

Focus on the Kingdom

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Anthony Buzzard, editor

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You Have the Right to Remain Silent — but Not as a Christian

by Barbara Buzzard

Would you believe that well over one half — some say 75% — of women having abortions consider themselves Christian? I am reminded of the Baltimore riots and a mother screaming after her son who was looting, “That’s not who we are. We don’t do that!” Well, in the case of Christians choosing abortions, it seems that they didn’t get the memo: that’s not who we are. That is not what we do and that is not what we stand for. And that is why we must be involved in this conversation. Please do not dismiss this information as not applicable to you or yours. Tragically it is the older generation (especially men) under whom this savage law became a reality and who enabled it to become a part of our culture. We have been a huge part of the problem. Our silence has made us thoroughly guilty. Our system of morality has become monstrous and has “metastasized throughout our society...contaminated every social institution touching upon our lives.”¹ The generation who really get this are the very young children who have not yet been corrupted. Just try to explain to them that it is OK to kill an unborn baby.

The problem is in both pulpit and pew. I was heartened by the honesty of a pastor who recently said that he had been wary and tepid about speaking or acting on the abortion question. He says that many pastors who are intellectually and philosophically and theologically against abortion are also very quiet about it. He is now on the frontlines. What changed him? And what will, I hope and pray, motivate all of us to stand and be counted? He didn’t know enough! It was information that changed him. It is only when you look into the eyes of this beast and stare it down that it becomes real.

As another pastor says, evangelical pastors have several reasons for not preaching on abortion, **and one is fear of man**. Some are honest enough to admit that it is also fear of diminished offerings. One director of a pro-life group said that his greatest frustration was the **silence of evangelical pastors**. My source calls them the “**still silent shepherds**.” This is not a diatribe against pastors but an inquiry into how things have gone so terribly wrong in this supposedly Christian country. Only one in ten pastors has spoken out against abortion recently with the exception of Right to Life Sunday. Some call this Christian squishiness. Those in the pews

are not getting it because the pastors are either not getting it or are not courageous enough to speak up. One advocate said that the most shocking thing he experienced was the lack of response from evangelicals *who pretend* to be pro-life *but will not* explore the issue or speak about it. Congregations rarely rise above their pastors, and so they are being denied what they need in order to become passionate against evil.

Walsh: “To all pastors afraid of condemning abortion: Find a new job. You aren’t qualified.”²

We have for years been moved by the profound and surprising words of Proverbs 17:15 which tells us that God despises those who acquit the guilty and condemn the innocent (repeated in Prov. 24:24; Isa. 5:20). As I see it, these two **awful** factors — ignorance and wickedness — when merged created the horror of abortion on demand.

To put this in perspective, we are one out of only four nations (of 195) which allow abortion for any reason. We are one out of only seven that allow abortion after twenty weeks. By day 21 the first beats of the heart begin and the unborn baby has his own fingerprints at 12 weeks. And at 20 weeks a baby can hear your voice — and distinguish it from another. She has eyelashes, fingernails and a heartbeat of 140 beats per minute. *Abortion stops that beating heart!*

Point #1: Unless you understand how we were lied to about Roe v. Wade, you might tend to think it a necessary or acceptable law. But Dr. Nathanson, who performed over 75,000 abortions and who ran the largest abortion clinic in the United States, after repentance has told the truth of how he and others made up and told and sold the lies to the American public. **Lying is essential for approval of abortion**. Nathanson says that the edifice of abortion is built on a foundation of lies. His is a fascinating account. He says that their first key tactic (no surprise here) was to capture the media. They simply fabricated fictional polls; they announced that 60% of Americans were in favor of permissive abortion. This is the tactic of the self-fulfilling lie. They fabricated the number of illegal abortions done, and these false figures took root in the consciousness of Americans, convincing many that we needed to amend the abortion law.

He says that it was a schizophrenic assault on Truth, that it was fraudulent thinking. When war comes the first casualty is Truth. When we began to believe that it was a personal decision between a woman and her

¹ Dr. Bernard Nathanson, *The Hand of God*.

² Dailywire.com, 11/8/17

doctor instead of the killing that it is — an intentional distortion of the Truth — we gave in to *perverted thinking*. We were conned, fed myths. The war against the unborn was lost. We were deceived by semantic gymnastics that allowed us to believe the unthinkable. What would it take to allow you to do or support the unthinkable? You would have to be deceived in some way. What happened to us as a society? I know passionate Christians who admit that they were taken in by the lies about clumps of cells, back-street abortions and the *necessity of having this law* in order to save women's lives. They even tell me that they believed the *propaganda* that without abortions thousands of women would die! They settled for what they were told was the lesser of two evils, without recognizing that they were being deceived. (And the lesser of two evils in any case is still evil.)

We would naturally be against the extermination of a segment of the population, so this had to be whitewashed. What happened to us is that for the most part the majority (including the church) has been silent about this blasphemy. This wholesale killing is a low point for humanity. What is the difference between this and the sacrificing of children to Moloch?

Grotesque Immorality

Former abortionist doctor Bernard Nathanson, author of the documentary *Silent Scream*, regards abortion as an impermissible act of deadly violence:

“As I look back across the 25 years separating me from that revolting extravaganza playing itself out on the bodies of pregnant women and their slaughtered babies, I am struck by the...moral and spiritual vacuum at the core of this...And yet, the thing was so obviously sordid. Why couldn't we make *the link* between the ethical and the moral, between the shoddy practices and shabby practitioners, the evident greed and callous motives, between the crassness of the enterprise and those involved in it, between all these ethical indicators and the *grotesque immorality of the act itself*?”

The Justices simply had not done their homework in *Roe v. Wade*. Many were out in the afternoons looking for work as they had just lost an election that would put them out of a job. The Scriptures could easily have informed them and so could the biology textbooks of the time. The story is that it was a kind of old boys' network. The lawyer was attractive and persistent, and as one Justice said after the fact, “we just gave her what she wanted.” There is currently a movie in the making: “*Roe v. Wade: The Untold Story*.” I hope it will open many eyes. To sum up: the *Roe v. Wade* decision deformed us as a nation and corrupted our thinking.

One has only to look at the video by Dr. Levatino, the former abortionist doctor who repented and testified before Congress about his former barbaric deeds. If one

only dares to look at the instruments and how the “procedure” is carried out, it can have a profound effect on one's attitude and desire to stop the barbarity. He sums it up by saying, “Like hell I would ever do another one,” and he pleads for the pro-life cause.

“We shake our heads in disgust at the German church's tolerance of one holocaust while ignoring our own tolerance of another” (Randy Alcorn).

The facts are that the baby in the womb is alive, and after the abortion it is dead. That is why the abortion was performed — to kill it. But *Roe v. Wade* made us legally blind, forgetting that **no law can give you the right to do what is wrong**.

Murder in the Land

Just one last point about *Roe v. Wade*: There is a Life at Conception Act which would declare that unborn children are persons and therefore entitled to legal protection under the law. The Supreme Court admitted in *Roe v. Wade* that **if** it could be shown that unborn babies were persons, this would cause the case to collapse. The Supreme Court never declared abortion to be a constitutional right. The 14th amendment reads in part: “nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty or property.” This leads one to wonder why abortion is even legal? If the Constitution were upheld, the solution is built right into it.

The crux of the matter is that this abhorrent ruling could never have survived this long if enough good people opposed it and worked against it. How is it that we have thousands and thousands of churches, and yet as Isaiah 1:21 says, “There is murder in the land”? In our case it is baby murder!

“Abortions and school shootings are symptoms of the same spiritual disease in our culture. They are born from a complete disregard for the sacredness of human life. A school shooter and an abortionist may have different motives, but they possess the same internal emptiness, the same deadened conscience, the same contempt for humanity.”³

I have compiled some 37 quotations from historical authorities regarding abortion, going back as early as 400 B.C. For example, from the *Didache* (circa 80 A.D.) under the heading “The teaching of the Lord to the nations”: “Do not slay a child by abortion, nor what is begotten shall you destroy.” It is not as though we have not been instructed on this subject!

Myths Bedevil the Conversation

Point #2: the exception clause for the life of the mother. The truth on this point is shocking but it is *good news* and very liberating, a wonderful example of the truth making you free, a black cloud of hesitancy gone.

³ Matt Walsh, dailywire.com, 2/19/18

A choice for one means no choice/no life for the other. (And we know which one gets to do the choosing!) But *is it true* that we might have to choose one life over the other?

We have been forced into (again lied to) thinking that we must have an exception clause. This colors and distorts much of our thinking. **Myths like these bedevil the conversation.** We have been hoodwinked into believing that this is a **necessary evil!** In truth, the necessity for an exception clause is a myth to *justify* murder of healthy children (and as Christians one of our major responsibilities is *not* to be deceived.) We have, both church and state, embraced abortion as a necessary evil, which is to say that we have been deceived.

And what about the life of the mother? A fair question. Dr. C. Everett Koop who was Surgeon General of the U.S. says, “Protection of the life of the mother as an excuse for abortion is a smoke screen. In my 36 years in pediatric surgery I have **never known of one instance where the child had to be aborted to save the mother’s life.**”

Dr. Levatino says that **NONE of the thousands of abortions he performed which were categorized as saving the life of the mother were actually necessary.** He explains that cutting the child to pieces only incurs *more* risk for the mother. He says that it wasn’t a necessary step, and never is.

“As the over 1,000 obstetricians, neonatologists, pediatricians, and midwives who signed the Dublin Declaration...have testified, **there is never any medical justification for abortion.** Now, it may be necessary in some rare circumstances to deliver a baby early, in order to save the mother. But the additional step of killing the child is not necessary.”

Matt Walsh of The Blaze: **“Abortion is never necessary to save a woman’s life...Abortion has never saved a life. It is designed instead to preserve the lifestyle of the mother. A baby’s life and her mother’s are NEVER in competition. We are never required to choose between the two.”**

Knowing this truth is liberating and empowering, compelling/allowing one to take a stand.

Abortion Does not Preserve a Life; It Preserves a Lifestyle

Call me a fanatic, but I just think that siding with the baby over the mother’s lifestyle is the right thing to do. To decide that a child must die so that you can do as you wish — that is horrendous and surely one of the greatest moral evils ever to be perpetrated on our culture.

More myths surround the issues of pregnancy due to rape and incest and their numbers are multiplied to look larger than in reality. Consider please, the logic of killing a child who is the product of rape or incest. We already have one victim. Does killing the other one

help? Abortion does not bring comfort or healing to a victim of these crimes. What it does is to leave us with one damaged, and one dead.

Also very telling is the slogan of a rape victim: **“I got over the rape. I never got over the abortion.”**

Believing a lie can be deadly. And if one falls prey to the false logic about an exception clause, it opens the door to yet more exceptions — disabled children, imperfect specimens. Information is power. It is powerful to be 100% pro-life, without exception and without compromise and without apology.

Consider this devastating logic: “I’m personally against abortion but I’m still pro-choice.” Brilliant author Randy Alcorn says that this is like saying, “I am personally against child abuse, but I would defend my neighbor’s right to abuse his child if that is his choice.”

Your Silence Speaks Volumes

Point #3: Is it necessary to engage? It is! Our moral sense was put in us by our Creator and is not to be ignored. That is where activism is born. What is your duty to your unborn neighbor? What responsibility do we have in this?

What does Christianity look like in a world that practices child sacrifice?

Here’s the thing: *You have to JOIN the side you are on!* There is a luminous power to Truth, but it must be *engaged in*. Consider this from the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C.: “Most Germans neither aided nor opposed the actions of the Nazis, thereby *permitting* the Holocaust to occur.” We are called to witness. All it takes for evil to win is for good men to remain silent.

A civilized society does *not* demand the right to kill its most vulnerable citizens. Who gave us the right to decide who may live and who must die?

Abortion is not compatible with being a Christian. It is child sacrifice and it is murder. By contrast, we are to *hate* bloodshed. Silent consent to the legalization of murder is not acceptable. Abortion is a uniquely heinous sin — so says Scripture. It possibly exceeds all previous atrocities with its 60+ million lives taken. We are to cherish and protect. We are commanded to protect the innocent and rescue those being led away to slaughter.

As Dr. Martin Luther King said, “Our lives begin to end the day we are silent about things that matter.” And he also warned that: “to ignore evil is to become an accomplice to it. Not to speak is to speak.”

“Who among us has any conception of the dimensions of shame that will befall us and our children when one day the veil has fallen from our eyes and the most horrible of crimes...reach the light of day?” (Hans Scholl, written during that other Holocaust).

Is it possible that we have met the enemy and that it is us? ⇧

Fathered by God

by Kenneth LaPrade, Texas

A great source of joy for faithful Bible readers is the correlation of both Jesus and Christians to the truth of being **fathered by God**. In a practical way, Christians are powerfully helped in their commitment to **not** keep on practicing a sinful lifestyle. They are wonderfully watched over and protected from the evil one by Jesus, the human mediator. Jesus himself was brought into existence by God in a fabulously unique way. What confidence all of this should inspire!

“We know that everyone fathered by God does not go on sinning. The one who was fathered by God keeps them, and the evil one does not touch them” (1 John 5:18).

In this verse the first use of “fathered,” in reference to Christians, is in the perfect tense in Greek, which refers to a continuous condition existing since a past event. The word could be rendered literally in several ways: “Having been fathered, engendered, begotten, generated, originated, or caused to exist.” This use of the word “fathered” describes the ongoing relation of Christians to God. When one views the Biblical uses of “**born again**” vocabulary, it becomes apparent that such terminology indicates a continued response toward the Father who has lovingly “begotten” Christians in a spiritual sense.

The word rendered as “was fathered” in the above quote from 1 John 5:18, in reference to Jesus, is a Greek verb in the aorist tense, indicating a one-time past event. This clearly refers to God’s literal, creative miracle produced in Mary when holy spirit came upon her, (when the power of the Most High overshadowed her) as announced by Gabriel to Mary. “Precisely for that reason the baby to be fathered will be called holy and the Son of God” (Luke 1:35b). Jesus literally had his origin and **was fathered by God** in this miraculous way at the time of his conception in Mary.

Our graciously provided Christian identity as children of God, heirs of God, and fellow heirs with the Messiah is a major theme that is beautifully described throughout the whole New Testament. In light of our being identified with Jesus, the one who **was fathered** in such a unique way, he is the “first born” of a large family of brothers and sisters. Jesus, having been made like us as a flesh and blood human being who could deeply feel our weaknesses (having been severely tempted and having suffered tremendously), is not ashamed to call us his brothers and sisters! Such magnificent truths rightly leave us in awe at the overwhelming compassion being extended toward us! We are always welcome to boldly approach the throne of grace when we need help!

“And now, children, abide in him, so that when he is revealed we may have boldness and not be put to shame before him at his royal appearing. If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been fathered by him. Look at the remarkable love the father has given us — that we should be called God’s children! That is indeed what we are” (1 John 2:28 - 3:1a).

According to the explanation of the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:18-23, our “new birth” begins with our voluntary, repentant response to the Gospel of the coming Kingdom of God which has been sown like **seed**. To be “good soil” we must hear and understand the “seed” (which is the message), and we must persist in that message to the end of “bearing fruit.” As similarly seen above in 1 John 2:28-29 we must “**abide** in him,” doing “what is right.” Within their contexts, **all** new covenant references to believers being **fathered by God** bear out the simple understanding of magnanimous, undeserved loving-kindness being poured out in juxtaposition with our ongoing obedience to the details of the message.

Within the growth of practical efforts to keep on obeying, pervasive forgiveness for shortcomings is always richly provided. On top of that, far-reaching help with any misunderstandings or weaknesses is a genuine reality that is constantly implied or stated in many relevant Scriptures.

In addition to a few verses previously mentioned, the following quotes, partial quotes, and allusions touch briefly on the vast panorama of this well-balanced, Scriptural theme. The dynamics of being **fathered by God** are integral to both our calling and our responsibility as His children.

For example, we are to imitate the perfect way God loves people, even when they are “unjust.” Thus, when we love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us, we will be “children of our father in heaven” (Matt. 5:43-48). In another context which also displays God’s unwavering goodness, the book of James reveals, “Of His own will He gave us birth through the message of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.” “Accept with meekness the implanted message, which is able to save your lives” (James 1:18, 21b). The context explains that evil actions and motives (including a mindset of active anger) must be **put away**. Believers are solemnly urged to stay careful to **act** on the implanted message, instead of merely hearing it and being forgetful.

Associating the **new birth** with the “seed” message (along with the reality of the resurrection of Jesus and our future hope) is abundantly evident in First Peter. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus the Messiah! In His vast mercy He has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus the

Messiah from among the dead...Certainly, your new birth wasn't from perishable, but from imperishable seed, through the living and enduring message of God." (I Peter 1:3, 23). The whole context of these two "**new birth**" verses clarifies several facets of a necessary, proactive response. Believers must sincerely desire the word (the "imperishable" message), while being purified by obeying the truth, loving one another fervently, and putting away evil. All of this is practiced in light of what is accomplished by the Messiah's precious blood (**not** "perishable" things like gold and silver).

"As many, however, as did accept him, to these he gave the right to become children of God — namely the ones believing in his Gospel revelation. These were born not from blood, nor from the desire of the flesh, nor from the desire of a male, but from God" (John 1:12-13).

Though misunderstood by Nicodemus, Jesus' conversation with him (in the third chapter of John) highlights the truth about the heavenly Father's will to **engender** children spiritually so that they may enter the future Kingdom of God. The unique wording "born from above" indicates the action of God to **regenerate** those who would repent in light of the message.

"Let me tell you the solemn truth," replied Jesus. "Unless someone has been born from above, they won't be able to see God's Kingdom."

"How can someone possibly be born," asked Nicodemus, "when they are old? You're not telling me they can go back a second time into the mother's womb and be born, are you?"

"I'm telling you the solemn truth," replied Jesus. "Unless someone is born from water and spirit, they can't enter God's Kingdom. Flesh is born from flesh, but spirit is born from spirit. Don't be surprised that I said to you, You must be born from above" (John 3:3-7).

This same conversation in John chapter 3, goes on to emphasize **believing** in Jesus' future sacrifice provided by God's love. "For God loved the world this way: He gave His uniquely fathered Son, so that everyone who puts their trust in him will not be destroyed, but have perfect life of the age to come." (John 3:16). Also, this conversation points to the importance of responding truly to the light of the Messiah, instead of loving darkness and staying within the deeds of darkness.

"Everyone who is fathered by God does not go on sinning, because God's offspring remains in him; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been fathered by God" (1 John 3:9).

"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God, and all who love are fathered by God and know God" (1 John 4:7).

"Everyone who believes that the Messiah is Jesus has been fathered by God. Everyone who loves the

parent loves the child as well. That is how we know that we love the children of God, because we love God and do what he commands. This is what loving God means: it means keeping his commandments. His commandments, what's more, are no trouble, because everything that is fathered by God conquers the world. This is the victory that conquers the world: our faith" (1 John 5:1-4).

Being "fathered by God," "born again," or "born from above" is a reality that entails much more of a response than the fleeting mental agreement to some ideas during a moment of time. Nevertheless, Christians really do share the life of the Messiah (being God's house) if they keep a firm, tight grip on the confidence and sense of triumph regarding the hope (Heb. 3:6, 14) all the way to the end! The unfathomably rich blessings of the new birth are vibrantly true!

The benefits of being **fathered by God** in the present time and in the future are lavishly poured out toward those who want to respond. God's victorious overcoming of the world, through his **uniquely fathered Son**, is a reality which we now enjoy by faith. This also means that we will be entering an incorruptible inheritance in the age to come. Our continuance in a lovingly obedient response is very do-able; it is not too heavy to bear! We can take on Messiah's yoke, "easy to bear," in light of God and His Son having done all the real "heavy lifting" to secure our undiminished heritage. It is the heavenly Father's gracious pleasure to welcome his beloved children into the Kingdom of God! ✧

Back to Basics: Believing What Jesus Our Lord and Savior Says

by Aaron Flahaut, England

Jesus the Christ is the ultimate agent of the Father, and the perfect representative of his will. "For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak" (John 12:49). He states here that he does not speak from his will, but only what God his Father has commanded him to say! Jesus says things such as, "Whoever does not love Me does not keep My words. The word that you hear is not My own, but it is from the Father who sent Me" (John 14:24). And the Father says of his Son, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him" (Matt. 17:5). If we are to call ourselves followers of Christ, then it is imperative that we believe Jesus at face value and believe the words he speaks as "spirit and life" (see John 6:63).

Questioning or twisting the Son of God's words is a dangerous game. If we are to follow Jesus then we are to believe everything he says and commands. Our Lord

Christ was a man in direct communion with our God and Father. He only spoke what God told him to!

Currently we live in a world where the church is heavily divided. This may in part be due to a number of people who throughout the centuries have chosen to not believe Jesus' words. "Believe in the lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16:31), but does not believing in Jesus mean also believing what he says?

The danger starts when we begin discarding the commands of Jesus. Many books and articles have been written regarding the corrosion of truth, but we can observe the danger when Jesus states, "The LORD our God is one LORD" (Mark 12:29), and then the early church discards these words in favor of creeds that state that God is not actually "one" as Jesus states, but is really "three in one." Jesus says, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their superiors exercise authority over them. It shall not be this way among you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant" (Matt. 20:25-26), and yet the early church (after the Apostles) chose a strict, hierarchical leadership model for the churches (not that order is bad, but we must remember that we are all brothers and sisters, and one is not greater than another). More words of Jesus ignored are: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (John 13:34). Here we have an essential order from our master, with deadly consequences for disregarding it. We are to love one another with the same sacrificial love that Jesus had for us, and he loved us to the point where he died a gruesome death so that we may have life. But instead, if we look at history, countless numbers of Christians have been martyred — at the hands of others who call themselves Christians!

These are only a few examples of where Christianity has veered from following and believing the words of its founder. We do well to remember that these are not the words of a mere man, but a man begotten by the holy spirit, and completely and utterly subjected to the will of his, and our, Father and God. Ignoring him, questioning him, and disregarding him are not the actions of a true follower of Christ, but if we are to be one with him as he was one with the Father (see John 17), then that means whole acceptance and faith in his words. Being a Christian leaves no room to doubt him. Jesus sums things up perfectly in John 5:24: "he who hears my word, and believes Him who sent me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." ✧

Words of Jesus Which Need to Be Understood

Matthew 24 records Jesus' famous lecture, repeated in Mark 13 and Luke 21, given on Wednesday or Thursday of the week in which he died on Friday, the day before the weekly Sabbath. This material from Jesus is not less important than any of Jesus' words. It needs to be understood, and was meant to be understood, by those of us claiming to be his disciples, students.

In Matthew 24 Jesus accompanied by the inner circle of his disciples looked at the existing Temple buildings and solemnly announced that they would be destroyed. In response the disciples asked the critically important question, "When will these things be and what will be the sign of your coming (Parousia) and end of the age?" First note carefully that the coming of Jesus is the same event precisely as the end of the age. One single definite article combines those two ideas. In the mind of the disciples trouble in the Temple in Jerusalem was the sign that the end of the age was about to happen.

All the so-called problems which have made this discourse a chaos of misunderstanding for many arise from the failure to think as Hebrews and not as Western English speakers. In the Hebrew mind a person can speak inclusively, that is to say that what might appear to us to be a single event can include further events like it, of the same sort. As things turned out, the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70 did not produce the second coming, the Parousia. Jesus himself told the disciples in Acts 1:7 that only the Father knew the times and seasons of the final events of this present evil age. What Jesus and the disciples knew well because they had studied the book of Daniel was that devastation in the Temple will be followed immediately by his second coming.

A basic law of language is that one must not arbitrarily switch the meaning of words in a single connected context. Thus Jesus said, "Do not be deceived...Many will come claiming to represent me and they will deceive many, but the end is not yet." The end of what? The only "end" available in the context is the end of the age and the second coming. Remember that Jesus was replying to the question about the end of the age and second coming. First there must be birth pangs, but this is not yet the end; the end does not come immediately. The "end" in question is of course the future end of the age.

Only in Matthew 24:14 do we arrive at a specific sign of the end of the age. This Gospel of the Kingdom, the only true Gospel, must be heralded in the entire world and then the end of the age will come; when you therefore see the abomination of desolation standing where **he** ought not to (Mark 13:14, as the Greek states). Then if you are in Israel flee to the mountains. The

appearance of this abominable figure described in Daniel several times would trigger the greatest and unique tribulation of all time. This cannot be the events of A.D. 70, because Matthew 24:29 (parallel to Mark 13:24) states unequivocally that “immediately following that great tribulation,” “in those days after that tribulation” (Mark 13:24), there will be cosmic signs and they will see the Son of Man coming in power and glory. That event is of course the one future second coming of Jesus. We know now with hindsight that the events of A.D. 70 were not the end of the age. Jesus did not in A.D. 70 come back to rule in the Kingdom of God. But as Luke reports, when the disciples finally see all the events described as signs, then they can know that the Kingdom of God is about to come (Luke 21:31), which means also their redemption (21:28). On no account should it ever be imagined that A.D. 70 was the coming of the Kingdom, much less the redemption of Christian disciples.

To imagine that the Great Tribulation began in 70 A.D. and has been going on consistently for nearly 2000 years is to make nonsense of straightforward language, and should be abandoned as a false understanding. ✧

Comments

- “I was a JW, and for me the chains really started to drop off when I realized for the first time who Jesus was — the fully human, non-preexistent son of God. Once I started to see Jesus for who he really was I realized I had been misled. For the first time I saw ‘The Organization’ in a new light. They claimed to be feeding people spiritually and leading people to Jehovah, but now I saw them as inserting themselves between Jesus and his sheep and actively working to hinder a close relationship with him. The linchpin in this deception to me is the teaching of the two classes of Christians. Once I realized I had been misled on the teaching of the two classes (I can’t imagine a teaching with graver consequences) for over 30 years and never questioned it, I started to think about how I could have been misled so easily for so long. There is an excellent book that really helped me with this called *Captives of a Concept* written by an ex-JW. This title sums up the JW (and for that matter any person who is enslaved mentally by another group) experience perfectly. The book makes the point that in order to become a Jehovah’s Witness the fatal mistake a person makes is to accept their claim that the Watchtower Organization is Jehovah’s one and only representative on the earth today and a restoration of the original 1st-century congregation, without any investigation into that claim whatsoever. (Of course no information is offered in the study publication or by the study conductor about the ever-changing doctrines and numerous failed predictions to help you with this decision.) Also, this claim is always one of the last

chapters in whatever ‘introductory Bible study aid’ they have you going through. When I first started studying we used a book called *The Truth that Leads to Everlasting Life* and this was replaced in 1982 by *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*. Both of these publications were responsible for tremendous growth in JW numbers and both of them spring this extraordinary claim on the student at the end of the book, after you have just invested many months worth of study and become attached to your teacher. It is a rare person who escapes after making it all the way through the book. That’s how it used to be 20 years ago at least. I’m not sure about now though. It seems like the scandals just keep coming and that the growth is really slowing down. There are new ex-JW Youtube channels every week it seems, so I know people are streaming out. Let’s try to light the way to Messiah for as many as possible and help them to not end up in the agnostic/atheist camp which seems to be quite common. ‘Lord, where are we to turn to? You have sayings of everlasting life’ (John 6:68).” — *California*

- “I graduated in Theology. I have studied the Bible with the Christadelphians and agree with many of their teachings. But the problem is in the way they teach about Satan, the Devil and demons.” — *Brazil*

- “I recently came out of a Trinitarian church and your material has really helped me. A couple months ago I had a conversation with my pastor about a message he gave on Matthew 22:41-45 in regards to ‘the Lord said to my lord.’ He maintained that it says ‘God said to God,’ and I said Jesus was a man. Recently he called me in to talk to me, with a witness there with him, saying that I had to recant from what I think about Jesus being a man, and if I didn’t I was no longer welcome at his church, and my membership was canceled due to that belief. He called me an unbeliever in need of being evangelized, and all I said was that if he thought that of me that was fine.” — *Arizona*

- “I just wanted to take a minute to thank you for the live stream Bible studies. I am 23 years old and raised believing the truth instead of the Christian orthodox, but the closest Church of God Abrahamic Faith Church is an hour and a half away, so needless to say I don’t always have the opportunity to go. This live streaming Bible study makes me feel like I am right there with the live chat feature. I will definitely be watching every Sunday I do not attend church. Thank you again for all that you guys do to help people like me better understand the truth and love our ONE God.” — *Illinois*

- “I just finished reading your book *The Coming Kingdom of the Messiah*. Very informative and powerful. The Kingdom of God on earth teaching is truly the heart of the Gospel — more precisely the Gospel itself.” — *Hungary*