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ALL FAITH IS GOOD? (TITUS 2:10)

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Editor

I. INTRODUCTION

Recently, I was studying the book of Titus and came upon an interesting discussion of Titus 2:10 in the book on Greek grammar that I used in seminary. This discussion was valuable because it challenged the common translation of this verse.

The book suggested that the proper translation of this verse would support a Lordship view of salvation. The author maintains that Paul is saying that true faith results in good works that are demonstrated in the life of a genuine believer. I had never heard Titus 2:10 used in the debate between Lordship salvation and the Free Grace perspective. As such, I believe a closer look at it would be beneficial for the readers of the *JOTGES*. Certain lessons can also be learned from such a study.

In this article, I will discuss the common translation and interpretation of Titus 2:10. Then, I will look at the argument for a different way of translating it. Finally, I will discuss how it applies to the issue of saving faith and the lessons we can learn from this example.

II. THE COMMON VIEW OF TITUS 2:10

When we look at Titus 2:10 and how it is understood, we find that there is a general consensus. This consensus is based upon an almost universally accepted translation of the verse.

A. The Translation

The KJV is representative of how this verse is commonly translated. It reads:

> Not purloining, but *shewing all good fidelity*; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. (emphasis added)

The part of the verse in question involves the words, "shewing all good fidelity." The Greek word for "fidelity" is the common word for "faith" in the NT (*pistin*). According to the leading Greek lexicon of the NT, one of the major meanings of the word is "the state of being one in whom confidence is placed." It speaks of that person's faithfulness, reliability, or fidelity in doing what is required or expected of them.[1]

The word "good" in the Greek (*agathēn*) is an adjective. Even though it is separated from the word "faith," the KJV translates it as modifying the word. Hence, we have the translation "all *good* fidelity."

Other translations follow this translation. Both the NET and NASB translate it "all *good faith*." The HCSB takes the words "all good faith" to mean "utter faithfulness." The NIV says the words refer to one who is "fully trusted."

In summary, if we pick up any English translation of the NT, we find that the words "good" and "faith" go together. They describe one who is reliable or faithful. That is the way commentaries understand the words as well.

B. A Survey of Commentaries

Titus 2:10 is found in a discussion by Paul on the topic of slaves who are Christians and how they should conduct themselves. In v 9, the Apostle says that slaves are to be obedient to their own masters. They are to please their masters in all things, and not talk back to them.

As with the case of the translation of v 10, there is basic uniformity as to what this verse means.[2] Taking 2:9-10 together, Hiebert maintains that v 9 deals with the attitude of the slave. They are to have a good attitude towards their station in life, and adopt this attitude voluntarily.[3]

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[1] Walter Bauer, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, ed. F. W. Danker (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 818.

[2] One area of disagreement is whether the "masters" in question are believers or nonbelievers. See A. T. Hanson, *The Pastoral Epistles*, The New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 182 and Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976), 196. Hanson says the masters are not believers and Guthrie takes the opposite view. However, this does not impact the theme of this article.

[3] D. Edmond Hiebert, *Titus and Philemon* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1957), 54. Mounce agrees with this voluntary attitude and points out that the verb "submit" in verse nine is in the middle voice. See William D. Mounce, Pastoral Epistles, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 415.

This attitude makes grumbling unacceptable, as well as a sullen disposition. Such an attitude makes one eager to please, regardless of one's status.[4]

In v 10, Paul moves to the actions of the slave. They are not to steal or use any "tricks of the trade" to hurt their owner financially. They are to show "good faith" by being trustworthy in every matter trusted to them, as long as what their master wants them to do is not sinful. This kind of action and attitude makes the message of grace attractive to those who observe the slaves doing them.[5]

Quinn says that v 9 deals with verbal opposition to the master, while v 10 addresses concrete actions. He cites Pliny the Elder, among others, to show that it was common for slaves to steal from their masters in the first century. Onesimus, in the book of Philemon, is a Biblical example of such a practice.[6]

The point of these verses is that Christian slaves should not follow this common practice. The word "faith" means *reliable*. Such reliability is described as "good" because as Christian slaves they are not to do anything sinful while being reliable slaves.[7] They are not to use the idea of being reliable slaves as an excuse for doing evil. In other words, the adjective "good" places a limit on their reliability.

In a similar vein, Stott says that the verbal aspect of obedience in v 9 refers to being respectful. "Good faith" is equivalent to showing they can be trusted.[8]

Whatever Paul is saying to slaves, such exhortations apply to all areas, as v 9 indicates.[9] When it comes to stealing from your master, a slave could easily justify doing so. As a general rule, the financial rewards of being a slave did not reflect the amount of work done. In addition, a slave could conclude that the master had more than he needed or could ever use. Anything the slave pilfered would not be missed.[10]

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[4] William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1957), 369.

[5] Ibid., 55.

[6] Jerome D. Quinn, *The Letter to Titus*, Anchor Study Bible (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1988), 144-49. He cites Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis historia* 33.6.26-27.

[7] Ibid.

[8] John R. W. Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus: Guard the Truth* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1996), 191.

[9] George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), 314.

[10] Ibid., 313.

A believing slave could also justify having a negative attitude, particularly if the master is also a believer. Such a slave would be taught about Christian liberty and equality within the Body of Christ. He could argue that willingly submitting to a Christian master as a slave would contradict such teaching.[11] Guthrie points out that a believing slave on the island of Crete may have difficulty not stealing because, as Paul says, they came from an immoral background (Titus 1:12). Such a background might contribute to a new Christian who was a slave taking advantage of a believer's freedom in Christ.[12]

III. TITUS 2:10 DOES NOT TEACH A LORDSHIP VIEW OF FAITH

In light of the way Titus 2:10 is translated in all English versions, it is difficult to see how this verse could be used to argue a Lordship view of faith. Such a view says that true Christian faith in Christ is demonstrated by obedience to Christ as Lord. A survey of the authors cited above, all of whom are more or less sympathetic with Lordship Salvation, bears this out. None of them see this verse as supporting such a view.

In Titus 2:1-10, Paul is giving instructions to Christians. He is not giving tests by which we can determine who is eternally saved or not. Hiebert points out that Paul is talking about the Christian life being a process, and not saying what will automatically happen.[13] Knight says these slaves are indeed Christians, as are the others discussed in chapter two, but have a choice on how they conduct themselves.[14] Stott also believes that these Christian slaves have a choice. Their lives can either add luster to the Gospel or not. The life of a Christian can either bring adornment to the Gospel or discredit it. If a Christian discredits the Gospel by how he lives, he gives no evidence of salvation, but that is possible for a Christian to do.[15]

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[11] Gordon H. Clark, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Jefferson, MD: The Trinity Foundation, 1983), 219.

[12] Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles,* 196.

[13] Hiebert, *Titus*, 58.

[14] Knight, *Pastoral*, 313.

[15] Stott, *Titus*, 192.

Both Knight and Mounce agree the point here is not to demonstrate that one is genuinely saved, but to make the gospel attractive to others. The instructions to slaves deal with the issue of evangelism.[16] Christian slaves have a responsibility to witness to others, especially their masters. They can possibly be used to lead them to Christ.[17] Their behavior can assist in this area. But their behavior is changed, not because they are genuine believers, but through the "doctrine of God" as taught by the church (2:10).[18]

Of course, if the masters in question here are already believers, their salvation is not the goal of the slave's Christ like behavior. By his exemplary conduct a slave can make Christian doctrine appear beautiful in the eyes of other onlookers.

Throughout chapter two, as Paul addresses different groups within the church, he gives admonitions and urges these believers to act in a certain way. He "exhorts" them to do so (v 6). This exhortation is implied throughout the chapter.[19] They are commanded to do these things because such actions are *not* automatic.

In the verses that follow Titus 2:10 it is also clear that the behavior demanded of those in the church, including slaves, is not automatic. Believers have to be taught these things, and must deny what they naturally want to do (v 12). A Christian slave will not do what Paul exhorts him to without such teachings and self-denial.

Regardless of how v 10 is translated and understood, the context certainly favors the view that Paul is telling Christians how they *should* act. It will involve sound teaching within the church so that they know how to do that. He is not telling them how they *will* act. Even those who hold to a Lordship view of salvation do not see this context supporting that idea.

However, it has been held that the Greek of Titus 2:10 leads to a different translation. This translation, it is held, teaches the Lordship salvation view of the inevitability of good works.

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[16] Knight, *Pastoral*, 316; Mounce, *Pastoral*, 416; Hanson, *Pastoral*, 182.

[17] R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 333-34.

[18] Clark, *Pastoral*, 219.

[19] Hendrikson, *Pastoral*, 368.

IV. A DIFFERENT TRANSLATION OF TITUS 2:10

In his popular NT Greek grammar, Daniel Wallace argues that Titus 2:10 should be translated in a different way.[20] He does so because of two grammatical points. The first issue is whether the verse has a double accusative of object-complement. The second involves the relation of an adjective to a noun in an anarthrous construction.

A. Double Accusative of Object-Complement

The point of contention involves the four words "showing all good fidelity" (NKJV). In the original Greek, there are four words as well. They appear in a different order:

> *Pasan* (all) *pistin* (faith) *enkeiknumenous* (showing) *agathēn* (good)[21]

The words "faith" and "good" are in the accusative case. The common way of translating these words is to treat the word "good" as an adjective, modifying the word "faith," since both are in the same case. This leads to the translation, "good faith" and thus, "showing all good faith."

However, Wallace argues that the word "good" should not be treated as an adjective that modifies the word "faith." Instead, it is part of a double accusative of object-complement construction. This construction is one in which a noun in the accusative (in this case "faith") is the direct object of the verb (in this case "showing"). The other accusative (in this case "good") complements the first accusative ("faith"). The second accusative can be a noun or, as in this case, an adjective. The second accusative says something about the first accusative, often with the verb "to be," which must be supplied. This leads to the following translation:

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[20] Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 188-89, 312-13. He calls Titus 2:10 a "debatable" passage in regards to these grammatical issues, but it seems fairly clear that he thinks the English versions have mistranslated the verse.

[21] Not all Greek manuscripts have this order. Wallace says that the other options, however, are not viable as reflecting the original. For readers of the *JOTGES* it might be of interest that the Majority Text, which Wallace does not accept, reverses the order of "faith" and "all": "faith all showing good." Even if this order of the words was accepted by Wallace, it would have little impact on his view. See Wallace, *Grammar*, 188 and Zane C. Hodges and Arthur L. Farstad, eds., *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1985).

Showing all faith to be good.[22]

On this grammatical point, Wallace offers a number of arguments.[23] The first is that the Greek word "showing" takes an object-complement in Romans 2:15.[24] In fact, it is an example of a verb that frequently takes an object-complement.

Another argument Wallace makes is that the word "good" is separated from the word "faith" by the verb/participle "showing." It is extremely rare in the NT for an adjective to be positioned this way. But this is the normal position for a predicate adjective.[25] Very simply, if the translation was "good faith" in Titus 2:10 we would expect the word "good" to be closer to the word "faith," and not after the word "showing."

Some say that because the word "faith" does not have an article (usually the English word "the") it cannot be the object of the verb "showing" in a double accusative construction. However, Wallace points out that there are other examples in the NT where there is an object of the verb that does not have an article and still has an adjective that says something about that object, as Wallace argues here in Titus 2:10. And example would be John 9:1, where Jesus "saw a man which was blind from his birth." The word "man" and "blind" are both in the accusative and "man" does not have an article.[26] The verb "was" needs to be added between these accusatives.

On this last argument, Wallace has more to say. The fact that the word "faith" does not have an article is significant.

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[22] Wallace, *Grammar*, 188.

[23] Ibid., 188-89.

[24] Rom 2:15: "they show the work of the law written in their hearts," where the words "work" and "written" are the two accusatives. They show the work of the law *to be* written in their hearts. The translation is not, "they show the 'written word' in their hearts."

[25] Wallace, *Grammar*, 188-89. An example is Acts 4:16, where the Jewish leaders say, in reference the healing of a paralyzed man by Peter, "for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest." The word "manifest" is an accusative predicate adjective, occurring after the verb "done" and associated with the word "miracle."

[26] Ibid., 189.

B. The Anarthrous Noun-Adjective Construction[27]

Titus 2:10 makes a nonequative statement. This simply means that the main verb is not "to be." The main verb is "showing."

In this verse, the anarthrous noun "faith" has the adjective "all" in front of it.[28] The order in Titus 2:10 is: an adjective (all); followed by an anarthrous noun (faith); followed by another word (showing); followed by a second adjective (good). Wallace says that there are no instances where this order occurs in the NT where the second adjective modifies the anarthous noun. In other words, there are no examples in the NT where Titus 2:10 would lead to the translation "good faith."[29] This leads to the second option, which is, that the word "good" acts as a predicate: "faith that is good."

When one considers that the verb "showing" does use accusative adjectives this way, the traditional way of translating Titus 2:10 needs to be questioned. Wallace states that the burden of proof is on those who would translate it "good faith."[30]

V. EVALUATION OF A DIFFERENT TRANSLATION

Anytime one is confronted with a new way of looking at something, there is at first a reluctance to accept the new point of view. Many of us have quoted or read from Titus 2:10 and have become accustomed to the phrase "showing all good faith."

However, all within the Free Grace movement have learned that sometimes our traditional way of seeing things are not Biblical. We need to be willing to let the text of the Bible speak for itself. Titus 2:10 may be such a case.

Wallace's discussion on the grammatical points of the verse is enlightening. Even if one does not know Greek, the simple order of the words in the original would suggest that perhaps Wallace is correct.

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[27] An anathrous noun is one that does not have an article in front of it, often translated by the word "the" in English.

[28] Wallace is using the order found in the Critical Text of the NT. As noted in footnote 21, the word order changes slightly in the Majority Text. But it is doubtful that the word order would substantially change Wallace's argument here.

[29] Wallace, *Grammar*, 312.

[30] Ibid.

The Greek grammatical arguments would at least lead one to conclude that the new translation is *possible*. In fact, one might conclude it is *probable*.

The most important question is: How would this new translation affect our interpretation of Titus 2:10? It is interesting that Mounce, himself a Greek scholar, makes note of Wallace's translation. In Mounce's commentary on Titus he follows the traditional understanding of the verse. He seems to consider the new translation a possibility but does not engage with it.[31] Perhaps he did not see the differences as significant. However, for the readers of *JOTGES,* Wallace's interpretation of the new translation is very significant.

VI. TITUS 2:10 DOESN'T SUPPORT LORDSHIP SALVATION

After suggesting a new translation for Titus 2:10, Wallace gives a reason why this new translation is important. He feels it supports a Lordship Salvation view of saving faith.

Wallace argues that the word "all" can be translated "genuine." He holds that the word can have this meaning with abstract nouns, such as faith, and that Greek lexicons list this as a possibility.[32] Paul, then, is speaking about what a "genuine" faith looks like.

For Wallace, a genuine faith is good in the sense that it is *productive*. He seems to be saying that "good" and "productive" are synonymous. The end of v 10 restates it in another way. Genuine faith results in adorning the doctrine of God. Wallace sees the two halves of the verse as being parallel. Both halves would be saying that slaves are to demonstrate that their faith is real and results in good behavior. Wallace maintains that this supports the idea that "saving faith does not fail, but even results in good works."[33]

Using the context of the Pastoral Epistles as a whole, Wallace says that the use of the word "faith" in these books supports this. When faith is said to be genuine it is a faith that produces good works. He cites 2 Tim 3:15-17 and Titus 1:13-16 as examples.

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[31] Mounce, *Pastoral*, 416.

[32] Wallace, *Grammar*, 313. He cites BDAG, s.v. pas, 1.a.d.

[33] Ibid.

This, however, is a little confusing. The lexicon he cites does not say the word "all" can mean "genuine." Instead, it can signify the highest degree of something. If that is the meaning here it would mean not "genuine" faith, but "greatest" faith.

In addition, the word "good" and "productive" are not synonyms. Something can be productive but not necessarily good. One can easily think of things that are good but not necessarily productive.

It also is clear that in coming to his theological conclusion Wallace is not using grammatical arguments. He mainly argues from the context, but it is far from clear that that context supports a Lordship Salvation view of faith. To live in such a way that "adorns the doctrine of God" does not mean that such a life is automatic.

The use of the word "faith" in the Pastoral Epistles, as will be discussed below, can certainly be understood in a Free Grace context. Wallace argues that the "flow" of the argument of Titus 2:10 argues for a faith that automatically results in good works. But, it appears that the flow of the chapter strongly suggests something else.

All of the commentaries discussed above, even though they are generally agreeable with the tenets of Lordship Salvation, do not see the context of Titus 2 as discussing the automatic results of saving faith. Instead they all see it as one of exhorting what Christians *should* do.

For example, Paul tells slaves here that they *should* be "subject" to their masters (2:9). The same verb is used in reference to wives. They are to be subject to their husbands (2:5). This involves being "discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, and obedient." To say that all Christian wives are *automatically* going to be these things strains credulity. To say that all Christian slaves will *automatically* serve their masters with a pleasant attitude, not talk back, and please their owners in every way strains it as well.

The context of chapter two deals with Christian living. The purpose of such living is not to show proof that one is eternally saved. There are other benefits when a Christian "adorns" his life in this way (2:10). Masters see the truth of Christian doctrine. Such living keeps the "word of God" from being "blasphemed" by *others*. In addition, *others* will have "no evil thing to say" about Christians (2:5, 8, 10). In other words, in Titus 2 Christian living has an impact on others.[34]

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[34] Knight, *Pastoral*, 316.

VII. PRACTICAL APPLICATION

If, as Wallace suggests, Titus 2:10 teaches that true saving faith results in a persevering faith that produces good works, there is a troubling application. One of the most disturbing aspects of Lordship Salvation is that it makes assurance of salvation impossible. It maintains that a true Christian cannot continue living a life of sin. However, since every Christian sins, there is always a question of how many sins it takes to "continue" in sin.

Even though Paul is talking about slaves in Titus 2:9-10, it is recognized that what he has to say applies to employees in general. It is very easy to apply Paul's teaching and conclude that Christians should be good employees, regardless of their social status. To find support for Lordship Salvation in Titus 2:10 means that if a person is a true Christian, he will demonstrate it by how he performs at his job.

A "true" Christian, then, will have a good attitude about his work. A true Christian will not say bad things about his boss. A true Christian will not pilfer from his boss by coming in late, or leaving early. Many other examples could be given of what it means to be a good employee based upon what Paul says here. And of course, it does not matter what kind of boss the believer has or in what kind of employment situation he finds himself.

How many Christians can feel good about these tests of assurance? How many of us could be better employees in all of these areas? Particularly, how many young Christians, even teenagers, fail miserably in this area of Christian living? If one believes that Titus 2:10 is a test by which we can determine if we have "genuine" faith, and that we base the genuineness of that faith on our performance at our place of employment, this will result in a further reason to lose assurance of our eternal salvation.

Fortunately, even if we accept the new translation proposed by Wallace, there is no need to accept the idea it supports Lordship Salvation. The key is found in looking at the meaning of the word "faith" in the Pastoral Epistles.

VIII. FAITH IN THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

The word *faith* occurs 33 times in the Pastoral Epistles. A quick review of these occurrences indicate that *perhaps* five could refer to the faith that leads to eternal life, that is, the faith in Christ by which the Christian life begins. But even in these instances such an understanding is not clear (1 Tim 2:7; 1 Tim 5:8; 2 Tim 3:8; Titus 1:1, 4). However, in the vast majority of instances the word "faith" occurs in contexts in which it is clear that Paul is talking about faith as it relates to Christian living. This kind of faith is the faith that lives in such a way that the Christian believes in what the Word of God teaches.

Examples of this use of faith include 1 Tim 2:15, where Paul is talking about children. They are to "continue" in faith. In 1 Tim 3:13, deacons who serve well within in the church obtain great confidence in the "faith." Paul wants Timothy to feed on sound doctrine in order to be nourished in the faith (1 Tim 4:6). In doing so, Timothy can be an example of faith (1 Tim 4:12).

From these examples we see that Paul speaks of a faith that involves obeying God's Word, and of a faith that can grow. It is a faith that gets the believer through difficult times, as it believes in what God has said.

The question in Titus 2:10 is: What kind of faith is Paul referring to? Is it the faith that begins the Christian life, or is it the faith by which a Christian lives?

As stated above, Wallace believes that verses such as 2 Tim 3:15-17 and Titus 1:13-16 show that in the Pastoral Epistles when faith is genuine it produces good works. He takes the word faith in these instances as referring to the initial act of faith in Christ. He then says that Paul means basically the same thing in Titus 2:10 when he refers to faith. A genuine faith is "good" in that it produces works.

It is not clear, however, that the verses Wallace cites use the word *faith* in this way. In 2 Timothy 3, this faith is intimately related to the Word of God. The Word of God teaches, rebukes, and trains the Christian in order to do good works. It seems that Paul is talking about a faith that uses what God has revealed in that Word. In fact, Paul is talking about a faith he wants Timothy to have. Timothy was already a believer.

Titus 1 is less clear. But even here, Paul talks about being sound, or healthy, in faith (1:13). This faith is not referring to the initial act of faith. Therefore, there is no need to conclude from these verses, as

Wallace does, that the initial act of faith always produces a life of enduring good works. The whole passage can certainly be understood in a Free Grace perspective.[35]

The real question, as far as this article is concerned, is what kind of faith Paul is describing in Titus 2. It is significant that in verse two Paul urges elderly Christian men to be "sound in faith." They are encouraged to manifest love and patience in their lives as well. This clearly refers to living by faith. The significance lies in the fact that the word "faith" here does not refer to the initial act of faith in a Christian's life. Titus 2:1-10 forms a unit. The next occurrence of the word *faith* occurs in the same section, in v 10.

IX. INTERPRETING TITUS 2:10

In Titus 2:1-10, Paul addresses different groups within the church. He tells each group how they are to conduct themselves. In order, he gives instructions to old men, old woman, young women, young men, and then to Titus, his lieutenant on the island of Crete. At the very beginning of these instructions Paul summarizes their goal. He wants the lives of each of these groups to display "sound doctrine" (v. 1).

The last group Paul deals with is slaves. They also are to live by certain standards. If we accept Wallace's translation, he wants them to show that "all faith" is "good."

As with the large majority of the occurrences of the word "faith" in the Pastoral Epistles, including the only other occurrence in this section (v. 2), Paul is talking about living by faith. Living by faith in what God's Word teaches, or sound doctrine, is difficult. Perhaps it can be said that among the groups Paul addresses, it was particularly difficult for slaves.

Slaves were at the lower rung of society. They were often at the mercy of bad masters. It would be easy to resent their station in life. It would be easy to take advantage of any personal benefit a slave could acquire.

But Paul is telling them to conduct themselves by having faith in sound doctrine. They are to live their lives based upon what the Word of God says, and not in light of their current plight. In Eph 6:5-8, Paul gives very similar instructions to slaves. In those verses, Paul explains

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[35] Zane C. Hodges, *The Gospel Under Siege: Faith and Works in Tension* (Dallas, TX: Redencion Viva, 1992), 105, 111; Robert N. Wilkin, "Titus," in *The Grace New Testament Commentary* (Denton, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 2010), 2:1016-17.

what is involved in a life of faith by a slave. A slave can conduct himself in this way, even in spite of life's seeming injustice, because he knows that he will be rewarded by Christ when Christ returns.

The Christian slave who served his master in this manner would demonstrate that a life of such faith produces what is good. Others would be able to see the good that adorns such a life. His deeds would be like jewels that reflect the sound teachings of Christ. No doubt, some would be attracted to Christ by seeing such a life. A life of faith, even by a slave, shows what is good. It would also result in eternal rewards.

X. CONCLUSION

Anything that helps us understand God's Word is welcomed. Often, such things challenge our traditions, such as how we translate a verse. Wallace's grammatical discussion on Titus 2:10 is a case in point. In my opinion, Wallace accurately shows that Paul is not talking about a "good faith." Instead, he is talking about a life of faith that demonstrates what is good.

That being said, one does not have to conclude that if a person is genuinely saved he will automatically live that kind of life. All the groups in Titus 2 are being exhorted to live that way because it is not automatic. But Paul sees all of them as Christians. Immediately before discussing Christian slaves, Paul exhorts Titus. Clearly, Paul saw Titus as a believer.

Whatever "group" we might find ourselves in, we should seek out sound doctrine from God's Word. Such doctrine tells how we should conduct ourselves. We should then, through the power of the Spirit, live in light of that teaching. Every such life of faith shows forth what is good.

To an unbeliever, such a life is good because the unbeliever can see the doctrine of God's Word at work right before their eyes. This could be used by the Spirit of God to draw such an unbeliever to faith. Titus 2 speaks of different groups within the church. If slaves trusted in God's Word to live in the way Paul exhorts, other believers would see Christ at work in such lives and be encouraged. For the slaves themselves, such obedience would result in rewards in the Kingdom of God.

Such living is living by faith in what God reveals in His Word. It is far from automatic. However, all such faith is certainly good for everyone concerned.

DOES FREE GRACE THEOLOGY DIMINISH THE GOSPEL? A REVIEW OF WAYNE GRUDEM'S, *"FREE GRACE" THEOLOGY: 5 WAYS IT DIMINISHES THE GOSPEL*, PART 2

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I. INTRODUCTION

In Part 1 I considered the first two chapters of Dr. Wayne Grudem's recent book in which he argues against Free Grace Theology (FGT).

I had intended to complete my review in this article. However, there is so much to say about his interpretations of the eleven tough texts of Chapter 5 that I will need to cover the final chapter separately.

Therefore, in this second article we will consider Chapters 3 and 4.

II. CHAPTER 3: FGT DIMINISHES THE GOSPEL BY GIVING ASSURANCE TO UNBELIEVERS

Grudem, like most Evangelicals, does not believe that it is healthy for people to be certain that they have everlasting life. Such certainty, in his view, leads to complacency and a dearth of good works. Worse yet, such certainty actually keeps people from being saved, as he argues in his first subheading of Chapter 3 (see below).

The subheadings which follow (for Chapters 3 and 4) are all Grudem's subheadings. We will consider the issues as he lays them out, paying special attention to the Scriptural support he cites.

A. The Result of the Weakened Free Grace Gospel Is Many Unsaved People

That heading suggests Arminianism, not Calvinism. According to Calvinism all of the elect will ultimately be born again no matter what messages are preached in various churches. The number of people who will ultimately be saved never changes. But here Grudem says that "the weakened Free Grace gospel" results in "many unsaved people."

Grudem first presents an argument from experience. He says that people who hold to FGT "wonder what is wrong with their Christian lives. Why do they not have the joy they see in Christians around them? Why does the Bible never seem to make much sense? Why is prayer not very meaningful?" (p. 78).

We are not told who he has in mind. Is he writing about some of the people he cites in the book like Jody Dillow, Charlie Bing, Fred Chay, Dave Anderson, and Zane Hodges? I know those people and I do not know any of them who wonder what is wrong with their Christian lives, why they have less joy than other believers, why the Bible doesn't make sense, or why their prayers are not meaningful.

This is a straw man argument. Even if he had provided examples, that would prove nothing. I suppose if he could finance a random study of ten thousand Lordship Salvation folks and ten thousand Free Grace folks, then maybe he could draw some semi-scientific conclusions. But he did no study. He is just sharing his opinion. He could be right. But then again, he could be wrong. Maybe it is Lordship Salvation people who typically lack joy, significance, and a meaningful prayer life? Or maybe the vast majority of people in both groups do well on all counts. What would any of this prove? Nothing. The issue is not who is happiest and most self-confident, but what the Scriptures teach.

Grudem gives no Scripture under this heading, which is inexplicable.

B. New Testament Epistles Frequently Warn Churchgoers That Some of Them Might Not Be Saved

The reader expects a discussion of a few passages from the epistles where church people are warned they might not be saved. The author quotes from eight verses or short passages: Jas 2:14-17; 1 Cor 6:9-11; 2 Cor 13:5; Heb 3:12; 1 John 2:3-6; 1 John 3:6, 9-10, 14. *Grudem does not explain any of these verses. He simply quotes them, assuming his proof texts need no explanation*.

FGT feels the need to explain what texts mean. Grudem does not.

To avoid making this review into a book, I will not explain texts that he does not explain. But readers can go to our website at www.faithalone.org and find that in most cases we have multiple articles on these passages. We have commentaries on every book of the NT as well, and in some cases more than one commentary on a given epistle.

Not one of the texts Grudem cites "warns churchgoers that they might not be saved," if by *saved* Grudem means regenerate, which he does. Surely he should have written at least a paragraph or two about each of the eight texts to point out where a warning concerning eternal destiny is found. He should also discuss the Free Grace view of each text, but he says in a footnote that he will do that in Chapter 5. The funny thing is that of the eight texts he cites, he only discusses two in Chapter 5 (2 Cor 13:5; Jas 2:14-17). That is disappointing.

C. The Free Grace View Says That People Can Become Complete Unbelievers and Still Be Saved

Grudem does not show in this section why it is wrong for FGT to suggest that believers are eternally secure even if they later apostatize. We freely admit we hold to that position. But why is that wrong?

Grudem does not discuss the verses which we cite which clearly teach that believers may apostatize. Why no discussion of Luke 8:13, the second soil which "believes for a time and in time of temptation falls away?" What about 1 Tim 1:18-20 and Hymenaeus and Alexander who "concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck?" What about 2 Tim 2:16-19 and Hymenaeus and Philetus "who have strayed concerning the truth…and they overthrow the faith of some?" We discuss all those texts and many more in our discussion of apostasy. But for some reason he doesn't cite the texts we cite, or discuss them.

If Grudem is convinced that believers can't stop believing, then why not discuss key texts which say that they can?

In this section Grudem keeps complaining that FGT does not ask people who profess faith in Christ to examine their works to see if they are born again. Yet those are people who profess faith, not people who do not, which is what this section of Chapter 3 is supposedly about.

D. Free Grace Teaching about Assurance Makes a Fundamental Category Mistake

Grudem, like other Lordship Salvationists, says "The question is not 'How do I know that Christ has died for people's sins and that he will save all who believe in Him?'" He goes on, "The question is, rather 'How do I know *that I have truly believed?*'" (p. 85).

Grudem's supposed proof is once again quoting texts without a word of explanation. This time he cites six passages, three of which he quoted earlier, and three new ones. Without explanation, his quotes certainly do nothing to prove his point to those who are not yet convinced of his position. Once again the passages he cites do not indicate that believers are being warned that they might end up in the lake of fire. Once again Grudem does not present or discuss Free Grace interpretations of these texts.

Grudem's concern, which he brings to the Scriptures, and not which he finds in the Scriptures, deals with how one knows he has *truly believed*.

By putting the word *truly* before *believe*, Grudem changes "whoever believes in Him" in John 3:16 to "*whoever truly believes* in Him."[1] This allows Grudem to get in works, for saving faith involves works in his view.

Grudem fails to discuss the only place in the entire Bible where Jesus or any of the Apostles asked anyone if they believed in Him. That is John 11:26. After saying that He guarantees everlasting life to all who live and believe in Him, He asked Martha, "Do you believe this?" Grudem would answer the Lord's question with three lines of evidence that he *really believes this*: 1) the confidence he gets when he examines his works; 2) the good feeling the Holy Spirit gives him; and 3) the intellectual confidence he finds in the promises of Scripture to the *true believer*. But Martha made the same category mistake that FGT makes. She said, "Yes, Lord. I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God who is to come into the world" (John 11:27).

No mention of works. No mention of feelings. Simply the mention of the OT Scriptures which say that the Christ, the Son of God, was

[1] The idea that there is a sort of faith in Christ which will not save is contrary to what the Lord promised. As long as we believe in Him for what He promised, everlasting life, we are secure (John 3:14-18; 5:24; 6:35-47; 11:25-27). Speaking of *really believing* confuses people and strips them of assurance.

prophesied to come into the world and the evidence shows that Jesus is He.

Maybe in another edition of this book Grudem will explain Martha's response to the question, "Do you believe this?" and maybe he will explain the Lord's failure to question Martha about her works.

In this section Grudem answers the question, "How many good works does one have to do in order to be assured of salvation?" His answer is "Some" (p. 92).

He continues, "To be more specific, *some* change of life gives a basis for *some* measure of assurance, and greater change of life gives a basis for a stronger assurance" (p. 92).

Herein lies the problem with Lordship Salvation. Assurance is never certainty. It fluctuates based on one's works, one's feelings about one's works, one's sins, one's feelings about one's sins, etc. But assurance is not certainty because if greater change of life means stronger assurance, then the only way to have certainty would be to have a total change of life, that is, glorification. Prior to death those following Grudem's theology will never be sure of their eternal destiny.

E. The Historic Protestant View Does Not Say That Assurance of Salvation Is Impossible, But Just the Opposite

Grudem is aware, of course, that his linkage of assurance with imperfect works and fluctuating feelings leads to the impossibility of certainty. So now he has a section supposedly showing that Lordship Salvation teaches that certainty of one's eternal salvation is possible.

He cites me as saying that under the Lordship Salvation view of saving faith "it is impossible to be sure of your eternal destiny…" and that "because no one's life is perfect, certainty of one's eternal destiny is impossible in this system" (p. 95).

He says that I misunderstand his position because in his view people can "have a confident assurance of their salvation in this lifetime" (p. 95). *Confident assurance* is not *certainty*. I spoke of *certainty*. He spoke of *confidence*. There is a huge difference between being confident and being certain.

However, Grudem then goes on and cites "the most influential Protestant tradition since the Reformation…the Westminster Confession of Faith" as saying that believers might attain "an infallible assurance" and might have "certainty" (p. 96).

Grudem misunderstands the Westminster Confession. When it speaks of "an infallible assurance" and "certainty," it is talking about the promises in the Bible to the one who believes in Christ. *Those promises are infallible and certain*. Joel Beeke, a Reformed pastor and professor who wrote his doctoral dissertation at Westminster Seminary on Reformation and Post-Reformation theology, says:

> The Puritan composers of the WCF were consistent in reminding believers that the objective promise embraced by faith (never apart from faith) is infallible because it is God's all-comprehensive and faithful covenant promise. Consequently, subjective evidence must always be based upon the promise and be regarded as secondary, for such is often mixed with human convictions and feelings even when it gazes upon the work of God. In fact, all exercises of saving faith apprehend, to some degree, the primary ground of divine promise in Christ.[2]

Thus the Confession pointed to one objective and infallible basis of assurance, the Word of God, and two subjective and fallible bases of assurance, the inner witness of the Spirit and the works which the Spirit produces in and through us. But the Confession teaches that the objective promises alone will not produce assurance. One needs the promises *plus* the subjective bases of assurance.

Grudem does acknowledge that the WCF requires more than belief in the promises of God: "This assurance is based on several types of evidence as indicated by many New Testament passages" (p. 96). He indicated earlier in Chapter 3 that those evidences are "continuing in faith" (pp. 83-84)—that is, believing the objective promises of God, "seeing evidence in their good works" (p. 84), and "the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit" (p. 88).

Calvinist David Engelsma comments on the difference between the Puritan doctrine of assurance (found in the WCF) and that of the Reformers: "The Puritan doctrine of assurance was not that of the Reformers. This is freely admitted by Reformed theologians who defend the Puritan doctrine of assurance."[3] He went on to say,

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[2] Joel Beeke, "Assurance of Faith: Promises, Inward Evidences, and the Spirit's Witness," available at file:///C:/Users/Bob/Downloads/Assurance%20of%20Faith%20-%20Dr.%20Joel%20R.%20Beeke.pdf, 7-8.

[3] David Engelsma, *The Gift of Assurance* (South Holland, IL: The Evangelism Committee of the Protestant Reformed Church, 2009), 15.

> For Calvin, all the Reformers, and the Reformation of the church in the sixteenth century, faith *is* assurance of salvation, faith *essentially* is assurance: "Faith is a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us" (italics his).[4]

Engelsma's concluding comments about the Puritan view of assurance of salvation apply equally as well to Grudem's view of assurance:

> Puritan preaching…is forever questioning your assurance, forever challenging your right to assurance, forever sending you on a quest for assurance, and forever instilling doubt. The Spirit does not work assurance by means of a gospel of doubt.[5]

Beeke, while lauding the Spirit's work in giving us *as much assurance as possible*, inadvertently confirms what Engelsma charges:

> For the divines of the Westminster assembly, all three grounds of 18.2—faith in God's promises, inward evidences of grace realized through syllogisms, and the witness of the Spirit—must be pursued to obtain *as full a measure of assurance as possible* by the grace of God. If any of these grounds are unduly emphasized at the expense of others, the whole teaching of assurance becomes imbalanced or even dangerous. No Puritan of the stature of Westminster's assembly of divines would teach that assurance is obtainable by trusting in the promises alone, by inward evidences alone, or by the witness of the Holy Spirit alone (italics mine).[6]

Not once does Grudem cite Calvinists who criticize the Puritan position on assurance. In addition to Engelsma, men like Kendall,[7] Zachman,[8] and Eaton[9] warn about the lack of certainty that prevails in Puritan theology.

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[4] Ibid., 16.

[5] Ibid., 53.

[6] Beeke, "Assurance of Faith," 10.

[7] R. T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1997).

[8] Randall C. Zachman, *The Assurance of Faith: Conscience in the Theology of Martin Luther and John Calvin* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993).

[9] Michael Eaton, *No Condemnation: A Theology of Assurance of Salvation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995).

Grudem is uncertain that he is born again because, by his own admission, his works and his feelings are subjective and fallible. Since he teaches that works plus feelings plus the promises of God are all needed to produce some measure of assurance, then the best he can have is what Beeke calls "as full a measure of assurance as possible." His position on assurance is what Engelsma labels "a gospel of doubt."

Chapter 3 is entitled "False Assurance." While Grudem means that FGT offers false assurance, the truth is that the chapter title applies to his own position. Grudem, though well intentioned, promotes false assurance. That is, he promotes non-assurance. What Grudem calls *assurance* is really *doubt*.

III. CHAPTER 4: FGT DIMINISHES THE GOSPEL BY UNDEREMPHASIZING TRUST IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST

Faith in Christ, according to Grudem (and Lordship Salvation) is not believing in Him for the everlasting life He promises. Grudem calls that *mere intellectual assent*.

Grudem briefly discusses *mere intellectual assent* (one page), since in his view most in FGT do not hold to that position.

Most Free Grace people, according to Grudem, believe that faith in Christ is both intellectual assent and trust in Christ (as evidenced by the five pages he devotes to this view). However, in his view the FGT view of trust in Christ is not robust enough.

A. Some Free Grace Advocates Say That Faith Equals Mere Intellectual Assent

The only people Grudem cites here are Zane Hodges, whom he calls "the founding father of the modern Free Grace movement" (p. 100), and me. He cites Hodges as saying that "Faith…is an inward conviction that what God says to us in the gospel is true. That—and that alone—is saving faith" (p. 100).[10] He cites me as saying, "Stripped of its pejorative

[10] Citing Zane C. Hodges, *Absolutely Free! A Biblical Reply to Lordship Salvation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1989), 31.

connotation, 'intellectual assent' is a good definition of what faith is" (p. 100).[11]

Hodges explained why he said that, but Grudem did not think it was important to give Hodges's evidence or interact with it. Hodges went on to quote and then discuss 1 John 5:9-13,[12] a passage which proves that faith is being convinced that a testimony is true. Hodges wrote,

> Since we often accept human testimony, how much more ought we to accept divine testimony? To do this is to possess that testimony inwardly—within ourselves. The opposite of this—unbelief—is to make God out to be a liar.[13]

Hodges ended his discussion of 1 John 5:9-13 by saying, "And when a person has God's word for it, they have no need to seek assurance elsewhere."[14]

It would be nice to see Grudem's response. But Grudem did not cite or discuss the support Hodges gave.[15]

In regards to Grudem's citation of me, it is odd that he picks an article in which I am summarizing, but not explaining or defending, FGT's view of saving faith. Elsewhere he cites my book, *The Ten Most Misunderstood Words in the Bible*.[16] I have an entire chapter in that book explaining and defending FGT's view of saving faith.[17] In an earlier book I have five chapters on saving faith.[18] It is a shame that he did not state my defense of my position.

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[11] Citing *Grace in Focus Magazine* (which Grudem wrongly identifies as "the Free Grace Journal," evidently not realizing that we have both a magazine and a journal), Sept-Oct 2014, 27.

[12] Hodges, *Absolutely Free*, 31-32.

[13] Ibid., 32.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Hodges gave much more support for his claim in the six and one half pages that preceded that quote. Hodges quoted and discussed John 6:47; 20:30-31; Rev 22:17; Rom 10:14, 17. Yet Grudem does not tell us what he said about those passages and he does not respond to what he said.

[16] Robert N. Wilkin, *The Ten Most Misunderstood Words in the Bible* (Corinth, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 2012).

[17] Ibid., 7-22.

[18] *Confident in Christ*, 2nd ed. (Corinth, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 1999, 2015), 17-56.

Faith is intellectual assent of a proposition. As we shall see, Grudem's rejection of that view of faith is in reality an unintentional rejection of God's Word.

B. Other Free Grace Advocates Say That Faith Includes Trust in the Person of Christ

The discussion in this section is a bit confusing. Grudem at one point quotes Hodges again regarding faith being the conviction that facts or propositions are true. Yet he also says that Hodges taught that faith is trust in the Person of Christ. So is he suggesting that Hodges belongs in both category one and two?

Grudem also wonders whether Anderson and Dillow hold to faith as believing the promise of everlasting life or faith as trust in the Person of Christ.

The idea that belief is always propositional rankles Grudem:

> Many wonderful Free Grace Christians whom I know *pray* to Jesus; they don't pray to propositions about Jesus. In church they *worship* Jesus; they don't worship propositions about Jesus (p. 102, italics his).

One wonders if Grudem has read Gordon Clark's famous book *Faith and Saving Faith*, in which he shows that all belief is propositional.[19] Clark was a Calvinist, but he recognized that the postmodern idea of faith being some sort of vague existential encounter (or feeling) is irrational.

In a section entitled, "Person or Proposition?" Clark, speaking about the type of argument that Grudem makes, writes:

> In spite of the popularity and supposedly superior spirituality of the contrast between a *mere* intellectual proposition and a *warm*, living person, it rests on a mistaken psychological analysis. Even Berkhof admits, with at least an appearance of inconsistency, that "As a psychological phenomenon, faith in the religious sense does not differ from faith in general…Christian faith in the most comprehensive sense is man's persuasion of the truth of Scripture on the basis of the authority of God" (Berkhof, p. 501).

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[19] Gordon H. Clark, *Faith and Saving Faith* (Jefferson, MD: The Trinity Foundation, 1983).

> This is an excellent statement and should be defended against Berkhof's previous contrary assertions.[20]

Has Grudem read John Robbins, another Calvinist who wrote a compelling article defending the idea that all faith is propositional?[21] Robbins wrote:

> Truth is propositional, and only propositional. To put it even more plainly, truth is a property, characteristic, or attribute only of propositions. This view is in stark contrast to views, both academic and popular, of truth as encounter, truth as event, truth as pictorial, truth as experiential, truth as emotive, truth as personal, truth as mystic absorption into or union with the divine.
>
> This last view, that truth is personal, not propositional, has led theologians to substitute the nebulous concepts of "commitment," "personal relationship," and "union" for the clear and Biblical concept of belief, thus undermining the Gospel itself.[22]

It sounds like Robbins has been reading Grudem. But Robbins wrote that in 2005. He concluded:

> According to Scripture, truth is always and only propositional. There is nothing in Scripture that states or implies that truth is encounter, event, picture, image, or emotion. Passages that seem to imply that something other than propositions is truth turn out to be figurative uses of the word truth. If the Gospel is to be preserved and propagated, it can be preserved only within the framework of literal, propositional truth, for salvation is, in the words of the Apostle Paul, "to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4).[23]

One would think that in a book that is responding to FGT the author would at least be aware of and cite key books and articles cited by FGT. Many FG authors, myself included, have cited Clark and Robbins.

Grudem mentions GES and me again at the end of this section. When he does, he demonstrates that he lacks awareness of the significant discussions that have occurred in FGT. He writes:

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[20] Ibid.

[21] John Robbins, "The Biblical View of Truth," *The Trinity Review*, Feb-Mar 2005, 1-8.

[22] Ibid., 2.

[23] Ibid., 8.

> I should add, however, that the Grace Evangelical Society and the Free Grace Alliance differ somewhat on this point [faith as trust]. The Grace Evangelical Society, under the leadership of Robert Wilkin, repeatedly emphasizes only believing the facts of the gospel (believing that I am a sinner and that Christ died to pay for my sins), with little or no mention of the need to go beyond belief that those facts are true and put one's trust in the person of Jesus Christ. By contrast, the materials promoted by the Free Grace Alliance do affirm in several places that our trust must be placed in the person of Christ, not merely in facts about him (p. 105).

In the first place, neither GES nor the FGA believe or teach that a person who believes he is a sinner and that Christ died to pay for his sins is born again.[24] People who believe in works salvation believe those things and yet are unregenerate.

In the second place, some in the FGA have criticized Zane Hodges and GES for suggesting that the object of saving faith is not the cross or empty tomb, but the promise that the Lord Jesus makes that whoever believes in Him has everlasting life.[25] Hodges taught and GES teaches that the cross and resurrection should lead people to believe the promise of life.[26] But believing in Jesus' death and resurrection is not equivalent to believing the promise of life. You can believe that Jesus died and rose again and also believe in salvation by works.

In the third place, some in the FGA do not believe that assurance is of the essence of saving faith.[27] All in GES believe that in order to be born

[24] There are some FGA members who hold that, but they are in the minority. See, for example, J. B. Hixson, Rick Whitmire, and Roy Zuck, Editors, *Freely by His Grace* (Duluth, MN: Grace Gospel Press, 2012), 76, where George Meisinger, one of the contributors, writes, "Apparently Wilkin rejects the idea that believing Jesus died for one's sins is a sufficient object for saving faith."

[25] Thomas L. Stegall was a member of the FGA when he wrote *The Gospel of the Christ: A Biblical Response to the Crossless Gospel Regarding the Contents of Saving Faith* (Milwaukee, WI: Grace Gospel Press, 2009). Fred Lybrand, one of the founders of the FGA and its first Executive Director, wrote a 37-page open letter while he was the President of the FGA. In that letter he criticized Hodges and GES over this issue. See freegracefreespeech.googlepages.com/GESGospel. LybrandOpenLetter.04-14-09.pdf (accessed 12/23/2016). For responses from GES see Don Reiher, "Zane Hodges and GES Did Not Change the Gospel," *JOTGES* (Spring 2010): 31-58, and Robert N. Wilkin, "Another Look at the Deserted Island Illustration," *JOTGES* (Spring 2013): 3-20.

[26] See the articles by Reiher and Wilkin cited in the previous note.

[27] See David R. Anderson, "Is Belief in Eternal Security Necessary for Justification?" *Chafer Theological Seminary Journal* (Spring 2008): 47-59. Anderson was the President of

again one must believe the promise that the salvation/life/justification he receives by faith alone, apart from works, is secure forever and cannot be lost.[28]

C. Both Groups Deemphasize the Element of Heartfelt Trust in the Living Person of Christ

Adjectives are especially important in Grudem's understanding of saving faith. Trust must be *heartfelt*. The object of that heartfelt trust must not merely be Christ or the Person of Christ, but *the living Person of Christ*.

This allows Grudem to make saving faith subjective and relative. What is "heartfelt trust in the living Person of Christ"? Grudem does not say, probably because he is convinced that "saving faith" is a mysterious existential encounter. For example, Grudem speaks of saving faith as

> …coming into the presence of the person of Christ and trusting him. The more you talk about the need for trust in the *person* of Christ the more you have to talk about a *personal encounter* with Christ, about coming into his very presence, and that means realizing deeply that he is your God (p. 106, italics his).

Grudem continues:

> The more we emphasize coming into the presence of Christ and trusting him, the more the idea of optional submission to his lordship becomes unthinkable. When we truly realize what it is to come into the majestic presence of the risen Christ, any thought of saying, 'Jesus, I'll trust you as my Savior today, and later I might decide to turn from sin and follow you,' is as far from our mind as the uttermost part of the sea (p. 106).

Robbins could have been speaking about Grudem when he wrote,

> [the] view that truth is personal, not propositional, has led theologians to substitute the nebulous concepts of "commitment," "personal relationship," and "union" for

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the FGA when this article was published.

[28] Zane C. Hodges, "We Believe in Assurance," *JOTGES* (Autumn 1990): 3-17. One section is entitled, "IV. Assurance Is an Inseparable Part of Saving Faith" (pp. 11-16). The same article appeared again in a memorial issue: *JOTGES* (Spring 2009): 13-30. Both are available online at www.faithalone.org s.v., Resources/Journal.

> the clear and Biblical concept of belief, thus undermining the Gospel itself.[29]

Assurance of one's eternal destiny is, of course, impossible if the issue is "a personal encounter," "submission to his lordship," and "turn[ing] from sin and follow[ing] [Christ]." Grudem touches on assurance at the end of this section:

> On the other hand, if saving faith involves more than just intellectual agreement that some statements in the Bible are true—if it also includes trusting Christ as a living person—that is not quite so easy to determine. It opens the question of whether an individual has really trusted Christ or not. It makes the question of whether a person has genuine faith more complex (pp. 106-107).

Grudem's Lordship Salvation views make assurance of one's eternal destiny "more complex" and "not easy to determine." However, Grudem is trying to put the best spin on his view as possible. In reality, his view makes assurance of one's eternal destiny impossible, since it requires two subjective elements, feelings and works.

Hodges could have been responding to Grudem when back in 1990 he ended an article on assurance saying, "So after all, if I have God's Word for something, what else do I need?"[30]

Grant Richison likewise says,

> Faith always rests on certainty, not on a suggestion of probability. Otherwise, chance is final and probability is empty. The very idea of probability precludes certainty and places chance at the core of a system…God's self-attesting Word transcends all probable approaches to truth.[31]

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[29] Robbins, "The Biblical View of Truth," 2.

[30] Hodges, "We Believe in Assurance," 17.

[31] Grant Richison, *Certainty: A Place to Stand* (Pickering, ON: Castle Quay Books, 2010), 259.

D. Saving Faith Requires Trust in the *Person* of Christ, and This Means That Mental Agreement with Facts *about* Christ Without Personal Trust in Christ Is Not Saving Faith

The fourth section in Chapter 4 is a restatement of the third section. I suppose what Grudem intends to do in this section is give proofs of what he already said in section three. His proofs fail to prove, however.

His first proof is that "saving faith is pictured as coming to Christ" (pp. 107-108). FGT heartily agrees. However, Grudem then says that "to 'come to' a person implies interpersonal interaction" (p. 107). Three times on one page he says that saving faith involves "personal interaction" (p. 108). He concludes his first proof by saying, "A personal encounter is in view" (p. 108).

Those are the words of postmodernity, not Biblical Christianity. Postmodernity reduces faith to personal encounters, feelings, and probabilities.[32] The Bible indicates that faith is being convinced that what God has said is true.

R. C. Sproul is not a proponent of FGT. He even believes that a personal response of repentance and submission is necessary to be born again.[33] Yet he very much rejects Grudem's idea that saving faith is a non-propositional personal encounter with Jesus:

> We live in an era that boasts of its vehement resistance to propositional truth. Truth is said to be a "relationship" or "personal encounter." Existential philosophy has placed so much stress on the personal and relational character of faith that an allergy has developed against propositional or objective truth.[34]

To come to Jesus is to believe in Him. Period.

The second proof Grudem provides is that "saving faith is pictured as receiving Christ" (p. 108). He cites John 1:11-12. Grudem, without any Biblical support, says, "A personal encounter with Jesus Christ is in view" (p. 109). Yet those verses define *receiving* Jesus as "*believing* in His name."

His third line of proof is that "saving faith is pictured as believing something in your heart" (p. 109). He cites Rom 10:9-10. Grudem

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[32] See the previous note.

[33] *Faith Alone: The Evangelical Doctrine of Justification* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 168-71.

[34] Ibid., 77.

then announces, "Paul does not say 'believe in your mind'" (p. 109). But Grudem misunderstands Paul. In Rom 12:2 Paul spoke of being transformed, "by the renewing of your mind." In 2 Cor 3:14 and 4:4 he speaks of Satan blinding the minds of people. The words *heart* and *mind* are often used interchangeably in the NT to refer to the place where belief occurs. Sorg writes, "A striking feature of the NT is the essential closeness of *kardia* [heart] to the concept *nous*, mind."[35]

Grudem's fourth line of proof is that "saving faith is portrayed as believing in a person" (p. 109). Grudem gives a highly misleading quotation from BDAG. That lexicon lists word meanings in order of usage. Thus the first meaning listed is the most prevalent in the NT. Grudem gives *the second meaning* first and implies that BDAG says that all uses of *pisteuō* in John fall under that meaning. But actually BDAG lists about an even number of uses in John under definition one and two. And their placement of specific verses is not gospel. It is one man's evaluation. In fact, in the previous edition of BDAG, called BAGD, there is no reference to commitment or total commitment in the second meaning (p. 661). It was added to the later edition.

Worse still, Grudem fails to point out what all Bible scholars, including himself, know—that *pisteuō eis* (*believe in*) is used synonymously with *pisteuō hoti* (*believe that*) in the Fourth Gospel. This is clear in John 11:25-27 where the Lord refers to *pisteuō eis* twice and Martha responds with an affirmation using *pisteuō hoti*. Also it is found in the famous theme verse of John 20:30-31. *To believe in* Jesus is *to believe that* He is the Christ, the Son of God, that is, it is to believe that He guarantees everlasting life to all who simply believe in Him for it (John 11:25-26 as compared with John 11:27).

My Father used to promise he'd come to my football, basketball, and baseball games. At first *I believed in him*. That is, *I believed that he would indeed come* to my games. But after one failure to fulfill his promise after another, I no longer believed in him. That is, I no longer believed that he would keep his promises. The alcohol had too strong of a hold on his life. He came occasionally. But often he did not.

Believing in a person is believing that he will fulfill his promises. It is not a personal encounter. It is not submission, partial or total, to the

[35] *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 2, s.v., "Heart," 182. See also "Mind," 616-20.

person. Grudem reads his Lordship Salvation Theology into his understanding of Scripture.

E. Free Grace Misunderstandings of B. B. Warfield on the Need to Decide to Trust Christ Personally

This fifth and final proof is no proof at all. So what if some in FGT have misunderstood Warfield's view on saving faith? Warfield, as great of a theologian as he was, did not write Scripture. His books are not inerrant. Whether Anderson and Dillow have rightly or wrongly understood Warfield is beside the point. The point is that in Scripture unbelief is willful, but belief is not willful. A person can choose to be closed to the proclamation of God's Word (Acts 13:46; see also John 5:39-40). But a person cannot choose to believe that someone is telling the truth. Of course, for Grudem, faith is not believing, but it is a "personal encounter" as he repeats at the end of this chapter (p. 118, though no header or page number appears). Of course, how does one choose to have a personal encounter with the God of the universe? Grudem never says.

IV. CONCLUSION

Wayne Grudem fails to show that FGT diminishes the gospel in Chapters 3-4. Indeed, he shows that his Lordship Salvation Theology is built on a house of sand.

I believe Grudem's book will do much to move people to accept the Free Grace position.

REVELATION 3:10 AND THE RAPTURE:[1] A NEW DEPARTURE

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I. INTRODUCTION

Revelation 3:10 in the New King James Version reads:

> "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth."

This article argues for a change in punctuation. Misplaced periods and commas have hopelessly confused the meaning of Jesus' words.

II. TWO FALSE VIEWS

Incorrect punctuation has led some to view Rev 3:10 as *Jesus promising that He will rapture the Philadephians because they were exceptionally faithful*. Anyone less faithful than the Philadelphians might be left behind. Puritan Dispensationalists brand such as unbelievers. Partial Rapturists contend that Jesus will leave unfaithful believers behind.

The Puritan-Dispensational view affirms the pre-tribulation rapture, but denies the possibility of a straying believer. Consider John MacArthur's view of the passage. After quoting the verse, he states:

[1] This is an update of my prior articles presenting this view: John Niemelä, "For You Have Kept My Word: Parts 1 and 2," *CTS Journal* 6 (January 2000): 14-38; and *CTS Journal* 6 (October 2000): 54-68. These are available online at: http://chafer.nextmeta.com/files/v6n1_2.pdf and http://chafer.nextmeta.com/files/v6n4_4.pdf.

> "That, dear friends, is a pre-tribulational Rapture verse. *You've kept My Word, You're Mine. I will keep you from the hour of testing*"[2] (emphasis mine).

What about people whose faithfulness is less than that of the Philadelphians? His Puritan theology yields the following converse (by adding *not* to each of his propositions):

> *You've **not** kept My Word; You're **not** Mine. I will **not** keep you from the hour of testing.*

MacArthur rightly sees the rapture as promised to all believers. He wrongly imagines that all true believers will persevere to the end.

By contrast, Robert Govett, a partial rapturist, rightly acknowledges that unfaithful Christians exist. Unfortunately, he denies (from Rev 3:10) that these eternally-secure believers would be raptured:

> "The hour of temptation" specially begins with the apostasy, and attains its full tide under the Man of Sin. The present rapture must therefore be before his revelation. It [Rev 3:10] is a promise, not to all the church, but to a certain clearly-defined portion of it—those who keep the doctrine of Christ's second advent, and its hope of rapture.[3]

Both Puritan Dispensationalists and Partial Rapturists agree that in order to be raptured, one must be faithful. Does this verse teach this?

III. DISCOVERING ANOTHER PUNCTUATION OPTION

Some, including Zane Hodges, solve this by denying any link between Rev 3:10 and the rapture. He viewed the hour of trial as an unspecified first-century empire-wide trial.[4] The usual punctuation leaves few options for grace-period pre-tribulation-rapturists. However, would we not

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[2] John F. MacArthur, "The Final Generation, Part 1 (Mark 13:28-37)," on *Grace to You*, April 3, 2011. Transcript at https://www.gty.org/resources/sermons/41-69/the-final-generation-part-1. Accessed August 9, 2016.

[3] Robert Govett, *The Saints' Rapture to the Presence of the Lord Jesus* (London: Nisbet, 1852), 310.

[4] Personal conversation with Zane Hodges in 1994. In December of 2016, Lon Gregg, Spiritual Director of the Denver Rescue Mission, mentioned in a personal conversation his correspondence with Hodges about Rev 3:10. Lon Gregg's February 21, 2002, email said, "The form of these church letters [Rev 2–3] and the immediate audience being commended [the Philadelphian church] suggests to me that the deliverance promised ('I

expect directly affecting Asia Minor—as part of the whole inhabited world (*oikoumenē*)—to be identifiable today?

Soon after my conversation with Hodges, while reading Rev 3:9-10 in an English Bible, two words (the last of v 9 and the first of v 10) caught my attention: "…you. Because…" Verse 9 ends with a period, so 3:10a starts a new sentence with "Because." The NKJV reads:

> "Indeed I will make *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved **you. Because** you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth" (emphasis mine).

This brought back memories of my seventh-grade English teacher, Miss Duncan. She said: "The word *because* should follow the independent clause, not precede it." Ever since, my writing has avoided starting sentences with *Because*. I also noticed through the years that few sentences in the NT start with initial "Because." That led me to ask, "What if John intended vv 9-10a as the first sentence and 10b as the second?" If so, the NKJV would read:

> "Indeed I will make *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved **you, because** you have kept My command to **persevere. I** also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth" (emphasis mine).

The first sentence would end with *persevere*, not *you*. The second sentence now starts with *I*, not *Because*. These changes make contextual

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will also keep you from the hour of trial…') is a *reward* for their praiseworthy behavior ('since you have kept my command to endure patiently'). But isn't this 'hour of trial' the tribulation period, about to be discussed in ch. 6 and following?... But if it is the Tribulation, wouldn't Jesus be conditioning this pre-Trib deliverance on their patient endurance?" On March 15, 2002, Hodges responded, "I strongly recommend that you contact Chafer Seminary and ask for the recent articles on Rev. 3:10 by Dr. John Niemelä [see footnote 1 in this article]… In my own view, however, the 'hour of testing' is not a reference to the Tribulation but to the period of turmoil in the Roman world (the Greek hour here is 'oikoumene') following the death of Nero. But you should read the Chafer articles [See note 1.] which take the period as the Tribulation." Hodges and I have taken different approaches here, but regard[ed] each other's views as viable second-choices.

sense, so the question is: Which is right? Features within Rev 3:7-13 argue for re-punctuation. This article will now validate this view.

IV. NAMING THE TWO VIEWS

The usual view starts v 10 with "Because," seeing it as one sentence. Because they were faithful, Jesus promises to rapture them.[5] This view's name starts with a capitalized *Because*, matching the default rendering of 3:10:

Because of Philadelphian faithfulness, promise of rapture.

By contrast, my re-punctuated sentence links vv 9 and 10a. Jesus promises vindication in the near-term before Satan's synagogue, because the Philadelphian church was faithful. The word "because" appears mid-title, as in the re-punctuated sentence (9-10a).

Near-term vindication because of Philadelphian faithfulness.

Simply put, does the faithfulness of the believers at Philadelphia result in a future deliverance at the rapture, or does it result in some type of vindication in the first century?

V. FAITHFULNESS LEADING TO RAPTURE OR NEAR-TERM VINDICATION?

Five issues validate the near-term-vindication view of Revelation 3:9-10a:

A. Causal *hoti* ("because/Because") rarely starts sentences.
B. *Kagō* ("and I") most naturally links 3:10b with 3:8-9's first-person verbs.
C. Keeping His word (3:10a) continues 3:8-9, while deliverance (3:10b) changes topics.
D. 3:10b cannot be both a specific and a general promise.
E. Jesus does manifest special love for faithfulness.

[5] I purposely avoided narrowing this to an explicit statement of my preferred view of the rapture (pre-Daniel's-seventieth-week), so those with different views of the rapture might take a closer look and consider repunctuation.

A. Causal *Hoti* ("because/Because") Rarely Starts Sentences

The usual view of Rev 3:10 employs a suspensive use of causal *hoti* (because/Because). A child trying to rationalize misbehavior may string a series of clauses starting with "because" in order to postpone admitting guilt as long as possible. Such postponement of an independent clause holds it in suspense (hence, the name *suspensive*).

> *"**Because** of 'a' and **because** of 'b' and **because** of 'c' and **because** of 'd' and **because** of 'e,' you would not want me to follow the letter of the rule, so I…"*

Both English and Greek rarely place causal subordinate clauses *before* independent clauses. I found only four writers who discuss its usage in Greek: Nigel Turner, Edwin Abbott, David Aune, and Leon Morris.[6]

After saying, "Normally the dependent clause follows the main clause,"[7] Nigel Turner has only one sentence about suspensive *hoti*: "*Hoti* (causal) is post-positive [non-suspensive] 397 times, and the only exceptions are as follows: Lk 19^{17} Jn 1^{50} (a question) 8^{45} (14^{19}?) 15^{19} 16^{6} 20^{29} (a question) Ro 9^{7} Ga 4^{6} Rev $3^{10.\ 16}$ 18^{7}."[8] Turner capitalizes "Because" for *hoti* eleven (or twelve) times of 409 (397 post-positive; 12 pre-positive).[9] That is less than 3%.

Edwin Abbott's *Johannine Grammar* lists John 1:50; 8:45; 14:19; 15:19; 16:6; 20:29; Rom 9:7; 1 Cor 12:15*f*; Gal 4:6; Rev 3:10; 18:7.[10] These twelve pre-positive (suspensive) uses are less than 3%. Abbott mentions the punctuation option, but (oddly) he claims that John's style is against it. Only nine of his uses are from John's writings. My statistics

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[6] I have not done an exhaustive study of the commentary literature on passages adduced by Turner or Abbott. A few more discussions may exist. Cf. J. H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 3, *Syntax*, by N. Turner (Edinburgh: Clark, 1963), 345; E. A. Abbott, *Johannine Grammar* (London: Black, 1906; reprint, Farnborough, ENG, 1968), 155*f*; D. E. Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, WBC, ed. D. A. Hubbard and G. W. Barker, vol. 52A (Dallas, TX: Word, 1997), 231, n. 10a; and L. Morris, *Revelation*, rev. ed., TNTC, ed. Leon Morris (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 79.

[7] Turner, *Syntax*, 345.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Turner and Abbott use "pre-positive" and "post-positive," while Aune says "pre-position" and "post-position." Aune's terms may be clearer for many. Pre-position says that *Because* precedes the independent clause; in post-position *because* follows the independent clause.

[10] Abbott, *Johannine*, 155*f*. He lists John 1:50, 8:45, 14:19, 15:91 16:6, 20:29; Rom 9:7; 1 Cor 12:15; Rev 3:10; and 18:7. He raises the non-suspensive possibility for Rev 3:10, but says that John's style argues against it. How so? John favors non-suspensive 178 to 9 (see next footnote).

show that John's writings have 178 causal uses of *hoti* in the *Majority Text* (whether suspensive or non-suspensive).[11] Nine of 178 uses is 5%. Ninety-five percent of John's causal uses weigh against Abbott's claim. How can he imagine that statistics favor his view?

David Aune, *Revelation*, mentions the rarity of pre-position (suspensive) *hoti*:

> The *hoti* clause that begins the sentence is in an unusual position, since in the vast majority of instances dependent clauses follow the main clause (other examples of *hoti* clauses in the pre-position [besides Rev 3:10] are found in Rev 3:16; 18:7; See Turner, *Syntax*, 345).[12]

Leon Morris realizes that re-punctuation is possible, but he did not know how to prove which meaning Jesus intended:

> Since introduces the reason, but grammatically it might be the reason for the preceding (the triumph of the Philadelphians over them of Satan's synagogue), or the following (Christ's keeping them in the hour of temptation). *There seems no way of deciding the point* (emphasis mine).[13]

Combining Turner and Abbott's references only offers fourteen possible uses. Miss Duncan's admonition in seventh-grade English primed me to note that a capitalized *Because* is rare in English Bibles. Rarity does not disprove the usual view, but raises questions. This article will now focus on four issues establishing a need for repunctuation.

B. *Kagō* ("and I") Most Naturally Links 3:10b's with 3:8-9's First-Person Verbs

A crucial feature of the passage is the series of first-person verbs. *Kagō* (*and I*) in v 10b (under the new punctuation) links these verbs:

1. I know (*oida*) your works (3:8a);
2. I have given (*dedōka*) before you an opened door (3:8b);
3. I give (*didōmi*) those of Satan's synagogue [to…bow down…] (3:9a);
4. I will make (*poiēsō*) them come… (3:9b);

[11] I find 92 in John's Gospel, 37 in 1 John, one in 2 John, and 48 in Revelation. Cf. Niemelä, "Kept My Word: Part 1," 18*f.*

[12] Aune, *Revelation* 1–5, 231, n. 10a.

[13] Morris, *Revelation*, 79.

5. **and I** (*kagō*) will keep (*tēreō*) you from the hour (3:10b).

Verse 10b culminates a series of first-person verbs: "I know… I have given… I give… I will make… and I will keep..." This flow makes sense of the *kagō* (and I) in 3:10b.

Thus, the *kagō* is a signpost linking two sentences. It joins the first sentence (3:9-10a) with 3:10b. A signpost *kai* (*kagō* = *kai egō*) starts the sentence, rather than being buried in the middle. The usual translation unexpectedly isolates the *kagō*. As a signpost, the translation of *kagō* should be *And I* (linking the first-person verbs), not *I also*.

> "**I know** your works. See, **I have set** before you an open door…Indeed **I will make** *those* of the synagogue of Satan…indeed **I will make** them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you, because you have kept My command to persevere. **And I** will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth" (emphasis mine).

Those defending the usual punctuation must explain the *and* in the middle of v 10. The *And I* (*kagō*) would be child's play (under the traditional punctuation), if John had reversed the order of 10a and 10b (as below):

> "[10b] **And I** will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth, [10a] because you have kept My command to persevere."

And I should start the new sentence (10b). In the *Near-term vindication, because of Philadelphian faithfulness* model, it does:

> "I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth."

Readers of unpunctuated early-manuscripts looked for signposts like *kagō* (v 10b) to signal new sentences. Thus, Rev 3:9-10a is one sentence and 3:10b is another. The first sentence teaches *Near-term vindication, because of Philadelphian faithfulness*. The second reiterates an unconditional truth: no Church-Age believer will enter Daniel's seventieth week

(however, the verse does not specify how the first-century Philadelphians would be delivered).[14]

Revelation 3:10b is not a rapture-passage, *per se*. Jesus only mentions here the fact of deliverance, not the means of escape. What kept the first-century Philadelphians from entering Daniel's seventieth week? They died. Revelation 3:10b does not refer specifically to the rapture.

Revelation 3:8-10a explains that the Lord vindicated the Philadelphians because of their faithfulness. By contrast, Revelation 3:10b reiterates an unconditional truth: No Church-Age believer will enter the tribulation. It does not specify how they would escape entrance into that hour. For all but the Church's final generation, physical death is what prevents entering the hour, not the rapture.

C. Keeping His Word (3:10a) Continues 3:8-9; Deliverance (3:10b) Changes Topics

The word *tēreō* (to keep) appears three times in Rev 3:7-13. The first two speak of *obedience*, while the third discusses *deliverance*:

1. *You have kept My word [faithfulness]* (3:8);
2. *You have kept the word of My perseverance [faithfulness]* (3:10a); and
3. *I will keep you from the hour [deliverance]…* (3:10b).

Although two uses of *tēreō* (to keep) appear in v 10, their meanings are distinct. By contrast, vv 8 and 10a both focus upon keeping Jesus' word (faithfulness). The bond between v 8 and v 10a is much stronger than between 3:10a and 10b, as the brackets illustrate. Over-emphasis of a nebulous linkage between 3:10a and 10b seems to be the main rationale for mashing 10a and 10b into one sentence.

D. 3:10b Cannot Be Both a Specific and a General Promise

Aune argues that the promise applied exclusively to the first-century Philadelphians. He asserts:

> …the promise made here pertains to the Philadelphian Christians *only* and cannot be generalized to include

[14] Revelation 3:10b is a reminder, because 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11, etc., set forth the pre-tribulation rapture. See Zane C. Hodges, "1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 and the Rapture," *CTS Journal* 6 (October 2000): 22-35.

> Christians in other churches of Asia, much less all Christians in all places and times[15] (emphasis in original).

Aune is to be saluted for not generalizing *you* beyond the first-century Philadelphians. They are the ones Jesus promised deliverance here. Under the corrected punctuation, v 10b is a complete sentence. Jesus unconditionally promises:

> "And I will keep you from the hour."

This harmonizes with other passages promising that no Church-Age believer will enter Daniel's seventieth week. Aune is right. The promise here cannot be generalized beyond the first-century Philadelphians.

However, Aune missed a crucial detail. Revelation 3:10b does not specify the means of deliverance. It uses no rapture-specific language. Physical death spared them and all generations up to the present from entering the hour. First Thessalonians 5:9 promises that the rapture will prevent one generation of believers from entering the time of wrath (Daniel's seventieth week).[16] Though the Rev 3:10b promise does not extend beyond first-century Philadelphia, 1 Thess 5:9 does.

Similarly, Schuyler Brown surfaces a conundrum for the *Because of Philadelphian faithfulness, future deliverance* view. The following models his argument:

> Special faithfulness would logically lead to a special promise, but the special faithfulness of Rev 3:10a is met merely by a promise in 3:10b that does not seem unique.

This is how Brown says it:

> If the promise is understood this way [as protecting believers on earth during the tribulation],[17] then we must grant Bousset[18] his objection that the Philadelphians are promised nothing that pertains specially to them.[19]

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[15] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 240.

[16] Some claim that the first part of the seventieth week lacks divine wrath. However, it is Jesus who opens the seven seals (Revelation 6) at the start of that week, releasing wrath upon earth. This effectively makes Jesus the agent whose initiation brought wrath to the planet. Inescapably, the whole seven-year period is a time of God's wrath upon earth.

[17] Schuyler Brown theorizes protection within the hour as other post-tribulation rapture writers suggest. However, no first-century Philadelphian entered the hour.

[18] Cf. Wilhelm Bousset, *Die Offenbarung Johannis*, 5th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1906), 228*f.*

[19] Schuyler Brown, "The Hour of Trial," *JBL* 85 (Summer 1966): 311.

Under the traditional punctuation, only the partial-rapture view or that of Zane Hodges surmounts the objections of Brown and Bousset. Those views perceive a special promise offered to those characterized by special faithfulness.[20]

How is it that the *near-term vindication, because of Philadelphian faithfulness* view escapes this conundrum? The special Philadelphian faithfulness (3:10a) leads to Jesus promising special vindication before Satan's synagogue (3:8*f*). Brown and Bousset pose a problem that applies exclusively to views that embrace the traditional punctuation. If verse 10 were a complete sentence, the special faithfulness (3:10a) would underlie the 3:10b promise. Bousset and Brown surface an Achilles' heel for the *Because of Philadelphian faithfulness, promise of rapture* views (other than for partial rapturists).

E. Jesus Does Manifest Special Love for Faithfulness

The *Because of Philadelphian faithfulness, future deliverance* punctuation allows two options concerning Jesus' love for the Philadelphians. Consider v 9 as if it were a self-contained sentence:

> Indeed I will make *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

Is it the same love that Jesus has for all believers, even the naughty Corinthians? Or is it a special love for especially faithful believers? In light of the Brown/Bousset argument (that special faithfulness logically leads to a special promise), it seems reasonable that 3:9 refers to a special love that Jesus has for faithful believers.

> "Indeed I will make *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that *I have loved you, because you have kept My command to persevere*" (emphasis mine).

Under this model, Jesus wants Satan's synagogue to know that He has a very special love that arises because of the Philadelphian faithfulness

[20] See sections II and III of this article. However, the partial rapture view wrongly broadens 3:10b's promise beyond the first-century Philadelphians.

under persecution. Note what Jesus also told the Eleven in John 14:21, 23; and 15:14 in the NKJV:

> "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him" (John 14:21).
>
> "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him" (John 14:23b).
>
> "You are My friends if you do whatever I command you" (John 15:14).

The special love that Jesus had for the Philadelphians (because of their faithfulness) recommends itself as what Satan's synagogue needed to see.

VI. CONCLUSION

Five issues support the *near-term vindication, because of Philadelphian faithfulness* view:

1. *Hoti*, when translated *because/Because*, rarely starts a sentence.
2. 3:10b's *kagō* (*and I*) most naturally links the first-person verbs of 3:8-9 with 10b, not 10a with 10b.
3. Keeping His word (v 10a) continues 3:8-9 (keeping His word); deliverance (3:10b) is a new topic.
4. 3:10b cannot be both a specific and a general promise, and
5. Other Scriptures teach that Jesus manifests special love for faithfulness.

Miss Duncan's English class primed me to notice that a capitalized *Because* is rare (3% of the causal uses of *hoti* for the NT; 5% in John's writings). In cases where either a rare or a common usage would make sense, exegetes should not unquestioningly assume that the rare usage is correct. Treating Rev 3:10 as one complete sentence follows questionable grammar. Viewing Rev 3:8-10a as one sentence and 3:10b as another is much more natural.

The first word of Rev 3:10b (*kagō* = *and I*) most naturally links a series of first-person verbs: "I know (8a)… I have given (8b)…I give (9a)…I will make (9b)…**and I** will keep (10b)…" The traditional punctuation isolates *kagō* in an unnatural position, buried in the middle of a sentence between a dependent and an independent clause. Why John would do this is inexplicable.

Verses 8 and 10a use the phrase *keep My word* to refer to Philadelphian faithfulness, while 3:10b uses the word *keep* in a different way. *And I will keep you from the hour* speaks of deliverance. The repunctuation links the two references to faithfulness in one sentence (3:8-10a), with 10b's promise of deliverance in another.

Aune argues that 3:10b only promises deliverance to the first-century Philadelphians. What prevented them from entering the hour of trial? The answer is physical death, not the rapture. A close examination of the passage shows that it does not use language of rapture. Aune rightly limits the promise to the first-century Philadelphians.

In a similar vein, Brown and Bousset point out that special faithfulness would logically lead to a special promise. Instead, the traditional punctuation matches a generic promise to special faithfulness. This is an Achilles heel for the usual approach. The *near-term vindication, because of Philadelphian faithfulness* view resolves the problem, because special faithfulness leads to a promise of great vindication before Satan's synagogue.

Finally, it makes sense that special faithfulness would lead to a special manifestation of God's love for the noteworthy Philadelphians (cf. John 14:21-23; 15:14). Jesus promised to make this church into an object lesson for Satan's synagogue.

This article started by noting that mispunctuation of Rev 3:10 produces wrong interpretations by both Puritan Dispensationalists (like John MacArthur) and partial rapturists (like Robert Govett).[21] MacArthur recognizes that all Church-Age believers will be raptured, but brands those Christians who do not persevere to the end as unbelievers. If MacArthur knew how to punctuate Rev 3:10 correctly, he would have one less proof-text for his Puritanism.

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[21] Joseph Dillow, *Final Destiny: The Future Reign of the Servant Kings*, 3rd ed. (Monument, CO: Panym Group, 2012), 389*f*, has a gracious review and summary of my prior articles on this topic.

Partial rapturists (like Govett) recognize the existence of regenerate believers who do not persevere to the end. Unfortunately, the traditional punctuation of Rev 3:10 hinders them from recognizing that no Church-Age believer will be on earth during any part of Daniel's seventieth week (a time of divine wrath upon earth). Repunctuating Rev 3:10 facilitates recognizing this truth in 1 Thess 5:9.

Punctuation matters.

WHEN WAS ADAM CREATED?*

TERRY MORTENSON

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Answers in Genesis

I. INTRODUCTION

When did Adam come into existence? Evolutionists say *Homo sapiens* came into existence 200,000 to 400,000 years ago (depending on which evolutionist you consult, because they do not all agree on what a *Homo sapiens* is). Can we harmonize that with the teaching of God's Word? Today, many Christians, including many leaders and scholars, think they can.

From my reading and interaction with old-earth creationists of all varieties in 25 countries over the last 35 years, I think one reason they think they can harmonize the two is that they have not paid very careful attention to the relevant biblical texts. They have just assumed that the scientists have proven the age of the creation to be billions of years and the age of mankind to be many tens or hundreds of thousands of years. They often recite the mantra that "the Bible is not a science textbook" (thereby confusing the vital difference between *origin* science and *operation* science). Therefore, it is claimed, the Bible does not deal with the issue of the age of mankind or even how man came into existence.

Another reason that a great many Christians think that the age of man and the universe do not matter and that the scientific establishment's view does not conflict with Scripture is because they or their teachers have been influenced by William Henry Green.[1] The famous

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[1] William Henry Green, "Primeval Chronology," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 47 (1890): 285–303.

OT professor at Princeton Theological Seminary wrote an article in 1890 in which he argued that "the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11 were not intended to be used, and cannot properly be used, for the construction of a chronology."[2] He concluded that "the Scriptures furnish no data for a chronological computation prior to the life of Abraham; and that the Mosaic records do not fix and were not intended to fix the precise date either of the Flood or of the creation of the world."[3] In other words, Green contended, the Bible is silent about the age of man and also the age of the earth and universe, so scientists are free to determine these ages according to the scientific evidence, and Christians need not reject or fear any date so determined.

Of course, Green was not the first to reject the biblical chronology prior to Abraham. Most of the Church had accepted the millions of years at the beginning of the 19th century. Christian leaders proposed the gap theory[4] or the day-age view[5] of Genesis 1 to accommodate all those years. Other reinterpretations were developed in the 20th century, such as the revelatory day view,[6] the framework view,[7] the Promised Land view,[8] the analogical day view,[9] the day-gap-day-gap-day view,[10] and the cosmic temple/functionality view,[11] to name a few. Most advocates of

[2] Ibid., 286.

[3] Ibid., 303.

[4] Popularized by Thomas Chalmers, C.I. Scofield and others, it puts the millions of years somewhere between Gen 1:1 and 1:3, before six literal days of re-creation.

[5] One of the early advocates was the Anglican theologian, George Stanley Faber, in his book in 1823. Today one of the most well-known promoters is Hugh Ross and Reasons to Believe. This view says that each of the days of Genesis 1 are long ages of hundreds of millions or billions of years each.

[6] Advocated by P.J. Wiseman, it says that the days of Genesis 1 are days of revelation, not creation, when on six literal days God revealed what He had created over who knows how long a time.

[7] Popularized by Bruce Waltke, Meredith Kline, and others, it says that Genesis 1 is not historical narrative, but a literary framework to teach theology.

[8] Developed by John Sailhamer in *Genesis Unbound*, it says everything but man was created in Genesis 1:1 and then from v 2 onward the text is referring to the preparation of the Promised Land, which he equates with the Garden of Eden.

[9] Advocated by C. John Collins in *Science and Faith: Friends or Foes?*, this is similar to the day- age view but says that God's creation days are like our days but not exactly like them.

[10] The view of John Lennox (in his *Seven Days that Divide the World*) inserts an indeterminate (but long) amount of time between each of the six literal days. But Lennox also believes day 1 starts at Gen 1:3 with an indeterminate amount of time before that.

[11] John Walton is the leading proponent and insists in *Lost World of Genesis 1* that God did not create anything in Genesis 1 but only gave function to pre-existing things so as to

these views have also reinterpreted the account of Noah's Flood to be a large but localized flood in the Mesopotamian Valley (modern-day Iraq) or a myth, which in either case has no bearing on the geological record, which supposedly reveals the millions of years.

Nevertheless, Green had a significant influence on a great many scholars who have taught Christians that we all need to simply "agree to disagree" about the time before Abraham. They insist that the age question is an unimportant and divisive side issue that we can leave to the scientists to determine. These influential evangelical scholars who followed Green, directly or indirectly, include B. B. Warfield (who in turn many recent evangelical theologians and others cite in support of their old-earth views being consistent with Scripture),[12] Francis Schaeffer,[13] Wayne Grudem,[14] Millard Erickson,[15] Walter Kaiser,[16] Robert Newman,[17] C. John Collins,[18] Norman Geisler,[19] and Ronald

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change a disordered creation into a cosmic temple for the Lord. He insists that the Bible says nothing about when or how God created things, including Adam. So whatever the scientific majority says is true is acceptable for Christians.

[12] Mark A. Noll and David N. Livingstone, eds., *Evolution, Science and Scripture: Selected Writings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000), 217–222. Warfield was heavily influenced by Green and concluded, "It is precarious in the extreme to draw chronological inferences from these genealogies" (p. 217) …because they are "so elastic that they may be commodiously stretched to fit any reasonable demand on time." He thought "the period from the creation of Adam to Abraham may have been nearer two hundred thousand years than two thousand years" (p. 222).

[13] Francis Schaeffer, *No Final Conflict: The Bible Without Error In All That It Affirms* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1975), 37-43, and *Genesis in Space and Time* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1972), 122, 155.

[14] Grudem did not cite Green, but cited Schaeffer who cited Green. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 290–292.

[15] Erickson does not cite Green, but cites Warfield who relies on Green. Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1983), 484. His second edition (1998) and third edition (2013) say the same.

[16] Walter C. Kaiser Jr., Peter H. Davids, F.F. Bruce, and Manfred T. Brauch, *Hard Sayings of the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), p. 101–103, and Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *The Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable and Relevant?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 69–75. Kaiser republished Green's whole 1890 article in *Classical Evangelical Essays in Old Testament Interpretation*, ed. Walter Kaiser, Jr. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1972). On p. 7 Kaiser describes it as one of "the finest moments in Old Testament scholarship."

[17] Robert C. Newman and Herman J. Eckelmann Jr., *Genesis One and the Origin of the Earth* (Hatfield, PA: IBRI, 1977), also reprinted Green's essay.

[18] C. John Collins, *Science and Faith: Friends or Foes?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003), 107–09

[19] Norman L. Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999), 267–270. Geisler cites Green, Warfield, Schaeffer, and Newman as sources

Youngblood.[20] In this chapter I will present some of the reasons for concluding that these great scholars were wrong on this important point and have thereby misled many pastors and lay people.

II. GENESIS 1–11 IS HISTORY

Before attempting to determine the date of Adam's creation, I want to make a few comments about the historicity of Genesis. The early chapters of Genesis are not poetry,[21] a series of parables or prophetic visions, or mythology. The chapters recount God's acts in time-space history: acts of creation, providence and redemption. When we insist that Genesis 1–11 is history, we are not saying that this section of the Bible is *only* history, i.e., that it was only inspired to satisfy some of our curiosity about origins. It is far more than history for it teaches theology, morality, and redemption, and those truths are vitally important. But Genesis 1–11 is not less than history, and what it teaches on the latter themes is rooted in that history. If the history is not true, then the theology, morality, and gospel based on that history is seriously called into question if not rejected.

Several lines of evidence demonstrate that this introductory section of Scripture is to be understood as history. First, the Hebrew *waw*-consecutive verb forms used in Genesis 1 (and continuing through the rest of the book) are characteristic of Hebrew narrative, but not of Hebrew poetry.[22]

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for his view that Genesis 5 and 11 do not contribute anything to "satisfy our curiosity about the date of human creation."

[20] Ronald Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1991), 75–76.

[21] The fact that Genesis records Adam's poetic and romantic statement in Gen 2:23 and the words of Jacob's poetic prophecy given to his sons in Gen 49:2–27 does not negate the fact that Genesis is history. It accurately records what those men poetically said on those occasions.

[22] See the in-depth analysis of Steven Boyd, "The Genre of Genesis 1:1–2:3: What Means This Text?" in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, eds. Terry Mortenson and Thane H. Ury (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2008), p. 163–192. A layman's summary of Boyd's research is in Donald DeYoung, *Thousands, Not Billions: Challenging an Icon of Evolution* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2005), p. 157–172. A fuller technical discussion is Steven Boyd, "Statistical Determination of Genre in Biblical Hebrew: Evidence for a Historical Reading of Genesis 1:1–2:3," in *Radioisotopes and the Age of the Earth, Vol. 2*, eds. Larry Vardiman, et al. (El Cajon, CA: ICR, 2005), p. 631–734, http://www.icr.org/i/pdf/technical/Statistical-Determination-of-Genre-in-Biblical-Hebrew.pdf.

Second, Genesis 1 does not have the dominant characteristic of Hebrew poetry, namely parallelism, where the truth in the first part of a verse is repeated in different ways in the second part (e.g., Ps 19:1, 30:10, 32:1, 37:1, 103:1). But those who hold to the Framework view claim there is a different kind of parallelism in Genesis 1 that should lead us to conclude that Genesis 1 is not straightforward history. They say that days 1–3 describe the created space and days 4–6 discuss the creatures that fill those spaces, where day 1 is linked to day 4, day 2 to day 5, and day 3 to day 6. But this claimed parallelism only works if one overlooks the details of the text. The heavenly bodies made on day 4 were placed in the expanse made on day 2 (not day 1). The sea creatures made on day 5 filled the water (made on day 1) of the seas formed on day 3 (not day 2). And nothing was made on day 6 to fill the seas made on day 3. There are many more serious exegetical problems with the framework view.[23]

Third, Genesis 1–11 has the same characteristics of historical narrative as Genesis 12–50, most of Exodus, much of Numbers, Joshua, 1 and 2 Kings, etc. Genesis 1–11 describes real people by name, real events in their lives, real places and geographical areas by name,[24] real times (days, months, years[25]), etc.

Fourth, the eleven *toledoths* ("these are the generations of") sprinkled through Genesis tie the whole book together as a unity, and no truly evangelical Bible scholar doubts that Genesis 12–50 is history.

Fifth, in every case that Jesus, NT authors, and OT authors referred to the events in Genesis 1–11, they always treated the text as straightforward, literal history. And they all knew the difference between truth and myth.[26] Jesus referred to Genesis more than any other book, and the Gospels record Him saying "it is written" 30 times and "have you not read?" 11 times in reference to all three divisions of the OT: the Law

[23] For a thorough refutation of the Framework view see Robert McCabe, "A Critique of the Framework Interpretation of the Creation Week," in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, eds. Mortenson and Ury, 211–250.

[24] The reason old-earth Bible scholars can't find the Garden of Eden and the location of Cain's city in our present Middle East geography is because those places no longer exist, having been destroyed in the global Flood that radically rearranged the surface of the earth and buried the pre-Flood land under thousands of feet of sediments.

[25] The account of Noah's Flood reads almost like a very simplified ship's log or diary.

[26] See, for example, Mark 10:6–9; Luke 3:23–38, 11:50–51; Matt 24:37–39, Rom 5:12; 1 Cor 15:21–22; 1 Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 2:4–9; Ezek 14:12–20; and Isa 54:9. Jesus, since He is the truth, knew the difference between truth and myth and would never use myth as a basis for teaching truth. Likewise, the Apostles clearly knew the difference between truth and myth (1 Tim 1:4, 4:7; 2 Tim 4:4; 2 Pet 1:16.)

(Pentateuch), Prophets, and Psalms (e.g., Luke 24:44). This shows that Jesus' default hermeneutic was: just read it, it means what it says.[27] Even most old-earth proponents recognize that Genesis 1–11 is history.[28] And virtually all Christians prior to the 19th century read it that way.

So there are many good biblical and historical reasons for taking Genesis 1–11 as literal history in which all the details matter and are inerrant. Given that fact, we need to look carefully at those details.

III. FROM THE BEGINNING OF CREATION TO ADAM: HOW LONG?

How long was it from the first moment of creation to the creation of Adam? According to evolutionists, the big bang (when, they say, nothing suddenly became something) was about 13.8 billion years ago, and the first true man appeared 13.7998 billion years after the beginning (or about 200,000 years ago).

In contrast to the evolutionary view, young-earth creationists believe the whole creation is only a few thousand years old. But it should be noted that while they do all agree that there were only five literal days of history before Adam, they do not all agree about the age of the earth and therefore about how long ago Adam was created. Some argue that there may be missing names in the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 and therefore up to a few thousand years could be added between Adam and Abraham (so that the first day of creation was perhaps 10,000 to 12,000 years ago).[29] On the other hand, three of the world's leading young-earth creationist organizations (Answers in Genesis, Institute for

[27] Of course, Jesus Himself used figurative language ("I am the light of the world," or "I am the door") and would not have "taken everything literally" in a woodenly literal manner. But He clearly implied that we should assume a literal interpretation, unless of course there are clear contextual reasons for not taking the text literally.

[28] See, for example, the arguments by Walter Kaiser, *The Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable and Relevant?* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001), 53–83, and Edward J. Young, *Studies in Genesis One* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publ., 1964), 82–83.

[29] For example, Whitcomb concluded that the two genealogies "have nothing to do with the actual length of the overall period" and therefore "it is unnecessary to press them into a rigid chronological system."' See John C. Whitcomb Jr. and Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Flood* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1977 reprint of 1961), 474–489, quotes on p. 477. Also arguing for possible missing names and gaps of time is Mark Snoeberger, "Why a Commitment to Inerrancy Does Not Demand a Strictly 6000-Year-Old Earth: One Young-Earther's Plea for Realism," *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 18 (2013): 3–17, https://www.dbts.edu/journals/2013/Snoeberger.pdf.

Creation Research, and Creation Ministries International) argue that there are no gaps and that therefore the beginning (Gen 1:1) was a little more than 6,000 years ago.[30] Though open to gaps in the 1960s, by 1976 Henry Morris, the most influential young-earth proponent of the 20th century, also took Genesis 5 and 11 as strict chronologies.[31]

The evidence that the evolutionary dates are utterly false and that there were only five literal days before Adam was created is discussed briefly as follows (for more depth, consult the footnoted sources).

A. The Meaning of "Day" (Hebrew: Yom) in Genesis 1

The very dominant meaning of *yom* in the Old Testament is a literal day, and the context of Genesis 1 confirms that meaning there. Yom is defined in its two literal or normal senses in v 5 (the light portion of the dark/light cycle and the whole dark/light cycle).[32] It is repeatedly modified by a number (one day, second day, etc.), which elsewhere in the OT always means a literal, normal, 24-hour day. Each of the six days ends with the refrain "evening was and morning was," and everywhere in the OT where '*ereb* ("evening"), *boqer* ("morning") and *layalah* ("night") are used, they always mean a literal part of a literal day. *Yom* is defined again literally in v 14 in relation to the movement of the heavenly bodies, and the sun, moon, and stars do enable us to measure literal days, literal years, and literal seasons.

The numbering of the days and the repeated refrain along with the repetition of "and it was so," (6x), "God saw" (7x), and "it was good" (6x) coupled with Exod 20:8–11 (see below) emphatically indicate that

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[30] See for example, Larry Pierce and Ken Ham, "Are There Gaps in the Genesis Genealogies?" https://answersingenesis.org/bible-timeline/genealogy/gaps-in-the-genesis-genealogies/; James J.S. Johnson, "How Young Is the Earth? Applying Simple Math to Data Provided in Genesis," http://www.icr.org/article/how-young-earth-applying-simple-math-data-provided/; Jonathan Sarfati, "Biblical Chronogenealogies," http://creation.com/biblical-chronogenealogies.

[31] Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1976), 152–155.

[32] For an in-depth analysis of the meaning of *yom* in Genesis 1 see Gerhard F. Hasel, "The 'Days' of Creation in Genesis 1: Literal 'Days' or Figurative 'Periods/Epochs' of Time?" Origins 21:1 (1994): 5– 38; Andrew E. Steinmann, "אֶחָד as an Ordinal Number and the Meaning of Genesis 1:5," JETS 45:4 (2002): 577–84; Jim Stambaugh, "The Days of Creation: A Semantic Approach," https://answersingenesis.org/days-of-creation/the-days-of-creation-a-semantic-approach/, 1 April 1991; Robert McCabe, "A Defense of Literal Days in the Creation Week," *DBSJ* 5 (2000): 97–123; and Trevor Craigen, "Can Deep Time Be Embedded in Genesis?" in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, p. 193–210.

these creation days were sequential and non-overlapping. The creative acts of one day were complete before the next day began.

We also should note that if God indeed created over long ages of time, there are various ways in Hebrew that He could have said that. He could have used *dor* (translated as time, period or generation in Gen 7:1; Exod 3:15, 31:13; Deut 32:7, NASB). Or He could have used a phrase such as "after many days" (Josh 23:1, NASB), or "thousands of ten thousands" of years (cf. Gen 24:60, NASB), or "myriad thousands" of years (cf. Num 10:36, NASB), or "years of many generations" (Joel 2:2, NASB). He could have borrowed a word from a neighboring language, as many languages do today and as God did with the Aramaic time words *zeman* or *iddan* in the books of Nehemiah and Daniel.[33] Instead, God chose to use the only Hebrew word (*yom*) that means a literal 24-hour day.

B. The Order in Which God Created

Not only does the time period of creation in Genesis 1 contradict the time claimed for the evolution of all these things. The order of creation in Genesis 1 also contradicts the order of events in the evolutionary story in at least 30 points. For example, the Bible says the earth was created before light and before the sun and stars, just the opposite of the big-bang theory. The Bible says that fruit trees were created before any sea creatures and that birds were created before dinosaurs (which were made on day 6, since they are land animals), exactly the opposite of the evolutionary story. Evolution says that initially the earth was a hot molten ball that cooled to develop a hard crust, and then evolved an atmosphere that produced rain, and then with the help of melted asteroids produced oceans. But Genesis says the earth was completely covered with water for two days and then dry land appeared. According to evolution, the earth has never been covered with a global ocean. But according to the Bible the earth has been completely covered with water twice: the first two days of creation and Noah's Flood. It is impossible to harmonize Genesis 1 with big-bang cosmology or the evolutionary story of earth's development.[34]

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[33] He used *zeman* in Nehemiah 2:6 and Daniel 2:16, 2:21, 4:36, and 7:25, and *iddan* in Daniel 4:16, 23, 25, and 32.

[34] See Craigen, ibid., p. 195–197; and Terry Mortenson, "Evolution vs Creation: the Order of Events Matters!" https://answersingenesis.org/why-does-creation-matter/evolution-vs-creation-the-order- of-events-matters/, April 4, 2006.

In addition to these contradictions, another obstacle to adding millions of years to the days or between the days relates to the order. If the "days" are figurative of long ages, then so are the "evenings" and the "mornings." But how could plants survive millions of years of darkness? Or how could they reproduce if they had to wait hundreds of millions of years before insects and animals were created that would pollinate the plants?

C. How Did God Create?

Many old-earth advocates say, "Genesis 1 tells us *that* and *why* God created, not *how* and *when* He created." Actually, the chapter does not tell us why God created but certainly does tell us when and how. He created the first animate and inanimate things supernaturally and virtually instantly. On the day that they were created they were fully formed and fully functioning.[35] For example, plants, animals, and people were created as mature adult forms (not as seeds or fertilized eggs or infants). These statements are very clearly contrasted with how all the subsequent plants, animals, and people would come into existence: reproduction by natural procreation "after their kinds." When God said, "let there be..." He did not need to wait millions of years for things to come into existence. He spoke, and creatures came into existence immediately, as Ps 33:6-9 emphasizes. To postulate millions of years between these supernatural acts of creation is an insult to the wisdom of God. Why would God create the earth and leave it covered with water for millions of years, when He says He created it to be inhabited (Isa 45:18)? Why would He create plants and then wait millions of years before creating animals and people who would eat plants for food? Why would He create sea creatures and birds and wait millions of years before creating land animals and people?

D. Objections to Literal Days

Many objections have been raised against the literal, 24-hour days interpretation, such as: (1) 24 hours would be insufficient to accomplish all the events attributed to the sixth day; (2) Genesis 2:4 uses *yom* in a non-literal sense, showing that the days of Genesis 1 were not literal; (3)

[35] When God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation," it could have been a supernatural growth to maturity, just as occurred when God made a plant to grow large enough in a few hours to provide shade for Jonah (Jonah 4:6).

the seventh day does not conclude with the refrain of the other days implying that it was not literal; (4) days 1–3 cannot be literal if the sun was not created until day 4; and (5) Hebrews 4:1–11 says that the seventh day continues and therefore is at least 6,000 years long. All of these and other objections have been refuted for years in creationist literature,[36] but I conclude from their published writings that old- earth advocates seem to pay little or no attention to creationist literature, and so they keep raising the same objections without responding to young-earth refutations.

E. God's Commentary on Genesis 1: Exodus 20:8–11

Exodus 20:8–11 stands as an insurmountable stone wall against any attempts to add extra time (months, years, millennia, or millions of years) anywhere in Genesis 1 or before Genesis 1:1. The fourth commandment says that God created everything in six days, just as the Israelites were to work six days and rest on the seventh.

Verse 20:11 rules out the day-age view and the day-gap-day-gap-day view because it says "for in six days"[37] God made everything and He used the plural *yamim* just as He did in the first part of the commandment. So the days of the Jewish workweek are the same length as the days of Creation Week. As noted above, God could have used several other words or phrases here or in Genesis 1, if He meant to say "work six days because I created over six long, indefinite periods."[38] But He didn't.

These verses also rule out the gap theory or any attempt to add millions of years before Genesis 1:1, because God says He created the heavens, the earth, the sea, and *all that is in them* during the six days described in Genesis 1. Exodus 20:11 also proves that the first day of creation begins in Genesis 1:1 (when the earth was created), not 1:3 (when God made light). He made nothing before those six days. It should be

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[36] Ken Ham, ed., *The New Answers Book* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2006), 88–112; Terry Mortenson, "Biblical Creation: Strengthening Your Defenses" DVD; Tim Chaffey and Jason Lisle, *Old-Earth Creationism on Trial* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2007), 23-79; Andrew Kulikovski, *Creation, Fall, Restoration* (Fearn, Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2009), passim; Jonathan Sarfati, *Refuting Compromise*, 2nd rev. ed. (Powder Springs, GA: Creation Book, 2011), 67–104; Jonathan Sarfati, *The Genesis Account* (Powder Springs, GA: Creation Book, 2015), passim.

[37] There is no Hebrew word for "in" here, but if it is taken out of the English "For in six days God created," the verse still means the same: "For six days God created."

[38] See also James Stambaugh, "The Days of Genesis: A Semantic Approach," *TJ* 5:1 (1991): 70- 78. www.answersingenesis.org/tj/v5/i1/semantic.asp.

noted that the fourth commandment is one of only four of the Ten Commandments that contains a reason for the commandment. If God created over millions of years, He could have commanded Sabbath-keeping without giving a reason, or He could have given a theological or redemptive reason, as He did elsewhere.[39]

Most old-earth proponents ignore this vital passage. A few have tried to reinterpret the verse to open the door for accepting millions of years. For example, Grudem says that in the very next verse (Exod. 20:12) "'day' means 'a period of time,'" implying a non-literal meaning.[40] Of course, a literal day is a period of time, though obviously by this statement Grudem wants to make room for millions of years. More importantly however, the verse does not use the singular *yom* (day), as Grudem's statement implies, but rather the plural *yamim* (days). The non-literal word in the verse is "prolonged," not "days." In other words, God is saying that if the Jews honor Him by faithfully keeping the Sabbath, the total number of days that they dwell in the land will be long (i.e., many), not that their days will be lengthened to be more that 24 hours. Exodus 20:12 does *not* show that the days in 20:8-11 are not literal.

Collins and Lennox assert that Exod 20:11 teaches the difference between man's *work* and *rest* and God's *work* and *rest* (i.e., that man's work and rest are "like," but not identical to, God's creation work and rest).[41] But the fourth commandment is not *contrasting* the *work* of man and the *work* of God at all. Rather, it is *equating* the human *week* with God's Creation *Week*.

To these previous considerations we can add the following biblical arguments against the billions of years of cosmic and geologic history before Adam.

F. Purpose of the Heavenly Bodies (Genesis 1:14)

God tells us why He created the sun, moon, and stars: so man could tell time. This is a ridiculous purpose if the evolutionary story of 13.8 billion years is true. In that case, for most of the years of existence of

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[39] Exodus 31:13 and Deut 5:13-15.

[40] Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 296.

[41] C. John Collins, *Science and Faith: Friends or Foes?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003), 65, 85–86, 97–99; John Lennox, S*even Days that Divide the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 57.

those heavenly bodies they did not accomplish the purpose for which they were made.

G. Adam and Eve Were to Rule Over the Animals (Genesis 1:26–28)

If millions of years of history really happened before Adam and Eve, most of the creatures that ever lived also died and many kinds of creatures became extinct before Adam and Eve could ever rule over them. What kind of a God would make such a ridiculous assignment?

H. Jesus and the Biblical Authors

Several passages show that Jesus believed that man was created at the beginning of creation, not billions of years after the beginning (as all old-earth views imply), which confirms the young-earth creationist view (Mark 10:6; 13:19; Luke 11:50–51).[42] His miracles also confirm the young-earth view. From His first miracle (in His earthly ministry) of turning water into wine (which revealed His glory as the Creator, cf. John 2:11 and 1:1–5) to all His other miracles (e.g., Matt 8:23–27, Mark 1:40–42), His spoken word brought an immediate, instantaneous result, just as His word did in Creation Week.[43]

Paul also made it clear that he was a young-earth creationist. In Rom 1:20 he says that God's existence and at least some of His attributes have been clearly understood by people "since the creation of the world"[44] so that they are without excuse for not honoring Him as God. Surely this great student of Scripture would have had in mind what David said 1,000 years earlier (Ps 19:1; cf. Ps 97:6) and what Job said 1,000 years

[42] I am not saying that the age of the earth was the focus of these verses. Rather, they reflect the young-earth creationist worldview of Jesus. For a thorough discussion of Jesus' words and old-earth attempts to reinterpret them, see Terry Mortenson, "Jesus, Evangelical Scholars and the Age of the Earth," *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, 315–346. A short layman's discussion is Terry Mortenson, "But from the beginning of…the institution of marriage?" www.answersingenesis.org/docs2004/1101ankerberg_response.asp, which is a response to a web article by John Ankerberg and Norman Geisler on Mark 10:6.

[43] This is true even of the two-stage healing of the blind man (Mark 8:22–25). Each stage of the healing was instantaneous. Jesus apparently did this miracle in stages for a pedagogical purpose.

[44] So read the NASB, ESV, NKJV, NIV, NLT, and NRSV. The KJV, KJ21, and HCSB render *apo ktiseos kosmou* as "from the creation of the world." But *apo* ("from") here surely means "since." For reasons behind this conclusion, see Ron Minton, "Apostolic Witness to Genesis Creation and the Flood," in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, p. 351–354.

before that (Job 12:7–10). The creation has always revealed the Creator to man from the beginning. Paul's language, like Jesus' language, is inaccurate and misleading if man was created billion of years after the creation of the world.

Similarly, Isaiah 40:21 shows that the prophet was a young-earth creationist. The parallelism of the verse shows that "from the beginning" and "from the foundations of the earth" refer to the same point in time. What the people of Isaiah's day knew about God is what people (Adam and Eve, and Cain and Abel, etc.) knew right at the foundation of the earth (the beginning of creation), which is also what all idolaters in Paul's day knew and what atheists throughout history and today have known. He is a fool who says there is no Creator for His glory is seen in His creation (Ps. 14:1, 19:1).

If the evolutionary view of 13.8 billion years is true, then Jesus, Paul, and Isaiah were badly mistaken and cannot be completely trusted in other things they teach.

I. No Death before the Fall

A critically important theological reason that we cannot add long ages of time before Adam is because that would mean millions of years of animal death, disease, carnivorous behavior, and extinction as well as thorns and thistles, earthquakes, tsunamis, asteroid impacts, etc. in God's "very good" vegetarian creation (Gen. 1:29-31).

The fossil record in the sedimentary rock layers of the earth is where the evolutionary geologists and paleontologists supposedly got their evidence for millions of years of history before man. Radiometric dating was not invented until the early 20th century, almost 100 years after millions of years was locked into the minds of most geologists (and other scientists).[45] But in that fossil record we find evidence of carnivores eating other animals; cancer, arthritis and brain tumors in dinosaurs; diseases and cannibalism in supposedly pre-human hominids; thorns and thistles; and at least five mass extinction events when anywhere from 60 to 90 percent of the species living at the time went extinct due to some kind of natural evil (such as the supposed asteroid that wiped out all the dinosaurs and most other life "65 million years ago").

[45] Terry Mortenson, "The Historical Development of the Old-Earth Geological Time-Scale," https://answersingenesis.org/age-of-the-earth/the-historical-development-of-the-old-earth-geological-time- scale/, August 8, 2007.

Not only does this evolutionary reconstruction of history contradict the picture of a "very good" creation in Genesis 1, it destroys the Bible's teaching in Gen 3:14-19; 5:29, and Rom 8:19-23 about the cosmic impact of the Fall. Furthermore, it undermines what the Bible teaches about the final redemptive work of Christ in the whole cosmos (Acts 3:21; Col 1:15-20; Rev 21:3-5; 22:3). It also assaults the character of God as revealed in Scripture. What kind of God would create over millions of years using all that natural evil and call it all "very good"?

Belief in the impact of the Fall on the whole creation, not just man, was Christian orthodoxy until the early 19th century.[46] Today, however, from my experience and reading, it is clear that most old-earth proponents have never even thought about these issues. Many theologians believe that the Fall affected the whole creation, just as they believe that after the Second Coming of Jesus Christ in the new heavens and new earth there will be no more human death and suffering for the redeemed but also no more natural evils (animal predation, death, disease, extinctions, earthquakes, tornadoes, etc.). But these theologians fail to see the inconsistency between these biblically and historically orthodox beliefs and their acceptance of millions of years.[47] Elsewhere I have given a thorough, documented discussion of the Fall and millions of years and responded to old-earth objections, and I urge readers to carefully consider this vital point.[48]

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[46] See for example, Thane H. Ury, "Luther, Calvin, and Wesley on the Genesis of Natural Evil: Recovering Lost Rubrics for Defending a Very Good Creation," in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, 399–424.

[47] See examples of this inconsistency in my critique of three leading systematic theology texts which make this error: Terry Mortenson, "Systematic Theology Texts and the Age of the Earth: a Response to the Views of Erickson, Grudem, and Lewis and Demarest," https://answersingenesis.org/age-of-the- earth/systematic-theology-texts-and-the-age-of-the-earth/, December 16, 2009.

[48] See Terry Mortenson, "The Fall and the Problem of Millions of Years of Natural Evil," https://answersingenesis.org/theory-of-evolution/millions-of-years/the-fall-and-the-problem-of-millions-of- years-of-natural-evil/, July 18, 2012. See also James Stambaugh, "Whence Cometh Death? A Biblical Theology of Physical Death and Natural Evil," *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, eds. Mortenson and Ury, p. 373-398. William Dembski has made a valiant attempt to wed an orthodox understanding of natural evil being a result of the Fall with the evolutionist claim that the natural evil happened for millions of years before the Fall. Even though his book, *The End of Christianity: Finding a Good God in an Evil World* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2009), has been endorsed by a host of evangelical leaders (including Josh and Sean McDowell, Frank Turek, Gary Habermas, Norman Geisler, Hank Hanegraaf, Chuck Colson, J.P. Moreland, C. John Collins, and many others), I argue that Dembski's proposal is fatally flawed. See Terry Mortenson, "Christian Theodicy in the Light of Genesis and Modern Science," https://

Christians who accept the evolutionary date for the first *Homo sapiens* (200,000–400,000 years ago) and for the age of the cosmos do not impress non-Christians or motivate them to believe the Bible and the gospel. The late atheist Christopher Hitchens remarked about such old-earth thinking,

> Let's say that the consensus is that our species, being the higher primates, Homo sapiens, has been on the planet for at least 100,000 years, maybe more...In order to be a Christian, you have to believe that for 98,000 years, our species suffered and died, most of its children dying in childbirth, most other people having a life expectancy of about 25 years...Famine, struggle, bitterness, war, suffering, misery, all of that for 98,000 years. Heaven watches this with complete indifference. And then 2,000 years ago, thinks, "That's enough of that. It's time to intervene," and the best way to do this would be by condemning someone to a human sacrifice somewhere in the less literate parts of the Middle East...This is nonsense. It can't be believed by a thinking person.[49]

Without a literal Adam and a literal Fall, the gospel is nonsense. But you cannot with any exegetical consistency believe in a literal Fall and simultaneously deny the literal six days creation of a "very good" world devoid of death and suffering and natural evil. The evolutionary view of death and other natural evils is diametrically opposed to the biblical view.

For all these reasons, the only biblically possible view is that Adam and Eve were created on the sixth, literal, normal, 24-hour day after the beginning of time. So now we turn to the time between Adam and us.

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answersingenesis.org/reviews/christian-theodicy-in-light-of-genesis-and-modern-science/, 11 November 2009. This article links to an excellent critique of Dembski's book by Dr. Tom Nettles.

[49] Christopher Hitchens, https://ashleyfmiller.wordpress.com/2010/09/24/hitchens-briefly-on-the- immorality-of-christianity/. The video of Hitchens saying this is on this page.

IV. FROM ADAM TO US TODAY: HOW LONG?

As noted earlier, due in part to the influence of William Henry Green, the majority of evangelical scholars and leaders today say or think that Genesis 5 and 11 provide no chronological information about the time from the beginning creation to Abraham. But every sincere Bible reader before the 19th century strongly believed that Genesis was telling us *when* God created the world. Even non-Christians had chronologies presenting an age of the world very similar to what is derived from a literal interpretation of Genesis.[50] Furthermore, conservative Jews take the text that way for their calendars today.[51]

But this is no great wonder. Genesis sure looks like God wants to convey a chronology. He gives the age of each patriarch when he dies and when the next man in the genealogy was born, when instead He could have just listed names, as He did in 1 Chron 1:1-27, Matt 1:1-16, and Luke 3:23-38. He also numbers the days of Creation Week, gives time markers for events during the Flood, tells us how old Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were at key events in their lives, and tells the Jews to pay attention to the calendar for religious festivals. He tells us how long the Israelites were in Egypt, how long they wandered in the wilderness, and how long it was from the Exodus to the building of Solomon's temple. He gives us chronological information about the reigns of the pre-kingdom judges, and the kings of Israel and Judah, and some neighboring kingdoms. He tells us how long the Babylonian captivity would last, and gives us plenty of chronological information in the Gospels and Acts to follow the ministry of Jesus and the Apostles. God has given a history in Scripture, and He evidently wants us to know when things happened.

If God doesn't want us to glean chronological information from Genesis 5 and 11, then why did He put it there? Does that mean that none of the dates in Genesis 6–8 has chronological information either, in which case we have no idea how long it rained and how long the Flood lasted? Without even looking at the biblical details, to think that

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[50] Bodie Hodge, "How Old Is the Earth?" in *The New Answers Book 2*, ed. Ken Ham (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2008), 184-188, https://answersingenesis.org/age-of-the-earth/how-old-is-the-earth/.

[51] So, May 31, 2016, is 23 Iyyar 5776 in the Jewish calendar. See https://www.hebcal.com/ and http://www.haaretz.com/jewish/this-day-in-jewish-history/1.679000.

Genesis 5 and 11 give no chronological information relevant to determining the age of mankind or of the universe seems extremely doubtful.

As I explained earlier, among young-earth creationists who do think the Genesis genealogies give us some chronological information there are two views. Some say that there very likely are missing names and therefore gaps of time, in which case Adam was created perhaps 8,000–12,000 years ago. Others, clearly the majority of leading creationists today, think there are good reasons to conclude that Genesis 5 and 11 are strict chronologies with no missing names or years. Hence, Adam and Eve (along with the whole universe) were created a little over 6,000 years ago. I will present some of the reasons for concluding the latter and encourage the reader to dig deeper in the resources in the footnotes.

A. Arguments for Gapless Genealogies and No Missing Years in Genesis 5 and 11

Unlike other genealogies in the Bible that simply list names (e.g., 1 Chron 1–8; Ruth 4:18-22; Matt 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38), in Genesis 5 and 11 we are given the age of each "father" when the "son" was born and how many years the father lived after that birth. Genesis 5 and 11 are in fact the only genealogies in the Bible and in Ancient Near Eastern literature that do this,[52] which draws our attention to this information even more.

Furthermore, we know there are missing names in Matthew 1, not only because we might suspect it from the arrangement of three groups of 14 names, but also because we can check the genealogy against other texts in the OT to find the omitted people. But we have no texts that would fill in the supposed missing names in Genesis 5 and 11. The extra Cainan in Luke 3:36 is almost certainly due to scribal error in copying manuscripts, for that Cainan is not in the oldest manuscripts of Luke and the Septuagint.[53]

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[52] Jeremy Sexton, "Who Was Born When Enosh Was 90? A Semantic Reevaluation of William Henry Green's Chronological Gaps," *Westminster Theological Journal* 77 (2015): 194, http://pastorsexton.com/articles/. Sexton cites the thorough work of Old Testament scholar, Gerhard Hasel on this point.

[53] That was the conclusion of the great Baptist Hebraist of the 18th century, John Gill, in his commentary on Luke 3:36 in John Gill, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament; The Whole Illustrated with Notes, Taken from the Most Ancient Jewish Writings (1746–1763)*, quoted in https://answersingenesis.org/bible-timeline/genealogy/gaps-in-the-genesis-genealogies/. See also J. Paul Tanner, "Old Testament Chronology and Its

Another evidence that Matthew has omitted some names is that if his list was complete, the average generation time between David and Jesus would be 35 years, which seems too long. But Luke's genealogy from Jesus all the way to Adam has 41 generations between David and Jesus, averaging a very reasonable 24 years for each.

Luke also expressly states that in writing his Gospel he "investigated everything carefully" to present the "exact truth" concerning Jesus (Luke 1:3-4, NASB), giving us reason to think that Luke was giving us a complete genealogy from Jesus back to Adam.

But what about the highly influential article by Green in 1890 mentioned earlier? Sexton has carefully examined Green's argument and exposes his logical fallacies.[54] Sexton affirms that Green was correct in the two examples he cited[55] to show that the Hebrew verb *yoled* (the hiphil form of *yalad*, "beget"), which is used in Genesis 5 and 11, does not always mean a literal parent-child relationship in Scripture, a fact which corrects what I have written elsewhere.[56] But Tanner notes that *yoled* is used 170 times in Genesis, and in all other cases outside of chapters 5 and 11 the context makes clear that a literal parent-child relationship is in view.[57] Additionally, because of non-chronological details given about six of these relationships, we know they are literal father-son links.[58] But since in both chapters it says that each of these six patriarchs had "many [other] sons and daughters," which surely is referring to immediate

Implications for the Creation and Flood Accounts," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 172 (January–March 2015): 33–34; and Jonathan Sarfati, *The Genesis Account*, 679-683.

[54] Sexton, "Who was born when Enosh was 90?" 193–218.

[55] The two examples were Deut 4:25 (referring to both children and grandchildren) and 2 Kgs 20:18 (in a prophecy that was fulfilled in the lives of Hezekiah's descendants living 4-5 generations after him: 2 Kgs 24:12-17; 25:1-7).

[56] Terry Mortenson, "Systematic Theology Texts and the Age of the Earth," https://answersingenesis.org/age-of-the-earth/systematic-theology-texts-and-the-age-of-the-earth/, just before endnote 51.

[57] Tanner, "Old Testament Chronology," 31.

[58] They are Adam-Seth, Seth-Enosh, Lamech-Noah, Noah-Shem, Shem-Arpachshad and Terah- Abraham. Adam named Seth because, as Eve said, he replaced Abel who was murdered (Gen 4:25). Seth named his son Enosh (Gen 4:26). Lamech named his son Noah and prophesied about him (Gen 5:29). Shem was on the ark with Noah. Arpachshad was born two years after the Flood (Gen 11:10). Abraham traveled with his father Terah to Haran where Terah died at age 225 when Abraham was 75 (Gen 11:27–12:4).

family members, this is strong evidence that all the links in Genesis 5 and 11 are literally father-son.[59]

Sexton also shows from various Scriptures and comments by modern Hebrew scholars that Green was right that *yoled* describes the birthing process or actual delivery of the child. But Green's argument collapses when he assumes that since *yoled* indeed *may* refer to a distant relative, there *must* be genealogical gaps in Genesis 5 and 11. More importantly, as Sexton demonstrates, Green erred in assuming (without explicit argument) that *genealogical* gaps necessarily imply *chronological* gaps. In other words, even if names (i.e., generations) are missing, that does not mean that there must be missing time too. It does not matter, for example, if Kenan was the son or grandson or great grandson, etc., of Enosh. In any case, Kenan was born when Enosh was 90 years old. So, again, while theoretically the Hebrew verb *yoled* could allow for missing names, there is no basis for imagining missing years. Genesis 5 and 11 provide us with a strict chronology from Abraham back to Adam (and thereby back to the very beginning of creation). Sexton, Tanner, and Freeman (cited in the notes) present other strong arguments to show that Green was mistaken and thereby has misled many other good scholars and that the position taken in this chapter is strong. But I will discuss a few more arguments here.

Many have argued that Genesis 5 and 11 each contain two lists of 10 names.[60] But this is simply not correct. In Genesis 5 if we count from Adam to Shem in the segmented genealogy of Noah, we have 11 names. In Genesis 11, if we start with Shem and count to Abraham in the segmented genealogy of Terah, we have 10 names. If we leave off the three sons of Noah, then we have 10 names in Genesis 5. But then to make a fair comparison we must leave off the three sons of Terah, giving us 9 names. We can count Noah in Genesis 11 to get 10 names to Terah, but Noah is not listed in the genealogy of Genesis 11.[61] Even if both

[59] While "son of" doesn't always mean a literal son but can refer to a distant descendant (e.g., Jesus, son of David), in the cases of Genesis 5 and 11 it surely refers to literal sons and daughters in 6 cases and it therefore seems inexplicable why it would mean anything different in the other 13 cases. What would be the point of conveying by this phrase the obvious fact that these 13 patriarchs had other distant descendants?

[60] For example, Ronald Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1991), 74.

[61] See further, Travis R. Freeman, "Do the Genesis 5 and 11 Genealogies Contain Gaps," in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, 283–314; and Tanner, "Old Testament Chronology," 26.

genealogies did contain 10 names, this would not nullify the conclusion that we have here a strict chronology.

Some have denied that Genesis 5 and 11 have chronological value because these chapters do not total up the years, as other Scriptures give total years between two events. In support of this argument Youngblood cites Exod 12:40 (giving the years the Jews were in Egypt) and 1 Kings 6:1 (giving the time from the Exodus to the building of Solomon's temple).[62] But surely Moses and God would expect the Jews to do the simple addition of the obvious numbers in Genesis 5 and 11. By contrast, it would take considerable effort and detective work to arrive at the total years in the two cases Youngblood cites.

Some have argued that the drop in ages after the Flood is evidence of missing names and missing time in Genesis 11. In particular, there is a 162-year drop in lifespan between Shem and Arpachshad and a 225-year drop in lifespan between Eber and Peleg. But there is a difference of 350 years between the lifespans of Noah and Shem. So this indicates missing names and years, it is argued. However, when the ages in Genesis 11 are analyzed mathematically, the drop in ages nicely fits an exponential decay curve, just as we would expect in the aftermath of the world-changing Flood.[63]

Formerly, some creationists attributed the drop in lifespans in Genesis 11 to significant environmental changes resulting from the collapse of a vapor canopy during the Flood. Not only is the idea of vapor canopy in the pre-Flood world no longer widely accepted by leading creationists,[64] but also today creationist experts think that genetics is the primary factor influencing lifespan.[65]

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[62] Youngblood, *Genesis*, 76. Citing the same two verses, Kaiser et al, *Hard Sayings*, p. 103, actually give "one final warning": "do not add up the years of these patriarchs and expect to come up with the Bible's date for the birth of the human race."

[63] Philip M. Holladay "An Exponential Decay Curve in Old Testament Genealogies," *Answers Research Journal*, vol. 9 (2016): 257-262, www.answersingenesis.org/arj/v9/biblical lifespans.pdf. See also Sarfati, *The Genesis Account*, 685-688.

[64] See Bodie Hodge "The Collapse of the Canopy Model," https://answersingenesis.org/environmental-science/the-collapse-of-the-canopy-model/, September 25, 2009; and Andrew Snelling, *Earth's Catastrophic Past*, 2 Vol. (Dallas, TX: ICR, 2009), 1:471-473 and 2:662-670.

[65] David Menton and Georgia Purdom, "Did People like Adam and Noah Really Live Over 900 Years of Age?" in *The New Answers Book 2*, ed. Ken Ham (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2008), 129-137, https://answersingenesis.org/bible-timeline/genealogy/did-adam-and-noah-really-live-over-900- years/. See also Snelling, *Earth's Catastrophic Past*, 1:65.

Some have suggested that the ages of the pre-Flood patriarchs are inflated ten-fold, but in that case, Enoch and Mahalalel had kids at the unbelievable age of 6.5 years old, Kenan at age 7, and Enosh at age 9. Christensen has argued that these ages cannot be literal because each age is the product of fives and sevens.[66] He correctly observed that the age of each patriarchs in Genesis 5 is the product either of fives, or of fives plus one seven, or in the case of Methuselah, fives plus two sevens. However, he never stated what the theological significance of these multiples of fives and sevens is, and the pattern is different in Genesis 11, where the ages are made up of the multiples of five and either four or seven sevens. Besides this, we should note that every number above 18 (except for 23, 33, 43, 53, 73, 83, and 93) is a multiple of fives, sevens, or a combination thereof. So this numerical analysis reveals nothing.

Furthermore, even if Genesis 5 and 11 are open genealogies with gaps, we cannot add enough years to harmonize Genesis with the evolutionary timescale for *Homo sapiens* without making the genealogies absurd. Since, as noted, 6 of the genealogical links are clearly literal, father-son relationships, that leaves 13 links where there could *possibly* be missing time. However, if we add 1,000 years between each of those men, which would be equivalent to the time gap implied by the genealogical link, "Jesus, the son of David," this still would not harmonize with the evolutionary dating of man. But adding even this much time between these patriarchs (most of whom we know nothing about) seems unreasonable in the extreme and would call into question why any genealogy was given. To match the evolutionary timescale, we would need to add tens or hundreds of thousands of years to Genesis 5 and 11, which creates even more problems, as illustrated next.

In 2005 in *Who was Adam?* Rana and Ross said that God created Adam and Eve "50,000–70,000 years ago."[67] But ten years later in their 2015 updated and expanded second edition they said, "In 2005, we predicted that God created human beings between 10,000 and 100,000 years ago."[68] If the evolutionist dating methods are so reliable, as Rana

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[66] Duane L. Christensen, "Did People Live to Be Hundreds of years Old Before the Flood? NO," in *The Genesis Debate*, ed. Ronald F. Youngblood (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1986), 166-183. See also Youngblood, *Genesis*, 76.

[67] Fazale Rana and Hugh Ross, *Who is Adam?* 1st ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2005), 248.

[68] Fazale Rana and Hugh Ross, *Who was Adam?* 2nd rev. ed. (Covina, CA: Reasons to Believe, 2015), 376. It should be noted that Rana and Ross follow William Henry Green

and Ross believe, why this difference in ages? The 2015 statement had no footnote to the page in the 2005 book, so without searching in the 2005 book readers would never know (1) that Rana and Ross did not accurately report what their own 2005 book said and (2) that they backed off from their 2005 relatively close range of ages to a less precise and wider range of dates. But Rana and Ross continued in the very next sentence of their 2015 book:

> The latest results from molecular anthropology place humanity's origin between 100,000 and 150,000 years ago. We were wrong [in 2005]. However the new dates line up with estimates of humanities' origin from the fossil record (between 100,000 and 200,000 years ago). Though these dates are older than those reported in the first [2005] edition of *Who Was Adam?*, we argue that they still harmonize with Scripture.[69]

How can any thoughtful Christian accept this? Adam was 50,000–70,000 years ago, then 10,000–100,000 years ago or 100,000–150,000 years ago or even 150,000–200,000 years ago, and this all harmonizes with Scripture? Really? In the very next sentence in 2015 they continue:

> After carefully reconsidering our interpretation of the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11, we now take the position that the biblical text implies that Adam and Eve were created while an ice age, probably the most recent one, was in effect.[70]

But when was that last ice age according to Rana and Ross? They don't tell the reader. Instead they have an endnote after this sentence, pointing the reader to several pages in Ross's 2014 book *Navigating Genesis*. Of course, unless the reader has that 2014 book, he cannot check and see that Ross says there (pp. 97–98) that the last ice age (when Adam was supposedly created) was 15,000–50,000 years ago. And the reader won't know that in the same book (p. 75) Ross says that "Noah would have been alive roughly 40,000 years ago and Adam and Eve anywhere from 60,000 to 100,000 years ago." This, says Ross in 2014 on the same page, shows that "the biblical account of creation retains its credibility

in arguing for gaps in Genesis 5 and 11 to allow for all this extra time (p. 50).

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

in light of advancing [scientific] research."[71] But this statement about biblical credibility will seem reassuring to readers, *only* if they think that Genesis 5 and 11 have no chronological value *and* if they don't examine the conflicting numbers Rana and Ross are presenting in several books or on even different pages of the same book. To make matters worse, in *Who was Adam?* (2015), Rana and Ross said (p. 51) that the Flood was "roughly 20,000 to 30,000 years ago." But going off the dates in Ross's 2014 book, that puts the Flood 10,000–20,000 years *after* Noah existed!

The vast majority of Rana and Ross's readers will never see this confusing and contradictory collection of dates. Sadly, their books have been warmly endorsed by many leading theologians and apologists[72] who apparently never bothered to do some simple math. So, let's do some.

Given that (as all agree) Abraham was born about 2000 B.C., the timeframe of Adam being 10,000–100,000 years ago (Rana and Ross's 2005 range) would put 6,000–96,000 years between Adam and Abraham. After taking out the 1,149 years covered by the 6 demonstrably literal father-son links,[73] Rana and Ross would need to account for another 4,851–94,851 years. This means that they would need to add an average of 373 to 7,296 years between *each* pair of names in the 13 *supposedly* non-literal links. If we consider that, apart from Noah's age of 502 when Shem was born, all the other begetting ages were less than 188 years (and most were below 100 years), then even 373 years for the ages of all the other patriarchs when the next man was born is ridiculous. Using Rana and Ross's 2015 range of 100,000 to 200,000 years would put Adam 96,000–196,000 years before Abraham, or an average of 7,296 to 14,988 years between *each* pair of names in the supposedly non-literal links from Adam to Abraham! As Sarfati has shown and documented, these errors and "harmonizations" of Scripture and "science" made by Ross and Rana are just the tip of the iceberg of the biblical and scientific errors that they and Reasons to Believe have been

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[71] Ross, *Navigating Genesis*, 75.

[72] *Who was Adam?* (2015) is endorsed by Walter Kaiser, Ted Cabal, Ken Keathley, Norman Geisler, John Bloom, Jack Hayford, C. John Collins, and John Ankerberg.

[73] Adam was 130 when Seth was born, Seth was 105 when Enosh was born, Lamech was 182 when Noah was born, Noah was 502 when Shem was born (Japheth was the first born: cf. Gen 5:32 & 10:21), Shem was 100 when Arpachshad was born, and Terah was 130 when Abraham was born.

presenting to the Christian public for several decades (with strong endorsements by some very prominent evangelical theologians, apologists, and other Christian leaders).[74]

This cavalier dating of Adam (following the constantly changing claims of evolutionists) certainly raises serious questions about Ross and Rana's claims to believe in the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture.

B. Where Are All Human Bones and All the Living People?

Where are all the fossilized and unfossilized bones, if mankind is 50,000 or 100,000 or even more years old? The earth should be overflowing with skeletal remains and human artifacts, but we find very little. And why isn't the human population today much larger and written records and other evidences of civilization much older than about 6,000–10,000 years, if *Homo sapiens* came into existence 100,000 to 400,000 years ago? From the eight people coming off the ark about 4,500 years ago, the present world's population can be easily explained.[75] But if mankind is as old as the evolutionists claim, the world's population today is far, far too small. Reality confirms the Bible, not evolutionary dates.

C. What About the Scientific Dating Methods?

All scientific dating methods are based on naturalistic uniformitarian assumptions. Many physical processes could theoretically be used to date the earth or any object in the earth (e.g., radioactive decay, or the erosion of the continents, or the increase in the salinity of the oceans, or the buildup of helium in the atmosphere). But every such dating method involves making assumptions about the initial conditions when the process started, the rate of change since then, and whether the physical process was changed in any other way prior to human observations. Because scientists have no way to verify the accuracy of their assumptions

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[74] Jonathan Sarfati, *Refuting Compromise: A Biblical and Scientific Refutation of "Progressive Creationism" (Billions of Years), as Popularized by Astronomer Hugh Ross*, 2nd rev. ed. (Powder Springs, GA: Creation Book, 2011). This revised second edition refutes the rebuttals that Ross made in response to Sarfati's first edition.

[75] For a layman's discussion see Brian Thomas, "Population Study Standoff," http://www.icr.org/article/9132, January 18, 2016. For the technical arguments, see Robert Carter and Chris Hardy, "Modelling biblical human population growth," *Journal of Creation* 29, no. 1 (2015): 72-79, http://creation.com/images/pdfs/tj/j29_1/j29_1_72-79.pdf.

about the unobserved and unrepeatable past, no scientific method can confidently determine the age of the earth, the universe, or a fossil.

With respect to human history, archeological dates based on carbon-14 are most untrustworthy.[76] The research that the BBC summarized and reported in 2001 is still true:

> A complete rewrite of the history of modern humans could be needed after a breakthrough in archaeological dating techniques. British and American scientists have found radiocarbon dating, used to give a rough guide to the age of an object, can be wrong by thousands of years...They found that the carbon dates were wrong by thousands of years and that the further back in time they went, the more out-of-date they were.[77]

Creation scientists contend that the Flood is very important in explaining why prior to about the time of Christ, the C-14 dates become less and less reliable.[78]

Archeology is dominated by the same naturalistic philosophical presuppositions that control biology, geology, and astronomy, and most archeologists judge the Bible's history based on the standard of Egyptian chronology. But in addition to the fact that the Bible is God's inspired inerrant Word and Egyptian writings are not, there are strong reasons to reject this reverence for Egypt's historians.[79] The anti-biblical assumptions controlling archeology and thereby discrediting the history of the Bible, especially in Genesis and Exodus, are clearly revealed in the recent excellent documentary film, *Patterns of Evidence*.[80]

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[76] To understand this dating method see Andrew Snelling, "Carbon-14 Dating, Understanding the Basics," https://answersingenesis.org/geology/carbon-14/carbon-14-dating/, October 1, 2010, as well as parts 2 and 3 linked in the article. A recent example of why C-14 dating doesn't work is discussed in Elizabeth Mitchell, "The Bible Wins the Debate with Carbon-Dated Camel Bones," https://answersingenesis.org/is-the-bible-true/the-bible-wins-the-debate-with-carbon-dated-camel-bones/, February 10, 2014.

[77] Anon., "Dating Study 'Means Human History Rethink,'" http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/1413326.stm, June 29, 2001.

[78] Andrew Snelling, "The Creationist Puzzle: 50,000-year-old Fossils," *Answers Magazine*, https://answersingenesis.org/geology/carbon-14/a-creationist-puzzle/, April 1, 2011.

[79] The problems with Egyptian chronology are discussed in Elizabeth Mitchell, "Doesn't Egyptian Chronology Prove That the Bible Is Unreliable?" in *The New Answers Book 2*, ed. Ken Ham (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2008), p. 245–264, https://answersingenesis.org/archaeology/ancient-egypt/doesnt- egyptian-chronology-prove-bible-unreliable/.

[80] http://store.patternsofevidence.com/.

The only way we can know with certainty the age of the creation or the age of mankind is if there was an absolutely trustworthy eyewitness of those creation events. We have one, the only one, in God Himself. He observed everything described in Genesis 1–11, which is His inspired, inerrant eyewitness testimony about those people and events.

V. CONCLUSION

It is simply impossible to apply sound hermeneutical principles to the Biblical text and harmonize Genesis 1–11 with the evolutionary claims about the antiquity of man (or the earth and universe). It is exegetically impossible to put more than six days between Adam and the first moment of creation. Even if names are missing in Genesis 5 and 11 (I think this is highly unlikely), there are no missing years because the age of the patriarch is given when the next man is born. William H. Green, like Charles Hodge, A.A. Hodge, B.B. Warfield, and likely the rest of the faculty at Princeton at the time, were wrong about the age of the earth and man and unintentionally misled many others.

But we cannot be dogmatic about the precise date of Adam's creation. Johnson helpfully suggests that it is highly unlikely that each son was born on the birthday of his father. This requires a "fudge factor" of a partial year for the time between the father's birthday and the son's birth.[81] Nevertheless, given the ages in Genesis 5 and 11 in the Masoretic Hebrew Bible (and reflected in our modern translations), Adam (along with the rest of the universe) was created a little before 4000 B.C., and Noah's Flood was a little before 2400 B.C.[82] Even if the Septuagint were shown to be more correct on all the begetting ages of the patriarchs,[83]

[81] See James J.S. Johnson, "How Young Is the Earth? Applying Simple Math to Data Provided in Genesis," www.icr.org/article/4124. Johnson also assumes that the begetting refers to conception, not birth, but Sexton's article above (pp. 195–196) gives strong biblical evidence to the contrary. Johnson also mistakenly counted Abraham as being born when Terah was 70. However, Haran was Terah's first-born and Abraham was not born till Terah was 130 (Abraham was 75 when Terah died at 205: cf Gen 11:32 and 12:4). So these points invalidate Johnson's calculations just a little.

[82] Readers who are not convinced are urged to consider the articles by Tanner and Sexton and the chapter by Freeman cited above.

[83] It appears that young-earth creationists need to investigate this question more deeply. Sarfati argues (*The Genesis Account*, pp. 460-462) that the Septuagint (LXX) obviously has inflated ages because it has Methuselah living 14 years after the Flood, that the LXX also shows evidence of having been altered to fit with Egyptian chronology, and that the Dead Sea Scrolls strongly confirm the Hebrew Masoretic text as the faithful

that would push the date of the Flood back only 750 years and the date of Adam's creation back another 586, making the age of the creation only around 7,350 years.[84]

The approximate date of Adam's creation (and therefore the creation of the universe) must be determined from the inerrant Word of God, not on the basis of fallible ancient pagan chronologies or equally fallible modern scientific dating methods that are controlled by equally pagan, naturalistic, philosophical assumptions.

But does it matter? Yes, it matters because God has given us many chronological details in His inerrant Word. He could have easily inspired Moses and the other biblical writers to speak in vague terms of "thousands of years" or "long ago." The details matter because every Word of God matters. It also matters because Jesus and the Apostles all clearly took Genesis as literal history. There is no reason to suppose that they thought any differently about the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11. If their word cannot be trusted on this matter, then their truthfulness and authority are undermined on all other matters. Furthermore, it bears repeating that if we accept the evolutionary dates and view of history, then we must insert death, disease, and other natural evils long before the Fall, which contradicts the Bible's teaching on that subject and thereby undermines the truth of the gospel.

So the only real question regarding the dating of Adam's creation is whether or not we will believe God's Word. Or will we instead make secular archeology, paleontology, geology, and astronomy and their dating methods as well as ancient pagan chronologies our final authority on this matter? Put more simply, whose word do we supremely trust: God's or man's?

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copy of the original. On the other hand, Sexton presents a more in-depth argument in favor of the ages in the LXX in the appendix of his "Who Was Born When Enosh Was 90?" pp. 210-218. See also Jeremy Sexton and Henry B. Smith Jr., "Primeval Chronology Restored: Revisiting the Genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11," *Bible and Spade* 29.2 (2016): 42-49. Regardless, both Sarfati and Sexton take the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 as tight chronologies.

[84] In the Masoretic Text (MT) the time from the creation of Adam to the beginning of the Flood is 1,656 years; in the LXX it is 2,242 years, an increase of 586 years. The time from the beginning of the Flood to the birth of Abraham is 353 years in the MT and 1,103 years in the LXX (if we omit the extra Cainan in later copies of the LXX), adding 750 years to the chronology. So if all the ages in the LXX were correct, we would add a maximum of 1,336 years between the creation of Adam (and the whole universe) and the birth of Abraham.

A REVIEW AND APPLICATION OF ALBERT MOHLER'S *WE CANNOT BE SILENT*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Albert Mohler, the president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY, recently wrote *We Cannot Be Silent*, which addresses many contemporary issues such as the sexual revolution.[1]

The main point of discussion is the acceptance of homosexual marriage, but Mohler also sees other aspects of this revolution in issues like the acceptance of transgenderism. For *JOTGES* readers, it is of interest that Mohler does not see this revolution in solely cultural terms. He holds that it also involves the gospel.[2] He feels that we cannot be silent on these cultural issues because if we do not speak rightly about sin and its consequences, we cannot evangelize people effectively (p. xvii). This naturally leads to an evaluation of what the saving message is. In addition, it is a reminder that how one defines the gospel influences how he sees the culture at large and how to respond to that culture.

In this review I will address these issues and discuss certain applications of what Mohler says. In the book, there are a number of things conservative Evangelicals, including Free Grace adherents, will agree with. However, there are things where that is not the case.

[1] R. Albert Mohler, Jr., *We Cannot Be Silent* (Nashville, TN: Nelson Books, 2015).

[2] The word *gospel* simply means good news. It can mean different things depending on the context. In this paper, I am using it to describe what a person must do to receive eternal life, or to be saved from spending eternity in hell.

II. POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

Mohler makes many statements which almost all conservative Christians will agree with. It is obvious that in our culture we are facing a redefinition of marriage and the traditional family. Mohler says that the changes are not like anything the Church has ever confronted.

A. Scripture Is the Authoritative Word of God

It is clear that Mohler holds a very high view of Scripture. He tries to support what he writes with the Bible. Christians must view marriage, gender, and sexual relationships based upon what God has revealed in the Bible. He bases his views of these things upon Genesis 1–2 (pp. 102-103). Both Scripture and natural law show the error of homosexual marriage, as Romans 1 indicates. However, Scripture take precedence (pp. 101-15).

He points out that our culture is now one in which anybody who believes that God has revealed moral truth is an "intellectual outlaw" (p. 6). When it comes to homosexuality and transgender issues, even if our brains are wired differently than our bodies, this does not justify sinful activities such as sex change operations or homosexual marriage (p. 80).

B. Clearly Our Culture Is Changing

It is difficult to look at our culture in the area of sexual morality and not conclude that dramatic changes have taken place. Mohler believes a large part of the problem is that American culture in the 20th century has moved away from Biblical teachings on such things. The moral authority of the Church was neutralized and marginalized (p. 15).

This cultural change was brought about in part by Hollywood (p. 50). In addition, gender is defined by one's feelings, which is a post-modern view (p. 71). Marriage has become a social construct and the government can decide what constitutes marriage.

The change is impacting all of us. The transgender revolution is attacking our children. Even in elementary schools, in some cases, the children are told not to use masculine and feminine pronouns, and to be accepting of those who do not identify themselves by the gender they were born with (p. 79).

Most Christian readers of the book wonder where all this will lead. Like Mohler, they probably conclude that if the Lord does not return first, and our nation survives, we will see the acceptance of polygamy and polyamorous unions (p. 96). As Mohler points out, the same arguments that are used to justify homosexual marriage can justify these unions as well. Critics say this is a false slippery slope argument, but the warnings are valid based upon the fallen nature of mankind (Romans 1–3), where Paul says the depravity of sin knows no bounds. Would it even be a surprise to see the acceptance of at least some expressions of bestiality in the future?[3]

There is a chapter devoted to the loss of religious freedom (chap. 8). Even if the reader has not experienced such losses personally, we are all aware of them. Bakers, restaurant owners, and photographers have been sued because their Biblical values went contrary to the government's acceptance of homosexual weddings. Hobby Lobby was sued because their religious convictions would not allow them to provide, through health insurance, birth control and medicine that would cause abortions. As the head of a Christian educational institution, Mohler warns that these things will have an impact on accreditation and admission policies. Such Christian institutions will be forced to change their policies in such things as admissions and housing.

Politically correct speech is also a problem. In many businesses, and certainly among government employees, one would be wise not to say anything negative about these moral issues. It has caused lawsuits and the loss of employment. Christians already feel the need to watch what they say in public. In some states, the government is already looking at fining businesses that do not use proper language in dealing with those who are transgender.

There are rumblings that Christian parents may face problems in adopting children. Those with strong Biblical views of morality are quickly being seen as intolerant, and not suitable to raise children.

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[3] Many, no doubt, would say this is an exaggeration, a false equivalency, and is used by people like Mohler to scare people. However, Michael Brown, believes this is a goal of at least some within the sexual revolution. He mentions Frank Kameny, a "gay rights pioneer," who promoted the idea of all types of sexual perversions, including bestiality by saying, "Let us have more and better enjoyment of more and better sexual perversions, by whatever definition, by more and more consenting adults;" and "If bestiality with consenting animals provides happiness to some people, let them pursue their happiness." See Michael L. Brown, *A Queer Thing Happened to America: And What a Long, Strange Trip It's Been* (Concord, NC: Equal Time Books, 2011), 19.

C. Christians Have Been Influenced by the Culture We Live In

Mohler points out that the legalization of same sex marriage did not occur over night. There were many things that paved the way. Some of these factors were things that the church either accepted or did not speak out against. One may not agree that there is a connection, but these things do indicate that the church can be influenced by the morality of the world. In each of the four specific things Mohler discusses, he points out that the Church at first rejected them as immoral but eventually accepted them. It would be hard to argue that the Church has not become more tolerant of these things.

The four things are: birth control; reproductive technologies; no-fault divorce; and cohabitation without the benefit of marriage (pp. 17-29). For example, he states that at first the Church almost unanimously opposed the birth control movement. But in all four of these issues, we see a devaluation of marriage, as well as the separation of sex, marriage, and having children. As another illustration, Mohler rightly points out that in most churches today the easiness of getting divorced does not even cause a stir. These things made it easier to accept marriage between two people who cannot have children and to redefine marriage itself.

It also appears clear that the sexual revolution is having a major impact on the youth in even conservative Evangelical churches. Mohler says that the Church is losing the youth in the area of believing in the sinfulness of homosexuality and that postmodern thought is a large problem. Many (most?) Millennials see the Biblical injunctions against homosexual marriage as being intolerant (p. 147).

D. Mohler's Courage Is Admirable

Mohler's views on marriage and sexuality certainly go against the cultural tide today. As a public figure he has surely been the object of ridicule. In addition, he is calling the Church to reconsider how they have been influenced by that culture in things like birth control and divorce. He admits that the discussion will make some uncomfortable.

Towards the end of the book, Mohler asks a number of "hard questions." One is whether people are born homosexual or not (p. 156). He says that there is no evidence that they are, but even if they are, that does not change things. We are all fallen and it shouldn't surprise us that the depravity of sin reaches even into the womb. This reviewer

appreciated this answer because there is a strong tendency among conservative Christians to argue that a person cannot be born homosexual and has never understood why some take such a strong stand. Mohler's answer will certainly be opposed by some of his readers.

Mohler probably angers many who would generally agree with his views when he says that homosexual couples should be able to adopt children. It would be better for the child to have two adults who love and care for them than it would for the child to remain in the foster care system (p. 92). Mohler is challenging us to reconsider some of our traditional views.

It is commendable that Mohler says things that go against the grain. He clearly has strong convictions and in many cases is not afraid to voice them. He believes he is promoting what the Bible teaches and says things that can have a negative impact on his ministry in light of those beliefs.

E. He Recognizes That Homosexuality Is Not a Worse Sin Than Other Sin

By referring to Romans 1, Mohler says that we are all sinners in the sexual realm. He reminds us that heterosexual sins are just as heinous in God's eyes as homosexual sins (p. 140). These include sins of lust and heterosexual sin outside of marriage. Divorce between heterosexuals is a devaluation of marriage as is homosexual marriage. In fact, the sheer number of divorces among heterosexuals shows that this sin will damage more lives than same sex marriage will (p. 25). Mohler repeatedly encourages us to show compassion to homosexuals and transgender people, but without condoning their sin.

Christians, in looking at homosexuals as worse sinners than heterosexuals, have not carried out the Great Commission to them. We cannot isolate ourselves from homosexual unbelievers. We must reach out to them. He admits that he has been guilty of this sin and has treated homosexuals as "out there" and a different class of sinner. Mohler might anger some Evangelicals when he suggests that we should even let our children play with the children of homosexual couples, which, one assumes, would include visiting their homes.

F. America Has Never Been a Christian Country

According to Mohler, one of the few positive outcomes of the sexual revolution is that it has allowed Christians to see that America has never been a Christian country. Because in the past many Americans shared, in some sense, a Biblical morality with Christians, we have lost sight of the fact that that does not make a person a Christian (p. 43). Polls that showed the majority of Americans were Christians were faulty. Even though Mohler and Free Grace believers hold to different gospels, most would agree that he is right on this point.

In the same vein, he says this is a reminder that moralism does not bring spiritual salvation to anybody (pp. 139-40). We must recognize that even if we could stop this revolution and we returned to the days of the 1950s in the area of sexual morality, nobody would be saved by accepting a Biblical view of marriage, sex, and gender roles. Free Grace adherents would give a hearty "amen" to that sentiment.

G. Summary

Any Christian who studies the Bible and looks at our culture would agree with Mohler that changes are taking place and that many of these changes are contrary to God's holiness as revealed in the Scripture. These changes should cause us to evaluate what is happening and to be on guard lest we be influenced by them. Churches would be wise to ask how they will handle certain issues, such as homosexual couples who want to get married in our churches. Individual Christians should ask how they will run their businesses and how they will address issues that arise in their children's schools. It is easy to see how many within Christendom will agree with much of what Mohler says and appreciate his willingness to point these things out to a culture that is opposed to what he is saying. However, there are other things in the book with which at least some Christians will take exception.

III. AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT

While there is much in the book that this reviewer agrees with, I have some objections. The most obvious is Mohler's coupling of these issues with the gospel.

A. The Gospel

It is well know that Mohler holds to a Reformed/Lordship view of the gospel. As such, in his view a person can only receive eternal salvation if he understands the seriousness of his sin. Part of preaching the gospel, according to Mohler, involves letting people know the depth of their depravity. We as the Church are called to tell the world about God's commandments (p. 6).

In this sexual revolution, Christians have failed in this aspect of the gospel. Mohler says that Christians did not maintain a vital voice in the culture on these moral issues both in words and deeds and this must change (p. 13). He warns that if we become like the culture we will devalue the seriousness of sin and thus cannot properly proclaim the gospel.

This is why we as individuals, and the Church as a whole, must not be silent. To be silent is not to be faithful to the gospel. The moral revolution is calling us to call homosexuality good (p. 138). This misleads millions of people about their need for Jesus. To reduce the sinfulness of sin slanders the cross of Christ. Jesus died for our sins. If we deny what is sin we mislead people about their need for salvation. Mohler says a "failure of this scale is impossible to estimate." This is how Paul was saved. He understood the seriousness of his sin (Romans 7) and thus his need for repentance from these sins (p. 139).[4]

In the question and answer section of the book he makes it clear that in presenting the gospel we must "plead with" and "persuade" people that they will face the eternal wrath of God if they do not abandon their sin for Jesus. He is saying that a homosexual or transgender person must understand the sin of their actions and abandon such practices. If we do not clearly and forcefully show the sinfulness of these things we are not committed to the gospel and do not love our neighbor. When unbelievers subvert marriage, they are in danger of eternal damnation (p. 178).

On a practical level, we also see how Mohler sees this working out in some instances. He asks what a church should do with a person who is struggling with gender issues, for example. If such a person "professes

[4] Once again, we see Mohler's view of the gospel influencing how he interprets cultural issues. Romans 7 does not deal with how Paul received eternal life, but how he struggled to live by the power of the Spirit after receiving eternal life. It is somewhat confusing to determine Mohler's view of Romans 7 because on p. 165 he indicates it addresses Christian living and experience as well.

Christ" and "repents of his sins" should the church immediately baptize him and "welcome" him into the church? It is difficult to determine exactly what Mohler means by this. He says it won't be easy and that churches will have to wrestle with these issues (p. 81).

It seems that Mohler is saying that a church must be careful in these situations. Perhaps there might be a probationary period for such individuals to see if they have understood the seriousness of their sin.[5] Mohler certainly suggests that a church should "expect submission to Christ to be demonstrated" in a transgender person, over a long period of time (p. 81). In other words, the homosexual and transgender person must indicate their sorrow for their sin, repentance, and submission to Christ before being welcomed into the church. While Mohler would not, it appears, suggest a rule that governs every situation, his words indicate that a church should be hesitant to too quickly accept a transgender person into fellowship into the church.

This, of course, goes against a Free Grace understanding of the gospel. Profession, understanding the serious nature of sin, submission to Christ's demands, and such things, are not part of the promise of life. As much as Mohler indicates that homosexual sin in not worse than heterosexual sin, he does seem to make a distinction here. Would he suggest a probationary period before baptism is offered to a 20-year-old heterosexual male that "professes Christ?" Such a person, as Mohler admits, has sinful lusts. Coming from our culture he likely is heavily exposed to pornography. Should we be wary of his "submission to Christ" before we "welcome" him? Would Mohler prohibit such men (and women) from entering into his college and seminary until they went through some probationary period?

More importantly, his view here is contrary to Scripture. The thousands of Jews in Acts 2, and the large household of pagans in Cornelius' house in Acts 10, were baptized immediately. In fact, in the case of the pagans they received the Holy Spirit immediately at the preaching of Peter. There was no probationary period. There was no demand for them to understand the seriousness of their sin or to demonstrate submission to Christ. And, we must remember, they lived in a very sexually immoral culture.

[5] Mohler asks, "*when* should such an individual" after repenting and professing Christ "be baptized and welcomed" by the congregation (emphasis added, p. 81).

Mohler believes that transgender and homosexual people who do meet these requirements will indeed demonstrate obedience towards Christ in the area of their sexual depravity. He admits that the road is a "long" one and the process may be slow, but it will continue in the "same direction." But, "in response to the gospel, all *true* Christians seek to live in obedience to the God who created us make and female" (emphasis added, p. 172). Mohler recognizes that it is very possible that homosexuals who truly come to faith in Christ and repent of their sins will continue to struggle with those sins until Christ calls them home.

Of course, this is the theological trap that Reformed/Lordship theologians fall into. If a homosexual person is truly saved, Mohler says he will obey and submit to Christ. However, Mohler recognizes that he will probably still have homosexual desires and that he might even have a temporary fall. But Lordship Salvation says he will soon repent and get back on track. But these desires will follow a person his whole life. How can such a person conclude that he has completely submitted to Christ?

We see Mohler's lack of assurance for these people when he says they are our brothers and sisters, but only, "insofar as they are fellow repenting believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, baptized into faith and obedience, and experiencing the sanctifying ministry of the Holy Spirit" (p. 143). A person who still has homosexual tendencies or struggles with transgender issues will simply not find assurance in such a long list of requirements for Christian faith and living. This reviewer would submit that most 20-year-old heterosexuals would not either.

Mohler's understanding of the gospel and how it relates to the sexual revolution is the most serious problem this reviewer has with his book. There are other concerns, however.

B. The Gospel and Politics

Throughout the book, Mohler indicates that political institutions play a role in the sexual revolution and moral decay of our culture. He mentions the institution of Planned Parenthood, founded by the strident racist Margaret Sanger (p. 19). It is our country's largest provider of abortions but is supported by taxpayer dollars. The very act of abortion contributes to the decoupling of having sex and reproduction. It has this in common with homosexuality.

The government also did away with the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which paved the way for homosexuals in the military and

homosexual marriages. The Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA) threatens Christian owned businesses (pp. 130-31).

In some instances, Mohler names the political party that is guilty of pushing these initiatives. He says that the Obama Administration has changed the phrase "freedom of religion," found in the Constitution, to "freedom of worship" (p. 127). The subtle change signals that Christians can say whatever they want in private worship, but not in the public at large. This, of course, is contrary to the main point of his book. We cannot be silent in the public square.

Mohler points out that the courts are being used by the government to bring about the revolution and to redefine marriage and God's purpose in sex (p. 48). He ends the book with a short chapter on how the Supreme Court has overthrown the Biblical view of marriage.

While many observant Christians recognize the truth of these things, a very large question remains. In light of Mohler's view of the gospel and these political realities, what should a Christian do in the political realm?

What Mohler implies, but does not specifically state, is that one political party is particularly guilty of promoting the redefinition of marriage and policies that attack the Biblical view of sex and gender. Obama is a Democrat. It is the Democratic Party that has pushed for the passing of the ENDA, and the continued support of Planned Parenthood. They promote political correct language and the repeal of DOMA.

When it comes to the Supreme Court, Mohler mentions the four justices that opposed the redefinition of marriage. All four of them—Alito, Scalia, Roberts, and Thomas—are Republican appointees.

Even though Mohler does not ask the question, there is an obvious implication here. Republican candidates for office have almost unanimously stated that they will undo the legislations that are redefining marriage and promoting homosexual marriage. They promise to place judges on the bench that will do the same. They promise to defund Planned Parenthood. Democrat candidates promise to do the opposite. They say they will push even harder to make homosexuality acceptable in society and prohibit the intolerant view of Biblical morality in these areas. They also promise to appoint judges who feel the same way.

The question that Mohler does not ask is: "What should a Christian do in this situation?" He plainly says we must be vocal in our culture and do it publicly. It is a matter of eternal consequences and is part

of the gospel. To this reviewer, the logical conclusion is that Mohler seems to be saying the church should oppose the Democratic Party.[6] If the policies of this Party are contributing to sending people to hell, by reducing the seriousness of sin, it should be opposed.

For somebody like Mohler, who heads a large conservative Southern Baptist seminary, the stakes our very high. If an institution like Southern Seminary, a church, or a denomination, adopts the public view that support of the Democratic Party is to make one an enemy of the gospel, the consequences would be catastrophic. They would lose donors, faculty members, students, and tax-exempt status. It would also cause the loss of fellowship with many in certain racial communities. In many of these instances the churches and institutions would have to close their doors. Since that has not happened at Southern, one must assume that this has not occurred as of this date.

Of course, there is an irony here. In a book that says we cannot be silent, this reviewer found a profound silence on this issue. It may be that I have entirely misread what Mohler *seems* to be saying between the lines. However, Mohler's definition of the gospel includes presenting the seriousness of sin. He points out that Christians must proclaim that seriousness publicly. If we don't, we are preaching a different gospel. He says there are political forces that are at work to diminish that picture of sin. How can faithful Christians and preachers of such a gospel actively support such forces?

C. Flexibility in Christian Practices?

As mentioned above, Mohler believes that many Christians have perhaps unknowingly contributed to the desensitizing of sin in our culture. Their use of birth control, reproductive technologies, and acceptance of no-fault divorce cause unbelievers not to realize the seriousness of sin by decoupling sex and marriage and procreation.

It is certainly valid to ask if the church has adopted the values of our culture in these areas. It is also valid to examine ourselves and ask if our use of birth control is an expression of our lack of faith in the sovereignty of God. Do we decide not to have children, even though the

[6] This is often implied but unsaid by white conservative evangelical leaders. For example, Brown points out that Obama was a strong supporter of even the most radical gay rights leaders. See Brown, *A Queer Thing*, 18-19.

Scriptures say they are a gift from God, because of selfish reasons such as more money, more free time, and more freedom?

But, as in the case with politics, Mohler indicates these issues also play a part in the gospel. Christians have contributed to unbelievers not realizing how sinful they are. Once again, how one defines the gospel determines whether that is the case or not.

If these practices are not related to the gospel, but sanctification, one may ask if there is some flexibility in these practices. Are there instances where it would not be sinful for Christians to practice these things? Suppose a Christian couple used birth control because due to physical or psychological problems they were either unable to carry a pregnancy to term or were unfit/unable to raise children? Could a Christian woman volunteer to be a surrogate mother for another couple who cannot carry a child or for a couple who has a frozen embryo they are going to discard?

To put it simply, do the Scriptures allow some differences of opinion among believers in these areas? If they play a part in the presentation of the gospel to our culture, as Mohler indicates, the answer is probably "no." However, many conservative Evangelical Christians have differences in the Scriptural interpretation of these things. For example, it is almost a certainty that the faculty at Southern Seminary have differences of opinion on what the Bible says about the conditions of divorce and remarriage. Perhaps this suggests that some of the things Mohler feels are a part of the church's responsibility in bringing people to faith are things related to sanctification and Christians can have different views.

IV. CONCLUSION

In *We Cannot Be Silent* Albert Mohler shows the reader that there is a moral hurricane going through our culture. Christians need to be aware that this sexual revolution will impact the church and Christian institutions. We need to be aware of what is going one. Our culture as a whole is rejecting any semblance of Biblical morality.

However, the glaring weakness of the book is seen by anybody who does not accept a Lordship view of salvation. Mohler believes that these moral issues must be emphasized so people can understand and repent of their sins, submit to Christ, and understand what it means to follow Him in obedience. All of these things are necessary to truly come to faith.

Most readers of the *JOTGES* will not accept this understanding of the gospel. The homosexual and transgender person is like anybody else in terms of what he or she must do to be saved. Understanding the seriousness of sin, the need to feel sorry for these sins, repentance from these sins, submission to Christ and a long, slow, life-long process of being obedient to Him are not part of the offer of eternal life as a free gift. Eternal life is given to all, including the homosexual, by faith alone in Christ alone for eternal life.

One value of the book is showing us the importance of how one defines the gospel. Not only does it determine how we proclaim it, it determines how one views the things occurring in our culture and how to respond to them.

BOOK REVIEWS

Galatians: A Verse-by-Verse Commentary. **By Thomas W. Finley. NP: NP, 2016. 162 pp. Paperback, Free.**

Thomas Finley has written this commentary on Galatians and offers it free of charge. It can be downloaded for free at www.seekersofchrist.org.

It caught my attention for two reasons. The first is that it is written from a Free Grace perspective. The other is that Finley wrote it to help Christians in countries other than the United States. In many of these countries there is a scarcity of Christian literature (p. 4). He is trying to meet a real need among Christians that live in these other countries. Both of these points make this book different from most books written today.

Throughout the book there are sections called "Life Applications" (e.g., p. 40). They provide spiritual help for living the Christian life. They can be described as practical applications of the truths found in Galatians.

Finley believes the letter was written to the churches Paul visited in his first missionary journey and was Paul's first letter written in the New Testament. Paul is addressing the problem of "Judaizers" who were attacking the good news of grace. Grace is the means by which a person is saved from hell but it is also the means by which believers are to live. Since the recipients of the letter are already believers, the main stress in Galatians is on grace for Christian living (p. 9). Finley recognizes that the word "gospel" in Galatians is not restricted to how a person is eternally saved (p. 16).

It doesn't take long to see the Free Grace view expressed in this commentary. Commenting on Gal 1:8-9 in reference to preaching a false "gospel," Finley points out that being accursed is not equal to being eternally condemned. Instead, it refers to some kind of temporal judgment from God (p. 19).

Finley takes Gal 2:20 as one of the "most important verses in the Bible" that deals with Christian living. The successful Christian life is a rejection of trusting in one's own power and living in dependence upon Christ (p. 37).

In a life application section on Gal 3:1-5, Finley discusses the difference between living by the law and living by grace (p. 47). Living by the law is natural for us as we have a natural inclination to live according to rules and traditions. Living by grace means focusing on Christ and learning from Him and seeking to know Him more intimately.

In Gal 4:11, Paul says that he fears for the Galatians, that he may have labored in vain in their regard. No doubt, some would say that Paul is concerned that the Galatians might not "really" be believers. Finley, however, takes the correct view that Paul is concerned that his labor there will not have its intended result, which is Christian maturity. Or, as Paul puts it, the goal is that Christ would be formed in them (pp. 67-68).

Paul refers to being "severed" from Christ is 5:4. Finley also correctly states that Paul knew the readers were believers and therefore this cannot be a reference to being eternally condemned. Instead, Paul is saying that if a Christian goes back to the law as a means of living the Christian life, he has "lost his vital fellowship with Christ." It means that believer is not being led by Christ or strengthened by Him (p. 78).

Finley sees a difference between entering the Kingdom of God and inheriting the Kingdom (Gal 5:21). He takes the position that inheriting the Kingdom refers to reigning with Christ. However, he takes the view that this only involves the Millennial Kingdom. Reigning with Christ is a reward, but will only apply during the first 1000 years of Christ's rule (pp. 98-99).

The principle of sowing and reaping in Gal 6:7-8 also does not refer to being eternally saved. People, both believers and unbelievers, can reap what they sow in this life. Finley believes, however, that the emphasis here is what the believer will reap at the Judgment Seat of Christ. He argues this point, in part, because Paul says "in due time" we will reap what we sow. The faithful believer will reap rewards when he stands before Christ (pp. 116-17).

The book ends with four appendices. They deal with law and grace principles, the Millennial Reign of Christ on earth, the reward of the birthright of the firstborn, and the eternal security of the believer (pp. 123*ff*). The section on eternal security is based on a booklet written by others. This booklet, unfortunately, uses the phrase "true" believer while discussing Rom 8:28-39, which can lead to misunderstanding and it is difficult to determine what the original author meant. Many use

the phrase to mean that if a person is "truly saved" he will persevere in good works. It is clear, however, that the author believes in the eternal security of the believer and that good works are related to rewards and not eternal salvation.

While not all Free Grace people will agree with all the details in this book, it is always great when a commentary is written from a Free Grace perspective. Many people look for such material. Hopefully, it will be used by those who have limited access to Free Grace material. I highly recommend the book.

Kenneth W. Yates
Editor
Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society

Preaching the New Testament: An Exegetical and Biblical-Theological Study. **By Jonathan I. Griffiths. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017. 152 pp. Hardcover, $44.99.**

The purpose for this book is not to show how we are to preach God's Word today. Instead, Griffith's concern is more basic. He asks, "Could it be that such convictions concerning the distinctiveness and centrality of preaching are simply grounded in a blend of history…and a heavy dose of pragmatism ('Preaching certainly seems to work…'), rather than in Scripture itself?" (p. 1). He continues, "The vital question is what Scripture says about this issue."

Perusing the Table of Contents, one wonders if Griffiths exercised great care in picking out which NT passages to discuss. He selects whole books (1 Corinthians and Hebrews), multiple chapters in books (2 Timothy 3-4, 2 Corinthians 2-6, 1 Thessalonians 1-2), and a single chapter in a book (Romans 10). In the introduction the author explains in one sentence or less why he selected each of these chapters and books (p. 5). While we might wonder why other passages were not selected, such as Paul's recorded sermons in Acts (e.g., Acts 13:15-41, 46-47; 17:22-31; 20:18-35) and the seven letters to the seven churches of Revelation 2-3, it is refreshing that someone is writing about what the Bible actually says about preaching!

I have taken many courses on homiletics and I've taught homiletics. In none of my courses did the professors attempt to develop our

style of preaching from Scripture. Instead, modern speech theory was employed. When I taught homiletics I pointed out that the Bible does not tell us how to preach, but simply that we should preach. However, I should have gone a step further and pointed out that the sermons found in Scripture at least give us an idea of how to preach. They should be models.

Based on 1 Cor 15:1-11 Griffiths suggests that "Christian preaching is fundamentally nothing more and nothing less than an accurate transmission of the received gospel of the sin-bearing death and resurrection of Christ" (p. 81). He must not mean that we are only to preach specifically about Jesus' substitutionary death and His bodily resurrection, for he sees Hebrews as an extended sermon and very little in Hebrews is specifically on the gospel of Jesus' death and resurrection. What he evidently means is that all Christian preaching has *at its core* the message of Christ crucified and raised. Everything we preach can be *related to* that message.

Unfortunately, Griffiths understands 1 Cor 15:2 to mean that "Ultimately, the response—and the continued response—to this preached word is a matter of life and death" (p. 81). In other words, he suggests that one's eternal destiny hinges upon continued faith in Christ.

Chapter two is very helpful. There the author considers three key Greek words related to preaching (*euangelizomai*, *katangellō*, *kerussō*), giving excellent charts showing where the words occur, the speaker, context, and content.

I was especially moved by the way in which Griffiths understood 2 Cor 3:18 as a text that deals with preaching God's Word. He writes, "The implication of this is that the proclamation of Christ from the word of God entails a transformative encounter with the Lord himself… (2 Cor 3:18)" (p. 91). We often read that verse as though it is speaking of our personal *reading* of God's Word. While that is a reasonable *application*, certainly the way in which first-century Christians received God's Word was through it preaching in local churches, not through individuals having their own Bibles as we do today.

Griffith's claim that Hebrews is one long written sermon is possible, but there are questions. If so, are all the epistles extended written sermons? Griffiths doesn't think so. He reasons that Hebrews is a sermons because the author in Heb 13:22 calls his work "the word of exhortation"

(p. 104). Griffiths points out that Acts 13:14-15 uses the same expression to refer to the sermon which Paul gave in Pisidian Antioch.

While it is possible that Hebrews is one gigantic sermon, it seems more reasonable to say that it is a "like a sermon" (Thomas L. Constable, Dr. Constable's Notes on Hebrews, 2017 Edition, p. 4, at SonicLight.com). In his commentary on Hebrews, Philip Edgcumbe Hughes considers this question and says, "In view, however, of the epistolary conclusion, this composition may be described as both homiletic and epistolary; and there is nothing unusual in this, for the main purpose of the letters of the New Testament is homiletic and hortatory" (*Hebrews*, p. 592).

I recommend this book. It does what it sets out to do. It convincingly shows that preaching is not simply something we do (and to which we listen) because it works or because it has been done for many centuries, but instead because we are commanded to *preach the word* (2 Tim 4:2, the motto of my alma mater) and to "desire the pure milk of the word" (1 Pet 2:3).

Robert N. Wilkin
Associate Editor
Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society

***Luis de Molina: The Life and Theology of the Founder of Middle Knowledge*. By Kirk R. MacGregor. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015. 292 pp. Hardcover, $24.32.**

Kirk MacGregor has written a tour de force on the life and theology of Luis de Molina. Luis de Molina, the originator of Molinism or "Middle Knowledge" was a Spanish Jesuit priest who lived and developed his theology in the late 1500's, during the era of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. He died in Madrid in 1600.

Middle Knowledge seeks to adequately explain and reconcile scriptures which express God's decrees and sovereignty over the affairs of man with scriptures that equally reflect the libertarian free will and choice of individual men. Molina's views were rejected by a large portion of the Catholic church at the time when written. They found acceptance, for the most part, only within Jesuit circles for centuries, until "re-discovered" by evangelical thinkers in the mid-1970's. Over the last 40 plus years, Middle Knowledge has emerged and become a very

popular view to explain the tension between the free-will of man and the sovereignty of God across many diverse theological systems within evangelicalism.

MacGregor's book is the most comprehensive work written to date on Molina and his views. It reflects original work in Molina's writings never before done to the knowledge of modern scholarship. And while it thoroughly develops and reflects the theological teachings of Molina, it does so within the historical context of his life and doctrinal development within the church. Readers will enjoy and come away with a better understanding of key people and issues and the doctrines that surfaced as a result from the early beginnings of church history until the time when Molina wrote.

Free Grace readers do need to be aware, however, that both Molina and MacGregor hold to Lordship salvation, and this surfaces at a few places in the book. Similarly, Molina held that any "believer" that fell away from the faith was really not a believer at all and had not surrendered his life to Christ. But as long as the Free Grace reader is discerning, the book will be enlightening and helpful for their theological growth. Many individuals within Free Grace circles embrace Middle Knowledge as a rational way of harmonizing sovereignty and free will.

I heartily recommend reading *Luis de Molina* for a better understanding of Middle Knowledge and personal growth in the theological doctrines of God's sovereignty and man's free will!

Jerry Pattillo
Board Member
Grace Evangelical Society

***Searching for Adam: Genesis & the Truth about Man's Origin.* Edited by Terry Mortenson. Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2016. 524 pp. Paperback, $24.99.**

This book consists of sixteen chapters, each written by a different author. The book deals with many issues. Among these are: Did Adam exist in history or is he a myth?; Was Adam supernaturally created from dust or did he evolve?; Are the six days of creation in Genesis literal, or do they refer to long periods of time?; and if we believe the Bible must we at the same time deny science?

All the authors are young-earth creationists. They all believe in the inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures. They present "biblical, theological, historical, paleontological, anatomical, genetic, anthropological, archeological, and social arguments" to argue that Genesis and the rest of the Bible is literally true when the Bible discusses Adam and human origins and the creation of the universe (p. 8).

The editor points out that many in the evangelical world deny the literalness of the creation account. Young earth creationists are becoming more and more marginalized and seen as anti-science by many. However, there are many accomplished scientists who accept the young earth view. Five of the contributors in this book hold PhDs in science from top secular universities in the United States.

Chapter One argues that the Old Testament as a whole teaches a literal Adam and Eve. Chapter Two points out that the New Testament shares the same perspective and that the NT authors used Genesis to describe the issues of sin, death, the atoning work of Christ, as well as His resurrection. Several NT authors, and Jesus Himself, affirmed a historical Adam.

Mortenson's article deals with those evangelicals who believe the Bible does not say when Adam was created. He maintains that "old-earth" creationists simply believe that the "Bible is not a science textbook" and we can't appeal to it to argue for a young earth (p. 139). Many evangelicals have adopted a gap theory or a day-age view of Genesis 1 to argue that the world is very old. Mortenson's conclusion is that Genesis 1-11 cannot be harmonized with an old earth view. When one takes into account the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11, even taking into account certain "fudge factors," Adam was created less than 7500 years ago.

The book, however, does not simply argue from biblical evidence. There are also chapters that argue for a young earth and a literal creation of Adam using science. David Menton uses fossil records and the sequencing of the human genome to show that mankind did not evolve but that all share a common ancestry (pp. 229—255). He also asserts that evolutionists have strong disagreements among themselves as to the evolutionary process.

Another chapter (chapter nine) also uses the fossil record to show that the Neanderthal Man was not a step in the evolutionary process. Instead, the Neanderthals were, quite simply, fully human. What are designated as Neanderthals were much more advanced than often

maintained and lived alongside humans classified as modern humans. Their advancement is seen in things like the artworks they left, as well as the tools they used.

Jeanson and Tomkins maintain that genetics confirm the recent and supernatural creation of Adam and Eve (chapter 10). By definition, then, genetic studies do not support an evolutionary view of human origins. The discussion, while complicated, is done in a way that non-scientists can understand. These studies indicated that humans did not originate from ape-like creatures or from a population of ancestors. Instead, mankind originated recently from a pair that were fully human. An interesting point of this chapter is that DNA studies indicate that major human ethnic groups originated near Mount Ararat. This is what we would expect in light of the Noahic Flood.

Chapter 12 studies the uniqueness of human design, which suggests man is "fearfully and wonderfully" made. The author says many aspects of man are "overdesigned" (p. 374). This design is purposeful and involves more than mere survival. This argues against evolution, which maintains that evolutionary changes have as their result simple survival.

I found the chapter of the relationship between evolution and racism fascinating. The author contends that the Darwinian revolution strongly contributed to biological racism (p. 375). This is because evolution taught that some races are superior to others become some races are further down the evolutionary process than others. These views were held by Nazi Germany, the Ku Klux Klan, and Planned Parenthood, among many.

This is an excellent book. The inspiration of the Scriptures is under attack today. This attack has influenced the Christian Church. Many, even in Christendom, do not think believing in a recent creation of the world and a recent creation of man is tenable because of "science." Those who do not accept evolution as an established fact are considered ignorant.

The writers of this book, however, show that if we accept an evolutionary view we will have to deny many of the statements of Scripture. They also show us that a person can appeal to science to support what the Bible teaches about creation. Some of the chapters, especially those heavily involved in scientific discussion, are hard for the layman to follow. But the authors have done a great job, including the use of charts

and other visual aids, to help us digest the information. This book has great apologetic value, and will be an encouragement for those who hold to the inspiration of God's Word. I highly recommend it.

Kenneth W. Yates
Editor
Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society

***Suffering and the Search for Meaning: Contemporary Responses to the Problem of Pain*. By Richard Rice. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014. 170 pp. Paperback, $20.00.**

This book is about how you can respond to real suffering, to "a sense of loss so huge and irreparable that the mind balks at taking its measure" (p. 137). Richard Rice was asked to teach a class on the subject of suffering to health care professionals at different stages of training. This forced Rice to treat the philosophical and theological issues surrounding God and suffering in a popular way, for people who were not trained theologians or philosophers, but who nevertheless faced the most tragic kinds of human suffering on a daily basis. This unique background was very beneficial to this book.

In *Suffering and the Search for Meaning*, asks two questions: What kind of world did God create? And what kind of God created the world?

Rice surveys some of the most important theodicies (attempts to reconcile God with the reality of evil and suffering). His writing is clear. Each view is presented in an objective and balanced way. He summarizes the key points from the key thinkers of it position (e.g., Calvin, Alvin Plantinga, Richard Swinburne, John Hick, Charles Hartshorne), offers key Biblical verses in support of each; explains why people find the view comforting; and then offers some objections.

The theodicies he presented are: Perfect Plan Theodicy (e.g., God decrees suffering as part of His plan); the Free-Will Defense (God permits suffering); Soul Making (suffering is necessary for moral and spiritual growth); Cosmic Conflict (Satan and God are in battle, and suffering comes as a consequence of war); Open Theism (like the Free-Will defense, but with an open future); Finite God (the god of Process Theology cannot stop suffering because he cannot suspend natural laws); and Protest Theodicy (suffering makes it impossible to believe in God).

Rice suggests that many readers will find elements of many different views to be helpful. A practical theodicy "brings together fragments from different, sometimes widely scattered sources and applies them to pressing personal needs" (p. 141).

The book ends with Rice explaining some of the elements of his own practical theodicy, and the theological commitments that gave it shape—such as the cross and resurrection of Jesus (p. 147)—with some suggestions as to how the reader may develop their own personal theodicy.

The strength of this book is that it accurately, and simply, summarizes the major philosophical arguments for reconciling the existence of God and suffering.

The weakness of this book is that the Biblical evidence is casually proof-texted, and not explored in any depth.

This book would be very useful to college students and pastors who want to understand the major philosophical responses to suffering. It would also be ideal for a small-group setting, to help people think through these issues.

Shawn Lazar
Associate Editor
Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society

***The Disruption of Evangelicalism: The Age of Torrey, Mott, McPherson, and Hammond*. By Geoffrey R. Treloar. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017. 334 pp. Hardcover, $35.00.**

The title of this book grabbed my attention. How was evangelicalism disrupted?

Treloar is Australian who teaches at the Australian College of Theology and who is a visiting fellow in history at the University of South Wales. He writes in this book about how evangelicalism changed in the English-speaking world in the early twentieth century (1900-c.1940). The subtitle suggests he does this by focusing on four famous evangelicals. But the chapters are not arranged in this way and the book does not emphasize these people. Possibly the publisher imposed the subtitle on the author.

The book is broken into three parts. Part one runs from 1900 to 1914: Fin de siècle, which means *end of the century*. The second part covers WW1, 1914-1918. Part three considers "Evangelicalism at the crossroads (1919-c.1940)."

If you'd never thought about how evangelicalism changes as a result of WW1, the Depression, and (to a lesser extent) WW2, Treloar will challenge your thinking.

His basic point seems to be that evangelicalism in the English-speaking world came to adjust its teachings and practices in the early twentieth century to make it come in line with modern thought. He shows how the more conservative evangelicals, which he calls "centre-right" (p. 210) or "anti-modern evangelicals" (p. 208), were grounded in Scripture and doctrine derived from Scripture (e.g., pp. 208-210). He says they "advocated a spirituality based on fidelity to received truth" (p. 208).

The "centrists and the left" (p. 191) were open to higher critical approaches to the Bible and felt that the absence of error was not essential to the Bible's authority, uniqueness, or inspiration (p. 191).

Treloar seems to be what he calls a centrist. Whenever he mentions higher criticism, he implies pleasure that it took root for most in evangelicalism (pp. 67-74, 74-78, 88, 131, 181, 233). For example, note this statement: "Increasingly in the 1930s they moved away from fundamentalism *and sought the intellectual respectability necessary for influence in the modern world*" (p. 201, emphasis added).

As one who is deeply concerned about a high view of Scripture and inerrancy, I was interested whenever Treloar dealt with these issues. He shows that the issues we face today in inerrancy and a high view of Scripture are not new. They have been around for over a hundred years in the English-speaking world. However, today the centrist to left view of inerrancy and inspiration has become the *dominant* position in evangelicalism, a position it arguably did not have a hundred years ago.

As someone who was born in Los Angeles and grew up a few miles from there, I was especially interested in his brief discussion of Aimee Semple McPherson (pp. 214-16). My aunt attended Angelus Temple for a time and identified herself as coming to faith in Christ under McPherson's preaching, though my Serbian Orthodox maternal grandparents quickly talked her into dropped that affiliation.

Treloar also discusses Keswick theology, pre-millennialism, and the anti-Catholic thinking that most evangelicals had in the first four decades of the twentieth century.

I recommend this book for those interested in the history of evangelicalism in the early twentieth century.

Robert N. Wilkin
Associate Editor
Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society

***Breaking Free Of OCD*. By Jeff Wells. Houston, TX: Lucid Books, 2016. 162 pp. Paperback, $14.99.**

Whether you suffer from OCD—as do 6.6 million in the U.S.—or you're just more OC than you'd like—or if you suffer from anxiety, depression, or any kind of mental illness or emotional problems—*Breaking Free Of OCD* will help. The Biblical cures Wells gives—so rooted in Scripture—for this troubling disorder, are actually cures that will serve you well on all the problems above! This is a book you will want to give out again and again to people to whom you minister.

Wells knows personally and painfully the terrible mental anguish (and other problems) this disorder carries. He lets us "in his mind" and vulnerably shares experiences of his obsessive-compulsive struggles. His own specific OCD is with "scrupulosity." "Over and over I had tormenting fears that I would displease God in some terrible way," viz. like actually being relieved he didn't win, in 1978, the closest Boston Marathon in history to that point (His 2:10:15 finish was 2 seconds behind winner Bill Rodgers, and we who witnessed the event on TV just knew if the race could've been 20 yards further, there would have be a different winner that day!). "Relieved," Wells recounts, because he was afraid—in his OCD'ness—that possibly he might've made a "Faustian deal with the devil."

In 1978, I considered Wells my best friend and hero-in-the-faith. I didn't meet Zane Hodges till the next year, but these two fellows were hands-down the most humble, dedicated believers I had ever met! That's why I was in shock when Wells shared with me during that time some of his struggles and the obsessive, unwanted thoughts that kept recurring—and which he couldn't get rid of!

Grace readers will especially appreciate that—much more than just an overly sensitive soul might have—Wells especially struggled with assurance issues:

> Other thoughts and fears tormented me, but this was the worst one: from time to time, I would wonder if I was even saved.

In the late 70's he shared this with me, and I couldn't believe it because, as mentioned, Wells was the most humble, pure Christian I had ever seen! He goes on,

> Maybe I had not really trusted Christ as Savior on that beach in Galveston on July 4th, 1972. Perhaps I just thought I had. Maybe I did not have 'real faith' or sufficient faith. What if I had not 'done it right'? Now, this thought was terrorizing!

He would meditate on verses all good free-grace people use: "I would go over verses in the Bible that promised salvation to all who believe" (p. 10; see also pp. 69-73). The verses he cites are all in John (1:12; 3:16; 5:24), except for Eph 2:8-9. He shows that doubting whether he'd really believed was a symptom of OCD, not a Biblical concern. His OCD led him to fret, "Had I done this right?…Did I have genuine faith?" adding,

> In my healthier moments, I knew I was a Christian. I knew that I was trusting Christ as My Savior and that He had saved me… But still, how could I be sure that I had really trusted Christ? What if I hadn't? What if? What if? This thought would torment me over, and over, and over.

"Normal" people could put it to rest. Wells couldn't. His disorder wouldn't let him.

Eventually, after a few weeks, the thoughts would die down, but new obsessive thoughts on other issues would take their place. Wells says that for years, in effect, though suffering very deeply—and in ways that affected his wife and family—he put Band-Aids on his disorder. He never faced it head-on. But then things came to a head.

In the meantime, Wells had gone on to plant one of the largest and most successful churches in the country, Woods Edge Community Church in the Woodlands, TX. But on May 2011, at age 57, his OCD spiraled out of control. "I felt overwhelming fear and hopelessness. At

that point, I had no choice. I had to talk about it. I had to get help. I was desperate" (p. 96).

He describes how his OCD had worsened in recent months, and he was under more stress than usual. Though on a vacation, his anguish was intense, and prayer, walks, and Bible verses alone weren't helping. Every waking moment he felt his brain would explode. "My pain was so great I feared I might commit suicide… I didn't want to, but the fear crept in that I might. I couldn't pray and reason myself out of these tormenting thoughts, but I felt like I was drowning in quicksand and I might not survive" (p. 97).

Beside the mental pain, he had a racing anxiety in his chest, a scary new sensation that even made it difficult to breathe—panic attacks.

They immediately contacted a psychiatrist at their church. He prescribed some meds that brought instant relief. I hope you'll read the rest for yourself, because Wells presents the most balanced—and personal—treatment on the discussion of medicine, therapy, and bringing all of God's resources to bear in dealing with mental health issues that I've ever read.

In the first third of the book, he defines OCD, discusses the various 'types' (checkers, washers, hoarders, overly-scrupulous, etc.), examples, causes (giving the latest, best neuro-science on the subject—the chemicals and parts of the brain involved), and faulty thinking about the disorder.

But it's the next two-thirds that will bless you! "How Can I Overcome OCD?" Chapters include: Depend Upon God; See Yourself As God Sees You; Soak In God's Word; Immerse Yourself In God's Love; Rest In The Cross; Do Not Battle Alone; Surrender; Commit To Prayer. Each chapter is filled with excellent and appropriate Scriptures, expounded by one of the godliest hearts I know; and each filled with lively, touching examples.

For those with true OCD disorder, you'll find chapter 12, "Do Not Battle Alone," a page-turner and affirmation of the role medicines, therapy, and friends can play.

Yes, there are good psychiatrists out there, like Wells's friend, Peter Johnson, who says, "If you rely on therapy, you will get what therapy can do. If you rely on talking, you will get what talking can do. If you rely on medicine, you will get what medicine can do. And God might

use these things. But when you rely on prayer, you get what God can do" (p. 110).

I highly recommend this book.

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