

THE

HARVESTER

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." [Luke 10:2]

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BIBLE BASHING

Bashing has become a popular sport in recent years. This is where people try their best to 'put down' the object of their scorn by saying bad things about it. It is like a fad to join the multitudes in throwing insults as an effort to discredit the recipients of the bashing. Take your pick: there's gay bashing, President bashing, Barney bashing, granny bashing, and sports team bashing.

"Bible bashing" itself is not a relatively new fad. Since the days of the Old Testament, men have blatantly despised God's Word (2 Chr. 36:16). Even in our lifetime we have seen the arrival of the Living Bible -- not a translation

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of God's Word but a paraphrasing. Some key passages have been so twisted by man's ideas in this version that the exact opposite of Truth is being taught! We have also witnessed a version of the Bible where every male reference to our heavenly Father has been changed to a 'neutral gender' in order to pacify the feminists! This is nothing but bashing of the Holy Scriptures.

A couple months ago I read in the daily newspaper about another Bible bashing attempt. The Jesus Seminar, a group of 78 Bible scholars, will be coming out with a new and "better" version of the Bible. What is so different about this one? It will show that Jesus did NOT actually say 82% of the words attributed to Him in our current red-letter edition! Is this bashing or what? If they can discredit or take away the sayings of Jesus Christ from part of the Bible, why not the rest of it? And what's to stop the next group of so-called Bible "scholars" from deciding that certain passages or doctrines do not even belong in God's book?

How did this "open-minded" group determine whether Jesus actually made a statement or not? Unbelievably, they voted on it! These scholars merely held up their hands and if the majority did not believe Jesus said it, then that made it official for them! Imagine a group of mortal men deciding the authenticity of our Lord's own words. Talk about treating the Word of God with the utmost of disrespect! *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* (Isa. 55:8-9) God's Word can never be based on the whims of men, much less on the votes of human reasoning.

This is just a perfect example of what is wrong with our world today: men believing that THEY have the right to change the Word of God as THEY see fit. When will men realize that God's Word is already "perfect" (Psa. 19:7), "sure" (Psa. 111:7,8), and "truth" (Psa. 119:142, 151, 160)? God wants "all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4). Surely it is possible that everyone can be saved and can "know" perfect truth or else 1 Timothy 2:4 would make no sense at all. But this will start to happen only when men quit bashing the Scriptures and accept His written Word as "*that which is perfect*" (1 Cor. 13:10), that is, as "complete" Truth.

This latest bashing, like the others, attempts to diminish the significance of the Bible in the sight of the people. It tries to undermine the authority of God's Word. But no matter what men may say about the Bible, it is still the Word of our Almighty Creator! This latest bashing says that Jesus is NOT the Messiah (which is what He claimed in His own words), that He did NOT perform any miracles, and He did NOT resurrect from the dead. In effect, these men are trying to prove that Jesus Christ was NOT the Son of God! When we do away with that fact, the Bible becomes nothing more than a jumbled book of disjointed stories offering false hopes of eternal salvation.

According to the Jesus Seminar committee, the gospel penmen were "skilled fiction writers" who "persuaded their audiences". But this is in direct contrast to 2 Peter 1:20-21, which tells us specifically, "*that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*." There we have it! The writers of the books of the

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Bible were truly inspired of God, and not just great "fiction writers".

The bottom line is that men today are trying to openly deface and devalue the Bible. "Don't listen to what the Bible says", they claim. "It is outdated and no longer sufficient for 20th century man. Listen to us and we'll show you the best way." Some have even suggested that the Scriptures are too complicated or impossible to understand or to come to an agreement with. John 8:32 plainly says, *"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"*. This implies that it IS possible to "know" Truth. When we know God's Word, we then know God. This knowledge, when acted upon, will make us free from sin and free from the clutches of the evil spirits that abound in the world today.

This recent movement by the Jesus Seminar group is just another plot by the devil to deceive mankind. By bashing the Bible, Satan hopes to win allies in minimizing the importance of the Scriptures. He does not want people to experience the power of the Word (Heb. 4:12). Instead, the devil hopes to turn people away from the Bible, and as a result, away from God. So far it looks like he has done a very good job. It is only through

our faithful and obedient acceptance of complete Truth that we can hope for God's salvation (Eph. 1:13). *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."* (Rom. 1:16)

RAY McMANUS

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Who was Shem's father?
2. In the book of Revelation, after the seventh seal was broken, how many minutes was it silent in heaven?
3. To what is righteousness likened in the armor of God?
4. What did Hananiah take from Jeremiah's neck and break?
5. Why would Abraham's servant not eat when he was offered food by Laban?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. What type of market (gate) was beside the pool at Bethesda? SHEEP GATE (John 5:2)
2. Moses told the people of Israel that God came to Mt. Sinai in order that the fear of Him would remain with them. What was this fear to prevent them from doing? SINNING (Exo. 20:20)
3. What will happen to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness? THEY WILL BE FILLED (Matt. 5:6)

4. According to Jeremiah, do the people of Judah and Israel know how to blush? NO (Jer. 8:12)

5. How many good kings did the Northern kingdom of Israel have? NONE

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE CHURCH

The following story is interesting to me. I pass it to others for what it may be worth. I quote first from the February issue of The Converted Catholic Magazine, (published at 229 W. 48th St., New York City, by ex-Catholic priests. On present conditions among nations it is truly enlightening). I quote:

"It is related that when Abraham Lincoln was elected president of the United States, all twenty-three clergymen of Springfield, Illinois, called upon him at his home. A spokesman for the group said: 'Mr. Lincoln you must now join some church. All the Springfield pastors are here and each will tell you what his church requires for membership so that you can choose the one you think best.' President Lincoln replied: 'Show me one church that requires what Jesus Christ required of his followers and nothing else: and I will join that church next Sunday'.

"None of the ministers present could do so, with the result that Abraham Lincoln, a true Christian if ever there was one, never joined any church. For he saw, what is even more evident today than in his time that if Christianity is to fulfill its promise of making all things new in Christ, it must return to the plain, undiluted teaching of the New Testament.

"Successful church organization helps to increase membership and maintain order, but is not essential to the spirit of Christ's teaching -- is often a hindrance to its development. Some Protestant denominations, in imitation of the Roman Catholic church, have almost completely covered over this essential spirit of Christ by useless ritual and organizational law. Reforms attempted by many church organizations to bring about a new world order have failed, chiefly for two reasons:

(1) because the regeneration of the individual has not been taken into account as the basic factor in the process of renewal;

(2) because their reforms have been directed toward improvement of the old man-made structure, which should have been torn down..

"For, the true Church of Christ, which is made up of the priesthood of all believers was intended to be a completely new creation, not of magnificent cathedrals, and a body of intricate metaphysics, theology and man-made rules, but of regenerated, sanctified individuals. Individuals, however, will not become thus newly-born and sanctified merely by joining a church. They must be joined to Christ!"

N. L. CLARK

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*Man
is like
a tack.
He must
be pointed
in the right direction, driven
hard, and then he will go as
far as his head will let him.*

GOSPEL MEETINGS

| <u>Dates</u> | <u>Place & Time</u> | <u>Speaker</u> |
|----------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| June 5 - 11 (Su-Sa) | Taylor's Crossroads Roanoke, AL 7:00 each evening | Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL) |
| June 12 - 17 | Mount Carmel Church Woodland, AL | Sam Dick (Cave City, KY) |
| June 12 - 18 | Bogue Chitto Church Bogue Chitto, MS | Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL) |
| June 19 - 24 | Ephesus Church Ephesus, GA | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| June 24 - 26 | Sun Hill Road Church Birmingham, AL | Sam Dick (Cave City, KY) |
| July 8 - 10 (F - Su) | Second Avenue Church Opelika, AL 7:00pm Fri & Sat | Bill Prince (Oxford, AL) |
| July 10 - 15 | Claud Church Wetumpka, AL | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| July 10 - 15 | Valley Church Valley, AL | Sam Dick (Cave City, KY) |
| July 17 - 22 | Oak Grove Church Woodland, AL | Unavailable at copy time |
| July 24 - 29 | Napolean Church Woodland, AL | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| July 24 - 29 | Temple Hill Church Smithdale, MS | Sam Dick (Cave City, KY) |

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IF WE COULD SEE OURSELVES AS OTHERS
SEE US, WE WOULD PROBABLY DENY IT.