

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

- Week of July 7, 2024 -

Sunday School	17
Sunday Morning Service	36
Sunday Evening Service	20
Wednesday Eve., 07/10/24 Service	16

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

- Week of July 7, 2024 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	\$ 1,446.45
Auditorium A/C Replacement Fund	\$ 150.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 07/07/24:	\$ 1,596.45

- Week of June 30, 2024 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	\$ 2,362.44
Auditorium A/C Replacement Fund	\$ 130.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 06/30/24:	\$ 2,492.44

- Week of June 23, 2024 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	\$ 1,116.47
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 06/23/24:	\$ 1,116.47

- Week of June 16, 2024 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	\$ 1,417.21
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 06/16/24:	\$ 1,417.21

- Week of June 9, 2024 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	\$ 853.31
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 06/09/24:	\$ 853.31

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed for church operating expenses EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,600.00

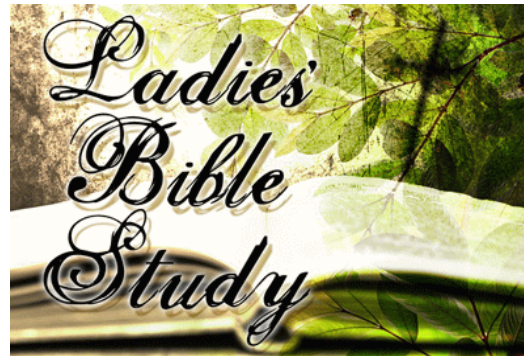


WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. Admit that you are a sinner.
2. Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.
3. Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.
4. You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).
5. By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, Who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.

LADIES!

Don't Forget -

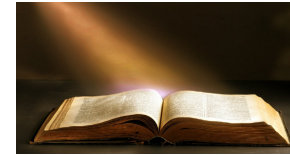


THURSDAY, JULY 18th @ 11 am

Church Directory

Todd W. White	Pastor
Debra Carlton, Mickie Shatwell, Lois Mae Floyd	Pianists
Derek Quinnelly	Greeter
Kim Phillips; Shirley White/LeAnna White; Berdena Bergman/Debra Carlton; Daniel Avery/GiGi Avery; & Keith Shufelt	Teachers
Larry & Mary Byars	Outreach
Keith Shufelt	Men's Prayer Group
GinaMarie Shufelt	Ladies Bible Study/Flowers
Seth White	Sound/Video
Larry Byars, Derek Quinnelly, David Smith	Trustees

REMINDER



Restoring the Literal Interpretation of Prophecy

by Evangelist David W. Cloud

The literal, imminent return of Jesus Christ was the heart and soul of the fundamentalist movement of the turn of the 20th century (last part of the 1800s and first part of the 1900s).

The right understanding of prophecy produced spiritual revival.

Prior to this, most churches and denominations in England and America (including Northern and Southern Baptists) preached amillennialism or post-millennialism. There was no expectation of an imminent return of Christ.

Describing the situation in England in the first half of the 19th century, historian D.W. Bebbington says, "The belief that Christ would come again in person was an innovation in the Evangelical world of the 1820s" (Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, p. 84).

Dr. William B. Riley said that when he graduated from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1888, there was no premillennial teaching in the school (William Trollinger, *God's Empire: William Bell Riley and Midwestern Fundamentalism*). When Riley arrived in Minneapolis in 1897 to pastor First Baptist Church, there was only one other pastor in the city who held to a premillennial stance (Trollinger, p. 84).

Through the fundamentalist Bible conference movement, there was a new emphasis on the literal interpretation of Bible prophecy, an emphasis on the imminent return of Christ, and a zeal to preach the gospel and fulfill the Great Commission while there is time.

Article XIV of the 1878 Niagara Bible Conference Creed stated,

"We believe that the world will not be converted during the present dispensation, but is fast ripening for judgment, while there will be a fearful apostasy in the professing Christian body; and hence that the Lord Jesus will come in person to introduce the millennial age, when Israel shall be restored to their own land, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord; and that this personal and premillennial advent is the blessed hope set before us in the Gospel FOR WHICH WE SHOULD BE CONSTANTLY LOOKING."

Note that this creed taught the imminence of Christ's return.

This was the beginning of "a millenarian movement" in the United States (Ernest Sandeen, "The Baptists and Millenarianism," Foundations, Jan.-Mar. 1970, p. 21).

It was simply a *restoration* of the literal interpretation of the apostolic era. Consider Romans 11:25-27. Paul taught that God's covenants with Israel will be literally fulfilled. Israel is currently blinded, except for those few, like Peter and Paul, who are saved through faith in Jesus as the Christ. But Israel will be blind only until the fulness of the Gentiles is come in, referring to the church age. Then Israel will be saved and her covenants literally fulfilled. That the apostles and the apostolic churches interpreted prophecy literally is acknowledged by church historians of all persuasions.

"The early Church for 300 years looked for the imminent return of our Lord to reign, and they were right" (William Newell, *Revelation*).

The announcement of the American Bible and Prophecy Conference in New York City in 1878 said,

"The precious doctrine of Christ's personal appearing has, we are constrained to believe, long lain under such neglect and misapprehension. So vital indeed is this truth represented to be that the denial of it is pointed out as one of the conspicuous signs of the apostasy of the last days. ... after the long sleep of the church, the wise are at long last rising up and trimming their lamps in preparation for the coming of the Bridegroom."

Nathaniel West, in his sermon in New York on "The History of the Pre-Millennial Doctrine," summarized the history of pre-millennialism from the apostolic era to the 19th century. Packed with documentation, the sermon probably took two hours to

(continued inside)

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preach. West showed from Scripture that the first Christians were looking for a literal Tribulation, a **literal** return of Christ, a **literal** conversion of Israel, and a **literal** kingdom. Next West showed that the “apostolic fathers” were expecting the same thing.

“*Consentient, is the voice of the Apostolic Fathers, for the pre-millennial advent, as also the earliest literary Christian monuments that remain to us wherever they have spoken on the subject.*” Next, West shows that during the third and fourth centuries the heresy of spiritualizing the prophecies was invented, Origen and Augustine figuring prominently in this error. Origen “was the first to suggest that the Gospel, by its new moral power, through the Spirit, would overcome heathenism in the Roman Empire.” Augustine “*did more to fasten [spiritualizing] upon the church for thirteen centuries than all other names besides.*” West shows that the Roman Catholic Church considered itself to be the millennial kingdom and that the 16th century Reformers held the Roman Church to be the Antichrist. West shows that there was a return to pre-millennialism in England in the 17th century by some Westminster Presbyterians, such as Peter Sterry, who said, “*Like a piece of rich coin, it hath long been buried in the earth, but of late days digged up again.*” And by the English Baptists, “*who presented their premillennarian confession to Charles II, AD 1660, John Bunyan’s name was among the number.*” Then, West shows how that in the 18th century post-millennialism was popularized by Daniel Whitby, who alleged “*the conversion of the world to God before Christ comes.*” Yet even in the 18th century, many held to pre-millennialism, including hymn writers Charles Wesley, Augustus Toplady, Isaac Watts, and William Cowper. West shows that pre-millennialism continued to be taught by many in the 19th century, though they were in the minority.

The 1878 fundamentalist Bible conference speakers emphasized the imminency of Christ’s return. They showed that the first believers were living in expectation of His return, considering it to be “at hand.” They said that it was indeed “always near to the feelings and consciousness of the first believers.” They showed that “this is admitted and proved by all post-millennial expositors and writers.” They said, “[I]t is a necessary element of the doctrine concerning the second coming of Christ that it should be possible at any time, that no generation should consider it improbable in theirs.”

They emphasized the power of the doctrine of imminency to sanctify the Christian life and ministry.

“[T]hat event was always near to the feelings and consciousness of the first believers. It was the great consummation on which the strongest desires of their souls were fixed, to which their thoughts and hopes were habitually turned. They lived in expectation of it; they labored to be prepared for it; they were constantly, in the expressive language of Peter, ‘looking for and hastening unto it.’ The Apostles, the first Christians in general, comprehended the grandeur of that occasion; it filled their circle of view, stood forth to their contemplations as the point of culminating interest in their own and the world’s history; threw into comparative insignificance the present time, death, all intermediate events, and made them feel the manifestation of

Christ, with its consequences of indescribable moment to all true believers, was the grand object which they were to keep in view as the end of their toils, the commencement and perfection of their glorious immortality. ... they hold it up to the people of God to encourage them in affliction, to awaken them to fidelity, zeal, and perseverance, and appeal to it to warn the wicked and impress upon them the necessity of preparation for the revelations of that day” (James Brookes, “*The Coming of the Lord in Its Relation to Christian Doctrine,*” Prophetic Conference, New York City, 1878).

The literal interpretation of prophecy produced an emphasis on the return of Israel to her land. One of the messages at the 1878 conference was “*The Gathering of Israel*” by William Nicholson. He cited passages such as Ezekiel 36-37, Amos 9, and Zechariah 14, and said that these “can possibly refer only to the literal Israel and to their restoration to Palestine.”

This was 19 years **before** the First Zionist Congress led by Theodor Herzl (1897), which was the first practical step toward the return of Jews to their homeland.

At the time of the 1878 prophecy conference, such a return looked impossible, humanly speaking, as the land was controlled by the Muslim Ottomans who had no intention to allow the Jews to return in any significant way and certainly not to allow them to establish a Jewish nation there.

The revival of sound prophetic understanding was also stirring in Great Britain.

In 1840, the Church of Scotland published *A Course of Lectures on the Jews* by various ministers. Lecture XI was titled “*Future Prospects of the Jews*” by Patrick Fairbairn. It unequivocally stated that there will be a literal fulfillment of the prophecies pertaining to the return and conversion of Israel.

In 1841, Edward Bickersteth published *The Restoration of the Jews to Their Own Land*, in connection with their future conversion and the final blessedness of our earth. Bickersteth said “*there is a growing interest spreading through the nations of the earth concerning them [the Jews]*” (p. viii). Bickersteth believed that the Jews would be partially restored in an unconverted state prior to their conversion. “*I think we have also abundant evidence ... that the Jews will be partially restored in an unconverted state, and that this is what we have first to expect; and that it is well to see this, that we may not be deceived by their first restoration, as if this were the beginning of their blessedness, instead of, after a short season of tranquility, Eze. 38:11, the beginning of their last and greatest trouble, before their final deliverance and full glory, Ezekiel 38, 39*” (Bickersteth, *The Restoration of the Jews to Their Own Land*, 1841).

This was written a half century **before** the Jews began a significant return to the land and more than 100 years before the modern state of Israel was founded.

In 1843, *Lectures on the Conversion of the Jews*, published by the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews, taught a literal return of the Jews to their land and a literal millennial kingdom. In Lecture 1, James Hamilton said that

Jerusalem would “*be re-peopled with precisely the same race which left it nearly two thousand years ago.*”

In 1844, Alexander Keith published *The Land of Israel, according to the Covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob*, in which he taught that Israel will be restored and blessed.

In 1864, the famous Baptist pastor Charles Spurgeon spoke to a gathering of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews meeting at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. This was the largest non-conformist church in London in that day, with a membership of around 3,000. The Tabernacle seated 5,000, but another 1,000 routinely crowded the aisles and rear of the building. Preaching from Ezekiel 37:1-10, which he interpreted literally, Spurgeon said, “*The meaning of our text, as opened up by the context, is most evidently, if words mean anything, first, that there shall be a political restoration of the Jews to their own land and to their own nationality. And then, secondly, there is in the text and in the context a most plain declaration that there shall be a spiritual restoration--in fact a conversion--of the tribes of Israel. Israel is now blotted out from the map of nations. Her sons are scattered far and wide. Her daughters mourn beside all the rivers of the earth. Her sacred song is hushed--no king reigns in Jerusalem! She brings forth no governors among her tribes. But she is to be restored! She is to be restored 'as from the dead.'*”

John Darby (1800-1882) and the Plymouth Brethren had a major influence on the revival of literal interpretation of Bible prophecy. Darby is one of the fathers of modern dispensational theology. As a student at Trinity College, Dublin, he was influenced by Richard Graves in interpreting prophecy literally and thus expecting a literal return of Israel to the land, a national conversion, and the establishment of Christ’s kingdom which Graves called “a grand era in the Divine dispensations.” Israel would play a major role in this kingdom. Graves distinguished between “the Jewish scheme” and “the Gentile or Christian dispensation” (Thomas Ice, *A Short History of Dispensationalism*). The foundation of Darby’s dispensationalism is the consistent normal-literal interpretation of prophecy, and this leads to an understanding that there is a clear distinction between Israel and the Church and that God’s covenants with Israel will be fulfilled literally. This leads naturally to a pre-tribulational Rapture to remove the Church from the earth for the completion of God’s program for Israel as described in Daniel’s 70 Week prophecy (Da. 9:24-27). Whether or not one agrees with a seven-age dispensational view (Darby held to six ages; others have divided the ages in other ways), the great advantage of dispensationalism is the literal interpretation of prophecy, with a literal Tribulation and literal Millennium, the emphasis on Christ’s imminent return, and a clear distinction between Israel and the Church. In our estimation, it is impossible to understand Scripture properly without these principles.

Dispensational theology was the predominant view on prophecy among conservative Bible believers by the turn of the 20th century. “*Dispensationalism came to North America through Darby and other Brethren before the Civil War. After the war dispensational teachings captured the minds of a significant*

number of Christian leaders, and by 1875, its distinctives were disseminated throughout Canada and the United States. Dispensationalism spread through preaching, conferences, the founding of schools, and literature. By the turn of the century dispensationalism was well known and quickly became the most popular evangelical system of theology” (Ice, *A Short History of Dispensationalism*).

James Brookes promoted dispensationalism through the Niagara Bible Conference, through *The Truth* magazine, and through his book Maranatha.

Arno Gaebelein promoted dispensationalism through his influential magazine *Our Hope*, his books *The Prophet Daniel: A Key to the Visions; Revelation, an Analysis and Exposition; Conflict of the Ages; Current Events in the Light of the Bible*; and his commentary series *The Annotated Bible*. He was an evangelist to the Jews in New York City. “*Gaebelein’s talents as a prophetic Bible teacher and dispensational analyst of current events and the state of worldwide Jewry made him an oft-quoted teacher of other fundamentalist leaders*” (Joel Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, p. 26). Gaebelein separated from the Methodist Episcopal Church because of its liberalism.

Another prominent name in the revival of Bible prophecy was W.E. Blackstone (1841-1935), the first Dean of BIOLA (the Bible Institute of Los Angeles) and the founder of the Chicago Hebrew Mission. In the early 1900s, the wealthy businessman gave away his savings and luxurious home to live a life of itinerant Bible teaching, evangelism, and writing (Paul Rood, “*The Forgotten Founder,*” *Biola* magazine, Fall 2013). He liked to be known simply as W.E.B. and often concluded his letters with the statement, “I am but an errand boy for Jesus.” He was a popular speaker at the Bible conferences in the United States. In 1878, Blackstone published *JESUS IS COMING*, which had a major influence in the spread of dispensational theology. It sold millions of copies and was translated into more than 40 languages. In November 1890, Blackstone organized a conference calling for the return of the Jews to their homeland. It was called “The Conference on the Past, Present, and Future of Israel.” Blackstone drafted a plea entitled “*A Proclamation for a Homeland for Persecuted Russian Jews in Palestine*” (popularly known as “The Blackstone Memorial”) and presented it to U.S. President Benjamin Harrison in March 1891. It said, “*Why not give Palestine back to them again? According to God’s distribution of nations it is their home; an inalienable possession from which they were expelled by force. ... We believe this is an appropriate time for all nations, and especially the Christian nations of Europe, to show kindness to Israel. A million of exiles, by their terrible sufferings, are piteously appealing to our sympathy, justice and humanity. Let us now restore them to the land of which they were so cruelly despoiled by our Roman ancestors.*” Blackstone secured the signatures of 413 prominent figures and organizations in America, including John D. Rockefeller and J. Pierpoint Morgan, two of America’s wealthiest men. The Blackstone Memorial was published in many secular newspapers, including the New York Times and the Boston Herald, and in many Jewish and Christian

publications, and “resulted in a firestorm of controversy in the international press.” President Wilson expressed interest in the document and it is thought that it influenced him to give his acceptance to Britain’s Balfour Declaration pledging Britain’s support for a Jewish homeland in “Palestine.”

Events in the first half of the 20th century brought an ever larger turning to premillennialism and an ever greater interest in the fulfillment of prophecy.

The return of Jews to the land increased quickly, beginning at the turn of the 20th century. The Zionist Movement was founded by Theodor Herzl in 1897 with the goal of returning the Jews to their land and establishing a modern state of Israel. The returns were called “Aliyah” which is Hebrew for ascent and appears in Isaiah 2:3 and Micah 4:2, “let us GO UP to the mountain of the LORD.” In 1801, there were only about 5,000 Jews in Palestine. After the First and Second Aliyah (1881-1914) there were about 60,000. By the beginning of World War II in 1939 the number of Jews had risen to 450,000.

World War I (1914-1918) was a refutation of postmillennialism, which promised that the “church” would bring in the kingdom of God by reforming the world. The devastation of humanity’s first world war was clear evidence that the world was not progressing toward the kingdom of God.

In 1917, the *Balfour Declaration* pledged British support for a Jewish homeland.

In 1918, Palestine was captured from the Ottomans by the British. This ended 700 years of Muslim control of Israel’s land and paved the way for the Jews’ return and the founding of the modern state of Israel.

In November 1947, the United Nations voted in favor of partitioning “Palestine” into Jewish and Arab states. The plan passed the UN General Assembly by a vote of 33-13, with 10 members, including Britain, abstaining.

In May 1948, the new state of Israel was announced by David Ben-Gurion, who became Israel’s first Prime Minister. Immediately, the fledgling nation, with no modern military to speak of, had to fight a war with the Arab League consisting of five well-equipped armies. After 18 months of fighting, Israel won the War of Independence against all odds. It is was God’s time for her to be back in the land to set the stage for the 70th Week of Daniel that begins with a peace covenant with the Antichrist and the building of the Third Temple (Daniel 9:27).

Another major influence in the great prophecy movement of the 20th century was C.I. Scofield and the Scofield Reference Bible.

Cyrus Ingerson Scofield (1843-1921), a popular Bible conference speaker, first broached the idea of his reference Bible to Arno Gaebelein at the Sea Cliff Bible Conference in 1901.

After the Civil War, Scofield served as a lawyer, state legislator in Kansas, and district attorney. He was forced to resign from the job of district attorney on 1872 “under a cloud of scandal.” He was drinking heavily. He left his wife and two daughters (a son, Guy, had died), and she obtained a legal

separation in 1877 for abandonment.

He had a conversion experience in 1879 at age 36. He did not reconcile with his wife and she divorced him in 1883. In 1884, he married Hettie Hall von Wartz, with whom he had one son, Noel Paul.

Scofield was taught dispensational theology by James Brookes, pastor of Walnut Street Presbyterian Church of St. Louis.

In spite of his divorce and remarriage, he pastored Congregational churches from 1882 to 1905. The first was the First Congregational Church of Dallas, Texas (1882-1896), later named Scofield Memorial Church. There, he had success among all levels of society. The membership grew from 14 to 812. Early in the ministry in Dallas, he had Bible studies in the home of a bar owner, and the man and his wife came to Christ. It was said that “she led probably seventy-five souls to Christ after her conversion.” He held two gospel Bible studies in various homes each week. “Such conversions, made in the presence of their neighbors, were genuine. There was no mere ‘joining the church’ formality, as so many people join the church today--like a social club. These people took Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour; they knew their neighbors would be watching them to see whether it was going to mean anything in changed lives; they trusted Christ to bring even that miracle to pass; and He was faithful to their trust, as always” (Charles Trumbull, *The Life Story of C.I. Scofield*).

Scofield worked with D.L. Moody and pastored the Trinitarian Congregational Church of East Northfield, Massachusetts, from 1895 to 1902. It was called “Mr. Moody’s Church” because the evangelist often preached there in earlier years. Northfield was the location of Moody’s Northfield School for girls and Mount Hermon School for boys. Here Scofield developed the Scofield Bible Correspondence Course which had been studied by 10,000 students by 1915. It was purchased by Moody Bible Institute.

Influenced by Hudson Taylor, Scofield founded the Central American Mission in 1890. As we have seen, the “fundamentalist” movement, impelled by the literal interpretation of prophecy and the awareness of the imminent return of Christ, stirred up a passion for evangelism and world missions.

Scofield co-founded, with Lewis Sperry Chafer, the *Philadelphia School of the Bible* in 1914. It was a two-year curriculum that focused on a survey of the English Bible. The zeal for Bible study, to make every believer an effectual Bible student, to train Christian workers in the Word of God, was an integral product of the fundamentalist revival.

Scofield’s greatest influence came through the *Scofield Reference Bible*. It has had an immeasurable influence in spreading dispensational theology and encouraging serious Bible study. Scofield did the bulk of the work, but he was assisted by prominent fundamentalist preachers such as James Gray, William Erdman, Arno Gaebelein, and A.T. Pierson.

The Scofield Bible was first published in 1909 by Oxford University Press, after the deans and presidents of the colleges voted unanimously for its publication. An improved edition that

appeared in 1917 became the standard “Old Scofield.”

One million copies were sold by 1930, two million by the end of World War II (1945), five million by the 21st century. It has been translated into German, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Hungarian, Swahili, and Russian. In 1967, a *New Scofield Bible* was published. It was produced by a committee that included Charles Feinberg, Frank Gaebelein, Allan MacRae, Alva J. McClain, Wilbur Smith, and John F. Walvoord. It had 700 new footnotes and 15,000 additional cross-references. In 2019, 110 years after its first appearance, both the Old and the New Scofield are still published by Oxford Press. In addition, since the Old Scofield is in the public domain, it has been printed by some private publishers, such as Barbour and Local Church Bible Publishers.

The *Scofield Reference Bible* is packed with Bible helps. It has introductions to each book of the Bible, dates of events at the top of each column (based on James Ussher), paragraph headings, word definitions, cross-references, notes, concordance, maps. It has a system of chain references that trace major topics through the Bible. Scofield had a gift of systematizing and encapsulating. The notes are succinct but thorough and a great many of them are very helpful, such as the studies on the Levitical offerings and the comments on the prophetic books. The paragraph headings in the Gospels include parallel passages. The *Scofield Reference Bible* is dispensational and conservative, meaning it rejects theological liberalism.

Unfortunately, the *1917 Scofield Reference Bible*, though based on the King James Bible, contains marginal notes supporting the critical Greek text, and the New Scofield of 1967 places the textual changes directly *into* the Bible text.

C.I. Scofield has been demonized by some, but though we disagree with him on many points, we are convinced that he knew the Lord and that his passion was to please the Christ who saved him and to help God’s people better understand the Bible. He viewed the Bible as God’s infallible Word, loved it, and wanted it to be understood by all of God’s people. Like any other of the Lord’s saints, he was just a sinner saved by grace and had plenty of “warts.” This can be said of the saints who appear in God’s Faith Hall of Fame in Hebrews 11. And this certainly can be said for every individual who appears in this history of Fundamentalism and fundamental Baptists, this author notwithstanding.

Lewis Sperry Chafer knew Scofield intimately and had a high regard for him and for the Scofield Reference Bible. After he founded Dallas Theological Seminary, Chafer told the students in about the 1930s,

“Now I hold that the Scofield Bible is one of God’s most precious gifts to the church in the last days. ... Don’t ever be a critic of a thing so wonderful as the Scofield Bible. I don’t doubt that you can find fault with something, maybe. There are one or two places where, if I had made the definition, I would have changed it. But that doesn’t amount to anything. I am not in a position to criticize Dr. Scofield. And when some of these critics that are rising up to find fault with it produce something that is as

*great a blessing to the church as Dr. Scofield’s Bible then I would be glad to listen to them. But when their own testimony is a vacuum and empty, I am not going to pay much attention to what they say. Oh, how many lives have been changed and how many have been blessed in their study of the Scripture by just following through. ... It may be my privilege sometime to take some chapel hour to speak on the personal relationship and my opinion of this man [Scofield] whom I think is the greatest Christian that I ever knew—without any doubt—marvelous Christian, so wonderfully balanced in all his thinking and in all his teaching. I think he was the incomparable teacher of the past generation. There is no other one to compare with him. Not another one” (“A Voice from the Past,” *Grace Gospel Press*).*

NEWS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS

➤ **US ARMY LABELS PRO-LIFE GROUPS AS TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS** - According to reports online, an anti-terrorism brief held at Fort Liberty (formerly Fort Bragg) has crossed a line that should infuriate any reasonable person. The presentation allegedly labeled several pro-life organizations, like National Right to Life and Operation Rescue, as “terrorist organizations.”

The brazenness of this presentation is mind-blowing. The slide in question was reportedly shown right after one about ISIS, an actual terror group in the Middle East.

The slide included an image of a license plate reading “IM4IT,” a common pro-life statement. Implying that everyday citizens displaying this plate are terrorists.

The slide detailed several qualifications and activities of such supposed terrorists—being pro-life, opposing Roe v. Wade, demonstrating and protesting (a First Amendment right), “Truth Displays,” and picketing. According to reports, it even falsely claimed that National Right to Life is responsible for bombing abortion clinics.

This entire fiasco is a glaring example of the military’s ideological corruption. It is a far-left attack on Christianity and a conservative, biblical worldview. This is where we are in America, when those who are tasked with preserving our freedoms are actively working to kill them.

RELIGION

emphasizes the importance of sacrifice, devotion, ritual, & how much people should do for God

THE GOSPEL

emphasizes the importance of the sacrifice & work of Jesus Christ



**IF SATAN WROTE
BIBLICALLY SOUND
WORSHIP MUSIC, WOULD
YOU SING IT IN CHURCH?**

I recall attending worship services where the worship leader and band members spent more time interacting with the crowd and showcasing their vocal range and guitar riffs than pointing us to the true object of Christian worship—Jesus Christ. It’s been a while, but it always had me thinking about how the line between a secular concert and a worship service has become perilously blurred in modern Evangelicalism.

In this glittering arena of contemporary “worship,” I find myself increasingly disheartened by what I see. Smoke machines and light shows eclipse the pulpit making me question the true focus of this industry. *Is it genuinely about honoring and glorifying God, or is it more about promoting the artists themselves?*

Sadly, it seems that much of what passes for worship today is little more than a platform for self-idolatry, driven by an insatiable desire for fame and fortune. In this industry, commercial success is vitally important, almost always overshadowing genuine devotion to God, let alone theological integrity.

Today’s worship music scene is riddled with examples where the focus shifts from God to the performer. Many so-called worship leaders craft songs that are steeped in emotional manipulation, designed to elicit a response from the audience that is more about the experience than about true worship.

Charity Gayle, an up-and-coming highly popular artist in this genre, exemplifies this trend. Her song “New Name Written Down in Glory” is a prime example, where the repetition of “I,” “me,” and “mine” dominates the lyrics, overshadowing any genuine reference to God. This self-centered approach to worship is not simply a quirk of modern music but a central tenet of it, and more importantly, a profound theological mistake that turns the focus away from God in all His glory and onto the individual and what “God can do for me.”

But what if some of this music is really biblically sound? It’s a hypothetical defense often raised by proponents of contemporary worship music, and it is a matter of fact that much contemporary music produced by such people is solid. However, this question itself demands a more thorough examination—one that brings us to the very heart of the matter:

**IF SATAN HIMSELF WROTE BIBLICALLY SOUND
WORSHIP MUSIC, WOULD YOU SING IT IN CHURCH?**

The short answer to this is, for most people, **they probably would.** They simply don’t care. But, for the more reasonable Christian, perhaps the one who actually (gasp?) believes the Bible, to answer this, we must first delve into the examples of contemporary worship music that, despite having the appearance

of doctrinal soundness, emanate from sources steeped in theological error and heresy.

Let’s take Charity Gayle again, whose association with the United Pentecostal Church (UPC) places her outside the bounds of biblical Christianity. The UPC denies the essential doctrine of the Trinity, a foundational cornerstone of orthodox Christianity, and presents a completely false God who is foreign to His revealed word. Therefore, any music emerging from this source, regardless of its lyrical content, carries the taint of heresy and should be avoided by true believers.

Similarly, **Bethel Church** in Redding, California, has built its reputation on emotionally charged music that overshadows sound theology. Bethel’s practices, such as “grave soaking,” the promotion of the heretical prosperity gospel, and their denial of various other core Christian doctrines, reveal a deep-seated departure from biblical Christianity. Their music, designed to create an emotional high, seduces the listener into an experience that prioritizes personal feelings over the worship of God.

Hillsong, another giant in the contemporary worship music industry, is equally culpable. Known for its polished productions and emotionally stirring music, Hillsong preaches rank heresy—the prosperity gospel that distorts the gospel into sensuality.

Hillsong’s focus on material success and personal well-being, usually at the expense of sound biblical truth, reveals a fundamental misalignment with God’s word. Hillsong’s music, while sometimes lyrically sound, interestingly serves as a gateway drug to their broader theological errors, leading believers astray.

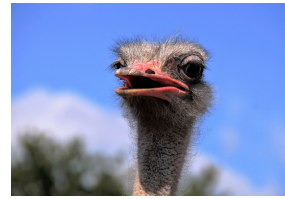
Even Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light, as the Apostle Paul warns in II Corinthians 11:14. ***If the most evil being in existence can deceive with the appearance of goodness, how much more can his followers—these so-called worship leaders—seduce with their seemingly sound music?*** The snare of emotional highs and the superficial appeal of contemporary worship songs mask the underlying spiritual poison and false teachings of their creators.

The argument that some of the music might have biblically true lyrics is moot. It really doesn’t matter and it is only used as a smokescreen by these aberrant movements to gain credibility while seducing believers into their false doctrines. By singing their songs, we inadvertently endorse their teachings and grant them a foothold in our congregations.

The danger lies not in the lyrics themselves but in the associations and influences that come with them. And the bottom line is that by allowing their music into your churches and your lives, you actually are singing and worshipping to music written by Satan.

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[Pastor’s Note: It must also be pointed out that the type of music used is also of primary importance. The doctrinal stance and/or morality of the songwriters & singers is, in addition to the words themselves, notwithstanding, if the music is SENSUAL in it’s design and presentation (IOW, rhythm-based), it defeats the stated purpose of “Christian music”. The popular idea that music, in and of itself, is “a-moral” is a lie from The Pit: sensuality (ie, carnality), in any form, is to be avoided by the Spirit-filled believer. - TWW]



**ONE OF THE THE
FRUITS OF HUMAN
DEPRAVITY IS:
STUPIDITY**

In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth, imbuing the world with order, reason, and morality, and most importantly, a desire to worship Him. However, the first tangible evidence of stupidity emerged in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve, deceived by the serpent, believed they could outsmart the Creator.

This single act of rebellion began a downward spiral in human irrationality that ultimately led to the entire human race, save Noah and his family, being completely destroyed by God. But it was more than just a breaking of God’s command—it was a profound display of unreasonableness—believing that they could hide from an omnipotent God.

This moment encapsulates a profound truth about human nature and its depraved condition: ignorance and irrational thinking are indeed fruits of depravity.

“But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption...” - II Peter 2:12

In this passage, the Apostle Peter is addressing false teachers who bring destructive ideologies into the Church leading people down a path of ultimate destruction and demonstrating the willful ignorance on display by such people. The reality here, however, is that unreasonable thinking isn’t limited to just false teachers, but to any self-worshipping fallen man who is in rebellion to God.

Throughout history, this pattern of irrationality has persisted, manifesting in myriad forms of rebellion against God’s sovereignty. When one rejects the divine foundation of truth—God’s self-revelation to creation—he embarks on a perilous path marked by confusion and folly. The unregenerate heart, poisoned by sin, becomes fertile ground for the most preposterous beliefs—chief among them the notion that humans can somehow conquer divine prerogatives or negate God’s omnipresence.

Scripture abounds with examples of such folly.

Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king who, in his arrogance, claimed glory that belonged to God alone led God to respond to his hubris by reducing him to a beast-like state, wandering and eating grass like an ox, until he acknowledged that the Most High rules over the kingdom of men (Daniel 4:28-37). This dramatic transformation exemplifies the extreme irrationality of believing in one’s own sovereignty over God’s.

Similarly, the **Pharaoh of Egypt** during the time of Moses displayed the utmost of irrational behavior. Despite witnessing the devastating plagues that systematically dismantled the Egyptian pantheon and demonstrated God’s power, Pharaoh’s heart

remained hard. His decision to pursue the Israelites into the Red Sea—where he and his army were drowned—puts on display the peril of opposing God’s declared will (Exodus 14:17-28).

This deceptive line of thinking does not merely pertain to spiritual matters but extends into cultural and moral arenas as well.

Consider the modern arguments justifying abortion or defending immoral lifestyles—these, too, are predicated on the feeble-minded notion that human will can override God’s law and eternal decree.

Such foolishness is not only ethically obscene but intellectually bankrupt, reflecting a deep-seated invasion of fatuity into the cultural conscience. The Bible truly couldn’t be any clearer: Proverbs 12:1 says, ***“Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish”*** (brutish=stupid).

The peril of such thinking is not limited to personal delusion but has societal implications. When communities and nations abandon God, they embrace a worldview that is fundamentally at odds with reality. This disconnect leads not only to moral decay but to a breakdown in rational discourse, where the most clearly self-destructive behaviors are celebrated as “freedoms” rather than recognized as bondage to sin—abortion, homosexuality, etc.

The compelling truth of God’s sovereignty, evident in every leaf and star, speaks to a reality far greater than our own designs. It is a constant reminder of the ultimate futility of human efforts to dethrone God. From the Garden of Eden to the present day, every attempt to do so has not only failed spectacularly but has also demonstrated the profound irrationality at the heart of fallen human reasoning.

We must beware of the poison of depraved thinking and seek instead the wisdom that comes from above. It is only through recognizing and submitting to God’s sovereign authority that we can hope to escape the cycle of irrational and morally bankrupt vain philosophies that threaten to undermine both individual lives as well as the collective society. As history has shown, every attempt to outsmart God is not only doomed to failure but is a clear testament to the intrinsic stupidity that sin begets.

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