



ZWTF

Zapping You Whenever Thoughts Flow

Volume 7, Issue 18

A winnable war against the Evil Empire, Part 2.

A bold plan to expose Christianity for what it is.



God understands the human psyche; He invented it. And so God knows that fatalism (or, worse yet, a prophetic picture of failure) would crush the evangelist.

As a case in point, consider the question the apostles asked Christ shortly before His ascension, then note our Lord's response—

Those, indeed, then, who are coming together, asked Him, saying, "Lord, art Thou at this time restoring the kingdom to Israel?" Yet He said to them, "Not yours is it to know times or eras which the Father placed in His own jurisdiction. But you shall be obtaining power at the

coming of the holy spirit on you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in entire Judea and Samaria, as far as the limits of the earth" (Acts 1:6-8).

What should He have told them? "Sorry, men, but the millennial kingdom and the regenerated earth you're dreaming of, over which you will rule, is still hundreds of years in the future. Your testimony is doomed to failure in your lifetime. Nevertheless, go out and preach with conviction." Jesus would never have told them that. These men were human beings with human emotions. Such news would have certainly dampened their enthusiasm, if not outright depressed them. Remember, these men believed that the kingdom was nigh. They believed that they were perhaps days away from being seated on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28).

Our Lord is wise. He deftly avoids the topic of time, engaging them rather with the immediate future and the task at hand: "You shall be obtaining power at the coming of the holy spirit..."

Now consider the case of Saul/Paul. When the risen Christ called this man, He made sure not to tell him, "Saul, after a lifetime of preaching, everyone you speak to in Asia will eventually forsake your message." Of course not. But neither did He tell him, "Saul, you're going to eventually become the best-selling author in history. Two thousand years from now, people will still be poring over your personal letters, studying them in minute detail, organizing conferences around them and praising God because of your faithful testimony." No. God neither crushes the evangelist nor distracts him with limelight. So Jesus simply tells Saul: "I shall be delegating you afar to the nations. And you shall be God's witness to all humanity of what you have seen and heard" (Acts 22:15,21).

Perfect. Not too little, not too much. But certainly a grand enough task to get the man (yes, Paul was a man) off his feet and moving.

“Wow,” Paul must have thought, “God has appointed me a witness to all humanity. A delegate to the nations.” Paul knew he would also suffer for Christ’s sake. But here was a grand promise that Paul kept in his heart throughout his life. Even first-century apostles, I believe, needed a grand purpose in life, something bigger than themselves to drive them out of bed in the morning.

All humanity. Meditate upon these words. These are the very words spoken to Paul by the glorified Christ. These are the words that gave Paul a mission in life. They kept him going in the swamp and in the jails. Paul believed these words literally, and they have literally become true; the Bible is the most widely-circulated book in history. And though Paul’s words have not been generally understood, nevertheless they continue to bear witness to all humanity.

Now, what if Jesus Christ woke you up in the middle of the night and said, “You will be a witness to all humanity of what you know concerning the truth.” Wouldn’t you be motivated? Ready to get to work? In this modern age, wouldn’t you then expect to end up on television? Or on the radio? Or the author of a book? Now, Jesus Christ did not speak these words to me. But I believe He has spoken to you, my readers—and to

the body of Christ collectively—in an important verse of Scripture that has heretofore been unappreciated. I will be sharing this verse with you shortly.

Scripture and the motivation factor. Put the two together. Paul knew that he was apprehended to fulfill Scripture, the same Scripture he had read as a boy, the same Scripture his forefathers had read before him. Hear Paul’s testimony in Romans 15:17-21—

I have, then, a boast in Christ Jesus, in that which is toward God. For I am not daring to speak any of what Christ does not effect through me for the obedience of the nations, in word and work, in the power of signs and miracles, in the power of God’s spirit, so that, from Jerusalem and around unto Illyricum, I have completed the evangel of the Christ. Yet thus I am ambitious to be bringing the evangel where Christ is not named lest I may be building on another’s foundation, but, according as it is written, “They who were not informed concerning Him shall see, And they who have not heard shall understand” (Isaiah 52:15).

Paul knew that he was the man apprehended by God to fulfill a Scripture written seven hundred years before his birth by the great prophet Isaiah. Now pause. Could



“All humanity.”

there possibly be a greater motivation for work than God calling one—in one’s lifetime—to not only fulfill a portion of Scripture, but to bring understanding to those who have never heard truth?

* * *

Now this know, that in the last days perilous periods will be present, for men will be selfish, fond of money, ostentatious, proud, calumniators, stubborn to parents, ungrateful, malign, without natural affection, implacable, adversaries, uncontrollable, fierce, averse to the good, traitors, rash, conceited, fond of their own gratification rather than fond of God; having a form of devoutness, yet denying its power. These, also, shun. For of these are those who are slipping into homes and are leading into captivity little women, heaped with sins, being led by various lusts and gratifications, always learning and yet not at any time able to come into a realization of the truth. Now, by the method by which Jannes and Jambres withstand Moses, thus these also are withstanding the truth, men of a depraved mind, disqualified as to the faith. But they shall not be progressing more, for their folly shall be obvious to all, as that of those also became. Now you fully follow me in my teaching, motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings, such as occurred to me in Antioch, in Iconium, in Lystra... (2 Timothy 3:1-11).

This is excerpted from a letter Paul wrote to Timothy in the summer of A.D. 68. Keep in mind that, specifically, it is a letter written to a fellow-worker to whom Paul is, in this very letter, imparting a solemn charge. Also be aware that the first three paragraphs of this particular chapter (according to my grouping) are prophetic, including the final sentence (which is the only positive note in the entire passage): *But they shall not be progressing more, for their folly shall be obvious to all, as that of those also became.*

Paul is here prophesying of a time that he believes will exist in Timothy’s day. This must be so, for Paul warns Timothy, personally, to “shun” those who have a form of devoutness but deny the power (a trait listed among those previous traits which will identify humans of the “last days,” when “perilous periods” would be present).

A few paragraphs after predicting perilous periods, Paul predicts his imminent death, telling Timothy that he has become “a libation, and the period of my dissolution is imminent” (2 Timothy 4:6). Is not Paul linking the oncoming peril with his death? This is a reasonable conclusion, for Paul had prophesied a few years earlier to

members of the Ephesian ecclesia—

Take heed to yourselves and to the entire flocklet, among which the holy spirit appointed you supervisors, to be shepherding the ecclesia of God, which He procures through the blood of His Own. Now I am aware that, after I am out of reach, burdensome wolves will be entering among you, not sparing the flocklet. And from among yourselves will arise men, speaking perverse things to pull away disciples after themselves. Wherefore watch, remembering that for three years, night and day, I cease not admonishing each one with tears. And now I am committing you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to edify and give the enjoyment of an allotment among all who have been hallowed (Acts 20:28-32).

Whether Paul’s “out of reach” refers to his imprisonment or his death, it hardly makes a difference. In Paul’s mind, his absence spelled the onset of apostasy—

For the era will be when they will not tolerate sound teaching, but, their hearing being tickled, they will heap up for themselves teachers in accord with their own desires, and, indeed, they will be turning their hearing away from the truth, yet will be turned aside to myths. Yet you (Timothy) be sober in all things; suffer evil as an ideal soldier of Christ Jesus; do the work of an evangelist; fully discharge your service (2 Timothy 4:3-5).

Again I say that Paul fully expected this era of apostasy to fall upon Timothy’s head. For you will notice that immediately after predicting these times (here, as well as in 3:1-8), he exhorts his friend, “Yet you be sober in all things; suffer evil as an ideal soldier of Christ Jesus; do the work of an evangelist; fully discharge your service.” This would be a needless charge in an era of sobriety and good.

Which brings me to the unappreciated passage of Scripture, already quoted. It is 2 Timothy 3:9—*But they shall not be progressing more, for their folly shall be obvious to all, as that of those also became.* This was a purely prophetic utterance, and Paul waited for just the right moment to disclose it. It would have come as good news—and great motivation—for Timothy. If Paul’s scribe could write in bold, Paul would have demanded it here. This sentence is good news and great motivation for us too, as you will soon see.

First of all, who are the “they” and the “their” of



this passage? Return to the previous page and read the context. “They” are the ones who are “having a form of devoutness yet denying its power.” Such a trait can only characterize a religious entity, for only such possesses “a form of devoutness.” It is the same congregation of people Timothy is instructed to shun in verse 6. This group is further described (in verses 6-7) as “those who are slipping into homes and are leading into captivity little women, heaped with sins, being led by various lusts and gratifications, always learning and yet not at any time able to come into a realization of the truth.” They are also “withstanding the truth, men of a depraved mind, disqualified as to the faith (verse 8).” These are the most insidious of those comprising the perilous periods, the same who “shall not be progressing more, for their folly shall be obvious to all...”

(A formal definition of “insidious” is helpful here: “Operating or proceeding inconspicuously but with grave effect.”)

After telling Timothy that perilous periods were ahead, and that among the worst of humanity would be religious frauds who, posing as truth-tellers, would actually withstand the truth and captivate many with their falsehoods, Paul tells his friend the good news, namely, that these “shall not be progressing more, for

their folly shall be obvious to all.” Immediately following, Paul exhorts Timothy, “Now you fully follow me in my teaching, motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings, such as occurred to me in Antioch, in Iconium, in Lystra: persecutions such as I undergo, and out of them all the Lord rescues me.”

What a perfect way to inspire an evangelist: 1) present an oncoming situation that will require a well-trained evangelist, namely, religious fraud, and 2) predict a time subsequent to this when the fraudulent “will not be progressing more, for their folly shall be obvious to all.” Now, what would young Timothy think—seeing as how Paul is throughout this letter charging him to strongly proclaim the evangel in the face of evil odds—but that he would be instrumental in effecting Paul’s latter prophecy, that is, that he would be used by God to expose the folly of the religious frauds. This scenario becomes even more probable as we note the following exhortation sandwiched between two descriptions (3:5-9 and 4:3-4) of religious apostasy—

I am conjuring you in the sight of God and Christ Jesus, Who is about to be judging the living and the dead, in accord with His advent and His kingdom: Herald the word. Stand by it, opportunely, inopportunely, expose, rebuke, entreat, with all patience and teaching (2 Timothy 4:1-20.)

When will this great event of 2 Timothy 3:9 take place? Did it occur in Timothy's day? Proceed slowly here. The first thing we need to see is that it will happen prior to the conclusion of this eon. If this "folly becoming obvious to all" should be relegated in time to some august event subsequent to (or at the very conclusion of) this current eon, such as 1) the former resurrection, 2) the return of Christ to the earth, or 3) the great white throne judgment—as one person has suggested to me—then Paul's exhortation is instantly devitalized. Timothy already knew, surely, that Jesus Christ would one day subject all enemies under His feet (1 Corinthians 15:25). He already knew, through Paul, that God would one day become "all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:28). How pale is the prophecy that "their folly shall become obvious to all" in light of these other truths—*until one takes into consideration the motivational effect of anticipated success.*

Never mind that one's assigned enterprise might not immediately succeed, or that an interim failure may be part of God's hidden counsel. God is not so mean as to dangle failure before His flesh and blood servants. Perhaps Jesus alone was able to endure the specter of immediate loss, sustained only by the far-off goal of "all in all." On second thought, God gave Christ the assurance that He would rise to immortality only three days after His death. Moses went to Egypt knowing that he would successfully lead the people from Egypt (Exodus 3:8), and so he was able to see through and be encouraged during the intervening plagues and the resistance of Pharaoh. Likewise, Joseph knew he would be great *in his lifetime*, a fact that sustained him through many trials.

When Paul was in Corinth on a missionary journey (Acts, chapter 18), the Jews resisted and blasphemed him in the synagogue (4-6). Naturally, Paul was shaken. But the Lord said to Paul in the night, through a vision—

Fear not! but be speaking; and you should not be silent, because I am with you, and no one shall place hands on you to ill-treat you, because there are many people of Mine in this city (9-10).

The Lord could have told Paul, "Don't worry. At the consummation of the eons, everyone in this city will be part of the 'all in all.'" He could have said, "Don't worry, Paul. You won't always need to fear a beating, because someday your body will be changed and made immortal." Wonderful comforts, but a tad distant for a good night's sleep *tonight*. The Lord knew that. So rather than engage Paul with a rosy though *distant* future, the Lord comforts him with an agreeable landscape right before his eyes, namely, "I am with

you, and no one will ill-treat you in Corinth. I have many people here—*this night, right now.*"

Is it any wonder that Paul decided to stay in Corinth a year and six months? (Acts 18:11).

Now let us join Paul en route to Rome on an Italian ship. As the ship founders in the grip of a nor'easter, the Lord could have said to Paul, "Remember, Paul, 'as in Adam all are dying, thus also in Christ shall all be vivified.'" That Scriptural fact was true enough. But the Lord, merciful to Paul in the night of his struggle, sends an angelic messenger to tell him that all on the ship would be saved through the storm. This gives Paul the courage and energy needed for the hour, and Paul thus delivers to the crew a revitalizing pep talk (Acts 27:21-26).

I am thinking, too, of the words our Lord imparted to Martha, sister of Lazarus, after the death of her brother—

Jesus is saying to her, "Your brother will be rising." Martha is saying to Him, "I am aware that he will be rising in the resurrection in the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who is believing in Me, even if he should be dying, shall be living. And everyone who is living and believing in Me, should by no means be dying for the eon."



A.E. Knoch writes in his commentary—

Our Lord is seeking to comfort Martha by that best of all consolations, the vivification of all His own at His presence, long before “the last day,” at the very commencement of the millennial eon.

Why is it that we believers today are so suspicious of good news and encouragement? Where God would comfort us today, we have trained ourselves to expect good only “at the end,” when God has concluded His purpose of the eons. We sigh like Martha and say, “Well, God will certainly spread His evangel in the great blue beyond.” *Look at us.* We are so Consummation oriented, that is, our minds so far-flung to the future, that we miss good tidings (2 Timothy 3:9) in this current era. Scripture pictures for us a God Who encourages His soldiers by the hour, dangling success before them as they work. Yet we picture a God Who intones, “Your work will be a practical failure.”

We humans are easily discouraged, and God knows that. Paul was no exception to this rule, and neither was Joseph, Moses, Timothy, Martha—not even Jesus Christ Himself. Are we, then, exceptions? Hardly. In Martha’s case, Jesus not only gave her an early expectation of resurrection, He raised her brother that hour! God ever imparts motivation to go on, not that we might find strength to rise from the grave ten thousand years from now, but that we might find strength to rise from our beds tomorrow.

This is the purpose of Paul’s prophecy in 2 Timothy 3:9. Like all that has gone before it in verses 1-8, it is a phenomenon to be expected in this eon. Timothy, I believe, expected it to occur in his lifetime. That it did not occur *in toto* would not have dampened his enthusiasm, because he expected it to occur.

I believe that we are living in the era of the fulfillment of 2 Timothy 3:9. Further, I believe that we are the people God has prepared to initiate it. Paul sensed this day, Timothy sensed it, Thomas Allin sensed it. But these men were born out of season. How many of the prophets longed to see Messiah? Yet one prophet did live to see Him: John the Baptist.

Today, the time is ripe and the players are set for the fulfillment of this prophecy. A day is coming, and perhaps now is, when all who have heard of eternal torment, or who have been affected for the worse by this awful teaching, will come to the realization that this teaching is a lie.

This realization will come through education. The

education will come through popular literature. It will become common knowledge throughout all circles of the Christian religion and among any who have heard of the Christian religion, that the doctrine of eternal torment is false. And thus the dream of Thomas Allin, that “a cruel Deity watching unmoved to all eternity the agonies, moral or physical, of His creatures, will seem to our children but an evil dream” will come to pass in this eon.

This does not mean that these doctrines will cease to be stubbornly taught by those who know it to be wrong. It does not mean that those to whom the religious folly



“This realization will come through education.”

becomes obvious will become believers. I am not so naive, and neither should you be, to assume that some great revival lies ahead, or that millions will come to Christ. It may be so, but this is not the prophecy of 2 Timothy 3:9. The prophesy of 2 Timothy 3:9 is that the folly of religious hypocrisy will become obvious to all. Millions, in our lifetime, will come to roll their eyes at the medieval Torture-God, not out of mere disdain for the sheer ridiculousness of it, but because it has been proven wrong.

Many, I'm sure, will be tempted to turn to the book of Revelation to "disprove" the prophetic optimism of Paul in 2 Timothy 3:9. This must not be done. The events of the book of Revelation occur subsequent to the time Paul writes about. The body of Christ, today, acts as "the detainer" (2 Thessalonians 2:6), keeping great lawlessness at bay. The members of Christ's body are the only ambassadors of God's conciliation to the world (2 Corinthians 5:18-21). As these members awaken to their charge, the prophecy of 2 Timothy 3:9 will come to pass. What happens to the newly-educated world after the body of

"Directly ahead for the body of Christ lies a time of unprecedented success in teaching."

Christ is snatched away (1 Thessalonians 4:17) is not the concern of the body at present. The body has heretofore over-contemplated the doom and gloom prophecies of Revelation, making them cast a shadow across their own era. This has been a terrible mistake. Directly ahead for the body of Christ lies a time of unprecedented success in teaching. That this is *followed* by doom and gloom is not the fodder of present affection. Many must hear truth. Many more, I suspect, must come to realize their membership in Christ's body. Through God's spirit, we will accomplish this. Let us rise, therefore, from our pessimistic malaise and put 2 Timothy 3:9 where it belongs: *before* the book of Revelation.

The results of people coming to disbelieve the doctrine of eternal torment will be profound. Recall the words of Thomas Allin—"Thus it is that by this shocking creed (i.e. eternal torment) the moral tone is lowered all round, wherever it is accepted." The reverse, then, must also be true, that where the shocking creed of eternal torment comes to be disbelieved, the moral tone will be raised all around. As already noted, this does not mean we will become a nation of believers. It does mean that we will become a nation that no longer believes in an insane God. But such a revelation cannot but relieve the minds and improve the morals of those who understand it. Which brings us to this shocking conclusion: the success that James Dobson and others desire (a moralistic nation) occurs as James Dobson and these others *fail* in their misguided evangelistic efforts.

* * *

I used to think that heralding the evangel "inopportunistly" (2 Timothy 4:2) meant heralding it in the face of failure. Now I see that it means heralding it when success seems improbable. What a difference.

* * *

I have been comparing our exposure and rebuke of the evil teachings of Christianity to Ronald Reagan's nomination of the Soviet Union as "an evil empire." As members of the body of Christ, however, we can do more than any American President or any other head of state has ever done to affect (and effect) morality in this world. We can do it through exposing religious hypocrisy and educating the world about God. If this is not practical, then I don't know what is. You will excuse me, then, if I do not quit this work to deliver pizza.

* * *

I will never forget when, many moons ago in the formative years of this work, a man from California contacted me two weeks before Christmas and asked me what he could do to help the cause. This man worked in television and he entertained great visions of this truth going forward through that medium. I told him that I shared his vision, and that we could eventually manipulate this medium to forward truth. But I apprised him that the cause needed some literature first, and that I was planning on writing influential books. Then I told him that what the cause really needed right now was a roll of postage stamps.





“The revolution was back on.”

At that time, I was very much out of money, having \$39 to my name. I still had one or two outstanding bills for the month, and needed desperately to contact my readership. I had stockpiled five rolls of stamps, but I needed six. All I needed was one more roll of 33-cent postage stamps.

I got the feeling that the man didn't want to hear this. He probably didn't believe me anyway—that anyone could be so freaking poor. He wanted to do something exciting, something that would really “count.” He did not realize that a roll of postage stamps was very exciting to me. He did not realize that, as improbable as it may have seemed, a lack of one roll of United States postage stamps was, at that time, hindering the revolution.

Not too many people ask me specifically what I need. When they do ask, I tell them. This man asked and I told him. But again, I think he thought I was joking. I thought he might send the stamps anyway, but he didn't. Someone else eventually sent the stamps.

The revolution was back on.

* * *

My wife was in the kitchen back in those days, sitting down at the counter and brooding. I was pacing the floor. It was July 8, 1993. I was three months away from

quitting my lucrative job with the Postal Service. In three months, I would begin publishing a newsletter for which I then had no subscribers. I would, in essence, be beginning my life's work.

“Where will the subscribers come from?” my wife asked.

I didn't know, exactly. But I knew that they were out there. I told her, “There are people out there, living and breathing right now, who we are destined to meet. We are destined to meet them and to know them, and they are destined to meet and to know us. We just haven't met them yet. But they're out there—I know they are—and God has prepared everything and everyone ahead of time.”

I was right. They *were* out there. And here you are.

Now I believe that there are many others “out there” who *we* are destined to meet, and who need to meet us. They are living and breathing right now, chosen to hear this truth, though not yet aware of it.

“How shall they be hearing apart from one heralding?”

* * *

God has placed us in a unique position in eonian history. Let us, together, walk in the light that God has imparted to us. —MZ

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