

**This is an era of grace,
not “nice.”**

—Martin Zender

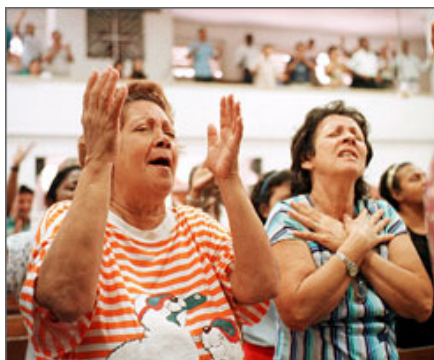
Martin Zender's Clanging Gong News

*“If I know all mysteries and all knowledge, but have no love,
I am a clanging gong” --1 Cor. 13:1-2*



Two out of three isn't bad.

Love truth—or die for the eon Seeking emotional fulfillment is not seeking truth.



“And now you are aware what is detaining, for him to be unveiled in his own era. For the secret phase of lawlessness is already operating. Only when the present detainer may be coming to be out of the midst, then will be unveiled the lawless one (whom the Lord Jesus will despatch with the spirit of His mouth and will discard by the advent of His presence), whose presence is in accord with the operation of Satan, with all power and signs and false miracles, and with every seduction of injustice among those who are perishing, because they do not receive the love of the truth for their salvation.

“And therefore God will be sending them an operation of deception, for them to believe the falsehood, that all may be judged who do not believe the truth, but delight in injustice.”

—2 Thess. 2:6-12

This passage is freighted with potentially disturbing truth. As I point out the more shocking aspects of it, I challenge you to believe what is said. Some of you will struggle with your own ideas of what is right or wrong. You will struggle with what does and does not make sense to you. But what does or does not make sense to you has no bearing at all on God's testimony. The challenge is to believe God's testimony. Believing God's testimony means the difference between eonian life and eonian death.

Though the events of this passage occur in the last days, what God does in this pas-

sage gives us a glimpse into His *modus operandi* throughout the three evil eons.¹

God sends deception

When I point out to people that God Himself sends deception, most people respond, “But God would never do that.” And yet—unlike many other Scripture passages—this verse could not be much clearer:

“And therefore God will be sending them an operation of deception, for them to believe the falsehood, that all may be judged who do not believe the truth, but delight in injustice.”

God sends deceptions so that people who do not love truth will have an opportunity to “show their colors” and be judged by Him as a demonstration to the universe of the ugliness of unbelief. God exposes the ugliness of unbelief so that the beauty of belief may be apparent. It is the contrast principle. Consider the following passage as corroborative evidence:

“For it must be that there are sects also among you, that those also who are qualified may be becoming apparent among you.”

—1 Cor. 11:19

There *are* qualified people who embrace Christ rather than sects (that is, denominations). Without sects in the world (“Baptist,” “Catholic,” “Methodist,” “Church of Christ,” etc.), the sect-hater would have no opportunity to embrace Christ *instead* of the sect. Because it delights God that believers embrace His Son rather than a sect, God Himself sends the sects. Note: “There *must* be sects among you.” God may well use others to bring about these sects (Constantine, Luther, Wesley, Herbert Armstrong, Satan, etc.), but “all is of God” (2 Cor. 5:18).

“They do not receive the love of the truth for their salvation.”

—2 Thess. 2:10

It is true that love of the truth must be received, and that only God can give it. It is also true that love of the truth is required

for one to be able to embrace truth, and therefore be saved. Thus, God Himself decides who will believe and be saved for the eons, and who will not.

“To whom He will, He is merciful, yet whom He will, He is hardening.”

—Rom. 9:18

Most of my readers are aware of my belief that, due to the success of Christ on the cross, all humanity will eventually be returned to God justified, including Adolph Hitler and Joel Osteen. I base this belief, not on wishful thinking, but rather on passages such as the following:

“For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just.”

—Rom. 5:19

The key here is that the entire race shall *eventually* be justified. In the meantime, however, there are many, many unbelievers who will miss large portions of God's future operations; most of humanity will not live until the 1,000-year kingdom of Christ on Earth has run its course, at which time they will stand before the great white throne to be judged (Rev. 20:5, 11, 12).

Religious unbelievers

What is not generally known about unbelief is that there are just as many religious unbelievers (Joel Osteen, for instance) as there are worldly unbelievers (Adolph Hitler)—possibly more. Being a part of a sect (“church”), or wearing a cross, or sporting a metal fish appliqué on one's



¹ For teaching on the eons, click on the following two links: http://martinzender.com/Zenderature/the_eons.htm
http://martinzender.com/ZenderTalk/Fun_With_Eons/fun_with_eonsfr.htm

car, or talking in Christian clichés, or writing bestselling books, or crying during so-called “worship music,” have nothing to do with belief. In fact, all of these things work against belief by captivating the soul (the emotions) rather than the spirit, and by emphasizing what one does for Christ, rather than what Christ does for the world.

To be a true believer, one believes in the sufficiency of Christ. Most sectarians, however, rely, not on Christ, but on their belief in Christ. (That is, they seek to establish their own righteousness; they think belief comes from a well of belief within them, rather than from God.) The Christian religion is no exception; witness the “turn or burn” philosophy, which is the essence—the “Good News”—of this religious sect. Thus, most members of religious sects are unsaved. True, they will be saved eventually—when salvation becomes a matter of sight rather than belief—but they are not saved now. (See sidebar at right.)

It’s just another religion

The difference between the Christian religion and, say, Buddhism, is that the Christian religion is whitewashed with the name of Christ. Thus, it is far more deceptive than Buddhism, and deceives far more people. Unlike Buddhism, Christianity



uses the name—the only name—whereby humanity is saved: Jesus. Unfortunately, however, Christianity teaches that Jesus merely made it possible for humans to save *themselves* by believing in Him. If this were true, then Jesus *Himself* saved no one.

SIGHT, NOT FAITH

Now is the time for faith. Now is the time when deceptions and religions (sorry for the redundancy) reign. Now is the time when God must give faith—that is, “a conviction concerning things that are not being observed”—in order to overcome the visible, emotion-based deception known as religion. Things will be different at the great white throne (see Revelation, chapter 20). There, humans will stand before God, and religions will have been relegated to the ash heap of history. There, no faith will be necessary; *everyone* will behold the Deity face-to-face and say: “My Lord, and my God!”



They don’t love the truth

Few members of the Christian sect love truth. Instead, they love—

“Power and signs and false miracles.”

—2 Thess. 2:9

The common denominator of all religions is the power (generated from within) that saves a person and keeps him or her saved. As the church sign I saw recently read:

“Your choice determines where you will spend eternity.”

What power! That about sums it up. So much for the cross determining one’s destiny.

Signs and false miracles

Then there are signs and false miracles; the Pentecostal arm of the Christian sect is all about signs, and 100% of the miracles it experiences are false. Do you want a miracle? The miracle God doles out these days is faith. If anyone has faith today—in spite of and in the face of the many religions that cover the world like weeds cover a field—it is truly a miracle of God.

Power and signs and false miracles that make people feel good about themselves and their personal faith are—

“In accord with the operation of Satan.”

—2 Thess. 2:9

And yet it is God Who sends Satan—

“For them to believe the falsehood, that all may be judged who do not believe the truth, but delight in injustice.”

—2 Thess. 2:12

Speaking of injustice

That people could be burned consciously forever (i.e. “eternal torment”) by God for not believing in a God Who refused to give them belief would be the height of divine injustice. If eternal torment were true, Christians (I am speaking of Calvinists and Arminians alike) would be first in the fire. Few humans turn more well-meaning seekers from God than those who boast Christ’s name and yet do not know Him. (This is what is meant by, “taking the Lord’s name in vain”; it has absolutely nothing to do with cursing, but with claiming the name of the Savior while remaining ignorant of His saving.) While Christians claim salvation to be, “no merit of our own,” they condemn others to hell for being too unmeritorious to believe. This is the height of hypocrisy. Every Christian sect speaks of “the love of God,” and includes in that love the capability of God to torture billions of His children forever. That members of the Christian sect hold tenaciously to this teaching proves that they “delight in injustice.” They *say*, “We believe God,”



but they don’t believe God because God never taught the doctrine of eternal torment. *That* teaching is a doctrine of Satan (1 Tim. 4:1). Therefore, Christians believe Satan, not God.

God Himself twisted Scripture

Scripture, correctly translated, teaches truth. Therefore, it teaches neither the doctrine of “free will,” nor that of “eternal torment.” There are many passages, however, that at first glance *seem* to teach these lies. For instance:

► The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Luke, chapter 16.

► The judgment of the nations in Matthew, chapter 25.

► The lake of fire passages in Revelation, chapter 20.

► The passage, “Choose this day whom you will serve,” in Joshua 24:15.

In order to read these passages rightly, one must grasp the fact that **a)** the Rich Man and Lazarus account is a parable, **b)** Matthew chapter 25 describes the 1,000-year judgment of nations rather than the eternal fate of individuals, **c)** the lake of fire is the second death, and death is eventually abolished, and **d)** the “choose this day whom you will serve” passage (Joshua 24:15) assumes a relative viewpoint rather than an absolute viewpoint.

One may object: “It is not right of God to make Scripture so hard!” He does not make it hard, but He does make it so that one has to love truth to get it. It does take some degree of intelligence to read Scripture rightly, but God gives this task to teachers. Not all are teachers. Teachers sweat through the Greek and study figures of speech so that students may receive truth sweatlessly. Teachers are blessed because of their sweat; learners are blessed because they love truth enough to seek it.

Who doesn't love the truth?

► Those attending church for social reasons

► Those attending church for self-affirmation

► Those content to follow others rather than seek for themselves

► Those longing to be accepted by others

► Those who despise making waves

► Those afraid to be different

► Those who think to themselves,

“The last thing I want to do is look stupid.”



For these kinds of people, being a part of and accepted by a loving community is much more important than truth; it makes them *feel* good. Historical and Scriptural precedent dictates, however, that truth abides *outside* the mainstream. (Consider the case of our Lord, the disciples, and the apostle Paul—among others.) Why is this so? God makes sure it is so. It is another “litmus test”; it is another way of differentiating to the universe the lovers of truth from the lovers of self-confirming society.

Dumbed down: Way down

Americans, especially, are over-awed by formal education. When confronted with a degree (Ph.D, MBA, M.D., M.Div., etc), we are unreasonably dumbstruck and apt to jettison common sense. Case-in-point is the dermatology profession's insistence that **a)** the sun causes skin cancer, and **b)** the best way to combat skin cancer is to slather skin with man-made chemicals. Because we tend to believe what “educated” people tell us, we smear ourselves in laboratory poison and limit our exposure to the source of all life. Want common sense? SHOP AND COMPARE:

SUN



- Created by God
- Source of all life
- Type of Christ

SUNSCREEN



Avobenzone, Parsol 1789, Dioxybenzone (UVB, UVAII), Ecamsule, Menthyl Anthranilate, Meradimate, Oxybenzone (benzophenone, benzophenone-3), Sulisobenzene (UVB, UVAII). Aminobenzoic acid, Cinnamates (octyl methoxycinnamate (OMC), Ethylhexyl p-ethoxycinnamate, Cinoxate, Dioxybenzone (UVB, UVAII), Ensulizole, Homosalate, Octocrylene, Octinoxate, Octisalate, Oxybenzone (UVB, UVAII), Octyl dimethyl paba, Padimate O, Para-aminobenzoic acid (PABA), Salicylates (octyl salicylate (OCS), Sulisobenzene (UVB, UVAII), Trolamine salicylate.

Gee, which one causes cancer?

How dumbed-down and lemming-like has our society become when it slathers dozens of laboratory chemicals with un-pronounceable names upon its skin (because it has been told to do so by “educated” people) in a desperate attempt to protect itself from the life-giving celestial orb created by God for health and healing?

Time for Church!



The lot of lemmings

Lemmings are rodents that supposedly run off cliffs together, committing mass suicide. This is what happens, metaphorically, to members of religious sects. Because they are continually surrounded by each other, and mindlessly accept whatever they are taught by institutionally trained “experts,” they get the sense that they are “all right.” And yet they are not. They are simply all wrong at the same time and in the same place.

One of the largest religious sects, Christianity, is so deceived that it thinks *its* members are the only ones who will be with God for eternity. This sort of exclusivity (the eternal variety) is a sure sign of religious sectarianism.

The common lot of humanity is death. But—thanks to Christ—the common lot of humanity is also eternal life. The difference between those who believe truth and those who don't is timing; it is a difference of *when* each person emerges from death, into life. Those who believe now emerge early; they live—and some of them reign with Christ—for two future eons. The rest of humankind remain dead until the great white throne judgment. After this judgment, some go to the new earth as mortals, some to the second death. When the second death is abolished, however, all will have eternal life.

For now, the mass of humanity—religious and otherwise—is rushing over the cliff of death. The only thing able to stop this tide is the miracle of God-given faith. For now, God gives faith to few. Later, He will give it to all.

If you have escaped lemminghood, thank Him. ■