

SPECIAL INTERLUDE

Revisiting Church History In Light Of The 500th Anniversary Of The Protestant Reformation

VI. Philadelphia: The Fundamentalist Church - Holding Fast To The Biblical Faith

(Revelation 3:7-13)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Recent polls show that "(f)or the first time in 35 years, only 38% of Americans support a biblical view of humanity's creation" (Answers, Nov.-Dec., 2017, p. 47) and "one in four Americans (24%) believes the Bible is the Word of God to be taken literally . . . the lowest level of belief in the Bible in 40 years," *Ibid.*, Sept.-Oct., 2017, p. 44.

Need: *So we ask, "In view of current public opinion on man's creation and the Bible, what should we do?!"*

- I. **In Revelation 3:8, Christ identified the Church of Philadelphia as the 19th and 20th century Biblically conservative Fundamentalists, and in Revelation 3:7 He revealed that they were upright, but possessed only a little strength and needed His help countering errant Liberal Theology (as follows):**
 - A. In Rev. 3:7, Jesus claimed to be the "Holy" and "True," a title used elsewhere of God in the N. T. *only* at Rev. 6:10 (Moult. & Ged., Con. to the Grk. Test., 1974, p. 42) as the Avenger of His deceased servants' persecutors.
 - B. Christ also claimed to have the keys of David (Rev. 3:7) sovereignly in the Davidic kingdom to open and shut doors, alluding to Isaiah 22:22 where Jerusalem government official Eliakim was given these keys in his era.
 - C. Rev. 3:8 notes Jesus gave this group an open door [His worldwide Davidic, messianic power] to minister [world missions] (Rev. 3:8a), for it had a little strength, *some* reliance on God (2 Tim. 1:16-2:1) and it had kept His Word and not denied His name, His reputation as God (Rev. 3:8b,c).
 - D. This group was thus the 19th & 20th century Biblical Conservatives [and later "Fundamentalists"] who held to (1) Christ's virgin birth, (2) His bodily resurrection, (3) the inerrancy of Scripture, (4) Christ's substitutionary atonement and (5) His imminent, bodily Second Coming in contrast to Liberal Theology. (Terry Mortenson, "Biblical Interp.," 7/14/2011; answersingenesis.org; Wm. Sweet, The Story of Rel. in America, 1973, p. 407)
- II. **Christ pledged to vindicate Fundamentalists before Liberal Theology foes who slandered them, Rev. 3:9:**
 - A. Jesus claimed that those who held to Liberal Theology belonged to Satan's synagogue, for they called themselves "Jews" like some did in the Rev. 2:9 Smyrna era, but **lied** in doing so as follows (Rev. 3:9a):
 1. Besides not trusting in Christ as the Rev. 2:9 Jews did [Rom. 2:28-29], the Rev. 3:9a,b "Jews" *also* "lied," seen in their coming to bow before Fundamentalists, alluding to Isa. 60:10-14 where **only Gentiles** do that!
 2. To explain, Liberal Theology taught the "Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man" by denying the authority and literal interpretation of the Bible that in turn led to their denying (a) Jews as being God's chosen people and denying (b) salvation by faith and (c) Christ's atonement for sin. (theopedia.com)
 - B. When Fundamentalists opposed Liberal Theology's "Fatherhood of God" view to defend the need for men to trust in Christ to become God's children, Liberal Theologians slandered Fundamentalists as being "unloving."
 - C. Christ thus offered to bring those in Liberal Theology to Fundamentalists to admit **He loved Fundamentalists**, and many in Liberal Theology churches were saved and left for Fundamentalist Churches! (Rev. 3:9b; *Ibid.*)
- III. **Liberal Theology also slandered the Scripture writers in applying German rationalism and Darwinian evolution, so God fittingly vindicated His writers in greatly judging these entities, Revelation 3:9-10, 7a:**
 - A. The Rev. 3:9 verb "lie" (*pseudomai*, U. B. S. G. N. T., 1966, p. 844) is also used by Christ elsewhere about sinners *only* in Matt. 5:11-12 (*Ibid.*, Moulton & Geden, p. 1021) of the *slander* His disciples and the O. T. prophets faced. The disciples wrote the N. T., so such slander is what **Liberal Theologians** did in attacking the words and characters of **ALL of Scripture's writers**. (cf. Zon. Pict. Ency. Bible, v. One, p. 584-591)
 - B. Then, (1) Christ's "word of My patience" (Rev. 3:10a) refers to 2 Peter 3:9 that, via 2 Peter 3:1-6 in its context **counters uniformitarianism** in Darwinian evolution (*Ibid.*, B. K. C., N. T., p. 875), what Liberal Theologians used to deny the Bible's credibility (*Ibid.*, Z. P. E. B., p. 591), pure creation (cf. 2 Peter 3:5) and the worldwide Genesis Flood (cf. 2 Peter 3:6). (2) Thus, God's offer to "keep thee from the hour of temptation" (Rev. 3:10b) points to 2 Peter 2:1-9 where God punishes false teachers while preserving the godly. (3) The N. T. Grk. word for "world" in Rev. 3:10b is *oikoumene* (*Ibid.*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T.), **but as the rapture does not occur until after the Laodicean Church era, oikoumene is not the "world"** upon which the Great Tribulation comes, but its **local** definition of **"Roman Empire,"** Arndt & Ging., A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 563-564.
 - C. So as (1) God judged Sodom and Gomorrah (2 Peter 2:6-7), He sent WWI and WWII on esp. **Europe**, the *old "Roman Empire"* (N. Bendavid, "A Century of Scars Linger From Europe's Great War," The Wall Str. Jour.,

June 27, 2014, p. A1) for adopting German rationalism and Darwin's theory of evolution in Liberal Theology *that slandered Scripture's authors!* (2) Germany suffered most (Compt. Ency., v. 22, p. 281) for (a) this error and (b) Hitler's persecution of Jews. (3) Hitler & Mussolini used evolution to wage war, thinking this would purge Europe of "weak" peoples (B. Davidheiser, Ev. & the Chr. Faith, 1976, p. 352-353), so God let Europe eat the fruit of the theory of evolution it adopted. (4) Yet, as He preserved Lot, God kept the Fundamentalists' homeland, mainly America, out of both world wars. [Britain had some Fundamentalists, so though bombed, Britain was not invaded.] (5) 2 Peter was so badly slandered in Liberal Theology (Ibid., Z. P. E. B., v. Four, p. 727), Christ applied 2 Peter 3:1-10 and 2:1-9 to honor the Fundamentalists' *defense* of 2 Peter and indicate the *reality* of 2 Peter 3:10 that the universe will pass away in a *literal* fireball by the dropping of 2 atomic bombs to end WWII! (7) Japan was God's target for the bombs since it attacked the U. S. Territory [not a state until 1959] of Hawaii on Dec. 7, 1941, land too close to the Fundamentalists' homeland that God wanted kept safe.

- IV. **God then warned Fundamentalists to hold to their stands lest they lose their crown, a huge need as many Evangelicals NOW compromise on evolution, Scripture and interpreting Scripture [Postmodernism denies the existence of absolutes, so many evangelical leaders influenced by it today avoid handling "debated" Bible passages. (Cameron Buettel, "The Arrogance of Uncertainty," Oct. 4, 2016; gty.org)], Rev. 3:11!**
- V. **For UPHOLDING the REPUTATIONS of the SCRIPTURE WRITERS with their FIVE stands, God promised to enhance the Fundamentalist OVERCOMERS' REPUTATIONS FIVE ways, Rev. 3:12-13:**
- A. One - The overcomer would be made a "pillar" in God's temple, the universal Church (2 Cor. 6:16; Rev. 3:12a) and "pillar" is used elsewhere of believers *only* in Gal. 2:9 of Peter, James and John who gave the right hand of fellowship to Paul to evangelize Gentiles (*stulos*, Ibid., p. 779). God would then make the overcomer a sender of men to disciple the world, what occurred in 19th and 20th cent. upright institutions, missions, etc.
 - B. Two - The phrase, "he will no more go out" refers to those who left or were fired from errant groups in standing for the truth, so Christ would honor them, keeping them from having to leave another group again.
 - C. Three - To have the name of God written on the man meant he would be called a "man of God," Rev. 3:12c.
 - D. Four - The name of the city of God, the new Jerusalem, given in Ezekiel 48:35 as "The Lord is There," meant believers would highly respect the institution or church where the godly man or men ministered.
 - E. Five - Christ's new name written on the overcomer is defined in Isa. 62:2, 4 and 12 as "My Delight Is In Her," "Married," "Sought Out," where *young men* would seek to be in Zion in the Kingdom (Isa. 62:5), illustrating how seminaries like Dallas, Grace and Trinity saw many young men strive to enter them for Bible training.

Lesson: Christ called Fundamentalists who stood against Liberal Theology and evolutionary ideology to keep hold uncompromisingly to their Scriptural stands in the Holy Spirit's power for God's help, vindication and honor.

Application: (1) May we trust in Christ to be saved, John 3:16. (2) May we TODAY rely on the Holy Spirit's power to HOLD UNCOMPROMISINGLY to SCRIPTURE TRUTH opposite Liberal Theology errors!

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

We apply the lesson of this message to current issues we face as mentioned in our sermon introduction:

(1) On evolution, (a) we state in our Sunday introduction that Jesus in Matthew 19:4-6 interpreted Genesis 1-2 **literally, so WE read it *literally* and *thus* hold to *pure creation*.** This statement specifically counters how many evangelicals now compromise with evolution by interpreting Genesis 1-2 as *figurative poetry!* (Mike Matthews, "Why Genesis Still Matters: Our Conversation With John C. Whitcomb," Ibid., Answers, Nov.-Dec., 2017, p. 74)

(b) On viewing Genesis 1-2 as poetry, George B. Gray, who lectured at Oxford, in The Forms of Hebrew Poetry, 1915 (reprint 1972), p. 52 held that the "waw conversive," what we now know is the waw consecutive verbal form (J. Weingreen, A Prac. Gram. For Class. Heb., 1969, p. 91), runs through Genesis 1:3-26, from day 1 to part of day 6 of creation, to show "progress in the sequence of time" (Ges. Heb. Gram., 1970, p. 133) as "*prose*" (Ibid., Gray, p. 220). Dr. Gray added that the absence of any "traces" of "rhythm" reveal that "at all times," Genesis 1 had been "prose," not coming from some former poetic form **versus a fellow Liberal scholar's assertion!** (Ibid., p. 212-220)

(2) Re: Scripture's inspiration and literal interpretation, (a) the literal fulfillment of the many prophecy details of the six Church eras in Revelation 2:1-3:13 we studied so far with their many allusions to other Scriptures all verified by secular history show our need to hold to the divine inspiration and literal interpretation of all of Scripture!

(b) Also, 1 Corinthians 2:9-13, 2 Timothy 1:13-14 and John 8:32 together reveal that believers under the Holy Spirit's ministry will **understand** God's **deep Scripture truths**, they will **hold** to them and thus be **freed** from sin!

May we trust in Christ for salvation and hold FIRMLY to the stands of our Fundamentalist forefathers!