



# CHURCH REDEMPTION OR BIBLICAL REDEMPTION

**The Difference Between Law and Grace**

## **Rejecting the Truth of Scripture, Sorcery's Root is Self**

By Paul Wickliffe

### **ABSTRACT**

The root of sorcery is self. Self above God and over people. This is committed by convincing others that YOU represent God's power and are the 'channel' through which God manifests that power, by either wording, messaging or a combination thereof. It must start by reducing the truth to something other than the truth. This begins by correcting truth or saying something like, 'The best translations say. . .' or 'The King James says this; however, the Greek says this.' This is how it all begins—by casting down the truth and elevating self. It is also accomplished by using subtle mind games convincing the audience that only YOU can be trusted—a private interpretation (see p. 2, footnote 3) of scripture (II Peter 1:20). It can even include the summoning, or calling forth, of dark powers whose purpose is to impose your will over the spirit of the group, or congregation. Does it sound like I might be indicting pastors? Absolutely. I was there!

# Church Redemption or Biblical Redemption?

by Paul J. Wickliffe, Friday, April 27, 2018

One of the reasons I have given up on the visible, Protestant denominational church is because of the blasphemy of its teachings. These teachings reveal the church's origin—Rome. After attending this monolith for over thirty years, I am free from its hold. I would go so far as to say, its hold on its attendees and members is akin to being bewitched.

This New Testament term bewitch suggests an unholy alliance. This despicable league is between truth and error, light and darkness, the authority of Christ and the authority of man, liberty in Christ (grace) and the dead devotion to the works of the law, Holy Spirit directed living along with the showy, outward religious trappings of piety.

Appearing in the context of Acts 8:9-11, we see Simon the sorcerer among the Samaritans. In Paul's letter to the Galatians, we read in Galatians 3:1 where Paul expresses his concern for this assembly, that they had abandoned the grace of Christ for security in the works of the law. The term "bewitch" also carries with it an association with the occult, namely sorcery.

In Acts, the sorcery stems from a man making himself out to be god AND convincing his followers he is god. This is precisely how the term is used in Acts 8. Simon, using subtle, psychological<sup>1</sup> techniques,<sup>2</sup> even as the serpent did with Eve in the garden, convinced his audience that he was "some great power of God." (Acts 8:10)

In Galatians, Paul was concerned with what was happening with those he had shared the gospel. They were going back under the law. They had rejected the grace and freedom that could only come from the Holy Spirit's presence within. This substitute of grace for works, posed not only a threat to the Galatians, but is one that confronts all men—will they pursue a path which leads **DOWN** to the dead orthodoxy containing the doctrines and commandments of men?

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The root of sorcery is self. Self above God and over people. This is committed by convincing others that YOU represent God's power and are the 'channel' through which God manifests that power, by either wording, messaging or a combination thereof. It must start by reducing the truth to something other than the truth. This begins by correcting truth or saying something like, 'The best translations say . . .' or 'The King James says this; however, the Greek says this.'

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<sup>1</sup> Psychological techniques are techniques that originate from within, appeal to self, and contribute to the pride of man (self-esteem).

<sup>2</sup> While there are numerous techniques utilized in undermining the truth, the number one strategy, by far, is to cast doubt on what God says. While not specifically indicating this was the case in Acts 8 with Simon, it is the necessary pre-requisite in exalting oneself above God. It is **THE** technique, convincing others, to hold you up in high esteem. I cannot tell you how many times I heard from the pulpit, 'the Greek or the Hebrew says this,' or 'the K.J.V. is more accurately translated.' Since when is a Greek or Hebrew 'scholar' my teacher, or the K.J.V. translators consistently in error when they translated the manuscripts? Other strategies range from guilt, to the suggestion that church attendance or membership is equivalent to salvation or necessary for good standing as a believer before God.

This is how it all begins—by casting down the truth and elevating self. It is also accomplished by using subtle mind games convincing the audience that only YOU can be trusted—a private interpretation<sup>3</sup> of scripture (II Peter 1:20). It can even include the summoning, or calling forth, of dark powers whose purpose is to impose your will over the spirit of the group, or congregation. Does it sound like I might be indicting pastors? Absolutely. I was there!

### **Rejecting the Truth of Scripture, Sorcery's Root is Self**

What was going in Acts 8 with Simon the sorcerer with the Samaritans, is routinely happening every Sunday in the pulpits across this land. We need Philip's message delivered to the Samaritans that freed their conscience from the guile of men. This involves rejecting the words of seminary trained men, who casting the truth to the ground, exalt themselves above God and others. The church attending person, needs to remove themselves from the context of the denominational church, and embrace the precious, inspired, inerrant words of Christ.

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The blasphemy of the church, in its teachings, strikes at the very heart of the gospel: **authority, scripture's inerrancy, and the redemptive paradigm**. It is through these three, the church has sought to supplant itself as the supreme, visible entity among men post-apostolically. It is through these three, the church has sought to replace Jesus Christ as the head, the Holy Spirit as the invisible presence and teacher in the life of the believer, and the acceptance of Jesus' words as the living expression of one's faith.

With that said, a careful analysis, will hopefully emphasize what the Holy Spirit has shown me regarding the phenomenon called the Protestant, denominational church.

**Church redemption** follows the prescribed path of:

1. **VISIBLE MEMBERSHIP OR ATTENDANCE**—Is God ever concerned with the amount of people who respond to his message? As a matter of scripture, we see that Jesus understood that the vast majority of people hold the truth in unrighteousness. By sheer numbers, men are driven by their flesh, NOT through the spirit. Eight out of billions, in the Genesis story of a worldwide flood, escaped the judgment of God. The other billions perished! Two people, Joshua and Caleb, out of a generation of 600,000 men exiting from Egypt, entered the Promised Land. Pretty slim pickens, wouldn't you say? I could go on: 1 sheep out of 99, many are called, but few are chosen, wide is the path that leadeth to destruction and many there be which go in thereat. . . The sacred writings declare.
2. **AUTHORITATIVE CASTE WITHIN THE CHURCH**—The inerrant scriptures, namely Jesus' words, are not the benchmark for authority within Protestant denominationalism. Just look at their view regarding biblical inerrancy. Their words, not mine, are 'We believe the original autographs were the word of

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<sup>3</sup> A private interpretation of scripture is a scriptural interpretation removed from the biblical context. This context is exposed to man's subjective opinion, while the limits of a biblical framework are removed. Scripture is also not compared with scripture. It is held up to the subjective lens of man's wisdom . . . A most lopsided, biblically contrary view.

God.’ By virtue of the past tense ‘were’<sup>4</sup> and the higher, ‘biblical critics’ of scripture, the authority of the inerrant Bible has been rendered impotent. Men are the authority within the churches, not the completed, inspired scriptures (K.J.V.)

#### Authoritative Caste Within the Church

The first will be last, and the last first. He who will be greatest will be the servant of all. Deny yourself take up your cross daily and follow me, Jesus said. Many are called but few are chosen. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. (Matt. 23:12) But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. I John 2:27

3. **DOCTRINE OF MAN PERVERTED**— ‘Christian psychology,’ Dr. James Dobson, Dr. Larry Crabb, etcetera, **REALLY!** This tells you the depths to which contemporary pop-culture ‘Christianity’ has sunk. I call it the *feminization* of the church or getting in touch with one’s inner being through feeling, experience, intention, intuition, sincerity. Let me remind you what God said through Jeremiah, the prophet, “The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jer. 17:9). Expecting to find the truth through self-actualization is always a dead end! The denial of man’s radical corruption, through Arminianism’s “prevenient grace,” has rendered all men falling under the umbrella of salvation, as potential agents of reformation. O.k. then, why are not all men saved?
4. **DENOMINATIONALISM IS PERSONALITY DRIVEN & NOT HOLY SPIRIT DIRECTED**—In any serious, biblical discussion be it missions, evangelism, redemption, inerrancy, authority, doctrine, etc. the Holy Spirit is completely absent. He is the teacher. It is Christ’s Holy Spirit that saves the individual through the phenomenon known as *baptism by the Holy Spirit*. This is a one-time event where the individual is translated out of darkness, the grip of the world loosened, man’s worldly wisdom rejected, seducing spirits repudiated, and a life absorbed with self is crucified. It is not enough to believe on Jesus. There must be fruit evident from a tree that is constantly undergoing God’s pruning—one must be “in Christ.”
5. **NO PEACE, BECAUSE PEACE IS NOT KNOWN**—Because the church, by a careful analysis, is hostile to the gospel of Jesus Christ, it sees and preaches that the man spoken of in Romans 7:14-25 **must** be the believer—a person without rest, constantly working, not knowing the peace of God that passes all understanding, and continually striving to keep the law. This is in stark

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<sup>4</sup> Psst, we do not have the original autographs. It is through the Holy Spirit faithful, God has transmitted, preserved, translated and distributed his words. This evidence from history, is the testimony the church clings to.

contrast to the believer in Romans 8. It is here, where “the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us” (Rom. 8:4), and the believer comes to understand “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” (Rom. 8:9)

**ROMANS 7:14-23 VS. ROMANS 8**  
**THE CONDEMNED, RELIGIOUS MAN VS.**  
**THE PARDONED, SPIRIT-FILLED MAN**

**Biblical redemption** follows the prescribed path of:

1. **GOD'S VIEW OF MAN'S NATURE**—Unlike Protestantism's view of each man possessing the potential for salvation, by the way a very inclusive, contradictory, unbiblical redemptive view, we witness a radically different judgment from scripture's perspective. The Bible says all men are corrupt AND any attempt by man to redeem himself from eternal hell fire is an impossible deliverance. God does not see any man as better than another. God, scripture repeatedly declares, is impartial in his judgment of man. God is neither moved by a man's innate 'goodness,' nor is Providence influenced by one's physical appearance or intentions. Religion, on the other hand, sees men entirely different. A works-based system of redemption **must** view some men as better than others. Otherwise, how can you justify the very clerical offices that are in existence in denominations today? The completed scriptures, the Holy Spirit as the believer's teacher, and **dispensational** teaching all preclude (nullify) the existence of most of these offices.
  - a. **Inherent sin**—This is the sin all men have inherited from Adam and the original fall. It affects our being and biology. We will all physically die. Death is a consequence of that original disobedience of Adam. Biologically, our genetic make-up is flawed and has the potential for error. This error, within man's genetic make-up, God did not ordain. It resulted when the first couple believed they could *choose* (man's "free-will"), instead of simply *acknowledge* the truth
  - b. **Innate sin**—This is how sin affects man's mind—his dreams, man's will, his cognitive function, the capacity to reason, man's behavior, and ultimately man's soul and **spirit**. Thrown in with man's wisdom, no wonder man is in a state of utter confusion, unrest and fear
2. **THE GOSPEL IS EXCLUSIVE, NOT INCLUSIVE**—Contradicting the church's missionary, evangelism and salvation narratives, the teachings of Christ reveal that the Master Teacher reinforced God's Old Testament tenet regarding the spread of the gospel. In the supreme parable defining all other parables, the parable of the sower and the seed (Matt. 13:3-23), or what it means to be saved, Jesus told his disciples amidst a multitude shockingly reveals, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Continuing, Christ taught in Matthew 13:14, 15, "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: 15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull

of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”

- a. **Ultimate objective of evangelism**—If evangelism is not numbers driven, what is the ultimate objective? It is to produce eternal fruit. Should those results be purely outward and temporal<sup>5</sup> or are they invisible and eternal? Has the individual been given a clear presentation of the gospel? Does the person understand what sin is? Do they fathom what it means to repent? How about confession of sin and forsaking it? What about making Jesus Lord in one’s life? What does that look like? What does it mean to be crucified in Christ? What is sanctification? How does sanctification differ from consecration? If I am a new creation in Christ, what about worldly separation? Since faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, which Bible is the word of God? How do I contend for the faith? etc.<sup>6</sup>
- b. **Evangelism’s credit**—When the gospel is given and some individual responds, do I get the credit or does the credit go to the Holy Spirit. Will the crowns I give to Christ be rightfully his and therefore endure, or will I take credit for the supernatural blessings in my life and discover they will be burned as wood, hay, and stubble. The spread of the gospel has occurred NOT because men have willed it, but because the Holy Spirit within the believer, in spite of the individual’s weaknesses, has accomplished the impossible.
3. **I JOHN 2:27 IS NOT SAYING ALL MEN ARE SAVED**—Propitiation means appeasement, or the idea that only in Christ could the Father’s requirement for sin’s penalty be satisfied. What I John 2:2 is declaring, is the solemn statement that no man is without excuse. Man’s sin has been paid for through Christ. When the sinner stands before his Creator, Jesus Christ, he will stand guilty and condemned. In spite of the church’s damnable heresy of man’s “*free-will*,” the key in man’s responsibility before Jesus Christ lay in his *acknowledging* truth as self-evident or agreeing that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God, the Father.
4. **THE RUIN OF PROTESTANTISM: DIALECTICISM (MAN’S STRUGGLE: SELF VS JESUS CHRIST) AND PSYCHOLOGY**—The idea truth can be mingled with error thereby giving rise to a less hostile, combative, controversial compromise has been one of the biggest deceptions foisted upon man in the Nineteenth Century. Christianity has given itself over to the feminization of its feelings in exchange for the truth and the Spirit of Christ. This is the destructive path ‘Christian psychology’ has laid for itself, as well as the path the denominational church has trod.
5. **ORIGIN OF BELIEVER’S AUTHORITY**—The third proposition the visible church ignores, is the source of all spiritual power—we are discussing the topic of spiritual authority. Remember, the chief priests and scribes confronted Christ concerning his

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<sup>5</sup> Size, numbers, building, church programs, influence, recognition, missionary boards with their metrics, all such barometers are irrelevant to God

<sup>6</sup> While all these things are important, it must be remembered God is the one that does the saving. Even if these questions were not asked of the sinner, God would still save. I do not believe God applies any condition of salvation on the sinner. That even goes for the unbiblical tenet of the *age of accountability*.

<sup>7</sup> And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

authority, and the origin of that authority. This story found in Matthew 21:23-27; Mark 11:28-33; and Luke 20:1-8 reveals that this eternal struggle is always between religious people versus the elect of Christ. The question of the believer's authority is never called into question by Christ's own. They know the source of that authority—Jesus' words, namely the power of the word and which Bible IS the Bible. The origin of that authority comes from Christ within every blood bought believer who has been baptized by the Holy Spirit of Christ.

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Dispensational teaching says that the apostolic church was unique and NOT a pattern for the post apostolic 'church' to duplicate. The completion of the scriptures changed the whole paradigm of authority. After the disappearance of the apostolic church, which had been the pillar and ground of the truth (I Tim. 3:15), the completed, inerrant scriptures would now become the believer's authority. With this change, of necessity, came also a change in the offices mentioned in I Corinthians 12: apostle, pastor, prophet, tongues interpreter, tongues speaker, apostolic healing. They would disappear because "when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." (I Cor. 13:10).

By the way, the word "governments" (I Cor. 12:28) has nothing to do with the operational phenomenon we see on a local, state, and federal level. Its application is **spiritual** (morally anchored to God's law as found in the Old Testament), NOT civil (subjective and partial in nature and based upon man's experience and wisdom through history). The word cannot be removed from its biblical context. The word suggests that there is an understanding of how the apostolic church was to run, doctrinally, as well as augmented by the apostolic ordinances and teachings. Governments also suggested that the individual, operating within the biblical parameter of the apostolic church, had a good understanding of doctrine, or the rules to which they needed to adhere and observe. The gift of governments is a phenomenon still in operation today, I believe. Order and detail are traits we discover about God throughout scripture. God is not the author of confusion.

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