

What'S In The Bucket? (Part Two)

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A headline from *The Charlotte Observer* newspaper led to this commentary, combined with a brief discussion that Ronny Graham and I had last Sabbath. The headline stated that members of the United Methodist Church, despite the fact that a long, ongoing doctrinal dispute over whether to allow gays in the ministry to marry each other, is not the motivating factor for the membership abandoning—leaving—the Methodist Church. My initial thought was, *What in the world is it going to take them to make up their mind to the obvious fact that this religious organization is not following Jesus Christ's doctrines?* I grew up in this church—the United Methodist Church—all of my youth teenage years and whatever.

The reality is that the United Methodist Church is simply just another humanist religious organization belonging to Satan's world, not God's. My thoughts did not end there because I find it truly sad that mankind's knowledge and appreciation of God is at such an awkwardly low level. The United Methodist Church was at one time one of the nation's largest and most conservative religious organizations in America. It has indeed sunk to a very low estate.

This will not be a commentary focused on the United Methodist Church, because the United Methodist Church there is just one part of a much larger and confusing issue because the ignorance of God and His way is deep and abiding.

Not long after seeing that headline, I saw a second headline regarding knowledge of God and His way. This one was much more positive regarding God. This headline stated—listen carefully—that there is only one reality regarding Christ's rulership, and that reality is that Christ is Supreme Ruler and any other choice is an absurdity. This also was in the *Charlotte* newspaper.

Those two headlines reveal the wide divergence of opinion regarding knowledge of God held in this nation. They are about as far apart as you can get. These headlines are just thoughts, but the gap between them is truly tragic because of the tremendous number of misdirections that have resulted from receiving lies, believing them, and putting them into action in one's behavior. It is along this line of action that Satan has been enabled to deceive the entire world.

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Let's begin with a reality. Jesus clearly stated in Matthew 16:18. "I will build My church and the gates of *Hades* shall not prevail against it." By using the term *Hades*, He meant the grave. Therefore, He was dogmatically stating that once He began building His church, it would never pass from the scene. It would never die out. This became important in a little bit.

American Evangelicals loudly proclaim that America was founded as a "Christian nation. I believe that what Jesus said is still a reality. So, where was the true church when America was founded in the late 1700s? Where was the true church? In which religious group was it in? What was its name? There is no record that I know of that Christ's church had any representation in America [at the founding]. Think about that. It could have been headquartered anywhere in the world, for that matter. It did not have to be in the United States of America, or the colonies.

If it was not even historically identified, how could America be a "Christian" nation at its beginning? Why is it almost everybody in America's Evangelical world assumes that American Christianity presented new settlers during America's founding period with a solid base of agreement regarding the doctrinal teachings that were acceptable to God both then and now? Jesus' doctrines never changed.

It is true that the Founders had a name that virtually everyone accepted: Christian. This is despite the facts regarding the specific religious organizations, the Founders themselves were members of. Is there ever a distinct church of God historically mentioned? (We've heard a lot about "fake news" lately, haven't we?) Available historical records show that the Founders were most certainly not all members of the same religious organization. Thus, despite being united in a common political cause they were not unified in hardly anything doctrinally in terms of religion—except that they believed in Christ. That's about it. Disagreements between Founders were, in many cases, very strongly held opinions they individually believed and held fast to, believing they were provable biblically.

The journalists who write regarding history and religion of that period of time that present historical information make the same general assumptions as the general public by assuming that the major figureheads of that time—George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, John Adams, Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry and dozens of other political greats of that time—have made about their religious beliefs and God Himself. And that assumption is glaringly wrong, as judged by those who know better. That assumption is that the spiritual beliefs and practices of those whose names appear on America's founding documents were all acceptable to God and truly representative of His way of life.

The Evangelicals sincerely and energetically attempt to persuade fellow Americans on the concept that America was founded as a "Christian nation." What does this reveal to you? Does this combination of what I have just given you so far not clearly give the impression, considering the major positive reputations of the Founders, that God will accept virtually any standard of life regardless of the displeasures and pains that it produces for others?

A vivid example is that the issue of slavery. It was discussed, and slavery was accepted during the Constitutional deliberations. That ought to tell something to you. It was a close vote, but they accepted it. These supposedly God-fearing men, supposedly believing in Jesus Christ, made a binding political and legal decision, and human slavery became a part of the American way of life duly permitted by our Constitution. Politics triumphed over God-given liberty in the minds of these doctrinally defective people. Does not this one example indicate a very large amount of unconcern for the well-being of those to whom He is giving life, but are considered as lesser on the basis of a privately-held prejudice that was anchored in the mind by the fear of the loss of wealth? That's what did it. The fear of the loss of wealth.

It is a matter of fact that neither the word "slave" nor "slavery" appears in the Constitution until after the Civil War. It was almost one hundred years after the original Constitutional Convention, and by that time the issue had been decided by the Emancipation Proclamation, and legally, by an amendment to the Constitution.

Brother, I believe that we have read a large amount of distorted history and were unaware of the end results of the ignorant thoughtlessness on the part of those reporting to us. There remains a far larger part of this picture of the American nation's spiritual ignorance than merely slavery.

In Malachi 3:7-10, God appeals to Israelites to return to Him, and He will open the windows of heaven to such an extent that there shall not be room to contain it. The vital question in this regard for this nation right now is, to what would the people return? Though the citizenry that then held to a much higher conduct-standard than the citizenry today do, we are literally still in the same mess we were when we began.