***Ignorant Intellectuals, No. 2

RV49-01***

We are studying the letter to the church at Philadelphia in Revelation 3:7-13. This is segment number 19. As we've already indicated, the Philadelphia church represents historically the genuinely born again body of Christ which the Scripture refers to as the church. These are the biblical fundamentalists who view the Bible as the sole source of divine information for securing eternal life. The Philadelphia letter was written to people who accepted the Bible as the Word of God. These people, therefore accept the biblical plan of salvation by grace, apart from all human good works. The Philadelphia church type are those who do not add anything to Scripture. They do not come up with later revelation of Scripture, such as in the form of a Koran; or the Book of Mormon; or, the Apocrypha of the Roman church, but they hold the Scriptures as God the Holy Spirit has produced them, as the sole source of information. That Scripture reveals a plan of salvation by grace, apart from human works. So, these people are genuinely in the body of Christ, and these are the ones to whom the Philadelphia church letter is written.

These who form the body of Christ, of course, are not all super grace type believers relative to spiritual maturity. Some of these people, who indeed are in the body of Christ, are very ignorant of Bible doctrine. Unfortunately, where local church ministries have come to in our day, this is probably true of the overwhelming number of believers today – that they are ignorant of Bible doctrine. This is because they are not systematically instructed in summaries of doctrinal truth. So, while you may be a member of the body of Christ, you may be far from enjoying the status of enjoying super grace blessings. Nevertheless, if you are in this body, which is the church universal, this book of the Revelation has promised that you will be preserved from ever personally experiencing that era in human history known as the tribulation period. That is seven years of the worst worldwide suffering ever experienced by the human race. They are the judgments of God upon Satan's world.

In quick summary, this tribulation era is going to be a time when billions (not millions), but billions with a "B" are going to die from a variety of causes. Intense physical pain will be experienced by human beings all over the world on a major scale. It will not just be that somebody is sick or somebody is not feeling well – but on a major scale, there will be intense physical pain. There will be the fearful ravages of an incurable disease that God will turn loose upon that unbelieving earth. There will be terrifying upheavals in nature relative to the planets and the stars. There will be famine from the destruction of food supplies – terrible agonizing cravings on a physical level, and a gradual deterioration. In some places of the world, the body will come to the point that even if it can secure food, it has lost its ability to assimilate, so that no matter how much food a person eats, he will still die of starvation.

There will be massive inflation destroying the basis for all normal economic functions. There will be violence both on a personal level as well as a national level in terms of warfare. Believers in Jesus Christ, who point to the Bible as the authority and as the source of information to enlighten people on what is taking place at that time, will be martyred. Those people will not be tolerated. There will be widespread killer earthquakes destroying life and property to a degree that has never been experienced on the earth before. There will be an ecumenical religious system directing worship to Satan through the antichrist ruler.

The worst persecution that the Jews have ever experienced in all the history of the world will break out. The vegetation of the earth will be destroyed on a large scale. Volcanic eruptions will reign destruction down. Freshwater supplies and sea areas will be turned to blood. The cycles of day and night will be so disrupted as to create periods of intense cold and intense heat. There will be the agonizing attacks of insects which feed upon humanity rather than on vegetation. Darkness will envelop the earth, creating great emotional traumas. There will be giant hailstones that fall upon the earth to batter out life of all kinds. Nations will be preparing to enter a world war on a scale that is going to destroy all the human race but for divine intervention. Personal freedom will be gone as a communist system of government rules the earth. Satan will be stalking the earth in a rage as he sees that his doom is at hand consequent to his loss of the great battle in outer space, resulting in his being cast out of heaven.

The human mind will have cut loose from the concepts of all absolutes, and the result will be widespread insanity as people try to grab hold of something to live by, but everything is in a relative relationship. There will be intense indulgence in sensual pleasures in order to try to cope with the pain and the terror. These will be pleasures in the form of drugs, illicit sex, and alcohol.

Satan, who rules the world today, is leading the human race in support of his goals which are going to create this kind of an earthly horror in the tribulation period. He does this through influential human beings. These are men who have periodically risen on the scene of human history. They are not evil men, as such. They are generally well-intentioned, human good type of personalities. But these are men who have injected certain key features of thinking into human thought – human viewpoint concepts which basically oppose biblical principles. They have presented these concepts in such a way that they have captured the attention and the devotion and the acceptance of people on this earth in a wide degree.

Their ideas, consequently, have shaped and swayed men's minds in such a degree as to shape the destiny of mankind. The ultimate consequences of these influential men will be the tribulation world. It is very important for you to understand your world today by understanding some of the basic concepts on which our world functions, and where these ideas came from. Satan himself is not omniscient. Therefore, he cannot envision the ultimate consequences of his ideas that he is promoting through these men. Even Satan thinks that these ideas are going to neutralize God's power and God's purposes, and what God has promised that He's going to do to this world. The only protection against these human viewpoint delusions is Bible doctrine principles in the mentality of the soul. Each of these influential men, who has arisen on the scene of human history, has been used by Satan to counter a vital principle of doctrine – a vital principle of divine viewpoint for the human race.

**Ignorant Intellectuals**

So, what we're talking about are voices from the grave which mankind today is blindly following into the tribulation world. It is very important that you get acquainted with these men. We have looked at some already.

1. **Immanuel Kant**

Number one: we have looked at Immanuel Kant. He said that nothing can be known beyond one's own five senses, and that we learn only through experiences. Therefore, truth is not absolute. It is not based on some external authority such as the Bible. Kant said that truth is relative, depending on a person's inner feelings, so there is no basis for a cause-and-effect system of thinking. That was a revolutionary idea, because until Immanuel Kant came on the scene, everybody thought that A could not be non-A – that they were mutually exclusive. Kant came along and said, "No, that's not true. Everything is relative. Absolute truth about life after death; resurrection; heaven; sin; creation; the virgin birth of Christ; miracles; and, God – all of that is an area that you can't know one thing about. Kant said that those are things you could not possibly know anything about, because you cannot experience those things with your senses. Only what you can secure through the five senses – only that is information that will come to you. Only that is a basis for truth, and reason determines truth through the senses – not a supernatural revelation from God.

So what happened was that man, in Kant's thinking, replaced God, and secular humanism was born. Kant's view is the basis for all liberal theology today which rejects, of course, the inerrancy of the Bible, and the fundamental doctrines of Scripture. This view produced the concept that morals are determined on a human level. They are a result of natural forces and of the consensus of society. What is right and what is wrong is based upon what society thinks at the moment. There is no independent restraint on human conduct which is right. The ultimate is simply what you think and what society tolerates at any certain point in time.

One of the things that has resulted from all of this is that, in our day, the average young person who is reared totally apart from biblical concepts does not think in terms of, "This is what is good, and this is what is bad." Only as he may pick those up in a fringe way from left-over concepts of Christianity does that still permeate areas or society, and does he think of certain things as being right and certain things as being wrong. There was a time when you could tell a young person (a parent could tell a child), "I want you to be a good boy," or "I want you to be a good girl," and they would understand what that meant. They would understand that certain things are bad to do, and certain things are good to do. And your mother was telling you that she wanted you to do the good things, and not to do the bad things.

Today, a child who is reared in a normal American home cannot be told, "I want you to be a good boy or to be a good girl," especially as they get up to their teenage years, because the teenager is not clear in his mind as to what is good and what is bad. This has now become a relative concept. There are not certain things that are always wrong to do. There are only certain things that are wrong to do sometimes. That's the way teenagers think today. There are certain things that are only right to do some other times. It's not always right to do those things. It's not always right to tell the truth. That's the way teenagers think today. It's only right to tell the truth on certain occasions. There are times when you have to tell a falsehood, which is called a white lie. That means it's a good lie. This whole concept came from Kant. And it was very important in Satan's world to be able to interject that poison into the stream of human thinking.

Now, the ultimate expression of Kant's thinking was, of course, the famous Marquis de Sade, who is the father of pornography, and whose name has given us the word "sadism," which means "enjoying the pain of other people" – enjoying dispensing pain for a variety of reasons. If you would read the writings of Marquis de Sade, you would discover that this was a human being who had descended to the lowest levels of any creature that ever breathed upon the face of the earth. He was the ultimate example of the concepts of Kant – that there are no absolutes. Everything is relative. So, this man bears his influence in our midst to this day. His voice is still resounding from the grave.

1. **Georg Hegel**

We looked at a second person (a second influential thinker), and that is Georg Hegel. Hegel took Kant's rejection of absolutes of truth and his rejection of the authority of the Bible, and Hegel developed the system of relativism into a way of determining truth. He developed a system for relative thinking with the idea that we have already touched on. He said every idea is a thesis. That idea is immediately opposed by an antithesis. They fight against one another, and the result is a synthesis. This synthesis now becomes a new thesis, and the process begins all over again. The name of that, by the way, is "dialectics." This is where the word comes from. This is the system of dialectical thinking. That meant, of course, obviously, that there was nothing that was definite. There were no universal truths that could exist. There were no absolutes of morality. Everything was changing from one time to the next. There was no basis left for you to be able to think in terms of cause-and-effect – the kind of thinking that you find in the Bible.

The Bible is a cause-and-effect book. The Bible says that if you perform certain evils, there will be certain consequences. The Bible conveys very clearly that you are responsible for your own acts. The Bible very clearly conveys the fact that if you do what is right, and if you live according to certain principles, you will be prospered, and you will be blessed. And life will move in the direction of fulfillment in terms of happiness. If you reject that and go in a different direction in terms of human viewpoints and satanic concepts, your life will pay the price in that direction. That is cause-and-effect – there are consequences.

Hegel came along and said, "No, no, no, that's wrong. Everything is relative. Everything is what you happen to think at the moment. So they created a god and a morality which was compatible with the evil of the sin nature in mankind. That's why Satan brought along Hegel – to interject this poison into human thinking. The tribulation world is going to be the product of this kind of relativism – this kind of absolute: no anchor points in terms of what is right and what is wrong. Hegel's poison of relative thinking has already produced a Hitler and Stalin, and it is this thinking which is going to produce the antichrist. The antichrist will be the direct outcome of Hegelian relative thinking of the dialectic of Hegel. Hegel's relativism ultimately finds its expression in the concept that the end justifies the means. This is why communism, which is based on the thinking of Hegel, has no compunctions whatsoever in murdering literally millions of people, because the end justifies the means.

No matter what world opinion thinks, relative to the people of Poland, and the right of a group of human beings in a certain national entity (which is the way God set up human beings to be related to one another – according to national custom and language), no matter what the Polish people want, Soviet Russia says, "Hegel has taught us that the end justifies the means. Therefore, even if we have to go into Poland, and we have to brutalize the people, and we have to slaughter thousands upon thousands of the Polish people, we are going for a paradise for man on earth. And that paradise justifies our brutality. Unless you think in terms of Hegelian thought, you won't understand why communists think the way they do. That poisonous line of thinking is based upon Hegel's dialectic. Nothing is relevant. It's all a flux.

Right now, Soviet Russia is saying the thesis is this: The state is supreme. The Communist Party is the brain of the proletariat. The brain knows what's good for the worker. Anytime somebody comes in with an idea that's other than communism, then we know that that's a false idea, and, therefore, the brain must protect the people. Within Poland, there is thinking which is resisting the communism brain of Soviet Russia. Soviet Russia sees this as a conflict (thesis and antithesis). And Soviet Russia says, "We're going to resolve this, and we're going to resolve this with a slaughter. There'll be a new synthesis. There will be a new establishment in Poland. Poland will not try to have workers' unions which are independent of the brain of the Communist Party.

Hegel interjected a terrible line of thought into the human consciousness, and the effects have been devastating. But the worst is yet ahead in the tribulation.

1. **Charles Darwin**

Then, man number three that we looked at, who speaks to us from the grave, of course, is Charles Darwin. Satan picked up Charles Darwin. Darwin was an English agnostic who went from medicine to theology to biology. Darwin claimed that life forms have gradually evolved by blind chance over millions of years from existing chemicals. Matter was thus made eternal, which is, of course, an idea that Darwin picked up from ancient Greek philosophy. This is the explanation that the ancient Greek philosophers had for matter. Where did matter come from? Well, finally, the philosopher said that matter was eternal. That, in effect, made materialism God. And inanimate matter, Darwin taught, began, at some point, to become animate matter – that inanimate matter became living matter.

This is really a variation of a primitive religion called animism. Primitive societies see forces working out in nature. They see various forces that they can't explain: natural phenomena. So primitive societies have come up with the concept that behind every force there is some kind of a spirit power, and this spirit power animates that particular thing that is taking place. The reason they do this is they look at themselves, and they say, "We are human beings." This is the problem that man his with the image of God in himself. He says, "I can think. I can make decisions. I can make things happen. I see things happening out here in nature: the tornadoes; the storms; and, the droughts. There must be a thinking spirit of some kind that's causing that." So they pray to the spirit which is controlling the crops; the spirit which is controlling the availability of animals for food; the protection from the natural phenomena of nature; and, so on. So, behind all these forces, primitive man says that there is some kind of a spirit force.

Well, the evolutionist is always screaming and shouting about the creationist trying to interject a religious concept in science. Isn't it interesting that the very basis of evolution is the old ancient animism of the primitive societies? They have said that inanimate matter had some kind of a moving spirit force within it that could cause it to leap into life. Don't ever let an evolutionist forget that he's an animist at heart. He is telling us exactly what every primitive jungle society is telling us – that behind his God is some kind of a spirit power that's causing life. The evolutionist is telling us that, out of dead material (inert, inanimate material), there is a spirit power of some kind that can create life. That is pure animism.

The personal Creator God, with the supernatural powers of deity, was seen as unscientific, and as superstition by the evolutionary thesis of Darwin. So, they substituted the intelligent concept of a special spirit force projected into existing inanimate matter. Isn't that really intelligent? That is the same thing that the Bible makes so much fun of. How many times can you read Scriptures where God is ridiculing some dumb idol that people are praying to because it has the animism of some spirit behind it that is motivating it? How many times has God enjoyed fooling around with the spirit of animism? Remember the god Dagon of the Philistines – how He kept knocking their god over on its face. They would set him up, and God would kick him over, and they would set him up, and then God kicked it over and knocked its head all over. You can just see the Lord having a wonderful time waiting for these clowns to come back to see what they're going to do next.

This is the evolutionist, folks, acting in the same tradition. Their inanimate matter has a spirit life force behind it. This is said to be the intelligent concept. This is the educated concept. Today, the materialists say that life is simply, therefore, matter in motion under physical chemical forces. That's all. Life is simply matter in motion. What is your brain? Does your brain have a spirit quality? Is there a soul within you where the mentality resides? No, the materialist says that your brain is a material thing. What is thought? Thought is an electromagnetic force. It's a material thing that is being projected out of your brain. That's all it is. There is no spirit quality. You are all material, including your thinking. It's just a material expression.

So, they pretend that there are creative forces hidden in dead material molecules. They call it science, and they call it intelligent. The spiritual inventions of human viewpoint philosophies are really fantastic. They worship dead idols in matter just as the primitive pagans worship their dead idols of wooden stone.

So, from the Darwinian evolutionary concept and the idea that there's an animistic life within inert matter, man has become just another animal with no soul to differentiate him from other creatures. That was very important for Satan – to convey the concept that man is just an animal who is no different from other animals, because then you can treat the man as an animal. Then if man does not behave (if you have an animal that's considered a threat to what you're trying to achieve), you kill him, just like you do an animal. If man will not restrain himself to fit a certain pattern you have, put restraints upon him and punish him just like you do an animal. Treat him in terms of his material being. Wave before him, like you do before a dog, a piece of good food so that he will respond in a certain way.

Evolution has been shown to be unscientific, of course, by the laws of science, and to be a faith which is simply replacing the faith of the Bible. Man is viewed as a naked ape who is to be treated as an animal in training him for the social relationships that elitists among men believe to be desirable, such as the communist system.

So, as Hegel gave philosophical basis for man to see no need for God, so Darwin gave a scientific basis for dismissing the authority of God. Hegel gave the philosophical basis for man not needing God. Darwin gave a physical basis for dismissing the authority of God. The false concept of evolution (from primitive to sophisticated) was then applied to social relationships as well, so that the idea that evolved was that the world was getting better. It was very important to Satan to interject this concept that the world was getting better, because, obviously, human history has seen terrific turmoil. It has seen horrific brutality on the part of humanity toward humanity. Yet, Satan had to somehow try to interject that we are not bad, and there is nothing wrong with us. This is what evolutionary sociology teaches – that man is not evil, and that there's not anything wrong with man. Man just needs a little more education. And in every way and every day we are getting better and better. That was an important concept for Satan to introduce into human thinking if the tribulation world was to become reality.

1. **Karl Marx**

Then a fourth person that we have looked at is Karl Marx. It is very important that you get these men and their thinking in your mind, because it shows up every day of your life. Karl Marx was a German Jew. He was an atheist who conceived the social order known today as communism. Satan's ultimate plan for creating a social paradise without God is communism. This was Nimrod's dream: a social paradise without God. Marx saw religion as a capitalist creation designed to control the laboring masses, and to create for them the illusion of happiness, at least in the life to come. Communism is built on Hegel's dialectic and Darwin's materialism to form the basic ground of communism, which is dialectical materialism. That's the basis for all social progress. That is, on the one hand, nothing is certain, and everything is relative. Then, on the other hand, it is all relative; there is no God; there is no supernatural; and, there is no spiritual quality in man.

Therefore, everything about man is material, and everything in terms of social progress is to be based on material factors. Therefore, what your parents did, and how they earned their money, will determine what kind of a mentality you have, and will determine whether you are a poison creature that needs to be eliminated, or whether you can be included in a worker's paradise. The end of an imaginary worker's paradise justifies any means, no matter how violent those means are. This is what you must understand. You wonder: why do communists act the way they do? How can communists not be ashamed themselves when they have to build walls like they do in Berlin to keep people in, and when they have to use guards and the secret police, and when they have to use all these means in order to control people, because people are ready to rebel against these systems? It makes sense to them, because Hegel has taught them that the end justifies the means. They have been taught that people do not understand what is good for them – that it is only a relative idea, and that they have come to what they call scientific concepts of social relationships.

These, of course, have denied the biblical principle of private ownership of wealth, and the means for practicing it. The state is made God, and the masses are ruled by an elite party who do their thinking for them. Communism violates the divine institution of free volition, and it produces poverty, shortages, and starvation. Please don't ever forget that communism and socialism always create poverty. It creates shortages. It creates starvation. Communist countries have to buy their food from capitalist countries. They have to steal their technology from capitalist countries. There is no incentive for a person to be productive through any of his gifts under a communist system.

Socialism is the step to communism. Communism is imposed either by sudden revolution, or by gradual steps so that it is undiscernable to the victims. The gradual steps from socialism to communism are the system which, for 50 years, has now been incorporated in the United States. Most Americans do not grasp what has happened, and how this conversion of socialism has been very gradual in this country so that the changes have been unapparent. Now, the consequences are beginning to be seriously felt. Unfortunately, Americans still don't understand how the economic system works. They do not understand how the power of government is constantly being used to benefit one group at the expense of another group. Currently, we're seeing the sad concept, which we hope will change, that everybody in this country thinks that the budget is being cut back, for example. Few Americans realize that the only thing that's being cut back is the new advancement of the budget made by the previous administration. The budget is not being cut back. For the budget to be cut back, it would take something like at least $100 billion, not $50 billion, and that would just begin to scratch the surface.

Consequently, Americans are going to wake up in a few months from now and say, "Hey, you know what? Inflation isn't going down. It's going up. You know what? Nothing is getting better. It's still the same as it was. It has only slowed down." Pretty soon some bright American is going to say, "Do you know what they're doing? They're doing the same thing that a guy who's been living wild on his credit cards, and suddenly realizes that he can't pay for what he has charged. So, he tells his wife, "From now on, we're going to have to use the credit cards a lot less." He thinks that that way, he's going to get himself out of debt. He's already beyond what he can pay. What he has to do is stop using his credit cards. So, the government is going to use the credit cards a little less, so that inflation moves upward a little more slowly. That's socialism. It is a direct result of the thought that Marx interjected in human society. It's going to bring its ultimate destructive effects.

1. **George Wellhausen**

Let's look at another one: a fifth man that Satan has brought on the scene for the destruction of the human race. This man's name is George Wellhausen. George Wellhausen was a German rationalist theologian. Before World War II, Germany was the center of all philosophy, medicine, theology, and social concepts. Germany was in the forefront of everything. German rationalism was the belief that man, by his human reasoning, could solve any problem, and could meet any human need. That rationalistic thinking came to its zenith in the middle of the 19th century in Germany. In 1875, another poisonous line of thought for the tribulation world was interjected in human thinking by Wellhausen. He proposed a new way of looking at the Bible. The Bible, of course, is a problem factor for Satan. For anything that the devil wants to do, the Bible is a hindrance. So, the Bible, in one way or another, has to be shredded. It has to have its influence destroyed if a tribulation world is going to be created. You can't even lay the groundwork for the kinds of things that are going to be taking place in the tribulation if the Bible is still functioning in human society. The biblical concepts, in every way, undermine everything that the tribulation is going to be. Therefore, the Bible has to be removed. It's a major barrier for Satan's plans.

Wellhausen was another man who was used to do that in a major way. He took the theory of evolution and he applied it to religion. He said that the Old Testament was a record of how Judaism had evolved from a very primitive stage that had worshiped many gods to a very enlightened stage where it worshipped only one God whom they called Jehovah. And the Jews, under the leadership of Moses, switched to worshiping just this one God. So, Judaism and the Bible are really human products which have evolved from primitive concepts to nobler concepts. In fact, the God that the Old Testament talks about, Wellhausen said, is purely the creation of human thinking. That God never existed. That is a God that the writers created. Furthermore, these writers lived centuries later than Moses, who is the key figure in leading Israel out of polytheism to monotheism. And they looked back, and they made up these stories, and they made up these descriptions, and they made up these myths, like the creation myths, to describe how this God functions, whom they created out of their own rational thinking. Consequently, the Bible is not, Wellhausen said, a supernatural revelation from God.

He then tied that idea with an idea that had already been proposed by a man named K.H. Graf. K.H. Graf came up with the theory that the Bible was the writings of various men, and that they were doing exactly what Wellhausen said they were doing. They were creating stories and myths about how their religion had evolved, and they were making up these pictures about how their God functions. This was a God who didn't exist, and they were creating this out of the figment of their imagination.

Now, when I say names like Wellhausen and Graf, you don't know who they are, but I want you to understand that they were very intelligent men and highly educated. They were very smart. They probably wore beards, which is the epitome of a sign of sophistication and intelligence. They were not dummies. These guys knew their way around. You have to recognize that these are the scholars. They were the height of the rationalist system, and Germany had been thrust toward a very discerning kind of thinking, because the Reformation began there. They had this backlog drive of the enlightenment of the Reformation.

So, Wellhausen tied his theory to Graf's concepts, and it became known as The Graf-Wellhausen Theory. What Graf had come up with was that you could identify the various writers in the Old Testament by certain key phrases they would use. One would use the name for God of "Jehovah," so he was called the "J" writer. Another would use the name for God of "Elohim" consistently, so, he was known as the "E" writer. Then there was the section of writings that were the codes by which Israel lived. These codes all had a certain similarity to them, so, they were called "Deuteronomy" writers, or the "D" writers. Then there was the priestly group that expressed the concept of the priest, and they were called the "Priestly" writers, or the "P" writers. So, he came up with the JEDP hypothesis. They could see how they gradually moved along, and they developed this whole concept that the Scriptures were just one person writing about this God, and another person writing about this God. And then they had some men who came along who were called redactors, and they took the writings of these various authors, written separately, and they pasted them together. And they added a few lines to connect them, and then they said, "Here's the book of Genesis."

**Higher Criticism**

Now Graf said, "Anybody who is intelligent, and who can look at the Hebrew, can and read the book of Genesis, and see that different writers wrote it, and somebody pasted the thing together, and here you suddenly have a book." Well, they started with Genesis, and then they expanded this throughout the Old Testament. So, by the time they were through, the Bible was in shreds. It was torn apart completely as being anything from God whatsoever. It was just a compilation of human thinking. Of course, this very nicely undermined the concepts of inspiration. It's certainly destroyed all concepts of the Bible as being a book characterized by inerrancy, and an authoritative record from God. What they said was that the Bible really gives us the beliefs of the men who lived later than Moses, as they looked back at their own history, and the way they saw it. Human reason replaced the authority of revelation in spiritual matters. The difference between reading the Bible and letting it judge man, or man judging the Bible is what the issue was. All biblical authority was completely undermined by this hypothesis. This, by the way, is called Higher Criticism. The original text of the Bible is treated by higher criticism, which determines who the authors are; where these parts came from; and, who wrote them. They have another section called Lower Criticism, which deals with the text itself (the Greek and the Hebrew), and determining the accuracy of that. But this is the higher critical theory.

Higher criticism was then later carried into the New Testament. It was given the same treatment to the New Testament writers – to discredit New Testament doctrines about Jesus Christ and salvation. When they got through, Jesus was a natural man who was born by natural birth with a human father. Jesus Christ was a traveling preacher with popular appeal, but who ran afoul of the Roman authorities. Jesus Christ suffered martyrdom because of His revolutionary ideas. That idea that Jesus was a revolutionary – boy, the Campus Crusades college group loves that. Bill Bright wrote a book on revolution, but the book wasn't all that bright. It sort of wanted to portray Jesus Christ as a revolutionary. When you understand these concepts of the higher criticism, you know exactly where he got the idea, and what he's trying to appeal to. This is considered scholarly now. They don't talk about that so much now, but during the 1960s, when revolution on the campus was the hot thing, and everybody was being a revolutionist – well what could be better to make Jesus Christ attractive than making Him a revolutionary? That line of thinking could be carried on: "Do you want to try to reach the homosexuals for God? Well, why not make Jesus Christ a homosexual now? We can find reasons that we could suggest that. Now we can appeal that way:" This is the insanity of treating the Scriptures as a human product that has no divine revelation. That's what higher criticism did to the Bible.

Well, Jesus Christ, then, suffered martyrdom for these so-called revolutionary ideas. The ideas about the deity and the resurrection of Jesus Christ were said to be pure inventions. They said that He never rose from the dead. The said that He never was God. It was created by the religious fervor of His own followers who wrote these gospels. But the higher critical theory says that these gospels had nothing to do with God. It says that they were purely human productions.

Higher criticism, of course, is itself a fiasco of subjective conclusions which are used to undermine the authority of the Bible. That's why Satan has used it. The concepts of higher criticism are really seen in their ludicrous light when you go back to the beginning, and you see how many conclusions the higher critics have come to such that they said, "This is absolutely true." They used to say, "It is impossible to say that Moses could write a book because writing wasn't invented then." Then later, archeological discoveries discovered, sure enough, writing was invented. You could go to ancient copies by going to old libraries, like the University of Chicago, where they keep all the old Encyclopedia Britannica's, and go back to the early years of Encyclopedia Britannica, and start reading them, in the areas of the higher critic's conclusions – what they used to call their "assured conclusions." You'll have to laugh out loud, because now they are so juvenile, as they have been proven to be so wrong. But this was all subjective thinking. And these men actually thought that they could button these things down by just reading the Scripture (reading the texts) and saying, "Oh, yeah, this was this writer, and this was this writer."

**Liberalism**

All of liberalism is based upon hyper critical thinking. Liberals use orthodox terminology with different meanings, since it's just all human opinion. The Bible does not speak for God to them, so it can be subject to human reason for evaluation of its teaching. The Bible is only the record of a dead past religious experience rather than the current voice of God. They reject Bible doctrine as propositions of absolute truth which are binding on all mankind.

The result of this thinking, interjected by Wellhausen, was that practically all of the major denominations (save one or two today) were taken over by the higher critical thinking. Their seminaries were captured by the higher critical line of thought – every one. I mean, you think about Princeton; you think about Yale; or, you think about Harvard – these were all once great fundamentalist seminaries. One-by-one, they were captured by higher criticism, and one-by-one, they were destroyed relative to all spiritual reality. There are only about two major denominations today which yet have not succumbed to higher criticism in their seminaries and in their denominational thinking.

**The Missouri Senate Lutherans**

The Missouri Senate Lutherans are one. They had a narrow squeak. Up to a couple of years ago, they were on the very verge of being taken over. And just in the nick of time, the chairman of the board governing the Lutheran seminaries did battle. He threw out the president of Concordia Seminary at St. Louis, and they did the right thing. They threw out all the professors who rejected the inerrancy of Scripture, and they saved the day. Today, they've just gotten through recently holding a series of meetings at Concordia seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, where they had some of the great creationist scientists running a seminar, who stand firmly for the inerrancy of Scripture.

**The Southern Baptists**

The Southern Baptists are on the ropes as well. They're the other denomination that has not yet gone down the tube. But they have not had the courage to throw the preachers and the seminary professors out who reject inerrancy. So, they are doomed. It's just a matter of time.

The higher criticism of Wellhausen created a God and a Christianity which is totally different from the one in the Bible. Religious liberalism today is absolutely outside of all that the Bible has to say. You must understand that. So, there is no great denomination that can be mentioned today that has not been captured by higher criticism. So, what they think is totally irrelevant. They do not speak for God. They have completely abandoned Scripture. The higher critics claim that they have evolved beyond the vindictive God of the Bible. They say that's an immature view. They come down for the love of God, but they ignore the holiness of God. Satan does not want people to take the revelation about the tribulation seriously. Therefore, he wants to undermine the Bible. He wants to say that some men wrote this, and that there'll never be a period on earth like that. There is no need to worry about sin. Even if you are wrong, God will not be unkind to us.

How often have you heard people say, "I'm doing the best I can, and I know that the Man upstairs is going to be kind to me?" Hey, friend, I'm going to tell you something. That God who is upstairs is not going to compromise His integrity because of your wishy-washy sweetness and light attitude toward Him. He is going to maintain His integrity, and His holiness is going to destroy you. And you better not count on His grandfatherly ways to get you through, because it's not going to happen.

**The Social Gospel**

Where did people get an idea like that? It came from right here out of Wellhausen's treatment of Scripture: "It's a human book. You can treat it with human evaluations." Education today is seen as the solution for evil conduct. The message of the Bible has been perverted into secular humanism. That's the latest evolution of religious expression. Salvation is a matter of social improvement – to create a heaven on earth. So, they produce the social gospel. The preachers who follow the higher critical viewpoint tell their people that the way to get saved is for you to help the poor; for you to build better housing for the underprivileged; and, all of these human needs that are to be met in one way or another. That is the social gospel. People are told that if you do that, then God will be pleased with you, and He will take you into His heaven.

**The HICEE Method of Expository Bible Teaching**

Well, the result has been the descent into demonism via false doctrines that we see today. The lifestyle of corruption and filthy conduct is characteristic of this kind of thought. The God of the Bible has been declared dead and irrelevant to modern man. So, the only bulwark against this satanic deception is Bible-teaching, expository churches who function on the HICEE method. You ought never to attend a church that does not operate from the pulpit on the HICEE method. Such preaching is based on Hermeneutics. It is based on principles of interpretation that guide to the meaning of the texts. It is based on Isagogics; that is, it is based upon looking at the background of Scripture so that it is interpreted in terms of what was happening in the time in which that text was written. It is based on Categories of truth, where truth is summarized from various parts of the Bible. A truth is brought together. The blood of Christ is summarized, and you get the whole picture. The first resurrection and the issue of salvation is brought together, in everything that the Bible has to say about it, so that you know what God has said. The concept of Etymology – that you are interpreting Greek and Hebrew words. That's what the text means – not what your preacher's mind says it means, or thinks it means. It is the meaning of those words. And then out of that, the Exegesis – the applying of the principles of grammar to the original texts so that you come up exactly with what God the Holy Spirit has said. Any preacher who preaches by the HICEE technique is going to be delivering to people the mind of God, and not the mind of man.

Wellhausen undermined this concept of preaching. This is what the Reformation produced. This is the kind of preaching that came out of the Reformation. Once the higher critics got their hands on the Bible to destroy it, sin was no longer an offense to be punished, but a fall upward in religious evolution. Salvation was reduced to the social gospel and the improvement of society. It was devastating to Bible teaching. Churches were reduced to welfare centers and social country clubs. The teaching of Bible doctrine is unimportant. It's irrelevant for man's modern world. The world is getting better every day in every way. The result has been the great influence of Satan and the demons in our society. Society today is a cesspool of moral filth and the enslavement to evil.

We close with Romans 12:6, where Paul says, "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us: whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait upon our ministering; he that teaches, on teaching; he that exhorts, on exhortation; he that gives, let him give with liberality; he that rules, with diligence; he that shows mercy, with cheerfulness." God has given us, as the body of Christ, differing gifts. As we exercise these gifts according to the principles of Bible doctrine, the Word of God is alive and powerful in the people of God, and the business of doing the Lord's work is left with you people who have these spiritual gifts to perform the Lord's work. This is the world in which we live. This is the world that Satan has confused and deluded, and is going to lead right into the tribulation horrors. Only you who have spiritual gifts and the enlightenment of doctrine, and who function on those gifts, are the bulwark to preserve some people from entering that nightmare of the tribulation.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)