



“Mysteries of the Bible”

We have all watched shows from time to time purporting to explain certain “mysteries” within the Bible. Usually in these programs, the writers set forth an allegedly “unexplained” phenomenon discussed in the scriptures and then seek the professional opinions of scholars and educators from different institutions of higher learning. The result of these programs is often a conclusion to which most believers in the Bible are shocked and dismayed. Additionally, many who have trusted the Bible on its own merits, after watching such programs, are left with a sense of doubt and generally have more unanswered questions than answered.

There are several types of these programs aired. There are the programs that explain the miracles within the Bible in terms of nature. I watched one program that explained the crossing of the Red sea by the Israelites in terms of a big wind blowing the sea apart at a shallow place. Such naturalistic explanations of the miraculous are common in such programs. Other, similar, programs try to explain the authorship of the Bible in human terms; some question the purity of the life of Jesus; and still others level charges of misogyny against Paul. In these programs, the possibility of God’s existence and intervention in such things is usually ignored and/or relegated to the beliefs of right-wing fundamentalists. How should the Christian respond to such programs?

The Christian should recognize that the people who create such programs base their beliefs upon modern day philosophies more than they do the Bible (if they have any respect for the Bible at all; many do not), and postmodernism is the philosophy of the day. While there are many facets to postmodernism, one of its basic tenets is the belief

that there really is no objective truth. Rather, “truth” is the explanation (theory) of something that holds up best against what is called “deconstruction,” a process of providing criticism that tests the explanation (theory). Postmodernism never uses the word “truth” per se, but the word theory (or explanation), in place of truth. The theory or set of theories that is the most falsifiable (that is, has the ability to be falsified by empirical data), but has the least evidence to prove that the theory is false becomes the accepted explanation for what is correct. What that means is that one can never prove the theory or set of theories to be true, it is just that there is no (or little) evidence to contradict the theory (i.e. it can’t easily be deconstructed). So the standard for truth becomes the theory that has the greatest potential to be falsified, but has the least evidence to contradict it. This leads to theories of the “unexplained” that are very naturalistic, because natural processes are more subject to falsification than supernatural theories.

The fact of the matter is that the fundamental assumption of postmodernism is false; truth exists. The statement “there is no truth” would be self contradictory if true, so it must be false. From the conclusion that there is objective truth, we can eventually come to the understanding that God exists and that the Bible is God’s word. Once that is established, we can easily recognize that the Bible contains all of God’s truth and we must believe it. Unfortunately, many people have bought into the philosophy of postmodernism, including many “Christians.” One, however, cannot be a true Christian and hold to the philosophy of postmodernism. It is simply contradictory to many of the plain statements of the Bible. Jesus said, “Ye shall know the truth and the truth

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shall make you free” (John 8:32). Jesus believed in truth. The Bible teaches that we can know God’s truth and that it is God’s truth for all mankind today. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life...” (John 14:6).

What ought a Christian to do about such programs? The Christian ought to keep in mind, that such programs are going to try to explain the supernatural in naturalistic ways. They are not going to assume God is the explanation of the Bible. That means that the miracles of the Bible are going to be explained in ways

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that would conform to scientific phenomenon. The writing of the Bible is going to be explained in terms of human collaboration and authorship. The personality of Jesus and his relationship to his apostles are going to be explained in terms of modern day psychology. The “hard” doctrines of the Bible are going to be explained in terms of cultural prejudice. Just about anything that would be objectionable to the “modern,” and “scientific” mind,

is going to be explained in a naturalistic and unbiblical way. I read a book not too long ago that suggested that Jesus had narcissistic personality disorder.

The Christian knows, however, that God exists; that God, through the Holy Spirit, wrote the Bible by inspiring the apostles and prophets to write His words; that Jesus was raised from the dead; and that there are very supernatural explanations to the “unexplained mysteries”

within the Bible. Certainly if God can raise Jesus from the dead, then He can do all of the other miracles in the Bible, as well as inspire men to write His words. The Christian need not bow to the philosophy of post-modernism, nor allow

his faith to be shaken based upon the speculations of men who hold their mutable philosophy dear. Tomorrow, the world will be influenced by a different philosophy and when it is all said and done, there is nothing upon which such men can hang their proverbial hat at the end of the day. The Christian, however, puts his faith in God and his word, the unchanging, unbending, and un-breaking standard of truth

Kevin Cauley

Kevin’s Korner

Well, it was pretty cold and icy this past week. We try not to venture too far away from home during such situations. The ice storm that we had this past Wednesday night was really hazardous. I heard reports of people coming off the road all over northern Arkansas. I trust that you all stayed safe and warm during the ice event. The boys got two days off from school, and I worked at home preparing for questions and answers.

I also thought I would let everyone know, in case you haven’t heard by now, that the Elliott family is OK. Wednesday morning we received calls that they were missing and that Larry had not called into work. This got Susan’s parents worried a little. We had the whole ladies Bible class combing the streets. Fortunately, they had just gone shopping. Perhaps Larry will learn to use the phone in the near future. We are, indeed, glad that they are safe because we love them.

This week, I developed some digital pictures at Wal-Mart of last years events. I am putting together a photo album and it should be ready soon. I think you will find it edifying as we remember all of the things we did in 2003.

Sermons and Study Topics

Week of 2/08/04

Morning	Music in the Church — Its History
Scripture.....	Colossians 3:16
Evening	Questions and Answers
Scripture.....	N/A
Sunday Morning Bible Study.....	The Book of Hebrews
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	Our Passion

Weekly Record

Week of 02/01/04

Sunday Class.....	59
Sunday A.M.	74
Sunday P.M.	62
Wednesday	50
Contribution.....	\$2187.36
Budget	\$1760.00

Confidence in His Coming

Swould like to suggest that we return to thinking about *the second coming of Jesus*. How many of us have given this promised event any serious thought recently? You see, He has postponed for so long that we have fallen into the trap of taking for granted that all things will go on as they always have,...but one day they won't. Peter promised this in Second Peter three. God is only holding back His coming today because of His *patience with us, not willing that any should perish, but that all come to repentance*.

If I understand the Bible correctly, the next great even on God's calendar is the second coming of Jesus. You see there is nothing that needs to happen for Jesus to come. He could come this year, this month, today, before you finish reading this article.

And here is something that we need to keep in mind, what we believe about His return determines the kind of people we are. What we believe about His coming will change our thinking, our conversations, our agenda, priorities and behavior. It certainly did the early primitive church and will us also.

Well, what should our attitude be toward His return?

We must be alert to His coming. The Greek word translated "coming" is *parousia*. *Parousia* speaks to us of the eminent, for-sure coming of Jesus. *Parousia* says His coming is a guaranteed event. After all, His return was an angelic promise found in Acts chapter one. Both Peter and Paul tell us that His coming will be as a thief in the night. They admonish us to be alert.

We must be properly dressed for His coming. Jesus gave a parable

about a wedding banquet that had been prepared by the king at great expense. The invitations were sent and the banquet hall filled with guests. However, when the king arrived he noticed that some were improperly dressed. Scripture tells us what is proper dress for His coming. *We are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have put on Christ, have been clothed with Christ.*

We must be found serving others. Jesus paints a picture of the judgment in Mathew chapter twenty-five. Those found serving their fellowman were invited to enter into the joys of God, those on the left were destined to punishment. *Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.*

We must be found encouraging others. Paul writes to the church at Thessalonica concerning the second coming. Twice he says, *encourage or comfort one another*. The Greek word translated encourage or comfort means to call, to invite, to pray, to beseech, to entreat. We are to be evangelistic! We are to be pointing others to Jesus as we wait for His return.

The question becomes *are we really looking for His coming?*

Some are not simply because they know that they are *not* ready. Remember when the fingers of a man's hand began to write on Belshazzar's wall? At that moment the King's knees began to knock, his stomach was caught up in his throat. What's the problem? Belshazzar knew that any news from the Lord would be bad, because he knew what he had done. Those in Revelation chapter six were asking for the mountains and rocks to fall on them. Why? Because they knew where they stood with the Lord.

If you are not ready, and you know it, do today whatever is needed to become ready for this great event. Get right with the Lord today! God is patiently giving us time to change, time to repent.

Others are not looking forward to His coming because they don't know that they could know that they are forgiven, saved, and ready. John wrote, *my little children, I write these things that you may know that you have eternal life*. The early church could know, so why can't we? We can! Don't miss the power that these verses hold for children of God. *If we confess (acknowledge) our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness... If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, continues to cleanse and purify us from all sin*. Perhaps now is the time to be confident in, and enjoy the security of, His promised coming.

R. Caselman

Via the Green Forest church of
Christ Family News

Elders:

Clay Bozarth, Leon Duncan,
Bruce Foster, Bill Fort, Glenn
Quigley

Deacons: Ken Smith, Brent
Stevens, Rusty Windle.

Preacher:

Kevin Cauley... 870-423-6707

News, Notes, and 'Nouncements

- We are truly thankful to God for the wonderful new Lord's day that he has given us today to worship him in Spirit and in Truth!
- We extend our deepest sympathies to the family of James Spencer. James' mother passed away last week. Her memorial service was this past Tuesday in Harrison.
- Let us remain constant in prayer for the following individuals: Brian Guess, Michael Collins, Donna Henderson, Chris Pinkley.
- Our youth devotional will be tonight, here at the building, after the evening service. Please bring drinks and chips, and anything else yummy that you want to share.
- Our monthly Men's breakfast is scheduled for this coming Saturday.
- There will be a sweetheart's banquet in Joplin on the 19th. Tomorrow is the deadline to let me know if you want to go.
- On Saturday, February 14th, we will have a Valentine's day party here at the building. Make your plans to come!
- Next Sunday is our monthly potluck. Please be sure to put that on your calendar for next week.
- Next Sunday evening is also the monthly elders and deacons meeting. If you have anything that one of these men needs to attend to, please let them know.
- On the fifth Sunday of this month, February, we will have our quarterly singing at the nursing home. Please come!
- The pantry item for this week is canned tuna.



Welcome!

To the Berryville church of Christ.

Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class:..... 9:30 AM
 Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30 AM
 Sunday Evening Worship: 6:00 PM
 Ladies Bible Class: 10:30 AM
 Wed. Evening Bible Class: 7:00 PM

Serving Each Other

	February 8th, 2004	February 15th, 2004
Sunday Morning		
Songs:	Brent Stevens	Larry Elliott
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Bruce Foster	Clay Bozarth
Scripture Reading:	Ray Duncan	Brent Moore
Lord's Table	Bill Fort	Glenn Quigley
	Ken Smith	Matt Bassing
(assist)	Brandon Foster	Perry Foster
	John Gass	Sandy Nieves
Closing Prayer	Dan Hand	Rusty Windle
Sunday Evening		
Songs:	Bruce Foster	Brent Stevens
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Dale Pinkley	Clyde Atchley
Scripture Reading:	Matt Bassing	Dale Pinkley
Lord's Table	Rusty Windle	Leon Duncan
	Sandy Nieves	Brent Moore
Closing Prayer	Perry Foster	Ray Duncan
Wednesday		
Songs:	Hugh Atchley	Rusty Windle
Opening Prayer:	Clay Bozarth	Bob Moore
Invitation:	Bill Fort	Brent Stevens
Closing Prayer:	Glenn Quigley	Brandon Foster

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