

CHRIST AT WORK IN ME TODAY • WHEN LIFE'S A WRECK

SOLA SCRIPTURA

AFFIRMING THE AUTHENTICITY, ACCURACY, AND AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

This Wolf is

Real

Suffering from the Boy-Who-Cried-Wolf Syndrome

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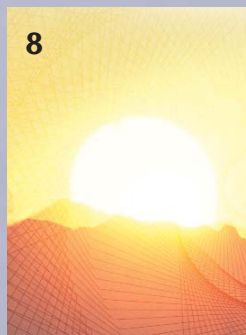
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SOLA SCRIPTURA

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The pages of Sola Scriptura are designed to be evangelistic and pastoral in nature: evangelistic in that the magazine is dedicated to proclaiming and defending the historic gospel of Jesus Christ; pastoral in that the magazine is committed to equipping and encouraging believers through sound biblical teaching.

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness..." (2 Timothy 3:16)

"In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following." (1 Timothy 4:6)

"Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." (Jude 3)

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The Passing of the Torch

Scott Pierre, Executive Director



This past summer, I attended the funeral of my high school football coach. He was an amazing man. He had coached for 46 years, and even though his success “on the field” was legendary, that was not the reason that so many others and I remembered him. Thousands gathered to honor a man who had used his platform as coach to influence the lives of others for the cause of Christ. It would be impossible to estimate the number of young people, and other coaches, who were introduced to the truth of the gospel through this man’s walk with God. That my coach “lived a very simple life with a profound impact” was the defining comment made at the funeral service. It was during this service that a humbling reality hit me: **It’s my turn now.** Two of the three most influential men in my life have gone to be with the Lord, and with their passing the sense of my own personal responsibility has caused

*I hope they say of me that I loved my children and wife.
Most of all, I hope they say I loved Jesus more than life.
So when I’m laid to rest, life’s journey I have trod,
I hope my children will say of me, “Dad was a man of God!”
I hope they remember me simply as a man of God.*

FROM A MAN OF GOD BY JEOFFREY BENWARD



me to reflect. It’s as though the torch of leadership is being passed to me and my generation as we no longer have these older, more mature Christian men to lean on. It is our responsibility now to accept this torch and use its light to guide the next generation in the knowledge of the truth. But how do we do this when our world is so adamantly and blatantly against the Scriptures? In fact, the prevailing thought being taught today in our elementary and high schools, our universities, our governments, our churches, our country and around the world, is that absolute truth cannot be known. We are being taught to be tolerant of every faith, lifestyle, thought and moral choice (except, of course, for Bible-based conservatism!). Young people today are convinced that there are multiple ways to heaven, and that what’s right is subjective. This diametrically opposes the truth that the Bible so clearly teaches.

You see, friend, the problem is that truth, by definition, is intolerant. Truth reveals a non-negotiable absolute by which all things can be measured, and anything other than that absolute is a falsehood. For example, we know that two plus two equals four, right? It’s the non-negotiable truth. So, when someone says, “Okay, it may equal four to you, but to me it seems more like seven,” they’re wrong. Unfortunately, we have begun to meet people with this type of thinking about nearly every area of life, and especially the consideration of man’s relationship to God. As a result, we are

being told that people can reach their own subjective conclusions based on their own rationale and every varying conclusion is correct. In other words, going back to our example, if it seems like seven, then for that person, it is seven. This is obviously not truth.

In order for us to effectively carry the torch into the future we must be willing to stand up and proclaim that which has become intolerant: the truth. Acts 4:12 put it this way, “there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved,” referring to the One mentioned two verses earlier, “Jesus Christ... whom God raised from the dead.” Jesus said “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through me.” This truth is an offense to sinners but is a glorious hope for believers. The hymn writer Eliza Hewitt put it this way “My hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus’ blood and righteousness.”

So, with this hope ahead we must be willing to charge forward for the sake of our Savior today. If my coach were here, he would boldly ask, “Are you ready to serve the King of Kings and Lord of Lords 110%?” May God grant us grace and mercy to humbly take the torch and faithfully guide the next generation in the truth.

In this issue we offer an article by James MacDonald that encourages us to make Scripture a reality in our lives each day. Charles Cooper warns us about trends that lead us away from a biblical worldview in his article “This Wolf is Real.” An excerpt from Dr. Dan Hayden’s new book will help you to maintain your faith even when things seem to be crashing in around you.

So, how about you? Are you running with the torch that’s been passed to you? Don’t let the flame with which you’ve been entrusted grow dim. ■

This Wolf is **REAL**

Suffering from the Boy-Who-Cried-Wolf Syndrome

On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong planted his left foot in the lunar dust and became the first American to walk on the moon. Unfortunately, that stellar moment in history may have been marred by one not-insignificant detail: If inquiring author Bill Kaysing has it right, Armstrong made his giant leap for mankind not 240,000 miles above the Earth in the barren Sea of Tranquility, but a mere 90 miles north of Las Vegas on a top-secret movie sound-stage. Yes, as Kaysing tells it, the nation was gulled into believing that Armstrong and Edwin E. "Buzz" Aldrin, Jr. were gamboling through a bona fide lunar landscape, when in fact the two "actors" were hamming it up in a sinister government production that qualifies as the greatest hoax of all time.

The idea that America is a product of democratically elected officials who seek to prosper and develop the country to be a bastion of individualism and freedom in the world is a farce. In reality, a select group of wealthy political and business leaders known as the "Illuminati" has been controlling the country since the early 1900s, putting different men in positions of power and removing others as they promote their own financial and personal interests. This

September 2001
A small but powerful group of men has been pushing for the demise of the American government and the Constitution of the United States in favor of joining a global union and a New World Order of leadership. Participation in the emergent European Union will allow for a single world monetary, religious and cultural system under the leadership of a single global administrator. The New European Order will be brought about by the inauguration of a "Global Village," assigning the production of certain commodities to particular countries, controlling energy to control nations, controlling food to control individuals. Under these conditions it would be next to

by Charles Cooper

Global governance is a very real and dangerous wolf

ACCORDING TO THE “LIBERAL LEFT” IN OUR SOCIETY, the “religious right” discovers a new conspiracy almost daily. One can find hundreds and hundreds of conspiracy stories on the Internet. The tendency to explain all major world events as the product of a conspiracy is called conspiracism. After any major national or international crisis, the conspiratorialists will find a conspiracy to explain and detail the “real” reason for the crisis. A concern here is that many sane, sober-minded followers of Jesus Christ are so accustomed to hearing far-fetched conspiratorial plots that the “boy-who-cried-wolf” syndrome has started to reduce our sensitivity to the issues. We hear so much of this that we tend to “tune out” when another theory is offered. The sad byproduct of this is that we may be caught unprepared when the wolf comes for real.

In the three examples of conspiracies on the previous page, two are probably the ravings of a fringe, but one is a genuine wolf that demands attention. The genuine wolf among us is the march toward “global governance,” which for years has been known as the “New World Order.” That many believers may be ignoring it and its ramifications is not surprising. Conspiratorialists have made much of the fact that a one-world-government has been the secret agenda of several political and economic organizations for a long time. Many of the organizations credited with a hand in moving the United States toward global governance do not overtly state such claims. However, as a member of a community committed to the authority, authenticity and accuracy of the Bible, I want to point out two irrefutable facts. First, there is historically documented evidence of a political and economic commitment to move the United States toward global governance. The second is that global governance will come at the expense of a believer’s absolute commitment to Jesus Christ. Global governance is a very real, very dangerous “wolf.”

CHANGES

Global minded Americans recognized that America’s support and entrance into a global government would require that certain changes occur in American politics, religion, and education. Over the past 80 years, socialistic and humanistic influences have slowly eroded the political, religious and educational institutions of America. Are these changes the result of a normal cultural evolution, or are they the result of planning and orchestration by certain purposed and focused individuals?

Political Change

Historically documented evidences of Americans desiring to move away from American individualism to global pluralism dates back to the early 1900s. In 1920, with a world ripe for change, the participation of the United States in a league of

nations was actually debated in the Congress of the United States, pushed by none other than President Woodrow Wilson. The events that led up to Wilson’s crusade to yield national sovereignty to a global governing body began long before 1920. The winds of socialism were influencing American politics well before Wilson’s election in 1912. A critical figure in any discussion of America’s move toward global governance must include Edward Mendell House.

House became chief advisor to President Wilson in 1912 after having served as his campaign manager. House, a Texan, was a key individual before and during the Wilson administration. His influence on American politics through President Wilson cannot be overstated. He helped establish the income tax, the Federal Reserve System, coined the phrase “league of nations,” drafted the covenant for the League of Nations and presided over the creation of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR).

In 1912, House published a novel entitled *Philip Dru: Administrator* (RWU Press edition, copyright 1998). The book was a fictional plan for the conquest of America by gaining control of both the Republican and Democratic parties and using them to create a socialist world government. While House’s novel is written as fiction, a careful reading of the novel and observations of history point to a clever plan deceptively disguised. Notice two telling paragraphs taken from *Philip Dru: Administrator*:

“What is to be the outcome, Philip?” said Mr. Strawn. “I know that things are not as they should be, but how can there be a more even distribution of wealth without lessening the efficiency of the strong, able and energetic men and without making mendicants of the indolent and improvident? If we had pure socialism, we could never get the highest endeavor out of anyone, for it would seem not worth while to do more than the average. The race would then go backward instead of lifting itself higher by the insistent desire to excel and to reap the rich reward that comes with success.”

[Philip responds,] “In the past, Mr. Strawn, your contention would be unanswerable, but the moral tone and thought of the world is changing. You take it for granted that man must have in sight some material reward in order to bring forth the best there is within him. I believe that mankind is awakening to the fact that material compensation is far less to be desired than spiritual compensation. This feeling will grow, it is growing, and when it comes to full fruition, the world will find but little difficulty in attaining a certain meas-

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Order of leadership. Participation in the emergent European
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ure of altruism. I agree with you that this much-to-be desired state of society cannot be altogether reached by laws, however drastic. Socialism, as dreamed of by Karl Marx, cannot be entirely brought about by a comprehensive system of state ownership and by the leveling of wealth. If that were done without a spiritual leavening, the result would be largely as you suggest.”

In 1918, House and others wrote a paper outlining their conviction concerning a league of nations. The purpose of this newly established body would be “to promote international cooperation and to achieve international peace and security.” It was neither a new idea nor an idea that would die. President Woodrow Wilson was so committed to the concept of a league of nations that he literally killed himself attempting to convince the American public to pressure the Senate into ratifying his agenda. Wilson, in early September 1919, embarked on a desperate attempt to take the issue of the League directly to the people. After three weeks of constant traveling and speaking, Wilson collapsed in Pueblo, Colorado, and then on October 2nd, suffered an incapacitating, near fatal, stroke. The Wilson era is not the product of conspiratorialists, but a historically documented fact. Wilson’s push for America’s direct involvement in the League of Nations was defeated in the United States Senate by only seven votes. However, the political fight to move America towards global governance did not end with the Wilson administration.

A child of the times, Herbert George Wells, better known as H.G. Wells, was a novelist, sociologist, and historian, who wrote over one hundred books. Wells was a strong advocate for a “new world order.” In his capacity as president of International PEN, a fellowship of writers designed to “create a world community that would emphasize the central role of literature in the development of world culture,” he had discussions with both Stalin and Roosevelt where he sought to convince both men to join his world-saving schemes. In 1928, Wells wrote a book entitled *The Open Conspiracy* (Greenwood Press, 2001) in which he argued for a one-world government. He wrote,

While the Open Conspiracy is no more than a discussion it may spread unopposed because it is disregarded. As a mainly passive resistance to militarism it may still be tolerable. But as its knowledge and experience accumulate and its organization becomes more effective and aggressive, as it begins to lay hands upon education, upon social habits, upon business developments, as it proceeds to take over the organization of the community, it will marshal not only its own forces but its enemies.

That Wells and others recognized the need for a process that would continue to change the political, religious and educational institutions is evident. Notice what Harvard professor Stanley Hoffman wrote in his book *Primacy or World Order* (McGraw-Hill Companies, January 1978): “What will have to take place is a gradual adaptation of the social, economic and political system of the United States to the imperatives of World Order.” Since the early 1990s it appears that the phrase “New World Order” has fallen out of favor to be replaced by the more politically correct phrase “global governance.” But the fact that many people are much more open to a world community that insures peace and safety cannot be denied. How then will this move influence those devoted to Jesus Christ?

Religious Change

The march toward global governance not only required a change in the political climate, but religious change was necessary as well. H.G. Wells wrote in *The Open Conspiracy*,

It seems unavoidable that if religion is to develop unifying and directive power in the present confusion of human affairs it must adapt itself to this forward-looking, individuality-analyzing turn of mind; it must divest itself of its sacred histories, its gross preoccupations, its posthumous prolongation of personal ends. The desire for service, for subordination, for permanent effect, for an escape from the distressful pettiness and mortality of the individual life, is the undying element in every religious system.

The time has come to strip religion right down to that, to strip it for greater tasks than it has ever faced before. The histories and symbols that served our fathers encumber and divide us. Sacraments and rituals harbour disputes and waste our scanty emotions. The explanation of why things are is an unnecessary effort in religion. The essential fact in religion is the desire for religion and not how it came about. If you do not want religion, no persuasions, no convictions about your place in the universe can give it to you. The first sentence in the modern creed must be, not “I believe,” but “I give myself.”

Wells succinctly states the changes that must occur in established religions to make room for global governance.

THE PROBLEM

Global governance demands that all religion “divest itself of its sacred histories.” To divest Christianity of “its sacred history” is to remove the defining trait that makes Christianity

*We are taught in John 1:1
that the Word is Christ.*

“Christian.” Equally, since Christianity’s “sacred history” is recorded in the Bible, it too must be part of our expected divestment. Yet to renounce the Bible as the Word of God takes “Christ” out of “Christianity” because we are taught in John 1:1 that the Word *is* Christ. For true believers, Christianity explains why things are and who is ultimately responsible for them. If “I believe” is no longer at the heart of Christianity then we are no longer “believers.” For true followers of Christ, socialistic, humanistic global governance is too expensive.

Most true Christians are aware of the continual attempt to marginalize the Judeo-Christian based values that formed a part of our country’s initial beginnings. The slow, but methodical removal of everything Judeo-Christian from the mainstream of American life is necessary if the United States is to join the move towards global governance. Why? Because the claims of Christianity prohibit pluralism in religion. Christianity simply cannot “get along” with all the other religions of the world. Jesus Christ demands exclusivity as to faith and salvation.

If global governance becomes a reality as a growing chorus in the United States seems to desire, Christians will have to make a choice: patriotism or persecution. Our goal here is not to be another conservative voice decrying the loss of the “good old America” we use to know and love. We are not calling for seclusion or isolationism. We are not suggesting a get-out-the-vote campaign to protect a conservative agenda nor are we arguing for more talk radio to dispel the “evil” agenda of the left. Our goal is to warn you, the individual, to watch, listen and read so that when the boy cries, “Wolf!” you will know the difference between conspiracism and prophetic fulfillment. ■

*For true believers, Christianity
explains why things are and who is
ultimately responsible for them...
Jesus Christ demands exclusivity as
to faith and salvation.*



CH

BY JAMES MACDONALD

RIST AT WORK in me TODAY

The Spirit of the LORD GOD is upon me,

Because the LORD has anointed me

To bring good news to the afflicted;

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,

To proclaim liberty to captives

And freedom to prisoners;

To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD

And the day of vengeance of our GOD;

To comfort all who mourn,

To grant those who mourn in Zion,

Giving them a garland instead of ashes,

The oil of gladness instead of mourning,

The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting

— Isaiah 61:1-3

WHEN YOU WERE GROWING UP, DID your family own a station wagon? Mine did. A metallic, lime-green Pontiac. The best seat in the car was the trundle way in the rear, facing backwards. When you sat there the only thing you saw mile after mile was the stuff behind you. A lot of people experience God that way, as if the awesome stuff God did is only ever behind us. Other people sit in the front and never look back. They think that the Bible is only about the future, scanning every passage for signs about what will happen at the end of the age.

But the Bible isn't some yesterday thing. Neither is God's greatness only a "Wow" scene in the future. The best seat in the Bible is the one that helps you focus on today. Yes, the Lord wants to reveal His mighty work in your life *today*.

The prophet Isaiah proclaimed this same good news. God's promise in Isaiah 61:1-3, although ultimately fulfilled in the future millennial kingdom when Jesus Christ will reign on the earth for a thousand years, began during Christ's earthly ministry, and continues in our day through the work of His Holy Spirit. In one sentence, His ministry today is this: **No matter how deeply you've been hurt, the Lord can heal you.**

Look at Isaiah 61:1, Jesus' ministry in your life is . . .

*To bring good news to the afflicted;
He has sent me to bind up the
brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to captives
And freedom to prisoners;*

Jesus has His heart set on helping three different groups of people. See them there? The afflicted, the brokenhearted, the prisoners. Who are these people? We are!

Christ came with good news for the afflicted.

The first specific people in this passage that need help are the *afflicted*. Some translations say *poor*. A good translation from the Hebrew would be *humble*. Jesus will bring good news to those who have humble spirits. You know the verse, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble"? It's quoted *three* times in the Bible—Proverbs 3:34, James 5:6, 2 Peter 5:5. This humility thing isn't a surprise.

In Matthew 5:3 Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," that is, people who are willing to admit that they have a need. Blessed are those who are humble enough to acknowledge that their best efforts are

not enough to merit God's forgiveness. Christ brings the good news of eternal life freely given—but you must be humble to hear it! You cannot have what Christ has to offer unless you admit your need. Not just for salvation, but for every grace for every day. Christians don't "have it all together" just because we've been to the cross. We must remain in that place of humility or we will not experience the grace of Christ for every day.

Christ came to heal the broken-hearted.

Is your heart broken? The word describes people who have been hammered by a devastating blow. Perhaps a very difficult circumstance has deeply wounded you. Is there a profound sadness to your life because of a tragedy in your past? Isaiah 61:1 says that Christ came into this world to *bind up* the brokenhearted. Like a doctor attending a broken limb. Like someone ministering salve over an open sore bringing

comfort to a place you thought might never heal. Yes, even in that place Jesus is the great Physician.

Christ came to set the captives free.

If you've had a week of failure where you've been trapped in a repeated cycle of sin-confess, sin-confess then you know firsthand the frustration and defeat of slavery to sin. Despite your best efforts, do you wonder if that sin will *ever* be gone from your life?

What you desperately need is the freedom Jesus came to give. He wants to break that cycle in your life and give you freedom. *That* is what He came into this world to do. Look into your heart and find the deepest place of defeat. Yes there, Christ would give you freedom. It is the birthright of every child of God.

A Really Great Swap

One word summarizes what all three of these people groups need: healing. And to

those who need healing, Christ promises an incredible swap. Isaiah 61:3 says Christ will come:

*Giving them a garland instead of
ashes,
The oil of gladness instead of
mourning,
The mantle of praise instead of a
spirit of fainting.
So they will be called oaks of
righteousness*

If you give God your ashes—your sorrow, God promises to swap it out for a garland. A garland was awarded to a successful athlete or someone being publicly recognized (like the apostle Paul wrote about in 1 Corinthians 9:25). If you surrender your mourning, Christ promises His joy and if your heart is burdened, God promises to cover you in a mantle, a robe, of praise.

Lastly, ready for this?—when we exchange our sorrow for His joy, we will be called, "*oaks of righteousness.*" Would

**What you desperately
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you describe yourself as tall, strong, steady, and faithful, deeply rooted in the soil of God's Word? Christ wants that to be true of your life. And here's the good news—this has nothing to do with your righteousness and everything to do with *His*. You don't have to stand straighter or try to act more godly, as if we could measure up anyway. We're talking about His righteousness *alone* here.

Are you impacted by the healing work of Christ today? Sadly, most Christians have only a head-knowledge of Christ's power. They've never experienced it personally. Beyond that, it frustrates their faith to keep hearing about a power they have yet to encounter for themselves. How about you? Has Christ healed for you those hurts from your past? Have you seen Him take a formerly consuming pain and melt it away? Or does it still hang out, unresolved, rattling around in the back of your brain? There's no use pretending; God knows the truth. If this is true, admit it to Him right now. Say,

"I'm not experiencing Your power in my life, but I want to." Turn to Him in humility, acknowledge your need of His healing ministry, and ask Him in faith to give it. Then believe that you have received it. Jesus said in Matthew 21:22, "And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

Don't sit in the back seat of the Christian life never experiencing His transformation firsthand yet trying to rejoice in what the saints of old reported. Don't accept the lie that all of God's power is yet future and not a part of your life before heaven. Look for Christ at work in your life today. "His going forth is as certain as the dawn" (Hosea 6:3). ■



Dr. James MacDonald is the founding pastor of Harvest Bible Chapel in Rolling Meadows, IL and radio Bible teacher on Walk in the Word (walkintheword.com) which emphasizes the precise exposition of God's Word and its practical life application. James and his wife Kathy have three children—Luke, Landon, and Abigail—and reside in the northwest suburbs of Chicago.

PUT IT INTO ACTION <

- In what way are you hurting *today*?
- Are you humble about your need?
- Take a heart check; pray for Christ's healing.
- Where are you most deeply defeated?
- How can Christ give you freedom?
- Do you believe in Christ's work *today*?

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A Sola Scriptura Exclusive

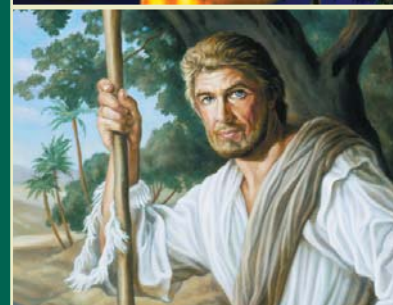
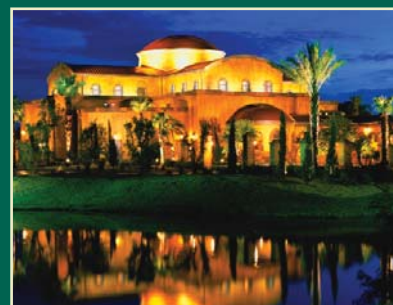
THE SCRIPTORIUM PORTRAITS



Voices from the Word of God

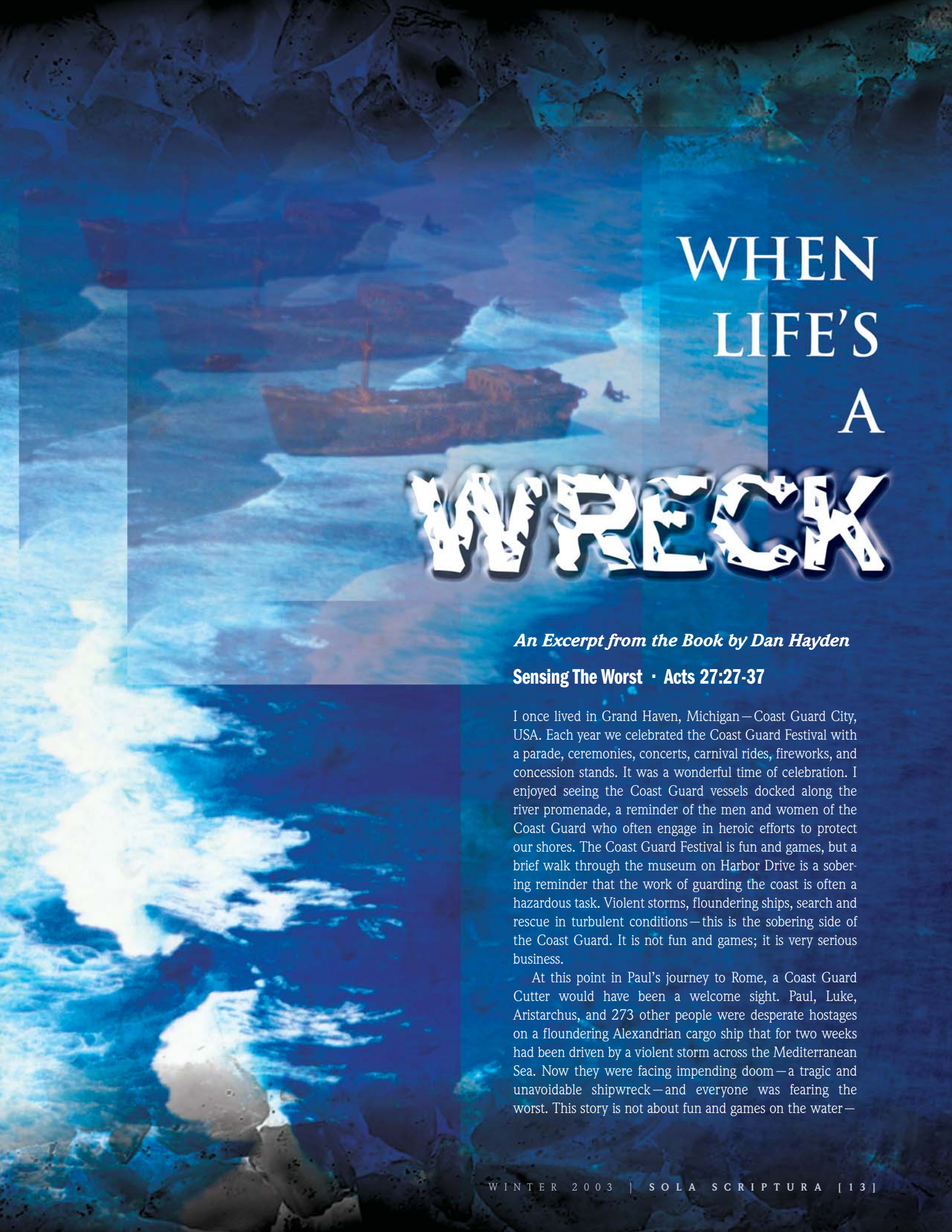
The Scriptorium: Center for Biblical Antiquities, an immersive museum at The Holy Land Experience in Orlando, Florida, features ten incredible paintings by artist Joseph Brown. These portraits capture the lives and faith of ten individuals from the Bible:

Moses
Joshua
Samuel
David
Isaiah
Ezra
Mary
John
Peter
Paul



The Scriptorium Portraits: Voices from the Word of God features all ten paintings accompanied by biographical sketches of each individual, background information, and notes on the paintings by the artist, Joseph Brown.

This beautiful gift book is available in hardcover for \$14.95 (plus shipping). To order, call Sola Scriptura at 800-844-9930 or visit our website at www.solagroup.org.




WHEN LIFE'S A WRECK

An Excerpt from the Book by Dan Hayden

Sensing The Worst • Acts 27:27-37

I once lived in Grand Haven, Michigan—Coast Guard City, USA. Each year we celebrated the Coast Guard Festival with a parade, ceremonies, concerts, carnival rides, fireworks, and concession stands. It was a wonderful time of celebration. I enjoyed seeing the Coast Guard vessels docked along the river promenade, a reminder of the men and women of the Coast Guard who often engage in heroic efforts to protect our shores. The Coast Guard Festival is fun and games, but a brief walk through the museum on Harbor Drive is a sobering reminder that the work of guarding the coast is often a hazardous task. Violent storms, floundering ships, search and rescue in turbulent conditions—this is the sobering side of the Coast Guard. It is not fun and games; it is very serious business.

At this point in Paul's journey to Rome, a Coast Guard Cutter would have been a welcome sight. Paul, Luke, Aristarchus, and 273 other people were desperate hostages on a floundering Alexandrian cargo ship that for two weeks had been driven by a violent storm across the Mediterranean Sea. Now they were facing impending doom—a tragic and unavoidable shipwreck—and everyone was fearing the worst. This story is not about fun and games on the water—



So what
do you do
when the
dark clouds
roll in and
you sense
the worst
is about to
happen?

it is about life and death. It was bone-chilling, life-drenching reality.

With the passing of time, the situation was not getting better for those aboard the ship. In fact, their situation was about to take a turn for the worse. You know the saying, “Cheer up, things could be worse. So I cheered up, and sure enough things got worse.”

When my wife and I were ministering at a camp in northern Wisconsin, a dear lady whom I had known for many years came to me and told me about a continuing problem she was facing in her marriage. She said, “For over a year our marriage has been a turbulent storm. At times, things seem to get better but then they just get worse again. Actually, I have no idea how things are going right now.” Later on I saw her again and she said, “Well, Dan, things are getting worse than ever.” Finally I received a letter from her saying, “He’s moved out. I’m afraid! What do I do?” Here was someone sensing impending doom with regard to her marriage and she didn’t know what to do. So what do you do when the dark clouds roll in and you sense the worst is about to happen?

Dealing With Your Fear

In verses 27-29, fear dominates the story: “And fearing that we might run aground somewhere on the rocks...” (v.29). A sense of impending doom and a feeling of helplessness were gripping everyone’s hearts. They were stuck in an impossible dilemma, and it had been fourteen long days and nights since the storm had first come upon them (v.27). If they had been on land, the storm would have eventually passed by, but it had caught them at sea and

had simply taken them with it. It swept them past the southern reaches of the Adriatic Sea (now called the Ionian Sea), and eventually deposited them at the little island of Malta, just south of Sicily. They had been driven nearly five hundred miles across the Mediterranean in the space of two weeks.¹

It was about midnight, and the sailors surmised that they were approaching land. Since it was dark, there were two ways that they could possibly have known this. First of all, offshore winds could have carried the scents common to land but absent at sea. That is probably not the case here, or at least we aren’t given any indication that it was. Another way to know land is near without seeing it is by the sound of the breakers on a rocky coastline. That appears to be the most likely scenario in this situation. In fact, if you go to the island of Malta today, there is a bay, which is named after this story, called St. Paul’s Bay. For a boat to enter that bay it has to pass within a quarter of a mile of the Point of Koura.² The waves pummel the rocky coast of Malta there, making a noise loud enough to warn sailors even at night that their ship is approaching land. Sailors say that in the daytime you can see the breakers on that part of Malta before you can see land.

So, here’s the situation. It was dark. The sailors knew that they were coming near a rocky coast, but they didn’t know where they were in relation to the rocks. Verse 39 indicates that even the next day when it was light, they had no idea where they were. It was an impossible situation indeed!

The impending danger only seemed to heighten as they took soundings (v.28) and discovered that they were in water twenty

fathoms deep. A fathom is about six feet—about the distance between the tips of your fingers with your arms outstretched. Twenty fathoms then is about 120 feet deep. A little later the depth was checked again, and it was found to be fifteen fathoms. Gradually the ship was moving toward the land. Verse 29 records that the sailors let down four anchors because they feared the ship would smash into the rocks.

Fear can be a crippling emotion. Maybe you've experienced the paralysis of fear. On the other hand, fear can cause an adrenaline rush and enable you to make it through a crisis. That seems to be the case in this situation. The sailors had the presence of mind to cast four anchors from the stern (the back of the boat). The hope was that, as they got closer to shore, those anchors would take hold and keep the boat from crashing into the rocks. Then they simply wished for daybreak. All they could do was wait.

Sometimes life is like that. You've done what you can do, and now you just have to put your trust in the Lord and hope for the best. Bill Gaither wrote a wonderful song called "Joy Comes in the Morning." He took that phrase from Psalm 30:5, which says, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning" (NKJV). When trouble comes, look for daybreak to dispel the darkness. It may be a literal daybreak, or it may be enlightenment in your soul where God begins to show you what is happening in your life. Joy comes in the morning—hang on for the day!

Once when I was pastoring in Orlando I received a phone call from a distraught mother in Minneapolis. She was a single parent and had a son who was very rebel-

lious. He was seventeen and had run away with a friend, hitchhiking to Florida. Upon arriving, they had gotten involved with the wrong people, had gotten into drugs, and were eventually arrested. At the time his mother called me he was in a juvenile detention center in Orlando, and she was planning to fly down for a meeting with the court-appointed attorney. Somebody had given her my name, and she was calling to find out if I could be of any help. This dear mother was in the grip of despair and was fearing the worst.

I met her at the airport and accompanied her to the meeting with the attorney, as well as the hearing before the judge. Her son's rebellion had placed him in a perilous situation and she was apprehensive about his future. She knew the Lord and was trusting in Him, but circumstances were overwhelming. As it turned out, the judge was lenient with her son, although he did order an extended time of detention. After the son was released, however, he returned to Minneapolis. I lost track of them after that—and even though I don't know the end of the story, I will never forget the turmoil in this mother's heart throughout that experience.

You probably know how it is to receive bad news. Fear grips your heart and you wonder. What do I do? You get a phone call. There's been a car accident, or there's been a sudden death in your family. You sit there numb and decimated. Yet, Second Timothy 1:7 says, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (NKJV). It doesn't say you won't be afraid. It's natural to have fears, but those fears are not from God. They are part of the natural reaction of a

**For God
has not
given us
a spirit of
fear, but of
power and
of love and
of a sound
mind.**

Be of good courage, for the Lord your God is with you.

> PUT IT INTO ACTION

- What fears are you facing today?
- Have you done all that you can do about it?
- How can you trust in the Lord and hope for the best?
- Stop the fear factor; pray for a spirit of courage.
- How can Christ give you good courage?
- Do you believe in Christ's work today?

heart that is caught in the limitations of humanity. We are afraid in times like that, and naturally we cry.

It's helpful to remember, however, that God doesn't give a spirit of fear. The New American Standard Bible translates it "a spirit of timidity." Someone with a spirit of timidity backs off from trouble and is crippled by fear. God doesn't give us that kind of a spirit—He gives us a spirit of courage. I love the words that are used in 2 Timothy 1:7. It says that God gives us a spirit of power—spiritual strength in the midst of adversity. He gives us a spirit of love; He enables us to see things in a positive light and to look for solutions. He gives us a sound mind to think logically and sensibly as we work our way through the problem.

Courage is not the absence of fear; courage is the control of fear. It is working through the fearful situation. God promises to help us in the midst of our circumstances when we depend upon Him. When we reach out to the Lord, He will give us a spirit of courage to strengthen us in any adversity. He will reinforce a positive spirit to look to Him for available options. God will give us a sound mind to think through what is the best course of action.

At the beginning of the book of Joshua, when Joshua was set to lead Israel across the Jordan River to conquer the land of Canaan, he had every human reason to fear. The nation had spent forty years in the desert because the Israelites had been afraid of the giants, to say nothing of the fortified cities scattered throughout the land. Now God was calling Joshua to lead the next generation of the children of Israel across the Jordan to conquer Canaan. They were going into the same land with the same

giants and the same fortified cities that had crippled the previous generation with fear. Yet, God said to Joshua, "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9, NKJV).

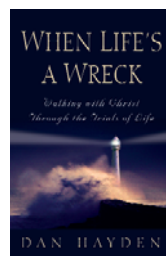
That's what you and I need to hear in times of distress. Do not be afraid! Be strong and of good courage, for the Lord your God is with you. Let the Lord strengthen you and give you courage to overcome your fear. Let Him give you a positive spirit and an ability to think reasonably about your circumstances. ■

ENDNOTES

1. James Smith, *The Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul*, 3rd Ed. (London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1866), p. 124.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 119.



Dr. Dan Hayden is Director of Ministries at Sola Scriptura. A pastor for more than 20 years, Dan's radio program *A Word from the Word* can be heard across the country. He has spoken at conferences and seminars worldwide and has authored several books, including *When Life's a Wreck*, published by Crossway Books. Dan and his wife Karilee reside in Orlando, Florida.



The Luther Bible of August of Saxony

Dr. Herbert Samworth

During the days of the Reformation in the 16th Century AD, there was a renewed interest in giving the common people the Bible in their own language. Previously, the Church had been the guardian of the Scripture, which was available only in Latin, the official language of the Church. In addition, due to an increasing popular demand for copies of the bible, printers began to produce expensive artistic editions that would appeal to the more affluent members of society. These two strands of thought, the Scriptures in the vernacular and an ornate presentation of the printed text, are brought together in the Luther Bible of August of Saxony. This is one of the treasures of The Van Kampen Collection at the Scriptorium in Orlando, Florida.

The August of Saxony Bible is a two-volume edition, translated into German by Martin Luther, and published by Hans Luft of Marburg and Worms in 1560-61. Hans Luft had printed the first complete Luther Bible in 1534, and he continued to work with Luther throughout the course of Luther's life, publishing his German translations of the Bible.

Known for its sheer magnificence and excellent workmanship, the August of Saxony Bible almost defies description. It was printed in two folio-sized volumes, not on paper, but on vellum or animal skin. The binding was in black velvet with silver clasps and ornately engraved corner pieces depicting sixteen scenes from the Scriptures. It had been commissioned between 1558-61 by Herzog August, Electoral Duke of Saxony. The title page, including the Duke's coat of arms, was followed by the Duke's portrait painted by the artist Virgil Solis.

The Van Kampen Collection copy is the one that the Duke presented to Wilhelm, Duke of Brunswick-Luneberg and his wife in 1569. The

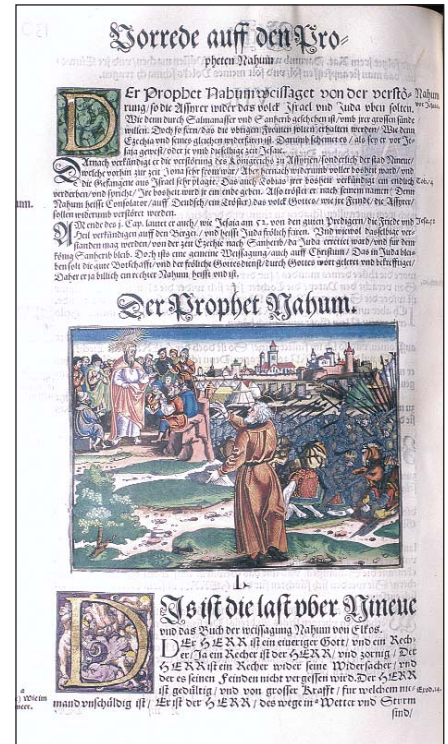
coats of arms of both Duke August and Duke Wilhelm were included on the cover of the book.

When we peruse the pages of this magnificent book, its beauty nearly overwhelms us. This Bible contains one hundred and seventy printed and hand-painted woodcuts done by George Limburger and Hans Broder. Twenty of the woodcuts appear in the Prophetical books and an astonishing thirty-seven were used to illustrate the book of the Revelation. The vividness and color of these woodcuts can make one imagine that he is standing beside the Apostle John himself when he was given the apocalyptic visions on the isle of Patmos.

The scarcity of copies is another distinguishing mark of this edition. Only eight of these books had been catalogued before the outbreak of the Second World War, five of which had been printed in less lavish editions. These five were catalogued in German libraries and some may have perished as a result of the war. A sixth copy, held by the British Library, is the extremely rare edition of 1561, the same edition as the Van Kampen copy.

We know of only one other copy of the 1560-61 edition printed on vellum. It also was a presentation copy. On August 6, 1564, Duke August presented it to his financial secretary, Johann Pymer, with the admonition "to read it with diligence." However the woodcuts contained in this copy were unpainted. All of this points to the fact that The Van Kampen Collection copy, with its vellum pages and colored woodcuts, is perhaps the only surviving copy of its kind in the world.

Thus, we have the two diverse means of presenting the Word of God joined together. On the one hand, we have the Word of God in a translation that was prepared for all German-speaking people, including the peasant class. On the other hand, the August of Saxony edition was printed in such a lavish format that it



was priced far beyond the ability of the average person to buy it. Its ornate binding, silver clasps, vellum pages and brilliant woodcuts make it totally unique. It is this combination of the common language and the ornate production that reminds us that the Word of God, while capable of being translated into the common language, is also the royal proclamation of the King of Kings. Therefore, the Scriptures are worthy of being preserved in the most lavish format imaginable. ■

The Luther Bible of August of Saxony is part of **The Van Kampen Collection**, one of the world's largest private collections of Bibles, artifacts, and biblical manuscripts in the world. The Collection is the centerpiece of Sola Scriptura's ministry, and is housed at **The Scriptorium**, an interactive museum at **The Holy Land Experience** in Orlando, Florida. This Bible is presently on display in the Special Exhibit Room at The Scriptorium. The Exhibit is called **Light in the Dark Ages** and is an illustration of the power of God's Word to dispel the spiritual darkness that had enveloped much of Europe before the Reformation.

The Great Con Game

Dr. Dan Hayden

Con men have elaborate schemes to delude their prey. The idea behind a con is to make something look legitimate when in actuality it is not. So care is taken to cover every potential loophole and answer every possible objection. Good con artists are smooth and articulate in the way they present their opportunity to unwary prospects, and they often give the impression that to question anything is the height of foolishness. It's not until the cons are long gone and the dupe is left holding the bag that the real truth begins to dawn—"I've been had!" It's an unsettling experience to be conned—a person is stripped of his or her dignity and most often left in an emotional heap of despair.

Well, there is a word in the New Testament that describes this kind of an experience. It is the word "deceive," which is sometimes translated "beguile" or "delude." This is the word used by Paul when warning the believers in Thessalonica. He says, "Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction" (2 Thessalonians 2:3).

Now the particular thing the Thessalonians were being deceived about is what Paul had referred to as the "Day of the Lord" judgment (v. 2). The Thessalonian Christians were experiencing a major persecution from their own countrymen for their faith in Christ. So they were under the impression that the end times had come and the persecution they were experiencing was the persecution Paul had talked about. Others had tried to convince them of this too (vs. 1-2), but it was all a great delusion. They were being conned.

The word "deceive" in this verse is not the simple word for deceive. It is the basic verb



apatao, which means "to deceive, cheat, or mislead." But the Greek preposition *ek-* is added to the front of this verb to stress completeness. In other words, the word *exapatao* literally has the idea of being completely deluded—wholly seduced, utterly conned. They were in danger of being shaken in their composure and very disturbed (v. 2) if they did not see the ruse. They were being tricked into thinking something was true when it really wasn't.

There was a way out, however. There is always a way out of a con game—and that is by knowing the truth. The Day of the Lord judgment had not come (v. 2) and there were two indications of that. First, the apostasy (or falling away from the faith) had not happened yet; and second, the man of sin (or "antichrist") had not yet been revealed. Knowing those two pieces of information unmasked the fraud and gave the Thessalonians the proper perspective

on what was happening.

Well we also are susceptible to deception just like the Thessalonian believers. We need to know the truth of God's Word if we are not to be blindsided by various erroneous practices and doctrines, including the timing of end-time events. Con men have been crying "wolf" for some time now—but the perceptive student of God's Word will see the telltale marks of truth and not be taken in by their fraud. A patient, persevering spirit of study will enable any Christian to be unashamed as to an accurate handler of the Word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15).

To be deceived and deluded is to end up being ashamed and shaken. Oh that we would be careful to know the truth so that we will be able to see with the eyes of Christ. Don't be blindsided by the con man. Be alert and understanding through the careful study of God's Word. ■

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near. John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne; and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father; to Him be the glory and the Amen. Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos, because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet, saying, "Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea." And I turned to see the voice

that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. And in His right hand He held seven stars; and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword...

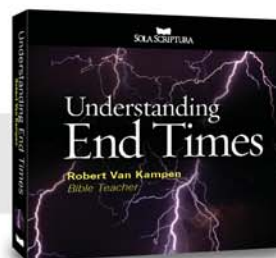
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 SOLA SCRIPTURA

Practice

Stu Kinniburgh

I've been an amateur musician for many years. Like many amateurs, I got to a point where I played well enough to enjoy music for my own purposes, and stayed there for a long while. I was aware of musicians who were much better than I was, but it didn't really matter because I was "good enough for me." Then I met Rick. Rick was a nurse in the Army when we first met, but the thing that linked us together was his ability to play the guitar. We would get together to do music on many occasions, and I was always amazed at how well he played. He was not a professional musician, in that he played mostly for enjoyment, but he could play better than anyone I had ever met! I began to get a little restless with my abilities, and asked Rick for suggestions on how to move to another level. He suggested that I go to a guitar camp, a week long, intensive course of study with professional musicians who provide enough material to carry one through an entire year of musical growth if applied properly. I decided to attend a camp the following summer that met in the little town of Merryville, Tennessee, even though I believed that I would be the worst player there and that the efforts of the teachers would be wasted on my abilities. From the first day at camp, I realized that it was indeed a special place. Players of nearly every skill ability had come from across the world to learn how to play the guitar better. Organized "jam" sessions where from 5 to 15 musicians of differing skill level would gather to play music served to both encourage and showcase the range of abilities of the players. Several classes each day with professional guitarists presented a wealth of information designed to aid the aspiring musician. Nightly concerts highlighted the instructors and some of the more skilled attendees with music that

was absolutely amazing. Throughout the week, one question seemed to be on the tips of the tongues of the attendees. That question: "How do you DO that?" After demonstrating parts of songs that seemed only playable by a person that has eight fingers on each hand, the answer that was given nearly every time boiled down to one word—*practice*. Fortunately, the answer did not stop there. Nearly everyone at the Camp understood the idea of practicing, but it is in the method of practicing that one is able to approach the abilities we were witnessing, and there was much discussion in that area.

Now, think about your life... specifically your Spiritual life. What correlations can you draw to the situation described above? For many, Spiritual growth has taken place at some time or another, yet there are often times of extended plateau. We consider our growth, knowledge and witness and think to ourselves... "I know most of the stories and theology of the Bible well enough to discuss them on a basic level. I've read several books by the big-name Christian authors. I attend Church and sometimes I go to a Sunday School meeting... I'm good enough for me!" Our lives find a comfortable path of minimal resistance, where our abilities are met squarely with challenges in a fairly even contest of push and pull. Then something happens... you meet a "Rick" of your own. Perhaps it is a co-worker, or a neighbor, or boyfriend, or

girlfriend. Perhaps it is your pastor, or a small-group leader in your church. Or perhaps you are prompted when you hear or read the Word of God, encouraging you to go beyond your abilities. Whoever or whatever the reason, something causes you to desire a deeper, richer, more meaningful relationship with Christ, and you begin to wonder just how you can achieve it? Is there a "guitar camp" for Believers? Many will find encouragement in seminars and conferences sponsored by ministries and churches that take place all across the country. Others find that regular participation in a small-group or Bible study serves a similar purpose. Still, the ultimate answer is the same as it is for those at guitar camp... *practice*. Philippians 2:12 encourages us in this manner: "So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling..."



The idea here of “working out” holds the same general idea as practice—so the issue then becomes how do we practice so as to improve and move forward?

When presented with this question at camp, I noticed the professionals recommended four aspects of practicing. The first aspect is to *practice with focus*. Most musicians who find little value in practicing do not concentrate their efforts. They will work on one thing one day, then another the next day, and then spend several days doing scales, then stop doing them for weeks. This kind of practicing does not usually result in over all improvement because we humans tend to forget things quickly. A focused effort requires a dedicated time period wherein specific aspects of playing are consistently rehearsed in an orderly fashion. First warm up, then scales, then songs we’re trying to perfect, then songs we’re trying to learn, then sight-reading, and so on. In the same manner, one who seeks to grow spiritually requires focus—setting aside a time period and guarding it against all of the things that get in the way. It is a good idea to create a system that incorporates meditation, reading, study, and prayer in a way that allows us to grow in those areas. I learned a method of Bible study many years ago called the ABCD method. Read a passage of scripture somewhere between 4 and 10 verses, then write a few words that sum up what the passage is **A**bout, followed by writing what you feel is the **B**est verse that communicates this Truth to you, followed by a few lines that capture what the verses **C**ommunicated to you, and finish with a short written prayer of **D**edication to Godly living and action. There are other methods that will help you to focus your efforts in this area, as well as books, study Bibles and pamphlets you can find at your local Christian book store.

The second emphasis to practicing better is to be *slow and deliberate*. Often, the performers could play a melody or part with lightening speed and accuracy. Most students learn the basic notes, and then try to play the notes at the same speed as the pros—losing

almost all of the accuracy. The solution: practice the part very slowly until every note is correct, and then slowly increase speed, each time ensuring accuracy before another increase. This takes weeks or months for some parts, but once the desired speed is attained, accuracy is there also. In the same way, we must not be impatient as we seek to grow Spiritually. In a recent small group Bible study, we were studying a book that uses Paul’s Journey to Rome in Acts 27 and 28 to teach about dealing with difficult times. Each chapter covers somewhere between 3 and 6 verses, yet the book is never boring or dull. In fact, a member of the group said recently “I never dreamed that there could be so much good stuff in only a few verses! How does the author do it?” We are a goal-oriented society, and we measure our progress often by how much we do rather than how accurately we do things. Studying the Bible takes time, and there is no prize for finishing a complete chapter in two days. Rather, the prize goes to the person who most completely understands the Truth as it is taught in Scripture. Slow and deliberate progress will serve to strengthen the foundation upon which we build our lives.

The third aspect of practice is to understand the *value of a good teacher*. A good teacher can encourage, instruct, protect and challenge their students. They can demonstrate the proper way to play a line of notes, and can help a student to reach beyond their capabilities to accomplish more difficult

tasks. One trip to the bookstore will demonstrate our penchant for self help. Books and pamphlets abound that tell us that we can learn to do a whole host of things without any additional help. One in particular advertised: “Learn to play the guitar in only three weeks—avoid the high cost of a private teacher!” I’ve worked with students who tell me that they started out with these books, and most say that after several days, they lost interest and stopped trying. Motivation and encouragement is part of it I am sure, but a good teacher can make a world of difference. Almost every one of the professionals at camp could point to a teacher who launched their professional careers. Spiritually, we are no different. A solid preacher or Bible teacher can make an amazing difference in a Christian’s life. I remember moving to Chicago years ago and searching for a Church. My wife and I tried many where the people were very nice and the services were the right blend of traditional and contemporary that we enjoyed. The pastors delivered messages that did not offend and were what we had come to expect in a nearly ecumenical Church setting. Then we attended a church that met in a remodeled home. It was new, and so did not have the established choir and youth programs we looked for. It was small, and so did not have the wealth of people from which to draw for projects and ministries. But the pastor taught from the Bible in a way that captured hearts and minds. He spoke about doctrine that was difficult to accept because it

*Something causes you to desire
a deeper, richer, more meaningful
relationship with Christ, and you
begin to wonder just how
you can achieve it...*

did not agree with our previous teaching, and after one week I couldn't imagine going back again. But each Sunday, my wife and I were drawn back to this fellowship to hear the Word preached because it touched a place in our Spirits as nothing else could. As we look back on those years, there is no doubt that we grew more spiritually at that time than in any other time in our lives. Do you have a teacher that is challenging you to grow in your understanding of Truth?

Finally, the last aspect of practice that I learned is to *play with friends* from time to time. Before going to camp, I had received music and practiced it as best I could so that I would be able to participate in "jam sessions" with other players. I thought I had done a pretty fair job of learning the music, but when it came time for me to play with the

group, I learned that I had been playing the music much too slowly, and that I had not maintained a solid rhythm throughout the song. I had slowed down just a little during the difficult parts, and when I had to play with the group, low and behold, they kept on playing at a steady pace, leaving me struggling to keep up. Playing with friends helps us to try out those things we've been working on and see how our part fits into the entire song. It gives us feedback on our efforts, and lets us learn from what others are doing. It prepares us to play with people we might not know, when the pressure is on. Spiritually, playing with friends equates to joining a fellowship of believers, either a Church or small group or Bible Study, where we can participate to the limits of our abilities. We can share our difficulties and our successes. We can ask questions. We can learn

from what others are going through. Scripture tells us that we must not fail to fellowship with other Believers because we learn and grow through that experience. Nothing else can provide the benefit of this gathering together with friends.

Focus. Seek slow and deliberate progress. Find a good teacher. Spend quality time with friends. And if you are one who thinks that you are "good enough" right now, then pray for a "Rick" to come into your life so that you can be exposed to what you are missing. Each of us should seek to be constantly maturing in our Faith, becoming more and more like Christ with each passing day. If you desire this and wonder how to make it a reality, then remember what the concert guitarist said to the student when asked, "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?" The answer: "Practice!" ■



Kangaroos—how did they get to Australia?

Question: Ken, if Noah's Ark, carrying representatives of all kinds of land animals, landed in the Middle East in the mountains of Ararat, then how did kangaroos ever get to your homeland?

Ken Ham's Answer: Well, the simplest answer is: they hopped!

Seriously, I believe there's actually an easy solution to this. Scientists have found lots of evidence that about one third of the Earth's surface has been covered by **ice**. There's evidence, for example, that large glaciers once **carved** the Great Lakes in North America. Creationists believe that this "ice age" occurred sometime after the Flood—because of the Flood. With warm water, cool land, and ash in the atmosphere blocking out sun light at the end of the Flood—there would be a lot of evaporation. The precipitation would come in the form of ice and **snow**.

The build up of ice and snow would lower oceans by 150 feet or more—forming land **bridges** all over the Earth. This would enable animals like kangaroos to migrate to different parts around the Earth. That's the simple answer!

Q&A from the ministry of Answers in Genesis, **Ken Ham**, President and Co-Founder. Ken is a speaker, author, and host of the radio program *Answers... Ken Ham*. For additional information and resources, including a free newsletter, go to the Answers in Genesis website: www.answersingenesis.org.



Making It Personal!

Renaut van der Riet

It's Christmas morning. Slowly she peels back the gift-wrapping. It's her fourth and final gift from him this season. The aroma of expensive ground coffee fills the room. There's a note. "10 days of breakfast in bed and 6 months of coffee by your bedside." Personal sacrifice. She smiles. It's a newlywed's first Christmas. Five years and two children later, it's a new non-stick pan (the cheaper version) and a bottle of bubble bath. There's a note. "Enjoy your bath, and try to relax." She smiles. Eight years, three children and a puppy later, it's a gift card to a department store in a note. "Dear Susan, buy yourself something nice. You're the best, love Jeff."

It seems that Americans strive to make things as easy as possible and giving gifts is no exception. This Christmas season we will stimulate our economy by spending billions of dollars on gifts, many of which will become next year's garage sale items. If you're like me, you have your list of people for whom you wish to purchase gifts, and if you're lucky, you'll cover them all in one trip to Hallmark. The tragedy is that as our giving has moved from personal sacrifice to material giving, the season has shifted emphasis from being about Christ to being about gift giving. In this, we've missed the whole point.

Jesus, at tremendous personal sacrifice, left the perfection of Heaven to be born into this world as a human. He voluntarily set aside

His Godly attributes and had to depend on intimacy with the Father and empowerment from the Holy Spirit, just like you and me. He gave all of Himself to us so that He could show us that He was "with" us and that He understood us. Then, He died to pay for OUR sins.

**And the Word became
flesh, and dwelt among us,
and we saw His glory, glory
as of the only begotten
from the Father, full of
grace and truth.**

John 1:14

When we give this season, it should be to honor Jesus. We should give more of our selves and less of our things. An overdue hug, that hard phone call to say I'm sorry, a smile when it's undeserved, that perfect parking space to the car behind you in line or perhaps sharing the message of the gospel with a person who has not heard it before. This Christmas, let's honor God by being bold in our giving and by making it personal. ■

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