

Fulton County Gospel News

Good News About Christ And His Church For All Of The World

“... Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Savior of the body.” - Ephesians 5:23

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UNSTABLE SOULS Part One

by Lee Moses

Christians have always faced spiritual threats, among them the false but alluring teachings of men. The apostle Peter wrote his Second Epistle to guard Christians against the danger of being seduced by false teachers and false teachings. Chapter Two of Second Peter describes false teachers' attitudes and actions, their seeming success but final failure. Among their transgressions is “*beguiling unstable souls*” (verse 14). False teachers feast on easy prey. Although all Christians face spiritual threats, those who are most susceptible to “beguiling” are those who are *unstable*.

Unstable in Their Faith in God

Faith upholds the Christian. One who has faith has assurance and conviction of things he has never seen (Hebrews 11:1), assurance and conviction to overcome potential delusion when one's eyes and otherwise worldly reasoning deceive him.

God warned Noah that He was sending a cataclysmic worldwide flood upon the earth and instructed him to build an ark in preparation for that flood (Genesis 6:17, 14-16). Yet Noah had never even seen rain (2:5). This is why the Hebrews writer said that Noah was “*warned of God of things not seen as yet*” (Heb. 11:7). What would have happened had Noah trusted his eyes rather than God? No human being or other earthly creature had ever seen rain; so neither had Noah ever **heard** of rain prior to this warning from God. What would have happened had Noah trusted the word of men over the word

of God? Thankfully, “*By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith*” (Hebrews 11:7).

Sadly, many today lack Noah's faith in God. Many quickly fall for the clueless claims of predatory Internet bloggers that God does not exist (Psalm 14:1). Others trust their eyes and what men tell them about how the church is to be grown rather than what God says about the matter (Mark 16:15; 2 Timothy 4:1-4). “*A double minded man is unstable in all his ways*” (James 1:8), and thus vulnerable to beguilement. For a Christian to persevere, he must “*walk by faith, not by sight*” (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Unstable on the Inspiration and Authority of the Scriptures

No honest person can deny that the Bible claims to be the word of God:

All scripture is given by inspiration of God (2 Timothy 3:16).

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1:20-21).

Now we [the apostles, LM] have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which

man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual (1 Corinthians 2:12-13).

This is what inspiration is—inspiration is the fact that God Himself selected the words to be written and preserved as Scripture, and that He directly and supernaturally influenced men to write those words which He had chosen. And since the Bible is inspired, then it is also all-authoritative. The two go hand-in-hand—if God holds authority over all mankind (and He does, Psalm 47:7; Romans 14:11-12), and if God has chosen to reveal His will to man through the Scriptures (and He has, Exodus 34:27; 1 Cor. 14:37), then all mankind is under obligation to obey the Scriptures.

However, the present age rarely affirms the inspiration of the Scriptures, and thus rarely submits to the authority of the Scriptures. Even among many professed Christians, there has been a redefining of and diminishing of what inspiration is. Some claim “partial inspiration,” that only portions of the Scriptures are inspired. You will hear “partial people” use such phrases as “the Bible **contains** the word of God” rather than “the Bible **is** the word of God.” But if only portions of the Scriptures are inspired, who is to say which portions these are? Is not everyone then free to pick and choose which Scriptures he wishes to consider inspired and authoritative, leaving a state of virtual spiritual anarchy where “*every man*

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[does] that which [is] right in his own eyes”? (Judges 17:6).

Others affirm “thought inspiration,” which claims that God only imparted to the Biblical writers His **thoughts**, which those writers were then free to express in words of their own choosing. If this were true, then the Bible could not be called the **word** of God, but a mere human expression of the thoughts of God. As such, the Bible would be subject to fallibility, rather than possessing the Divine infallibility it claims (Psalm 19:7; Luke 16:17; 24:44; John 10:35). In response to “thought inspiration,” an obvious question arises: How did God convey His thoughts to Biblical writers without words? In special revelation, God has always used words: “*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son*” (Hebrews 1:1-2, emphasis LM). And what is written in the Bible are the words that God has spoken.

Others claim that the Bible writers were inspired in the same sense that Shakespeare was “inspired” when he penned *Hamlet*, or Beethoven when he composed his Fifth Symphony. They will say that godly men of uncommon literary and theological genius wrote the Bible, and only in this sense can the Bible be called “inspired.” Admittedly, such is a common use of the English word *inspired*. But this is simply not how the Bible describes its inspiration. Rather, it says, “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God*” (2 Timothy 3:16, emph. LM). It is not the product of Moses’, David’s, Luke’s, Paul’s, John’s, nor any other human being’s own genius—it is the product of God’s perfect mind. While the English word *inspire* today may hold divergence in meaning, it originates from the Latin *inspirare*, meaning, “breathe or blow into.” It is the compound of *in-* (“into”) and *spirare* (“breathe”). “The word was originally used of a divine or supernatural being, in the sense ‘impart a truth or idea to someone.’”¹ And the Greek word translated “given by inspiration of God” (yes, that is all one word in the original!) is *theopneustos*, literally meaning “God-breathed.” This is a far cry from “man-thought.” Paul said, “*But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ*” (Galatians 1:11-12).

Again, what is written in the Bible are God’s words. As Paul wrote Scripture, he said, “*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly*” (1 Timothy 4:1, emph. LM). “*David...the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue*” (2 Samuel 23:1-2). One who reads the book of Revelation, or has the book of Revelation read to him, is told, “*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches*” (Revelation 2:29). What

one reads in Scripture is exactly what the Holy Spirit says.

The logical next step for one who appreciates the inspiration of the Scriptures is to submit to their authority. How could anyone do otherwise? As Jesus asks, “*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*” (Luke 6:46). And the Bible’s silence does not authorize, it prohibits (Hebrews 7:14; 8:4). The Scriptures say, “*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him*” (Colossians 3:17). Christians are to have Biblical authority for whatever they do, either by direct statement (e.g., Matthew 28:19; Acts 22:16), implication (e.g., John 3:16; 1 Peter 3:21), or approved example (e.g., Acts 2:42; 20:7).

Where people are not firm and resolute on the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, it is much easier for false teachers to beguile them with the unbiblical things they say. If one does not treat the Scriptures as the authoritative word of God, what reason would that person have to disregard the lies of men simply because they contradict Scripture? The church must build stability on the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures.

Unstable on the Age of the Earth

When people mention “cardinal” or “fundamental” Christian doctrines, they rarely mention the age of the earth. However, many godless people have found that shaking a Christian’s conviction on the age of the earth is an easy way to seduce a Christian from the truth. If one lacks conviction on what the Bible teaches about the age of the earth, why would he stand resolutely for anything else the Bible teaches?

The Bible plainly teaches that, relative to what textbooks and the scientific community commonly

postulate, the earth is very young. The entire universe, including the earth and mankind, were created in six days of creation (Genesis 1:1-31). By counting the years of the genealogies in the Bible, one can determine that the creation occurred not much longer than 6000 years ago.

However, fallible human sources now claim that the earth is 4.56 billion years old.² This number is certainly subject to change, and indeed has changed multitudinous times in the past two centuries. Furthermore, they claim that man is a johnny-come-lately on the earth, springing onto the scene over 4 and a half billion years after the formation of the earth, and over 13 and a half billion years after the formation of the universe.³

To harmonize this with what one reads in the Bible, some unstable souls claim that each day of creation actually represents a very long period of time, a view called the “Day/Age Theory.” By this reasoning, “the first day” of creation, on which the heavens, the earth, and light were created (Gen. 1:1-5), was actually not separated by a literal five days from “the sixth day” on which man was created (verses 26-31). Rather, the two “days” were separated by millions or billions of years, or whatever the scientific community deems the time separation to be at any given point in the evolution of their theorizing. “Gap theory” advocates insert an elongated chronological “gap” between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, with the same ultimate goal as “day/age theorists”—to extend the period of creation to billions of years.

The Bible simply will not allow for this alleged timeframe. Again, the Bible teaches that the entire universe, including the earth and mankind, was created in six days of creation (Genesis 1:1-31). In addition to the heavens, the earth, and light, on the first day of creation God created **time**, particularly the basic time unit of a **day**: “*God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the*

darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day” (verses 5-6). Just as a “day” today is a 24-hour period including night and day, so it was the week of creation. Had a “night” been millions or billions of years, how could the plants created on day three lived until day four with no sunlight? How could Adam, created on the sixth day, have lived to see the seventh day of the creation week if it were actually hundreds of millions of years later?

God commanded the Israelites,

Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work... For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it (Exodus 20:9-11).

The Israelites were to work for the same length of time that God had worked, and to rest for the same period of time that God had rested. Any allowance for millions or billions of years in that schedule would render the Fourth Commandment an impossibility and an absurdity.

While speaking of Adam and Eve, Jesus plainly stated, “*From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female*” (Mark 10:6). No eons of time elapsed between the “beginning of the creation” and God’s creation of man. Additionally, Jesus placed the murder of Adam and Eve’s son Abel at “*the foundation of the world*” (Luke 11:50-51).

Those “millionizing” and “billionizing” the creation account feebly attempt to conform what God has said into the image of what man says (compare with Romans 1:23; 12:2). But why? What man says is fallible (Proverbs 6:2; 10:19; 1 Corinthians 1:20; 2 Timothy 2:14); what God says is not (2 Kings 10:10). Scientists continue to add years to what they believe is the age of the earth

in efforts to plug the holes in their own untenable theories. Why should Christians be obligated to accommodate this?

The fact of the matter is that Christians are not obligated to sway with every wind of human teaching (Ephesians 4:14). Rather they are obligated and blessed to stand fast in the immoveable and certain word of God.

To Be Continued

¹ *New Oxford American Dictionary*, 3rd ed., s.v. “inspire.”
² *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, s.v. “Earth (planet)” (by Raymond Jeanloz and Jonathan I. Lunine), <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/175962/Earth/242081/Development-of-Earths-structure-and-composition> (accessed Jan 27, 2014).

³ *Ibid.*; *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, s.v. “Human evolution” (by Russell Howard Tuttle), <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/275670/human-evolution/250607/Learning-from-the-apes> (accessed Jan 28, 2014).

FURTHER COMMENTS ON THE AGE OF THE EARTH

by Lee Moses

As mentioned in the previous article, the age of the earth is not commonly classified as a “cardinal” or “fundamental” Christian doctrine. Hopefully, the previous article also sufficiently demonstrates that elongating the earth’s age to millions or billions of years is inharmonious with Scripture. As such, one’s view of the age of the earth typically affects and reflects one’s view of Scripture.

And the age of the earth has become a favorite battleground for atheists to meet those professing allegiance to Christ and belief in the Bible. Most people have simply heard “the earth is billions of years old” so many times, the notion of it being less than 10,000 years old sounds farfetched to them. And this is largely why many professed Christians are reticent to defend what the Bible says about the age of the earth (contra Philippians 1:17; 1 Peter 3:15).

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However, those who claim that the earth is billions of years old do so **without one shred of solid proof.**

Most fail to consider that the earth would have been created with the appearance of age. Adam and Eve were created as adults, not as children. Trees were created fully grown, not only as saplings or seeds. Riverbeds were already carved, rushing full of water (Genesis 2:10). The light from stars many light years away was already visible on the earth the very day the stars were created (1:14-15). Likewise, certain geological features of the earth would certainly have made the earth seem as though it had been around for a while from our vantage point.

A key assumption of those who conclude the earth must be very old is *uniformitarianism*—the notion that since the universe’s formation, all nature continues in uniform, unchanged patterns. Or, as Peter described certain “scoffers,” they say, “*All things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation*” (2 Peter 3:4). But Peter goes on to describe the global flood of Noah’s day as evidence that things **have not** continued as they were from the beginning of the creation. Such a cataclysmic event completely changed “*the world that then was*” (verse 6), and

did so in a remarkably short period of time. The massive erosion would have led to rapid burials of animal and marine life, essential to the preservation of fossils. The rapid temperature changes caused animals to be frozen alive, and even tropical animals with tropical plants in their mouths have been found frozen alive, dating from thousands of years ago.

And common dating methods are commonly flawed. In the years following the eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980, rock formed. By radiometric dating methods, this rock has been shown to be up to 2.8 million years old. Yet we factually know that this rock is less than 30 years old.

There are numerous reference materials and website available that critically examine the arguments of old earth advocates and dating methods, and the reader is encouraged to consult such sources to look more deeply into these matters.

It is generally outside of this publication’s purview, and certainly outside of this writer’s expertise, to wade in much further on the scientific side of these matters. “*Nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day*” (2 Timothy 1:12).

**GOD’S AUTHORIZED WORSHIP
– COLOSSIANS 3:17 –**

1. **LORD’S SUPPER** - The New Testament and early church history record that Christians met on the first day of every week (Sunday) to worship God and remember Christ (Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 11:23-24; 16:1-2).
2. **PRAYERS** - (Acts 2:42; Philippians 4:6-7, I Thessalonians 5:17-18).
3. **SINGING** - God’s word authorizes only vocal music and specifically singing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12). The New Testament shows no use of mechanical instruments of music in worship to God by the church Christ established. Church history notes no such use for nearly 700 years after the New Testament was completed. It is an innovation of men, not of God.
4. **GIVING** - Free-willed, cheerful, generous, and every week (Acts 20:35; I Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8 & 9).
5. **PREACHING OF THE WORD** - The gospel of Christ, not men’s doctrines nor entertainment, saves and strengthens us (Acts 2:42; 20:7; Romans 10:17; I Corinthians 1:18-23).

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