

# "YEA, LET GOD BE TRUE, BUT EVERY MAN A LIAR"

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Edification and evangelism is hard work today because there are those who are making significant attacks on the Bible as the word of God. The Bible being free from error is a particular point of attack being launched currently and from one of the most unlikely and unfortunate sources, a so-called "Christian" school. Paul, whose words reflect his confidence in God as a God of truth and are presented in the title, met a man with the point of view very similar to some today. His name was Elymas. Paul confronted him, "And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" (Acts 13:10). A group of professors from Abilene Christian University have gotten together and have written a couple of books in a promised series of books called the "Heart of the Restoration Series" in which they go to great lengths to "pervert the right ways of the Lord" by destroying the Bible and the churches of Christ. J.E. Choate, an honorable Christian and recognized as a knowledgeable and credible historian of the restoration movement gave his impression of the first book in the series: "The book lacks a clearly stated thesis, and has numerous 'hidden axes' to grind. It is a book, despite its pious comments, which trashes and dishonors the Biblical churches of Christ in every word and on every page, and dishonors the Bible as the Word."<sup>1</sup>

Why should anyone care about a group of scowling scholars who have written a couple of contemptible books? One reason is because these books are being advertised in a three-quarter page ad of each edition of the *Christian Chronicle*, the public relations arm of the Oklahoma Christian University. This paper has a circulation of near 100,000. That is why. Their efforts may very well recruit others to attack the Bible and the church as they are doing.

They brand anyone who will not let them discredit the Bible as Pharisaic,<sup>2</sup> incapable of standing united on the inerrancy of the Bible,<sup>3</sup> and guilty of contriving answers to alleged discrepancies that "stretch credulity and actually *create* faith problems for people."<sup>4</sup> They criticize answering those who present alleged discrepancies in the Bible saying such efforts "often work to undermine belief."<sup>5</sup> Do they use as an example of their complaint someone living today that has created a problem by inept attempts that could receive correction from them? No. They dug up Osiander who lived 1496-1552! They more than "stretch" their own "credulity"; they disintegrate it!<sup>6</sup>

The basic problem these men have is they prefer the non-inspired above the inspired. Consider what they wrote: “More information might actually resolve many of these difficulties or future research might clarify specific discrepancies between the biblical narrative and our knowledge of secular history.”<sup>7</sup> If they admit the possibility of answers that could resolve certain perceived problems in the future, then why do they rest so confident in their allegations today? The reason is they exalt their limited knowledge above that of the Almighty God, and a serious response to them is that written by Paul: “God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged” (Rom. 3:4).

No area of the Bible that received criticism from the liberal theologians of the nineteenth century has escaped criticism from the ACU professors. They criticize the scientific accuracy of the Bible,<sup>8</sup> the harmony of the gospels,<sup>9</sup> and the Bible’s use of historical information in Luke and Acts.<sup>10</sup> The Devil surely must be thrilled every time a God-fearing, Christian family sends their darling child off to sit in the classrooms of such men. If that thrills him, he must be ecstatic when a preacher for the churches of Christ enrolls at ACU, OCU, or HUGSR in Memphis, where these authors recently have spoken on campus.

Why would such men even care anything at all about the Bible if they think and teach that it is filled with errors from the beginning to the end? Listen to a possible answer they themselves give. After discussing a particular alleged discrepancy they wrote, “One need not conclude either that the event happened twice (a contrived and improbable explanation) or that this fact undermines the credibility of John’s report. The story in John serves the author’s purposes. Authors throughout history have used the sequence of events to make their points rather than to inform a future reader about a precise order of events.”<sup>11</sup> Their view is that the Bible does not need to be inerrant; it just needs to serve the author’s purpose. In their own writings that model serves as the basis: A point does not need to be true; it just needs to serve the purpose of the author.

The word of God insists on being the truth (John 17:17). The Psalmist declared, “Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way” (Psa. 119:128). Once more the Psalmist said, “Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever” (Psa. 119:160). Isaiah said, “I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right” (Isa. 45:19). As the Lord said to Job,

so it is put to these contemporary charlatans, “Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it” (Job 40:2).

## ENDNOTES

1 *Yokefellow*, Curtis A. Cates, Sr. ed., 29:4 (April 18, 2002), pp. 1, 4.

2 Kenneth L. Cukrowski, Mark W. Hamilton, and James W. Thompson, *God's Holy Fire* (Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 2002), p. 39.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 42.

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*, p. 44.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 42.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 41.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 39.

9 *Ibid.*, pp. 40-42.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 40.

11 *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.