

It Is Written

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Are Modern Revelations From God?

By David Dann

The message of the Bible with regard to the revelation of God's word is summed up in these terms: "Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Prov. 30:5-6).

However, many religious groups claim to receive modern revelations of truth from God even today. The phrase "modern revelation" is used to refer to any supposed truth of God that has been given to man since the completion of books of the Bible. For example, a man may claim that God has spoken to him and revealed some new and important truth to him that was not previously known. Such claims are made quite frequently among the religious groups of our day. Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-Day Adventists, Christian Scientists, Roman Catholics, and various Pentecostal churches all construct their doctrine, to some extent, upon their claim to receive special modern revelations of truth from God.

Can we determine whether or not the claims of modern revelation are true? According to the Scriptures, there are some things that we can positively know about such revelations. The Bible teaches that modern revelations:

1. Make God A Liar. Jude begins his epistle by stating that he, "found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnest for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). "The faith" refers to the gospel, or to the body of God's revealed truth (Gal. 1:23; Col. 2:7). Jude, by inspiration of God, says that God's truth "was once for all delivered." That is the same as saying that it was delivered one time for all time. In other words, God revealed all of the truth he intended to reveal by the close of the first century A.D. Those who claim that God continues to reveal new truth today would make God out to be a liar. But as Paul said, "let God be true, but every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4).

2. Make Christ A False Prophet. In this book of John we read that Jesus promised his apostles that the Holy Spirit would, "guide you into all truth" (Jn. 16:13). This is a promise that was made to the Lord's apostles who were alive at that time. Did God hold back a portion of the truth from the apostles and reveal it to men in some special, miraculous way today? If so, Christ is a false prophet, for He claimed that all truth would be revealed to his apostles in the first century A.D.

3. Make The Holy Spirit Rebellious. Again, Jesus told his apostles, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come" (Jn. 16:13). The apostles to whom the entirety of truth was revealed have recorded that truth, and have all be dead for nearly two thousand years. There is no living person today who can accurately fit the description of those to whom the Holy Spirit was to reveal the truth. If the Holy Spirit is revealing more spiritual truth to modern religious leaders, then he is doing it in clear violation of and rebellion against what Jesus said in John 16:13.

4. Make God The Author Of Religious Confusion And Division. Would God reveal one thing to the Pope, something different to the Jehovah's Witnesses, and something different still to the Mormons? If so, God is responsible for all of the religious confusion and division that exists in the world today. However, the apostle Paul right says, "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (1 Cor. 14:33). The real authors of religious confusion and division are those who claim to have received modern revelations of truth.

5. Are Accursed. Paul writes, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8). Any revelation of "truth" that is different from what the apostles preached is not the truth at all, and those who preach it are doomed to destruction. However, those who claim to receive such revelations are quick to point out that their message is really just the same as that of the apostles. If there message is the same as the message of the New Testament,

then why do we need their message? What is the purpose of it? Those who make such claims are accursed.

Conclusion

The apostle Peter clearly states that God has "given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3). Obviously, the "all things" of which Peter spoke could not have included any modern or current revelation of divine truth. Therefore, modern revelations have nothing to do with godliness.

What If YOU Were The Last Remaining Christian?

By Greg Gwin

A tired and discouraged Elijah proclaimed to God, "I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away" (1 Kings 19:10). He was wrong, of course. The Lord explained that He had 7,000 who remained faithful (vs. 18).

But what if Elijah had been right? What if he really was the last remaining faithful servant of God in all the earth? Two things seem clear: 1) He could not have used this as an excuse to give up, to surrender, to stop doing the will of God; and 2) The urgency of his work would have been even greater. The need for his proclamation of God's word would have been even more pressing.

There's a lesson here for us. Have you ever felt like you were alone in your stand for the truth? Has it seemed like no one else was committed to doing what was right? If so, you should take heart in knowing that there are many others who share your convictions and dedication. You are NOT alone. As in Elijah's day, God knows and has an accurate count of all those who are faithfully living for Him.

But, even if you were the last faithful Christian in all the world, you would still need to work hard to teach and practice the will of God. This would not be an excuse for you to give up or surrender in your service for Him. In fact, your work would be more important than ever.

If all men were to let us down, and we truly stood alone, we would still have this promise from God: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." And our reaction to this truth should be to "boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:5,6).

Christian, you are not alone. You have a host of faithful brethren who stand with you. And, you have the Almighty God of heaven who supports you. Stand fast!

Rebellion is as Witchcraft

By Jim R. Everett

Even young children know the story about Saul and the destruction of the Amalekites (1 Samuel 15:1-23). The interplay between Samuel and Saul after the battle is amusing but also very sad. It is amusing in that it depicts the childish rationalization by Saul of his conduct in sparing King Agag and the best animals. Strangely enough, many sympathize with Saul and say that God was too strict, because Saul's intentions were noble. It is sad because a man who appeared to be so great and have such great potential for leadership at first, came to be a petty, jealous little king at the end -- humility was replaced by arrogance and hate. Samuel said Saul was rebellious and, obviously, God takes rebellion seriously.

At first glance it may be difficult for us to appreciate the significance of Samuel's statement in v. 23, that rebellion and stubbornness, are equivalent to witchcraft and idolatry. The two pairs are duplicated for the purpose of stress --rebellion and stubbornness convey the same kind of attitude toward God's word, while witchcraft (soothsaying) and idolatry both depict an allegiance to another power than God.

But why? Why is rebellion as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness as idolatry and teraphim? The answer is simple -- all conscious disobedience to God's will is actually idolatry, because it makes self-will a human god. All evident opposition to God's commandments is, like idolatry, a rejection of the true God.

God did not request sacrifices of Saul - He instructed Saul to destroy utterly the Amalekites. Samuel's reply to Saul's rebellious attitude and self-justification was, "Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Samuel 15:22). And all our attempts to give God something other than obedience is likewise viewed by God as rebellion and witchcraft - we make our own will our god.