



1



2

“Not knowing what you believe is by definition a kind of unbelief ... Advocating ambiguity, exalting uncertainty, or otherwise deliberately clouding the truth is a sinful way of nurturing unbelief. ... Truth and meaning are not determined by our intuition, experience, or desire. The true meaning of Scripture – or anything else, for that matter, has already been determined and fixed by the mind of God. The task of an interpreter is to discern that meaning. And proper interpretation must precede application.” John MacArthur



3



Brian McLaren, best-known figure in the Emerging Church movement, *Christianity Today*, Nov 2004:

“I don’t think we’ve got the gospel right yet ... I don’t think the liberals have it right. But I don’t think we have it right either. None of us has arrived at orthodoxy ...

4



... ask me if Christianity is orthodox, meaning true, and here's my honest answer: a little, but not yet ... I'd have to say that we probably have a couple of things right, but a lot of things wrong ...


5



Frankly, many of us don't know what we should think about homosexuality. We've heard all sides but no position has yet won our confidence so that we can say 'it seems good to the Holy Spirit and us.' ... We aren't sure if or where lines are to be drawn, nor do we know how to enforce with fairness whatever lines are drawn."

Brian McLaren, *Christianity Today.Com*

6


A portrait of Tony Jones, a man with short brown hair and glasses, smiling. He is wearing a light-colored, vertically striped shirt. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

“I think that deconstruction is the only hermeneutical avenue that comes close to expressing the transgressive nature of our sacred text.”

Tony Jones
Emergent Church leader

7

“What if tomorrow someone digs up definitive proof that Jesus had a real, earthly, biological father named Larry, and archaeologists find Larry’s tomb and do DNA samples and prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that the virgin birth was really just a bit of mythologizing the Gospel writers threw in to appeal to the followers of the Mithra and Dionysian religious cults that were hugely popular at the time of Jesus, whose gods had virgin births? ...

A portrait of Tony Jones, a man with short brown hair and glasses, looking slightly to the right. He is wearing a dark, button-down shirt. His right hand is raised, with fingers spread, in a gesture. The background is dark.

8



What if that spring was seriously questioned? Could a person keep jumping? Could a person still love God? Could you still be a Christian? ... Or does the whole thing fall apart? But if the whole faith falls apart when we reexamine and rethink one spring, then it wasn't that strong in the first place, was it?"

9

An easy way to determine if something is biblically consistent/reasonable is to employ what I call the "Nth Degree Technique."

The "Nth Degree Technique": carrying out a line of thinking to its "Nth degree" to see if it is sound.

10

- If the virgin conception/birth is not true, then the plain reading of Scripture cannot be trusted

11

Mt 1:18-25 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. ²⁰ But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. ²¹ And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." ²² So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ²³ "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." (Is 7:14) ²⁴ Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, ²⁵ and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.

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Lk 1:34-35 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" ³⁵ And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

13

- **If the virgin conception/birth is not true, then the pharisees were correct in questioning Jesus' parentage**

Jn 8:38,41-42,44 I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father." ... ⁴¹ You do the deeds of your father." Then **they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father – God."** ⁴² Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. ... ⁴⁴ You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. ...

14

- If the virgin conception/birth is not true, then Jesus would have inherited Adam's sin nature from Joseph and could not be the Savior

Rom 5:12,18-19 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned ...
¹⁸ Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. ¹⁹ For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

15

Scripture solves the dilemma by clarifying that Jesus was part of Adam's race through His earthly mother, not father

Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

Gal 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

16

Did God directly create the material universe in 6 literal days or did He use some type of evolutionary process over millions/billions of years?

17

If the material universe is not an act of direct creation, what do we do with verses like these?

Gen 1:1, 5:1-2, 6:7
Ex 20:8-11
Deut 4:32
Ps 148:1-6
Is 42:5, 45:12,18
Mk 10:6, 13:19
Rom 1:20,39, 8:19-21, 8:39
1 Cor 11:9
Eph 3:9
Col 1:15-16
1 Tim 4:3
2 Pet 3:4
Rev 3:14, 4:11, 10:6

18



19

What are the consequences if the Bible cannot be taken seriously when it speaks of the creation?

It cannot be taken seriously when it speaks of salvation.

Jn 3:12 "If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?"

20

What are the consequences if we do not believe Adam was “real”?

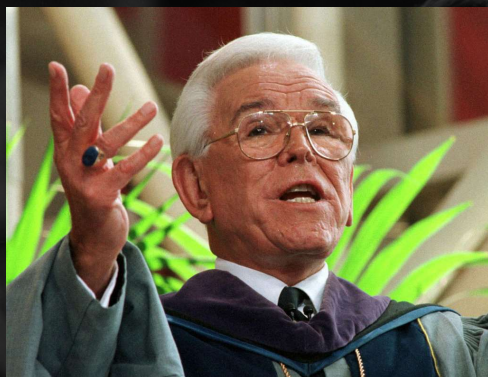
- Paul’s presentation of the Gospel is flawed:

Rom 5:12,14,15 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned ... Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, ... For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

- Paul’s presentation of the order of things is flawed:

1 Tim 2:12-14 And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. ¹³For Adam was formed first, then Eve. ¹⁴And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

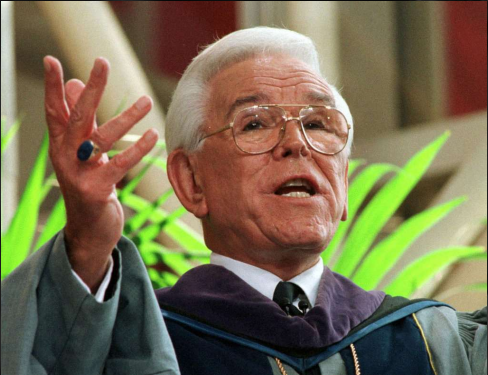
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SCHULLER: “What, what I hear you saying, that it’s possible for Jesus Christ to come into human hearts and soul and life, even if they’ve been born in darkness and have never had exposure to the Bible. Is that a correct interpretation of what you’re saying?”

Billy Graham on Robert Schuller’s
“Hour of Power”, May 31, 1997

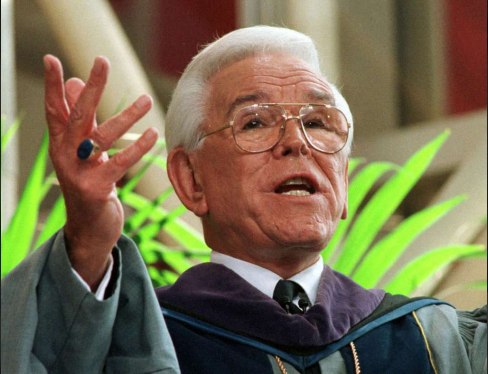
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GRAHAM: “Yes, it is, because I believe that. I’ve met people in various parts of the world in tribal situations, that they have never seen a Bible or heard about a Bible, and never heard of Jesus, but they’ve believed in their hearts that there was a God, and they’ve tried to live a life that was quite apart from the surrounding community in which they lived.”

Billy Graham on Robert Schuller’s “Hour of Power”, May 31, 1997

23



SCHULLER: “I’m so thrilled to hear you say this. There’s a wideness in God’s mercy.”

GRAHAM: “There is. There definitely is.”

Billy Graham on Robert Schuller’s “Hour of Power”, May 31, 1997

24

A photograph of Billy Graham, an older man with glasses, wearing a green shirt and a patterned tie, sitting at a desk with a microphone. He is gesturing with his hands while speaking. The background is a dark studio setting with a colorful, pixelated light display.

KING: But what about those faiths -- the Mormons and the others that you mentioned -- believe in Christ. They believe they will meet Christ. What about those like the Jews, the Muslims, who don't believe they ...

GRAHAM: That's in God's hands. I can't be the judge.

KING: You don't judge them?

GRAHAM: No. ...

Billy Graham on "Larry King Live"
June 9, 2005

25

A photograph of Billy Graham, an older man with glasses, wearing a green shirt and a patterned tie, sitting at a desk with a microphone. He is gesturing with his hands while speaking. The background is a dark studio setting with a colorful, pixelated light display.

KING: But do you think -- you don't think homosexuality -- or do you think it's a choice?

GRAHAM: Well, that's a big debate.

KING: But if it's not a choice, it can't be a sin. Right?

GRAHAM: Well, maybe. God will make that judgment, not me. I'm not deciding who's a sinner and who is not.

Billy Graham on "Larry King Live"
June 9, 2005

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Billy Graham on "Larry King Live"
June 9, 2005

KING: How about abortion?

GRAHAM: Same thing.

KING: Against it totally?

GRAHAM: Yes. But I'm not
getting involved in it.

KING: So you believe it's the
taking of a life?

GRAHAM: Yes, I do.

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Billy Graham on "Larry King Live"
June 9, 2005

KING: But Franklin once said he
was very critical of Islam. He
called it evil and wicked. How did
you react to that?

GRAHAM: Well, he has my views
and I have mine. And they are
different sometimes. I told him
from the very beginning that
there would be times when he
would have to take his own
positions. But he doesn't hold
that position now. I think he said
it off the cuff somewhere some
years ago.

28

1 Tim 6:20-21 O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge – ²¹by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith.

Jude 1-3 Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother James, to those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: ²mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you. ³Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

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Titus 1:11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain.

2 Jn 2:9-11 Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; ¹¹for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

30



“The belief that truth is best understood by reducing it to a few fundamentals or a single 'sola' insight is, to me, at least questionable if not downright dangerous.”

Brian McLaren, *A Generous Orthodoxy*

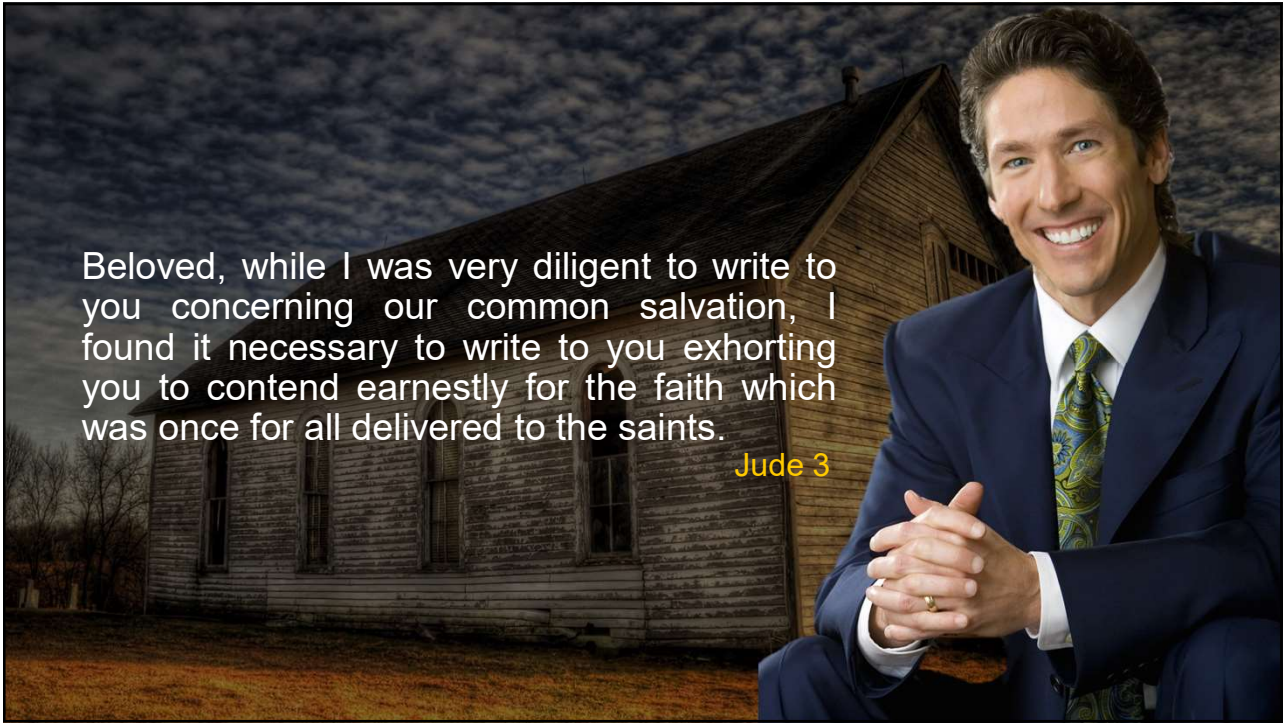
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“But, if many things still remain abstruse to many, this does not arise from obscurity in the Scriptures, but from [our] own blindness or want of understanding, who do not go the way to see the all-perfect clearness of truth ... nothing whatever is left obscure or ambiguous; but all things that are in the Scriptures, are by the Word brought forth into the clearest light, and proclaimed to the whole world.”

Martin Luther, *Bondage of the Will*

32



Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

Jude 3