

"Six Things Christians Should Just Stop Saying"

Introduction. Steve McSwaim, in The Huffington Post on February 28, 2013, wrote an article titled, "Six Things Christians Should Just Stop Saying." Coming from a self-proclaimed "religious" person, these are going to shock you, but it is very important to carefully examine them to refute his gross error (1 John 4:1, 6).

I. ***"The Bible Is The Inerrant, Infallible Word Of God"***

- A. Mr. McSwaim says, "It isn't inerrant and not likely even in the 'original manuscripts.' But then, I cannot say that with absolute certainty, anymore than anyone else can either. Why? Because no such 'original' manuscripts even exists. That's like saying, 'We believe there are aliens on other planets!' Good for you. Now, prove it. As we have it, no matter what translation you favor, the Bible is replete with errors. To pretend otherwise is your right. To say otherwise is a lie. You are entitled to your opinions, your assumptions, even your beliefs. What you are not entitled to is a misrepresentation of the facts."
- B. The Bible certainly claims to be from God (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Revelation 1:1-3). Over 4,000 times the Old Testament writers affirm that their message was from God. Over 800 times the Pentateuch uses expressions like "the mouth of the Lord has spoken." Over 100 times Jeremiah confirms that his prophecy was "the word of the Lord." Although there are no original autographs of Scripture, the amount of manuscript evidence is overwhelming as to the accuracy and authenticity of the Bible. If we must reject the Bible because there are no original manuscripts, then we must also reject the writings of Plato, Aristotle, and Homer. The supporting evidence for the Bible exceeds 25,000 documents. My faith in the accuracy of the Bible is undeterred by the attacks of critics, doubts of unbelievers and the assaults of infidels (2 Peter 1:19).

II. ***"We Just Believe The Bible"***

- A. McSwaim writes, "That, too, is false. What you really believe is your interpretation of the Bible. And the last I checked, the history of the Christian church is the history of disagreement over 'interpretation.' How else do you explain the scores of denominations within Christianity alone? It would be patently more honest of Christians to say, 'The following represents our understanding and interpretation of the Scriptures, but we are also aware there are many equally sincere Christians who interpret the scriptures differently from us.'"

- B. Jesus has authority over all flesh (Matthew 28:20; John 17:1-3). He delegated that authority to the apostles (John 14:26; 16:13-14; 1 John 4:6), who then wrote our New Testament (James 1:25; 2 Peter 1:3-4; Jude 3-5). Differing interpretations of the Bible exist because so few people are dedicated to following God's pronouncements of authority: command (John 12:49-50), example (John 5:19), and necessary inference (John 7:21-24). Instead, they would rather depend on conscience (Proverbs 16:25), feelings (Proverbs 28:26), or creeds (1 Peter 4:11). Sincerity ultimately does not matter; God will not tolerate divergence from His law (Joshua 1:7; Revelation 22:18-19).

III. ***"Jesus Is The Only Way To Heaven"***

- A. McSwaim declares, "What you are really saying is, 'The way we interpret John 14:6 is that Jesus was clearly drawing a line in the sand and telling his hearers and the world: If you do not believe in Me, you won't go to the Father when you die.' For this, I refer back to No. 2 above: what you and your group of believers really mean to say is, 'It is our interpretation of John 14:6 that Jesus is saying that He is the only way to heaven.' It is my hope that Christians will know there are equally sincere Christians like myself and others who do not believe Jesus was drawing a line in the sand between Him and some new religion He was creating and all the other religions of the world."
- B. The Bible says there is no other name by which we can be saved (Acts 4:12). Jesus was and is deity (John 1:1, 14). He is the embodiment of truth (John 1:14, 17; 18:37). He is the light of men (John 1:4-5). This age of political correctness has influenced churches, preachers, and spiritual leaders. It is not popular to preach the exclusivity of Jesus. It may offend Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and Atheists. However, it is the truth revealed from God (Acts 4:19-20).

IV. ***"The Rapture Of Jesus Is Imminent"***

- A. McSwaim states, "Again, if you want to believe in some secret rapture of Christians from the earth just before the Tribulation, if you want to believe in and carry around in your hip pocket detailed charts and graphs of how its all going to happen, then so be it. But do the rest of us a favor and stop saying so in public. So far, your record of correctly predicting the future earns a flunking grade. And I and scores of other Christians are frankly tired of apologizing for your arrogant -- and so far, absolutely wrong -- predictions as to when it'll happen."
- B. We actually come closer to agreeing on this one. The idea of the rapture comes from a misunderstanding of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. If this passage supports the rapture theory, then the rapture will not be

silent, it will not be a secret, it will not be for only seven years, there will not be two comings of Christ, and there will not be three resurrections. The doctrine of the rapture only exists because of the doctrine of Premillennialism, which has serious consequences such as voiding the kingdom prophecies, limiting the power of God, taking Christ off His throne, making the church a substitute, and ignoring the plan and purpose of Christ's death. Jesus plainly stated that no man knows when the world will end (Matthew 24:36). The apostles taught the same too (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3; 2 Peter 3:10). No Christian who respects the scriptures would teach the rapture is imminent or would try to set a date for the end of the world.

V. **"Homosexuality Is A Sin Against God"**

- A. Mr. McSwaim contends, "This one issue, my friend, is on the outs ... And you, my friend, are misinterpreting the moral, spiritual and religious environment -- and the changes that are coming. My son said it well the other day. We were discussing homosexuality and same-sex marriage and he observed, 'Dad, it's your generation that's hung up on these issues. Once you guys get out of the way and the younger generation moves into the decision-making arena, these issues will disappear. The day will come when, just as slavery is unthinkable in our consciousness today, it will be equally unthinkable to deny anyone the right to be who they are or the right to same-sex marriage.'"
- B. I cannot do much to alter the course of cultural changes, but the contention that homosexuality is simply an issue of changing generations is not true -- it is an issue of God's word. Homosexuality was the cause of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:4-25) and the destruction of the Gibeonites (Judges 19:22-23). In the New Testament, homosexuality was condemned in the Gentile world (Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21). Because homosexuality defiles those who practice it, they will not be in heaven (Revelation 21:8, 27).

VI. **"The Earth Is Less Than 10,000 Years Old"**

- A. Finally, McSwaim asserts, "If you want to believe that Genesis is a scientific description of the origins of the universe, then have at it. Just stop insisting that those myths be taught in our public schools. You do no service to the Bible nor to the morality of this country by demanding school administrators include textbooks that teach that nonsense or by demanding courts hang the Ten Commandments on chamber walls or classroom walls. If this democracy is going to survive, get over your silly, misinformed notions that our forefathers were all Bible-believing, Bible thumping, Genesis-affirming Christians

who came to this country to establish your kind of Christian nation and then expect everyone else to conform to your misguided assumptions.”

- B. Anyone who truly believes the Genesis account (which Mr. McSwaim does not as seen by his use of the word “myths”) understands that the earth cannot be very old. Scholars and scientists have proposed ways of reinterpreting the Bible to allow for a 4.5 billion-year-old earth, but they cannot stand in the face of careful scrutiny. Furthermore, there are superb evidences for a young earth including very little sediment on the seafloor, bent rock layers, soft tissue in fossils, faint sun paradox, rapidly decaying magnetic field, helium in radioactive rocks, Carbon-14 in rocks, fossils, and diamonds, short-lived comets, very little salt in the sea, and DNA in “ancient” bacteria. We all share the same evidence, but the question is how will we interpret it?

Conclusion. Modernism, also known as theological liberalism, rejects the concept of authority in religion and states that religious beliefs must pass the test of reason and experience instead of holding to the authority of God. Postmodernism accepts all religions as true, provided that no one of them claims to be exclusively true.

Believe it or not, modernism and postmodernism are the current state of religion in today’s world. Mr. McSwaim’s statements are very common among liberally-minded religious people. Yet he considers himself just as much a Christian as you do, but we could not be further from each other doctrinally. Bible-believing Christians must “prove all things” (1 Thessalonians 5:21) and be willing to “contend earnestly for the faith” (Jude 3).

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