

Article of the Month
October, 2023

"Too Good to be True!"

Those of us who have been blessed to hear the clean and pure truths now due at the end of the age have an unusual experience. We present the glorious message only to have someone reply, "That's nice. But it's **too good to be true.**"

What is it about humanity now that makes it skeptical about something good? It may well be that the old adage about advertising claims has hardened us against optimism. In MANY cases, it is SO TRUE that, "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is." But THAT is NOT THE CASE with what God's Word has to offer. God's Word is not advertising! God doesn't and CAN'T lie! (Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18)

Unfortunately, so many have come to believe that the Bible is not capable of being clearly understood. If that were the case, one would have to wonder why God took the trouble to have it written. Often it is thought that only those who go to seminaries can have any kind of understanding. Unfortunately, seminaries are deep holes of long-held falsehoods. Do we really think that if Jesus wanted to teach people, he would necessitate their going for years to a seminary? The thought is grossly unreasonable! This belief about seminary learning is just a ploy to keep individuals from verifying things for themselves. It can create a powerful, dominating, and mistaken (if not corrupt) clergy class.

But where does that leave us? Do we no longer believe in absolute truths? Do we no longer think it is possible to find something that is wonderfully true and satisfying?

So, let's just ask it of ourselves. "Do I believe there are absolute truths?" Hopefully the answer is, "Yes!" Of course, we don't want to be taken in by sophistries. But we should never give up on the belief and hope that we can, indeed, find something even a little bit better than our old understandings. Jesus' promise was that sincere searching will have benefits. He said, "ASK, and you shall receive; SEARCH, and you will find; KNOCK, and it will be opened to you." (Matthew 7:7) Do we believe that? Hopefully, YES! And Daniel 12:4 promises that the book is sealed ONLY UNTIL "The Time of the End." In other words, the promise is that, at the end of the age, understanding WILL blossom!

Some of us have been duped by people's saying that the old beliefs must be true because they've been around so long, and so many people that believe them are so sincere. Well, longevity and sincerity are NOT the standards for truth! Error has the remarkable ability to "stick around" for ages. And it is so possible to be sincere in believing it!

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There is ONLY one way to overcome the dirty traditions and find the clean truths; and THAT way is sincere and unbiased study of Scripture. And, we should look into it NOT expecting to find what men tell us it says, but, rather, to find the kind of message that would, indeed, be worthy of the true God. In other words, **good ENOUGH to be true!**

"Gospel" traditionally means "good news." How much of what the churches proclaim and support is "good news?" They may do some admirable social works; but what is their message? Is it satisfying and worthy of a great God? Is it inclusive of all humanity? It seems not. It is more exclusive than inclusive. God is not like that!

We pick no arguments with the *people* who are in these churches. Many of them are exceedingly fine people. We only question the validity of the *teachings* that come out of those denominations. We do not find it to be "good news." But we DO find a message from Scripture that is **too good NOT to be true!**

Inevitably, someone will ask, "What makes YOU think that YOU have the truth?" It IS a good question, deserving of a good answer. But we must conclude initially that either SOMEONE has or NO ONE has the truth. If NO ONE has it, we might as well give up. And if SOMEONE has it, it should be findable and **should sound good!** So, if you ask us why we think we have great truths, our response will first be, "Do you think ANYONE does?" Then we will reply, "If you do think it is available, just please listen to how good what we are proclaiming is, and how the Bible supports it *without contradiction* -- not just with a verse here or there, but with a consistent and PROVABLE message throughout. It is "God's honest truth," and it is **too good NOT to be true!** As one now-departed Bible student once stated it, "Oh, man! WHAT A GOD!"

Another interesting reaction to the good news is that people often respond to it by saying, "It sounds good, but it will never happen in MY lifetime!" Well, then -- IN WHOSE lifetime? The poor human race has seemingly lost all hope that anything good can come quickly. Our dear race has *given up* on hope and given up thinking that anything good can happen. So much has been and is BAD that we now think good is next to impossible! But that, too, is because faith in the Bible is nearly non-existent. One woman upon hearing the message said, "Yes! But never in Chicago!" We all seem to have some reservations! But the universal scope of the Divine plan for mankind is so grand and so inclusive that NO ONE will be left out -- not even Chicago, or Moscow or Beijing!

Not only are the Scriptural testimonies really good news, but the Scriptures teach with clarity WHEN those good things will happen. And, YES! IT WILL BE IN THE LIFETIME of most who are now alive. But let's get back to the basic question: "What's so good about the truth, and is it TOO good to be true?" In fact, it is SO good that it MUST BE true. It is better than almost any of us could ever dream. It is "the desire of all nations." (Haggai 2:7)

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What would YOU like things to be like? **Make a list!** Surely it will be a good list if you are tilted toward righteousness at all. But your list will likely be much too conservative for what will actually be. With certainty you are thinking too small! The truth is better and bigger than our best imaginations.

Let's look first at a few NEGATIVES. Many things churches teach are horrible! They are not true. But they are so strongly imbedded in the minds of people that they THINK these things are Scriptural, and they don't dare to question them. But their doctrines are NOT "good news." They are irrational, unscriptural, discouraging, and **too bad to be true!** Some of them are subtle errors that don't sound so bad. But their ramifications ARE so bad. Let's take a look at just a sampling of bad doctrine that can sound good:

(1) Just about every denomination -- and about every non-Christian religion, too -- teaches that we have immortal souls. That means we can't die. Sounds good! But it ISN'T. As a result of this error, something MUST happen at the moment we SEEM to die. But this is all a big mistake! It seems little known that the Bible NEVER mentions an immortal soul! As a matter of fact, it says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:4) And what was the first LIE? It was, "Thou shalt NOT surely die!" (Genesis 3:4) Satan spoke it. God had said the OPPOSITE: "Thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:17) But the religions of the world chose to believe the liar! They still do.

SO WHAT? It's a BIG "So what!" If we don't die -- if we have souls that continue to live -- then we are forced to believe in certain options: (a) We go to someplace "nice." Or (b), we go to someplace miserable. Or (c), We go to someplace in-between. In some religions, there are other options. (d) We gain some other kind of animal form, like a cow. (e) We are "recycled." We come back as someone who had a past life. "Reincarnation" is that doctrine. (f) We become "ghosts" and continually haunt people or places. **All too bad to be true!**

(2) But this all brings us to a second example of erroneous doctrine. Most of Christianity (and even most other religions) think that we are subject to going to some kind of eternal torment -- "hell-fire" for short.

Why is this bad? **First:** An honest study of Scripture shows that "hell" ("*sheol*" in Old Testament Hebrew, and "*hades*" in New Testament Greek) is the condition of total non-existence at the point of death. In other words, we ALL go there. Hell is OBLIVION -- except for the fact that the Bible promises that mankind will be RELEASED from it. (Revelation 20:13) We call that release an "awakening" or a "resurrection." THAT is the Biblical teaching -- NOT immortal souls!

Second: Just common reason should tell us that ETERNAL SUFFERING is totally UNJUST for ANY crime. A crime and its resulting effects do not last an eternity. Why should a punishment? Only an unfair-minded fiend would think of this doctrine -- certainly not a good God! It's **too bad to be true!**

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There are many more dark-age doctrines that yet plague denominational Christianity. We won't here rehearse them. There are all **too bad to be true**. But, despite that, their adherents try with fervor to hold on to them. Why should we believe that THEY have the truth? THEY have nonsense and irrationalities! -- despite the fact that their doctrines are very old and sincerely believed, and despite the fact that they CLAIM the Bible teaches these perverse doctrines.

But let's look, instead, at the POSITIVES. An old sonnet says, "Let me count the ways!" However, no list that would fit into this article could even come close to counting the great, rational, Scriptural, wonderful, heart-warming truths of the Divine plan. So we will only list a few. Are the following things on your list of things that you would LIKE to see happen? We hope so, because these things WILL happen.

- (1) People will stop dying.
- (2) People will gain total mental, moral, and physical health. Lost limbs will be restored. Aging will be reversed until its effects have all disappeared.
- (3) Those who have already died will return from death to join the living in the "resurrection" process of being brought to perfection. Even very ugly characters will reform.
- (4) There will be no more pain, fear, sickness, war, famine, natural disasters, poverty, or ignorance.
- (5) Consequently, there will be no more police, doctors, lawyers, undertakers, banks, fire departments, homeless shelters, prisons, governments, thieves, murderers, liars, insurance companies, locks, etc.
- (6) Food for all will be abundant, healthful, and without cost.
- (7) All employment will be a joy. It will be creative and beneficial for all people. It won't feel like work because it won't BE work or labor. It will be love for what each one is doing.
- (8) Money will be extinct. No more advertising on phones, billboards, internet, television. All beauties and needs of life will be supplied freely and abundantly.
- (8) The animal realm will all be friendly to humans. No more mosquito bites!
- (9) People will not be judged for the mistakes they made in the past.
- (10) No human will have control over any other human.
- (11) Clear thinking at the "genius" level will be the experience of everyone alive.
- (12) Individuality will be encouraged and flourish. Tolerance for individuality will be treasured.
- (13) Nothing will hurt nor destroy. Even nature and the weather will cooperate!
- (14) Every question will have a satisfying and reasonable answer.

That is ONLY a sampling! It doesn't even scratch the surface of what will be -- although this list DOES give us something to think about! Is it **too good to be true?** Hardly! It's **too good NOT to be true!** It reflects what a good God OUGHT TO BE LIKE. And it is the consistent testimony of the Bible's message.

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Jesus promised that at the time of his return he would provide a succulent meal of truths for his disciples. (Revelation 3:20; Matthew 24:45-47) That time has come. The errors have been cleansed. (Daniel 8:14; 12:10) They have been replaced by the truths spoken by Jesus and his Apostles; and they have been augmented by clear understandings of the prophecies. Our prayer for any who might be seeking, is that they FIND what is **too good NOT to be true**. Lord bless your efforts.

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