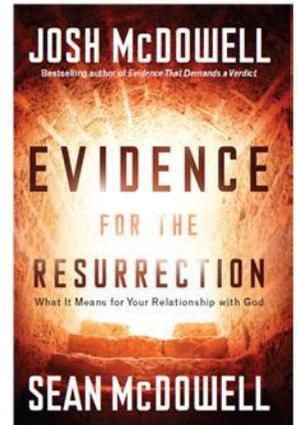


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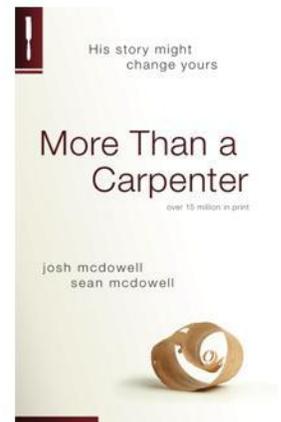
3 TEACHING OUTLINES

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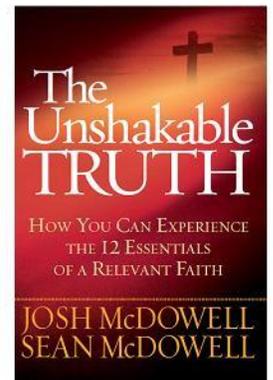
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San Juan Capistrano, CA



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RELEASE DATE: JULY 10, 2010

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PRIDE OR FEAR: WHICH ONE IS KEEPING YOU AWAY FROM GOD?

By: Mark Fitter

A. Introduction

1. Have you heard the one about the agnostic, dyslexic insomniac who stayed up all night wondering if there really was a dog?

Every person knows there is a God – whether they admit it or not

Martin Luther said it this way:

“There is a God Shaped vacuum in the heart of each person”

Are you looking for a conversation starter with your friends who deny there is a God?

Try telling them this:

2. The Bible tells us there are two things we know about a person who says there is no God.

a. He is a fool Psalm 14:1

b. He is a liar Romans 1:18-23

Caution: you may want to be out of reach when you're telling them this.

The term “suppress the truth” in Romans 1 is an eloquent way of saying “they lie.”

3. Illustration.

As children, many of us remember playing in the pool with floatation devices. Back then there were not as many inflatable toys as there were toys made of Styrofoam. I had a float that was shaped like a missile. It was about 3 feet long, kind of flat with rounded edges – like a miniature surf board. It was meant to be used as an aid for swimming. But I liked to hold

it under water and suddenly let go of it and it would shoot out like a missile. I usually waited for someone to come by and I tried to shoot them with it (FYI this is before I came to know Christ as my savior – of course given the opportunity, I would probably do it again today.) The most difficult part of this ambush was being able to get the Styrofoam “missile” under water. You see, Styrofoam is made to float. It wants to float to the surface. It took a great amount of energy and all my weight to force that missile under water. This is the concept Paul is stressing in Romans chapter one. He says that people suppress the truth in unrighteousness. In other words, people force the truth under water, just like I used to force that Styrofoam missile under water. People know there is a God, but they submerge the truth/they lie.

Question: If everyone knows there is a God, what keeps them from salvation? What causes them to suppress the truth?

Answer: Pride or Fear

B. Pride stops us from admitting our need for Jesus

1. Fear stops people from surrendering our life and lifestyle to God

- a. Herod was a man whose pride and fear kept him from God as well.
- b. His pride would not allow him to admit his need for Jesus. In so doing he would have had to surrender his title as king and worship the true king.
- c. His fear of losing a lifestyle he loved would not allow him to surrender his life to the one who gave him life.

2. About Herod

Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great

Herod the great feared losing his kingdom so when Christ was born; he executed the male children of Jerusalem after the visit from the magi.

MT 2:16 When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its

vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.

To try and impress the Jewish people and hoping to destroy the records of the coming Messiah, whom he feared would take away his kingship; Herod rebuilt the temple.

Before his death, he had all the leading men of Jerusalem arrested. He ordered them to be executed after his death as a fitting way of mourning his own death. The act was never carried out.

He had one of his sons executed five days before his own death

Caesar: "It is better to be Herod's hog than his son."

His son, Herod Antipas is the ruler of whom the scripture speaks in Luke 23.

He originally received half the kingdom, but had it reduced to a fourth."Tetrarch."

Jesus referred to Herod Antipas as sneaky by calling him a "fox". Luke 13:32

He eloped with his half brother's wife, Herodias, while they were both already married.

Herod Antipas had John the baptist beheaded because he condemned this act

MT 14:6 On Herod's birthday the daughter of Herodias danced for them and pleased Herod so much ⁷ that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. ⁸ Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." ⁹ The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he ordered that her request be granted ¹⁰ and had John beheaded in the prison. ¹¹ His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who carried it to her mother. ¹² John's disciples came and took his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus.

3. Herod thought that Jesus was either John the baptist resurrected or He was Elijah.

Herod was looking for a show

Note: Eventually Herod was deposed from his throne and exiled.

LK 23:8 Now Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus; for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him.

⁹ And he questioned Him at some length; but He answered him nothing.

¹⁰ And the chief priests and the scribes were standing there, accusing Him vehemently. ¹¹ And Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate. ¹² Now Herod and Pilate became friends with one another that very day; for before they had been at enmity with each other.

LK 23:13 And Pilate summoned the chief priests and the rulers and the people, ¹⁴ and said to them, "You brought this man to me as one who incites the people to rebellion, and behold, having examined Him before you, I have found no guilt in this man regarding the charges which you make against Him. ¹⁵ "No, nor has Herod, for he sent Him back to us; and behold, nothing deserving death has been done by Him. ¹⁶ "I will therefore punish Him and release Him." ¹⁷ [Now he was obliged to release to them at the feast one prisoner.] ¹⁸ But they cried out all together, saying, "Away with this man, and release for us Barabbas!" ¹⁹ (He was one who had been thrown into prison for a certain insurrection made in the city, and for murder.) ²⁰ And Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again,

21 but they kept on calling out, saying, "Crucify, crucify Him!" 22 And he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has this man done? I have found in Him no guilt *demanding* death; I will therefore punish Him and release Him." 23 But they were insistent, with loud voices asking that He be crucified. And their voices *began* to prevail. 24 And Pilate pronounced sentence that their demand should be granted. 25 And he released the man they were asking for who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, but he delivered Jesus to their will.

Luke 23:

⁴⁴It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour,

⁴⁵because the sun was obscured; and the veil of the temple was torn in two.

⁴⁶And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT." Having said this, He breathed His last.

Herod was a man whose pride and fear kept him from God. His pride would not allow him to admit his need for Jesus. His fear of losing a lifestyle he loved would not allow him to surrender his life to the one who gave him life.

Herod's pride and fear kept him from his savior.

Did you know that in the first few drops of blood that Christ shed, he shed at least one red blood cell for each person who has ever lived (Hebrews 9:22).

4. Jesus was executed.

But that was not the end. It was the beginning.

Luke 24

¹But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

²And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb,

³but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

⁴While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing;

⁵and as the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living One among the dead?"

⁶"He is not here, but He has risen Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee,

⁷saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

⁸And they remembered His words.

Jesus resurrected from the grave!

He is alive!

He is knocking on your door!

C. How about you?

- 1. Is your pride keeping you from admitting your need for Jesus this morning?**

Is the fear of losing a lifestyle you love keeping you away from Jesus this morning?

- 2. Herod wanted Jesus dead for two reasons:**

- a. His pride would not allow him to admit his need for Jesus. In so doing he would have had to surrender his title as king and worship the true king.

- b. His fear of losing a lifestyle he loved would not allow him to surrender his life to the one who gave him life.

3. How about you?

Is your pride keeping you from admitting your need for Jesus this morning?

a. Maybe your pride keeps you from reading the Bible?

You reason that it is an old book that is full of errors, not worth your time to read and certainly has no bearing on your life today

However:

- b. Did you know that in copying the Old Testament the scribes would:

Count the number of words in a book to make sure the total was the same as the original.

Count the number of letters in a book to make sure the total was the same as the original.

Count the middle word and middle letter in a book to make sure they matched.

On the third mistake, even though corrected, the document had to be destroyed.

- c. The four gospels are:

1. Rooted in eyewitness testimonies.
2. Written so close to the event that they cannot be the product of legend.
3. They contain embarrassing material and hard to explain material that would have been deleted if the writers wanted to white-wash the material.
4. Archaeology and ancient writings outside the Bible all corroborate the

New Testament Gospels.

4. Maybe your pride will not allow you to accept that you were created – you believe you evolved and are indebted to no creator?

Math tells us we were created and not evolved. There is simply not enough time for evolution to have taken place no matter how many billions or trillions of years you suppose.

The odds of the simplest living cell's ability to rebuild itself by chance are 10 to the -2,000,000,000. Molecular Biophysicist Harold Morowitz

10 followed by 2 billion zeros.

1 to the 20th would be one chance in one thousand thousand trillion.

If the earth is 2 billion years old and there were 100 mutations every second, in the course of 2 billion years, the number of mutations would be:

6,300,072,000,000,000,000 – or rounding up, 7 18th. That is a seven with 18 zeros behind it versus a 10 followed by two billion zeros.

FYI there are not nearly even that many mutation – also many mutations are negative and destructive, like cancer.

“To suppose that the eye...was formed by chance I freely confess is absurd to the highest degree.” Charles Darwin

It would take 100 years for a Cray super computer to simulate what takes place in your eye many times every second.

5. Is the fear of losing a lifestyle you love keeping you away from Jesus this morning?

Herod chose his lifestyle over God.

Are you afraid to fully surrender to God this morning?

Trust Him – He made you – He knows what is best for you

Proverbs 3:5-6

⁵Trust in the LORD with all your heart

And do not lean on your own understanding.

⁶In all your ways acknowledge Him,

And He will make your paths straight.

You cannot experience true joy until you surrender your life to Christ.

D. Conclusion

The Bible says that:

Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. Proverbs 16:18

This morning is the time to surrender your pride and fear and embrace God.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. John 3:16

The Greek word for life here is *zōa*. It means spiritual life. It is not just a continuation of the life we have now. It is eternal life in the presence of God.

Today you have decision to make.

Walk out of here lost in your pride and your fear

Or, lay down your pride and your fear and accept what Jesus did for you when He resurrected from the grave.

E. Invitation