

Hidden Agendas

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The history of mankind is a history of defection from truth and an affinity for error. He, who is the Truth, is and has been consistently rejected by man in every age. God's redemption is a particular truth from which man defects by modification.

In Genesis, Cain understood God's requirement of blood but substituted that which he had on hand, something convenient, a substitute that seemed logical.

In Leviticus, Nadab and Abihu met the requirement of blood, but improvised on what seemed as a minor detail: the fire for the incense. Six times God told Moses to make everything according to the pattern given in the mountain. A steward is not an innovator; he is a keeper. He has no authority to add or detract. God was displeased with these two individualists who charted their own course.

In First Samuel, Saul violated the requirement that a priest offer the sacrifice. This expediency seemed necessary from Saul's viewpoint as seen by his attempt to justify his actions to Samuel.

In Second Kings, Ahaz visited Tiglath-Pileser after the capture of Damascus. Seeing a 'great altar' there, he sent a pattern back to Urijah the priest in Jerusalem. Urijah built this new altar and moved God's bronze altar north of the 'great altar'. He moved the sea from the twelve bronze oxen and made other "updates". The offering system and methodology of service are divinely authorized symbols of redemption that lose their identification and efficacy if modified. Ahaz desecrated by modification!

Redemption was the object of satanic attack in these four examples. The earthly sacrificial system did not accommodate man; it reflected God and his Glory in redemption. The blood, fire, priest, and articles in the tabernacle had derived significance. They were foreshadows or earthly copies of the heavenly. Because of this, the details were critical; ". . . the example and shadow of heavenly things . . . See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount" (Hebrews 8:5). . . . "the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true" (Hebrews 9:24). God did not 'invent' the earthly system, He simply instructed man to follow the pattern of the Heavenly.

So today, God's system of redemption reflects Him and His Glory. The details are significant. Any modification to accommodate man creates a corrupted image of God. Were God still in the fire sending business, many pulpits would be crematoriums this Sunday.

In our age, we have modern day modifiers. Redemption is "updated" to accommodate post-modern man by eliminating repentance, making following Christ optional (no Lordship), presenting a "Plan of Salvation" rather than Christ, offering heaven rather than Jesus, and telling the lost to "Ask Jesus to come into your heart" (where did that come from?).

New Evangelicalism is progressively corrupting the purity of the image of God in redemption by offering their own brand of strange fire, logical substitutions, time saving expediencies, and innovations; all to 'reach' man. They tell us: "Methods do not matter. Let us have biker Sunday". "Music is amoral; give them popular music". "Tailor the worship styles for the consumer". "Let's get together, and have more influence". Fidelity to the Biblical message and methods that reflects God's glory is lost in a sea of love, unity, and relevance, all consumer driven; designed to produce growth. Sadly missing are truth, holiness, purity, and separation. No longer does structuring the message and methods solely to please God by adhering to the biblical pattern burn in our hearts and drive our behavior.

Biblical redemption, a surprising (and exclusive) work of the Holy Spirit, is left lying in the dust; having been exchanged for easy believism, Fifth Avenue marketing, consumer orientated packaging, rehearsed encapsulated presentations, along with guilt and/or high pressure driven invitations. Empowered with this synthetic Gospel the post-modern church rolls along embracing world-tainted methods and message; cleverly cloaked to look like authentic Christianity.

The root cause? Men do not love God; they love their own agenda. On the surface Cain, Nadab, et al. were uniformly religious. They all wanted to worship, sacrifice, obey, or otherwise please God! However, each one had a hard heart and a hidden agenda.

So, in our day, not so hidden agendas drive this corruption of redemption. The Biblical measurement of love is obedience (John 14:23, I John 5:3). This measurement judges these Old Testament modifiers and finds them wanting. By the same standard, all current modifiers are found defective who attempt to take God's perfect revelation, and improve and expedite it in order to worship, praise, win souls, plant a church, obey, or otherwise please God.

We need men of the Bible dedicated to the Scriptural message and methods, and who plant the seed faithfully, who water faithfully and then trust God with the task of redeeming sinners.