

Title: **A CALL TO DOGMATISM**

Text: Isaiah 8:11-16

Subject: *Fundamentals of the Faith*

Date: Tuesday Evening — May 12, 2009

Readings: *Lindsay Campbell and Larry Criss*

Introduction:

I've got a message on my heart that's about to burst to get out. So, if you will turn with to the 8th chapter of Isaiah's prophecy, I want to issue a call to dogmatism. That is the title of my message: — **A CALL TO DOGMATISM**. I issue this call to you, to this congregation; and I issue this call to every man who claims to be a preacher of the gospel. If I could have the ear of every preacher in the world, I would say to them all, "Either proclaim the gospel of Christ with bold, God honoring, dogmatism, or shut up, get out of the way, and let somebody else do it." I am sick to death of mealy-mouthed, pussy-footing preachers who are scared to death of offending anyone except God!

ISAIAH 6

In chapter 6 Isaiah saw the Lord Jesus, the crucified, risen, ascended Christ, exalted and sitting on his throne (Isaiah 6:1-4; John 12:41-42). With the revelation of Christ, he tells us how he experienced the forgiveness of sins through the Savior's shed blood (Isaiah 6:5-7). Then, the prophet was commanded to preach the message, the glories of the crucified Christ until the land was utterly desolate and "*there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land*" (Isaiah 6:8-12). "*Yet in it,*" God promised, "*shall be a tenth...whose substance is in them...So the holy seed shall be the substance thereof*" (Isaiah 6:13).

ISAIAH 7

In chapter 8 we read about a confederacy made between Re-zin the king of Syria and Pe-kah the king of Israel. The children of Israel, the ten northern tribes of Israel, those who claimed to be worshippers and followers of Jehovah, united with the Syrian, pagans, base idolaters, to destroy God's elect remnant among them, the children of Judah (Isaiah 7:1). Syria and Ephraim formed a confederacy to stomp out the worship of God and destroy those who worshipped God (v. 2). But the Lord God said to his chosen, "*Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted*" (v. 4). He says,

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concerning the reprobate confederacy and its determination to destroy God and his people...

(Isaiah 7:7) “Thus saith the Lord GOD, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.”

Without question, all these things were written with historical reference to the physical nations spoken of in this chapter. I understand that. But I understand this, too: These things are written for us, addressing issues facing us, in this day of swarming infidelity and apostasy, when those who profess to be worshippers and followers of God join in hellish confederacy, to destroy God’s church and God’s truth. Multitudes who claim to be unflinching defenders of the truth are quick to compromise the gospel of God’s glory, that they might be accepted by those who hate the gospel. **They form a confederacy with the will-worshipping idolaters of the world, to make war against Christ, his people and his gospel.**

- Ian Paisley and Bob Jones
- Edgar Andrews’ Request
- Gary’s Doctrinal Adjustment

The war is not a war between men and men. It is a war of men against God, against him whose name is Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14). — “*For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire*” (Isaiah 9:5). And you can be sure of this: — Immanuel is going to win this war!

ISAIAH 8

(Isaiah 8:9-10) “Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. (10) Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God *is* with us.”

(Isaiah 9:6-7) “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (7) Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon

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his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

Now, let’s look at our text. Here is a call to dogmatism written by the finger of God himself in Isaiah 8:11-16.

Verse 11 — “*For the LORD spake thus to me with a strong hand.*” — The Lord Jehovah spoke to me by his Spirit accompanying his word, and bringing it home to my heart. He spoke to my heart that I might deliver his message to your heart. He spoke, taking me by the hand, in loving efficacy, pulling me back from the road traveled by the multitude, pulling me back from the hellish confederacy.

His purpose in speaking to me was “*that I should not walk in the way of this people.*” — It is God alone who keeps me from howling with those ravenous works wolves and roaring legal lions who seek to destroy the souls of men with free-will, works religion. I don’t tune my fiddle to their pitch because God has spoken to me. I have been swimming against the tide my entire life as a believer; and I am prepared to do so until I die, even if I swim alone!

(2 Peter 3:17) “Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.”

Read on...

(Isaiah 8:12-15) “Say ye not, A confederacy, to all *them to* whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. (13) Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and *let him be* your fear, and *let him be* your dread. (14) And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (15) And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.”

BIND UP

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Now, look at verse 16. Here, Isaiah gives every prophet and preacher the instructions God gave him as his prophet. — Standing in this pulpit to speak to you in the name of God, as God’s ambassador, it is my responsibility to faithfully deliver to you the Word of God without addition, without subtraction, without adornment. With simplicity and plainness of speech, I am responsible under God to give you His Word. In verse 16 we read God’s commandment to every preacher.

(Isaiah 8:16) “Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.”

“The Testimony” is the Word of God. It is the Word he gave to his prophet, particularly the Word he had just given Isaiah concerning the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ (7:14; 8:14-15).

(Isaiah 7:14) “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

(Isaiah 8:14-15) “And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (15) And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.”

The Testimony of God is the gospel of Christ (2 Timothy 1:8-12).

(2 Timothy 1:8-12) “Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; (9) Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: (11) Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. (12) For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

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The preacher is responsible to “bind up the testimony” as something indescribably valuable, taking great care that no part of it be neglected or lost. By diligent study, prayer and preparation, he is to bind it up in his own heart and mind like a priceless treasure.

Then he must, by his preaching “seal the law among my disciples.” “*The law*” here does not refer to the Ten Commandments, or to the ceremonial Law of Moses, but to the whole Word of God. It is the whole doctrine of Christ. **It is the responsibility of every gospel preacher to establish God’s saints in the doctrine of Christ** (Ephesians 4:11-14; 2 Timothy 4:1-4).

(Ephesians 4:11-14) “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (12) For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (13) Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: (14) That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.”

(2 Timothy 4:1-4) “I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; (2) Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. (3) For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; (4) And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

Standing before eternity bound sinners, speaking in the name of God, as I now do, it is my responsibility to deliver to you the Word of God. **When I do, I claim for myself the right to be heard.** I do not preach without preparation. I do not give out leftover, rehashed sermons. And I do not simply repeat that which I have heard someone else say, or something I have copied out of a book.

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When I come to this pulpit to preach the gospel, what I preach to you in forty-five minutes is the result of many hours of labor in study and prayer, labor spent for your soul. That gives me the right to be heard. **But that does not give me the right to be believed, obeyed and followed.** I do not claim for myself a right to blind loyalty and allegiance. No man, no matter how sincere he may appear to be, myself included, is to be given unqualified allegiance. — *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world”* (1 John 4:1). **It is your responsibility to try what I say by the Word of God** (Isaiah 8:20). — *“To the law and to the testimony”* (to the doctrine of Christ revealed in the testimony of God given in the Book of Holy Scripture) *“if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is not light in them!”* — Compare Galatians 1:6-8.

(Galatians 1:6-8) “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: (7) Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. (8) But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

I have come here this hour *“to bind up the testimony”* and *“seal the law,”* to bind a precious treasure, so that nothing be lost, and to seal the doctrine of Christ to you. Here are ten, stubborn, irrefutable statements, ten dogmatic declarations that go right to the heart of true Christianity. You will either accept or reject these ten statements. There is no middle ground; and you will find it impossible to be indifferent regarding them. There is no room for compromise on any of these ten points. I say, regarding every man who claims to be a prophet or preacher sent from God that which the Lord God said to Isaiah. — *“To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is not light in them!”*

1. **Either the Bible, is in its entirety the holy, inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God, or it is in its entirety a lie by which the souls of men are eternally deceived and damned.** If the Bible not the Word of God, throw it away. But if it is, as it claims to be, God’s Holy Word, we better pay attention to it. It claims, as such, a total sway over our lives. It must be our only rule of faith and practice.

(2 Peter 1:21) “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of

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man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.”

(Psalms 138:2) “I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.”

(Psalms 119:128) “Therefore I esteem all *thy* precepts *concerning* all *things to be* right; *and* I hate every false way.”

(2 Timothy 3:16-17) “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (17) That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

2. **Either God almighty is absolutely sovereign, in total control of all things, at all times, or there is no God.** Again, there is no middle ground between these two poles, between God’s absolute, total sovereignty and absolute, total atheism. To speak of a god who is not totally sovereign is utter nonsense. Atheism is far more sensible than Arminianism. If God is, he is sovereign!

(Psalms 135:5-6) “For I know that the LORD *is* great, and *that* our Lord *is* above all gods. (6) Whatsoever the LORD pleased, *that* did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.”

(Isaiah 40:9) “O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift *it* up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!”

(Isaiah 40:12-15) “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? (13) Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or *being* his counsellor hath taught him? (14) With whom took he counsel, and *who* instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding? (15) Behold, the nations *are* as a drop of

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a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.”

(Isaiah 40:17-18) “All nations before him *are* as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. (18) To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?”

(Isaiah 40:21-22) “Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? (22) *It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:”

(Isaiah 46:9-11) “Remember the former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else; *I am* God, and *there is* none like me, (10) Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: (11) Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken *it*, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed *it*, I will also do it.”

(Daniel 4:34-37) “And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom *is* from generation to generation: (35) And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? (36) At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. (37) Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works *are* truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.”

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3. **Either man is totally depraved, utterly dead in trespasses and in sins, or there is nothing wrong with him and he needs no Savior.** There is no such thing as partial depravity or partial goodness before God. Either we are totally sinful and depraved or we are totally righteous and good. There is no middle ground.
- Utterly Dead, without Ability
 - Utterly Corrupt

(Psalms 14:2-3) “The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God. (3) They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.”

(Jeremiah 17:9) “The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

4. **Either God chose to save some of Adam’s fallen race to salvation and eternal life in Christ before the world began, as the Bible says he did, or no salvation is possible for any man.** Salvation is God’s prerogative, not man’s. Grace is God’s gift, not man’s choice. If God does not choose to save and choose whom he will save, no sinner can ever be saved.

(Romans 9:13-18) “As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. (14) What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid. (15) For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. (16) So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. (17) For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. (18) Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth.”

5. **Either the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God is altogether and alone the effectual Redeemer and Savior of his people, or he is a fraud and a failure.** Again, there is no middle ground, no room for compromise. Either Christ did what he came to do, or he is a failure. If he is a failure, he is not God, and we have no Savior. Either every sinner

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for whom Christ shed his blood at Calvary shall be saved by his blood, or none shall be saved by his blood.

(Isaiah 53:10-11) “Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. (11) He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.”

6. **Either we are regenerated and called to life and faith in Christ by the irresistible power and grace of God the Holy Spirit, or there is no such thing as salvation.** The only hope for a dead sinner is free and sovereign grace, grace that asks for nothing and gives everything, grace that waits for nothing and does everything.

(Psalms 65:4) “Blessed *is the man whom* thou choosest, and causet to approach *unto thee, that* he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, *even* of thy holy temple.”

(Psalms 110:3) “Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.”

(John 6:63) “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.”

7. **Either God’s people are entirely free from the law, as the Scriptures declare us to be, or we are yet under the bondage of the law and entirely obligated to keep it perfectly.** There is no such thing as being partially under the law and partially free from it, not in biblical terms. The only way sinner can satisfy, fulfill, and establish the law is by faith in Christ (Romans 3:31). — “*Ye are not under the law, but under grace*” (Romans 6:14). — “*We are not under the law, but under grace*” (Romans 6:15).

(Romans 7:4) “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth

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fruit unto God.”

(Romans 8:1-4) “*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. (3) For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: (4) That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

(Romans 10:4) “For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

(Galatians 3:24-25) “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (25) But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”

8. **Either all believers are sanctified in Christ, or none are sanctified.**

This Book declares that all who trust Christ are “saints,” sanctified and holy, sanctified by grace (Jude 1; Hebrews 10:14; 2 Thessalonians 2:14; Hebrews 12:14), made holy by grace, as “*partakers of the divine nature*” (2 Peter 1:4), and new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 3:5-9)

(2 Corinthians 5:17) “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

(1 John 3:5-9) “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. (6) Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. (7) Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. (8) He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. (9) Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

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1. If you're not sanctified, you're not saved.
 2. If Christ is not in you, you're not in Christ.
 3. If his righteous nature has not been imparted to you, his grace has not been given to you.
9. **Either every sinner who comes to Christ is saved by Christ, or none are saved by him.**

(Matthew 11:28-30) “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.”

(John 6:37) “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

What does it mean to be saved by Christ?

- Completely Forgiven
- Fully Justified
- Perfectly Holy
- Utterly secure

Come humble sinner, in whose breast
A thousand thoughts revolve;
Come with your guilt and fear oppressed,
And make this last resolve.

“I’ll go to Jesus, though my sins
Like mountains round me rose;
I know his courts, I’ll enter in,
Whatever may oppose.

“Prostrate I’ll lie before his throne,
And there my guilt confess;
I’ll tell him I’m a wretch undone
Without his sovereign grace.”

I’ll to the gracious King approach,
Whose scepter pardon gives;

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Perhaps He may command my touch,
And then the suppliant lives!

Perhaps He will admit my plea,
Perhaps will hear my prayer;
But if I perish, I will pray,
And perish only there.

I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away, I know,
I must forever die.

But if I die with mercy sought,
When I the King have tried,
This were to die (Delightful thought!) —
As sinner never died!”

10. **Either every saved sinner shall persevere to the end, being preserved and kept by God’s infallible, immutable grace, or none shall.** The perseverance of the saints is demanded by the purpose of God, the purchase of Christ, and the power of the Spirit. — Either salvation is by grace alone, free, sovereign, effectual grace alone, or there is no such thing as salvation.

(Philippians 1:6) “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ.”

(Jude 1:1) “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called.”

(Jude 1:24-25) “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, (25) To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.”