

Looking at the True Face of Jesus

2 Corinthians 3:18- 4:6

¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The Light of Christ's Gospel

4 Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. ² But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. ³ But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. ⁵ For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

The Current trend in Modern day Evangelicalism is leaning more and more toward the Subjective and not the Objective, More mystical than Historical.

The Call of the Reformation for Sola Scriptura is being drown out by the heralds of dreams, visions, and experiences.

We are being inundated with those that would tell us that how to know God is up to ones one personal opinion and no one answer is right or wrong.

Biblical Expository Preaching is being set aside for the fanciful, practical, and sometimes mystical approaches to knowing God.

I just heard this week of a church that was going to approach Sunday School a little different, They would meet together in different groups, home groups, and discuss a chapter in a book or in the Bible. and meet on Sunday morning and talk about what you talked about.

Nothing wrong in talking about the Bible or books related to the Bible. But Someone has got to Study and know what the text meaning by what it says. Or is becomes pool of ignorance.

Everyone giving what they think it means, whether it does or not. Subjectivity gone amuck

No Wonder we are in the mess we are today. Discernment in the church is at an all time low.

I used to be shocked by some of the questions I get from believers who have been in church for years. I would think “you should know this”

But now, it is so common, I am no longer shocked. Im shocked when someone does understand Scripture.

I was amazed to hear a few months ago that the growing trend in young people today is Gnosticism

What is this?

GNOSTICISM IS THE TEACHING based on Gnosis, the knowledge of transcendence arrived at by way of interior, intuitive means. Although Gnosticism thus rests on personal religious experience, it is a mistake to assume all such experience results in Gnostic recognitions. It is nearer the truth to say that Gnosticism expresses a specific religious experience, an experience that does not lend itself to the language of theology or philosophy, but which is instead closely affinitized to, and expresses itself through, the medium of myth. Indeed, one finds that most Gnostic scriptures take the forms of myths. The term “myth” should not here be taken to mean “stories that are not true”, but rather, that the truths embodied in these myths are of a different order from the dogmas of theology or the statements of philosophy.

Heaven is for Real, by Todd Burpo, tells the story of Burpo's son, Colton, who says he visited heaven while anesthetized for an appendectomy at age 4. Colton, now 13, says in heaven he got a halo and real wings (though they were too small for his liking). He also claims he sat on Jesus' lap while the angels sang to him; he saw Mary standing beside Jesus' throne; and he met the Holy Spirit (who, according to Colton, is "kind of blue").

More than seven million copies of this book are now in circulation, and the publisher has been assembling a sizable catalogue of spin-off products, including a planned movie version (to be produced by televangelist/prosperity preacher T. D. Jakes).

That book is not to be confused with *The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven*, by Kevin Malarkey—another runaway best-seller. Malarkey's book is about his son Alex, who at age 6 was nearly killed (and left permanently paralyzed) in a devastating automobile accident. In the

immediate aftermath, and then during his rehabilitation, Alex says he made multiple trips to heaven and back.

The Malarkeys' version of heaven is considerably darker and not as full of details as the Burpos'. "There is a hole in outer Heaven," Alex says. "That hole goes to hell." The devil evidently uses this portal freely, because he is a major figure in Alex Malarkey's description of paradise. Alex says he has personally seen Satan many times, first at the accident scene and then later in heaven.

Indeed, this is perhaps the most vivid part of Alex Malarkey's whole account: "The devil's mouth is funny looking, with only a few moldy teeth. And I've never noticed any ears. His body has a human form, with two bony arms and two bony legs. He has no flesh on his body, only some moldy stuff. His robes are torn and dirty. I don't know about the color of the skin or robes—it's all just too scary to concentrate on these things!"

Those books are part of a burgeoning genre, currently one of the hottest trends in publishing: imaginative tales purporting to be eyewitness accounts of heaven and the afterlife. (Blogger Tim Challies **has labeled the genre "Heaven Tourism,"** candidly dismissing one bestseller in the category as "pure junk, fiction in the guise of biography, paganism in the guise of Christianity.")

Examples of these works include *My Journey to Heaven: What I Saw and How It Changed My Life*, by Marvin J. Besteman; *Flight to Heaven: A Plane Crash . . . A Lone Survivor . . . A Journey to Heaven—and Back*, by Dale Black; *To Heaven and Back: A Doctor's Extraordinary Account of Her Death, Heaven, Angels, and Life Again: A True Story*, by Mary Neal; *90 Minutes in Heaven: A True Story of Death and Life*, by Don Piper; *Nine Days In Heaven*, by Dennis Prince; *23 Minutes In Hell: One Man's Story About What He Saw, Heard, and Felt in that Place of Torment*, by Bill Wiese; and many others. Several of these titles have appeared on various bestseller lists, and most of them are still riding high.

This is not a totally new phenomenon. Various survivors of near-death experiences have been publishing gnostic insights about the afterlife for at least two decades. Betty Eadie's *Embraced by the Light* was number one on the *New York Times* Bestseller List exactly 20 years ago. The success of that

book unleashed an onslaught of similar tales, nearly all of them with strong New Age and occult overtones. So psychics and new-agers have been making hay with stories like these for at least two decades.

What's different about the current crop of afterlife testimonies is that they are being eagerly sought and relentlessly cranked out by evangelical publishers. They are bought and devoured by millions who would describe themselves as born-again Bible-believing Christians. Every book I have named in the above list comes from an ostensibly evangelical source. Many of them are old-guard mainstream **ECPA** publishers, not vanity presses or dilettantes from the charismatic fringe.

These books are coming out with such frequency that it is virtually impossible to read and review them all. But that shouldn't even be necessary. No true evangelical ought to be tempted to give such tales any credence whatsoever, no matter how popular they become. One major, obvious problem is that these books don't even agree with one another. They give contradictory descriptions of heaven and thus cannot possibly have any cumulative long-term effect other than the sowing of confusion and doubt.

But the larger issue is one no authentic believer should miss: *the whole premise behind every one of these books is contrary to everything **Scripture** teaches about heaven.*

“For anyone who truly believes the biblical record, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that these modern testimonies—with their relentless self-focus and the relatively scant attention they pay to the glory of God—are *simply untrue*. They are either figments of the human imagination (dreams, hallucinations, false memories, fantasies, and in the worst cases, deliberate lies), or else they are products of demonic deception. We know this with absolute certainty, because Scripture definitively says that people do not go to heaven and come back: "Who has ascended to heaven and come down?" (**Proverbs 30:4**). Answer: "No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man" (**John 3:13**, emphasis added). All the accounts of heaven in Scripture are visions, not journeys taken by dead people. And even visions of heaven are very, very rare in Scripture. You can count them all on one hand.

Only four authors in all the Bible were blessed with visions of heaven and wrote about what they saw: the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel, and the apostles Paul and John. Two other biblical figures—Micaiah and Stephen—got glimpses of heaven, but what they saw is merely mentioned, not described ([2 Chronicles 18:18](#); [Acts 7:55](#)). As Pastor MacArthur points out, all of these were prophetic *visions*, not near-death experiences. Not one person raised from the dead in the Old or New Testaments ever recorded for us what he or she experienced in heaven. That includes Lazarus, who spent four days in the grave.

Paul was caught up into heaven in an experience so vivid he said he didn't know whether he went there bodily or not, but he saw things that are unlawful to utter, so he gave no details. He covered the whole incident in just three verses ([2 Corinthians 12:2-4](#)).

Why Christians who profess to believe the Bible would find these stories the least bit compelling is an utter mystery, but it is a sure sign that many in the evangelical *movement* have abandoned their evangelical *convictions*. Specifically, they have relinquished the principle of *sola Scriptura* and lost their confidence in the sufficiency of Scripture. Why else would they turn from clear biblical teaching on heaven and seek an alternative view in mystical experiences that bear no resemblance to what Scripture tells us?

This trend away from biblical authority was even noted earlier this week by a secular reporter in *The New York Post*. Consider the implications of this quotation:

Lynn Vincent, who ghost-wrote "Heaven is for Real" on behalf of the young boy Colton Burpo and his father, said that she was initially reluctant to include Colton's description of people in heaven having wings. "If I put that people in Heaven have wings, orthodox Christians are going to think that the book is a hoax." She did and they didn't.

Evangelical readers' discernment skills are at an all-time low, and that is why books like these proliferate. Despite the high profile, high sales figures, and high dollar amounts Christian publishers can milk from a trend such as this, it doesn't bode well for the future of Christian publishing—or for the future of the evangelical movement.

Spoiler alert: Heaven's a lot more glorious than any of these current bestsellers suggest.

You may have noticed also the trend among believers and non believers alike who claim to have seen the face of Jesus on various food items

[Rosalie Lawson](#) found the image of Christ in a sour cream and onion potato chip.

[Dan and Sarah Bell](#) found the figure of Jesus in a bag of Cheetos.

[Fred Whan](#) found the face of Christ in a fish stick.

80-year-old [Ernesto Garza](#) found the face of Jesus while eating a breakfast taco.

[Lisa Swinton](#) found the face of Christ in her afternoon snack on the bruising of a banana

[Donna Lee](#) found Jesus in a pierogi and sold it on eBay for \$1775.00.

[Jennifer](#) found the image of Jesus on an apple that was about to be turned into applesauce.

[Pastor Renee Brewster](#) found Christ on the cross on potato pieces while making potato salad.

Jesus in a Pancake?

The Cowgirl Cafe flipped a pancake with a face resembling Jesus on Friday, April 18, 2014. Owner Karen Hendrickson said it wasn't served to a customer.

The GRILLED CHEESUS® is an electronic sandwich press that toasts the face of Jesus onto your sandwich bread. Inspire your family at the dining room table or impress your friends at a party. However you slice it, the GRILLED CHEESUS® lets you bring little grilled miracles to mealtime, snack time, or anytime.
\$40.00

One of the first things that comes to my mind is how do they know what Jesus looks like.

Does some have a polaroid picture of him
or did someone get an email I did not know about.
If fact many of the ones I have seen remind me more of
John Lennon, or Johnny Cash with a Beard.

2 Corinthians 3:18- 4:6

¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, **beholding** as in a mirror **the glory of the Lord**, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The Light of Christ's Gospel

4 Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. ² But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of

God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. ³ But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the **glory of Christ**, who is the **image of God**, should shine on them. ⁵ For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the **glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ**.

This is not subjective but objective
not Mystical but Historical

Matt. 17:1-9

Isa 6

Rev 1

II Peter 1:16-21

So we are saying that the way to see the face of Jesus is in the pages of Holy Writ

John 1:1

John 1:18

Col. 1:15

The Theme of this passage is being Transformed into the image of Christ by Beholding the Face of Christ.

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¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, **beholding** as in a mirror **the glory of the Lord**, *are being transformed* into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Therefore

I. We are not Discouraged

4 Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.

II. We are Repenters

² But we have renounced the hidden things of shame,

III. We are Faithful

v. 2 not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

IV. We are Enlightened

A. The Perishing

³ But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

2 Cor 4:3

Perishing

Present Participle

Original Word: ἀπόλλυμι

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: apollumi

Phonetic Spelling: (ap-ol'-loo-mee)

Short Definition: I destroy, lose, am perishing

Definition: (a) I kill, destroy, (b) I lose, mid: I am perishing (the resultant death being viewed as certain).

HELPS Word-studies

622 *apóllymi* (from **575** /*apó*, "away from," which intensifies *ollymi*, "to destroy") – properly, *fully* destroy, cutting *off entirely* (note the force of the prefix, **575** /*apó*).

622 /*apóllymi* ("violently/completely perish") implies permanent (absolute) destruction, i.e. to cancel out (remove); "to die, with the

implication of ruin and destruction" (L & N, 1, 23.106); cause to be *lost* (*utterly* perish) by experiencing a miserable end.

Now the god of this world, or the god of this aion, the word aion means age. The god of this age. Well what does that mean? Well whoever the god of this age is, he is in control of this age. What age? Man's age, today in our world. The god of this age is the one who controls the thoughts, the ideas, the opinions, the ideals, the maxims, the hopes, the impulses, the aims, the goals, the views current in the world, the one who reigns in the world's philosophies and the world's psychologies and the world's education and the world's commerce and the world's labor and the world's sociology. In every enterprise he is the monarch.

Who is this? Who is this god of this world? Back in **Matthew chapter 4** we start to get an answer to that, verse 8, the devil takes Jesus to a very high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in their glory and said to Him, "**All these things will I give You.**" Now you can't give what you don't have, right? So there you have the devil possessing the kingdoms of the world. It's none other than the devil himself who is the god of this world. **In John chapter 12 verse 31, chapter 14 verse 30 and chapter 16 verse 11, three times Satan is called the ruler of this world.**

Ephesians 2:2 *he is called the prince of the power of the air.* He is the one who rules the atmosphere of demonic habitation that surrounds the earth.

In 2 Timothy 2:26 *he is the devil who has captivated the senses of men.*

In 1 John 5:19 *the whole world lies in the lap of the evil one.*

Satan has blinded the minds of the unbelieving. How has he done it? Does he get inside your head and mess around with you? No. He's created...he's created the society in which you live that has this massive influence. **All the ideologies, as I said, the thoughts, ideas, opinions, ideals,**

maxims, hopes, dreams, impulses, aims, goals, views, everything in the world as we know it is under the control of the god of this age. And it's not enough that people are dead in their trespasses and sins. It's not enough they're veiled from the truth because they hate the light and love the darkness and therefore they are unbelieving and on the road to damnation, compounding that problem Satan has created a system in this age that panders to their depravity and deepens the darkness. And so it can be said of them by Jesus in **John 8:44**, "You're of your father the devil." The blind perishing unbelievers follow Satan's system.

A.W. PINK

The gospel of Satan is not a program of anarchy. It does not promote strife and war—but aims at peace and unity. It does not seek to drag down the natural man—but to improve and uplift him. It advocates education and cultivation, and appeals to the "best that is within us." It endeavors to occupy man so much with *this* world—that he has no time or inclination to think of the world to come. It propagates the principles of self-sacrifice, charity and benevolence; and teaches us to live for the good of others, and to be kind to all. It appeals strongly to the carnal mind and is popular with the masses, because it ignores the solemn facts—that by nature man is a fallen creature, alienated from the life of God, dead in trespasses and sins, and that his only hope lies in being born again.

The gospel of Satan teaches salvation by works. It inculcates justification before God, on the ground of human merits. It is a *bloodless gospel*, and presents a *crossless Christ*, who is received merely, as the Ideal Man.

The *apostles of Satan* are not saloon-keepers and white-slave traffickers—but are for the most part *ordained ministers!* Their *message* may sound very plausible, and their *aim* appear very praiseworthy—yet we read of them, "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen,

masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness." (2 Corinthians 11:13-15).

In Proverbs 14:12 we read, "There is a way that seems right to a man—but in the end it leads to death." This "way" which ends in "death" is **the Devil's Delusion**—the gospel of Satan—a way of salvation by *human attainment*. It is a way which "seems right," that is to say, it is presented in such a plausible way that it appeals to the natural man. It is set forth in such a subtle and attractive manner, that it commends itself to the minds of its hearers. By virtue of the fact that it appropriates to itself religious terminology, sometimes appeals to the Bible for its support (whenever this suits its purpose), holds up before men lofty ideals, and is proclaimed by those who have graduated from our theological institutions, countless multitudes are decoyed and deceived by it!

It has been said with considerable truth, that *the way to Hell is paved with good intentions*. There will be many in the Lake of Fire who lived with good intentions, honest resolutions and exalted ideals; who were just in their dealings and charitable in all their ways; men who prided themselves in their integrity—but who sought to justify themselves before God by their own righteousness; men who were moral and kind—but who never saw themselves as guilty, lost, hell-deserving sinners, needing a Savior. Such is the way which "seems right." Such is the way that commends itself to the carnal mind and recommends itself to multitudes of deluded ones today. **The Devil's Delusion** is that we can be saved by our own works, and justified by our own deeds!

Mind Nouama The reasoning ability. the thinking process.

Reprobate Romans 1: 23—

B. The Preaching

⁵ For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake.

C. The Projection

⁶ For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

I Peter 2:9-10⁹

But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Eph 5:8

⁸ For you were once darkness, but now *you are* light in the Lord.

Luke 4:18

"THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME,
BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE
GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO
PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND
RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET
FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,

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Acts 26 :15

¹⁵ So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶ But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. ¹⁷ I will deliver you from the *Jewish* people, as well as *from* the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, ¹⁸ to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'

Calvin wrote

"Indeed the Word of God is like the sun, shining upon all those to whom it is proclaimed, but with no effect among the blind. Now, all of us are blind by nature in this respect... Accordingly, it cannot penetrate into our minds unless the Spirit, as the inner teacher, through his illumination makes entry for it." (Calvin's Institutes 3.2.34.)