

An Assessment of the Popular WOFM Spiritual Warfare Teachings

**Some Reflective Thoughts
for the Christian**

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Introduction

In a separate write up, we stated that knowledge of THE TRUTH makes a whole world of a difference. We stated that if one has the correct view and understanding of God's word, then they, will in all probability, approach life in a correct way. Most likely, such individuals will avoid extremes as well as be liberated from unwarranted phobias such as the fear of man or the unknown. We also established that many "Truths" and systems of thought presently compete for the premium place in the mind of a person because, if and once the mind is captured, then the entire person can easily be manipulated. An appreciation of the Truth, as it is in Jesus, sets free from deception, fear or misdirection (John 8:31,32,36).

In this present discourse, our attention shifts to another angle though connected to the previous discussions, the Truth. As before, we largely synthesize the rich, deep thoughts and conclusions of several sound authorities including Bob De Waay, whose work teems with Biblical thought and perspective, having first hand experienced some extreme contexts himself but now stands on the solid word of God. We heartily recommend a meticulous reading of DeWaay's most insightful article on the matter at hand, though admittedly, we do not subscribe to all his conclusions. In the main, we do. For our purposes and in undertaking this arduous task, as before, we consider some potent helpful verses that De Waay, Brown, Haggins and others sometimes refer to before arriving at their conclusions.

The major thrust of this write up is to highlight the fact that if one does not have the truth as it is in Jesus, they easily become prey, a soft target and susceptible to all manner of attacks, manipulation or in worst case scenario, abuse. They may unknowingly be deceived into believing a lie which they only later realise escaping with seriously deep emotional scars or, in worst case scenarios, ending up on the wrong side of eternity, when it is far too late. Others end up abandoning religion altogether after being disillusioned. This wrong belief system

equally leads to wrong ethical practices, extortion or even direct dishonouring of God, all in the name of “*servicing God*”. At other times, it may result in serious time wasting or ruining some one’s health, wealth, estate or career. Thus, we need to examine the scriptures to determine what exactly saints need to meticulously watch out for as while journeying along this pilgrim way.

Taking the scriptures as our lamp and guide, we commence our enquiry constantly applying to what we see around us:

The first scripture is from Psalm 103:19 where the Psalmist states that God’s throne is established in the heaven as well as rules over the whole universe. *Yahweh* has absolute control over the entire world and runs it according to the most wise counsel of His will. He is not exclusively or exclusively remote (i.e. exclusively transcendent) or far removed from His creation as the Deists would teach but in divine Providence sustains (i.e. immanently) and runs all things according to the counsel of His pleasure and will. Further, *Elohim* may be said to be sovereign in that He does as He pleases with His creation. He can and will do what He has purposed to do in His word from everlasting to everlasting. *Adonai* does not have an equal or even any one that can challenge His being and purpose, summoning creation to do His bidding as well as free to work within or outside His created laws. The sovereign Lord remains supreme. But then we may also add that God has a majestic throne in the heavens, whether it is His dwelling place or the skies as in the Universe. This tells us that God is both transcendent and yet immanent, with no one to question or frustrate His design. By implication, not even Satan has full control of the created Universe although he was cast to the earth, over which he is dubbed the prince of darkness (Ephesians 2: 2). Today’s theologians (or practitioners) therefore dishonour God when they teach that when Christ ascended, He handed over lost power and authority to Satan. They allege that God sits as a reclusively defeated, powerless observer in some remote corner of the Universe. This is not so. He remains the Ancient of Days (Daniel 7:13-14), fully in charge of the entire cosmos.

A few Menacing Heresies of the Times

Some common heresies and wrong teachings are here briefly exposed and highlighted:

- a. Adam gave rulership to Satan. This wrong theory has been taught and popularised by gentlemen like Kenneth Copeland and cohorts. This is a heretical view and imposed on scripture.
- b. The ransom theory of the atonement: They teach that God had to pay Satan to buy back the world. Satan was tricked out of his possession (the world) and realised too late. This teaching violates and opposes the substitutionary and

vicarious death of Jesus on the cross. An example of a person holding this heretical view is Ed Silvano.

- c. Nero Theology: The next heretical view making it rounds is the *Nero Theology* which teaches that whenever some calamity strikes a given context, then the Christians have something to do with it. This is so called the “Nero Theology” emanating from the historical treatment of Christians when Rome went into flames with the blame squarely apportioned upon the saints. It appears this kind of thinking has persisted to this day, though in a modified form/sense. This teaching in effect denies the providence of God and His absolute control over creation. Pundits claim that the state of the church determines the fate of the city or state. John Dawson parrots such interesting claims alongside other like minded clowns. But as De Waay reasonably questions, if that were the case, why didn't the apostle Paul intimate this fact in any of his letters, let alone the Pastoral epistles? Paul was/is mysteriously silent on this matter, proving that this teaching is figment of imagination of it's proponents.

Given the above points we may thus conclude that knowing the liberating truth is very essential to one's welfare and comfort. If the Truth is known, imbibed and internalised, then there is no reason to possess a spirit of fear. Of more damaging consequence is the resulting practice and teaching. If things are faulty from the root, then expect disastrous consequences and practices along the line. This may include outright heresy, grieving the Spirit and blasphemy. It is high time the Church arose and examined the scriptures afresh and let them speak as we obey not vice versa, eisigetically forcing the written word to say what we want to hear. Let the authorial intent of the Spirit direct our paths while darkness flees from our path by that token.

Had we time and space, we could have examined Acts 17:26 where the apostle Paul asserts that God has determined the destinies of every nation and at the right time. This verse re-echoes God's sovereignty and power over creation. We could also consider Romans 13:1 where the saint is exhorted to render obedience and submission to the governing authorities, no matter who they be because God has set them there at that particular time. Both these verses demonstrate God's province and sovereignty over creation. Any other views deviate from what God has stated in His word.

Take Home lessons

Several lessons may be cleaned from this brief consideration. We highlight some at length:

1. Truth is found only in the Bible.
2. Ignorance creates fertile ground for delusion if not disillusioned.

3. Not everything fine sounding is correct or sound.
4. The Bible is an open book that can be appreciated or understood by any regenerate saint, provided they use the correct Hermeneutics.
5. We don't need mediums or mediaries to understand the mind of God. Not even highly trained Theologians are needed for the novice to grasp the basic concepts of the word of God, matters to do with the way of salvation, let alone orthopraxy.
6. Heretics, motivational speakers or such ill-intending folks roam around looking for someone to defraud, scare, control or extort wealth out of. Christians need to diligently beware by proactively wearing the belt of Truth within their Christians flour (Ephesians 6:10-18). Failure to do so may result in some serious casualties. It ought not to be.
7. Error and Heresy ought to be vigorously fought, opposed and attacked where ever found. This is not work for the faint hearted. The well trained apologist is ready for both negative (including polemics) and positive apologetics. The very life of authentic Biblical Christianity stands under threat.
8. The surest way to inoculate against wrong teaching is to know what the genuine article is, as revealed in the word of God. Dewaay and John Newton of old are spot on when they urge the saint to know what is correct, then they can easily detect what is false or merely a clever imitative forgery. Discernment in key.
9. They high plethora of the Word of Faith Movement (WOFM) need not scare the saint. Armed with the Bible, we are not afraid. The five Reformation splash are still a lethal weapon against error. Haggin, Copland, Creflo Dollar, Osteen, Jakes or any other cannot stand if we have the Bible on our side. We may be few in number but truth often wins in the end after the storm is past.
10. But the WOFM is not the only threat confronting us. We have the proliferating cults (some even dubbed "Christian" cults), the avalanche of liberal Theologians invading our seminaries or running projects (e.g. Funks' Jesus Seminar), African Traditional Religion (ATR), animism, naturism or the now all pervasive materialism, all vying for attention! The Christian needs to contend against all these vices whilst making headway on their sanctification walk of faith! With Christ as the captain of our salvation, we can and will make it!

Conclusion

In view of what we have noted above, we conclude that the Christian can oh free themselves from the clutches of men by returning to the Bible as the Reformers showed the way. Ignorance is the hotbed of error. Correct Hermeneutics is a key ingredient towards or quest as we fight, wadding off error in it's various forms or colour. May a time come when we shall honour God in whatever we think, do and say, for He has a purpose for which we were all created. May His name be praised, amen!

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