

By William P. Wilson, M.D., Director of Institute of Christian Growth
Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, NC
Distinguished Professor of Counseling, Carolina Evangelical Divinity School, Greensboro, NC
1209 Virginia Avenue, Durham, NC 27705

© Protected by Common Law Copyright.
This may be copied for personal use only.

COMMENTARY

CHRIST & BELIAL

ICG E-News November 2011

The apostle Paul wrote to his people in Corinth: “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God.

As God has said:

‘I will live with them,
and walk among them,
and I will be their God,
and they will be my people’” (2 Corinthians 6:14-16).

When we read this scripture almost everyone wonders who Belial is. In the Old Testament he was one of the four crown prince’s of Hell, or in other words he was a demon. Now if we carefully search the Bible, we find that there are only two gods – the

Trinitarian God and a subordinate god who was the god of the world. Paul knew Satan is God of the world, so one wonders why he implied that Belial was also god of the world.

It is also clear that in the Hebrew Bible all gods other than Yahweh and Satan are no gods (Psalm 106:28, Isaiah 37:19, Jeremiah 2:11, Jeremiah 5:7, Jeremiah 16:20, Daniel 5:23, Jonah 2:8, Acts 19:26). They are just images of men, birds, reptiles or other animals. These were the kind of idols in the countries surrounding Israel. Today we worship indigenous gods like Elvis, sports figures, entertainers, musicians, those who the church denominates as saints, and **ourselves** (2 Timothy 3:2). Satan has always tried to appeal to our pride by telling us we can be like god (Genesis 3:4). He does have subordinates dwelling in the world who are demons, and man can worship them as they do in Hinduism. Satan's goal is to distract us from worshiping the one true God – the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Son of God – Jesus.

One other ploy of Satan is to distract us by offering a god who is said to be the god of Abraham. He is also the God of Ishmael who was not the child of "promise." God promised to make Ishmael the father of a great nation, **but he did not make him a child of the covenant** (Genesis 17:21). Isaac was the child of promise and a progenitor of God's chosen people. It is clear that the god of Islam, who they claim is the God of Abraham, is not the same god that we worship. I have often wondered why people frequently refer to Yahweh as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; but it is clear to

me now they wish to make the point that God was Ishmael's creator, but he did not make him the child of promise. Isaac, not Ishmael, was to be a progenitor of Jesus the Son of God.

The above will arouse great anger in Muslims, for they consider us infidels and unbelievers because we believe in a Trinitarian God. They have believed from the very beginning – we are to be either converted by force or be exterminated. In the Middle Ages, Muslims set out to conquer the world and spread their religion. They did conquer the area around the Mediterranean. When they tried to conquer Europe through Spain and Eastern Europe, they were turned back by Charles Martell, Ferdinand and Isabella (in Spain), and Jan Sobieski in Vienna. The Muslims eventually ceased their efforts to conquer the Christian world after Vienna.

It is very important to recognize the behavioral correlations of the followers of the gods they worshiped. There has never been a cessation of killing by the Muslims throughout their history. Mohammed was a general and spread his religion by the sword. In contrast, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob asked people to believe in God because he loves them and has their best interests at heart. God also accredited himself with signs and wonders – something that has been said that Allah has done, but not in the same ways that Jesus did. Muslims try to claim miracles, but a review of the miracles attributed to Mohammed indicates that they are not true miracles. Notable in absence are the miracles of healing and raising the dead. Mohammed was not

resurrected from the dead, although it is claimed he ascended into heaven,.

The Koran denies Jesus is divine, and it also asserts that Allah does not have a son. The Koran is right in saying this because Allah is only a created being – not the one true God who has always existed.

One of the popular efforts to exonerate Islam these days is the politically correct statement which claims only the terrorists are extremist Muslims. There is considerable evidence against this. **All Muslims have the potential to become terrorists.** All one has to do is to look at their behavior in Egypt, Indonesia, Nigeria and other Muslim countries. Very often Christians are murdered, their homes burned, and their churches destroyed – by nice, sweet, kind Muslims. These are ordinary citizens who are carrying out the terrorism. The persecution of Jews and Christians is too widespread to blame it on a small group of fanatics. You will note that I said, while they may not be fanatics they have the potential to become so if aroused by fanatical leaders.

I have former students from Iran, presently Muslim physicians. They have been very caring, and apparently believe we worship the same God. I have tried to let them know we do not worship the same God, but to no avail. They continue in their Muslim ways. I have always loved them just as I love all my students, and they respond to that love. But they have not, by faith, made Jesus lord and believed in their hearts he was resurrected from the dead. What amazes me even more is they have supported my ministry. I have

long felt they were not far from the kingdom of heaven.

I want to emphasize **the most important** difference that exists between Christianity and all other religions and is that God, The Holy Spirit, comes and lives in us when we by faith make Jesus Lord and Master of our lives. This is a personal relationship and allows us to converse with God. This is not true of any other religions. If a spirit comes and lives in a believer of another religion, it is one of the spirits of the world. Hinduism is a religion that worships demons. When practitioners of Yoga utter their mantras they are communicating with their divine, for they are uttering sounds that are representatives of god(s) and call upon him(them) to invade them. Since they are not calling on Yahweh, they can only be calling on the god of this world. The chanting prayers of Islam are done five times a day. The prayers are the same each time and extol Allah. Allah is great (Allahu Akbar) is a repeated statement. Their prayers are not a conversation.

In conclusion, it is clear the thing setting Christianity apart from all other religions is that God comes and lives in us. Since he installs himself in us supernaturally, it is also clear we have a personal relationship with him. We can, therefore, relate to him as we do all other persons. We can converse with him, make our petitions, and praise him for his beneficence and love.

Having read Christopher Hitchens, a man who claims to be an atheist, Marxist and a devotee of the enlightenment, I realize his political religion (Marxism) wishes to take as

many people to Hell as it can (although he does not believe this). It is obvious that Satan is working through him as he does in all other religions. He wishes to stamp out all religions, but especially Judaism and Christianity for they are the truth.

As I write this, I am reminded over and over again that there has been a hatred of Jews in many cultures over time. My father, who was a strong Christian, often spoke derisively of Jews, although he had few contacts with them. At the same time I lived in a neighborhood where there were several Jewish kids who were close to my age. I always wondered why the other kids in the neighborhood persecuted them. This was before Hitler's rise to power.

I recently learned there was anti-Semitism in Germany long before Hitler. Bismarck was quite anti-Semitic. Islam's anti-Semitism is particularly virulent. Now, it is a fact that God chose Israel to carry his message into the world. Jesus was Jewish, but he was also the Son of God. His conception, birth, life, ministry, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension are so unique that his claim to be God is accredited. The most important part of his existence is that his Holy Spirit comes and lives with and in us. Islam can make no such claims for its founder.

Finally, I have one last thought that is of importance. Our mind is supernatural. God is supernatural. It is, therefore, important to recognize Paul's statement in Colossians 1:21-23, "I have become its (the church's) servant by the commission God gave me to

present to you the word of God in its fullness – the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord’s people. **To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**” None of the gods of the world can make this claim.