

Godly Gaffes, Goofs, & Goobers

Mark 9:44 **Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.**

Mark 9:46 **Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.**

Mark 9:48 **Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.**

The identical verse, 3 times, bunched together. Was that a mistake by the scribes who copied it? Was it done on purpose for dramatic effect? If so, it must be an important verse. But I've never heard preachers build a sermon on it. I've never heard of that as the basis for a Sunday School lesson. I've never heard it mentioned by anyone. That's weird. That's weird. That's weird.

What's also weird is that we see these verses in the KJV (King James Version), but not in other translations. For example, in the NRSV (New Revised Standard Version), there is no verse 44 or 46.

But that's not the only time God stuttered in his infallible, inerrant, inspired Book.

Read 2 Kings 19. Now read Isaiah 37. They are almost identical. Oops.

Christians assume that the Bible is a book filled with beauty and wisdom. But it is no challenge to find verses that you never hear about in church or Sunday School, for obvious reasons. Here are a few examples.

Psalms 137:9: **Happy shall they be who take your little ones and dash them against the rock!**

Kids and parents alike are undoubtedly truly inspired by that little verse.

Numbers 25:7-9: . . . **The priest . . . got up and left the congregation. Taking a spear in his hand, he went after the Israelite man into the tent, and pierced the two of them, the Israelite and the woman, through the belly. So the plague was stopped among the people of Israel. Nevertheless those that died by the plague were twenty-four thousand.**

What an uplifting little story to boost the spirits of the entire congregation on Sunday morning.

Judges 5:28-30: **Out of the window she peered; the mother of Sisera gazed through the lattice. Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the hoofbeats of his chariots? Her wisest ladies make answer; indeed, she answers the question herself. Are they not finding and dividing the spoil? A girl or two for every man; spoil of dyed stuffs for Sisera, spoil of dyed stuffs embroidered, two pieces of dyed work embroidered for my neck as spoil?**

Yes, isn't it every mother's dream to watch her boy return home after killing a bunch of people? Especially when there is so much booty to go around. Some brightly colored knitting, including a piece for dear old Mom to wear around her sweet little neck. But best of all, there are women -- enough for every guy to snag one or two for his very own personal service and pleasure. We just don't get enough sermons about blonde booty.

Malachi 2:3: **I will rebuke your offspring, and spread dung on your faces, the dung of your offerings, and I will put you out of my presence.**

Can't you just see a Sunday School class with boys laughing hysterically about the prospect of actually smearing doodoo on somebody's face? Wouldn't you just love to be the SS teacher that day?

Song of Solomon 5:4: **My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.**

Isn't that lovely! Try getting that image out of your head.

William Tyndale translated the Bible into English. His translation was the primary source for the King James Version, which is considered by many Christians to be the infallible, inerrant word of God. They hold that those who translated and copied biblical text were inspired by the Holy Spirit, and this is how they achieved perfection in their work.

For his efforts, Tyndale was choked to death, then burned at the stake. By the Roman Catholic Church. For heresy. Boy, God really takes care of his people, doesn't he?

Romans 8:28

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

I see. According to God, getting strangled to death and burned at the stake is a good thing, especially if you have been an exemplary Christian. If that's the Christian God's idea of good, what would bad look like?

Part of Christian marketing is the idea that if you accept their Christ, Jesus will be your closest friend, your guardian, your protector. He's got your back 24/7/365.

The truth is that Jesus can't even protect nuns in a convent! Jesus can't protect little kids from school shootings. Jesus can't stop abortions. Jesus can't protect altar boys from pedophile priests.

In fact, the truth is that the Christian God drowned millions of babies in the Noah Flood. The truth is, (according to some Catholics) God condemns babies to eternal hell if their parents don't get them baptized in a Catholic church.

Don't you think the very least we have a right to expect from Christians is honesty? Yet that's the last place you'll find it. Don't expect the Christian God to protect you from evil. In far too many cases, Christians are the evil you need to be protected from.

Jesus and Buddha had a lot in common. For example, they both were fond of parables. Turns out, one of Jesus' most famous parables, the one about the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32), was a direct lift from his buddy Buddha.

Not that it should come as a big surprise. Buddhism, which is much older than Christianity, had a profound influence on Christianity -- a fact which neither religion wants to admit.

In fact, Christianity is packed with plagiarism. For example, both the 23rd Psalm and the Lord's Prayer were lifted from the Egyptian god, Osiris.

It isn't difficult to get a Doctor of Divinity degree.

The Rev Dr Billy Graham completed only a couple of Bible classes. He had Doctor of Divinity degrees out the wazoo.

Who else got a DD degree? Michael Jackson, Ed McMahon, Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Mr Rogers, Captain Kangaroo, Doctor Seuss, Jane Pauley, Bob Hope, Robert Redford, Stevie Wonder, Dan Rather, . . . and many others.

Since Adam and Eve were initially the only humans on earth, we know that Cain and Abel must have married their sisters. Which means that the Christian God obviously sanctioned incest.

Maybe God changed his mind or the rules somewhere along the line. But that contradicts the Christian doctrine that God is immutable. So, if God never changes, it would appear that God still has no problem with incest to this very day. And if God condones (or even forces) incest, what else might God condone that we (most of us) cringe at today?

For one thing, a quick trip through the Old Testament suggests that the Christian God didn't seem to have a very high opinion of women. For another, a close look at Paul shows that he advocated slavery. There are lots of other examples.

In the early centuries, the Christians had a word for greeting and departing; it was the word maranatha, which means The Lord is coming soon.

-- Hal Lindsey

Jesus specifically stated to his followers that some of them would still be alive when the Kingdom of God arrived. Paul later said it would happen before he died. Jesus and Paul were both wrong. Christians are wrong, as well. Only delusional Christians could maintain that 2000 years and counting is *soon*.

Did you know Moses was an Egyptian, not a Jew? Well, maybe. Moses is an Egyptian name.

Did you know Moses had horns? In the Roman church of San Pietro in Vincoli, the Michelangelo-sculpted Moses has a pair of horns. A horny Moses is also displayed in paintings in English parish churches, some from as late as the 19th century.

I want to be invisible. I do guerilla warfare. I paint my face and travel at night. You don't know it's over until you're in a body bag. You don't know until election night.

-- Ralph Reed

Ralph Reed, leader of the Christian Coalition in the 1990s, God's perennial pretty boy, imploded when implicated in the Jack Abramoff scandal. Since then, he has been pretty much invisible, just as he wished.

Nature against God. God against nature. Nature against man. Man against nature. Man against God. God against man. Very funny religion.

-- Daisetz Suzuki, 91-year-old Japanese, Zen philosopher;
as quoted in *The Hero's Journey*, Joseph Campbell

Polytheist: one who worships many gods.

Monotheist: one who believes in only one god.

Atheist: one who believes in slightly fewer gods than the monotheist.