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welcome to the ekklesia fellowship!

Avoiding Spiritual Collapse

April 30, 2006

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Avoiding Spiritual Collapse

"What are you standing on?"

1 Peter 5:6-9

Learning to Stand Firm in Our Faith.

1. "humble yourselves"
2. "be on the alert"
3. "resist him, firm in your faith"

"I believe that the Bible is completely, entirely and verbally the word of God. I refuse to stand above and criticize it; I insist rather, on standing below it and letting it criticize me."

Damned Through The Church by John Warwick Montgomery (who holds nine earned degrees in philosophy, theology, and law, and is the author of over forty books.)

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There is a very definite link between *spiritual collapse* and the *authority of Scripture*.

2 Timothy 3:4-5

- v.1 "in the last days difficult times will come"
 - Between the ascension and second coming of Christ, there will be recurring cycles of distress.
- v.2-5 "holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; and avoid such men as these."

2 Timothy 3:12-17

- Notice how Paul moves from the theme of deterioration of faith and moral collapse to the one remedy and cure for the believer:
 - An adherence to the written word of God.
 - The defense of a Christian in a day of relativism is a thorough acquaintanceship with the written Scriptures.
 - The defection from faith which may occur is made possible only by an abandonment of these ancient writings.

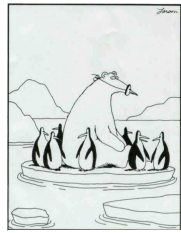
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The Scriptures have been under intense attack for millennia

- Up through the 17th century these attacks were from without.
- Somewhere around the 18th century, there began a new approach — attacks from "within"



"And now Edgar's gone...
Something's going on around here."

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Avoiding Spiritual Collapse

Four propositions which will keep us from spiritual collapse:

1. **As disciples of Yeshua, we have no right to hold a different view of Scripture than that which He held.**
 - The authority of the Bible rests squarely upon the authority of Jesus himself.
 - To be a Christian at all means that we have fully accepted the authority of Jesus.
 - It is utterly nonsensical to say that we accept who Jesus is and then reject what He says about Scripture or what the Scriptures say about Him.
 - "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."
(Colossians 1)

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 - "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power."
(Hebrews 1)

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 - **John 17:13-21**
 - **John 5:46-47**
 - **Luke 24:25-27**

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Four propositions which will keep us from spiritual collapse:

2. **As disciples of Yeshua, we have no right to hold a different view of Scripture than that which was held by the apostles.**
 - Karl Barth, "We cannot stand and look over the apostles' shoulders, correcting their work. It is they who stand looking over our shoulders, correcting our work."
 - **Galatians 1:11,12**
 - **1 Thessalonians 2:13**
 - **2 Peter 3:15-16**
 - Stedman, "When a professor behind a desk ... makes a pronouncement that differs from what Paul or Peter or James or John has said, then reject it, for that professor is some thousands of miles and some two thousand years too far away to make an adequate and proper judgment."

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3. **As disciples of Yeshua, we will never discover the depths of Scripture's insights into life without first accepting it as true and authoritative.**
 - Should this passage be here?
 - Is it genuine, is it real?
 - Has it been inserted?
 - Is it a legend?
 - Is it a fairy tale?
 - Is it something that is merely the thinking of the apostles and was never in the mind of Christ?
 - **John 12:37-41**
 - Stedman, "Those students and pseudo-scholars who feel they are a final authority on what ought to be here, and what ought not to be here, never seem to be able to understand what is written. They never seem able to say anything about the depths of Scripture or the teaching of it, for they exclude themselves from understanding by their attitude of judgment over it."
 - **2 Timothy 3:7**

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Four propositions which will keep us from spiritual collapse:

4. **Scripture does not need to be defended, but simply declared.**
 - Charles Spurgeon: "The Bible is like a lion. Who ever heard of defending a lion? Just turn it loose, it will defend itself."
 - **Matthew 4**
 - **John 14:6**
 - **2 Timothy 3:16,17**
 - **Matthew 7:24-29**



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