

CHURCH HISTORY LITERACY

Lessons 8 & 9

Early Church Heresy – Parts One & Two Gnostics

It is claimed: Late on the night of September 21, 1823, an angel named Moroni appeared to a young man named Joseph Smith. The angel led Joseph outside behind his rural upstate New York farmhouse to Hill Comorah. At a designated spot, the angel had Joseph dig, uncovering tablets of gold. With the angel's help and divine inspiration, Joseph then translated these tablets from "reformed Egyptian" into English, producing "The Book of Mormon."

It is further claimed: The Book of Mormon and other Mormon writings are a later testament of Jesus Christ that explain mysteries hidden from normative Christianity. Included are secrets of the cosmos, of God and his nature, of the person and work of Christ. These are explanations of hard to understand passages of the Bible. These words fill in gaps left in scripture, like explaining where Jesus went and what Jesus did during the 3 days between his crucifixion and the resurrection. These words tell us what happened to the ten lost tribes of Israel and give us an early history of North America. Mormon doctrine teaches that the God of the Bible is not the only God of the cosmos. Jesus and Satan are sons of that God and brothers to each other. Our Father God of the Bible has many other cosmic godchildren, including you and me. Mormon doctrine teaches that we lived with God as Spirits before we were born, but we have just forgotten! We were his spirit children who progressed as far as we could without him. After this life, those who live right and make the right choices will go into the heavens to populate their own section of the cosmos with their godly offspring.¹

Solomon said: "There is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which one can say, 'Look! This is something new'?" (Eccl 1:9).

Solomon was right. Many of the basic premises of Mormonism echo heresies the church faced in the second century after Christ. But, these echoes are heard in more than just Mormonism. We will focus these next few lessons on the heresies of the early church with attention to the church's response to those teachings. While many of the heresies will seem far-fetched to us today (mainly because the church was successful at rooting out and eradicating the teachings), actual teachings and issues in the heretical sects should sound familiar!

¹ These beliefs are set forward through the official Mormon website at www.lds.org. ("LDS" stand for "Latter Day Saints," the common Mormon label for themselves.

Most of the writings of the heretics were lost in history. They were either actively destroyed as heretical or were lost as the heresies lost followers and no one was around to make copies! Our knowledge has typically come from the church fathers describing the heresies they were facing, more so than the actual writings of the heretics. That changed a bit in 1945 when a group of writings from a heretical teaching we term “Gnosticism” were found across the river from Nag Hamadi, Egypt.² Those writings are today a hotbed of scholastic study. From them, it is readily apparent that certain early church fathers had fairly accurately described the heretical teachings as they wrote refutations of those teachings.

Our approach to these heresies will both explain the heresies and the reaction of the church. As we explore this aspect of church history, we will notice several things:

- (1) Truth matters. Wolves parade in sheep’s clothing for a reason. Wolves want to devour and wreak havoc without their true nature being discerned.
- (2) The road to heresy doesn’t always involve a U-turn. A slight deviation in the road traveled can easily lead to a place far from truth.
- (3) One doesn’t have to fully understand all of scripture to understand the truth of scripture. Some passages are hard to understand, but the core message and its truth are hard to miss! Therefore –
- (4) Be wary of goofy interpretations of scripture that seem to stand apart from historic orthodoxy and straightforward interpretations.

WHAT WAS GNOSTICISM?

“Gnosticism” is a label scholars attach to a broad area of heresy in the early church. It comes from a Greek word γνοστικός (*gnostikos*) that means “capable of attaining knowledge.” At its core, Gnosticism taught that there was secret knowledge, γνοσις (*gnosis*)³ held in its teaching that was not available or known to the church at large. The Gnostics were those “in the know.” They claimed to be the ones with true insight for their day, the true knowledge that explained the

² Commonly called “The Nag Hammadi” books. They are available in English translation.

³ In Greek, there are two different words for knowledge. This word, (γνοσις - *gnosis*) means an acquaintance, as when two people have met each other. The other word, (ειδεναι - *eidēnai*) meant what we would call propositional knowledge, as in “I know Houston is in Texas.” Gnostics were those capable of attaining, and in fact actually attaining acquaintance, with a previously unknown god. In fact, certain Gnostics would use Paul’s sermon about the unknown god to the Athenians (Acts 17:23) as a text supporting their special knowledge.

cosmos, God and man, apart from the apostolic faith taught by the Orthodox Church.

Gnosticism took a number of different forms, depending on whose secret insights one might ascribe as truth.⁴ But, most of the teachings taught similar basic core ideas: (1) There is more than one “god;” (2) Our spirits are eternal and good while the earth and our physical bodies are temporal and evil (or at least, lesser in goodness than our spirits); (3) Our need in life is to free ourselves from the physical and get our spirits through the heavens back home where they belong. Salvation is seen as the liberation of the spirit and its return through the heavens. Jesus was the messenger to teach the spirit’s liberation and the keys to return. As a holy messenger, Christ was not flesh and blood himself. It was taught he was either an apparition (according to one branch of Gnosticism) or a spirit that descended upon the man Jesus at or near his baptism, removing himself in liberation before the man Jesus was crucified.⁵

Different “schools” of Gnosticism bore the names of their originators or major teachers. Three Gnostic schools are worth looking at in a bit more detail. These schools followed their progenitors: Cerinthus, Marcion, and Valentinus.

We will look at Gnosticism from multiple sources, with emphasis on the writings of St. Irenaeus of Lyons.

Irenaeus was born in Polycarp’s bishopric of Smyrna⁶ around 120 A.D. (35 years or so before Polycarp’s death). In his youth, Polycarp mentored Irenaeus, learning the apostolic doctrine Polycarp received from John and Polycarp’s collected works of Paul and others.

⁴ There are a number of Gnostics’ writings available today. These writings include those discovered across the river from Nag Hammadi, Egypt, as well as numerous other scraps and fragments. Frequently, some set of these writings get published as “hidden” or “lost” books of the Bible when, in reality, they never had anything to do with Orthodox Christianity. One might read, for example, *The Secret Book According to John*, but the book was never written by John, and the secrets have nothing to do with our Biblical truth! This book gives a creation account that allegedly predates the Genesis account. Genesis is then retold in this book. The differences are compelling. In *The Secret Book According to John*, the creator of the material world from Genesis 1:1 (“In the beginning, God created the heavens and earth”) is not the true god but is actually Satan himself whose true name is given as “Ialdabaoth” and “Saklas” (BJn 10:19f, 11:15f). This mystic truth was claimed as told by Jesus after his resurrection when he was hanging around earth for another 18 months teaching the secret truth!

⁵ *The Story of Christian Theology*, Roger Olson (IVP 1999), p. 37.

⁶ For information on Polycarp, see lesson 7 on his martyrdom.

Around 150 or so, Irenaeus moved to Lugdunum (today this town is Lyons, France) and became a Christian leader at the church there. In Roman parlance, Lyons was a part of Southern Gaul, an area barbarians still inhabited (people who by definition spoke neither Latin nor Greek!).

Later in the second century, Irenaeus went to Rome to fight against heresies coming out of Rome and into Gaul.⁷ While in Rome, Irenaeus learned much of the Gnosticism taking hold there. Upon his return to Gaul, Irenaeus found the Gnostic heresy growing in his own church's community. Irenaeus became Bishop at Lyons and set about to write his expose and refutation of Gnostic heresy.

Irenaeus wrote against the teachings of Valentinius around 180 A.D. Irenaeus wrote in five books that set out the heretical teachings as well as the Christian response. The five books took a number of years to complete,⁸ but they offer not only insight into the Valentinian school of Gnosticism, but also into the mindset of the late second century church. Irenaeus entitled his work: *Expose and Overthrow [or "Refutation"] of What is Falsely Called Knowledge*.⁹ The work had a shorter title that was simply, *Against the Heresies*.

Most scholars agree that Irenaeus was the first great post-apostolic theologian of the church. As he wrote against the heresies of Valentinius, he also defined the real orthodoxy of the church. He writes on the Trinity, on Creation, on the theology of salvation and the atoning work of Christ as well as the church and the Christians' resurrection. Irenaeus's writings are distinct from those we have already covered in that he is not merely recording historical events (like The Martyrdom of Polycarp), nor is he writing letters of encouragement to the church (like the letters of Ignatius, Clement, or Polycarp). He is not writing an instruction manual (like *The Didache*). He writes fairly clear theology setting out the

⁷ While in Rome, Irenaeus missed a major persecution and purging of Christians in Gaul where hundreds, and maybe thousands, were martyred. Irenaeus would ultimately be martyred in Lyons in 202.

⁸ We do not know the exact years Irenaeus wrote. We can tell from reading that the composition took a number of years spanning from before 180 through perhaps as late as 189. See, Dominic Unger's Introduction at pages 3-4, Volume 55 of the Ancient Christian Writers Series published by Newman, *St. Irenaeus of Lyons, Against the Heresies Book 1*.

⁹ The section of the title, "of what is falsely called knowledge" is a word for word quotation from Paul's first letter to Timothy (6:20). Paul told Timothy to "guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of *what is falsely called knowledge*." Irenaeus uses these words in his title setting out the propriety of his work as called for by apostolic command.

Christian belief system in response to that of the Gnostics who *claimed* to be “Christian” but in fact were heretics.¹⁰

Iraeneus had a two-fold authority he used in his writings: scripture and apostolic tradition. While there was not yet a “Bible” put together for the church’s use, most of what we consider the New Testament was well attested and well known by Iraeneus. Iraeneus references or quotes every book in our New Testament except Philemon and 3 John. His failure to reference those works does not mean he didn’t know them or consider them inspired. They are both very small and had nothing in them that he saw of import in his writing. Reading Iraeneus shows that he considered these New Testament writings as inspired and divine as the Old Testament (3.24:1).¹¹ Iraeneus believed in the inerrancy of these New Testament writings, noting that they were “perfect,” and the “mainstay and pillar of our faith” (2.28:2 and 3.1:1, 5:1, 14:2-4).¹²

Part and parcel of Iraeneus’s authority was apostolic tradition. It was this tradition that validated the scriptures. In other words, the tradition proceeded from the same Spirit that produced the scriptures. Because this Spirit was behind the apostolic teaching, that teaching was right, whether written (scriptures) or oral (tradition). The accurate oral tradition depended upon a clear link of Bishops from the apostles to his present time (3.2:2, 3.3:1ff). That tradition was to be consistent in all churches (1.9:4; 1.10:1-2; 3.1:1; 3.4:1-2; 3.24.1). Iraeneus also believed the Roman church had the ultimate authority over the tradition (3.3:2).

Iraeneus writes with warnings about his lack of eloquence in writing, “From us who live among the Celts and are accustomed to translating practically everything into a barbarous tongue, you cannot expect rhetorical art...or the craft of writing...or elegant style and persuasiveness” (1.Preface:3). But, Iraeneus’s humility undercuts his own skill. He writes with good, biting irony. He also shows great flourish at times. Consider, for example, what Iraeneus says about truth: “Error, in fact, does not show its true self, lest on being stripped naked it should be detected. Instead, it craftily decks itself out in an attractive dress, and thus, by an outward false appearance, presents itself to the more ignorant, truer than Truth itself” (1.Preface:2).

¹⁰ A word here about “heretics” and “heresy.” We get our word from the Latin *haereo*. It means “to be in doubt.” Heresy is doctrine contrary to orthodoxy. A heretic is one who has the beliefs that are contrary to orthodoxy.

¹¹ Our references are to his work, *Against the Heresies*. The book number (1-5) is given first, then the chapter, a colon and the verse. The translation we will use for quoting is Unger’s.

¹² Iraeneus even argued that punctuation would matter in the scriptures (2.10:1).

Irenaeus starts his Gnostic refutation by stripping the actual Gnostic doctrine to its core teachings to show its absurdity and lack of any foundation. Irenaeus then shows the illogic of believing the Gnostic school had any link to the apostles' or Jesus' teaching. Irenaeus also used a great deal of scripture to show the fallacies of Gnostic doctrine.

His approach is equally useful today when confronted with strange doctrine:

- (1) What is the doctrine? Flesh it out!
- (2) What is the basis or authority for the doctrine?
- (3) What does scripture say on the issue?

As noted before, Irenaeus gives us information on multiple schools of gnostic teaching. We focus on three schools using not only Irenaeus, but other sources as well as we examine each.

CERINTHUS

One of the earlier known Gnostics was Cerinthus. Although we are uncertain about his origin or date of birth, he received training from Egypt and lived and taught in the later days of the Apostle John in Asia Minor (modern Turkey). We do not have any of his writings today, but know about him through the writings of others, notably Irenaeus and Eusebius.

Cerinthus taught a heresy that blended aspects of Gnosticism with his perception of the gospel. For example, Cerinthus believed in one Supreme God, but taught that he was unknown until the time of Jesus Christ. The world and the law (Old Testament) were made and given by lesser angels who themselves did not know or understand the Supreme God. Jesus was born, not miraculously of the Virgin Mary, but through common relations between Mary and Joseph. Jesus was a holy man, but not in any way divine. That status, however, changed with his baptism. When Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit, or what some would call the "Christ," was sent by the Supreme God in the shape of a dove and dwelt within Jesus the man. This indwelling Christ taught Jesus about the Supreme God in ways and with secrets not known by even the angels of creation. When the passion came, Christ bailed out from Jesus leaving Jesus alone to suffer (hence the cry, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"), but Cerinthus assured his students that while Jesus the man died and was buried, he either was resurrected or will be resurrected with all men on the coming resurrection day.¹³

¹³ These teachings come from Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book 1, 26:1).

This major deviation from the work of God in Christ brought about strong reaction within the church. Some scholars believe that John wrote his gospel, at least in part, to dispel any suspicion of truth about this story. Irenaeus would record later a story from Polycarp, John's disciple. Irenaeus wrote, "But Polycarp also was not only instructed by apostles, and conversed with many who had seen Christ, but was also, by Apostles in Asia, appointed Bishop...whom I saw in my early youth, for he lived a very long time, and, when a very old man, gloriously and most nobly suffered martyrdom [see last week's lesson!], departed this life. There are those that heard from him [Polycarp] that John, the disciple of the Lord, going to bathe at Ephesus, and perceiving Cerinthus within, rushed out of the bath-house without bathing, exclaiming, 'Let us fly, lest even the bath-house fall down, because Cerinthus, the enemy of truth, is within'" (Against Heresies, 3.4).

MARCION

Marcion was born in Sinope, Asia Minor somewhere toward the end of the first or beginning of the second century. A wealthy ship owner and merchant, he moved to Rome around 135 A.D. Some early authorities indicate that Marcion's home church (where his father was Bishop!) had already expelled him for heresy or moral misdeeds. Arriving in Rome, Marcion became a major player in the Roman church donating a large sum of money. The Roman church eventually returned the money and also expelled Marcion for his heretical teachings and ideas.

Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna we studied last week, reportedly had run into Marcion in Asia Minor.¹⁴ As Irenaeus reports the account, Marcion asked Polycarp, "Do you recognize me?" Polycarp responded, "I recognize you for the firstborn of Satan!"¹⁵ What would cause such a blunt response from a devout and caring a man as Polycarp? The fact that Marcion was teaching doctrine that denied the work of God and Jesus, deceiving multitudes from the truth.

Marcion taught that the church wrongly used and supported the Old Testament. For Marcion, the God of the Old Testament was clearly different than the God of the New Testament and Jesus. Using Luke 5:36-38 (the parable of the wineskins) and Luke 6:43 ("no good tree bears bad fruit nor does a bad tree bear good fruit"), Marcion argued that Jesus' message was totally new and apart from Judaism and the Jewish scriptures. Marcion wrote a listing of proofs that the Old Testament God was different from that of the New Testament.¹⁶ For example, The God of

¹⁴ Some scholars believe this encounter came in Rome rather than Asia Minor.

¹⁵ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book 3, 3:4

¹⁶ This publication was called, *Antithesis*, and is lost. What we know of it today comes mainly from Tertullian's writings against Marcion from about 200 A.D.

Genesis could not find Adam and Eve, having to call out, “Where are you?” (Gen. 3:9), whereas Jesus knew even the thoughts of man (Luke 5:22). A similar “proof” for Marcion was the God of the Old Testament saying, “an eye for an eye” (Ex. 21:24) where Jesus said, “If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also” (Lk 6:29).

Marcion considered the god of the Old Testament as a vengeful and hateful God contrasted to the loving God of the New Testament. Similarly, the Old Testament God was centered on legal minded justice while the New Testament God and father of Jesus was merciful. The Old Testament God worked through his faulty creation; the New Testament God came into that creation to save mankind.

Marcion put together his own set of acceptable scriptures. Marcion’s “Bible” or “canon” consisted of Luke edited to his liking, and ten of Paul’s letters again edited and explained by the peculiarities of Marcion’s beliefs in introductions to the books. Marcion sought to distant the true teachings of Paul and Luke (and thereby of Jesus) from that of the other apostles. Marcion believed that Paul, Jesus, and Luke had supported his belief that the Old Testament god was a vengeful, hateful, harsh, and judgmental god distinct from the God of the New Testament. Similarly, Judaism was a corrupt and wicked faith that promised an earthly Messiah to set up an earthly kingdom. That anticipated event was preempted by the loving God of the New Testament who sent Jesus (not a man, but an apparition!) to destroy the Old Testament and Judaism by revealing it for what it was.

So when Marcion put together his scriptures, he used the gospel of Luke, and none of the other three. Even the gospel of Luke required revisions, however. So, Marcion left off the first two chapters that linked Jesus to the Old Testament by birth and teaching. Similarly, Marcion left out the temptation narrative in Luke 4:1-3 because Jesus quotes Deuteronomy three times in response to Satan’s temptations. Luke 4:16-30 where Jesus claims to fulfill the Old Testament was also booted from Marcion’s bible. Paul’s writings also suffered editing from the hand of Marcion. Much of Romans 9-11 was removed, as were the critical verses from Romans 3:21-4:25. In Galatians, Paul’s usage of Abraham as an example of faith was excised.

Marcion taught an ethic that was very impressive. No doubt many converts were won over to his system simply by his lifestyle. Again, there are impressive lifestyle examples found in heresies of orthodoxy today, but that doesn’t change the issues of truth in belief and understanding. Marcion was celibate and required the same of his followers. He taught people that morality was important and urged people to live, denying the pleasures of this world and dedicating themselves to the next world.

The effect of Marcion on the church was significant. He spread his heresy far and wide (Tertullian would say he planted churches the way wasps do nests!). Marcionism grew so much that the movement lasted several hundred years. Not a small feat when you consider that it taught celibacy, so growth only occurred through conversion!

To defeat this heresy, the church had to grow in several areas. The church was forced to address issues of canon, or scriptural authority. What writings were authoritative? Only Paul? The church and orthodoxy set forward once and for all that the Spirit inspired not only Paul but also all the apostles. So, the proper scriptures were not merely Paul's epistles, but also the writings of Matthew, John, Peter, James, and Jude, as well as those affiliated with apostles (Mark with Peter, Luke with Paul and others). The church also addressed the role of Judaism and the Old Testament confirming its authority and relationship to Jesus as Messiah.

VALENTINIUS

Irenaeus begins his explanation of the Gnostic beliefs of Valentinius with a chapter he titled: "The Valentinians' Absurd Explanation of the Origin of the Aeons [gods]."¹⁷ In its essence, this Gnostic branch taught that there were 30 Aeons, or divine beings of note. Among the first generation of Aeons was the "First-Father" who begat the others with the help of another first generation Aeon named "Silence." They gave birth to "Mind" and "Truth." "Mind" gave birth to "Word" and "Life" who conjugally produced "Man," "Church," and ten other lesser Aeons with quite impressive names! ("Profound," "Mingling," "Ageless," "Union," "Self-producing," "Pleasure," "Immobile," "Blending," "Only-begotten," and "Happiness.") Not to be outdone, "Man" and "Church" emitted 12 Aeons of their own: "Advocate," "Faith," "Paternal," "Hope," "Maternal," "Love," "Praise," "Understanding," "Ecclesiastic," "Blessedness," "Desired," and "Wisdom." A grand total of 30 Aeons!

Now, we get a bit of the special knowledge that made the Gnostics "super Christians in the know!" These are the 30 Aeons Jesus hinted to in his parables of the laborers given in Matthew 20:1-7! Remember that parable? "The *kingdom of heaven* [Gnostics read this as the heavens and the Aeons dwelling there] is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his

¹⁷ "Aeon" is an unusual word that was common in Gnostic writings. It is unclear where the word came from, although there are a number of theories. The Gnostics used the word to designate their deities or divine beings (lower case "gods"). The Old and New Testaments use the term "Aeon" frequently but it never was in a personified sense except in Ephesians 2:2 where it is used for demons.

vineyard.” He sent out some at the first hour, others at the “third hour.” Still more were sent at the “sixth,” “ninth,” and “eleventh” hours.

How does this relate? Well, the Gnostics would tell you that it is a secret code whose meaning they understood. This was part of their special “knowledge.” If you add up the hours Jesus enumerated, then you get the first (1) plus third (3), plus sixth (6) plus ninth (9) plus eleventh (11), and $1 + 3 + 6 + 9 + 11 = 30!$ Thirty Aeons in the Kingdom of Heaven! Because these Aeons exist in silence, unknown but by the privileged few, Jesus had no ministry, but was silent for his first 30 years on earth. This was an homage Jesus paid as well as a subtle sign for the knowing few, that there were 30 Aeons silent in the heavens.

Absurd? Absolutely, if one follows scripture. Yet, the deviations are not so hard to believe if we consider them apart from our 2000 years of orthodoxy. The Mormons teach that the God of the Bible has produced Jesus as offspring through conjugation with a “Heavenly Mother.” In fact, all humans are the offspring of this heavenly union and exist prior to coming to live in earthly bodies. The time here on earth is seen as a gaining of experience and a probation of sorts. Heavenly rewards and destinies depend on how one navigates and lives this earthly life.

The Mormons teach that much of this information is missing from the Bible because it has come in as secret knowledge to certain prophets of the church. Other aspects of Christian scripture hint at these teachings, but the meanings are obscure absent the interpretation given through Mormon writings.

While there are certainly distinctions between Valentinius and Mormonism (notably the Gnostic view of the material world as evil), the similarities cannot be missed. The similarities compel a response that starts with a bedrock foundation of scripture. Is it no wonder that Irenaeus manages to quote or reference 90% of the Bible’s books in dealing with this heresy!

But, Irenaeus does not rely on scripture alone to answer the premises of Valentinius. He uses logic as well. And, his logic comes with a bite! Consider this passage where Irenaeus argues against the panoply of 30 gods with their “names:”

“Woe, woe! Alas, alas! Indeed such...a concoction of names, and such boldness to add the names [to his belief system] without blushing.... [He has given the names to his gods] Nothing, therefore, prohibits anyone else from proposing names for the same system as follows: ... There exists a power, which I call a Squash; with this Squash coexists a Power to which I give the name Utter-Emptiness. Now this Squash and Utter-Emptiness brought forth a fruit...which we call Cucumber. With

this Cucumber there coexists a Power to which I give the name Pumpkin...”

Simply by renaming the Aeons/gods of Valentinius, Irenaeus is able to show that this supposedly deep secret knowledge is actually silly.

Valentinius, like most of the Gnostics, believed that the human problem calling for salvation was not sin but ignorance and that the means of attaining salvation was therefore not the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ but the secret "knowledge" possessed by the Gnostics themselves.

His "gospel" was a-historical, outside time and space, in the realm of cosmic speculation and esoteric "gnosis." Irenaeus contrasted with this teaching with the apostolic gospel which reported a historical flesh-and-blood Savior who lived during the reign of specific emperors and lesser kings and governors, who died on a Roman cross and rose from a specific tomb on a certain calendar day.

POINTS FOR HOME

So, why does this history matter? Many reasons. First, while Gnosticism itself is not prevalent in the world today, many of the elements that brought it about are easily found: disdain for the Old Testament, an improper appreciation of the Old Testament and how it relates to the New Testament, unusual explanations of scriptures that breed unusual theology, the idea that some possess certain keys of understanding that stand them and their teaching apart from orthodoxy and core Christian doctrine, etc.

We worship the one God. He is the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New. He came to earth in Jesus Christ, born of a virgin. Jesus suffered and died not because the law was wrong, but to fulfill the law. In him, we have forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

We know then:

1. "ALL scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching and training in righteousness that the man of God can be complete, equipped for every good work." 2 Tim 3:16
2. "Your BODY is the temple of the Holy Spirit." 1 Cor 6:19
3. The apostles "did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Pet 1:16