

The following is based on an ever saddening email conversation concerning the Shack

Hi _____,

Thank you for your encouraging words. It is such a blessing to hear how the Lord is working through His Word. I pray His Word continues to work in your life.

Concerning *The Shack*, I have not read it all the way through and I do not plan to, although I am aware, unfortunately, of much that is in the book. And from what I have read, I know enough of the Word to recognize this book is deceptive and evil, therefore I chose to turn away from it in obedience to the Word of God.

In the context of prophetic utterances, which is the Word of God, we see Paul telling the Thessalonians ²¹ "But examine everything *carefully*; hold fast to that which is good; ²² abstain from every form of evil." 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 The word translated "examine" speaks of testing or proving. The word "abstain" means to stay away from. Now although the shack is not the Word of God, it is being subtly used in such a fashion. It does not take more than a quick perusal to test it to see the overall intent of the book, and then in obedience, turn away from it.

Now, many Christians have made much about the specific issues within the book, such as "how could God be portrayed as a black woman?" To me, these are sub issues and can be diversions from the main issue, which is:

By what right does anyone have to declare truth (or in this case mistruth) or teach about God apart from the Word of God? Let me phrase it this way: What authority does the author have to share or teach anything about God, apart from the Word of God.

1 Peter 4:10-11 ¹⁰ As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ **Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God;** (or literally "oracles of God", that is His Word cf Rom 3:2)

I am aware of the arguments that the author was not intending to teach about God, and that this is nothing more than a modern day Pilgrim's Progress. However, the point remains, he is doing just that. He is teaching about the nature of God in a subtle and deceptive way. We see the fruit of such false teaching when people (including many from Crossroads) talk about how much God "through the book" has change their lives.

However, if we understood the Word of God, we would never make such a spiritually adulterous statement. It is the Word of God alone that equips us for, not most, but every good work ¹⁶ "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷ that the man of God may be adequate, equipped **for every good work.**" 2 Timothy 3:16 -17

Consider the influence *The Shack* is experiencing and how it has permeated the life of Crossroads. It is discussed at the pulpit by a woman and affirmed by the pastor and by others in authority. That is a powerful testament to its deceptiveness! Although they may state that this book is not the Word of God, and insist that they are not granting it status as such, yet by their outward response, just the opposite is true! As concepts are shared from the pulpit and people give God credit for changing and healing their lives..."through the book".

However, God has not left us in the dark concerning the means by which He has ordained the transformation of our lives! Our lives are changed through Christ, by means of His Spirit empowered written Word...

In Salvation: It is the Spirit-empowered and inspired Word of God that He uses to bring us into a relationship with Himself.

- Romans 1:16 ¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
- Ephesians 1:13-14 ¹³ In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in ¹Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's own* possession, to the praise of His glory.
- 2 Timothy 3:14-16 You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*; ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings

which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture...

- 1 Peter 1:23-25 ²³ for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, *that is*, through the living and abiding word of God. ²⁴ For, "All flesh is like grass, And all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, And the flower falls off, ²⁵ But the word of the Lord abides forever." And this is the word which was preached to you.
- James 1:18 ¹⁸ In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures.
- James 1:21 ²¹ Therefore ^aputting aside all filthiness and *all* that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.
- Hebrews 4:12-13 ¹² For ^athe word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. ¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

In Sanctification: It is the same Word of God (alone) that He uses to grow us in respect to our salvation.

- 1 Thessalonians 2:13 ¹³ And for this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted *it* not as the word of men, but *for* what it really is, the word of God, **which also performs its work in you who believe.**
- 1 Peter 2:1-2 Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, **that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,**
- John 17:17 ¹⁷ "**Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth.**

The Shack is nothing more than a fable fit for old women; it is nothing more than a myth. Satan and his servants actively use this type of earthly wisdom to subtly draw people away from His Word. Indeed, throughout Paul's letters to Timothy, we see warning and instruction concerning such false teaching. Paul reveals the stark contrast between false teachers (as in the propagation of this type of materials) and what Timothy should be doing: preaching the Word of God and pointing out such error.

1 Timothy 4:6-7 ⁶ In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, *constantly* nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following. ⁷ But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women.

4:1 I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: ² **preach the word**; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. ³ For the time will come **when they will not endure sound doctrine**; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; ⁴ and **will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.**

When all is said and done, *The Shack* is a mere fable. It is a myth which subtly assaults the sufficiency of Scripture. In the most subtle way, deceived Christians and make-believers are looking to this book to gain insight concerning God, and they would readily share that their lives have been changed by it. This is evil. Certainly godly under-shepherds, who truly love Christ, would never allow such evil to enter into the church or to be propagated from the leadership. Those who do so are either false teachers or are completely unqualified and sinning, thus disqualified leaders.

I have not shared all I would like to share concerning this. However, you need to understand and recognize that if you have accepted this book and sit under those who would propagate it, then you need to repent also. I'm not saying this is the case, because I do not know you. Still, I would encourage you to examine yourself in light of Scripture to see if you desire to have your ears tickled by attending Crossroads. You are in spiritual danger and I must warn you.

I pray you will examine yourself and ask God if there is any wicked fleshly way within you that is keeping you in the midst of a church that is openly deceptive and disobedient. We cannot follow Christ in this half-hearted way!

Jesus calls us to follow Him completely!

I do not mean to offend you, and again, though I do not know you, I pray that you will take to heart what I have shared, for your own good and for those around you.

Thank you again for your email, I do appreciate your question.

If you have any other questions please feel free to call or e-mail.

In Him,
Greg Lundstedt

_____,'

Thank you also for your response. Yet, I must admit I am greatly grieved by it.

I need to let you know, I usually do not respond to those whom I am not shepherding unless I can prayerfully discern a genuine desire for obedience to God's Word. My desire is to be a good steward of the time God gives to me. Thus it's important for me to attempt to understand the motive of the one who is asking the question before I spend God's time responding.

In your first query, I prayerfully held back from the possibility that you were really querying me to see if I had read the book all the way through so that this might be the basis for you to accept or reject my opinions concerning this book. I sensed from your query that this was where you're coming from. But after praying, I believe that the Lord wanted me to give you the Word of God concerning these issues.

As I shared earlier, I was greatly grieved by your response because it was centered around a discounting of what I said, simply because I have not read the book all the way through. What was absent from your response was anything related to Scripture and to the arguments I gave.

Let me give you an extreme example of where you are in error, which I hope makes the point: Do you believe the *Book of Mormon* is erroneous? On what basis do you say so? Have you read through it all the way? Does one need to read through it completely to recognize it is erroneous? Certainly not. If someone reads portions of the book of Mormon and discovers error, and then puts it down and turns away from it, is the error they found discounted simply because they did not read the entire book? Absolutely not! There are Mormons who use your same line of reasoning to discredit anyone who addresses their error. Do you see the fallacy in that? How about the *Koran*? Does one need to read it through all the way in order to give it an adequate judgment? Not at all. Once unbiblical, heretical things are found, (which by the way, will be found) it should be put down immediately. We should, as we are commanded in Scripture, to "abstain from every form of evil."

What about *The Purpose Driven Church*? Or the *Purpose Driven Life*? If I were to read portions of it and find it to be un-biblical (which it is!) would the fact that I did not read it through completely, be enough to discount the error that was found? Obviously not.

Besides the fact that your argument is based on a fallacy rather than Scripture, as I have exemplified, what grieves me the most is that **you did not respond one bit to the Scripture and the explanations that I have given concerning this book.** This is telling, and reveals how deeply and subtly you have been wooed away from the Lord and the authority of His Word. The very way you have answered is an illustration of how dangerous this book is.

Your statement that one must read the entire book in order to make an accurate judgment, is a total fallacy and is an evidence that you have bought into the very thing I am warning you about.

I believe your comments reveal that you are deceived, but God is gracious to warn you. Although, unfortunately, your elders have not warned you, nor have they sought to protect you. Thankfully, God is good and gracious and He has warned you through the Word that I shared with you in my last e-mail.

***You may attempt to simply write-off all that I have said, wrongly thinking that since I have not read the book in its

entirety, I am unable to make an adequate judgment. Still, you cannot write-off the truth of the Scriptures that I have shared regarding this book. For a woman who has been in the Scriptures for 30 years, I find it very odd that you do not address the Scriptures that I have shared with you, and the context in which I shared them. If I am wrong, show me from the Word of God that I sent to you, and from my explanations, where I am wrong. What Scriptures do you have that validate your view of the book?

It is ironic that you "cannot accept what I have to say" simply because I haven't read the book in its entirety, and that I am unwilling to listen to what you say because you have not shared from the Scriptures. This should be an eye opener to you.

_____ would you please ask the Lord, with a humble heart, if the specific Scriptures I have given to you and their application to The Shack are from Him, or from man?

I do thank you again for responding, and please know that I am praying for you. If you desire to have an honest conversation concerning the Word of God (not your own opinion) I am willing to do so.

In Him,
Greg

Okay, so you don't want to address the main issue as I have laid forth through Scripture: that the author has no right to teach about the nature of God apart from the Word of God. The fact remains, that this book is, above all, an attack on the sufficiency of Scripture.

Who has the right to make up a story to teach about God, let alone misrepresent Him, through human concepts? Bringing Him down to man's level is pure idolatry!

God has never, ever approved of man describing Him through his own wisdom. This is idolatry! God has condescended to reveal Himself to man via His Word, not by man's own wisdom or understanding.

This main point alone should have been enough to warn you to set the book down, but you did not. *You continued on, and now you are reaping the consequences of your own choices through being deceived by obvious error.**

By the way, you are wrong and have misquoted Scripture. Believers do judge the church when sin is involved. (In this case, Idolatry)

1 Corinthians 5:11-13 ¹¹ But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler-- not even to eat with such a one. ¹² For what have I to do with judging outsiders? **Do you not judge those who are within *the church*?** ¹³ But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from among yourselves.

Besides the obvious point that I made, which would not require a full reading of the book, since you know the book so well, let me ask you: What about the heretical false teaching in the book?

Can you prove to me that these heretical concepts concerning the nature of God (as Michael Yousef has rightly pointed out (1)) are not subtly taught in the book?

1. That God the Father was crucified with Jesus.
2. That God is completely limited by His love and would not practice justice
3. That God on the cross God forgave all humanity regardless whether they repent or not
4. That any hierarchical structure whether it be in the church or in the government is evil
5. God will never judge people for their sins
6. That there is no hierarchical structure in the Godhead, just a circle of unity
7. God submits to human wishes and choices
8. Justice will never take place because of love
9. There is no such thing as eternal judgment in torment in hell
10. Jesus is walking with all people in their different journeys to God and it doesn't matter which way you get to Him.
11. Jesus is constantly being transformed with us humans
12. No need for faith or reconciliation with God because everyone will make it to heaven
13. The Bible is not true because it reduces God to paper

The author of *The Shack* is a false teacher, you are deceived, and your elders are disobedient and disqualified.

I am judging you and your elders concerning your idolatry. You are placing *The Shack* on the same level as Scripture...as something that can change your relationship with God. You need to repent now.

You are also propagating this heresy with your approval of this book. And if you have caused any one of the Lord's sheep to stumble, it is better that a millstone be hung around your neck...you would be better off dead!

6 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it is better for him that a heavy millstone be hung around his neck, and that he be drowned in the depth of the sea. 7 "Woe to the world because of *its* stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes! Matthew 18:6-7

Repent now of your idolatry and God will graciously forgive you.

(1) Pointed out in another email http://www.leadingtheway.org/site/PageServer?pagename=sto_TheShack_13heresies