

## Common Greetings — *An Introduction*

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And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another. And *this is love, that we walk according to his commandments*; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it. For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist. Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward. Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. *If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.* (2 John vv. 5–11 emphasis added)

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### 1.

Those who would deceive Christians are many, each coming with a differing meaning for what constitutes love for God and neighbor, with there being only one acceptable meaning: to walk according to the commandments. And anyone who teaches another message should not be received into the Christian's house or given any greeting; for whoever greets a false teacher of Israel takes part in his or her wicked works, a broad claim that is sometimes lost in an epistle of few words.

What John wrote can be expanded: the person or fellowship who receives anyone bearing the name of a brother-in-Christ who is an idolater, sexually immoral, greedy, a reviler, a drunkard, or a swindler (from 1 Cor 5:11) takes upon the person or the fellowship the guilt of the offender. Both the guilty person and the one who receives this guilty person are to be purged from the Body of Christ; for disciples *are to judge the Body*, expelling from it all unrighteousness, not being as the saints at Corinth were, tolerating a little sin so as to make themselves seem merciful and righteous in their own eyes. Each fellowship of the Body of Christ is to cleanse out the old leaven—the sinfulness of this world; the teachings of Judaism and of carnally minded Christians—so that the fellowship may be a

new lump of dough, unleavened and fit to take the Passover sacraments of bread and wine on the night that Jesus was betrayed [i.e., the dark portion of the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month, the month that begins with the first sighted new moon crescent following the spring equinox].

Jesus left with His disciples the authority to bind and loose (Matt 16:19), to forgive or to withhold forgiveness of sin (John 20:23), to establish the sacred calendar and what constitutes Holy Writ—and endtime Sabbatarian Christians have, almost without exception, been fearful to judge the Body of Christ, choosing instead to defer to Judaism and the leaven of rabbinical Judaism in matters from when to keep the Passover to how to read Holy Writ. Some Sabbatarian Christians have gone so far into error as to assign bastardized Hebrew pronunciations to the name Ἰησοῦ—*Jesus*, whom Israel followed into the Promised Land and whom Christians will follow into heaven ...

Moses didn't change the name of his assistant, עֲשֵׂהָ [Oshea], עֲשֵׂהָ [Joshua] so that a Sacred Names Heresy could poison Christians in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries, but changed the name so that the visible, physical things of this world would precede and would reveal the invisible, spiritual things of God (cf. Rom 1:20; 1 Cor 15:46), with outwardly [physically] circumcised Israel following עֲשֵׂהָ—Ἰησοῦ (from Acts 7:45) across the River Jordan on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the first month (Josh 4:19), thereby physically entering the physical Promised Land as the selected Passover lamb of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of the living not of the dead (Matt 22:32), forming the shadow and copy of circumcised-of-heart Christians walking as Ἰησοῦ—Jesus (from Acts 4:10) walked in this world, thereby entering heaven as Jesus entered heaven ... the outwardly circumcised nation of Israel was the firstborn son (Ex 4:22) of the God of the living, the only God that the outwardly circumcised Israel knew or was to know and worship. But outwardly circumcised Israel took upon itself the idolatry of the peoples being dispossessed: it took upon itself the sins of Canaan by receiving the people of Canaan, not putting them all to death, but making covenants with them, covenants that became snares that strangled righteousness, leaving the selected Passover lamb of the God of the living defiled and dead.

The God of the living is not the God of the dead: when Israel rejected the commands of the Lord and chose for themselves whom the nation would worship, mingling the sacred with the profane (i.e., the Lord with Baal), the nation of Israel ceased being a *living* firstborn son of God and became a despised nation. The Lord told Jeremiah, “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will punish all those who are circumcised merely in the flesh—Egypt, Judah, Edom, the sons of Ammon, Moab, and all who dwell in the desert who cut the corners of their hair, for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart” (9:25–26). And indeed, these days came—and these days will come again, for Israel is not today a nation circumcised of heart, but a dead nation that must be raised from death by the God of the dead, not the God of the living, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Only when Israel is again a living nation can Israel worship the God of the living. As a dead nation, Israel worships demons, a claim that is hard to accept

nevertheless a true claim; for Israel received false teachers and false prophets and took to itself their sins and their sinful ways.

Again, Christians are not to receive anyone who is an idolater, the sexually immoral, the greedy, a drunkard, a swindler if the person bears the name of *brother*, meaning that Christians are not to receive other Christians who claim to be born of God yet flaunt their lawlessness, their sinning practices, their false doctrines and dogmas, waving their false beliefs and ways in the faces of their brothers who strive for righteousness. Faithful Christians will all keep the commandments of God and their faith in Christ Jesus. The Christian who transgresses the least of the commandments—the Sabbath commandment—is spiritually dead, and is not to be received by spiritually living sons of God ...

Ancient Israel was defiled through handling dead bodies. Circumcised-of-heart Israel is defiled through receiving spiritually dead Christians; for inevitably, the spiritually dead will want to discuss doctrines and tenets of the faith, introducing into these discussions their falseness; e.g., the faithful Sabbatarian who receives someone who has swallowed the poisoned pill of the Sacred Names Heresy will begin to feel uncomfortable using the name <Jesus> when the spiritually dead heretic uses some variant of the icon <Yehoshua> and before long, the faithful Sabbatarian joins with the heretic, also a Sabbatarian, in using a bastardized Hebrew pronunciation of *Joshua* when referring to *Jesus*, not realizing that in doing so the previously faithful Sabbatarian denies Christ Jesus and will therefore be denied by Jesus before angels, a situation that permits demonic possession. So in seeking to convert or simply to accommodate the Sacred Names heretic by receiving the heretic out of politeness and a misapplied sense of hospitality, the faithful Christian slays him or herself, giving to the Adversary an unearned victory. And this is a true scenario, one that has played itself out now thousands of times in the last sixty years—a scenario that has taken out Christians whom I can name, Christians who started well and journeyed as far as New Jerusalem before committing spiritual suicide. For inevitably, the Sacred Names heretic is an Arian Christian.

For years, when I saw a person approaching the house with a Bible in the person's hand, or when I answered a knock on the door and the person stood on the porch with a Bible in hand, I would step outside and close my door, choosing to speak to the person or persons outside and to speak to the person without greeting the person. I would never say *good-bye* to the person, who usually stomped away mad after saying some version of, *I'm supposed to be preaching to you and not you to me*, the actual words of one Jehovah Witness.

When living in a small Intermountain community while attending Idaho State University, Pocatello, I learned that Latter Day Saint bishops had instructed their missionaries not to speak with me; for I was a dangerous person because as a *Gentile*, I knew too much Scripture. I didn't/don't accept the Book of Mormon as a legitimate testament of Christ Jesus, and when asked, I wasn't shy about saying why the Book of Mormon is not legitimate ... what did David do when he had a chance to kill the very drunk King Saul? David's behavior forms the shadow and type of Christian behavior toward civil authority for all Anabaptists—and that is

what this ministry is, a Sabbatarian Anabaptist ministry that has grown in grace and knowledge since of ministry of Andreas Fischer almost five centuries ago, with much of this growth coming in the past decade. And the Book of Mormon presents as acceptable a very different course of behavior from what David took when opportunity presented itself before it was time for him to receive the kingdom.

David was, for the most part, willing to wait on God and to trust the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of the living. As a result, David became a man after God's own heart—not a man perfect in all of his ways as Job was, but a man who sought oneness with the Lord, not justifying his ways, but returning to the ways of the Lord when he found himself out-of-bounds.

In his radio broadcasts of a half-century ago, Herbert W. Armstrong would tell listeners to blow the dust off their Bibles and check out what he said, not all of which would withstand scrutiny. However, his instructions to listeners to blow the dust off their Bibles and read the Bible for themselves as other books are read was sound advice; for Scripture will withstand careful and close reading, noting apparent contradictions in the text, lacunae, translation errors, scribal edits and inclusions—textual difficulties that melt away when meaning is taken from Scripture via typological exegesis.

The Bible should not be a venerated icon that a Christian fears to touch because its holiness will be diminished through everyday use. Compilation of the Bible didn't occur at one time in one location, but occurred over centuries through astute readers recognizing in the writings of a human person the voice of the God of the living. This voice isn't mysterious, but does contradict the wisdom of this world and as such is at odds with the wars and economics that false Christians have supported from Scripture. Therefore, it is in how meaning has traditionally been taken from Holy Writ that has caused the Bible to be perhaps the least read best-seller of all time.

You, as auditor, receive me when you read on-line or download the essays or commentaries that will be posted to this website. Yes, I teach Christians to keep the commandments; to walk as Jesus walked; to have love for born and unborn sons of God—and in doing so, I will occasionally ruffle feathers of those spiritual chickens who are unwilling to confront evil and call it what it is.

For far too long, Anabaptists have been *quiet folk*, their enthusiasm martyred by intense 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Century persecution. But Anabaptists didn't begin as *quiet folk* and they shall not end as compromising *quiet folk*, relaxing the least of the commandments—the Sabbath commandment—so that they can hide in plain dress in a world that mocks them. So let the battle be joined, not receiving the idolatry of this world but meeting it at the door and not permitting it to enter whether through the broadcasts of network television or cheery greetings of Sunday-keeping neighbors. Idolatry doesn't come labeled as *idolatry* but as *truth & wisdom* in a world that asks, *Can't we all just get along?* No, we cannot all get along; for righteousness has no fellowship with unrighteousness, and a faithful Christians has no fellowship with doubt, unbelief, and heresy.

Let the one who labels a faithful Christian as a heretic—and this is sure to happen—be alone with his or her regrets when cast into the lake of fire. Let not death long receive this person; let the one who will be ashes under the feet of the righteous be quickly burned to ashes, perhaps the only appropriate statement of love that can be extended to idolaters.

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