

Electrocuted pastor's final prayer: 'Surprise me, God'

Ironic theme in case of Christian minister shocked to death during baptism

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Rev. Kyle Lake

The theme of the final prayer delivered last week by a Christian pastor who was electrocuted during a baptism was, ironically, "Surprise me, God."

That disclosure came this morning on the national radio program, Coast to Coast AM, by Terry Esau, author of "Surprise Me, a 30-Day Faith Experiment," who had been invited to speak at the University Baptist Church in Waco, Texas.

GOD SENDS SHOCKING MESSAGE TO EMERGING CHURCH!

By Paul Proctor

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NewsWithViews.com

The ABPnews.com headline read: "Waco pastor Kyle Lake killed in freak baptism accident." I thought to myself: "Yeah, I guess this one just slipped by the Sovereign God of the Universe. Maybe the Lord was stuck in line at the food court waiting for an espresso when the lights flickered.

"His eye is on the sparrow" but evidently not on a prominent Emerging Church leader standing in a baptistery full of water holding an electronically charged microphone before a crowd of 800 on Sunday morning following a prayer where he petitioned the Almighty to "surprise me." Apparently the Ancient of Days only numbers the hairs of your head when you're properly grounded.

If the ABP article and its curious headline had appeared in The Associated Press rather than the Associated Baptist Press, it probably wouldn't have drawn my attention; but seeing as it was featured in a "faith-based" publication, the article's title stands out like a sore oxymoron.

Now before some of you go indignant on me for my lack of sympathy over this pastor's sudden demise, I would ask you to consider the late Ananias and the Apostle Peter's

caustic comment to his wife Sapphira before she dropped dead in front of that congregation:

"...behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out." - Acts 5:9

I couldn't help but notice that he didn't gently take her hand and try to comfort or console her over the untimely death of her husband before breaking part two of the bad news. Was Peter being un-Christ-like in his terse remarks to her or was he busy teaching onlookers something more important, like the necessity of fearing and obeying God?

And what about that little diatribe the Apostle Paul wrote to his young protégé' in 1st Timothy 1:20 about having "delivered unto Satan" Hymenaeus and Alexander "that they may learn not to blaspheme?" Where's the love here, for crying out loud? Kind of makes you want to ask Rick Warren what Paul's "S.H.A.P.E." was, doesn't it? He also cited another false teacher named "Philetus" in, shall we say, less than endearing terms over in 2nd Timothy 2.

I think it's safe to say that comments like those from Peter and Paul would pretty much render them unsuitable for staff jobs at Saddleback or Willow Creek because you see, unlike the cowardly and enabling church leader today, they used to name the names of heretics and blasphemers; and today's glass house gospel doesn't really allow that sort of thing any longer. So, if you are planning a career in ministry, just remember; when it comes to criticizing your corrupt contemporaries, mum's the word.

My how things have changed...

"Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." - 1st Timothy 5:20

So, were they being cruel, unloving and disobedient to God by saying such things to the brethren? Where's all the kind, gentle, caring and coddling compassion we are constantly commanded to show today's false prophets and their underlings who incessantly lead others astray from the pulpits of perdition in a choreographed confusion directed by the "father of lies?"

And then there was that perverse fellow Paul so harshly addressed in his first letter to the Corinthians, who had an incestuous affair with his father's wife; commanding the church there to: *"... deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."* (1st Corinthians 5:5)

Wow! Talk about "mean-spirited!" Imagine hearing that in your Sunday morning announcements! This can't be the same fellow that penned chapter 13, could it?

And let's not forget those memorable words from the Author of love and compassion Himself, Jesus Christ, when He addressed those who would dare fracture the faith of a child:

"And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea." - Mark 9:42

Do you get the uneasy feeling that a completely different gospel is being preached today? Yeah, me too...

Terry Esau, a visiting speaker to UBC and witness to the horrible electrocution of Rev. Lake that morning in Waco, was quoted in a World Net Daily article as saying:

"I think he [Kyle] would have said, 'There are laws of nature, electrical laws, and they were violated that day and I was in a really bad place where the violation happened.'"

I would only add that the Emergent Church is also in a really bad place right now; that many spiritual laws are also being violated; and they would do well to heed the Word of God and repent before their artsy-craftsy plans for the future are unexpectedly altered, like Rev. Lake's.

Clearly, any man or woman who disobeys the physical laws God has established in this earthly domain risks dying a physical death, as evidenced by the tragic event at Baylor. It should also be noted that those who violate the spiritual laws of God risk death, as well; and anyone who has researched with any discernment, conviction and knowledge of scripture, the unbiblical teachings and practices of the Emerging Church movement knows all too well that the laws of the Lord and His Word are not only being violated for the sake of the sensual; but also that the leaders of this new spirituality are teaching others to emulate them and practice many ungodly things in the name of Christ such as new age mysticism, the empty-minded mantras of contemplative prayer, labyrinths, the trivializing and minimizing of God's absolute truths and the casual dismissing of doctrine as divisive, destructive and unnecessary so as not to infringe upon one's own personal experience and opportunities for entertainment, excitement, enlightenment, illumination, stimulation and gratification.

University Baptist Church posted the closing remarks of the last sermon their pastor gave that fateful day on their web site. It contains the words they evidently would most like you and I to remember him by. To say the least, they are quite revealing:

" Live. And Live Well. BREATHE. Breathe in and Breathe deeply. Be PRESENT. Do not be past. Do not be future. Be now. On a crystal clear, breezy 70 degree day, roll down the windows and FEEL the wind against your skin. Feel the warmth of the sun. If you run, then allow those first few breaths on a cool Autumn day to FREEZE your lungs and do not just be alarmed, be ALIVE. Get knee-deep in a novel and LOSE track of time. If you bike, pedal HARD... and if you crash then crash well. Feel the SATISFACTION of a job well done-a paper well-written, a project thoroughly completed, a play well-performed. If you must wipe the snot from your 3-year old's nose, don't be disgusted if the Kleenex didn't catch it all... because soon he'll be wiping his own. If you've recently experienced loss, then GRIEVE. And Grieve well. At the table with friends and family, LAUGH. If you're eating and laughing at the same time, then might as well laugh until you puke. And if you eat, then SMELL. The aromas are not impediments to your day. Steak on the grill, coffee beans freshly ground, cookies in the oven. And TASTE. Taste every ounce of flavor. Taste every ounce of friendship. Taste every ounce of Life. Because-it-is-most-definitely-a-Gift."

Where's the call to repentance - the willing self-sacrifice of the redeemed - the grateful suffering and faithful testimony of a blood-purchased saint? Where is the dire warning to the rebellious about an eternity in hell that awaits those who refuse to heed the call? And,

what about God's eternal, unchanging and indisputable Word, and the Cross of Christ that is repeatedly referred to throughout? a Cross that was selflessly and sacrificially endured by His only Begotten Son to deliver us from this fallen world and pay for your hideous sins and mine.

Is he preaching a tantalizing message of sensory gratification, psychotherapy and escape to pleasure seekers on holiday or obediently pointing sinners toward an undeserved opportunity for eternity with Jesus Christ in a Kingdom not of this world? Just whose life, death, kingdom and words are being exalted and memorialized here; those of a dying man or a living God?

Compare his priorities to those of Jesus:

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." - Luke 14:26

And his testimony to Paul's testimony:

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." - Galatians 2:20

Frankly, Rev. Lake sounds like someone who was absolutely in love with his life, the world around him and everyone in it, which is the expressed reverse of what the Bible teaches:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." - 1st John 2:15-17

Just how is the Lord glorified in the worship of the world, the adulation of men, the gratification of the flesh, the satisfying of the senses and the personal pursuits, ambitions and "unequally yoked" relationships of the here and now in a Sunday morning sermon?

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" - James 4:4

Lake's words read more like those of a new age poet or 60's flower child enticing those around him into participating in whatever the world has to offer through a craving appetite for euphoric feelings, fun and friendships rather than a child of God faithfully forsaking all to proclaim His Word even unto death, as men of God are called to do.

Notice the stark contrast between Lake's seductive words and those of the Psalmist and his son, Solomon:

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever." - Psalm 111:10

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction." - Proverbs 1:7

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding." - Proverbs 9:10

In fact, nothing in scripture even remotely resembles the heralded expressions and whimsical aspirations found in Rev. Lake's final message. One might just as easily find such things in a secular bookstore among the esoteric writings of an atheist, agnostic, pagan or occultist; or in a romance paperback from some corner market; in the songs of a struggling Starbuck's singer on a Saturday night; or in the syrupy script of an afternoon soap.

I downloaded the entire sermon he prepared and saw the name of "Jesus" mentioned only once in passing; and even then He was not identified as the Christ, much less the Son of God or someone who died on a cross for the sins of the world. The Gospel was simply not preached! This is the new spirituality; and it troubles me deeply that many are not going to hear it because today's preachers won't preach it!

Can you think of anything more tragic than lost souls being baptized before an applauding audience of their peers and spending the rest of their doomed lives thinking they're saved because of it? How do you back up and undo that kind of deceitful damage and convince them that what they underwent so innocently in front of everyone was a farce initiated by their pastor? Don't grieve for Kyle Lake, my friends; grieve for all of those who never heard the words "sinner," "shed blood," "repent," "resurrection" or the Gospel of Jesus Christ preached!

And please don't write me to say what a kind, wonderful, generous, loving and funny person Rev. Lake was because that's not a sufficient replacement for proclaiming the whole counsel of God; and I'm quite sure Ananias, Sapphira, Hymenaeus, Alexander and Philetus were all dearly loved and treasured by their friends, family and followers as well. There is only one true God, one true Gospel and One Name in all of Creation that saves; and that name is Jesus Christ!

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." - Acts 4:12

The folks at University Baptist Church and The Associated Baptist Press might consider Rev. Lake's death an accident; but I assure you, as Romans 8:28 clearly teaches, there is no such thing between the Alpha and the Omega.

It happened; and it happened for a reason.

He didn't die a martyr's death, like Stephen, courageously proclaiming God's Word to angry men bearing stones. He wasn't beaten, crucified or burned at the stake for his unwillingness to renounce his faith in God. Lake was killed trying to baptize someone in front of an adoring audience; and the Lord stopped him dead in his tracks.

Why would He do that?

Paul didn't drop dead when he shook the poisonous viper off his arm after being shipwrecked on the Island of Melita among barbarous villagers that needed to hear the Gospel. The Lord even spared Paul's shipmates when they heeded His Word to abide in the vessel rather than flee the raging waters in another boat. If they had listened to Him in the beginning they wouldn't have even lost the ship!

So why did Rev. Kyle Lake drop dead before hundreds of Emergent Church worshippers? That's the question that needs to be asked and answered because there are no accidents beneath the Throne of God; and judging from some of the Emergent blogs I've read, participants are sorely troubled and confused by this tragedy.

Some are having difficulty accepting the fact that God would allow someone they loved, believed in, trusted and followed to be taken from them in such a horrible and abrupt manner right before their very eyes, like a frat house spectacle Christian bashers might stage for a Halloween gag, leaving who knows how many traumatized for life.

Although they obviously miss their beloved pastor and his fanciful messages, the real tragedy here would be missing the message that God was sending; but then sometimes the hardest things in life to understand and accept are the obvious.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." - Romans 8:28

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