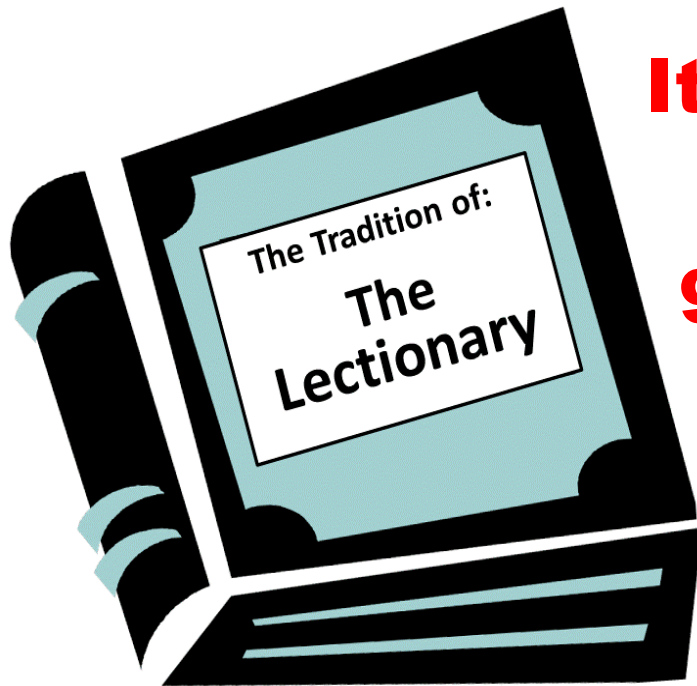


CLERGY SECRETS

How “Services” Fleece the Sheep



**It is “Tradition”
that leaves
92.28% of the
Bible largely
ignored.**

***When people begin to know about the
lectionary, the laziness and biases it
serves become less popular fast!***

**The accounting of the lectionary and
how the lectionary is REALLY used are what
“religious officials” don’t want you to know about
because knowing begins to put YOU in charge!**

**The most lucrative aspects of “church services” are
(1) the three-year lectionary and (2) the vibrant sermon
market. Only 7.72% of the Bible’s verses are typically
preached; and even then, the vast majority of “pastors”
lazily buy, sell, and trade sermons.**

April 18, 2019

This is a publication is associated with:

CLERGY SECRETS

They Don't Want You to Know!

And its related publications.

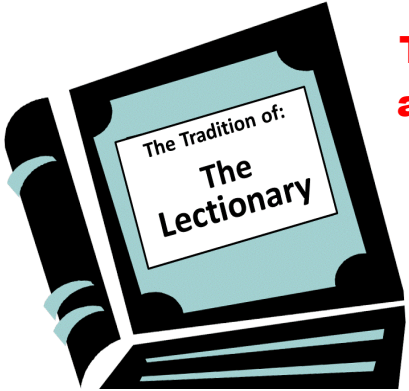
Visit ClergySecrets.com

Warren Vitcenda

NOTE: In this publication, the accounting shown of the Revised Common Lectionary is under Copyright by Warren Vitcenda.

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and TXu 1-909-272.**

How “Services” Fleece the Sheep 1



The "separation of church and state" has acted as a sly authoritative agreement of nearly blind tacit approval for each other's deceitful tyrannies.

Know what “church” hides as part of the “Establishment” with government.

HOW “SERVICES” FLEECE THE SHEEP

The market for sermons is wide but shallow.

The market for sermons is wide in the sense that a HUGE percentage of religious officials buy, sell, copy, and reuse sermons. Their sources include journals, “sermon studies,” and websites such as DesperatePreacher.com (an old favorite), SermonMall.com, and Sermons.com – among others.

The sermon market is shallow in that most sermons revolve around only Gospel verses that are chosen by the CCT – the Consultation on Common Texts. The CCT’s membership includes many churches that would surprise many people, including the Roman Catholic Church and many Protestant denominations – both “liberal” and “conservative”. Having “common texts” for sermons, via the CCT’s “lectionary assignments,” creates the “common” base needed for preachers to coordinate a vibrant sermon market – a market that is “spiritual” but also one that protects Orwellian tyranny.

What is not “commonly” known about the CCT’s scripture assignments for preaching is that only about 7.72% of the Bible’s verses are typically preached about. Most scripture is ignored for preaching, with the results being that (1) “preachers” use sermons over-and-over again and (2) biblical stories that question cunning “Establishment” are strategically avoided.

LAY MEMBERS MUST RETAKE CONTROL AND PICK VERSES FOR PREACHING INSTEAD OF LETTING THEIR “PASTORS” OR DENOMINATIONS ALWAYS DO SO!

2 How “Services” Fleece the Sheep



Corrupt government is overlooked in the study of the Biblical Story... as if it were a loophole for coveting and stealing that "religion" protects. Lectionary use is a key strategy!

When did God command that religion not pursue keeping government honest? Hmmm?

Most “religious officials” will not tell you about the wicked side of the three-year lectionary like CLERGY SECRETS does!

Caution:

Reading this could make your church officials *nervous!*

- 1) Knowledge awakens your own authoritative abilities and choices!**
- 2) Be known as someone who sees “behind the curtain” at church!**
- 3) Begin maximizing your potential! More effectively use the Bible’s knowledge and wisdom to live your life better.**

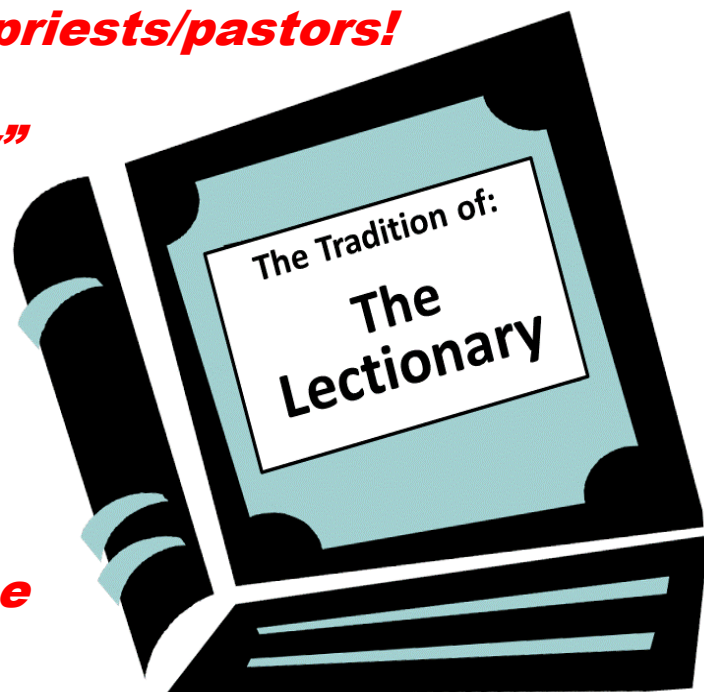
Honesty about church can only improve it!

The Wicked Side of the Lectionary

Behold the sly bureaucratic way to most easily:
(1) Repeat the same sermons over and over again,
(2) Conduct services from rote memory, and
(3) Avoid scriptures that would challenge the
“Establishment” to stop its leveraging of religion
and government to dishonestly covet and steal
as means to seek adulation, praise, and power
by the easiest means available.

*Is it the Bible or priests/pastors who have
little to teach about the Establishment’s
coveting and stealing? It’s not the Bible!
It’s the priests/pastors!*

*“Religious authority”
protects the
“Establishment”
by the verses that
are chosen for
worship services,
but more so by those
NOT CHOSEN.*



4 How “Services” Fleece the Sheep

Read & Get Grounded!

Only rare clergy have been honest with churchgoers about lectionary practices!



These articles are presently linked at ClergySecrets.com

Given the power of “tradition” in church bureaucracy, it is amazing how up-to-date these articles remain! **SHARE!**

- 1.) **“Limitations of the Lectionary”**
By Dr. Walter Sundberg (ELCA - Lutheran)
“Limitations of the Lectionary” is most recommended as it details rather imprudent patterns that are inherent in modern church practices. Almost all church officials have preferred not to publicize this information.
- 2.) **“Questions about the Lectionary”**
By Dr. James C. Goodloe IV (PCUSA-Presbyterian)
- 3.) **“A Canon Within a Canon?”**
By Pastor David Flavell (Methodist-United Kingdom)
- 4.) **“Old Testament-Statistics-Compared” & “New Testament-Statistics-Compared”**
By Dr. Felix Just (Roman Catholic)
- 5.) **“Trends Among Lutheran Preachers”**
By Dr. David Luecke (LCMS - Lutheran)
While **“Trends Among Lutheran Preachers”** investigates Lutheran denominations, the information is mirrored in other mainline “traditional” denominations as well.

How “Services” Fleece the Sheep 5

*This information could educate you & your congregation
- or it could provide you with reason to go elsewhere for
“church!”*

Lectionary Introduction

Is it really possible that most traditional mainline Christian denominations, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, are programmed to regularly ignore over 90% of the Old Testament and almost 50% of the New Testament? Shocking/Surprising?

YES it is!

The three-year lectionary omits huge amounts of the Bible and dishonestly presents "ministry" as being "officially complicated."

Perhaps the most lucrative aspects of “church services” are (1) the three-year lectionary and (2) the vibrant sermon market. Only 7.72% of the Bible is typically preached; and even then, many sermons are lazily reused, traded, bought, and sold.

Have you ever wondered?

- 1. Why many people have not learned much about the Bible even though they have regularly attended church?**
- 2. Why sermons are often short in traditional Mainline Christian denominations?**
- 3. How clergy use “tradition” to control and to avoid controversy?**

It is due to traditional denominations (Protestant and Roman Catholic) being programmed to ignore much of the Bible for worship and preaching!! Church members are hardly ever taught about how scriptures are assigned for their worship services. Many clergy will not question their denominational "traditions" and bureaucracy. Biblical illiteracy, complacency, and wasted values are the results.

6 How “Services” Fleece the Sheep

General Overview of the Lectionary:

CCT Membership Based in Nashville, TN

How is over 90% of the Old Testament and almost 50% of the New Testament in the Bible systematically and regularly ignored? It is because of something that is generically called a “lectionary,” or more specifically, The Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) and the related Roman Catholic Lectionary. The RCL is the main focus of Clergy Secrets. The lectionary is the set of assigned readings from the Bible which are read during worship services in most traditional churches. It repeats every 3 years. The lectionary is often found in hymnals and followed by denominational publications. The denominations which use either the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) and/or the closely related Roman Catholic Lectionary (from which the Revised Common Lectionary is derived) include the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant churches that emerged from the Reformation period in the 16th century. (See Wikipedia for more information.)

The denominations listed below belong to the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT) organization, which is based in Nashville, TN. The CCT promotes the use of the two main lectionaries, the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) and the closely related Roman Catholic Lectionary by way of association with the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. The CCT’s website is www.CommonTexts.org. The main CCT membership includes these organizations in alphabetical order:

- | | |
|---|--|
| *Anglican Church in Canada | *Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod |
| *Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops | *Mennonite Church |
| *Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) | *National Conference of Catholic Bishops of the United States (i.e. The Roman Catholic Church) |
| *Christian Reformed Church in North America | *Polish National Catholic Church |
| *Church of the Brethren | *Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) |
| *Episcopal Church | *Presbyterian Church in Canada |
| *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America | *Reformed Church in America |
| *Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada | *Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship |
| *Free Methodist Church in Canada | *United Church of Canada |
| *International Commission on English in the Liturgy | *United Church of Christ |
| *Liturgy and Life: American Baptist Fellowship for Liturgical Renewal | *United Methodist Church |
| | *Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod |

These organizations differ widely concerning many theological “whos,” “whats,” “hows,” “whens,” “wheres,” and “whys.” They also vary greatly in their political aspects. The CCT membership has however colluded to use only the scriptures that are assigned by the lectionary for use in services and for sermons. Since many things separate these church organizations, something must be bringing them together. That “something” is the repeating pattern the lectionary which provides opportunity to simply repeat and rerun both past services and sermons with ease. This provides church officials with repeating adulation, praise, and power by the easiest means available. The CCT remains the single agency most responsible for the limited view that many Christians have of the Bible.

How “Services” Fleece the Sheep 7

Lectionary History Overview

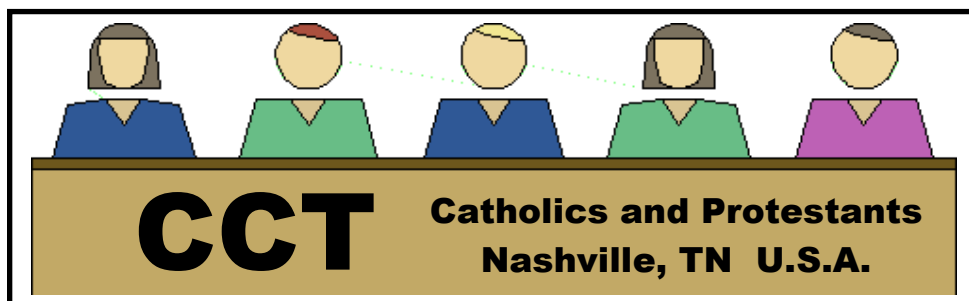
Long before Jesus was born, ancient Hebrew/Jewish religious authorities created pre-assigned scripture schedules for worship and preaching from the Old Testament. Jesus likely read from one of these pre-assigned scripture readings when he read from Isaiah 61:1-2 during a service, as recorded in Luke 4:16-21. Jesus claimed his Divinity in the service by saying, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your presence.”

Pre-assigned scripture readings are also traceable back to parts of the early Christian Church. Not all of the Christian Church used lectionaries, but most parts did, including those parts that ultimately formed the Roman Catholic Church.

Both Hebrew (Jewish) and Christian lectionaries hop and skip through the Torah/Bible and include verses which are generally favored by “the bureaucracy” that created each lectionary version. Verses which promote particular theological positions and/or just seem easiest and safest (and have ready-made sermons available) are definitely the most frequent in lectionaries.

Prior to the 1960s, many Protestant denominations simply borrowed the Roman Catholic Lectionary, making small changes to suit their own circumstances. Following the changes that took place in the Roman Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) in the early 1960s, many Mainline Protestant denominations began to have a greater interest in the newly approved Roman Catholic Lectionary from Vatican II. Soon after Vatican II, a multi-denominational organization was formed in the late-1960s and called the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT). It was and is based in Nashville, TN. The goal of the CCT was to create an official new lectionary based on the Roman Catholic Lectionary for use in the Protestant Denominations in order to coordinate similar scripture usage. For the most part, the resulting Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) was very similar to the original Roman Catholic version that emerged from the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) in the early 1960s. The influence of the CCT has since spread throughout most mainline denominations around the world.

The Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) and the Roman Catholic Lectionary can together be generically called “the lectionary.” They are very similar. Both operate on a near identical 3 year repeating cycle, using almost the same scripture readings. The lectionary also goes by the Latin based name “Ordo Lectionum Missae.” Many Protestants would be surprised to know that most of their worship scripture has been selected essentially by the Roman Catholic Church, with only very modest changes made by their own Protestant denominations which reflect their own special events.



The CCT is an influential cartel-like organization of traditional denominations that is based in Nashville, TN.

8 How “Services” Fleece the Sheep

Lectionary use is “highly encouraged” by peer pressure in the traditional denominations that are members of the CCT. www.CommonTexts.org



The lectionary must be followed!

It's Church Tradition!!

Most people are too intimidated or mesmerized by “church” to investigate how it operates *“behind the curtain.”*

Most clergy officials have avoided explaining the lectionary and the huge amounts of scripture that it has systematically avoided.

Memorized services are easy to repeat over and over!

CHURCH

Old sermons are easy to quickly copy, practice, and reuse as well!

THE LECTIONARY’S PERCENTAGES REVEALED!

SPECIAL NOTE: When comparing the lectionary to the Bible, one needs to understand that there are varying differences in accounting for both the number of verses per book and the total number of verses for the Bible. The reasons for this are several, with the most notable being how the titles and introductions of the many psalms are treated. Dr. Felix Just discussed the differences in his article Old Testament Statistics Compared at <http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/OT-Statistics-Compared.htm>. Dr. Just also discussed the New Testament at <http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/NT-Statistics-Greek.htm>. Omitted Bible Verses is also found on Wikipedia at www.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_omitted_Bible_verses. The following analysis reflects an overall count of 31173 verses in the Bible, which is just one of numerous acceptable counts. (Revised Common Lectionary accounting; U.S. Copyright TX 6-579-559)

The Old Testament compared to the Bible and to the Revised Common Lectionary.

The Whole Bible

There are 31173 verses in the Bible.

**(Try internet searching “31173 Bible Verses” for various reference sources.)

The Old Testament (This is exclusive of Psalms; see the note lower on this page.)

There are 20684 verses in the OT.

Old Testament Verses Assigned by the Revised Common Lectionary

1991 Only 1991 OT verses are used by the RCL Lectionary.

(Full credit given for partial verse use.)

The Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) assigns only 1991 verses from the OT for reading in worship services, exclusive of Psalms. This means that 90.4% of the Old Testament’s verses are systematically ignored for worship readings. (1991/20684 or only 9.6% used.)

****Special Note About Psalms:** The OT has 20684 verses, exclusive of Psalms. The Psalms have about 2530 total verses (depending on how psalm introductions are counted), and are read separately from the rest of the Old Testament in most mainline denominational worship services. The Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) uses only 1301 of the 2530 verses in Psalms, meaning that 48.6% of Psalms’ verses are systematically not used in denominational worship. (1301/2530 or 51.4% are used.)

Continued on the next page.

10 How “Services” Fleece the Sheep

THE NUMBERS: The accounting on pages 9, 10, and 11 was painstakingly completed by counting the verses assigned for worship services by the lectionary. Completed by Warren Vitcenda

The New Testament compared to the Bible and the Revised Common Lectionary.

(Revised Common Lectionary accounting; U.S. Copyright TX 6-579-559)

The Whole Bible

There are 31173 verses in the Bible.

The New Testament

7959

The New Testament has 7959 verses.

3778

The 4 Gospels have 3778 verses.

4181

Acts through Revelation have 4181 verses.

(3778 verses + 4181 = 7959)

New Testament Verses Assigned by the Lectionary

3991

Of the 7959 verses in the NT, only 3991 NT verses are assigned by the Revised Common Lectionary (2407 from the Gospels and 1584 from Acts through Revelation). (Credit given for partial verses.)

- **This means that 49.9% of the NT's verses are systematically not used for worship (and even less for sermons).**
- **3991/7959 or 50.1% are assigned by the lectionary for reading in worship services; 3968/7959 or 49.9% are not used and are largely ignored.**

Continued on the next page.

How “Services” Fleece the Sheep 11

Continued from the previous page.

Verse Accounting: i.e. The number of verses from each book that are part of the lectionary.

***Note how little is included in the lectionary.**

(Revised Common Lectionary accounting; U.S. Copyright TX 6-579-559)

Genesis	336/1533	Ezra	0/280	Hosea	34/197
Exodus	181/1213	Nehemiah	8/406	Joel	25/73
Leviticus	12/859	Ester	11/167	Amos	47/146
Numbers	29/1288	Job	84/1070	Obadiah	0/21
Deuteronomy	79/959	Psalms	1301/2530	Jonah	17/48
Joshua	30/658	Proverbs	61/915	Micah	20/105
Judges	7/618	Ecclesiastes	23/222	Nahum	0/47
Ruth	28/85	Song-of-		Habakkuk	8/56
1 Samuel	131/810	Solomon	6/117	Zephaniah	15/53
2 Samuel	95/695	Isaiah	301/1292	Haggai	10/38
1 Kings	117/816	Jeremiah	135/1364	Zechariah	4/211
2 Kings	32/719	Lamentations	30/154	Malachi	6/55
1 Chronicles	0/942	Ezekiel	55/1273		
2 Chronicles	0/822	Daniel	14/357		
Matthew	654/1071	Ephesians	110/155	Hebrews	127/303
Mark	451/678	Philippians	58/104	James	63/108
Luke	694/1151	Colossians	59/95	1 Peter	57/105
John	608/879	1 Thess.	54/89	2 Peter	14/61
Acts	221/1007	2 Thess.	24/47	1 John	54/105
Romans	204/433	1 Timothy	27/113	2 John	0/13
1 Corinthians	219/437	2 Timothy	37/83	3 John	0/15
2 Corinthians	112/257	Titus	8/46	Jude	0/25
Galatians	72/149	Philemon	21/25	Revelation	43/404

*Many sources post the number of verses in the New Testament at 7959. The author of Clergy Secrets was able to account for 7958 of them. It is therefore assumed that the New Testament's title is the one missing verse, that being the title "The New Testament of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Many of the Bible's books are either almost or entirely ignored by the Revised Common Lectionary.

(And also ignored by the closely related Roman Catholic Lectionary.)

20 Old Testament books have 25 or fewer of their verses in the RCL.

12 Old Testament books have 10 or fewer of their verses in the RCL.

5 Old Testament books have ZERO verses in the RCL.

10 of the New Testament's 27 books have 50 or fewer verses in the RCL.

7 of the New Testament's 27 books have 25 or fewer verses in the RCL.

3 of the New Testament's 27 books have ZERO verses in the RCL.

12 How “Services” Fleece the Sheep

THE 7.72%

SERMON BAMBOOZLE:

Mainline clergy preach sermons that are almost exclusively from the Gospel verses that are lectionary assigned. This means that only 7.72% of the Bible’s verses are systematically preached in sermons over the lectionary’s 3 year cycle. Having control of the “lectionary” has been how religious officials have exceedingly cheated people as a matter of course!

Matthew has... 654 verses in the lectionary.

Mark has 451 verses in the lectionary.

Luke has 694 verses in the lectionary.

John has..... 608 verses in the lectionary.

Total = 2407 Gospel verses assigned in the lectionary.

2407 Gospel verses/31173 Bible Verses = 7.72%

Only 7.72% of the Bible’s verses are “traditionally” and conveniently used for sermons, over and over and over. About **92.28% of the Bible’s verses are largely ignored for sermons.**

Church “authorities” have long preferred that people not realize this!

Church councils need to exercise more control!

There is just enough "variety" in the lectionary's scripture assignments over its 3 year cycle to keep "the sheep" confused, overwhelmed, and not sufficiently expert to recognize that they are habitually getting repeated services and sermon leftovers from previous ministry.

Laziness in ministry is protected!

Omitted Gospel Verses

These and many other verses are very unlikely to be preached about in traditional mainline denominational churches because they are not included in the lectionary’s assignments:

From Matthew:

Matt. 13:34-35 The use of Parables; counterparts in Mark 4:10-12 and Luke 8: 9-10 are also omitted.

Matt. 23:13-39 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

Matt. 24:45-51 Faithful and Unfaithful Slave; counterpart in Luke 12:41-48 is also omitted.

From Mark:

All 3 of the following stories from Mark 8: 11-26 are omitted:

1. Demand for a sign; counterpart from Matt. 16:1-4 is also omitted.
2. The Yeast and the Pharisees and of Herod; counterpart from Matt. 16:5-12 is also omitted.
3. Jesus cures the blind man who saw people who looked like trees walking.

Mark 11: 20-25 Jesus curses fig tree and the lesson; counterpart from Matt. 21:18-19; 20-22 is also omitted.

From Luke:

Luke 16:14-18 Pharisees were lovers of selves and money.

Luke 17:20-37 Kingdom Of GOD is among you; cataclysmic event [Noah].

Luke 19:41-44 Jesus weeps over Jerusalem and promises destruction.

From John:

John 7:1-36 Unbelief of Jesus’ brothers; Jesus reconsiders and goes to Jerusalem.

John 8:1-30 Woman caught in adultery, light of the world, Jesus foretells his death.

John 8:37-38 Jesus not welcomed.

John 10: 19-21 Unbelief is challenged.

John 16:1-3 They will put you out of the synagogues.

This is a small example of Gospel verses that are essentially ignored in worship and preaching by denominations that have used the Revised Common Lectionary and/or the Roman Catholic Lectionary from Vatican II.

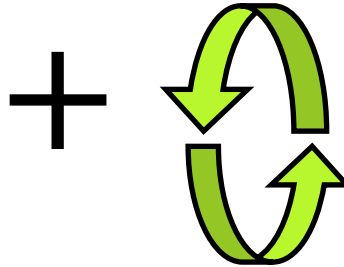
14 How “Services” Fleece the Sheep

Major Concerns for Worship & Preaching:

Because most clergy follow the lectionary as “tradition” (and as part of their assigned liturgical format), clergy therefore almost always preach sermons that come from only the assigned readings of the 4 Gospels. The other scriptures that are read for worship services are mostly only read and rarely, if ever, preached about. The Old Testament reading, the Psalm reading, and the Epistle reading are almost always left hanging with **NO PREACHING OR TEACHING** about them after they are read during a worship service. **This is a major reason why many people find worship services to be confusing and/or boring.** The same scriptures are also “recycled” every 3 years (along with many sermons...). Both the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) and the closely related Roman Catholic Lectionary operate on a schedule of years A, B, and C. When year C is done, year A is started again with the same readings. Much of the Bible is systematically ignored in congregations, for decades and even centuries. The lectionary has hidden much of the Bible from view.



**Recycled Lectionary
Services & Sermons**



=



Many pastors use sermons that are available from internet sources.

An example is at <http://www.DesperatePreacher.Com>.

DeperatePreacher.com buys sermons (paying \$35 each) and makes them available to its subscribers.

Other websites are [Lectionary.Org](http://www.Lectionary.Org) and [SermonMall.com](http://www.SermonMall.com).

Search the internet for others with the words “sermons,” “preaching,” and “lectionary.” Denominational names are also helpful.

The 3 Big Reasons Causing Biblical Illiteracy

1) Preaching “*just a little scripture*” is standard!

Writing sermons by using scriptures from outside of the lectionary’s assigned readings is done rather rarely, resulting in there being less to preach about. This “tradition” is largely a habit for preachers stemming from their seminary educations. This “seminary tradition” stresses using only verses for sermons that are assigned by the lectionary’s selected Gospel texts. Similarly, most sermon preparation manuals that are used by mainline pastors/priests also encourage using only scriptures that are found in the lectionary assignments, most especially the verses from the four Gospels. As many clergy of traditional denominations prefer to both follow and promote this paradigm, they therefore preach from only 7.72% of the Bible’s verses over the Revised Common Lectionary’s (RCL’s) 3 year cycle. (2407 Gospel verses divided by 31173 Bible verses = 7.72%) Breaking this down further, only about 2.57% of the Bible’s verses are regularly considered for preaching by many mainline denominational clergy during the typical course of a single year (7.72%/3years = only 2.57% per year). Because preaching is intended to be the much utilized method of discipleship/teaching, these low percentages are THE PRIMARY CAUSE for widespread biblical illiteracy!

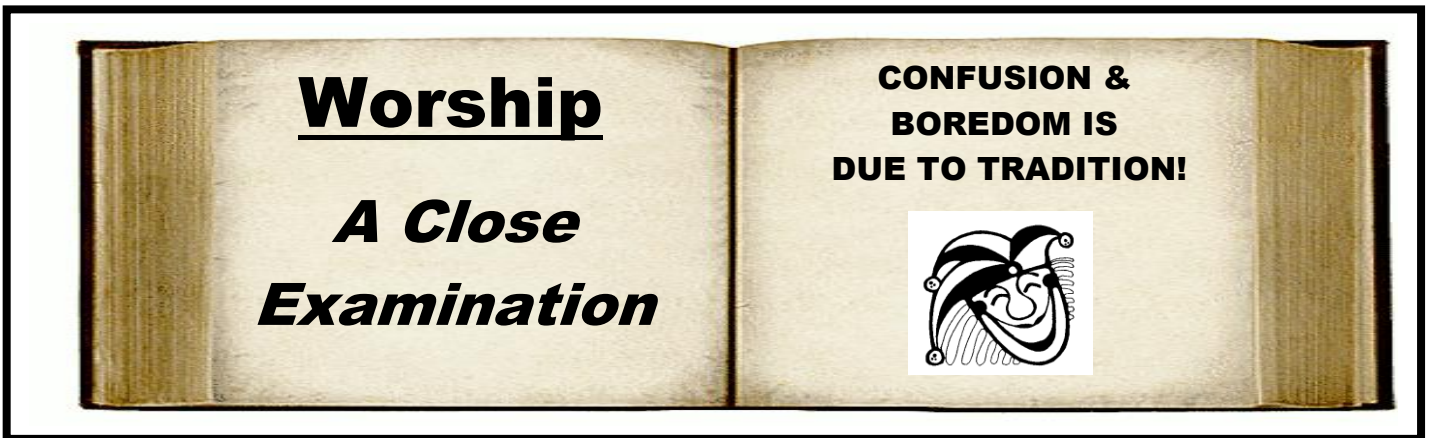
2) Short Sermons!

Short sermons are THE SECOND MOST IMPORTANT CAUSE of biblical illiteracy over the centuries. Pastor David S. Luecke once found through a study survey that 2 out of 3 Lutheran pastors (LCMS & ELCA denominations) preach for less than 15 minutes, with younger pastors trending toward the shorter sermons. The article generally asserts that much of the Lutheran Church is void of “trendsetters” who consider preaching to be the most important part of a worship service. It is much the same for other mainline denominations as well. Dr. Luecke’s article is called “Trends Among Lutheran Preachers,” and it is linked at Lectionarylite.com.

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3. Uncoordinated Readings & Confusing Services

This is THE THIRD MOST IMPORTANT CAUSE of biblical illiteracy throughout lectionary history, but it is perhaps the most neurotic! Mainline denominational worship services that use the lectionary use the four standard readings which are: (1) an Old Testament reading, (2) a Psalm reading, (3) an Epistle reading, and (4) a final reading from the four Gospels. The Gospel reading is almost always the sermon topic. These four scripture readings are very often NOT coordinated, SURPRISE SURPRISE!



OT and Gospel readings from the lectionary theoretically “complement,” but even if they marginally complement, it is over only part of the year!

(See the CCT’s claims from 2008 on the bottom of page 31.)

THE PROBLEM IS:

The Psalm and Epistle readings are read in an order (often 2nd and 3rd) which separates the “theoretically” complementing OT and Gospel readings, thus causing CONFUSION and ultimately BOREDOM in church services!

READING ORDER

1. OT Reading
2. Psalm Reading
3. Epistle Reading
4. Gospel Reading

Examine Scripture Readings Yourself!

- 1) Read Dr. Walter Sundberg’s article “Limitations of the Lectionary” for more information about disjointed and unrelated scripture readings in worship services. Go to ClergySecrets.com.
- 2) Try examining scripture assignments from the Revised Common Lectionary & the closely related Roman Catholic Lectionary yourself! Ask yourself whether they complement or confuse...

How “Services” Fleece the Sheep 17

The Consultation on Common Texts (CCT) tried to explain non-complementary scripture readings in 2007:

The CCT Says:



In 2007

“In that same time, the preacher should notice that the second (New Testament Epistle) reading proceeds from week to week on a continuous chapter-by-chapter course, and so there will be no obvious correlation between that lesson and the Gospel or the Old Testament. So on those Sundays the three readings [OT, Gospel, & Epistle], which have deliberately no thematic interrelationship, are all proceeding on a continuous or semi-continuous track. If this were thought curious or troublesome, it should be remembered that such an ‘in course’ sequence of reading is borrowed directly from the synagogue’s use of the Torah and the subsequent practice of the churches of the first several centuries.” (Underlined emphasis and brackets added.)

Retrieved from the internet in 2007. www.commontexts.org/rc1/faq.html

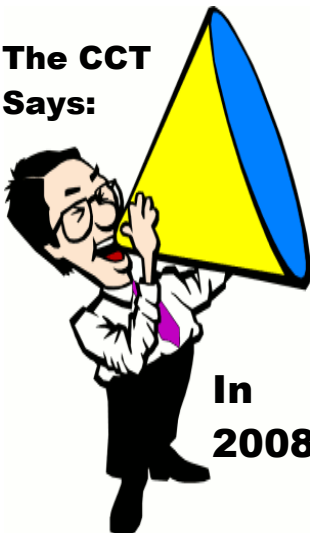
(Perhaps accidentally honest in 2007, the CCT admitted to “no obvious correlation.”)

A Surprising Change on the CCT’s Website in 2008:

(But not really all that “surprising,” cynically speaking.)

The CCT’s quote from 2007 was deleted in 2008 with all the answers to their “frequently asked questions.” It was replaced with the following less informative information in 2008. Notice in the 2008 quote below that the CCT tried to positively spin the CCT’s questionable claim that the Old Testament readings are “closely related” to the gospel readings from the First Sunday of Advent to Trinity Sunday and also as one of two “patterns” that occur from Trinity Sunday through the end of every one of the three church years (years A, B, and C).

The CCT Says:



In 2008

The Pattern of Scripture Readings

“From the First Sunday of Advent to Trinity Sunday of each year, the Old Testament reading is closely related to the gospel reading for the day. From the first Sunday after Trinity Sunday to the last Sunday of the church year, provision has been made for two patterns of reading the Old Testament: a complementary series in which the Old Testament reading is closely related to the gospel reading, and a semicontinuous series in which large portions of the Old Testament are read sequentially week to week.”

Retrieved from the internet in 2008

<http://www.commontexts.org/rc1/usingrc1.html>

18 How “Services” Fleece the Sheep

Problems with the CCT’s Statement from 2008

(Refer to previous page.)

1. First of all, the CCT (and its clergy) totally fails to mention or acknowledge the problems associated with uncoordinated and non-complementary scripture readings (see page 30). Both the Psalms’ readings and the Epistles’ readings most often “do their own thing” and their reading comes between the OT and gospel readings. The psalms and epistle readings separate the Old Testament and Gospel readings which are supposedly (according to the CCT) “closely related.” The CCT fails to acknowledge the rather harsh changes in topics that occur during the four readings of a service. The Old Testament readings, the psalm readings, the epistle readings, and the gospel readings are almost always not coordinated as a group except for perhaps on major holidays. Because of the order that verses are read in services, typically with the psalm reading and the epistle reading in the middle, whatever important “close relatedness” that there is between the Old Testament reading and the gospel reading becomes disjointed. This is why church is often confusing and boring for people! It is why many church jokes exist! → Read Dr. Walter Sundberg’s article “Limitations of the Lectionary,” which concerns the disjointedness of scripture readings for worship. It is linked at ClergySecrets.com.

2. The “relatedness” that the CCT claims to exist between the OT readings and the Gospel readings is also quite suspect. For instance, during the first season of every church year, Advent, the Old Testament readings reflect the Hebrew (Jewish) wait for the Messiah while the gospel readings reflect either the birth of Jesus or Jesus’ Second Coming. While the Old Testament reading and the gospel reading generally reflect the idea of “God coming”, there are actually many subjects about “God coming” that can be quite different and various. At best, worshippers get only a very quick exposure to various ideas having to do with “God coming” in the Old Testament and Gospel readings during Advent. The usual 10-15 minute sermon may or may not reflect any of the specific readings. At best, only a “general relatedness” between the Old Testament readings and the gospel readings can be claimed. The “closeness” and “relatedness” between the Old Testament readings and the gospel readings is similarly questionable during the other seasons of the church year as well, along other topics.

3. There is a large period of time each year called “Ordinary Time” which consumes either 33 or 35 Sunday in each of the three rotating church years (A, B, & C). Much of “Ordinary Time” contains the “semi-continuous series in which large portions of the Old Testament are read sequentially week to week” (quoted from the CCT’s 2008 statement on page 31). This means that the OT readings will not often directly correlate with the other scripture readings which are on their own various cycles as well which are not “led” by the OT reading. Such a large period thus does not leave much time in the rest of a year for hardly any services where the scripture readings can supposedly “closely relate.” The “relatedness” claim of the CCT becomes a very lax and practically nonexistent concept. (Talk about causing confusion and ultimately boredom!)

Bureaucratic smoke and mirrors....from the CCT!

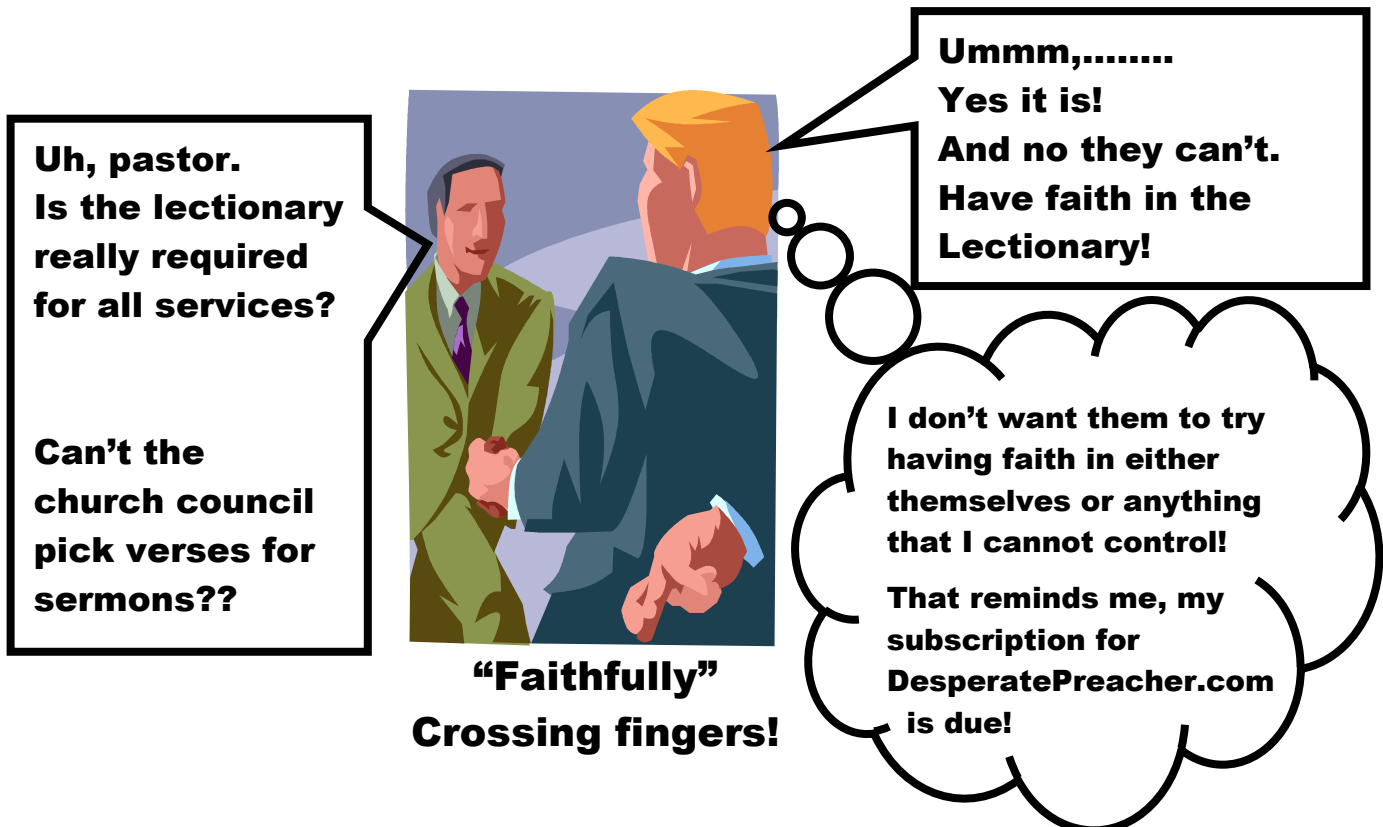
How “Services” Fleece the Sheep 19

Worship Services Confuse & Dishonestly Reinforce Clergy as “Authorities”

By presenting unrelated and unconnected scripture readings out of full context and without explanation in worship services, the lectionary is able to take something which should be for spiritual nourishment and turn it into something with which church authorities (clergy) can use to appear as authoritative, mystical, and important. Instead of understanding and gaining spiritual nourishment, the congregation only hears the words; - they feel that there is something important, but they also know that they don't quite see what it is; the result is that they look to the clergy to explain it. When it is not explained and understood, the congregation gets tired, bored, and surrenders to the idea that it is easier to just listen to “whatever” clergy say.

(See Dr. Walter Sundberg's article, “Limitations of the Lectionary” which concerns the disjointedness of worship scripture readings. It is linked at Lectionarylite.com and ClergySecrets.com.)

“Tradition” and its tyranny are so rarely examined or questioned!



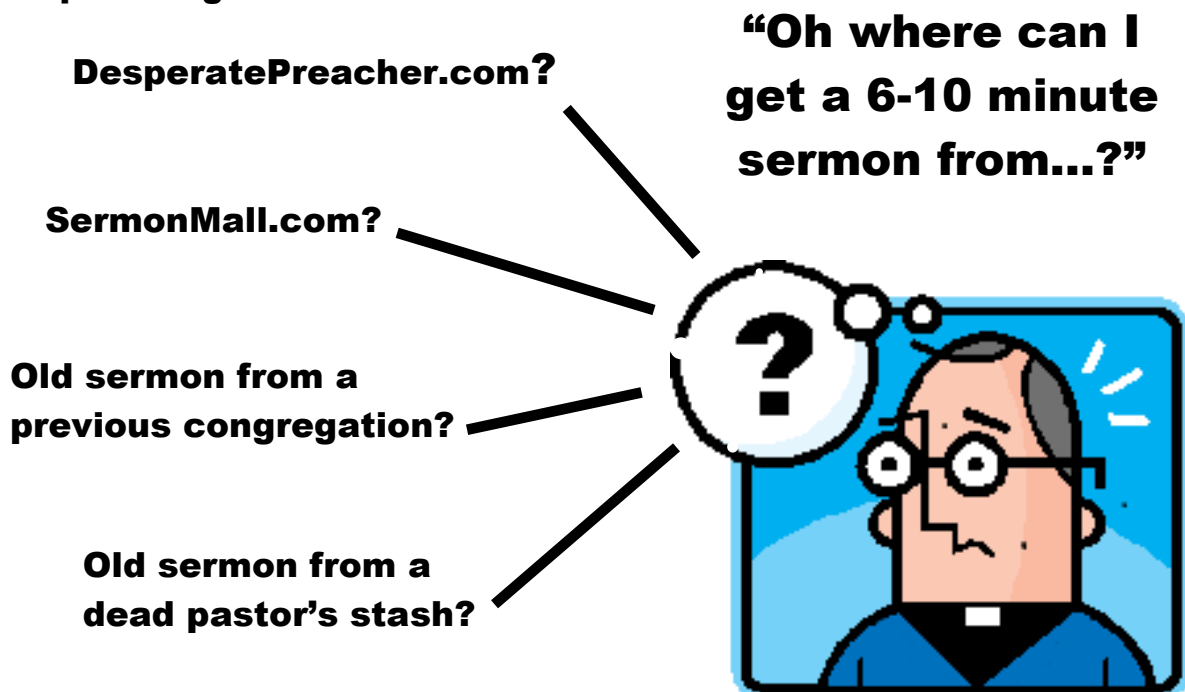
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The Cartel of Denominations

The following is a general definition of “cartel” from Wikipedia.com.

Modifications specifically concerning “church” have been added in red, with brackets, and underlined. www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cartel.

CARTEL: A *cartel* is a formal (explicit) agreement among *competing* firms [or denominations]. It is a formal organization of producers and manufacturers [like the Consultation on Common Texts, aka the “CCT”] that agree to fix prices, marketing, and production [rerun services and sermons]. Cartels usually occur in an oligopolistic industry, where there is a small number of sellers and usually involve homogeneous products [rerun services and sermons]. Cartel members may agree on such matters as price fixing, total industry output, market shares, allocation of customers, allocation of territories, bid rigging, establishment of common sales agencies, and the division of profits or combination of these. The aim of such collusion (also called the cartel agreement) is to increase individual members' profits [church profits] by reducing competition [and dishonestly reducing work]. www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cartel



The lectionary uses only a small fraction of the Bible, which allows for many conveniently repeating services and sermons every three years throughout the mainline denominations. The lectionary is central to the denominational cartel known as the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT) of Nashville, TN.

PREACH THE EPISTLES **FOR SOMETHING DIFFERENT!** 😊

The Epistles, and really most everything from Acts through Revelation, explains what Christianity is about with more specifics. Preaching from the Epistles would be a welcome change from the overbearing tendency that clergy have to preach mostly from the scriptures of the 4 Gospels that are assigned by the lectionary. The Epistles are much neglected when the lectionary is followed for mainline denominational worship and preaching. It is probably just easier to follow the “tradition” and spend time with the story lines about Jesus in the 4 Gospels than it is to wade into the deeper and more introspective theology of the Epistles. The typical use of the lectionary, by most clergy, lacks boldness in this fashion.

Pardon the author’s Lutheran background, but Martin Luther made the following interesting comments about the lectionary’s bias in the 16th century. They are from Luther’s Works, Volume 53, pages 23 & 24 (American Edition) in the chapter titled “An Order of Mass and Communion for The Church At Wittenberg.”

QUOTING MARTIN LUTHER: “After this the Epistle is read. Certainly the time has not yet come to attempt revision here [**of the Roman Catholic Lectionary of the 16th Century**], except that those parts from the Epistles of Paul in which faith is taught are read only rarely, while the exhortations to morality are most frequently read. The Epistles [**lectionary readings from New Testament books**] seem to have been chosen by a singularly unlearned and superstitious advocate of works. But for the service those sections in which faith in Christ is taught should have been given preference.”

- Martin Luther. (Underlined comments in brackets were added for additional explanation.)

(Continued on the next page.)

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It is clear Martin Luther had a respect for the order of the mass/worship service and that he valued the inclusion of the Epistle reading. Luther however also makes it clear that he saw many Epistles being either ignored or used by church officials to cunningly elevate their own perceived “authority” over people rather than righteously encouraging people to recognize their own abilities.

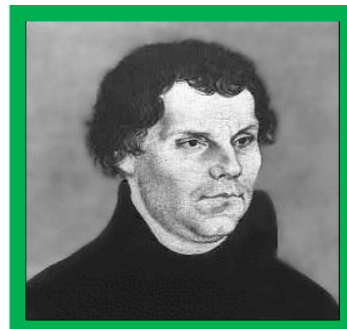
Such though is how the lectionary has often been deceitfully used. It has often been quite a self-serving “tradition” for church officials - to say the least!

A church bureaucracy and its “officials” are often therefore not honest or unbiased when putting together a lectionary for preaching and “worship”! Any lectionary, after all, reflects the biases of the “officials” who chose the included scriptures. And sadly, thanks to the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) and the Roman Catholic Lectionary, Martin Luther’s comment that “...the Epistles of Paul in which faith is taught are read only rarely” is still a problem even now in the 21st Century! Almost 100% of Lutheran clergy still do NOT even pay attention to what Luther had said about ignoring the Epistles!

Martin Luther

(1483 – 1546)

**A Key Pragmatist of
the Reformation**



“Traditional” Lazy Reasons
that Clergy Give for
Using the Lectionary,
Plus Honest Responses!

LAZY CLAIM #1: “The lectionary keeps pastors from preaching only what they want to preach.”

HONEST RESPONSE: Surprisingly, this statement chooses to trust the lectionary over pastors themselves. The idea is that the lectionary gives pastors scriptures and topics that the pastor has not personally chosen. **There is truth in that, but perhaps the time has come for church councils to pick scriptures to preach instead of the lectionary!!** It is also honest to say that the lectionary will **HARDLY** ever keep clergy from putting their own “slant” on whatever scriptures are preached anyway.

Let us however be real honest at this point. Clergy primarily want to follow the lectionary because it is easier to “borrow” (i.e. copy) sermons every week than it is to deeply investigate and integrate other scripture in order to preach in-depth on crucial subjects. That’s what church “authorities” really want, and that’s what they do. Clergy really have no negative consequences to deter them. They are practically 100% insulated from “being caught in the act” of “slacking” when using the lectionary. Using the lectionary as a ready-made format for worship and preaching is (1) easy to execute, (2) not easily vulnerable to detection, and (3) not easily assailable. Lectionary is however quite dishonest as most church-goers have not been honestly informed by “clergy.”

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LAZY CLAIM #2: “The Books of the Bible are heard virtually in total, or in large part.”

HONEST RESPONSE: The lectionary is often described in rather supportive, benevolent, and glowing terms by clergy. Deception about the lectionary by clergy is however “legion.” Clergy often make reassuring lies about how much of the Bible is used. But let's be honest. Most people will not question “church officials” because they are seen “holy ” and having a lot of “right education” from official denominational sources.

Just remember: (1) Some 90.4% of the Old Testament is omitted from the lectionary (exclusive of Psalms, which are a separate reading.) (2) Some 48.6% of Psalms’ verses are also omitted. (3) Some 49.9% of the New Testament is additionally omitted from the lectionary. (4) The assigned Gospel verses from the lectionary, which are almost always used for sermons, are only 7.72% of the Bible’s verses, meaning that some 92.28% of the Bible’s verses overall are essentially ignored for sermons!

**“They must find it difficult...Those who have taken ‘authority’ as the truth, rather than truth as the authority.” -- Gerald Massey
(English Poet 1828 - 1907)**

LAZY CLAIM #3: “The Lectionary allows listeners to ‘hear the voice’ of each scripture writer week by week, rather than the readings being selected by a theme or topic.”

HONEST RESPONSE: The concept of "*hearing the voice of each writer*" of each scripture reading seems initially to be a nice and cozy idea. In actuality, listening to the typical four readings in a service is tantamount to reading a paragraph from four different articles in a magazine. Besides, highly often (like 95% of the time or more) only the Gospel reading will be preached about. The other readings are read for “spiritual purposes” only and usually will not be preached about. **NO WONDER PEOPLE OFTEN FIND CHURCH TO BE BORING AND CONFUSING!!** It seems too that the lectionary is often asserted by clergy as being more “holy”, valid, and important than what worshippers (and church councils) feel a need to hear about! **ISN’T THAT INTERESTING?!!**

“None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe that they are free.”

**Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.
(German Philosopher 1749-1832)**

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LAZY CLAIM #4: “The Lectionary creates a common ‘togetherness’ for the denominations.”

HONEST RESPONSE: The lectionary is a tool of laziness and control. That is what why church officials want a “common togetherness” among the denominations.

Does it not seem peculiar that many people do not even know the word "lectionary" or know that the CCT (Consultation on Common Texts) lectionary organization of denominations even exists in Nashville, TN?? Denominations are assumed to be so "independent," but they will quietly set that aside for something that makes everything "easier" for them collectively.

Clergy like the lectionary because they can easily access ready-made sermons from many sources. Clergy trade sermons by using internet websites and journals. Clergy also rerun their sermons from their previous years of ministry.

Hmmm, people assume that pastors pray heavily about writing sermons. Oops! There goes that dishonest myth!

**Clergy have PREFERRED
to keep people
in the dark about the
lectionary!**



How “Services” Fleece the Sheep 27

FORSAKEN PROSPERITY VERSES

REWORDED AS CONFESSIONS

In addition to the TEN COMMANDMENTS, many other prosperity verses and promises in the Bible have often been ignored by
(1) not being in the assigned lectionary, and also by
(2) clergy church officials wanting to preach only “safe sermons.”

The following reflects only a small sample of such ignored verses.

(For a very comprehensive list of the Bible’s promises, a book called “God’s Promises”, by Dr. A.L. Gill, has hundreds of examples of God’s promises for every area of life.)

I find favor in the sight of God and man. (Proverbs 3:4) * I have the blessing of the Lord; it makes me rich and adds no sorrow with it. (Proverbs 10:22) *** God does supply all my needs according to His riches in Glory. (Philippians 4:19) *** I thank you Father for teaching me how to understand parables and thus also your Word. (Matt.13:34-35, Mark 4:10-12, and Luke 8:9-10) *** I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. (Philippians 4:13) *** God’s ears are open to my prayers. (1 Peter 3:12) *** I am a believer and in the name of Jesus Christ I cast out devils, I speak with new tongues, and when I lay my hands on the sick they do recover. (Mark 16: 17-18) *** Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world. (1 John 4:4) *** I am far from oppression and fear does not come near me. (Isaiah 54:14) *** I am a believer and these signs do follow me. I speak with new tongues, I take authority over the devil, I lay hands on the sick and they recover. (Mark 16:17-18) *** In my pathway is life and there is no death. (Proverbs 12:28) *** I am submitted to God and the devil flees from me because I resist him in Jesus’ name. (James 4:7) My peace is great because I’m God’s child and I’m taught of the Lord. (Isaiah 54:13) *** That it is fulfilled for me which was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, “He took my infirmities and bore my sicknesses”. (Matthew 8:17)*** I speak unto mountains and they are removed, thrown into the sea, for I do not doubt in my heart that the things I pray for will come to pass. (Mark 11:23-24) *** Whatsoever I ask of the Father, in Jesus’ name, he will give me, that my joy may be full. (John 16:23-24) *** I abound in the things of God; neither will I be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:9) *** I thank you Father that you are alert and active watching over Your Word to perform it in my life. (Jeremiah 1:12) *** I thank you Father that no weapon that is formed or fashioned against me shall prosper. (Isaiah 54:17) *** I overcome by the blood of Jesus and the Word. (Revelation 12:11)**

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A New Definition for the Lectionary:

The lectionary is an assigned and repeating set of bureaucratically chosen Bible verses that are used for worship and preaching. The diabolical “genius” of the lectionary is that it creates an aura/mysticism/illusion that portrays “ministry” and worship services (in particular) as being “complicated”. This however is counter to actual lectionary practices which allow for the easiest, safest, and most economically profitable methods of ministry to be followed. The lectionary promotes many repeating ministerial shortcuts that require the least amount of skill while still allowing clergy to bask in the false lime-light of their dishonest and false altruistic “authority.”

Closely Examine **Lectionary Services!!!**

Regardless of which lectionary is used, whether it is the Revised Common Lectionary, the Roman Catholic Lectionary, or some other lectionary, checking to see what scriptures are actually covered and preached about in each service is important.

It is crucial to actually know if one is investing one’s time and money well at church or if church authorities are yet again creating patterns to help themselves gain adulation, praise, and power by the easiest means available, which would be in addition to their generally “rendering the Word to no effect (Matthew 15:6 and Mark 7:13),” causing confusion, and boring people!

About the “Daily Lectionary”:

The “Daily Lectionary” is a publication that came out in 2005. It was designed and written by the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT) organization of Nashville, TN. The CCT is the same organization that created the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL).

✓ **A comment about the CCT’s new “Daily Lectionary”:**

The list of articles on page 18 along with pages 30-33 of CLERGY SECRETS detail how the Sunday lectionary’s scripture assignments are quite often not coordinated or complementary with each other. A “daily lectionary” that supposedly “complements” the Sunday lectionary readings will therefore have the same disjointed problems. The “Daily Lectionary” adds more complicating twists and turns to an already confusion-filled weekly Sunday lectionary. Disjointedness and “unrelatedness” rule them both!

The “Daily Lectionary” dishonestly sends the subliminal message that church is “complicated.” It also implies that the creators and users of the lectionary (church bureaucracy) must therefore be “in charge,” practically without question. It is a lie from the pit of Hell! It is a lie that turns people (“the sheep”) into cash-cows for the benefit of lazy clergy who seek adulation, praise, and power by the easiest (laziest) means available!

DOES IT NOT SEEM STRANGE??

Does it not seem strange that unrelated scriptures are ever read in worship services? It is such a neurotic exercise! The “*habit/tradition*” of copying “*Torah tradition*” from 2000 years ago (see CCT comments from 2007 on page 31) which hops and skips through the Bible to pick verses that are preferred by the “bureaucracy” causes much confusion!

Consider, is the goal of modern church tradition possibly to produce confusion and boredom? Confusion and boredom seem to be what the CCT wants for worshippers. Its “traditions” help to make ministry and worship to appear as “complicated” in order to enhance the aura and illusion of clergy being in “authority.” Could such similar confusion, boredom, and the fake appearance of “complicated ministry” in the traditional synagogues be reason why Jesus stopped “closely relating” with them? It is very likely!

Church councils should reserve the right to pick verses for sermons, and actually do so regularly!

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Does having essentially the same scripture assignments help the mainline denominations? A lot of evidence says “no.” Just type in the words “mainline” and “decline” into any internet search engine and you will be referenced to many articles that discuss the many problems and decline of traditional denominations.

THE “SHEEP” MUST ROAR!

- 1) Have church councils independently assign scriptures for preaching and set aside the lectionary!
- 2) Make “church officials” teach and preach from verses that are from outside of the lectionary’s “traditional” assignments!
- 3) Experiment with allowing regular members to preach!
- 4) Be open to new information & reason!

Always consider 1 Thessalonians 5:21,

²¹ “Test all things; hold fast what is good.”

A Modern Rewrite of Mark 7:6-8

If Jesus were to speak to modern church officials about ministry, he could simply paraphrase what he said to the Pharisees and the scribes in Mark 7:6-8, in the following fashion.

⁶ He answered and said to the 21st Century church officials, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written:

*‘ This people honors Me with their lips,
But their heart is far from Me.*

⁷ *And in vain they worship Me,
Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’*

⁸ “For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men—using the lectionary with its *‘easiest means available’* repeating patterns for the sake of your own secret laziness and greed, and many other such things you do.”

(Paraphrased from the NKJV)

Brood of Vipers!

**“How can you, being evil, speak good things?”
- Jesus (Matthew 12:34 NKJV)**

**Shouldn't More Honesty Be Expected
of “Religious Officials?”**

**For many “Levitical” religious officials,
their love of authority is a love of money.
The love of money is, of course, the root
of all evil! (1 Timothy 6:10)**

Communion is NOT a Monopoly!

**Jesus did not die to make a requirement
that “clergy” lead Communion.**

**Dishonest crazies lead churches now. They
deserve no monopolies regarding Communion.**

**People could be more spiritual by doing Communion
themselves daily instead of giving “religious officials”
a weekend monopoly that only supports
their imposing application of “clergy authority.”**

Church Councils Should
Pick Verses for Sermons
& Preaching!

And also authorize the sources (internet, journals, etc.)
that preachers can get old sermons from!

A RECOMMENDED READ

**Rendering unto Caesar:
Was Jesus a socialist?
by Lawrence W. Reed**

www.fee.org/resources/rendering-unto-caesar-was-jesus-a-socialist/

**Did Jesus make a loophole for
dishonest socialist government by
saying "Render unto Caesar?"
NO!! Checkout the above article.**

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