



Death by Chocolate

By now everybody knows the desert Death by Chocolate. It's usually some super-chocolaty cake, maybe with four layers of chocolate or five layers of chocolate. Or it could be some other kind of densely-chocolated desert with an unspeakably sweet flavor, as if layer upon layer of the dark substance had been folded over

onto each other and then crushed together. I imagine an ancient sword-maker folding it and hammering it, folding it and hammering just like he might do to make the densest and deadliest sword. Except this isn't death by sword. This is Death by Chocolate. And it kills.*

There is a comparable phenomenon to this desert in the modern church world. A kind of super-sweet heavy syrupy sugary confection that kills. But we won't call this confection Death by Chocolate. We'll call it Death by Evangelical.** It's the kind of sachariny and vacuous modern religion that the church world has devolved into. It's the kind of religio-phenomenon that leaves anyone who respects the good doctrines and common sense discipline characteristic of the Church for centuries wearing themselves out muttering – Is nothing sacred – over and over. It's a death by sweetness we'll say. A death by bliss. A death by Evangelical.

Anyone on my side of the fence knows what I'm talking about without me getting into great detail, but I'll just put out a few details of this deadly toxin masquerading as a real food to make things clear. Number one is the laughably populist nature of the modern church. Any individual or any small group can get up off their couch one day, and claim to be a "church." We're not talking about having a home group here. We're talking about claims to have the anointing of the Church,



the mantle of the Church, with nothing other than their personal discernment, and whoever out there also likes them. Why should anyone take this seriously? And really, if you can ding yourself on the head with a magic wand and claim to have an anointing like Moses, why can't I do the same thing? And if I can do the same thing, why should I come to your church or respect it as a church in the first place? See what I'm saying here? It's kind of weak when anyone and everyone gets to run a church, and that's understatement.

Number two, and perhaps the most serious, is the total lack of respect for holiness and standards. That includes everything from morality to basic Christian mores. For example, just try and get your local church to get their congregants/parishioners to show up with modest clothing. Except for some very small and closely-knit sects out there, your chances of having any success are probably under one percent. Many churches don't want standards. They want popularity. That's the bottom line. And that's why you'll see people showing up for "church" half-dressed or in sports gear. It's this lack of standards that makes me naturally name the modern Evangelical world after a syrupy sweet desert. Because it feels good to let it all hang out. It feels good to not have to enforce rules. It feels good to avoid all possible conflict. So be it. This is syrupy sweetness at its worst.

The lack of moral standards extends to things much more weighty than modesty. It extends to entire churches (and I'm including the more orthodox ones here too) which refuse to explicitly teach moral standards or the good codes of conduct that uphold them. The common response today is that if we actually have set standards and codes of conduct, that will make us legalists and it's very bad to be a legalist. But this is nonsensical! The very apostle Paul encouraged morality in some specific language. Not only that, but apostle Paul instructed a church to approach those members who were sinning boldly (in this case having an open affair between family members) and tell them to either repent or leave. That's right. You heard correctly – Repent or leave. If these standards are good enough for the apostle they are certainly good enough for us. Our churches and communities need standards, and the good ethical codes that help uphold them.

Following along with this soft and flaccid modern church is what I'll mention as number three—the soft and flaccid feminization of the church. That's not just the feminization of biblical truth into something like chewing gum, but the literal importing of women into positions that the



word of God does not permit them. In fact the church is so feminized in some parts today, you'd think you were in a day care. I understand why so many stay away. There are women violating the limits that God places on them in ministry in all areas, from preaching from the pulpit, to actually calling themselves pastors.

Furthermore, this aberrant practice is embarrassingly upheld by some of the worst exegesis (interpretation) that you're ever going to hear. That means the problem isn't just anti-biblical gender-bending, but also popularizing terrible forms of interpretation, forms that will likely be misused elsewhere. And the fallback excuse for this laughable practice, if you've managed to point out the problems in the feminist exegesis, is to claim – Well, the males do have an “authoritative” teaching role, but women can still preach from the pulpit in a less than authoritative way. But this is

silliness, and brings us back to reason number one above – the populist degeneracy of the church. For if they have just profaned the pulpit in a way that it is now an “unauthoritative” church forum, why should you and I really respect it? After all, I have my own unauthoritative church forum at home. It is called my LIVING ROOM COUCH. It actually shocks me that the scoundrels who have feminized the church still desire respect as pastors. They have made a laughing stock of their own position. Why should they ask for such a high level of respect?

This brings us nicely around to our final point about the modern church which is really point one again in disguise – that many fewer of the above abuses would have happened if not for the large-scale disunity of the church. There are tens of thousands of sects and nearly any one of them can nearly any day teach nearly any doctrine. Furthermore, if various thousands of sects want to do anything religious together, the only way to do that is to completely ignore various doctrines, otherwise it would never happen. They'd never manage to get together anything more than a small barbecue. Thus, they are forced to become a conspiracy of back-smackers. That means no matter what ridiculous practice or aberrant doctrine your “ministry”

friends come up with, you are obliged to keep smiling and smacking their back. Nearly anything goes then. At least among back-smackers. And that is most sects.

Of course as I say throughout the various pages here, Kodesh Kallah as a website and an organization is not just about presenting the awful problems in the Church. It is also about presenting solutions. A major part of that solution amounts to nothing more than Restoration.



Restoration of good practices and doctrines that have been recklessly tossed out of the Body of Messiah. Restoration of our holy lifestyles as individual believers and as entire congregations. I even present here a few first steps we can take towards a unity of the Church, a bringing together of the badly-mutilated Bride. I don't think it will require too much back-smacking. I don't think it will require too much syrupy sweetness either, although a little here and there is nice. I present here real steps toward restoration and holiness. I'd like to ask you to take them seriously, and if you haven't yet, even try a few. As compared to the junk we are currently feeding the Body of Messiah, I believe they count as real food and drink. As true sustenance. Nutrition. Joy. For the One we worship is the Waters of Life. He is the True vine. He is real food and drink.

Grace and peace to you all.

Tom

**This piece is in no way meant to disparage chocolate or chocolate lovers. In fact many fine people of excellent character love chocolate, and when eaten in moderation, chocolate isn't so bad for you. In fact dark chocolate is believed to have healthful benefits, also when eaten in moderation.*

***While this piece uses the phrase Death by Evangelical, it does not mean to signify that the problems described are unique to those labeled evangelicals. Some similar problems exist among the few traditional Protestants left, as well as within the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Church. Suffice to say, all the problems in the world can't be blamed on evangelicals.*