



The Phone that Rang with no Connection

By Dr. Mark Creech

While visiting Oklahoma City recently for a convention, I had an unusual experience. I'm typically a slow riser in the morning. So the night before I had set the alarm on my phone to stir me at 5:00 a.m. As a back-up, I also called the front desk of the hotel where I was staying and asked that they give me a "wake-up call" for 5:15 a.m.

When the alarm on my phone went off early the next morning, I silenced it and didn't delay getting out of bed, but found my way to the bathroom to begin getting ready for the day. While in the bathroom, the wake-up call from the front desk started ringing the room phone. I didn't bother to leave what I was doing because I assumed if I didn't pick-up the receiver; it would eventually stop ringing on its own. It did for a short time, but would resume ringing again.

So this time I presumed I needed to pick-up the receiver and hang-up the phone and it would end the wake-up call for good, which I did. Nevertheless, within a few minutes the room phone was ringing off the hook once more. This time, I thought maybe the front desk wants to be certain I'm up and about and I need to answer someone on the other end before the wake-up call will finish.

When I answered the phone, a courteous man who said his name was Jim, was on the other end of the line. Jim asked, "Is your phone still ringing from a wake-up call?" I responded, "Yes, and I'm beginning to think this is the wake-up call from hell." Jim laughed and said, "Well, strangely your wake-up call continues to ring incessantly at the front desk and I can't pinpoint the problem to stop it. Would you mind unhooking the phone from the wall and let's see if that ends it?" Reaching down behind the nightstand, I pulled the plug and went back to the bathroom to continue preparing for the day.

Enter "Twilight Zone" music. Within minutes, the phone started to ring again. At this point I asked myself, did I unplug all the necessary cords from the wall? Let me check. When I checked the phone, it was completely unhooked from the wall. Yet it was still ringing!!!

Naturally, unsettled by the matter, I picked up my cell phone and called Jim down at the front desk to ask him if he had any explanation for the phenomena. Jim said he couldn't explain it, but he corroborated that the phone was ringing again at the desk during the same time it was ringing unhooked from the wall in my room.

We both scratched our heads, so to speak, and laughed about the incident and discussed its similarities to a scene from a horror movie. How can a phone ring that has no connection? There was never any technical explanation for what happened. Eerie!!! Really Eerie!!!

Since I told this story to family and friends back home, some have asked why I didn't answer the call when it was disconnected. I responded I didn't really know except that I was so stunned. One friend said, "It might have been a phone call from an angel about your future. It might have been some spirit trying to reach you about your life, perhaps trying to warn you or give you some secret to success."

Although I suspect there is a completely natural explanation for what happened, even if it were an entity trying to reach me, I am unmoved and feel such contact would really not

only be unnecessary, but dubious at best. In fact, it could actually be dangerous and damning. Why? Because everything one needs to know for life and its challenges is contained within the pages of God's Holy Word – the Bible. Any other source can never be fully trusted.

This is not to say God never uses extraordinary means for communicating with people, but even when or if He does, the message legitimately given would never contradict what is revealed in Scripture. An inconsistency would clearly show the dispatch was not from Him.

The apostle Paul gave some pertinent instructions, saying, "But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8). On another occasion the apostle wrote, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (I Timothy 3:16,17).

Any message or messenger that contradicts what God has revealed in the Gospel, should be accursed, says Paul. Moreover, the word translated "adequate" in the last text quoted from the apostle means to be made complete or whole. In other words, the study of the Bible, God's own Word, makes us a whole person and is adequate for every need and equips us for every situation and responsibility.

Brain Harbour once wrote: "For the needs facing modern man – the deterioration of morality, the lack of a firm foundation, fear before the challenges of our time, a lack of hope in the future – the answer is to be found in the Bible...It not only speaks the truth; its truth will set you free." [1]



Like a phone call bypassing its connecting lines, there are many voices that ring out today in seemingly amazing and astonishing ways. We may find their words and the circumstances surrounding them quite alluring, remarkable, and unparalleled. Still, no matter the voices' agencies or channels, there is only one voice that can be trusted implicitly – God's voice – God's voice as revealed in the Scriptures – God's voice as revealed in the living Word – His Son, Jesus Christ. Whether it's a personal or a public test, "Let God be true though everyone were a liar" (Romans 3:4).

Resources:

[1] Harbour, Brian L. *From Cover to Cover*. Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1982. Pg. 225.