



DOCTRINE

ROOTED IN TRUTH

Kingdom of Light

- Jesus has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and brought us into His kingdom of light
- Colossians 1:13–14 and 1 John 2:8–11, 15–17
- Many passages of the New Testament, not just these, emphasize the stark contrast between the kingdoms of this world and the kingdom of God.
- The imagery of the world being the “kingdom of darkness” and God’s kingdom being the “kingdom of light” is just one example.

Kingdom of Light

- If you were lost in the dark without a flashlight and kept tripping over things and struggling to find your way, you would be thrilled if someone showed up with a giant lantern, wouldn't you?
- It's just common sense. Coming to know God through Jesus opens our eyes so we can see what the world around us is really like (Ephesians 1:18).
- So we can understand the dangers and pitfalls and see through the manipulations, lies and schemes of the Devil and keep from falling into his snares (1 Timothy 6:9).

Kingdom of Light

- Yet John said that when the light came into the world, some people rejected it because it exposed their evil deeds; they wanted to stay in the darkness (John 3:19–21). Those of us who have been saved from the kingdom of darkness see that exposing the darkness is a good thing, but those who are stuck in their dark ways can't see that.
- It's like doing an intervention with an addicted family member; they hate you for it because they can't see you are trying to help them. They simply love their addiction too much. They are blinded to the reality of how much it is hurting them.

Kingdom of Light

- The people living in darkness may respond in two opposite ways.
- Some see it as a lighthouse guiding them to safety through the storm. Jesus described it as a “city on a hill,” a refuge from the dark world around them (Matthew 5:14).
- Others will see it as condemnation because they don’t want their dark deeds exposed by the light (Ephesians 5:7–14).
- Regardless of how people respond, our mission is to walk as children of the light, shining His light into the dark places all around us.

Kingdom of Light

- This means choosing to walk in the way of the kingdom, not the “things in the world” (1 John 2:15). John made a clear distinction between these kingdoms.
- One is light, one is darkness; they are opposite.
- You cannot have one foot in God’s kingdom and the other in the kingdom of darkness.
- The phrase “do not love the things of this world” doesn’t mean you can’t love “the world,” as in the people of the world.

Kingdom of Light

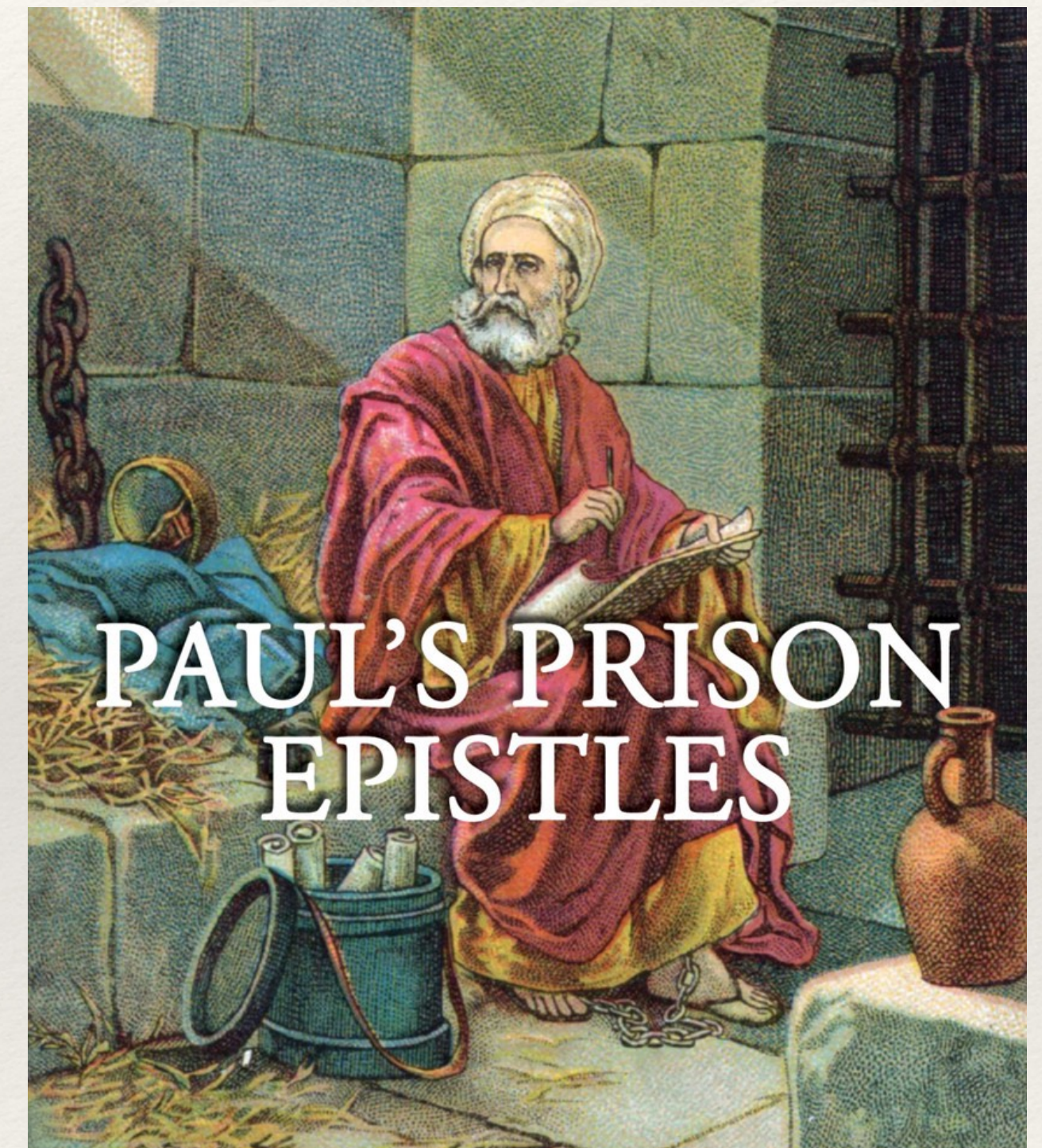
- Of course, we should love them. They are not the enemy; they are those whom we are trying to rescue.
- It also doesn't mean you can't love the "things" of the world such as art, music, family, sports, nature and so on. Those things are good gifts God gives us in this life, which are meant to be enjoyed in moderation.
- When John told us not to love the "things in the world" he meant the sinful desires of the kingdom of darkness, the things that come from the Enemy, the "prince of this world" (John 14:30).

Kingdom of Light

- When we walk as children of the light, choosing the way of Jesus over the “desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life,” we will not only have happier, healthier, more fulfilling lives ourselves, we will also be a light to the world around us.
- People will see the spiritual fruit of joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, etc. in our lives and be drawn to the light of the Holy Spirit in us.
- Some people may hate our light because it naturally exposes the truth of the evil in the world around us, but many will be thankful that we “turned on the light” and showed them the way to truth, safety, joy and abundant life.

Two Kingdoms

- These two kingdoms are engaged in a spiritual battle
- Ephesians 6:10–18
- Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians while he was in prison in Rome, waiting to see if he would be executed for his faith.
- Ephesians is a more general letter that doesn't address one specific situation in one particular church.



Two Kingdoms

- It was written as a “circular letter” to be distributed to all the churches.
- It emphasizes the Church as the body of Christ and encourages unity among all believers. The letter ended by talking about the spiritual battle all believers are engaged in all the time, a war with the spiritual forces of darkness in the heavenly realm (6:10–18).
- This isn't a situation unique to the Ephesians at this time. Spiritual warfare is a battle in which believers engage – in all times and places, whether they realize it or not.

Two Kingdoms

- When it comes to spiritual warfare, Christians fall on two extremes.
- Either they don't take Satan seriously and don't believe he is really working in their lives, or they make too much of Satan and blame everything on him.
- Peter agreed that Satan is real and constantly on the prowl, looking for people to attack (1 Peter 5:8).
- John said we don't need to be afraid of Satan, because the One who is in us is greater than the one who is in the world (1 John 4:4). We know which side is stronger and who will have the ultimate victory.

Two Kingdoms

- Every choice we make is ultimately a spiritual decision. With every decision we make, we either further God's kingdom or the kingdom of the world. We either participate in the deeds of darkness or bring the light of Christ to the world.
- Our struggle is not against flesh and blood (other human beings), it's against the "spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."
- Therefore, our weapons and armor must be spiritual. Paul described it as "the whole armor of God" – righteousness, truth, faith, salvation, the gospel of peace and the Word of God.

Two Kingdoms

- Most of the “armor of God” is defensive protection from “the flaming darts of the evil one.”
- This imagery is a bit misleading in the English translation. This ancient Roman weapon was a huge catapult that shot a bolt that could be set on fire.
- The Roman shields were large and rectangular.
- A group of soldiers could use them together in the “tortoise formation” to not only protect them from a frontal attack but also from those projectiles launched from the catapults.

Roman Armor



Two Kingdoms

- The armor of God is not meant to be used alone, just as no Roman soldier would go into battle alone.
- We are to go into this battle as a unified body of Christ, protecting one another.
- Over and over, Paul said to stand firm in the Lord.
- Just as God told His people in the Exodus, the conquest, and the monarchy of the Old Testament, we need to stand firm in the Lord and let Him fight for us (Exodus 14:14; Joshua 3:5; 1 Samuel 12:16).

Two Kingdoms

- The only offensive weapon mentioned in the armor is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.
- We use the Word of God to fight the lies of the Devil with the truth of God's Word, as Jesus did when Satan tempted Him in the wilderness. He answered every temptation with the Word of God.
- This means we must know God's Word.
- We must study it, understand it, and memorize it – hide it in our hearts – so when Satan tempts us with His lies, we can have the truth ready to answer.

Two Kingdoms

- We cannot forget that every day is a battle against evil.
- Paul said we must take every thought captive to Christ, because the battle often starts in our minds (2 Corinthians 10:5). We struggle with the internal battle between good and evil in our own hearts (Romans 7:14–25) and the external battle with evil in the world around us.
- For both battles, it helps to have a group of soldiers with us – protecting one another, praying for one another, encouraging one another, holding one another accountable, speaking truth to one another, and spurring one another on to love and good works (James 5:16; Hebrews 10:24; Ephesians 4:25; 5:19).

Ambassadors of the Kingdom

- We are ambassadors of the kingdom of God to the kingdom of darkness
- Philippians 3:17–21 and 2 Corinthians 5:17–20
- Paul also wrote Philippians while he was in prison in Rome awaiting the possibility of execution. Philippians is Paul's most joyful letter, which is amazing considering he wrote it from prison.
- Paul had this heart not only for his spiritual children who had already accepted Christ but also for the unbelievers of the world who may have seemed like enemies but were really victims of the Enemy.

Ambassadors of the Kingdom

- In this passage, Paul starkly contrasts those who set their minds on earthly things and those whose citizenship or identity is in heaven.
- Those whose minds are set on earthly things are consumed with earthly things – their god is their stomach and their earthly passions and desires, which only lead to destruction in the end.
- On a physical level, we know this to be true.
- If you consumed whatever you desired with no self-control or concern about your health, you would eventually destroy your body.

Ambassadors of the Kingdom

- The same is true spiritually.
- If you live by gratifying the desires of your flesh, you will destroy yourself spiritually.
- God's law and wisdom to humanity is not an arbitrary standard; it is actually true. This is how Satan deceives people.
- He makes the things of the world look so good, or that they don't really matter, that people don't even realize they're destroying themselves.

Ambassadors of the Kingdom

- But we are citizens of heaven.
- We have been rescued from this kingdom of darkness into the light of His kingdom, which means our end is not destruction, but transformation into glory.
- But this doesn't mean we just live our better, healthier lives while we wait for heaven and let everyone else destroy themselves.
- Our mission as God's people is to rescue everyone we can from the kingdom of darkness.

Ambassadors of the Kingdom

- Paul told the Corinthians that because God has reconciled us to Himself, we've now been given the ministry of reconciliation.
- We have the responsibility to do whatever we can to rescue others.
- We are ambassadors of His kingdom sent into this dark world with the message of peace from our king.
- The language Paul chose in this passage is the language of pleading with the people to please turn back to God for their own good. An appeal, not a demand. He implored unbelievers to be reconciled to God.

Ambassadors of the Kingdom

- This is why the spiritual warfare against us is so strong.
- Because we are citizens of God's kingdom living in hostile territory.
- The Enemy doesn't want us sharing His light with those around us.
- He doesn't want us rescuing people from their own destruction and showing them the way to life.
- So we must stand firm and put on the full armor of God every day.

Living in a
Post-Truth Culture

Battle for Truth



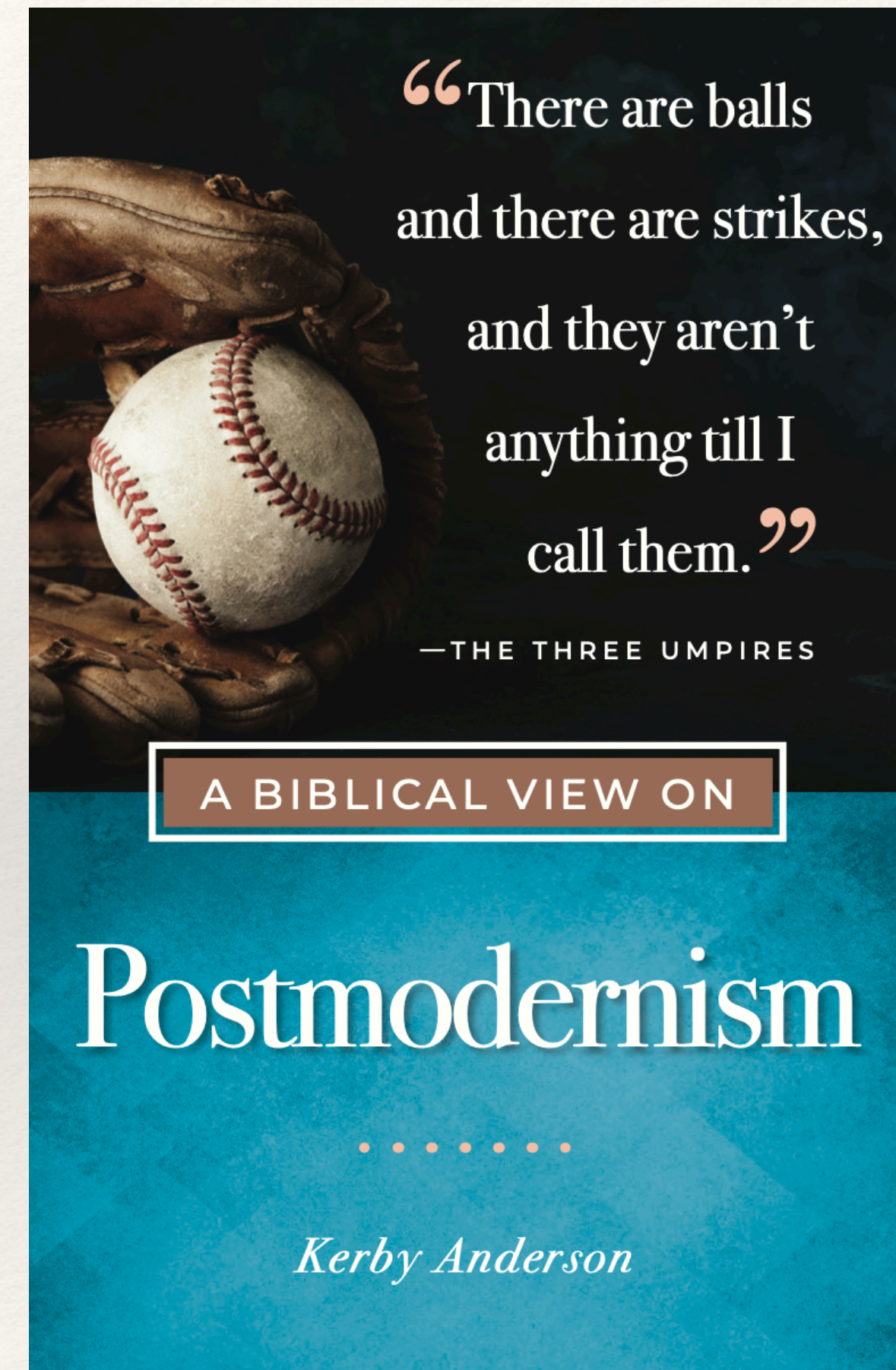
What is Postmodernism?



Three Umpires

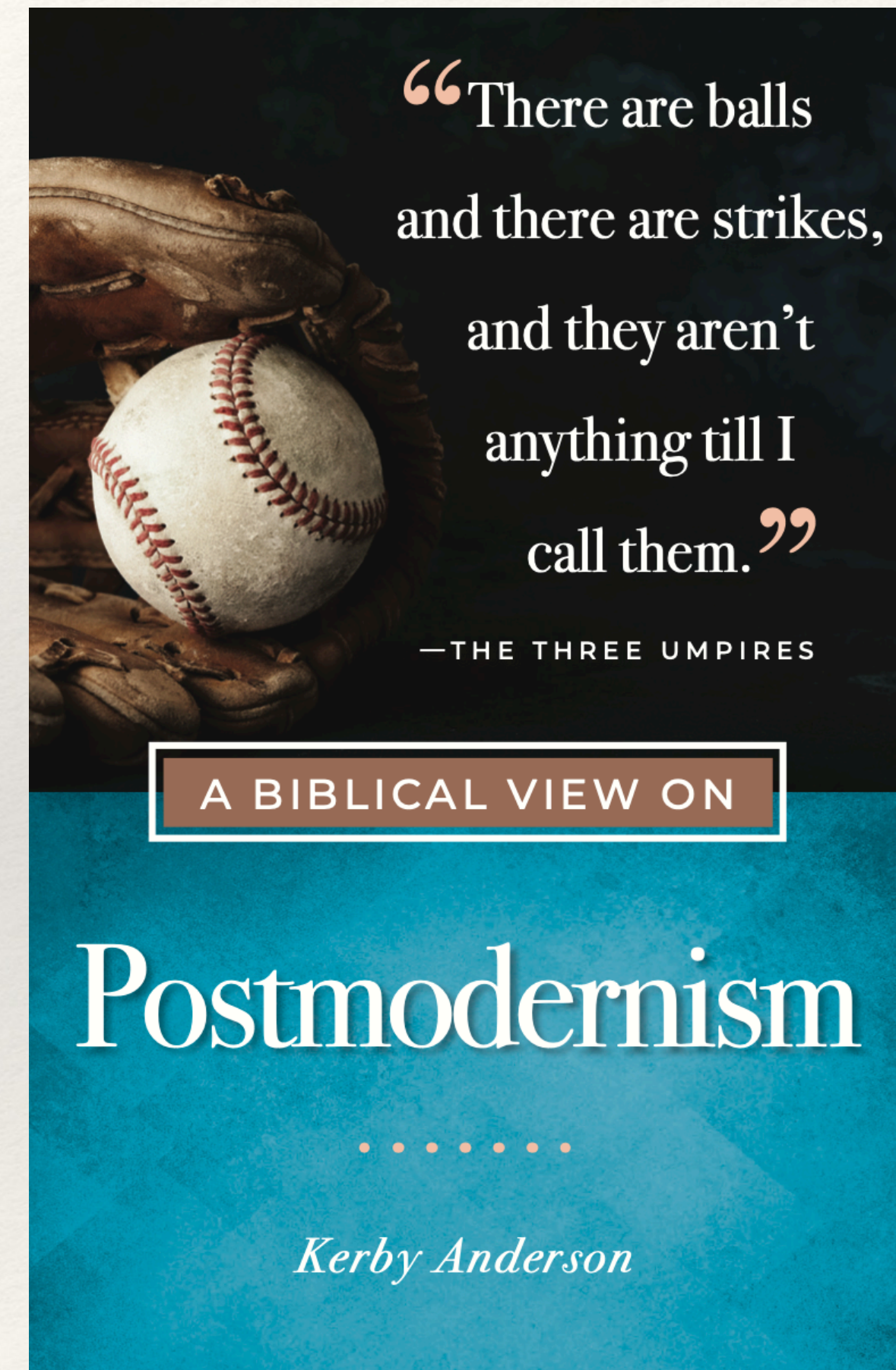
- There are balls and there's strikes, and I call them the way that they are.
- There are balls and there's strikes, and I call them the way that I see them.
- There are balls and there's strikes, and they aren't anything till I call them.

Truth is Stranger Than It Used to Be



Three Views of Truth

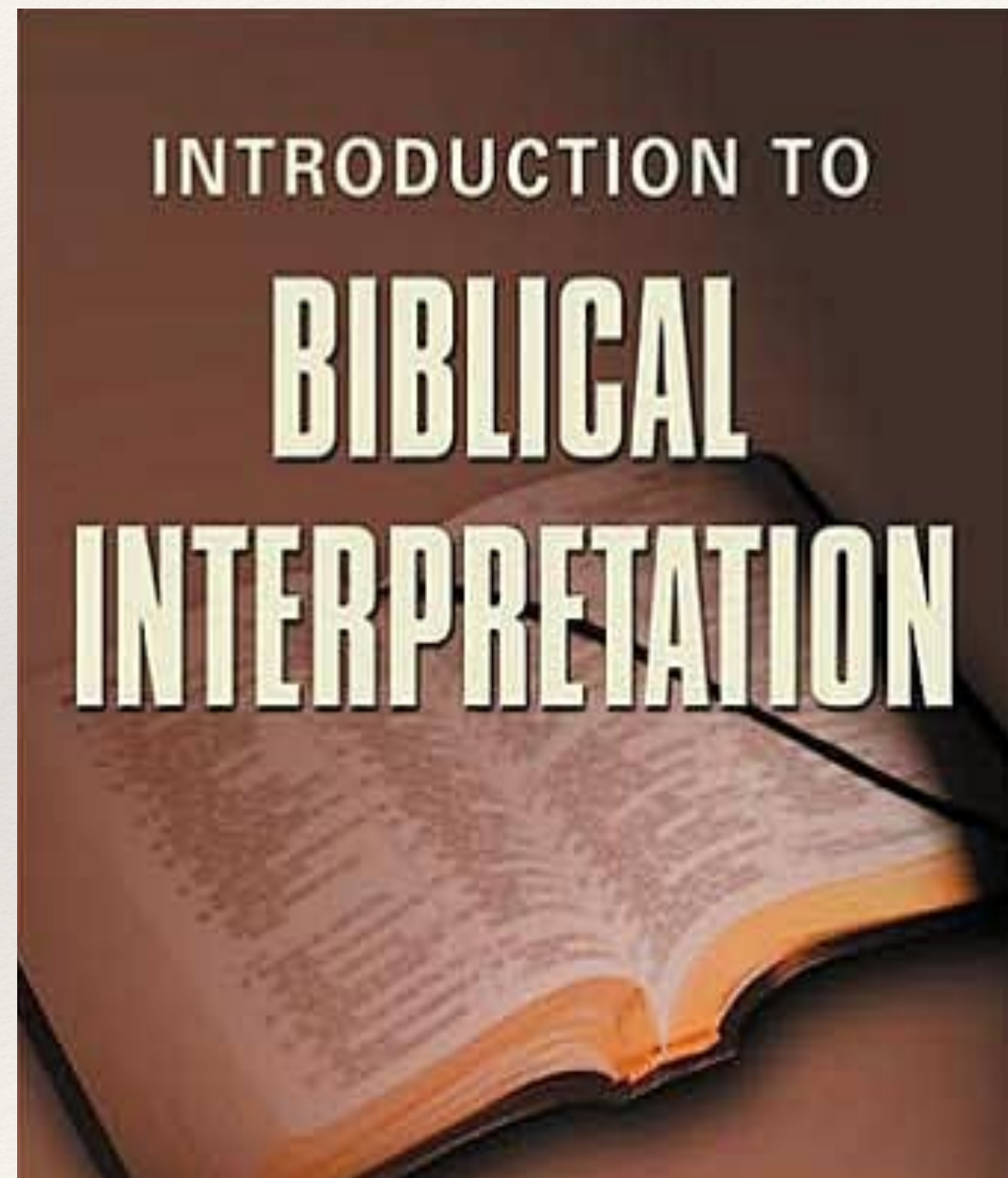
- **Pre-modernism** – God-centered universe, revelation, truth is absolute.
- **Modernism** – Enlightenment, science, truth is relative.
- **Postmodernism** – loss of hope for truth, truth is created.



Self-Defeating Propositions

- Postmodernists argue that all worldviews have an equal claim to the truth.
- In other words, they deny the existences of absolute truth.
- But the denial of absolute truth is self-defeating.
- Claim that relativism is true for everyone, everywhere, at all times.
- But that itself is an absolute truth.

Biblical Interpretation



- People are reading literature (including the Bible) differently than before.
- Literary interpretation uses what is called “postmodern deconstruction.”
- Many Christians no longer interpret the Bible by what it says.
- Instead, they interpret the Bible by asking what the passage means to them.

Resources

