

Enchanted

The background of the image is a composite of three elements: a night sky with the Milky Way galaxy, a road winding through a forest, and a bright light source on the horizon. The text 'Enchanted' is written in a large, yellow, serif font at the top. The text 'Supernatural Blindness' is written in a white, serif font at the bottom right.

Supernatural
Blindness

Why Are Christians Uncomfortable with the Supernatural? Dr Michael Heiser

Modern Christianity suffers from **two** serious shortcomings when it comes to the supernatural world.

First, many Christians claim to believe in the supernatural but think (and live) like skeptics. We find talk of the supernatural world uncomfortable. This is typical of denominations and evangelical congregations outside the charismatic movement—in other words, those from a background like my own.

Why Are Christians Uncomfortable with the Supernatural? Dr Michael Heiser

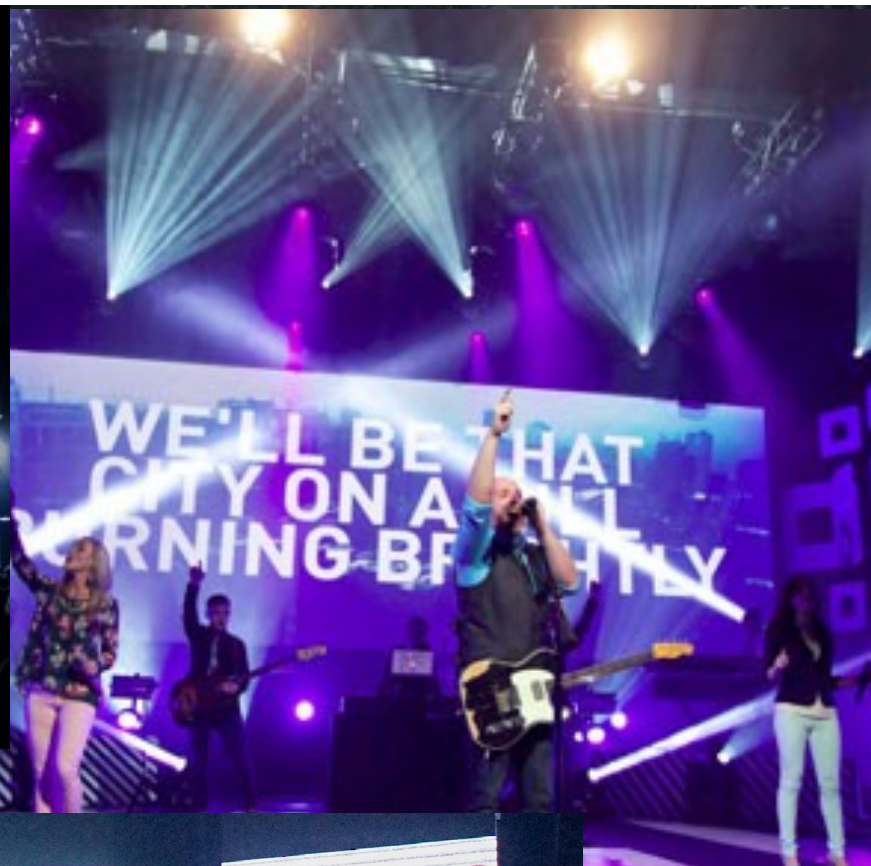
The other reason is less self-congratulatory. **The believing church is bending under the weight of its own rationalism**, a modern worldview that would be foreign to the biblical writers. Traditional Christian teaching has for centuries kept the unseen world at arm's length. We believe in the Godhead because there's no point to Christianity without it. The rest of the unseen world is handled with a **whisper or a chuckle**.

My contention is that, if our theology really derives from the biblical text, we must **reconsider our selective supernaturalism and recover a biblical theology of the unseen world**.

Forgotten God, Francis Chan

I bet you'd agree that a group of talented, charismatic leaders can draw a crowd. Find the right creative team, musicians, and speakers, **and you can grow any church.** It doesn't even have to be a Christian church.

The fact is that without making a conscious choice to depend on the Holy Spirit, we can do a lot. **My point is that a growing and energetic gathering is not necessarily evidence of the Holy Spirit's work.**



what would a church look like that stopped believing in the supernatural?

unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity... and Why It Matters, David Kinnaman

"Surprisingly, the Christian faith today is perceived as **disconnected from the supernatural world** – a dimension that the vast majority of outsiders believe can be accessed and influenced."

unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity... and Why It Matters, David Kinnaman

"Most people in America, when they are exposed to the Christian faith, **are not being transformed**. They take one step into the door, and the journey ends. They are not being allowed, encouraged, or equipped to love or to think like Christ. Yet in many ways a focus on spiritual formation fits what a new generation is really seeking. **Transformation is a process, a journey, not a one-time decision.**"

transformation is a supernatural process



**Western Christianity is
in the perfect storm of
dwindling interest and
superficial engagement**

**We have forgotten
what we are and
who we belong to**

"And above all,
watch with
glittering eyes
the whole world
around you
because **the
greatest secrets
are always
hidden in the
most unlikely
places.** Those
who don't
believe in magic
will never find
it." **Roald Dahl**



Once upon a time...

A dark, atmospheric photograph of a road winding through a forest at night. The road is illuminated by a soft light, possibly from a street lamp or moonlight, creating a path that leads into the distance. The trees on either side are silhouetted against the dark sky. In the upper right portion of the image, the Milky Way galaxy is visible, adding a magical and celestial quality to the scene.

Enchanted: To attract and delight; entrance, bewitched; magical utterly delighted or captivated; fascinated; charmed

Encounter

Decision

Response



Simon the Magus

A great wave of
persecution began that
day **Acts 8:1**

But the believers **who**
were scattered
preached the Good
News about Jesus
wherever they went.
vs 4

Simon the Magus

Philip, for example, went to the city of Samaria and told the people there about the Messiah. Crowds listened intently to Philip because they were **eager to hear his message and see the miraculous signs he did**. Many evil spirits were cast out, screaming as they left their victims. And many who had been paralyzed or lame were healed. So there was great joy in that city. **vs 5-8**

Simon the Magus

A man named **Simon** had been a sorcerer there for many years, amazing the people of Samaria and claiming to be someone great. Everyone, from the least to the greatest, often spoke of him as "**the Great One—the Power of God.**" They listened closely to him because for a long time he had astounded them with his magic. **vs 9-11**

Simon the Magus

There was a Samaritan, **Simon**, a native of the village called Gitto, who in the reign of Claudius Caesar, and in your royal city of Rome, did mighty acts of magic, by virtue of the art of the devils operating in him. **He was considered a god**, and as a god was honoured by you with a **statue**, which statue was erected on the river Tiber, between the two bridges, and bore this inscription, in the language of Rome:--"Simoni Deo Sancto," "To Simon the holy God."

Justin Martyr, First Apology, 155 AD

Simon the Magus

But now the people believed Philip's message of Good News concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. As a result, many men and women were baptized. **Then Simon himself believed and was baptized.** He began following Philip wherever he went, and he was **amazed** by the signs and great miracles Philip performed. **vs 12-13**

why did they believe, because the message was accompanied with power

Existemi: to throw out of position, displace

Simon the Magus

When Simon saw that **the Spirit was given** when the apostles laid their hands on people, he offered them money **to buy this power**.
"Let me have this power, too," he exclaimed, "so that when I lay my hands on people, they will receive the Holy Spirit!" **vs 18-19**

what did simon believe?

Simon the Magus

Simony: A sacrilege that consists in **buying and selling what is spiritual in return for what is temporal**. In simony the person tries to equate material things, such as money, with spiritual things, such as divine grace, and treats the latter as though he or some other human being had full ownership of what really belongs to God

In the first few centuries CE, there were virtually no instances of **simony** among Christians. The status of Christianity as an illegal and oppressed religion meant that **there were few people interested enough in obtaining anything from Christians that they would go so far as to pay for it.** **Melissa Snell**

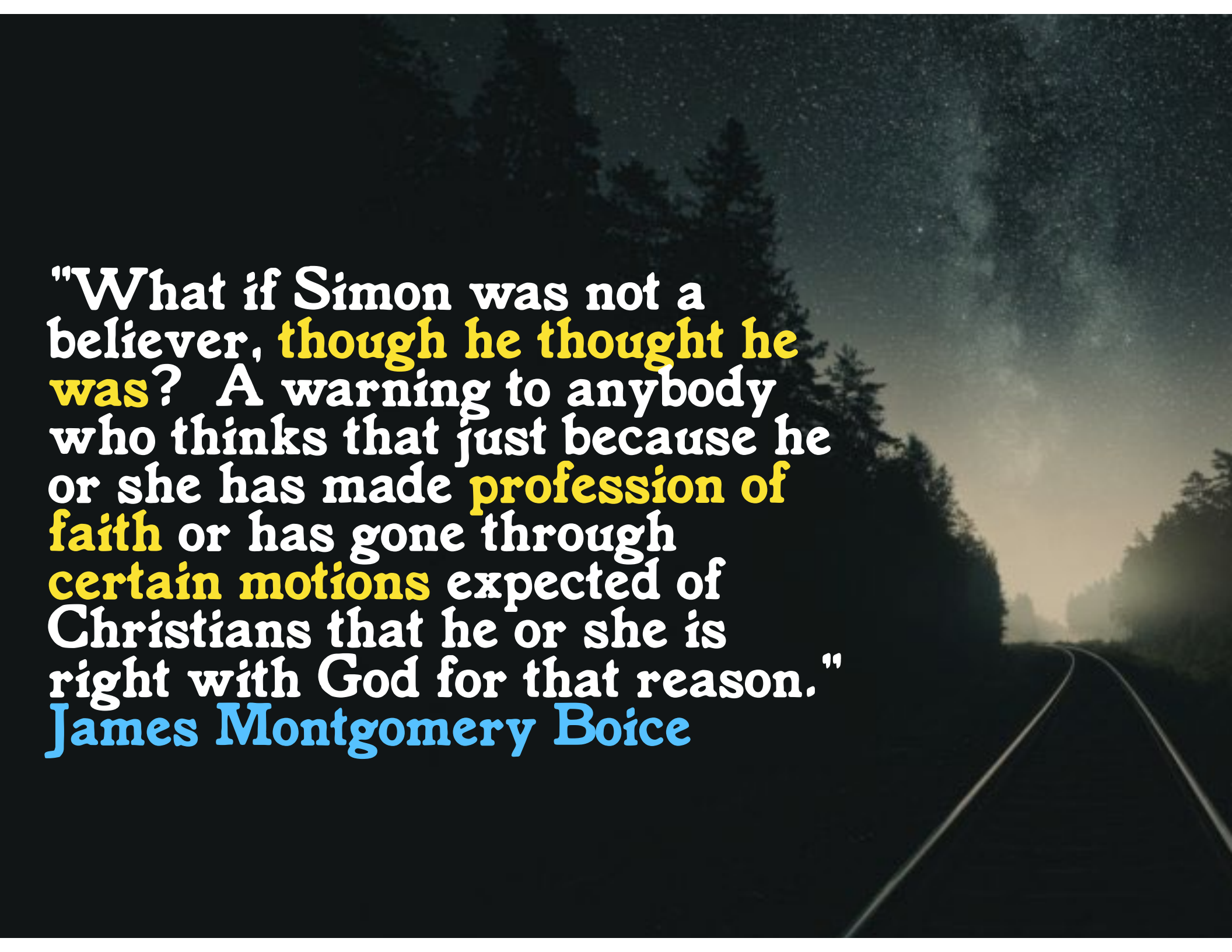
Simon the Magus

did he (Simon)
have a merely
intellectual
knowledge of
what Christians
taught without a
change of heart
and a **true**
commitment to
follow Jesus as
his saviour?

Richard Ostling

Simon the Magus

But Peter replied, "May your money be destroyed with you **for thinking God's gift can be bought!** You can have no part in this, for your heart is not right with God. Repent of your wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive your evil thoughts, for I can see that you are full of **bitter jealousy** and are held captive by sin." **vs 20-23**

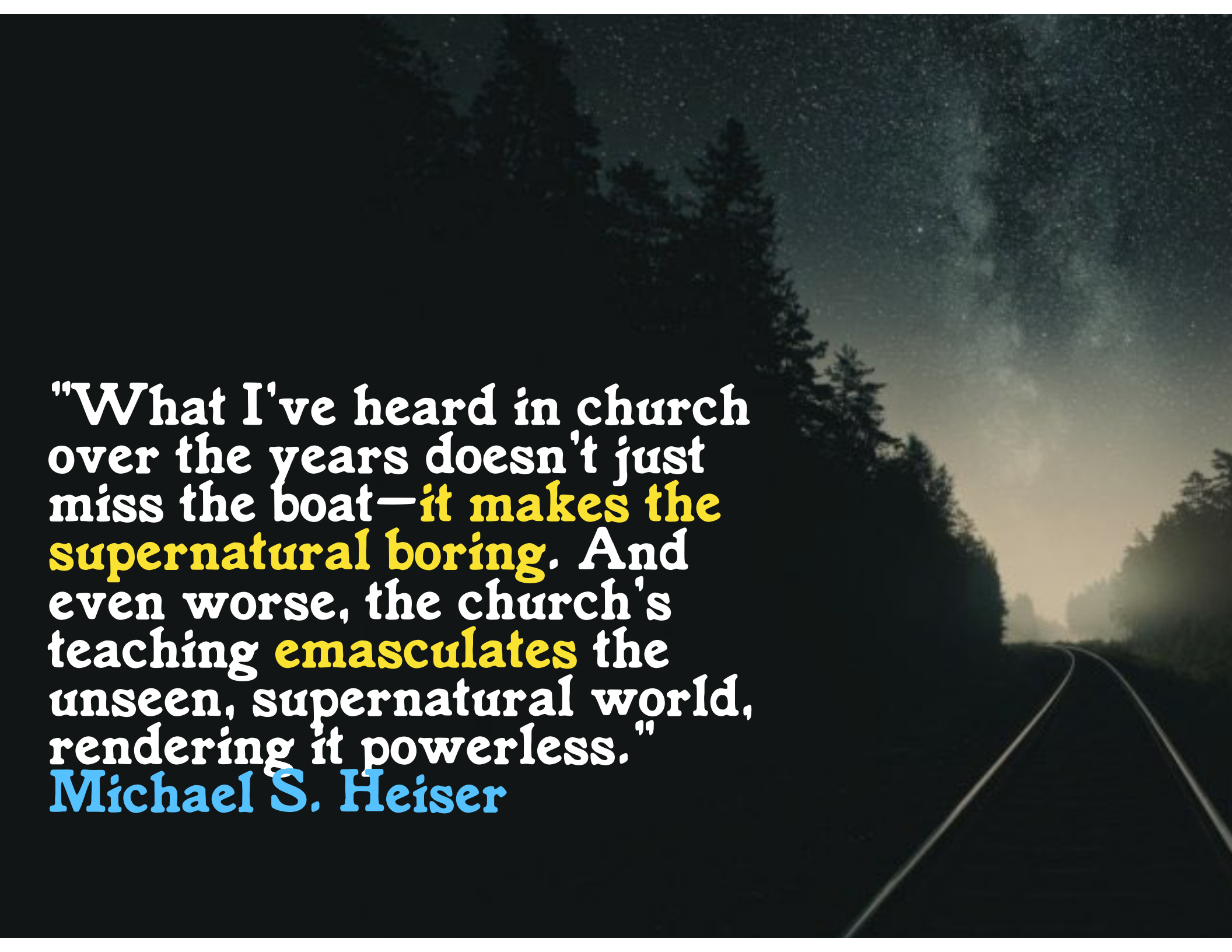


"What if Simon was not a believer, **though he thought he was**? A warning to anybody who thinks that just because he or she has made **profession of faith** or has gone through **certain motions** expected of Christians that he or she is right with God for that reason."

James Montgomery Boice

Simon the Magus

"Pray to the Lord **for me,**"
Simon exclaimed, "that these
terrible things (Acts 5) you've
said won't happen to me!" **vs 24**



"What I've heard in church over the years doesn't just miss the boat—it **makes the supernatural boring**. And even worse, the church's teaching **emasculates** the unseen, supernatural world, rendering it powerless."

Michael S. Heiser

You are following a different way **that pretends to be the Good News** but is not the Good News at all.

You are being fooled by those who deliberately twist the truth concerning Christ.

Galatians 1:6b-7

Dear brothers and sisters, I want you to understand that the gospel message I preach is not based on **mere human** reasoning. **vs 11**

Whatever Christianity is supposed to be its origins are supernatural