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2007: Pressing On...

I WROTE this during the first week of the New Year. By the time you get it 25 percent of 2007 will have gone—my oh my. Although the topic may be most prominent in our thoughts at the turn of the year, fortunately, it relates to any time.

Firstly, I pay tribute to CWM's army of volunteers who regularly undertake the huge task of distributing our quarterly magazine. Only those involved realise how big a job it is. Thank you one and all.

Secondly, in reviewing 2006, a year of increasing confusion and deception in the world and within the "church", we feature a few "high-points" (or "low-points") depending on your view.

Thirdly, we look to the future and how we plan, God willing, to play our part as a watchman ministry with a growing network of local churches linked by the grace of God through the tenuous threads of our literature and websites' work.

2006 IN REVIEW: That was the year that was...

Much of today's confusion is due to information overload. How does one keep up with it all and filter the true from the false? Even the big media boys sometimes get it wrong. According to *WorldNetDaily.com* posting dated January 2, 2007:

CNN¹ is apologising today after the cable news outlet confused Senator Barack Obama, D-Ill., with terrorist Osama bin Laden in on-screen graphics last night reading, "Where's Obama?"

CNN blamed its graphics department for what it called a "bad typographical error" and offered their personal apologies to Sen. Barack Obama. Tommy Vieto, Obama's press secretary, said:

Though I'd note that the 's' and 'b' keys aren't all that close to each other, I assume it was just an unfortunate mistake, and don't think there was any truly malicious intent. (http://wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=53606)

1 Cable News Network—<http://www.cnn.com>



Senator Barack Obama, D-Ill., not Osama bin Laden

Osama (not Obama) allegedly still can't be found, which is another confusion to us all. Maybe bin Laden would resent being taken for Barack Obama and would relish the opportunity to sue CNN (or worse) if anyone would give him a chance. It's not the first time the two have been confused in the public arena. Go to the above link and listen to a parody song about it all under the heading—Click here to listen to the spoof.

CONFUSION is bad enough, but CORRUPTION in the most visible part of Christendom should ring loud alarm bells. In 2006 Rick Warren went to Syria and offended the Christian world by what he said. When challenged he claimed he was misrepresented. Asked for the recording he claimed that none existed. He told two barefaced lies as the world now knows by the widespread distribution of the "non-existent" recording.² He

2 See pages 14–16 this issue—<http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/warrenexplanation.html>

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also invited Barack Obama to Saddleback. Obama is a pro-abortionist liberal democrat who could well be the key to getting Hillary Clinton into the White House as the first woman president. Warren is a member of the CFR³, which is the powerful lobby group that decides in practical terms who gets elected as president of the USA and to some extent what happens internationally.

IN CONTINUUM

Part of CWM's biblical mandate is Colossians 1:28

"Whom [Christ] we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man mature in Christ Jesus".

By God's grace and enabling we will not deviate in spite of the criticisms—and there are many. CETF will continue to expose evil and evil workers.

WARNING: In this magazine several articles are so dedicated. In addition we start a column on two of the big issues: 1) MUSLIM MARAUDERS and 2) WARREN WANDERINGS. Both are international concerns. There's so much material we could fill all 32 pages with it but we'll merely summarise it with some key links.

TEACHING: In this issue we hope to stimulate your thinking and challenge your devotion by carefully examining the truth about victory over sin as taught in Romans chapters 6 and 7 (see pages 18–19), and the significance of the "still small voice" of Elijah's encounter with God (pages 20–23). Later we will look at the biblical teaching on divorce and remarriage and how it affects our STANDING in Christ and our LEADERSHIP privileges. We also plan to further examine the biblical pattern for Kingdom-giving as an extension to my article on TITHING (CETF 37 pp 21-23), which created some controversy. The non-biblical teaching on this is a foundation to the heretics' empires. That foundation needs to be shown for what it is—unbiblical and unscrupulous. The New Testament advocates stewardship based on personal (individual) responsibility, not tithing, which applied to Israel and not to the Church.

WE PREACH CHRIST

2006 saw some significant progress within CWM and the CWM-Fellowship (Brisbane). Visit <http://www.cwmfellowship.org>. Click on <churches> on the top Menu Bar. To be part of this network you only need to approve our Statements of Faith and Mission, tell us that you have no part in the word of faith or ecumenical movements and send us your church and contact details.

God bless you throughout the year,



³ Warren's claim to be a member to the CFR (Council of Foreign Relations) can be viewed at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rick_Warren>. CFR, the Bilderbergers and the Trilateral Commission have a hidden agenda to bring about a New World Order. <<http://afgen.com/trilateral.html>>. See page 15.

Why we shouldn't let the world set our agenda

By JOHN LANCASTER

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THE Bible is sometimes an uncomfortable book. You read it as part of your devotions, quietly enjoying its stories and being blessed by its inspired words, and then, suddenly, it points its finger at you!

It happened to me recently. Reading through the second book of Kings, I was fascinated by the story of the visit by King Ahaz to Damascus for an "international summit" with the Assyrian king, Tiglath-Pileser (2 Kings 16). The location and occasion sounded so much like the politics of our own day—it was a good read.

What followed was even more interesting: in Damascus, Ahaz saw a pagan altar which so impressed him that he had drawings of it sent to Jerusalem, with orders for a replica of it to be made in order to replace Solomon's great altar in the Temple. That set me thinking: how could Ahaz replace a Holy Spirit designed altar (see 1 Chronicles 28:11-19) with a pagan one? Surely that was copying the world.

It was at that point that the Bible pointed its finger at me! It seemed to say, "Isn't the modern church in danger of doing the same thing? Isn't much of her life influenced by 'contemporary culture' causing her to adjust her theology, her methods and her lifestyle in order to meet the 'challenges' of the present age?"

Take for instance, the "altar" of the cross (c/f Galatians 5:11). In some quarters of evangelical thinking, the old biblical altar of substitutionary atonement has been replaced with a new one which copies the more attractive designs created by post-modern insights. The uncompromising lines of the old altar with its emphasis on the sinfulness of sin, the unutterable holiness of God, the certainty of judgement and the need for propitiation and repentance, have been replaced by the softer, more rounded shape of the new one. This new altar manages to remove some of the "offence of the cross" by offering a revised version of Christ's atonement which is more acceptable to modern sensibilities.

The word "contemporary" is a powerful one; it affects the way we "do church", the way we worship, the way we communicate the gospel, the way we counsel people and the values that determine our lifestyle. The slogan "The church

must move with the times", is equally powerful; but while it contains elements of truth it also contains subtle seeds of compromise.

The church is called to challenge the culture, not conform to it. That is why Paul says "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world" (Romans 12:2); and why John writes, "Do not love the world or anything in the world... For everything in the world: the cravings of sinful people, the lust of their eyes and their boasting about what they have and do, comes not from the Father..." (1 John 2:15-16). In other words, don't let the world set the agenda.

When preaching replaces careful exposition of the Word of God with popular sound-bites (2 Timothy 4:2-4)..., when worship is more like a rock concert than the robust, God-centred praise of the Psalms and Revelation..., when counselling methods are more influenced by some of the dubious techniques of popular psychology than by biblical principles..., when leadership styles seem to turn pastors into business managers rather than Spirit-anointed ministers..., when churches seem more like religious factories urgently working to meet customer demand rather than seeking to be what Jesus said it should be: "my Father's house, ... a house of prayer" (Matthew 21:13, Mark 11:17, Luke 19:46, cf. Isaiah 56:7), and when our personal values reflect the aspirations of the consumer society in which we live rather than seeking first the Kingdom of God... then we have allowed the world to set the agenda.

If the above descriptions match our experience, then we have replaced the Spirit-designed, biblical altar for a pagan one, and we will fare no better than Ahaz. Our road to Damascus has led us in the wrong direction and we had better turn back, for "anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God" (James 4:4).

Perhaps we need to have a fresh look at our 'altars'.

About the Author



JOHN LANCASTER is a respected senior minister with over fifty years experience in the Elim Church of the UK. This article was originally published in *Direction Magazine* (November 2006), journal of the Elim Pentecostal Churches.

Editorial Comment: In these faith-destroying days when even some missionaries and missionary organisations are changing the gospel with their so-called cultural approach, it's important that we present another side. *New Tribes Mission (NTM)*, with whom CWM is forging an increasingly close link, is one mission that is going against the tide. We agree with their statement, "Those who stress culturally-felt needs as the key for understanding and accepting the gospel are confusing the results and blessings of the gospel with the gospel itself. The true gospel is never culturally relevant."¹ This column is dedicated to telling the stories of those who have remained true to the FAITH in their proclamation of the REAL gospel. As long as the stories keep coming we will keep telling them:



Warfare that counts

By **DANIEL NEW**

BOB was a combat marine during the Korean war era, a tough guy. But somewhere along the line, he became a "believer". He was still a tough guy, and now he had a tough faith. He was unimpressed with what he called "churchianity" and sought a more meaningful way for him to dedicate his life to his new Commander-in-Chief.

He married, and took his beautiful bride to a foreign country, which I cannot name, because they're still working there. They settled in a valley that had no roads—you trekked in and out. They lived on the same food the locals ate, with the occasional taste of "home" they carried by backpack.

They began to learn the language and the culture, with the goal being to eventually translate the New Testament into a language that had never before been written down. Soon their children spoke the local language well. In time, a road came into the valley, and a few years later the drug lords arrived. The locals had a choice—either grow marijuana (MJ) between their corn for unheard of amounts of cash, or die. They always chose the former.

After a few years the colonel of the provincial military base "invited" Bob to his office for "an interview". He bluntly informed him that he knew that Bob knew who was growing MJ in the valley, and he wanted the names of the farmers.

Bob looked the colonel in the eye for several seconds, then said, "Colonel, let me ask you a question. If they kill me for telling you the information you want, will you promise me that you will come into the valley and spend the rest of your

life translating the Bible for those people?"

"Don't be ridiculous" the colonel sneered, and then, as calm as a man in combat can be, Bob said, "In that case, Colonel, I'll make you a deal. You do your job, and I'll do mine."

The colonel smiled probably for more than one reason. Perhaps because he recognised a brave man when he saw one, but there was another reason. Not long after the "interview" Bob learned that the colonel was one of the largest growers of MJ in the province. In trying to discover his competition he learned that day that Bob would not be telling anyone, anything. Indeed, Bob may have saved his life and his life's work by just saying, "NO" to drugs.

You will never read about Bob and his still beautiful wife in any newspaper, unless something goes seriously wrong; and probably not even then. They have invested their lives in a small group of despised, difficult, and drunken heathen men and women who have largely rejected them and their message for over 25 years, yet, there are a few believers. Through medical work they have saved the lives of children who have grown up to persecute them and the believers. They don't have churches full of happy Christians, and yet their faith is unshaken.

I'm reading lots of "feel good" articles these days about the military in Iraq and Afghanistan, and I don't want to take anything away from them—they do deserve our prayers. But, all things considered, not one of them displays the commitment to the Kingdom with their guns and boots that Bob and his family demonstrate in that lonely jungle valley with their laptop computer and their malaria and their little clinic as they try to save a few lives and introduce a few souls to a new kingdom. Kingdom warfare is for eternity.

Sure, they could use some encouragement—and they would love to have someone praying for them daily. But just as important, you can use their example to help teach your Sunday school class, or children in your family, that some wars are more important than others, and instead of glorifying soldiers who are armed to the teeth, our children need to be preparing their hearts and minds to live, and die if necessary, for the Kingdom of God.

About the Author



DANIEL NEW has been privileged in his travels and living in foreign lands to meet many believers who are true warriors in the battle for eternity. He has dined in grass huts with cannibals as well as Washing-

ton restaurants with congressmen, and frankly preferred the fun and fellowship and integrity of the former group. He's been telling stories all his life, but says the most rewarding is to spread the message to this young and uninformed generation that the real war, the one that matters, is going on all around them, and there are some real warriors out there whom they need to emulate. He lives on the family farm in central Texas, USA raising poultry, cattle, horses and grandchildren (14 so far). He has written a book on his son's decade-long legal battle with the US government over the question of forcing US soldiers to serve under the United Nations against their will (that case is now pending before the US supreme court). He lectures widely on issues of national sovereignty and globalisation and has had more guest appearances on radio shows than most talk show hosts have in their entire career.

¹ Firm Foundations Creation to Christ Building According to Plan © 1993 New Tribes Mission—p. 16

A MEGA CHURCH that makes God smile

By WARREN SMITH

A COUPLE of days after I got home from a recent trip to India I received *Outreach Magazine's* annual list of the 100 largest churches in the United States. The entire issue was devoted to these churches and their pastors. I couldn't help but notice that the largest was feel-good preacher Joel Osteen's Lakewood Church. Recently disgraced Ted Haggard's New Life Church was number 37 on the list.

As I read through that issue, I thought about another kind of church, one whose pastors don't fly around the country in private planes and who don't pay for their vacation retreats with book royalties.

These were the churches I saw and the pastors I met on a recent trip to India with the Christian ministry, *Gospel For Asia*. One of them, in particular, sticks in my mind:

About 20 kilometres outside the emerging high-tech city of Hyderabad, you are fully into the Indian countryside. The road turned to dirt in places. Ox drawn carts or foot travel were primary modes of transportation. It took almost two hours to cover the 20km distance from the city, but we eventually came to a small village, where we stopped in front of a small *Believers Church*, which is what *Gospel For Asia* calls all of the nearly 30,000 churches it has planted over the past 30 years. It is a small but sturdy building with a cross prominently reaching skyward from the peak of the building. The pastor of the church came out to greet us and invite us in. We sat on plastic chairs as he told us, with the help of a translator, a remarkable story.

When he first came to this village to plant a church, he slept some nights out in the open as he went from house to house, distributing gospel literature provided by the *Believers Church*. He met with much resistance, and once was beaten severely by anti-Christian radicals in the town. During that beating he had teeth knocked out, and



“Beware of any man who claims to be wiser than the apostles or holier than the martyrs of the Early Church. The best way to deal with him is to rise and leave his presence. You cannot help him and he surely cannot help you.”

—A.W. Tozer, “How To Try The Spirits” from *Man: The Dwelling Place Of God*

his ear was nearly ripped off.

But the pastor persisted. And when the village began to experience a water shortage, the pastor prayed and drilled a well next to the road in front of the church.

“Everyone told us the well would not bring water”, he said. “But we prayed, and by God’s grace and for His glory the water came.” The pastor let it be known that it was Jesus who had brought the water, as it is God who brings all good gifts. He called the well the *Jesus Well*. He also let it be known that everyone in the village, even those who had beaten him, or who had been happy when he was beaten, could freely use the well.

“Seeing the water from the well changed the hearts of many people”, the pastor said. “Soon, a few were coming to the *Believers Church* for services, and before long 30 and then 40 and then 50 people came”. The pastor explained to these new churchgoers that attending church does not save them. Only by turning from their sins and accepting Jesus, becoming born again, could they be saved. Eventually, ten people made that decision, but because it was soon after the pastor had been beaten, he and others in the leadership of the *Believers Church* decided that it would be safer if they were baptized at the Bible college in Hyderabad. So they made the trip and were baptized.

Today, the pastor is almost fully healed. Only a scar remains to show where his ear was nearly ripped off his head during the brutal beating. The ten, who were baptized, were followed by more who made the same decision to turn from their sins and become Christians. Now, every Sunday, 65 people jam into this small *Believers Church* for worship.

No, it’s not a mega-church in the sense that we think in the West. In fact, this is a typical *Believers Church*. On average, churches planted by *Gospel For Asia* have about 60 members. But when you consider that all of these 60 members are newly born-again and baptized believers, and when you remember that there are 30,000 such churches, and that *Gospel For Asia* is planting them at the rate of more than 1000 per year, you begin to realise the truth. The 1.7 million members in these churches represent more real growth in the Kingdom of God than all the mega-churches (a church with more than 2000 members) combined.

It makes you wonder if this method of church growth is not more biblical and more effective than the mega-church model touted in “Outreach” magazine and in Western evangelicalism.

At least I hope it makes you wonder. As for me, I’m through wondering. After seeing Ted Haggard on television, and comparing that image to my memory of those pastors in the remote villages in India, I no longer wonder. My mind’s made up.

About the Author



WARREN SMITH is an award-winning journalist, radio and television personality, who currently hosts the syndicated radio and local TV programmes *Worldviews with Warren Smith*. He is author of numerous secular and Christian articles and several books, the most recent of which is *Voices That Carry*, published in 2005. He and his wife Missy have four children. They live in Charlotte, North Carolina, USA.

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Church Growth Hormone —a biblically banned substance

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death

—Proverbs 16:25

By RAY BAUMANN

AG-USA – Associate pastor

FOR the first eight years of my ministry I was a church growth hormone addict, thriving on a daily diet of books and videos centred around the latest fads and trends that focused on church growth. I was on the cutting edge of ministry thinking, learning more and more about marketing and the psychology of connecting people. I believed that numbers equalled success, even if that meant changing the name of the church, offering self-help programs, or implementing any other sort of method I thought would help to boost the numbers.

Like many pastors, I could be compared to a professional athlete when it comes to how we view success and how we value ourselves. For an athlete, the math is pretty simple; score goals, hit home runs, and nail three-point shots; it's all about numbers. The more successful you are in making the score, in essence, hitting your numbers, the greater your worth. For pastors, it's the number of people that are sitting in the seats that seems to be the measure of success. This is something, however misguided, that we all strive to obtain. Now, more than ever before, books emphasise church growth with the goal of becoming a mega-church. This desire facilitates the thought, "If I grow the church bigger, I'm doing more for God than the next person."

Recent news has revealed that many professional athletes have been taking illegal substances to build muscle and strength in order to improve their performance. They will do whatever it takes to achieve their goals and thus enhance their perceived value. For them the end result justifies the means, no matter what the side effects. Similarly pastors around the world have come to believe that church growth equals success. Thousands attend conference after conference, read book after book, and watch and listen to video and audio messages regarding church growth. They, like the professional athlete on steroids, are taking "church growth hormones" just for the sake of growth. Having seen the quick "success", they have signed on for the dangerous pill. True they have improved their performances on Sundays and Wednesdays, not recognising that the "church growth hormone" contains some ugly ingredients. Let's take a look.



Ray and Kristi Baumann with their four children

Ingredients include: man-centred theology; relevant messages to meet people's needs; events and programs that reach out to the community; contemporary music that is entertaining. For best results, remove the pews, dress casually, and install a 5,000 lumen projector. Take the "hormone" weekly, follow the regimented marketing strategy and you are guaranteed growth. The side effects may include unbelievers in the leadership, false converts, uncommitted members, and shallow minds.

On my own, there is no way that I could have seen the damaging effects of what I was participating in. To top it off, I was encouraged in this sin by the people. If anyone asked how the church was doing, what they really wanted to know was how the attendance was progressing, not how God was working or what He was doing in our congregation. My world-view was filled with garbage and I was blinded. My flesh (ego) craved constant validation. This came directly from numbers and growth, not from what God was doing or how He was moving. That's right, I said flesh, and that was my problem. It was all about me. When I left myself out of the equation, my sight started to become clearer. The Word had to become my number one reference for all things.

After some study, I actually began to be discerning. Those many books that I owned went right into the trash and I learned how to study the

Bible inductively. To use a computer-based analogy, Jesus in effect reprogrammed the hard drive of my mind, steering me away from a numbers-driven thought process. Growing the church is no longer my focus. Now my focus is on training believers.

About the Author

Wearing a variety of hats comes easy to some ministers. Such was the case with Ray Baumann; youth and associate pastor, coach, husband, and father, he wore them all, while continually trying on more. He is a former emergent, post-modern, relevant, purpose-driven, church growth thinker who has been dramatically transformed. Ray spent the first eight years of his "youth ministry" focusing on "growing the church", but has recently changed his focus to "growing the believer". He claims, "My senior pastor David Raynaud at First Assembly of God in Belleville, Illinois, USA, where I now serve as family pastor, has been a very big influence in my life and ministry and supports me 100 percent." Ray speaks on youth culture and church issues, and enjoys training soccer players at Belleville East high school. He and his wife Kristi have taken on the added challenge of "home schooling" their four children to teach them the importance of leading Christ-centred lives. Their active, lively household is located in Shiloh, Illinois.

News, Views & Your Letters



WE PRINT LETTERS FROM YOU, THE READERS. LETTERS MAY BE EDITED FOR BREVITY. WE REGRET THAT THE EDITOR CANNOT ENGAGE IN PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE.
 Editorial Comment (Ed) is by Philip L. Powell (PP) or B. Michael Bigg (MB)

FROM THE REGULAR (EMAIL) MAILER

To subscribe go to: <http://www.christian-witness.org/joinsearch.html> and follow the prompts.

THE CHRISTMAS THEME

On December 16 CWM-Fellowship hosted a Carols by Candlelight, which was previously publicised in our e-Mailer. This prompted some moderately critical correspondence. The following are typical:

"Putting Christ Back into CHRISTmas"

But He was never in it: we are commanded to remember His death, not celebrate His birth according to the Bible: We live our lives doing that! See article herewith. (See attached file: The Bible on Christmas.doc) Blessings,

GM, South Africa

If we are only willing to search and investigate the information in the Bible, we do know the precise day of the year through scripture and that is Tishri 15, i.e. the Feast of Tabernacles. However I could even give you the year but that can be debated out. But unfortunately most Christians want to stick to pagan feasts that God does not approve!

SA, UK

Philip Powell responded as follows:

I would certainly be interested to read the evidence re the precise date. I think you have highlighted the major problem when you suggest it's open to debate, which I think will always rage over this issue. Here are my comments to another person who wrote to me. Hope it helps to explain why we do what we do in this respect:

We simply use it as an occasion to preach the gospel, i.e. that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and that He was raised etc. We are not specifically commanded to assemble on a Sunday. We do it as a convenience thing. It is legitimate to use ALL occasions to proclaim the message including what the world recognises as CHRISTmas. I can see no problem.

Some object over the pagan links but continue to refer to Thursday, Sunday etc which were named after pagan deities. There is no end to that sort of argument. We cannot change history, nor should we try. Just REDEEM the time by buying up EVERY opportunity to proclaim Christ and for that we have biblical precedent and principle on which to operate.

I appreciate any typical teaching about the Jewish feasts including what you attached, BUT the fact of the matter is that "Christ is the end of the law" including the feasts. He is the great anti-type of all types. We are no longer commanded or required to keep any of the Jewish feasts. It is legalism to teach otherwise. Extrapolate truth by all means, but don't go further than that or you will end in bondage,

which many well-meaning exponents from the Jewish Messianic camp have done.

Some observe Hanukkah as a replacement, but fail to see that simply because Christ as a Jew possibly kept all the feasts, HE is the end to all that. Interestingly there is no reference to His having kept Pentecost. I wonder why? I have always felt and taught that it is on account of the fact that it relates to HIS heavenly ministry not HIS earthly ministry. If we are not careful we will "strain out gnats and swallow camels" over the issue. Every blessing,



AOG – UK

Hello. Am new to this website (<http://www.christian-witness.org>); most interesting reading. I had lost contact with AOG here in UK 30 years ago (born into it—you will know what I mean) and subsequent Home Missions worker in the movement—I remember Philip Powell when he was pastoring in Manchester. AOG has changed in many respects. I am gradually catching up—somewhat confused about things like the G12¹—and unsure at this stage as to making further contact and fellowship. I recall people such as pastor Clifford Rees in the AOG movement, who Philip Powell will know and am wondering what his advice might be! My enquiry comes from a sincere heart trying to catch up after a long time away from my fellowship roots.

I am increasingly concerned to see G12 principles operating in AOG fellowships. Whilst recognising that their churches are autonomous, it would seem obvious that the AOG national leadership approved of and influenced it, following one of its board member's visit to G12 overseas. Was it a case of AOG deciding it was time to try everything, going in the name of becoming less exclusive and more inclusive? I might call it, "enthusiasm gone mad syndrome".

For the life of me, I can't believe that G12 was God inspired, from what I now see. What a change compared to my time in the movement back in the 60s/70s, though I do retain reservations about some AOG approaches operating in that era. I think that AOG in those days would have kept well away from it and been more discerning. I can imagine

¹ César Castellanos, whose idea was to "disciple" church members, with them holding some degree of accountability, initially developed the Government of 12 (G12) strategy. The main leader would disciple 12 people (on values, teaching, prayer and ministry on a weekly basis) until those people themselves were ready to lead their own groups. Each disciple would find 12 new disciples and so the process would go on until there were 144 — and on and on the process would go.

the uproar in the 1978 AOG General Conference at Minehead, (the last one I attended as a pastor) should there have been any mention of a G12 structure then.

It would be wrong of me to deny, that numerous Christians have benefited, but the fact remains that it has seriously affected so many, often with long term health problems. Only yesterday I was in touch with a former leader within a G12 fellowship (AOG connections). He shared the fact that he was rejected because of his differing opinions about the nature of G12 and of the hurt and injustice done to him.

Furthermore, I believe that one can so easily spill out statements such as "the Lord told me this and that" as casually as dishing up fish and chips... unintentionally maybe, but still misusing the Name of our Lord. Sensible discernment is often a missing thread and the church in many areas needs to return to that. Perhaps larger and more regular proportions of common sense would be helpful too... Thanks,

John Howell, UK
 delwin@btinternet.com

OF INTEREST: John Howell refers to several "old-time" godly AoG pastors—Douglas Christie, remembered as the official AoG conference organist and George Newsholme well-known AOG-UK college principal and his own father Harry Howell an Elim pastor. He writes: "Now that the dark nights are here, I plough through your [CWM] archives. Lots of interesting articles. It does give insight Mr [Clifford] Rees conducted my wedding (1976) and dedicated my son (1978). Have always thought well of him. But I wonder how he fits into the current AOG climate (can't see him being into G12 and the Paul Weaver/Gerald Coates antics etc). Maybe I'm wrong. I guess Mr Rees would be forthright, but guess he just gets on with fulfilling his ministry, which he is called to do. He is truly a gentleman."



AG – USA

Editorial Comment: The following two letters were addressed to James Sundquist with whom CWM is working closely in exposing the hypocrisy of Thomas Trask and other AG-USA personnel in supporting Rick Warren's Purpose Driven deceit and deception. The letters are published with the knowledge and approval of the authors. This was sent to AG-USA officials including Thomas Trask and George Wood on 05/02/07 for comment prior to publication. As at 15/02/07 there has been no response from the AG-USA hierarchy.

I appreciate the stand you have taken concerning Rick Warren's Purpose Driven stuff and some of the other theological and doctrinal errors now overtaking the Assemblies of God. I am a former student of the late Dr Opal Reddin at CBC. She was a great and godly lady who worked tirelessly to defend the faith once delivered to the saints. For some time after her passing I felt rather hopeless about the Assemblies of God and the Pentecostal Movement in general. ... Then the Lord reminded me that He has called us to take the torch of the Word and the Spirit that those who have gone before are passing to us.

I have pastored two A/G in the southern Missouri district. I have sincerely thought about leaving the Assemblies of God because I'm tired of the drift toward liberalism and apostasy. The ecumenical movement within our ranks is an abomination that is leading us into the camp of Rome. With the backing this movement has within our ranks, I doubt we can turn this trend back, but we have an obligation to hold on to all the truth of God's Word as long as we can before we either have to leave or are driven out. Right now I am between ministries, and my wife and I are seriously seeking the Lord as to whether we should remain in the A/G.

Leading A/G ministers, teachers, theologians, and executive leaders are embracing the Emerging Church Movement (ECM)—the next logical step toward Rome and apostasy. Dr Earl Creps at AGTS² is a huge promoter of ECM. He apparently operates with impunity and immunity. I recently wrote a letter to Superintendent Thomas Trask about the errors of Rick Warren, ECM, and the Ecumenical Movement. He wrote back to tell me how he and our other leaders were doing everything in their power to preserve and promote sound doctrine in A/G churches. A few days after he wrote that letter to me I discovered that Creps is involved in this stuff up to his eyeballs right under the noses of the folks on Boonville Avenue.³ I try to give people the benefit of the doubt as much as possible, but I find it impossible to believe that Trask and others at the General Council headquarters are not aware of the activities of Earl Creps. If Trask is indeed aware of this—as I strongly suspect, then he is either deceived into accepting these false teachings, or he lied to me. I think we're in trouble either way.

Dr Creps has just published a book titled, *Off-Road Disciplines* that promotes many of the errors of the ECM. Leonard Sweet endorsed it and Dan Kimball wrote the foreword, both of whom are major players in the Emerging Church Movement. In fact, Leonard Sweet is as much New Age as he is anything else.

When Tony Campolo spoke at Valley Forge Christian College I confronted Superintendent Trask about it. He told me that I should talk to the college president before I talked to him. He quoted Matthew 18:15-17. I wrote back to him that this was not a Matthew 18:15-17 issue. The issue was that a rank heretic would be speaking in one of our colleges over which our leaders had the responsibility to protect the minds and souls of young people. This put the responsibility back on him to stop it, but he didn't stop it. Yet these same leaders have destroyed the A/G ministries and ministers who have done nothing immoral, unethical, or unlawful but simply refused to go along with the political correctness now coming from Springfield.

Academia has operated without restraint for at least the past 15 years. I had the opportunity to confront a lesbian who was an Evangel University graduate when she was attending SMS⁴ now

MSU⁵ as a graduate student. I was the Hebrew Editing Assistant, working on the Old Testament Complete Biblical Library project for World Library Press, and she was presenting a paper on "Feminist Theologies". We were in a meeting of theologians, students, and researchers. She referred to "Gay Theologies". During the question and answer period I listened quietly for as long as I could stand it. Finally I asked her a few short questions including whether her interest in and familiarity with "Feminist" and "Gay" theologies was due to the fact that she herself was a lesbian. She did not answer outright, but she did sheepishly confirm my suspicion. Amazingly, those who gave me the most grief for my questions were fellow A/G ministers and professors. However, they found that I was in my usual recalcitrant mood when dealing with wolves that are perverting and destroying the flock of God. I have never been easily intimidated, and the more I am around backslidden and unsaved ministers the worse it gets. I'm just plain intolerant!

I will continue to address these issues as the Lord gives me opportunity, but I suspect that I will find myself in trouble eventually. Again, I thank you for your work—keep it up! It is an encouragement and a great resource to all believers who love the Lord and His Word.

JL, Missouri USA

Brother I want to give you an update on what's been happening here locally with the PDC/PDL Movement. I am so thankful for your books; "Whose Driving The Purpose Driven Church." They have been so helpful. Thank you. My former church of which we had spoken about in our first phone conversation has split and is on the verge of falling apart. This church went down from an average Sunday congregation of about 2000 down to what is today about 600 or less. The senior pastor has resigned and the new pastor is a Rick Warren follower. I have started a church, "The Joy of Jesus Christian Centre", and I am preaching against this destructive movement. The Lord has led me to host a conference on the 21st of this month to openly discuss the problems associated with the PDC/PDL. Dr Noah Hutchings has agreed to join me that day and speak on the same subject. If you have any other information you can send, please advise. I thank the Lord for you and your ministry. Keep up the good work and may the Lord richly bless you now and forever. Sincerely Yours In Christ,

JG, Oklahoma USA

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Open Letter to Thomas Trask

On January 11, 2007 Steve Svendsen wrote a letter confronting AG-USA General Superintendent Thomas Trask with the spreading departure from sound doctrine within Assemblies of God as evidenced by the use of the evolving Seeker Sensitive, Church Growth teachings of Robert Schuller, Bill Hybels and Rick Warren. Mr Trask responded but failed to answer the most important question and hedged the entire issue.

You can read both letters at: <http://contending.org/traskletter&response20070112.htm>

Steve Svendsen is a former long-term member of Bethel AG, who has been conducting a survey among AG-USA state superintendents, pastors and members on this matter of growing concern. CETF plans to keep you informed.

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THEOPHISTIC COUNSELLING Elijah House Prayer Ministry – being sued

Editorial Comment: *Some time back CWM issued a warning about Theophostic Counselling which had been adopted by "DUNAMIS" (Brisbane, pastors Shawn Hanson and Trevor Chandler) and by others. We believe that the following report justifies our warning:*

Go to: www.lyingspirits.com/news2006.html — for an interesting summary of law suits originating in British Columbia, Canada, involving the so-called "Christian prayer counselling" ministry of Elijah House, founded by U.S. residents John and Paula Sandford.

They use "inner healing" techniques drawn from occultism, especially the "recovery" of repressed memories in order to heal those memories (as they say). This is sometimes called "Theophostic Prayer Counselling" (TPC). Elijah House counsellors are, among other things, taught to help people recover emotional wounds and hidden memories in order to "apply the healing power of Jesus" through prayer. In my book *True to His Ways*⁶ I compared this practice with kundalini yoga (which is actually orthodox Hinduism). In yoga, practitioners uncover repressed memories and then apply the healing power of kundalini (i.e., the serpent). Eastern thought, not the Bible, is the source of such practice.

In the early 1990s a Canadian lawyer, under the tutelage of John Sandford, left her law practice to head up Canadian operations for Elijah House. However, they closed down the Canadian offices in the early 2000s. Around that time a man sued for divorce, saying his marriage was torn apart as a result of counselling that caused his wife to have false memories of sexual and satanic abuse. Recently, the wife apparently realised that she had been deluded and she sued Elijah House. More information is in linked statement.

In 2005 one of the leaders of Elijah House personally told me they were planning to send representatives to carry their teaching into individual churches, especially in the USA, having decided that they need to take their practices directly into church congregations.

Christians beware: www.lyingspirits.com/news2006.html
Ruth Davis, Baruch House Publishing Co., *True to His Ways: Purity in Christian Spiritual Practice*. <http://www.truehisways.com>

2 AGTS stands for the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, located in Springfield, Missouri, USA

3 The address of the Assemblies of God headquarters located in Springfield, Missouri.

4 SMS stands for Southwest Missouri State University, located in Springfield, Missouri

5 MSU, which stands for Missouri State University was formerly SMS and is located in Springfield, Missouri.

6 *True To His Ways* available from CWM AU\$24 plus post—see front cover for contact details.

TITHING

Dear Philip: My brother receives CETF and referred me to your article on 'tithing' (CETF 37 Sept 2006—p 21-23). The 'tithing' issue became a saga for us in the Revival Centres Australia (a "cult" really) over many years. Some of the 'pastors', often from quite humble beginnings, became multi-millionaires (one eventually living in a heritage listed mansion mainly through their heavy emphasis on 'tithing'—talk about "white-collar crime"!)

I found your article to be very informative and a 'breath of fresh air' after enduring years of stone-walling about a very contentious subject. Judging the reactions one gets for daring to even question it, could it be that this is because it is linked to the church's "\$ hip pocket nerve"?

Some refuse to countenance the possibility that tithing is not supported in the New Testament. Others adopt an off-handed "we cannot tell" (Matthew 21:27) type of response—but we're going to keep on promoting it anyway.

As we know, exotic species of flora/fauna, freed from the "checks and balances" found in their native lands, can turn into rampant monsters when introduced into another country. In like manner, tithing found its perfect place in the Old Testament with eleven tribes supporting a twelfth (Levi) and providing "meat in my (God's) house" (Malachi 3:10) with primary produce for the tabernacle/temple sacrifices and offerings as well as other aspects outlined in your article. Introducing the Old Testament law of tithing into the Christian church has turned it into a "rampant monster" in many places, especially where large congregations feel compelled to funnel a tenth of their incomes (which can be a \$colossal collective amount!) to a few selected individuals—often just one man, the pastor, which makes a mockery of scriptures such as 1 Peter 5:2 and 1 Timothy 3:3. A pastor in such a situation has no need to be "greedy of filthy lucre" as 'tithing' will pour money all over him!

Attached (see below) is a question, (obviously 'loaded'—but nonetheless genuine), that I unsuccessfully attempted to gain an answer to over quite some time. As you observed on page 21 (CETF 37), of the three occurrences where Christ commented on tithing, "...He condemns those who practised it as being hypocrites". In Galatians, Paul condemns those who seek to keep any part or parts of the law to the exclusion of the rest of the law. His point is that such people, and this must include the proponents of tithing, are "debtors to do the whole law". Because that's impossible, they are automatically "cursed" for "continuing not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them". One can't pick and choose about keeping the law! Thanks again for a very interesting and well thought out article.

Observance of Tithing in the Christian Church —THE GREAT CON

The final verse in the Old Testament dealing directly with the law states that it is to be kept in its entirety: *Remember the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments* (Malachi 4:4).

Therefore, previous mention of such laws as those dealing with sacrificial animals (Malachi 1) and tithing (Malachi 3) have to be viewed in the context of keeping the 'whole' law (see Gal 5:3).

Nehemiah realised that the Law of Moses had to be kept as a whole when he set about "...to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord..." (Nehemiah 10:29) and identified tithing as part of that law "...and the tithes of our ground unto the Levites..." (Nehemiah 10:37).

With the emphasis placed by Paul on keeping "all" the law, why does Galatians 3:10 and Galatians 5:3 apply to circumcision (pre-existing the giving of

the law, carried out by Abraham on a type of Christ, Isaac, and subsequently incorporate into the law) but (apparently?) not to tithing (pre-existing the giving of the law, Abraham again to a type of Christ, Melchizedec, and subsequently incorporated into the law)? That is my question — why don't these verses apply to tithing?

All who rely on the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things which are written in the book of the law to do them (Galatians 3:10).

For I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law (Galatians 5:3).

Muslim Marauders

LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC NEWS

Collated with editorial comments by B. Michael Bigg (MB)



If anyone is under the delusion that Islam does not have an agenda, and that of defeating, overrunning and enslaving all non-Muslims, then surely the highlights of the following news stories from around the world should be a wake up call. The incidents, issues and stories highlighted were reported from 30 September 2006 to 6 December 2006, not even two and a half months. The question must be asked, how many concessions will the West make for the "religion of peace" (Islam), when it is quite obvious that the "peace" they are really after, is a piece here and a piece there, let alone Israel, until all the world is Islamic. Sleep and slumber civil libertarians, multiculturalists, for the time will come when the intolerance of the "tolerant" will come to bear, and Sharia (Islamic Law) could be introduced. As one point of view, quoted in a story below, says, the Netherlands is in peril of being 52 percent Islamic by 2015. Islam doesn't need guns and weapons to take over the world. The West is inviting them in.

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Head of the Church of England and Defender of the Faith, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II "was praised yesterday after converting a room at Windsor Castle into a mosque. She took the historic step so Muslim staff have a quiet place to pray during Ramadan, Islam's holiest month."¹ I'm just glad that the King of Kings maintains the true standard of faith and faithfulness.

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In the United Kingdom, "A hardline Muslim teacher who caused a furore by denouncing pupils for celebrating Christmas, has been made a

government schools inspector. Israr Khan's Ofsted appointment was described by a former colleague as 'absolutely astonishing'. Mr Khan, now headmaster of an Islamic school, launched into his tirade during a concert rehearsal at Washwood Heath Secondary School in Birmingham in 1996 after the choir including around 40 Muslim youngsters, had sung a number of popular Christmas songs, including carols. He leapt from his seat, yelling: 'Who is your God? Why are you saying Jesus and Jesus Christ? God is not your God—it is Allah.' As children in the audience began booing and clapping, a number of choir members—both white and Asian—walked out, some in tears."²

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In 1989 Iran's mullahs accused Salman Rushdie of blasphemy and declared a *fatwa* against everyone associated with publishing *The Satanic Verses*. The novelist went underground for the next decade, followed by a 24-hour security detail. The Japanese and Italian translators of the book were stabbed two years later, Hitoshi Igarashi fatally. At the time, the fatwa was seen as an isolated stroke of lunacy by a crazed Islamic regime. Westerners were troubled but few ruminated on the possible link between this assault on freedom of speech and the Islamist bombs that were targeting US embassies in Africa, or envisioned what they augured for the future. Five years after the September 11 attacks the world is a foreign place. Identity is the West's obsession; one of its core values, freedom of speech, is under assault; and Europe is convulsed by the rise of Islamism within its borders." According to Dutch-born journalist, Ian

1 Virginia Wheeler, *The Sun*, "Ima'am of Windsor Castle", 30 September 2006. <http://www.thesun.co.uk/article/0,,2-2006450503,00.html>

2 Wayne Francis, *Daily Mail*, "Muslim teacher in carol concert tirade is made Ofsted inspector", 30 September 2006. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=407795&in_page_id=1770

Buruma, “by 2015 Muslims will make up 52 percent of the Netherlands’ population. There are five million Muslims in France, while across the English Channel, notes Bruce Bawer, author of *While Europe Slept*, polling shows 40 percent of Britain’s 1.6 million Muslims would like to see the country under sharia law (sic)³”. Summarising history, the article states, “Not since the Ottoman Turks were hurled back at the siege of Vienna in 1683,” writes Martin Walker in *The Wilson Quarterly*, the journal of the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, ‘has Europe been gripped by such apocalyptic visions of a Muslim invasion’.⁴

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This time, in America, another “school has been ‘teaching’ Islam by having students study and learn Muslim prayers and dress as Muslims, and a lawyer who argued a previous dispute over this issue to the U.S. Supreme Court said such methodologies wouldn’t ‘last 10 seconds’ if it were Christianity being taught”. The latest protests come from Nyssa, Oregon “where one parent raised objections when the Islamic teachings came to light. The district there, according to Supt. Don Grotting, is teaching a chapter in a history textbook *Journey Across Time* that talks about ‘how civilization has developed and some of the particular aspects of Islam.’” What is most disturbing though, is that the Superintendent states that “for extra credit” kids can “dress up (as a Muslim)”.⁵

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On 12 October 2006, Toby Helm, chief political correspondent of the UK’s *Telegraph* reporting on a speech by Ruth Kelly, the communities’ secretary, stated, “Muslim organisations that refuse to defend core British values and fail to take a ‘pro-active’ role in the fight against extremism are to lose access to millions of pounds of government funding”. Of particular note in this issue was Ms Kelly’s “apparent threat to the *Muslim Council of Britain* (MCB), the umbrella group for Muslims which has received more than £200,000 from government in the past two years. Miss Kelly highlighted its refusal to take part in Holocaust Memorial Day”. Such comments by government officials are in stark contrast to previous efforts “by Labour ministers to tackle sensitive religious and cultural issues previously regarded as politically ‘off limits’ for the party”.⁶

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“A committed Christian said today she planned to take legal action against her employers British Airways (BA) after the airline

ruled that displaying her crucifix breached uniform rules.” The hypocrisy of BA is highlighted all the more since, “she and fellow employees had just undergone ‘diversity training’—including receiving advice from pressure group Stonewall on how to treat gays and lesbians in the workplace. The airline’s uniform code states that staff must not wear visible jewellery or other ‘adornments’ while on duty without permission from management. It makes exceptions for Muslim and Sikh minorities by allowing them to wear hijabs and turbans.” Not to mention that BA’s chief executive came under fire, himself, for failing to comply with the uniform regulations by not wearing a tie.⁷ (Note: BA has now changed its rules to allow crosses, etc.)

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“A man arrested as a terror suspect for allegedly trying to transport \$340,000 from a group tied to Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, and who reputedly had connections to Osama bin Laden, helped write the ‘Religious Expression in Public Schools’ guidelines issued by President Clinton during his tenure in office. And that could explain why students at a California school were told as part of their required classes they would become Muslims and pray to Allah—and a federal judge approved that, and why an Oregon school this year is delivering similar lessons to its students, as WND has reported.”⁸ And to think, Hilary Clinton is running for president. What more damage could they do?

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In 2004, al-Qaida (the militant Sunni Muslim terrorist organisation, whose name means “the Law”, “the foundation” or “the base”) warned Australia that it would never be safe from terrorism with the world’s most populous Islamic nation just to its north. Threatening Australia’s prime minister, John Howard, and foreign minister, Alexander Downer, the terror organisation for the religion of submission and peace (Islam) warned them not to interfere in Indonesia, nor take comfort—thinking that Indonesia had a moderate president.⁹

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“The nation’s (Australia) most senior Muslim cleric has blamed immodestly dressed women who don’t wear Islamic headdress for being preyed on by men and likened them to abandoned ‘meat’ that attracts voracious animals. In a Ramadan sermon that has outraged Muslim women leaders, Sydney-based Sheikh Taj Din al-Hilali also alluded to the infamous Sydney gang rapes, suggesting the

attackers were not entirely to blame,”¹⁰ reported Richard Kerbj of *The Australian* on 26 October 2006. In response to the outcry, Sheikh al-Hilali went on to accuse Australia’s media of misrepresenting his Ramadan sermon. Unfortunately for al-Hilali, *The Australian* newspaper provided a transcript of his speech, which shows that al-Hilali meant exactly what he said:

But in the event of adultery, the responsibility falls 90 percent of the time with women. Why? Because the woman possesses the weapon of seduction. She is the one who takes her clothes off, cuts them short, acts flirtatious, puts on make-up and powder, and goes on the streets dallying. She is the one wearing a short dress, lifting it up, lowering it down, then a look, then a smile, then a word, then a greeting, then a chat, then a date, then a meeting, then a crime, then Long Bay Jail, then comes a merciless judge who gives you 65 years.

But the whole disaster, who started it? The Al-Rafih scholar says in one of his literary works, he says: If I come across a crime of rape—kidnap and violation of honour—I would discipline the man and teach him a lesson in morals, and I would order the woman be arrested and jailed for life.

Why, Rafih? He says, because if she hadn’t left the meat uncovered, the cat wouldn’t have snatched it. If you take a kilo of meat, and you don’t put it in the fridge, or in the pot, or in the kitchen, but you put in on a plate and placed (sic) it outside in the yard. Then you have a fight with the neighbour because his cats ate the meat. Then (inaudible). Right or not?

If one puts uncovered meat out in the street, or on the footpath, or in the garden, or in the park, or in the backyard without a cover, then the cats come and eat it, is it the fault of the cat or the uncovered meat? The uncovered meat is the problem! If it was covered the cat wouldn’t have [snatched it]. It would have circled around it and circled around it, then given up and gone.

If she was in her room, in her house, wearing her hijab, being chaste, the disasters wouldn’t have happened...¹¹

There you have it, in al-Hilali’s own words. Let me suggest that the only time that al-Hilali is misrepresented, is when he misrepresents himself by his own blatant lies. He said it, and he meant it. Uncovered “meat” is the problem ... uncovered “women” are the problem, not the men who rape them. How much higher is God’s true standard, than the male orientated standards of the Qur’an?

Jesus tells us:

You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY’; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart (Matthew 5:27-28).

Let us not play with ideas of covered and uncovered, it is the desires of our own hearts, the lusts of our eyes and flesh, and the willingness to give a place

3 “Sharia” means law, so strictly speaking this is tautology.

4 Deborah Hope, *The Australian*, “Fatwa on Freedom”, 7 October 2006. <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,20518020-7583,00.html>

5 Bob Unruh, WorldNetDaily.com, “Brave New Schools. ‘Five pillars of Islam’ taught in public school. ‘Education practice wouldn’t last 10 seconds if kids told to dress as priests’”, 10 October 2006. http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=52335

6 Toby Helm, *The Telegraph*, “Back British values or lose grants, Kelly tells Muslim groups”, 12 October 2006. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/10/12/nkelly12.xml>

7 Jane Merrick, *Daily Mail*, “Christian BA employee to take legal action over suspension for wearing cross”, 14 October 2006. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=410299&in_page_id=1770

8 Bob Unruh, WorldNetDaily.com, “Brave New Schools, Terror suspect contributed to school ‘religion guidelines’”, Issued by Clinton, rules let students pray to Allah, but banish Christmas”, 19 October 2006. http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=52519

9 Simon Kearney, Australian Defence Report, “Australia won’t ever be safe, says al-Qa’ida”, 23 October 2006. http://www.australiandefencereport.com.au/10-06/australia_wont_ever_be_safe_says.htm

10 Richard Kerbj, *The Australian*, “Muslim leader blames women for sex attacks”, 26 October 2006. <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,20646437-601,00.html>

11 *The Australian*, “Revealed: the Mufti uncut”, 28 October 2006. <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,20656690-601,00.html>

to them, irrespective of what kind of sin, that is the problem. We are all guilty. It is a shame that we prefer to pass the buck and blame others for our own weakness, sinfulness and treachery, but such is the natural man's self-righteousness and pride of life (cf. 1 John 2:16).

"New South Wales opposition leader Peter Debnam has written to premier Morris Iemma calling for the state government to withdraw funding from the Lakemba mosque while Sheikh Taj el-Din Al Hilali remains the mufti". The *Australian ABC* article reports that "The Lebanese Muslim Association (LMA) was given \$122,000 this year for social workers through the Department of Community Services (DOC)." Mr Iemma, though, regarded Mr Debnam's comments as nothing more than a political stunt.¹²

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"A Saudi court has sentenced a gang rape victim to 90 lashes of the whip because she was alone in a car with a man to whom she was not married. The sentence was passed at the end of a trial in which the al-Qateef high criminal court convicted four Saudis convicted of the rape, sentencing them to prison terms and a total of 2,230 lashes." Despite being found guilty, one of the assailants received only a one-year imprisonment and 80 lashes. The victim's male friend, who was in the car with her, when they were kidnapped, received 90 lashes for being alone with her in the car.¹³

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In statements reminiscent of the reformation, or the history of yesteryear when Europe was previously under Islamic siege, Jonathan Wynne-Jones of the *Sunday Telegraph* reported that "a leading church group which represents more than a million Christians has raised the prospect of civil unrest and even 'violent revolution' to protect religious freedoms". Amazingly though, Wynne-Jones says that their comments, "echoes comments made by Muslim fanatics" and that, "Only days ago, Islamic activist Anjem Choudary said Muslims had become radicalised because they were 'a community under siege'." In stark contrast though, the article's web page uses the image of a masked Islamic protestor holding a sign saying, "Behead those that insult Islam" (from the Danish cartoon controversy). And yet, despite the tough words by church leaders, no Christian seeks to behead Muslims, or non-Christians, for insulting our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Islam says Jesus is not God, and that He did not die on a cross, but Himself had a substitute. Amazingly, Wynne-Jones quotes Anjem Choudary, who helped organise the anti-Danish cartoon protests. "The London bombings should not have come as a surprise. How else do you expect Muslims to express themselves? We are a community under siege. It's going to blow up

one day in everyone's faces." If it was a Christian spokesperson, who had made such statements, they would have been the ones who were blasted.¹⁴

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Islam is taking over, piece by piece, city by city, country by country. All we need do is look at Europe where Jews are an endangered species. Soon enough (it seems), the American Jew will likewise be endangered. Soon enough, Israel will be the only, and the unlikely, place Jews will be safe. We encourage you to read Paul Belien's article, *The Rape of Europe*¹⁵ (A synopsis from *The Golden Report*¹⁶, 19 November 2006)

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In a private email to Philip Powell from Ireland via London (UK) the writer shared about Muslims flooding into the Republic of Ireland and given land to build a mosque while they as Protestant believers have been turned down twice by the town council for permission to build. They were given land but denied permits for building, and were told that they would never be able to build a place of worship... She writes: "We just continue to meet in a hotel as we have done for the past 8½ years where we rent rooms for worship and for children's church. We keep looking for property that we can afford but everything is extremely expensive here."

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28 November 2006, *The Washington Times* reports, "Muslim religious leaders removed from a Minneapolis flight last week exhibited behaviour associated with a security probe by terrorists and were not merely engaged in prayers, according to witnesses, police reports and aviation security officials." Furthermore, the article stated, "Passengers and flight attendants told law-enforcement officials the Imams switched from their assigned seats to a pattern associated with the September 11 terrorist attacks and also found in probes of U.S. security since the attacks." In their defence the Imams said they "were merely praying before the 6.30pm flight on November 20, and yesterday led a protest by prayer with other religious leaders at the airline's ticket counter at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport". Strange that they had to change seats to pray? "Two in the front row first-class, two in the middle of the plane on the exit aisle and two in the rear of the cabin".¹⁷ One might suggest that such action was intentional, just as provoking the expected response was; all for the purpose of getting profiling banned on US flights. Other reported unusual actions by the Imams was, "The Imams" also claimed "two first-class seats", saying "their tickets were upgraded.



Controversial Sheikh al-Hilali, grand mufti of Australia. See next page for Special Report—Not so "al-Hilarious".

The gate agent told police that when the Imams asked to be upgraded, they were told no such seats were available. Nevertheless, the two men were seated in first class when removed"¹⁸.

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"Two Muslim students have been expelled from an Islamic school in Melbourne for urinating and spitting on a Bible and setting it on fire. The explosive incident has forced the East Preston Islamic College to call in a senior imam to tell its 650 Muslim students that the Bible and Christianity must be respected. Anxious teachers at the school have also petitioned principal Shaheem Doutie, expressing 'grave concern' about an 'inculcation of hatred and radical attitudes towards non-Muslims' at the school, including towards non-Muslim teachers." The article goes on to say, "the desecration incident has shaken the nerves of the school's teachers, about half of whom are non-Muslim. A petition signed by 22 teachers expressed 'anguish and dismay at the grave incident of the desecration of the Holy Bible'. This whole incident implies a deep hatred inculcated in the students towards the Christian/non-Muslim teachers'. The petition said there had been 'previous incidents of students misbehaving towards non-Muslim teachers'. It called on the school to 'take steps to rectify this explosive situation' to ensure the safety of teachers."¹⁹ In reality, one has to question why this surprises people. If secular society thinks the Bible is nothing more than a story book, and that the US, for example, has banned, in places, the Bible from classroom and courtrooms (eg, biblical monuments outside of courthouses), why would a non-Christian think the Bible to be anything special, to be regarded, considered or respected. Who's sowing? Who's reaping?

12 ABC NewsOnline, "Iemma urged to cut mosque funding amid sheikh row", 2 November 2006. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200611/s1779747.htm>

13 *The Jerusalem Post*, "Saudi court sentences rape victim to 90 lashes", 2 November 2006. <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1162378314145&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull>

14 "Christians ask if force is needed to protect their religious values", Jonathan Wynne-Jones, *Sunday Telegraph*, 5 November 2006. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/11/05/nrelig05.xml>

15 <http://www.brusselsjournal.com/node/1609>

16 from <http://www.thegoldenreport.com>

17 Audrey Hudson, *The Washington Times*, "How the imams terrorized an airliner", 28 November 2006. <http://www.washtimes.com/national/20061128-122902-7522r.htm>

18 http://www.washtimes.com/national/20061128-122902-7522r_page2.htm

19 Cameron Stewart, *The Australian*, "Muslim boys urinated on Bible", 6 December 2006. <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,20879483-2702,00.html>

SPECIAL REPORT BY B. MICHAEL BIGG:

Not So al-Hilarious

Sheikh Taj Din al-Hilali, the Australian Federation of Islamic Council's appointed mufti of Australia, who, it seems, is never far from controversy, has done it again.

In an interview on Egyptian television al-Hilali made statements to the effect,

"The Western people are the biggest liars and oppressors and especially the English race. The Anglo-Saxons, who arrived in Australia, arrived in shackles. We paid for passports from our own pockets. We have a right to live in Australia more than they have."

He also blamed the September 11 attacks on the USA, which he is reported to have accused of influencing the lengthy sentences handed down in Sydney's Lebanese gang rape cases.

"Up until then the worst crime in Australia had received seven years' jail," he is reported to have said. He also claimed great insight into the Australian way of life and "oppressive" Western mentality since arriving here in the early 1980s. In a reference to homosexual unions, he is quoted as saying: "I understand the mentality of the West and especially the Australian mentality and I understand that the Australian law guarantees freedom to the point of insanity."¹

Australia's prime minister, John Howard, laughed off al-Hilali's comments about Australians being descendants of convicts, saying, "the Sheikh's latest remarks would bring a 'wry smile to the face of Australians who don't actually feel the least bit offended that many of our ancestors came here as convicts."²

Despite Mr Howard trying to play down the controversy and diffuse a potential war of words by making light of the mufti's comments, there is an underlying, unresolved issue that needs addressing. An issue which certainly is not "hilarious".

One can understand al-Hilali's "criticism" of Australia, the West and democracy, when one understands that: 1) he was born and raised in Egypt, a land in which Sharia³ rules; 2) Sharia embraces society, government, law and religion; 3) in Sharia Muslims are regarded as superior to non-Muslims, and are accorded preferential privileges and freedoms; 4) under Sharia, non-Muslims are not accorded freedom of speech (though they may be able to practise their religion, if Jew or Christian); 5)

non-Muslims are dhimmi—the subjugated peoples of Islam, and taxed for the privilege; 6) in Sharia men are superior to and the masters of women, and 7) making the world Islamic is the goal of Islam. Understanding this, one can see from what perspective the mufti speaks—and know that no matter what apology or deflection comments he makes—his heart has truly spoken.

In retrospect, let us consider the Skaf brothers, who "are serving 46 years and 24 jail years respectively for a series of gang rapes in Sydney in 2000"⁴, and al-Hilali's comments from October 2006. Remember that the mufti,

gained international attention ... by saying that women are generally at fault if they are raped. Speaking to a Muslim audience in Sydney, he explained that rape (specifically, *zina*, sexual activity forbidden under Islamic law—a word mistranslated in published accounts of the sheikh's words as 'adultery') is "90 percent the woman's responsibility. Why? Because a woman owns the weapon of seduction. It's she who takes off her clothes, shortens them, flirts, puts on make-up and powder and takes to the streets, God protect us, dallying. It's she who shortens, raises and lowers. Then, it's a look, a smile, a conversation, a greeting, a talk, a date, a meeting, a crime, then Long Bay jail. Then you get a judge, who has no mercy, and he gives you 65 years".⁵

Despite apologising and trying to explain away his comments, al-Hilali reiterates the same point of view. He holds to the belief that it is the woman's fault, not the man's, and that racial prejudice played a role in the case.

On Egyptian television al-Hilali said, (transcribed from translator's narrative),

"... [Australian] standards are skewed, and the claims are fabricated. That there is no freedom or democracy for Muslims. ... I think we can say that Islam in Australia has grown out of this. It has advanced the call of Islam more than it was before. I don't want to talk about numbers, but I would like to say a young man can meet a woman, smile, arrange a rendezvous, and then end up in jail for 65 years. This youth was from Lebanon and was charged with rape. But it was just after September 11 and he was judged in the name of Bin Laden. He deserved to be jailed, no question, but for 65 years? And another youth for 45 years? This took place in a public park, at about 2 or 3 in the morning; when, for the worst crime you can

get seven years. This is not really about crime, it is about racial prejudice."⁶

To al-Hilali's defence, following his October Ramadan sermon, came Kaysar Trad, of the Islamic Friendship Association. In a *Sydney Morning Herald* article (definitely worth reading) Paul Sheehan comes straight to the point, by calling al-Hilali's, and Trad's "spin doctoring" translation, of the interview, "absolute rubbish" and that, "There is a word for this: lying"⁷.

As a side issue, consider the Islamic Friendship Association's name, and the Qur'anic verse,

O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as Auliya' (friends, protectors, helpers), they are but Auliya' of each other. And if any amongst you takes them (as Auliya'), then surely he is one of them. Verily, Allah guides not those people who are the Zalimun (polytheists and wrong-doers and unjust).⁸ (Surah 5:51 The Noble Qur'an)

I ask, therefore, who is the Islamic Friendship Association lying to: Australia or Allah? This question aside, let us address the issue of what crime Skaf and his accomplices actually committed, and the justness of the sentence. During sentencing, the judge stated,

The offender was the leader of a brutal gang of rapists who, *on three occasions, raped four young women*. His activity and those of his gang spread terror in Sydney in August 2000 just before the commencement of the Olympic Games. *The gang consisted of varying numbers of men, up to about fourteen*. Not all of them have been caught. Those who have been caught and brought to justice were either identified by the victims or pleaded guilty because evidence had been found to connect them with the offences.

The activities of the gang *were organised by the use of mobile phones, and there was a considerable degree of planning and coordination involved in each set of attacks*. As is common with rapists, the gang members treated each of their victims with callous indifference and considerable cruelty.⁹

Let us be clear. This is not the case of "a look, a smile, a conversation, a greeting, a talk, a date, a

1 eBay Forums posting (from *The Geelong Advertiser*), "Muslim leader slams nation of 'convicts'". WWW page. <<http://forums.ebay.com/db1/thread.jspa?threadID=2000299734&tstart=40&mod=1168803018224>> (13 Jan 2007, cited 17 Jan 2007).

2 BBC News, "Australia cleric in convicts jibe". WWW page. <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6255287.stm>> (12 Jan 2007, cited 17 Jan 2007)

3 Sharia: Islamic Law

4 Marie Scoutas, ABC Radio, "Legal reforms proposed to enable retrial of Skaf brothers". WWW page. <<http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2005/s1296084.htm>> (4 Feb 2005, cited 17 Jan 2007).

5 Robert Spencer, *FrontPage Magazine*, "Muslim Rape? They Were Asking for It". WWW page. <<http://www.frontpagemag.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=25210>> (31 Oct 2006, cited 17 Jan 2007)

6 *The Age*, "Mufti Savages Australia". WWW page. <<http://media.theage.com.au/?rid=24927&sy=age&source=theage.com.au%2Fnews%2Fnational%2Fmessage-to-sheikh-dont-like-it-dont-come-back%2F2007%2F01%2F12%2F1168105181163.html>> (12 Jan 07, cited 17 Jan 07).

7 Paul Sheehan, *Sydney Morning Herald*, "Sheik tries to lie his way out of trouble". WWW page. <<http://www.smh.com.au/news/opinion/sheik-tries-to-lie-his-way-out-of-trouble/2006/10/29/1162056864793.html?page=fullpage#contentSwap1>> (30 Oct 2006, cited 17 Jan 2007).

8 *The Noble Qur'an: English Translation of the meanings and commentary*, (Madinah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an, 1996 (1417AH)), 152.

9 Four Corners, ABC, "Sentencing of Bilal Skaf". WWW page. <<http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/stories/s675775.htm>> (c. 2002, cited 17 Jan 2007).

meeting, a crime, then Long Bay jail” as al-Hilali asserts. This was a calculated crime, organised and participated in by more than one person. Where “democracy” failed for the Skaf brothers, and (presumably) from al-Hilali’s perspective, is that it failed to consider Islamic Law (Sharia), in which, as the BBC reports,

In Saudi Arabia and Pakistan

For example, in Saudi Arabia, a woman’s testimony in court is worth half that of a man’s testimony, according to a Human Rights Watch report in 2002.

Under the so-called zina (fornication) law in Pakistan, extramarital sex is punishable by public whipping or even stoning to death.

If a woman is raped, she runs a high risk of being charged with zina, particularly if she becomes pregnant. In order to prove an absence of consent, however, a woman is required to provide four witnesses to the rape, a near impossible task.¹⁰

Based upon a woman’s testimony being worth only half that of a man, 14 men (perpetrators) to 4 women (victims), means a testimony comparison of 28 to 4, and each victim would be required to have four witnesses to support the claim. Therefore, under Sharia, the Skafs wouldn’t have been guilty of anything.

Al-Hilali has shown himself for what he is, and what fundamental Islam means. Al-Hilali, Muslims, civil libertarians, and certain rights groups can jump up and down and claim foul by trying to play the “race” card all they like, but this has nothing to do with race. It has to do with, not even religion per se, but ideology, an ideology of superiority, self-righteousness, violence and hatred ... veiling itself as the victim.

In response to al-Hilali’s latest outburst, Kaysar Trad apologised—should someone take offence. But what does that really mean?

“But I, as a Muslim Australian, do feel the need to apologise for anyone who is offended by these comments.”¹¹

Notice Trad’s statement. He did not apologise, as a Muslim, for the comments. He apologised if someone took offence at the statement. What does he really mean, “Sorry if you take offence, but that’s the way it is”? Or is it because a vast PUBLIC (non-Muslim) outcry that they must resort to Taqiya? The Answering Islam website states,

Taqiya, or not showing their faith openly by means of pretense, dissimulation, or concealment, is a special type of LYING which is used by Shi’a Muslims. “Taqiya” (or taqiyyah) is related to the terms “taqwa” and “taqi” —all have the root meaning of “guarding” something, in this case, the Islamic faith. ... Some Shiite Traditions promoting Taqiya are “Imam Jafar Sadi (R) said: ‘Associate your opponents only outwardly and oppose them inwardly.’ (Ft. #1, Usool al Kafi, p.244)” ... although taqiya is usually seen as a Shia doctrine only, *it is practised and taught also by Sunni Muslims* ... Here just one quotation from a Sunni website, Islam

Q&A (www.islam-qa.com), advising in regard to making friends with non-Muslims: “Let not the believers take the disbelievers as Awliyaa’ (supporters, helpers) instead of the believers, and whoever does that, will never be helped by Allaah in any way, except if you indeed fear a danger from them’ [Aal ‘Imraan 3:28]. This verse explains all the verses quoted above which forbid taking the kaafirs as friends in general terms. What that refers to is in cases where one has a choice, but in cases of fear and TAQIYAH it is permissible to make friends with them, as much as is essential to protect oneself against their evil. That is subject to the condition that one’s faith should not be affected by that friendship and the one who behaves in that manner out of necessity is not one who behaves in that manner out of choice.”¹²

That al-Hilali and Kaysar Trad openly lie about what they say and what they mean should not come as a surprise to us. They are but reflecting the nature of the god they serve: Allah (who is NOT the God of the Bible). Allah, according to Islam’s own teachings, is the greatest deceiver. By comparison, the Bible identifies someone else as the deceiver,

“You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44 NAU).

Thankfully, we are not in a country where Sharia exists. And thankfully we live in a truly democratic and free country where freedom of speech exists. Else, what might be the result if such comparisons were made in an Islamic land? Maybe a “fatwa” just like that made against Salman Rushie? Unfortunately, Sheikh al-Hilali is not the only Sydney based imam spewing forth Islam’s poisonous doctrines; Sheikh Feiz Muhammad has preached from the same page of the same book.

“Every minute in the world a woman is raped, and she has no one to blame but herself, for she has displayed her beauty to the whole world,” Sheikh Feiz Muhammad told a packed public meeting in the Bankstown Town Hall last month. “Strapless, backless, sleeveless—they are nothing but satanical. Mini-skirts, tight jeans—all this to tease men and to appeal to (their) carnal nature.”¹³

See! It truly is the meat’s fault for being out, open in the public, and the fault is not with the cat that happened to wander by for a bite. Both al-Hilali and Feiz Muhammad are in agreement. Sheikh Feiz Muhammad runs The Global Islamic Youth Centre¹⁴ (GIYC) in Liverpool, Sydney. A concern is his and the GIYC’s influence by being “the nerve centre of Islamic youth in Sydney, setting the tone for 4000 youths, their families and fraternities in the city’s southwest.”¹⁵

In a 6 January 2007 article from *The Australian* newspaper, Feiz Muhammad discusses his concerns for friends who were arrested in November 2005 in an anti-terrorism raid. In another example of playing the victim card, the Sheikh claims that Australia has changed and it is the Islamic community who is suffering. In an attempt to show forth Islam’s “peace and tolerance”, Feiz Muhammad said,

“Islam teaches us you can’t detriment the body or limb of Muslims, or non-Muslims. If it means you are going to harm someone orally, or physically, it is against Islam and killing one innocent¹⁶ soul is like the killing of all humanity¹⁷. ... “In Australia (the Muslim community is) very moderate, very understanding,” Feiz says. “And that goes back to the Sheikhs themselves. There are no Sheikhs preaching chaos there. No one is telling people to raise arms against the Australian community. I honestly believe you have nothing to fear. “You live in a very, very safe place. I think the Australian government has become a bit over-zealous and that results in a fear within the Australian community, especially among non-Muslims. I have said the same to some of our security agencies and said that this could cause things to get much worse.” ... Asked to explain why some Muslims around the world espoused a state of almost perpetual warfare against non-believers, he says they have moved from defensive to offensive roles. “And that is unacceptable to Islam. They may believe that the time for combat has come and that those people are actually fighting us. They are unlearned people, ignorant to the ways of the religion.”¹⁸

Yet, undermining all his Taqiya-based PR-spinning lies, are the Sheikh’s video sermons.

A dvd of preachings by a radical Australian sheikh, in which he refers to Jews as pigs and calls on Muslim parents to offer their children as soldiers to defend Islam, has been labelled “offensive, unacceptable and outrageous” by the acting attorney-general. Sheikh Feiz Muhammad, amir of the Global Islamic Youth Centre in Liverpool, makes the controversial comments on several dvds, called the Death Series, which are available for purchase in Australia, overseas and on the internet.

His preachings drew concerns following the airing of a British documentary, *Undercover Mosque*. Its producers bought one of his dvds from children selling Islamic cds and dvds at a car park behind a mosque in England. The Australian federal police said it was aware of the dvds and was making enquiries into the matter.

Sheikh Feiz, who is an Australian citizen now believed to be in Lebanon, is shown in the documentary preaching jihad. “The peak,

16 The use of the word “innocent” should be noted well. Islamic writing would seem to disregard non-Muslims from being included in such a group. Therefore one could suggest that the words inclusion is a form of Taqiya; deceptively used for non-Muslims to overlay their own undiscriminating definition upon the word, rather than the Islamic definition.

17 These words are, in some ways, reminiscent of a statement made in the Talmud, and utilised in a scene from the movie Schindler’s List where the Jews who Oscar Schindler saved present him with a ring inscribed with, “Whoever saves one life, saves the world entire”.

18 Martin Chulov, *The Australian*, “Treatment has sheik wary of returning home”. WWW page. <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,21017850-601,00.html> (6 Jan 2007, cited 18 Jan 2007).

12 Answering Islam, “Taqiya”. WWW page. <http://answering-islam.org/Index/T/taqiya.html> (cited 18 Jan 2007).

13 Pamela Bone, *The Age*, “Religious extremists an insult to our values”. WWW page. <http://www.theage.com.au/news/pamela-bone/religious-extremists-an-insult-to-our-values/2005/04/13/1113251680541.html> (14 Apr 2005, cited 18 Jan 2007).

14 <http://www.giyc.com.au>

15 Martin Chulov, *The Australian*, “Treatment has sheik wary of returning home”. WWW page. <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,21017850-601,00.html> (6 Jan 2007, cited 18 Jan 2007).

10 BBC World Service, “Article 7: Right to equal protection by the law”. WWW page. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/features/ihavearightto/four_b/casestudy_art07.shtml> (cited 17 Jan 2007).

11 National Nine News, “Sheik in hot water again”. WWW page. <http://news.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=156925> (12 Jan 2005, cited 18 Jan 2007).

the pinnacle, the crest, the highest point, the pivot, the summit of Islam is jihad," he said. He criticises Muslim parents for being too cautious about letting their children receive jihad teachings. Today, many parents prevent their children from attending lessons. Why? They fear that they might create a place in their hearts, a love, just a bit of the love, of sacrificing their lives for Allah. He goes on to talk of his desire that children be offered "as soldiers defending Islam". Teach them this: that there is nothing more beloved to me than wanting to die as a Muhajid. Put in their soft, tender heart the zeal of jihad and the love of martyrdom.

In another dvd excerpt shown on *Undercover Mosque*, Sheikh Feiz makes pig-like snorting noises when he refers to Jews. "They will be [snort, snort]—all of them. Every single one of them."¹⁹

So much for Sheikh Feiz Muhammad's claim, reported 12 days earlier, that, "In Australia (the Muslim community is) very moderate, very understanding . . . And that goes back to the Sheikhs themselves. There are no Sheikhs preaching chaos there. No one is telling people to raise arms against the Australian community. I honestly believe you have nothing to fear". AL-TAQIYA!

And, as usual, to smooth things over is Islamic Friendship Association spokesman Kaysar Trad who says, "he is doubtful the Sheikh's comments will radicalise young people, but he is concerned it will reflect badly on the rest of the Muslim community. Jihad means different things to different people but these type of comments do unfortunately create a misunderstanding," he said. "It's best to talk to the person himself and unfortunately I understand he's not in Australia."²⁰ AL-TAQIYA!

In another ABC News article, Kaysar Trad says, "As a community, it is quite disconcerting for us that these comments are found from time to time and they're broadcast all over the news . . . They certainly give the public an erroneous impression about Islam and Muslims."²¹ Erroneous? Really!

Islam says that Muslims are the inheritors of the world, and Muslims are keen to see that enacted today. What this means for the West, whether someone is Jewish, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, atheist or secular, is that you will, as a Jew or Christian, die or become a second class citizen, a dhimmi; or for other non-Muslims, you will convert to Islam or die. Sharia exists in many countries around the world; do we, in the West, really think it can't, or won't, happen here? If or when Australia becomes 51 percent Islamic do we, the non-Muslims, think that we could stop Islamic law being legislated? How?

"By 2015, Europe's Muslim population is expected to double" and "conservative projections estimate that, compared to today's 5 percent, Muslims will comprise at least 20 percent of

Europe's population by 2050. Some even predict that one-fourth of France's population could be Muslim by 2025 and that, if trends continue, Muslims could outnumber non-Muslims in France and perhaps in all of western Europe by mid-century."²²

In the Netherlands, the Islamic University of Rotterdam's website states, "According to the 1997 prognoses of CBS, 10.8 percent of the total population of the Netherlands will be Muslim in 2015"²³ The KeepMedia website reviewed, in September 2006, Ian Buruma's book *Murder in Amsterdam The Death of Theo van Gogh and the Limits of Tolerance*. The review notes that, "Buruma uses the death of van Gogh²⁴ as a point of departure to examine the wider issues confronting Europe as its population changes from predominantly white and Christian to Arab and Islamic (one statistic he

cites: by 2015, Holland's population is projected to be 52 percent Muslim)."²⁵

So much for the once Calvinist (Dutch Reformed) and Anabaptist nation. But then, can we see God's judgement against this once Christian country now with the reputation of being one of the red-light capitals of Europe and the world, particularly Amsterdam? A country transformed, from where the law of Christ once reigned, to a country where anything goes, a country of lawlessness (talking of God's laws). Wasn't Israel judged, in the Old Testament, equally so for its sinfulness and unfaithfulness? This is but one example of many once Christian nations that now can not be truly regarded so.

What the future holds remains, in some ways, unseen and unclear; in other ways the inevitable is approaching. Nevertheless, such change in the world, and especially the West, gives one reason to reconsider what Jesus said,

"I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8 NAU).

Will He find faith? Will He find the true faithful? Or will Christianity and Christians truly be a dying breed, an endangered species, by that time?

25 Steven Rea, "A bloody emblem of Islamic alienation". WWW page. <<http://www.keepmedia.com/pubs/PhiladelphiaInquirer/2006/09/17/1819572>> (17 Sep 2006, cited 17 Jan 2007).

22 Timothy M. Savage, Europe and Islam: Crescent Waxing, Cultures Clashing, *The Washington Quarterly*, Summer 2004. WWW page. <http://www.twq.com/04summer/docs/04summer_savage.pdf> (c. Jun 2004, cited 17 Jan 2007).

23 Islamic University of Rotterdam, "Vision and Mission". WWW page. <<http://www.islamicuniversity.nl/en/showcontent.asp?id=114>> (c. 2004, cited 17 Jan 2007).

24 Theo van Gogh was an outspoken short film maker, who was "Not just shot, but slashed across the neck with a machete. And then stabbed through the heart. The attacker, a Muslim radical, pinned a note with the knife driven into van Gogh's chest—a martyr's manifesto. He expected to be killed by police. Subsequently tried and convicted, he has expressed no remorse for his deed. In fact, he stood in the courtroom and said he would do the same again." (Refer footnote 25.)

Warren's Wanderings

AN EXPOSÉ OF RICK WARREN AND THE PURPOSE DRIVEN TEACHINGS
Collated with editorial comments by B. Michael Bigg (MB)



THAT *The Purpose Driven Church* and *The Purpose Driven Life* are unbiblical and unprincipled is, in reality, undeniable. All one had to do was compare the 40 day examples Rick Warren cites in the introduction, "A Journey with Purpose, Getting the Most from This Book", of *The Purpose Driven Life* with the Bible to realise that he is either biblically illiterate, illogical or intentionally deceptive. If Rick Warren could not even truly, accurately or biblically explain the 40 day examples he cites, then what chance does he have of telling us, "What on earth am I here for?" And for that matter, why would you trust him, and continue reading the book, relying on him to explain other biblical verses?

If anyone is under the delusion of Rick Warren's integrity as a Bible teacher and pastor, then consider the ongoing wanderings of "America's pastor".^{1,2}

"Global Summit on AIDS and the Church" or Submitting the Church to the spiritual equivalent of AIDS?

"Hosted by Rick and Kay Warren and the Purpose Driven Network, Nov 30–Dec 1, 2006, Saddleback Church Conference, Lack Forest, Calif., USA" was the "Global Summit on AIDS and the Church: Race Against Time"³ The website states, "It brings together the leading authorities from health and relief organisations, governments, international agencies, and ministries to interact with pastors and church leaders from

19 Jano Gibson, *The Age*, "Outrage at sheikh's pig jibe". WWW page. <<http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/sheikhs-pig-comments-outrageous/2007/01/18/1168709878630.html>> (18 Jan 2007, cited 18 Jan 2007).

20 ABC News, "Rudd says Sheikh's comments incite terrorism". WWW page. <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/newstems/200701/s1829408.htm>> (18 Jan 2007, cited 18 Jan 2007).

21 ABC News, "Sheikh's martyr, pig comments condemned". WWW page. <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/newstems/200701/s1829231.htm>> (18 Jan 2007, cited 18 Jan 2007).

1 Zondervan, "Rick Warren's Bible Study Methods". WWW page. <<http://www.zondervan.com/Cultures/en-US/Product/ProductDetail.htm?ProdID=com.zondervan.9780310273004&QueryStringSite=Zondervan>> (c. 2006, cited 15 Jan 2007).

2 CNN. WWW page. <<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0612/15/sitroom.02.html>> (c. Dec 2006, cited 15 Jan 2007).

3 PurposeDriven, "2006 Global Summit on AIDS and the Church: Time is Running Out". WWW page. <<http://www.purposedriven.com/en-US/HIVAIDSCommunity/GlobalConference/2006Conference/Time.htm>> (c. Oct/Nov 2006, cited 13 Jan 2006).

around the world who are modelling reproducible programs". Confirmed speakers include **Bill and Melinda Gates**, **Bono**, **Senator Bill Frist** (United States senator, Tennessee); **Senator Barack Obama** (United States senator, Illinois), **Senator Sam Brownback** (United States senator, Kansas)⁴

Of concern for many people is the inclusion of pro-abortion, pro-homosexual, Senator Barack Obama, a fact addressed by an article republished on Rick Warren's www.pastors.com website outlining Saddleback's response to complaints made about Senator Obama's inclusion at the summit. The article includes,

"The name of the seminar at which Sen. Obama will be appearing is entitled, 'We Must Work Together,'" said a statement signed by 18 pro-life groups. "No, Mr Warren, Mr Obama, we will never work with those who can support the murder of babies in the womb."⁵

In response, Saddleback stated,

"We're not making an endorsement of Obama or any of the other speakers," continued the statement. "Rather by coming to Saddleback, the Summit speakers are affirming and supporting the vital role of the Church in fighting the pandemic of HIV/AIDS." Warren responded to a blogger who claimed he invited Obama to preach in his pulpit to the Saddleback congregation. "Of course that is untrue," said Warren in an e-mail Saturday to the Purpose Driven Network. **'I'd never invite any politician to speak from the pulpit to our congregation. Never.'** Receptionists at Saddleback had received 'rude and vicious' calls from people complaining about the claimed invitation. The church, with an average attendance of 22,000 people each weekend, made clear that Obama is not speaking to the Saddleback congregation, but rather to a conference comprised of ministry leaders, social workers, and health professionals on the topic of HIV/AIDS only.⁶

Technically, one could say the Saddleback, and Rick Warren's, statement is true. Nevertheless, the conference is being organised, hosted and advertised by Saddleback. And, the summit's title is "2006 Global Summit on AIDS and the Church", not the "Global Summit on AIDS". If this was truly a "ministry leaders, social workers, and health professionals" conference, then why publicise it like a church seminar, advertised to congregants and Christians? If it was an educational seminar for Christians, then (one would hope) you wouldn't invite persons with the policies⁷ like that of Senator Obama. A verse of scripture worth considering, here, is

what Paul says in 2 Corinthians:

Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? (2 Corinthians 6:14-15 NKJ)⁸

The Berean Call⁹, in response to the conference, makes the point, "Saving of lives is certainly paramount, but saving of souls is greater yet. We have seen enough examples that demonstrate whenever evangelicals join hands with the world, the real "good news" will be set aside. That is part of the demands of the world."¹⁰

The CampOnThis blog¹¹, also raises an interesting point worth considering,

Rick Warren seems like a compassionate man; but one who is a late-comer to this issue of AIDS. He said on an interview with FOXNEWS this past week that the first priority was to "break the silence of the church on AIDS". I beg your pardon Mr Warren, but there have been many churches over for the past 20+ years without fanfare, PR and national media attention have faithfully served the Lord and those that are HIV positive in very sacrificial and profound ways. It is good that Rick and Saddleback have finally broken the silence and are getting involved on this issue.

But in all honesty, one must logically ask why now? I mean, where has he been all those years when people were dying with AIDS? I can only think in part that this is now due because of his PDL fame and subsequent wealth derived thereof, that he has to have somewhere to use and justify the tens of millions of dollars he has made from "being in the ministry." Thus... his fascination with social causes.

Mr Warren is being promoted, positioned and perceived, mostly by his own public relations machine, as a global leader in fighting HIV infection. However, rather than using his "Q" to drive him deeper into pastoral ministry (i.e. prayer, biblical exposition, the discipleship of God's people, and the proclamation of the gospel of sola fide) he has turned to social causes: global warming, getting rid of poverty, bringing his P.E.A.C.E. plan to Syria, and now of course... AIDS.¹²

when a brave nurse named Jill Stanek brought about national awareness to a practice at a local hospital in suburban Chicago that allowed the starvation and neglect of newly born children who had survived abortion procedures—Obama opposed her. He opposed the right of those children to be given the chance to live and he advocates against a ban on such procedures—then known as 'born alive abortions'". (Kevin McCullough, "Why is Obama's evil in Rick Warren's pulpit", Investigate Magazine, January 2007). Consider now, who, Rick Warren is inviting to Saddleback, a man who in one breath advocates the right to kill the helpless and innocent—allowing them to be butchered or die by starvation and neglect; whilst in the next breath he says we must help the victims of AIDS, and no doubt the starving, in Africa.

8 NKJ—New King James Version

9 <<http://www.thebereancall.org>>

10 Email, *The Berean Call*, 9 December 2006.

11 A Blog (or Weblog) is a journal or diary style website, chronologically listed by the most recent entries first.

12 CampOnThis, "Broke 'Saddleback' Mountain...when a pastor tries to be a politician". WWW page. <<http://stevenjcamp.blogspot.com/2006/12/broke-saddleback-mountain-when-pastor.html>> (2 Dec 2006, cited 15 Jan 2007).

Visit <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sf9RRJm6Qvw>> to see and hear Rick Warren describe the summit to his church. "This next week on Thursday, Friday, we're doing the Global conference, *The Global Summit on AIDS and the Church*. The premier conference on AIDS and the church, in the world." It seems that in light of the criticism he has received over the invitation of certain persons in the summit, he included, following the remarks quoted above, a carefully crafted warning that one may not necessarily agree with everyone or everything you hear. On the same video, Rick Warren presents to his church a clip of his recent trip to Syria. A trip supposedly not recorded. A trip in which Rick Warren makes controversial remarks and whose story keeps being rewritten.

Rick Warren's Road to Damascus

On November 28, 2006, Berit Kjos, reported the following story on NewsWithViews¹³, summarising the furore that has arisen from Rick Warren's trip to Syria.

On November 13, Rick Warren met with Syria's Grand Mufti Sheikh Badr al-Din Hassoun in Damascus. Their dialogue was publicised by the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) in an article titled, "American Priest (Warren) Says no Peace without Syria:"

"Rick Warren on Monday said... that 80 percent of the American people rejected what the US Administration is doing in Iraq and considered the US policy in the Mideast as wrong.... Warren expressed admiration of Syria and the coexistence he saw between Muslims and Christians, stressing that he will convey this image to his church and country. "

On November 16, WorldNetDaily founder Joseph Farah wrote, "Rick Warren wrote to me this morning to protest this column. He claims he didn't say anything he was actually quoted as saying by the official press in Syria. However, in a video... he says Syria 'does not allow extremism of any kind.' In fact, Syria is, in many ways, the No. 1 sponsor of terrorism in the world.... Here's what the Syrian Arab News Agency reported: '...Pastor Warren hailed the religious coexistence, tolerance and stability that the Syrian society is enjoying due to the wise leadership of President al-Assad....'"

Despite contrary evidence, Warren proclaimed what the Syrian President al-Assad apparently told him. But the soon-to-follow assassination of Pierre Gemayel, a Christian anti-Syrian official in the Lebanese government—therefore a foe to the Syria-backed Hezbollah terrorists—should shatter those public illusions of tolerant coexistence.

Finally, in a startling exposé on November 20, Joseph Farah wrote,

"I pointed out to Warren that WND had indeed attempted to contact him about his trip. No one from his Saddleback Church ever returned our calls the day the story broke. 'I'm sure since you were warned in advance by the State Department that you took the precaution

13 <<http://www.newswithviews.com>>. View the article online to investigate the details further, by following the footnoted reference hyperlinks.

of recording your own words,' I suggested in my response. 'We look forward to seeing the transcripts: ...'

"I really didn't expect to hear back from Warren—but, a few minutes later, I did, with an absolutely stunning retort. He let me know he is a close friend of President Bush 'and many, if not most, of the generals at the Pentagon.' He also told me he did not tape anything while in Syria, 'because it was a courtesy call, like I do in every country.' Warren explained that he had also counseled with the National Security Council and the White House, as well as the State Department, before his little courtesy call.... 'In fact, Warren added, 'as a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and Oxford Analytica, I might know as much about the Middle East as you.'..."

"Not one to let lies go unchallenged, I wrote back to Warren with a link to the YouTube video: 'If you didn't tape anything, what's this?'... It might be that Rick Warren, deep in the bush of Rwanda, never received those last questions, because he never responded—at least not in the last three days. He did, however, within minutes make sure the YouTube video he recorded independent of his meetings with the Syrian brown shirts was removed from the network."¹⁴

After leaving Syria, and having become aware of the furore that his trip had generated, *Christianity Today* magazine's website, reported, in a blog compiled by Ted Olsen,

Rick Warren, criticised for Syria trip, says he was misquoted

After criticism from the Institute on Religion and Democracy and some other quarters for visiting Syria and meeting with president Bashar Al-Assad, foreign minister Walid Al-Mu'allim, higher education minister Ghiath Barakat, and grand mufti Sheikh Badr al-Din Hassoun, Saddleback Church pastor Rick Warren says his trip was misrepresented both by the government-controlled Syrian media and U.S. bloggers. In a letter to church members and others, he wrote:

"In hindsight, I wish we'd been better prepared for our visit to Syria. We would have handled some meetings differently, watched our words more closely, and been more aware of the agenda of their state press. We wanted to just slip in and out, but that's nearly impossible for me to do anymore. It's been a learning experience. ... As we left, the official state-controlled Syrian news agency issued some press releases that sounded like I was a politician negotiating the Iraq war by praising the Syrian president and everything else in Syria! Of course, that's ridiculous, but it created a stir among bloggers who tend to editorialise before verifying the truth. Does it seem ironic to you that people who distrust Syria are now believing Syrian press releases?"

Warren's office has also issued a press release explaining that the visit to Syria "was neither official nor political, but rather came out of a promise to his Muslim neighbor in California." There are, however, some political statements in the press release: recognition of the

Syrian government's treatment of its Christians and its welcoming of Iraqi Christian refugees, for example, as well as some encouragement for more dialogue between the U.S. and Syrian governments.¹⁵

The press release by Rick Warren's office can be read at: <<http://www.alarryross.com/PressRelease.aspx?id=261&cid=37>>. And though Warren's office well spins the graces endowed upon Jews and Christians by Syria, such as,

Many Americans don't realise that both Christianity and Judaism are legal in Syria. In addition, the government provides free electricity and water to all churches; allows pastors to purchase a car tax-free (a tax break not given to Muslim imams); appoints pastors as Christian judges to handle Christian cases; and allows Christians to create their own civil law instead of having to follow Muslim law. Every Christian with whom Dr Warren's team met—including those in the city of Malula, where they represent two-thirds of the population—expressed gratitude for the government's protection of their right to worship.¹⁶

However, Bob Unruh, of WorldNetDaily, notes,

Thousands of Christians are fleeing from the violence in war-torn Iraq to Syria, but their new home also holds "ruthless" positions against Christianity which range from life in prison for talking about your beliefs to death for a Muslim who converts, according to ministries working there.

"It's better than Iraq, but it's no bed of roses there for sure," Jim Jacobson, president of Christian Freedom International, told WND. "The Christians (there) are stuck between a rock and a hard place."

While Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Iran and other Middle East nations are well-known for persecuting Christians, Syria's actions are of a lower profile. But it is listed among those nations around the world that persecute Christians by everyone from Jacobson's organisation to the U.S. government.

In Syria, the constitution requires the president to be a Muslim and specifies that Islamic jurisprudence is a principal source of legislation. And sharing your Christian faith with someone—anyone—is discouraged as "posing a threat to the relations among religious groups" and carries a penalty of up to life in prison, he said.

"For Christians, one of the core tenets is the ability to share your faith, but in Syria that can lead to arrest (and) persecution," Jacobson said. "We list Syria as one of the top ... countries where Christians are facing real persecution."

"Syria isn't Saudi Arabia, but it's one of the big untold stories out there," he said. For those who want to convert from Islam to Christianity, "you're disowned by your family, if the local mosque issues a death threat, no one is going to do anything about it, you'll just end up dead. Nothing is done, no police action, that's just

understood.

"If you convert you'd better leave the country," he said.

For those who already are Christian, the government allows them to practice their religion—but within harsh and restrictive guidelines. A Christian is not allowed to proselytise—ever. And churches that want to hold an extra service must get a government permit. Sermons are routinely monitored, as is church fundraising.

He said the issue for Iraqi Christians is the choice of being dead soon in Iraq, or taking your chance in Syria and so they are flooding into Syria.¹⁷

Selectively presenting the freedom and rights of Christians in Syria is not honest, and is a disgraceful betrayal of the Christians living in Syria and other Muslim lands.

Joseph Farah, who founded WorldNetDaily¹⁸, is "a Christian journalist of Syrian and Lebanese heritage who has covered and analysed the Middle East for the last 25 years"¹⁹. Concerning the circus which is Rick Warren's Road to Damascus, Farah notes the following pattern,

Warren went to Syria and recorded himself praising the totalitarian police state and its dictator.

Then he denied saying what he said.

Then, after removing a video recording from YouTube, he denied any recordings were made in Syria.

Then he told his congregation he had recorded some 12 hours of his trip through Syria and Africa.

Then Warren apologised to me for defending his actions and presumably misrepresenting the truth.

Then he told his congregation in writing that the controversy over his trip was just being stirred up by satanically-inspired internet pundits. (I assumed that was meant to be a description of me.)

Then he told me he was a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Then his assistant denied membership.

Is any of this important?²⁰

Yes, is any of this important? Rick Warren says that his trip to Syria was just to promote his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan.

"P.E.A.C.E. is an acronym that stands for "Plant churches, Equip servant leaders, Assist the poor, Care for the sick, and Educate the next generation," Warren said. The emphasis calls for church-based small groups to adopt villages where spiritual emptiness, selfish leadership, poverty, disease, and ignorance keep people from experiencing the kind of life God wants them to have"²¹

17 Bob Unruh, WorldNetDaily, "Christians flee Iraq, find Syria 'ruthless': Ministries say believers have no Mideast refuge". WWW page. <http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=53549> (29 Dec 2006, cited 13 Jan 2007).

18 <<http://www.worldnetdaily.com>>

19 Joseph Farah, WorldNetDaily, "Rick Warren: Is he or isn't he?". WWW page. <http://worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=53688> (9 Jan 2007, cited 13 Jan 2007).

20 Ibid.

21 Mark Kelly, PurposeDriven, "P.E.A.C.E. Plan a worldwide revolution, Warren tells Angel Stadium crowd". WWW page. <http://www.purposedriven.com/en-US/AboutUs/PDintheNews/Archives/25th_Celebration.htm> (c. 2005, cited 13 Jan 2007).

14 Berit Kjos, NewsWithViews, "Mother of all Purpose Driven Deceptions". WWW page. <<http://www.newswithviews.com/BeritKjos/kjos67.htm>> (28 Nov 2006, cited 13 Jan 2007).

15 Compiled by Ted Olsen, *Christianity Today* magazine, "Weblog: Rick Warren's Purpose in Syria. WWW page. <<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2006/novemberweb-only/146-51.0.html>> (17 Nov 2006, cited 13 Jan 2007).

16 The News Kitchen, "Dr Rick Warren includes visit to Syria on three-nation pastoral training and Peace Plan Tour". WWW page. <<http://www.alarryross.com/PressRelease.aspx?id=261&cid=37>> (16 Nov 2006, cited 13 Jan 2007).

The "kind of life God wants" people to have is NEW LIFE. New life, not just a better life in a fallen world. Need it be said that the epistles of the New Testament talk not about experiencing success, but about being faithful—irrespective of circumstances (cf. Hebrews 11:36-40).

Let us consider a couple of alternatives to Rick Warren's acronym, "Plant worldly churches, Equip purpose driven servants, Assist the poor to become purpose driven, Care for those who accept Rick Warren's teachings and Educate the next generation of Warrenites" or alternatively, "be Popular with the world, be Egalitarian to everyone except those who hold fast to the biblical line, be Accepting of Islamic propaganda, Collaborate with the world, be an Enemy of God and His Word".

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From
\$UCCESS
to
SIGNIFICANCE
to *seduction*

By PAUL PROCTOR

I WAS again reminded last week of just how far the perceived church has strayed from the Great Commission upon reading an article published in the Baptist Press (BP) entitled: *Mid-life adults can move from 'Success to Significance.'* It begins by quoting the renowned and now deceased business management guru Peter Drucker, whose celebrated concepts and principles came not from scripture but reportedly from his own observations and life experience—pragmatic precepts that have become the very leaven of today's church, with the help and influence of men like Bob Buford, author of the book, *Halftime*.¹

The BP article's writer, Don Beehler, quoted Drucker as having said:

"... people now have two lives—life one and life two.... They are over prepared for life one and under prepared for life two...there is no university for the second half of life."

He then poses the question: "What exactly did Drucker mean by two lives?" followed by a suggested interpretation given later in the article from "successful" real estate developer, Lloyd Reeb:

"I came to the realisation that each of the buildings I had built would one day be torn down and be forgotten", Reeb said. "I began to re-evaluate life in view of God's definition of success rather than my own, and made some serious changes."

So, now, instead of our lives being assessed scripturally as either lost or saved—obedient or not—it is suggested that we divide them into two earthly parts: a pursuit of "success" (part 1) and a pursuit of "significance" (part 2) under the implied premise that the latter is God's definition of the former—that the pursuit of significance somehow has redeeming qualities because it is motivated by benevolent intent rather than brazen materialism.

The article goes on to say:

"The 'halftime' concept centres on the growing number of people like Reeb who reach mid-life and discover that the pursuit of success isn't enough. They want their second half of life to really count for eternity."

As presented here, "the pursuit of success" isn't considered sinful, rebellious or even contradictory to the Christian life—just "not enough," but not enough for what? Our egos? When our pockets are overflowing, isn't that about all there is left to fill? And the alternative is what? Pursuing significance? Did Jesus say: "Be significant, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand?" What is the eternal value in that? Sounds significantly self-centred to me; but then I was taught that the biblical alternative to rebellion was repentance and that what Jesus demonstrated in the upper room with the basin and towel was that we are to be servants, not significant. Then again, I guess the role of servant is a little hard on one's self-esteem—or if you prefer, one's self-significance.

"Our goal is to cast a vision for church leaders to reach the greatest untapped resource that sits in front of them every Sunday—half timers, marketplace leaders and individuals with experiences, gifts and callings to serve God," Reeb said.

Cast a vision? Unless that's the name of some fancy new fishing lure, I'd say we're getting into pointed hats and flying bats here. Come on folks—let's put the crystal ball away. Are we God's resources or God's redeemed? My dictionary defines "resource" as somebody or something "that can be used as a source of help or information." Since when does the Lord need my help or information? If I understand the scriptures, it is WE who are in need of help and information—not God. All He wants is our obedience.

...Reeb began speaking to men and women around the country about using this period of their lives to pause and to redirect time, talent and treasure into something fulfilling and lasting for Christ...

¹ The book—<http://www.halftime.org>; The author—<http://www.halftime.org/bobsnotes>

Here, true repentance is craftily replaced with a kind of religious redirection and reinvestment of time, talent and treasure “FOR Christ” as if the Almighty, like the marines, just needed “a few good men” to get the job done.

“Because you say I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing; and don’t know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked” (Revelation 3:17).

Shall we now help God by helping ourselves, or is someone just seducing us into co-operation here by way of our own self-absorbed search for significance?

In the Baptist Press piece, Reeb cites a Harvard/Met Life study which he claims “shows that half of all Americans aged 50-70 are interested in working to help the poor, elderly and others in need. They want to transition from lives of success to lives of significance,” adding “the trend is especially strong among baby boomers”.

In other words, this trendy baby boomer interest in helping “the poor, elderly and others in need” has nothing to do with the Word of God, the conviction of the Holy Spirit, true repentance and faith in Christ or even the church, for that matter, and everything to do with “half of all Americans age 50-70” wanting to “transition from lives of success to lives of significance.”

If anything is being “transitioned” here, it is the church being transitioned into that of a benign social services organisation for the brotherhood of man—transitioning churchgoing baby boomers from “I am crucified with Christ” to “All for one and one for all”—which, to the spiritual, implies a one world religion; and to the secular, a new world order. The result is, not the adding of good works to one’s faith in Christ, but only the subtle substitution of true repentance with self-significance. Very shrewd, and ego-friendly, don’t you think?

Instead of repenting from a disobedient life of self-satisfying rebellion against God to an obedient life of self-denying righteousness in Christ, we are taught now to simply “transition” from “success to significance”—which in my view is simply moving from vanity to vanity since there is no scriptural evidence that significance is any more a fruit of the Spirit than is success.

Later in the article we see where this is all heading when Beehler reveals the following:

Bill Craig, LifeWay’s director of leadership and adult ministries, said the widespread desire “to transition from success to significance among people reaching the second half of their lives creates tremendous opportunities for churches to partner with marketplace leaders in their congregations—and discover innovative ways to improve not only their local communities, but also the far reaches of the globe”.

So, “widespread desire...creates tremendous opportunities...with marketplace leaders...to improve local communities.” Somebody please show me in scripture what this has to do with the gospel of Jesus Christ and His eternal kingdom!

My trusty creeker-speak² decoder ring with its special seeker-sensitive doubletalk descrambler

tells me that it means the church has decided to unequally yoke itself to wealth, power and influence to make the world a better place for everybody—a world Jesus specifically commanded us NOT to love—to come out from and “be separate” (2 Corinthians 6:17).

Thus says the LORD: “Cursed be the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the LORD” (Jeremiah 17:5).

Once again,
grinning wolves are
among us friends,
using their warm
and fuzzy truths
to decoratively frame
a cold and deadly lie;
that the purpose
of the church is to
love the world and
make it a better place.

These aren’t pilgrims, folks—these are self-significant settlers making themselves right at home here in a kingdom built with hands.

Beehler eventually ends up leading us right into Hollywood’s latest liberal celebrity fashion craze of preferred charitable endeavours by talking about African villages, AIDS, orphaned babies and the providing of food, clothing and education—eventually mentioning, only in passing and ever so briefly, the “gospel” (whatever that means to him) as if the afterlife was merely an afterthought, before going on to tell of “another person who made this transition from ‘success to significance,’” one Sandy Griffith of Houston, who “rocks, feeds, soothes and, in prayer, asks God to bless... premature infants and those struggling to overcome other severe health problems” at Ben Taub General Hospital’s high-risk nursery unit.

So, what’s wrong with Lloyd Reeb speaking to people around the country about redirecting their “time, talent and treasure” into “something fulfilling for Christ?” and Sandy Griffith rocking, feeding and praying for preemies? Absolutely nothing, unless you’re using good intentions, acts of kindness and the irresistible pull of motherly heartstrings to replace the real gospel of repentance and faith—something that is curiously unimportant in the article and, with the exception of one word, missing altogether.

Once again, grinning wolves are among us friends, using their warm and fuzzy truths to decoratively frame a cold and deadly lie; that the purpose of the church is to love the world and make it a better place.

“Do not love the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any one loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not from the Father, but is from the world” (1 John 2:15-16).

The final quote in the Baptist Press article reveals even more about the misguided nature of the Success to Significance program:

“We hope to ignite lives of adventure and impact throughout the nation,” Reeb said.

Is that what Jesus Christ commissioned us to do?—“Go and ‘ignite lives of adventure and impact?’” Is that our incentive here? Did Jesus ever try and make the Christian life sound exciting, inviting, fun or adventurous to his followers? When did He ever dangle carrots of self-significance or adventure in front of them for motivation? So why do we repeatedly dangle such carrots today?

In my estimation, it is because there is no longer any conviction of sin or sense of foreboding about this fallen kingdom we find ourselves in—or even a longing for another. As far as I can tell, the vast majority of pew warmers today are not passing through to a better place—they’re already home.

Adulterers and adulteresses, don’t you know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God (James 4:4).

I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again: Jesus Christ did not suffer and die on a cross two thousand years ago to change the world, but rather to redeem us from it. By erroneously embracing the former, one foolishly forfeits the latter.

Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then my servants would fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but my kingdom is not from here” (John 18:36).

Related articles:

1. Mid-life adults can move from “Success to Significance” (<http://www.baptistpress.org/bpnews.asp?ID=24145>)
2. The Red 3-legged Stool (<http://herescope.blogspot.com/2006/10/red-3-legged-stool.html>)

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About the Author



PAUL PROCTOR a rural resident of the Volunteer state and seasoned veteran of the country music industry, retired from showbiz in the late 1990’s to dedicate himself to addressing important social issues from a distinctly biblical perspective. As a freelance writer and regular columnist for News With Views, he extols the wisdom and truths of scripture through commentary and insight on cultural trends and current events. His articles appear regularly on a variety of news and opinion sites across the internet and in print. Paul may be reached at watchman@usa.com

² Satire—toys with high tech equipment found in cereal boxes in the 1960s to carry out imaginary “secret agent” highly classified intelligence missions.

Is there victory over sin

By MARK MULLINS

In Matthew 5:48 the Lord Jesus gave this command to the crowds gathered together to hear His sermon on the mount: *“Be perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect.”* The Greek word used by the Lord is “teleios” which means to be complete and includes moral character. The context of this exhortation to holiness comes as Christ applies the outward commands of the law to the inner man, so that we are told that to be angry without cause against our brother is tantamount to murder (v22), and to lust after a person of the opposite sex is to commit adultery in our hearts (v28). How do we fare under this exacting test, brother and sister in Christ?

In Romans 6 Paul begins the chapter with this well-known rhetorical question: *“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?”* And look at this surprising answer in verse 2: *“May it never be! How shall we, that are dead to sin, live in it any longer?”* Paul explains that we have been crucified with Christ and that the old self is now dead. In verse 7 he goes on to say that He who is dead has ceased from sin! I remember that when I was baptized I felt as if I had gone to my grave and indeed Paul tells us that this is exactly what happens to the Christian when he turns to Christ (v4): *“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life.”*

In verse 11 Paul goes on to tell us to reckon ourselves dead to sin: that is *to act* as if we are dead to sin. It would make no sense to suggest that this act of reckoning was wholly futile; like the emperor without his clothes on, whom everyone told looked wonderful except the innocent little boy who told him the truth. When we reckon ourselves dead to sin we are to reckon ourselves alive to God. If being born again means anything doesn't it mean just that? As Paul writes (in Ephesians 2:5) we have been made alive in Christ!

There are many who claim that we can never have victory over sin in this life and therefore that we shouldn't expect to. Now I am far from perfect, regrettably. However I cannot accept that the Lord Jesus would make a demand on his followers that they are unable to meet. Many cite Paul's account of his battle against sin in Romans 7 as clear and irrefutable evidence that he did not have victory over sin in this life. Well, let's have a look at this passage.

Chapter 7 opens with Paul's illustration that those in Christ have been set free from the law just as a widow is set free to remarry after her husband dies (see verses 1-6). This leads on to Paul addressing the great objection that is raised by the law's barrier to us having life: is the law evil (v7)?

He then explains that the purpose of the law is to demonstrate our sin because it is only when we have a law that we are able to see that we have broken it: sin is seen as sin when compared to the law (v9). He retorts that it is we who are sinners and not the law.

In verse 12 Paul concludes that the law and the commandment are holy, just and good. In verse 13 he continues his defence of the law showing conclusively that the law's purpose is to demonstrate how sinful sin is. For us to understand Paul's logic in the rest of chapter 7 we must start at verse 13 which provides us our gateway into all that follows.

The Crucial Importance of the Word “for”

The first “for” in verse 14 defends the law on the ground that we know that the law is spiritual but I am carnal, sold under sin. Paul is saying that the law cannot be at fault because it is holy. I am the one who is fleshly and sold under sin. He is obviously not talking about the redeemed state but the unredeemed. In order to bring me to Christ I have to know my sin. My sin is made known to me by the law which, we know from Galatians 3:24, is our guardian that leads us to Christ.

In order to further establish this point Paul uses the second “for” to show that it is sin in me that is the cause of the problem and not the law. The “I” is the old nature. It illustrates the battle that occurs between an awakening mind and a sinful body. There is a part of me that knows what is right but another part that cannot do what is right. From this in verse 16 Paul deduces that if I know what is right, and I acknowledge that what I am doing is not right, then I consent that the law is good: again he is making the point that it is *sin* in me that is at fault and not the law.

In verse 18 we have a third “for”: Paul explains why it is—so that my knowledge, that what I am doing is not what I want to do, is the root of the problem and not the law: there is a part of me that knows that in me (my flesh) dwells no good thing because, although I want to do the right thing, I am not able to do it. He makes this point again in verse 19. I wonder how many of us have had this experience before we were converted? I remember that there was someone I knew who always seemed to do the right thing and naturally seemed to have a heart for others. Actually she was not then a Christian although I understand she is now converted. However the point is that in my fallen state I acknowledged that someone was better than me because she walked more closely according to the law that I consistently broke. I acknowledged this law that it was good but, like Paul, did not have the power to keep it.



The Awakening Conscience

From verse 17 onwards Paul seems to be excusing himself from his sin. Does this mean that Paul is suggesting that, in some way, a person who cannot do anything about his sin is excused from its consequences? This cannot be so because he has just concluded at the end of chapter 6 that the wages of sin is death and indeed he concludes chapter 7 with the cry in verse 24: *“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”* This old nature that was dragging him to hell and separation from God needed to be dealt with but he was powerless for the task.

No, I believe that the first “I” that we see in verse 20 is referring to the mind or conscience that has been awakened by the law and realises what sin is and would resist the committing of the sin: it is not that part of me that sins but it is the sin that dwells within the rest of me. Again Paul returns to his old theme to show that the law is good and is not the problem.

The Tale of Two Laws

In verses 21 to 23 Paul contrasts two laws: the first law he refers to here is not the moral law of the Bible but a sort of natural law of cause and effect. I want to do good but do evil because evil is present with me (v23). Part of me delights in God's law but there is at work the law of sin that has come into me from the Fall: it wars against the mind or the conscience that knows that sin is wrong. It is important to note that Paul describes himself as delighting in the law of God after the inner man. It is as if he were saying that he desires not only to be perfect outside (as every pharisee) but also on the inside. You will recall that the Lord's great indictment against the pharisees in Luke 11 was that they kept their cups clean on the outside but were filthy on the inside!

in this life?

Who can deliver me from the body of this death: who can rescue me from this impossible situation where I know what I want to do but am unable to do it? Verse 25 has the answer: it is Christ:

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

The second sentence returns to the former argument: that the enlightened mind (or conscience) serves the law of God by imposing the plumb-line of righteousness to show up the fallen standards of the old nature that serves the law of sin which leads to death.

Deliverance from the Law of Sin and Death

In Chapter 8 Paul concludes that we may enjoy victory over the old nature when we walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh. Indeed he introduces a third law: the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, which has set us free from the law of sin and death. Those of us who are in Christ Jesus are in the Spirit because the Spirit of Christ lives in us (v9).

This should not come as a surprise to us. When we become Christians something happens: we have the assurance of sins forgiven; an understanding of what the Bible teaches; an ability to resist sin: all through the Spirit of Christ that comes into the believer at conversion.

The question for us is whether we will walk in the Spirit or in the flesh. If we walk in the flesh then we indulge our sinful nature; if in the Spirit then in the righteousness of Christ. Consider Galatians 5:16 which enjoins us to "walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh".

We need then to reckon the old nature as dead. This we can achieve only through the Spirit. In the words of Colossians 3:1-2 we must "seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God." We are to set our "affection on things above, not on things on the earth". If we indulge the flesh how can we expect it to be mortified? Philippians 4:8 encourages us to fill our minds with "whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report". How are we doing? Let us take certain steps: be careful which books we read, which (if any) television programmes we watch, who we spend our time with and what we talk about in general conversation. If there is anything we are involved in that leads us into temptation then we should stop doing it: it is all part of the principle at the end of Mark 9 of cutting off anything that causes us to stumble.

Let us all then put on the new nature and be full of the fruit of the Spirit which we find in Galatians 5. I end with a quote from F.B. Meyer¹ in

his commentary on Isaiah:

We are not bidden to purchase strength, or generate it by our resolution, prayers, and agonisings; *but to put it on.* It is already prepared, and only awaits appropriation. Put on your strength, O tempted one! Before passing from the quiet morning hour into the arena, which has so often witnessed failure and defeat, put on the might of the risen Saviour. Do not simply pray to be kept or to be helped but arm yourself with the whole armour of God; take hold of his strength and be at peace; wrap yourself about with the mail of Him who is stronger than the strong man armed. Reckon that it is yours. Dare to believe that you are more than a match for your worst foes. Say with David, "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who set themselves round about. The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?"

Isn't it exciting that the new nature is already prepared for us? Putting on Christ is like putting on a garment! The work of faith is a work of grace: we are after all, "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared before that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10). As we put on Christ so we find ourselves walking in the good works He has prepared for us. So let us all fix our eyes on the Lord Jesus! (Heb 12:1).

¹ F.B. Meyer, a 20th century Keswick theologian and famed devotional writer

About the Author



MARK MULLINS became a Christian at the age of 19 in his first year at Durham University. After graduating Mark joined the army where he spent seven years, leaving in 1993 to study for the bar. Mark has been a barrister since 1995, specialising in crime and immigration. Until 1994 Mark attended a large charismatic anglican church in central London but left as a result of the Toronto blessing to attend a small traditional pentecostal assembly in north London where he is now an elder. Mark is on the council of Christian Alliance Ministries which is an umbrella organisation for pentecostals/charismatics who seek to follow simple Bible-based Christianity. Mark has been involved with the Lawyers' Christian Fellowship since 1994. He is now a member of its governing council, the London chairman and chairman of the public policy unit which is active in speaking out on a whole range of moral issues which are affected by current changes in the law. Mark and his pastor Roger Winter-Smith were speakers at the 2006 CWM camp and undertook a short preaching and lecturing tour through Australia, and will be returning in 2007.

THEME JESUS IS ALTOGETHER LOVELY

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An AoG minister (USA) for 20 years, Jeff has travelled in full time music ministry, appearing on television and singing in hundreds of churches across America. He has taken a stand for biblical Christianity against the general trend in the USA and across the world. Jeff is available for a short ministry tour through Australia after the camp. Interested churches should contact Clive & Donna Leembruggen at CWM-Fellowship: (07) 3423 0089 or email [clivendonna@gmail.com](mailto:<clivendonna@gmail.com>).

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K I N G S C L I F F E
A U S T R A L I A

The Still Small Voice

By B. MICHAEL BIGG

Of incredible value to the Christian is J.C. Ryle's¹ masterful work, "Holiness"², and the abridged edition, "Aspects of Holiness"³. In the chapter "Want of the Times", Ryle makes the statement,

Oh, that people would remember that it was not the wind, or the fire, or the earthquake, which showed Elijah the presence of God, but 'the still small voice' (1 Kings 19:12).⁴

And though Ryle and others are right to emphasise the personal relationship of Christians with God, and use Elijah's encounter at Mount Horeb to home in on aspects of such a relationship, we must be aware of the background to Elijah's experience to fully understand the encounter. Furthermore, we must be aware of the modern abuse of referencing this scripture to justify an experience. It was because of God's presence that the experience has meaning, and not because Elijah experienced a "still small voice" that God was present. May we look to God rather than an experience, for it is when we encounter God that the experience will be of value.

The Mountain of God

After Israel left Egypt and made their way to Mount Sinai, Moses ascended the mountain to God and God told Moses His intention to enter into a covenant with Israel. On the day that this was to occur God descended upon the mountain,

So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder. The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up (Exodus 19:16–20)⁵

Exodus also records the reaction of the people,

All the people perceived the thunder and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood at a distance. Then they said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but don't let God speak to us, or we will die." Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may remain with you, so that you may not sin." So the people stood at a distance, while Moses approached the thick cloud where God was (Exodus 20:18–21).

Both the Old and New Testaments⁶, record not just that God entered into covenant with Israel and the giving of the Law (the Ten Commandments and the ordinances that followed), but the experience of it by the parties present. God's presence brought a thick cloud upon the mountain with lightning and thunder, but also the sound of a trumpet. But it was no ordinary trumpet. When a trumpet sounds the musician holds the note, or sound, as long as he can before the air in his lungs is fully exhaled and the volume of the trumpet dies away. In contrast, the trumpet on the mountain did not become softer, but "grew louder and louder". In the days prior to synthesised digital effects this indeed would be an uncommon, unusual and unnatural event in its own right; but this was but one of five⁷ supernatural events at the giving of the law.

Horeb, the mountain of God at Sinai, was not just the location where God entered into covenant with Israel, it was The Mountain of God, where God revealed Himself.

Enter Elijah

Approximately 800 years after entering into Covenant with God, Israel, in her usual example of the sinfulness of man⁸, was still rebellious against God. And just as Israel whined against God and Moses in the wilderness so too did they whine and rebel in Elijah's day. In 1 Kings 18 Elijah confronted

Ahab, king of the northern kingdom of Israel⁹.

Elijah said, "As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to him today." So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah. When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is this you, you troubler of Israel?" He said, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, because you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and you have followed the Baals. Now then send and gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, together with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table." So Ahab sent a message among all the sons of Israel and brought the prophets together at Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:15–20).

In confronting the people Elijah asked, "How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD (Yahweh) is God (Elohim), follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.' But the people did not answer him a word" (1 Kings 18:21). As 'fence-sitters' the people would not advocate one point of view or the other, but rather went with the status quo. Only after God's sovereign display of His power would the people acknowledge, in an urgent double imperative, that "Yahweh is God (Elohim), Yahweh is God (Elohim)" (v39).

Despite the obvious success on Mount Carmel, of which all of Israel and King Ahab were eyewitnesses, Elijah, following Queen Jezebel's threat to have him executed, ran for his life. It is here, after having prayerfully sought God to answer by fire on Mount Carmel, that we encounter Elijah, the 'prophet of fire'¹⁰.

Having escaped from Jezebel and having made his way past Beersheba, in the southern kingdom of Judah, Elijah entreated God to end his life (1 Kings 19:4). God, however, sent to Elijah the *Angel of the LORD* to provide food and water. Twice the angel visited and twice Elijah ate. On the strength of these two meals Elijah travelled to Horeb, the Mountain of God.¹¹

6 Hebrews 12:18-20. "For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. For they could not bear the command, 'If even a beast touches the mountain, it will be stoned.'" 7 Thunder, lightning, cloud, trumpet and earthquake.

8 In reading the Old and New Testaments one may question God's choice of Israel as a chosen people. But God in His wisdom chose wisely; for Israel truly represents the flawed character in all of us: sinful, corrupt, unfaithful and full of pride. That Israel, the keepers of the Old Testament oracles of God, rejected the Messiah, Jesus, at His first coming is one thing; but that the "Christian" West (i.e. nations of Christian heritage, though it is more true to say they are secular these days, that these nations), in general, reject Jesus Christ—having available to her both Old and New Testaments—shows that we, indeed, are no better, but rather worse.

9 Following the death of King Solomon the Kingdom of Israel was divided into the Southern Kingdom of Judah (comprised of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin) and the Northern Kingdom of Israel (comprised of the other tribes). The Northern Kingdom survived until the invasion of the Assyrians, and the Southern Kingdom until invasion of the Babylonians. For seventy years the Southern Kingdom was in exile, until the decree went forth for Israel to return. Upon their return, Judah, as the Southern Kingdom was called, became the name for Israel's inhabitants in "Judea".

10 See also, 2 Kings 1:9-15.

11 Rick Warren, in the introduction to his book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, ridiculously claims that "Elijah was transformed when God gave him 40 days of strength from a single meal." It was not the meal that transformed Elijah, but Elijah's encounter with God at Mount Horeb; let alone that it was two meals and not one as Rick Warren asserts.

1 J.C. Ryle, 1816-1900. First Anglican Bishop of Liverpool (1880-1900).

2 J.C. Ryle, *Holiness: its nature, hindrances, difficulties, and roots*, (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 1979).

3 J.C. Ryle, *Aspects of Holiness* (London: Grace Publications Trust, 1999).

4 J.C. Ryle, *Holiness: its nature, hindrances, difficulties, and roots*, (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 1979), 295.

5 Unless otherwise stated, verses are from the New American Standard, Updated (1995).



Horeb, the mountain of God at Sinai, was not just the location where God entered into covenant with Israel, it was The Mountain of God, where God revealed Himself.

At Horeb, whilst lodging in a cave¹², the Word of the Lord came to Elijah. Elijah's conversation with God, at Horeb, is reminiscent of that of Moses. Not only were these two men prophets of the LORD, they were both concerned with God's covenant with Israel, and the unfaithfulness of the people.

Then Moses returned to the LORD, and said, "Alas, this people has committed a great sin, and they have made a god of gold for themselves. "But now, if You will, forgive their sin—and if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written!" The LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book. But go now, lead the people where I told you. Behold, My angel shall go before you; nevertheless in the day when I punish, I will punish them for their sin." Then the LORD smote the people, because of what they did with the calf which Aaron had made (Exodus 32:31–35).

Then he came there to a cave and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"¹³ He said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (1 Kings 19:9-10).

Furthermore, concerning their encounters with God, they both had similar, and yet distinctly different, experiences.

Then Moses said, "I pray You, show me Your glory!" And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion." But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" Then

*the LORD said, "Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand **there** on the rock; and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen" (Exodus 33:18-23).*

Likewise, at the giving of the Law (as stated earlier) in Exodus 19, accompanying God's presence was thunder, lightning, a thick cloud, a very loud trumpet sound and an earthquake. Like Moses, Elijah too was called to stand on the Mountain as God passed by.

So He said, "Go forth and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire... (1 Kings 19:11–12a).

Elijah experienced the same events that Moses and the people did! However, 1 Kings 19 notes that Yahweh (the LORD) was not "in" these things. It was not, and is not, these "things" that are to be chased or experienced for the presence of God. Elijah, having read the Torah (the first five books of the Bible) knew of all these events and experiences, and would have expected them; (not to mention that he had already experienced God's revelation by fire and thunder [storm] at Mount Carmel). In contrast to Moses' experience whereby,

When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder (Exodus 19:19).

God did something completely different for Elijah. The Updated New American Standard Bible renders it,

And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of a gentle blowing. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. And behold, a voice came to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" (1 Kings 19:12–13 NAU)¹⁴

The King James, New King James and Revised Standard versions render the "sound of a gentle

blowing" as a "still small voice"—the most oft remembered rendering.

And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice (1 Kings 19:12 KJV)¹⁵

Likewise, the Jewish Publication Society's 1917 translation of the Tanach (Old Testament) utilises the same rendering. Other translations, though, render "a still small voice" as "a voice still small" (YLT)¹⁶, "a gentle whisper" (NIV)¹⁷, "the sound of a low whisper" (ESV)¹⁸, "a tiny whispering sound" (NAB)¹⁹, "a soft murmuring sound" (TNK)²⁰, and Brenton's English translation of the Septuagint²¹ renders it as "the voice of a gentle breeze" (LXE)²². In striking contrast to the other translations, the New Revised Standard renders this verse as,

and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence (1 Kings 19:12 NRS)²³

Similar to Young's Literal Translation and others, a modern literal rendering of the Hebrew is, "a voice, a barely audible whisper"²⁴. The New Revised Standard's rendering is an attempt to convey more deeply what the Hebrew is trying to say. Following the extraordinary displays of God's presence and power—though God was not IN these things, but the source of these things—was the tangible, palpable, whisper, or silence, in which God revealed Himself. It is here, when we compare Elijah's encounter with Moses', that we appreciate what happened.

Where God revealed Himself to Moses with the sound of a trumpet, the revelation to Elijah is in a barely audible whisper. It was not the events occurring around him that caused Elijah to cover his face (a conscious action of the fear of the LORD

12 The actual Hebrew says "the cave" which some (including the Talmud) suggest refers to the cleft of the rock where Moses was positioned when God revealed Himself to him (Exodus 33:22).

13 It is worth noting that God's question is not asked for the sake of informing God, but, seemingly, as a means of questioning Elijah's actions; that is, he was doing what he had not been asked to do. And just as Adam, after he was disobedient, was asked, "Where are you" and Cain, after he had slain his brother was asked, "Where is Abel your brother?" and "What have you done?", Elijah is seemingly asked to justify his course of action of fleeing from Jezebel, when God had been with him throughout his ministry.

14 NAU—New American Standard, Updated 1995.

15 KJV—King James Version.

16 YLT—Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898).

17 NIV—New International Version (1984).

18 ESV—English Standard Version (2001).

19 NAB—The New American Bible.

20 TNK—Tanakh (1985), Jewish Publication Society.

21 Septuagint—A 3rd to 2nd Century BC translation of the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures into Greek.

22 LXE—The English Translation of The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament (LXE) by Sir Lancelot C. L. Brenton, 1844, 1851, published by Samuel Bagster and Sons, London.

23 NRS—New Revised Standard.

24 Michael Coogan, ed., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha, Third Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 525.

and the awareness that for sinful man to see the face of God means death, cf. Exodus 33:18; Isaiah 6:5). God's awesome displays of power are not mandatory signs of God's presence and revelation. It is foolish to stereotype God into a set course of action, response or display. God acted in a way which was foreign to Elijah's expectation.

God is still God, no matter how dramatic and no matter how innocuous. Elijah covered his face at the AUDIBLE voice of God, softly spoken, or quiet, as it was. Where Israel trembled at the thundering, booming, trumpet of God, Elijah trembles at God's silence.

Comparisons and Contrasts

Furthermore, Elijah is contrasted to Moses by way of attitude. The people sinned before God and Moses interceded on their behalf, seeking their forgiveness. Elijah, however, had virtually given up, and sought God's judgment against their sin. Both men encounter God on the Mountain, but both are very different characters. Another point is that though we may see God in action at times, a lack of visible outworking, by God, does not mean inaction on God's part.

And like Moses, Elijah anointed his successor, *Now Joshua, son of Nun, was filled with the spirit of wisdom, since Moses had laid his hands upon him; and so the Israelites gave him their obedience, thus carrying out the LORD'S command to Moses (Deuteronomy 34:9).*

Elijah set out, and came upon Elisha, son of Shaphat, as he was ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen; he was following the twelfth. Elijah went over to him and threw his cloak over him (1 Kings 19:19).

But unlike Moses, it seems that Elijah missed something in God's revelation in silence. When questioned a second time about his reason for coming to Horeb, Elijah replied exactly as he did before the experience. What was Elijah supposed to learn, what did he fail—at this point in time—to learn?

There he came to a cave, where he took shelter. But the word of the LORD came to him, "Why are you here, Elijah?" He answered: "I have been most zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts, but the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to the sword. I alone am left, and they seek to take my life." ... When he heard this, Elijah hid his face in his cloak and went and stood at the entrance of the cave. A voice said to him, "Elijah, why are you here?" He replied, "I have been most zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. But the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to the sword. I alone am left, and they seek to take my life" (1 Kings 19:9-10,13-14).

Apparent success or failure in Elijah's ministry was not for Elijah to decide, Elijah was required only to be obedient to God. In "failure" Elijah sought for God to end his life (v4); but in a surprising twist God revealed Himself, not in an awesome display of His might and power, but in the stillness of supposed inactivity. Obedience and not the show of outward success is what Elijah was called for, just as with Moses.

The Mount of Transfiguration

Another similarity worth mentioning is that both Moses and Elijah appeared at Jesus' transfiguration on the mount, cf. Matthew 17, Mark 9 and Luke 9. In a vision, the disciples present with Jesus saw these two men, figures and representative of the Law and the Prophets. How apt, that these two men, to whom the LORD revealed Himself, were again present, when a cloud covered and surrounded the mountain, and God spoke from the cloud, whilst Jesus was transfigured — revealing His glory. At hearing the audible voice of God, Jesus' disciples, "fell face down to the ground and were terrified" (Mt 17:6). Certainly not the response of today's Still-Small-Voicers.

Today's Still Small Voice

Much can be said and illustrated by the "Still Small Voice", and certainly many a good man has referenced Elijah's encounter with God in regard to relationship and prayer in the Christian life. But let us remember the context and setting of Elijah's day to understand the intent of the inclusion of this incident in 1 Kings.

Unfortunately, many a biblically-illiterate "hireling" today, calls upon 1 Kings 19:12 as merely a proof-text for hearing the supposed "voice" of God (i.e., the Holy Spirit). Infatuated by their own perceptions, and grandiose claims, they repeat the presumption of Elijah and yet claim illumination and spiritual maturity. Elijah thought he knew God's presence—having known the Word of God and read the experience of Israel at the giving of the Law. But God revealed Himself to Elijah differently than He did to Moses. Today's "ministers", especially the Word-Faith variety and those influenced by them, talk of the "Still Small Voice" in the same way: this is how God reveals Himself! Is it? We can NOT pigeon-hole God to a set formula or action: HE is GOD and will reveal Himself as He chooses to, not necessarily in the manner "ministers" expect Him to. But amazingly, the very verse, concerning Elijah's encounter, which "ministers" use to justify their ideas, is actually the text which demolishes their own arguments. It is the voice of correction and fear of the LORD.

Is today's "Still Small Voice" valid? Is hearing the "Still Small Voice" the voice of the Holy Spirit? Are the advocates of this teaching, teaching biblical doctrine?

The Word-Faith ilk talks of hearing the 'still small voice'. To some a literal whisper, to others a voice in their head (to put it plainly). So-called ministers stand upon the platform/pulpit and show off their supposed spirituality (and "relationship" with God) by introducing statements with, "Yes Lord, I'll say that," or, "Thank you Lord," when they sought a way to word a thought. Then there's the "ministers" who profess obedience to the voice of God by saying, "God just told me to act the fool before you. I'm a fool for God. God said to stand on my head." And obediently, they follow the directive. Fools, indeed, they are.

Kenneth Copeland, talking about "character", says,

Character does what is right when there is no one around to see you do it. For instance, let's say you're in a public restroom—maybe at

church, at a restaurant or at work—and after you wash your hands, you take the paper towel you used to dry your hands and throw it in the trash can...but you miss and it lands on the floor. Do you stop and take the time to pick up the paper towel and drop it in the trashcan? Or, do you just keep on heading out the door, leaving the paper towel on the floor for someone else to pick up thinking: *Well, I was in a hurry.... Besides, they pay people to clean up the bathrooms.* Never mind the fact that you heard that "still, small voice" in your spirit say, *Go back and pick it up—and wipe off the sink where you splashed water all over, while you're at it.*²⁵

So it was the "still, small voice" and not our conscience? And what of the non-Christian who "hears" the voice in his head, that is, his conscience, and does the same? What, the Christian needs to be prompted by God, but the non-Christian doesn't?

Copeland is intent on teaching that the "still, small voice" is what Christians must seek to hear,

If we, as believers, are ever going to receive God's specific instructions for our lives, we must first obey the general instructions He has given us. We must hear and obey the first and second commands God has given us in His written Word before we will be able to *hear His still, small voice giving us more detailed instructions about our daily lives.*²⁶

The Still-Small-Voicers of today seem to neglect scripture which says that, *"your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams"* (Acts 2:17). God did speak to the first century Christians in dreams and visions. Peter talked with God in a vision, whilst in a trance (Acts 10:10). Through visions Paul was instructed and encouraged in his preaching of the gospel (Acts 16:9-10, Acts 18:9-10). It wasn't a "Still Small Voice" which guided them.

Consider also the Lord's appearance to Paul (Saul of Tarsus), whilst he was on the road to Damascus; note the experience,

Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. As he was travelling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do." The men who travelled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank. Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am,

25 Kenneth Copeland, *Building Character Builds Protection*, http://www.kcm.org/studycenter/articles/protection/build_protection.php, cited 16 Dec 2006.

26 Kenneth Copeland, *Orders from Headquarters*, http://www.kcm.org/studycenter/articles/holyspirit/orders_headqtrers.php, cited 16 Dec 2006.

Lord." And the Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight." But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to Your saints at Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake." So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized; (Acts 9:1-18).

The theophany experienced by Saul of Tarsus shows that the voice of God was certainly not small or still, but rather audible enough for all present to hear.

And so, though it is written that, "your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams" (Acts 2:17), we can not be so rigid as to say that God can not, or will not, reveal himself in other ways. Nevertheless, the "Still Small Voice" of popular conception is not necessarily that way.

To Him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear His voice; and He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out. And when He brings out His own sheep, He goes before them; and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers (John 10:3-5).

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me (John 10:27).

It is a shame that some are so eager to chase the "voice" of "God" that they fail to hear the Word of God. To such, the experience is more real, more meaningful, more exciting and more fulfilling than reading the Holy Scriptures and meditating (studying, considering and reflecting) upon them.

About the Author

B. MICHAEL BIGG For a number of years Michael and his wife Kathryn were in the Word-Faith movement. By God's grace they saw the light and truth of the Word of God and now warn others trapped in that deception. Michael's passion is the study of the Word of God, and his concern is for true expositional teaching in the church. Michael can be contacted at michael@echad.net (www.echad.net).

The Toronto Deception



By **PAUL GOWDY**
former Toronto Vineyard Pastor

OT has taken me nine years to actually come to the place where I would write this story. Part of the reason was because I was not fully convinced that it was appropriate to speak out against weaknesses in the body of Christ publicly. Another reason is because it has taken years of soul searching to become convinced that what happened in the Toronto Airport Church (TAC later changed to Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship — TACF) was actually all bad or at least more bad than good!

For the past number of years I have called it a **mixed blessing**. I think James A. Beverly called it this in his book *Holy Laughter and the Toronto Blessing, 1994*. Today I would call it a mixed curse, concluding that any good that came from this experience is far outweighed by much harm and satanic deception. Therein has been my dilemma. I have tried to live my life in the fear of the Lord Jesus, who told us that the unforgivable sin was blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, i.e. attributing to Satan what was in fact a work of God. If pressed as to whether or not the Toronto blessing is all God or all devil I will still be hesitant. However, I am convinced that Satan has used the experience to blind people to the historical doctrines of God: producing fruit in keeping with repentance; testing and discerning the spirits; and to test prophecy.

After three years of being in the thick of the Toronto blessing our Vineyard assembly in Scarborough (East Toronto) just about self-destructed. We devoured one another, with gossip, backstabbing, division, criticism etc. After three years of 'soaking,' praying for people, shaking, rolling, laughing, roaring, ministering at TACF on their prayer team, leading worship, preaching and basically living at TACF we were the most carnal, immature and deceived Christians that I know. I remember saying to my friend and senior pastor at Scarborough Vineyard Church in 1997 that ever since the Toronto Blessing came we have just about fallen to bits! He agreed!

My experience has been that the manifestation of spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12 was much more common in our assembly, before January 1994 (when the Toronto blessing started) than during the period of supposed Holy Spirit visitation.

During 1992-1993, when praying for people, we would experience what I believe was genuine prophecy, deliverance and much grace and favour from the Lord. After the Toronto Blessing started, all ministry time changed. The only prayers were 'More Lord MORE', the shouting of 'Fire,' the jerky-shaking of the body with the 'ooh ooh OOH WOOOAAH' prayer. (I am not exaggerating!)

On January 20, 1994 about 15 people from our church travelled over to *Toronto Airport Vineyard* to listen to Randy Clark, a Vineyard pastor from the USA. John Amott had called our senior pastor to invite us. He said that Randy had been to the Rodney Howard-Browne meetings and that the "stuff" had broken out in his church in the following weeks. John was hoping that something might break out with us too. We were only too happy to travel over.

Our fellowship was planted, in 1992, out of the Toronto Airport. In those days there were three vineyard churches in Toronto. One down town church, Scarborough vineyard church to the east and the airport church. We were one big happy family. Because we were small in number we did special meetings, conferences etc, together. The year before, most of our leadership teams joined and had headed to Nicaragua for a short-term mission trip. We had genuine love and fellowship with each other. Since leaving the Vineyard churches I have read a lot of analysis from the critics. Some allege that the *Toronto Blessing* was one huge conspiracy to lead the body of Christ into heresy. Heresy and apostasy I suspect may well be the result, but none of this was intentional. I am honestly convinced that the leaders in the Vineyard churches were genuine born-again Christians who loved the Lord, but fell into deception. They did not love the Lord enough to keep His commandments. They failed to obey the scriptures and have been led astray by longing for something bigger and brighter and more exciting and dynamic. I was guilty of this sin also.

I have preached renewal in Korea, the United Kingdom, the USA and here in Canada. I am genuinely repentant and in writing this story I would ask you, the bride and body of Christ, to forgive me. Especially the Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians among you, for you are my immediate family, theologically. I am an evangelical Christian. I always have been, but I do not believe in the cessation of the spiritual gifts at the end of the

apostolic era. I believe that it was my evangelical roots (my family are Baptists and I was born again in the Presbyterian church) that started to open my eyes to problems with this so-called renewal. In hindsight I wonder how could I have been so blind? I laughed at people acting like dogs and pretending to urinate on the columns of the TACF building. I watched people pretend to be animals, bark, roar, cluck and pretend to fly as if they had wings, perpetually act as if drunk and sing silly songs. How I thought that any of this was from the Holy Spirit of God amazes me today.

It was loud, irreverent and blasphemous of the Holy God of the Bible. In my mind I reasoned that as long as they did not teach anything in direct violation of scripture then it was what we called the "exotic". This is a buzzword for manifestations that could not be justified from a biblical perspective. I was taught, from the pulpit, that we had two options. The order of the nursery, full of life and messy, or the order of the graveyard, very orderly but dead! As a young immature pastor I wanted life with mess. I failed to remember that God wants us to become mature and grow up in Him.

I became disconcerted by the prophetic words that came forth, especially one by Carol Arnott in which she had her bride experience where she was taken into the very presence of Jesus and said that the love that she experienced was even better than sex! I was shocked in my spirit and thought how can one compare the love of God with sex? When we suspected that demons were running riot in our services, John Arnott would teach that we should ask, are they coming or going. If they are leaving then that is okay! John would defend the chaos by saying that we ought not be afraid of being deceived, if we have asked the Holy Spirit to come and fill us then how could Satan come and deceive us? This would make Satan very strong and God very weak! He said that we needed to have more faith in a Big God to protect us than in a Big Devil to deceive us. This sounded very convincing, but was totally contrary to scripture for Jesus, Paul, Peter and John all warn us about the power of deceiving spirits and especially so in the last days. Again, we did not love God enough to obey His Word and the result was that we opened ourselves up to lying spirits. May God have mercy upon us!

Finally the penny dropped for me as I was rolling around one night 'drunk in the Spirit,' as we would say. I started singing and as I rolled around the floor the Nursery Rhyme 'Mary had a little lamb its fleece was white as snow' came to mind. I sang this in a mocking spirit and instantly my heart told me this was a demon. Instantly I repented and was in total shock. How could a demon influence me? Did I not love God? Was I not zealous for the things of God? I knew that an unclean spirit had just manifested through me and I was guilty of great sin. After this experience I stayed away from TACF. I did not go back there any more. I did not possess the conviction to denounce the whole experience, but thought that we were failing to pastor the Blessing well enough.

Even after I stopped going over to TACF, I had to pastor the fruit of it. One example was when some of our people returned from a meeting there asking

us if we had all received the golden sword of the Lord? I asked them what they were talking about, thinking that it was some prophetic reference to the Holy Scriptures, but they said, 'No, its not the Bible. It's an invisible golden sword that only the really pure can receive. If taken in an unrighteous fashion then the Lord would kill you'. But if you are holy enough to receive it then you can wield this sword and it will heal aids, cancer etc. and bring salvation. How one wielded this sword was by pretending to have this invisible sword in your hand and motioning to strike people with it when in prayer! I thought, while even in deception at this time, that the TACF had become lunatics! This was purportedly first received by Carol Arnott and then

If God has forgiven me and opened my eyes then He can do it for all those caught in deception too.

given to the ones holy enough to receive it!

Another thing was the gold filling in the teeth. We had people in our assembly peeping down one another's throats looking for the gold fillings that God had placed there to show how much he loved them! In all my time there I only heard one message on repentance, given by a visiting speaker, Jackie Pullinger from Hong Kong. It went over like a lead balloon. We were not there to repent. We were there to party in the Lord! After one year into the blessing I spoke out at a pastors' meeting and said, 'Guys we have shaken, rattled, rolled, laughed, cried and bought the tee-shirt. But we have no revival, no salvation, no fruit and no increased evangelism, so what's the deal?' I was soundly rebuked. Who was I, to expect to see fruit when the Lord was healing His broken people? We had been legalistic long enough and God was spending this time restoring His wounded and freeing us from legalism. I was told not to push the Lord and the harvest would come in His time.

I knew this was wrong because the Lord had commanded us to go into all the earth and make disciples! Not, that everyone should take a sabbatical for who knows how long, while God does some strange new thing! Ultimately I left over something as controversial as the ordination of women. Personally I believe from scripture that women should not be pastors/elders in a local assembly. I could be wrong on this, and there is much debate in the church today, but that is my conviction and in the Vineyard churches they were ordaining all the pastors' wives to co-pastor with them. I am certainly for women in ministry but believe that the elder/pastor role in a local assembly has been reserved for men. We didn't write scripture but, we should have the grace to obey it.

So there is my story. I could go on and document much excess, folly, sin and latter day rain teaching that manifested from the prophetic end of this Blessing but others have already done that. We sang about Joel's army and the billion-soul revival as if it were one of the Ten Commandments, and as always it was just around the corner, next month, next year etc. Jesus asked, "When the son of man returns will he find faith upon the earth?" He warned that His coming would be hastened "the days will

be shortened" for the sake of the elect. This is a far cry from the dominionism that is being taught all through the vineyard-prophetic-spiritual-warfare movement. They think they are going to take over the whole world! While in the Vineyard I embraced a life-changing verse from Paul, the apostle, the phrase, "*Do not go beyond what is written!*"

To finish, I just want to say sorry for the damage that I have done, by teaching things that are not correct, biblically. I repent before men as I already have before God. I will not excuse my falling into deception. I did not test things when the scripture commands us to do so. Everyone who was there when this thing started knows that what I write is true, they would just come to different conclusions especially if they are still promoting the 'river!'

To those in the river I would say, climb out, there are things living in the water that will bite you really badly! I love the people of TACF and the Vineyard movement, but they have much to answer for and may the Lord open their eyes sooner rather than later. I suspect that when my story becomes public I will get bombarded by emails, some damning me for still believing in the ministry of the Holy Spirit and still walking in deception and some old friends damning me for exposing dirt or being negative about the Lord's anointed! Well, the Lord knows my heart and by His grace He will guide me into all truth as I seek to know Christ and Him crucified!

If you believe that I walk in sin and error please pray for me, that the Lord would forgive me and open my eyes. I will study the Word to show my self a workman approved! I would call on all who read this to pray that the Lord would open the eyes of all who have been involved in this deception, whether leader or follower, we are loved and the Lord is a forgiving God. He says, "*If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness*". I believe we are like the church in Laodicea, we think that we are rich, have prospered and need nothing, we do not realise that we are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked. We must take the Counsel of Jesus and buy gold refined in the fire, white garments to clothe our shameful nakedness and eye salve that we might see again. Jesus is calling us to repentance and thank the Lord that He is, for it will lead us to true restoration with our Father! If God has forgiven me and opened my eyes then He can do it for all those caught in deception too. I will finish with a warning from Paul, who said, "*If you think you are standing firm be careful lest you fall*".

About the Author



PAUL GOWDY a native of Northern Ireland met his wife, a Canadian, while working with YWAM in Scotland. They moved to Canada in 1991, married and now have five children. Paul was a pastor in the Scarborough Vineyard church for four years and a member for six. He was never forced out of the Vineyard Movement but is now doing evangelistic work, raising his own support, and working with the Pentecostal Churches of Canada a sister denomination with AG-USA.

... and all liars ...

But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

—Revelation 21:8 NASB

By **SANDY SIMPSON**

LYING is a problem for all people (Psalm 116:11). We are all sinners (Romans 3:23). Those of us who are Christians are “sinners saved by grace” (Ephesians 2:8) indwelt by the Holy Spirit in our “new self” (Colossians 3:10). But we still live in our “old self” whom we must “put off” (Ephesians 4:20-25) by taking up our cross daily and following Christ (Luke 9:23).

The difference between unbelievers and those who are truly born again is that believers no longer “practise sin” (1 John 3:9). They have the indwelling Holy Spirit (Romans 8:11) who convicts them when they lie (John 16:8). True believers then repent (1 John 1:9) and go on to “practise righteousness” (1 John 2:29) with the Lord’s help.

The unregenerate, the false brothers, or those who have fallen away (Galatians 5:4, Mark 4:17), practise lying. They practise a lifestyle of lying because their consciences are seared (1 Timothy 4:2) and the Holy Spirit, when convicting them, cannot break through the hardness of their unrepentant hearts (Ephesians 4:17-19, Hebrews 3:13).

Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron (1 Timothy 4:2 NIV).

Those we expose as false apostles, false teachers, false prophets and false Christs are hypocritical liars who practise lying as a lifestyle. They lie when they say the Lord told them something and it is proven not to be true. They lie when they claim to be able to transfer the Holy Spirit anointing. They lie when they claim to be healing people or raising the dead when they are not. They lie when they teach things that are against the core doctrines of the Bible and yet they claim to have some newer revelation. They lie when they say they either can’t remember teaching heresy when confronted with the facts, or that they never taught it. They lie about their associations with certain groups and individuals when they think they will get into trouble with biblical believers. They lie when they are put to the test and keep on lying without repentance. This is how you can know your true brothers in the Lord and those who claim to be brothers but are actually false brethren.

Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practises righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practises sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. No one who is born of God practises sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practise righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother (1 John 3:7-10 NASB).

Those who practise lying as a lifestyle, according to John, are actually of the devil. They may claim to be followers of Jesus Christ (Matthew 7:21-23). They may speak high sounding words, have millions of followers and maybe even perform great signs and wonders (Matthew 24:24). But if they are liars they show who their father is (John 8:43-45).

They will commit heinous sins and then, *after* they are caught, they confess. But when they confess, they only confess to what they were caught doing or think they might be prosecuted for, and then they continue to lie about the rest. Their confessions are only political in nature, done to please men, but are not true repentance. Then in a few months they are back preaching the same lies and living to please their appetites because their “mentors”, “counsellors” and followers allow them to continue in the lifestyle to which they have become accustomed.

But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbour, for we are members of one another (Ephesians 4:20-25 NASB).

Those who are true believers will stay away from false brethren because they are “wolves”, which have entered the church in order to try to bring true believers into bondage again to sin.

But it was because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage (Galatians 2:4 NASB).

Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? (Matthew 7:15-16 NASB).

False brethren bring the Truth into disrepute.

But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping (2 Peter 2:1-3 NIV).

What is their fruit? Not the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), but the fruit of unrighteousness.

The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19-21 NIV).

A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognise them (Matthew 7:18-20).

There is a lesson for all true believers in recent events¹. Have nothing to do with deeds of darkness perpetrated by false brothers. Reject heresy. Mark and avoid false teachers.

Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them (Ephesians 5:11 NIV).

¹ Editorial Comment: See “End Note: Liars” for a number of illustrations with supporting evidence and URL links.

A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject (Titus 3:10 KJV).

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them, which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine, which you have learned; and avoid them (Romans 16:17KJV).

END NOTES:

- Haggard lies to ACT (Apologetics Coordination Team – <http://op.50megs.com/act>); NAE (National Association of Evangelicals – <http://www.nae.net>); about his involvement in the NAR (New Apostolic Reformation)—<http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/answertothaggard.html>
- Haggard admits he is a liar and deceiver about sexual immorality (but continues to lie about his involvement in the NAR, of which he is still a listed member)—http://www.moriel.org/articles/discernment/church_issues/statement_regarding_ted_haggard.htm
- C. Peter Wagner and Paul Cain lies—<http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/addendmNAR.html>
- Rick Warren's excuses about statements he made—<http://www.fromthelighthouse.com/blog/index.php?p=368&more=1&c=1>
- Rick Warren lies in his response to the Syria statements—<http://www.deceptioninthechurch.html>
- Brownsville lies—<http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/lies.html>
- False prophecies of the NAR—<http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/narfalsprophecies.html>

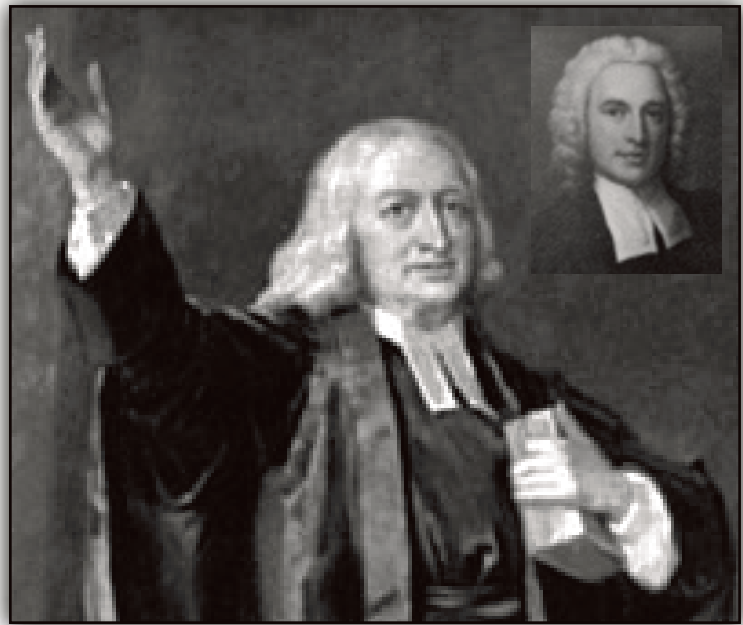
About the Author



SANDY SIMPSON is a missionary with Liebenzell Mission USA in Hawaii, to the Micronesian islands including Guam, Saipan, Yap, Palau, Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae and the Marshalls. He writes: "Many island

groups have their own established churches on Oahu (part of Hawaii) so we provide discipleship and mentoring for the leaders of the island churches. Many who come to Oahu for medical purposes or for work, are going back to their islands equipped to disciple others." Sandy grew up in Palau where his family settled as missionaries in 1962. He has written music, translated songs and other materials, done concerts and preached in the Palauan language. Since 1989, as part of the *Evangelical Churches of Micronesia* in Guam and Hawaii, he has been teaching Bible, counselling and visitation to their leaders. Sandy directs the *Apologetics Coordination Team (ACT)* of which the *Deception In The Church* website is an arm. ACT was established to help island church leaders grapple with the onset of the apostate Third Wave movement. Sandy has written a number of books, produced numerous videos, and is in the process of editing a new book, which he co-authored with Mike Oppenheimer of *Let Us Reason Ministries*. This book details the false doctrines of the *World Christian Gathering of Indigenous Peoples*.

www.deceptioninthechurch.com/ditcsignup.html



The Wesley Brothers in Cornwall

PART 2

By **PAUL SHERBIRD**

©1994 whilst a Bible College student (1992-96)

CARRY FORWARD FROM PART ONE:

The west of England of the eighteenth century was a wild and lawless place. In the face, at times, of mob violence and much opposition even from the established church the Wesleys battled on. How can we discern the signs of true revival? Crime rates fall, immoral standards are banished and misery and sorrow are turned to joy. The Wesleys portray the physical and spiritual qualities needed to spearhead a true work of God.
THE MINISTRY CONTINUES:

THE following year (1744) both John and Charles visited Cornwall again. John was first, travelling with lay preacher James Wheatley, he arrived in Cornwall on Monday 2nd April and spent the night at Digory Isbell's, travelling to St Ives the following day to stay with John Nance. John spent two weeks in Cornwall culminating in a visit to John Bennett's parish where Wesley preached to a large crowd at Laneast. Charles made his way down to Cornwall on the 12th July and reached St Gennys on the 15th where he stayed with "Brother Thomson". Charles obviously

loved his visits to Cornwall. To read his journal of this period gives a glimpse into his joy and delight, not just in his ministry but in the friends he made and in the delights of the countryside. He seems to have been especially fond of rock climbing around the Cornish coast.

Charles went on preaching tours with the rectors Thomson and Bennett. In St Ives the arrival of three clergymen apparently alarmed their persecutors who were in awe of such highly respected ministers as Thomson and Bennett. Charles records that the "Brethren were strengthened" by the arrival of Thomson.

Persecution continued to be a problem for the Methodists throughout 1744 as John and Charles both experienced. The mobs continually caused trouble. In St Ives stones were thrown through the windows of believers' homes, and those who offered the preachers hospitality were often under attack. It was the Anglican ministers who continued to stir up persecution; in St Ives, Hoblin the curate railed against the Methodists as enemies of the church, claiming they were Jacobites¹ and Papists².

1 Jacobite: One dedicated to the return of the Stuart kings to the thrones of England and Scotland.
2 Papist: Used as a disparaging term for a Roman Catholic.

In Penzance John first encountered the minister, Dr Borlase who was a noteworthy adversary, and a magistrate who made it impossible for the persecuted Methodists to obtain justice against their persecutors. Charles said that Borlase was the greatest persecutor of the little flock in Penzance and records one of Borlase's fellow clergymen claiming "he wished the Bible was still in Latin only, that none of the vulgar might be able to read it."³

Despite the opposition there was much to encourage the Wesleys in 1744. Their journals note the forming of new societies in Penzance, Morva and Gwennap and new preaching points opened in Penzance and Falmouth on the south coast. They continued to preach to crowds of hundreds and thousands. The greatest evidence of the work of the Lord was at Gwennap where for the first time in living memory the jail was found empty. Charles wrote, "the whole county is sensible of the change and not one Gwennap man was available for a wrestling match", they were "struck off the devil's list, and found wrestling against him, not for him."⁴

Persecution was a continuing problem for these first Cornish Methodists and the sad thing is that the chief protagonists were the Anglican ministers. Borlase as magistrate posed serious problems, along with another minister in Redruth who was also a magistrate and determined to "root out this sect". The next time John returned to Cornwall in July 1746 he found lay preachers being arrested on "trumped up" charges; one was even arrested on the charge of knowing his sins were forgiven.

Borlase himself attempted to arrest John and have him pressed as a soldier. He and the other magistrates made use of an act passed during Queen Anne's reign (1703) which allowed them to impress idle persons for soldiers and marines. Though some of the lay preachers found themselves arrested, Wesley always escaped by some mysterious means always facing the accusers with calm confidence and seems to have had miraculous escapes from their hands. Often his prospective captors seemed to let him go without any explanation.

Riots continued. During 1746, there was a fierce riot in Falmouth from which John so miraculously escaped that he wrote, "I never saw before..... the hand of God so plainly shown as here."⁵

A few days later he faced what became known as the Helston mob at Stithians near Helston, which became what the early Methodists called a "storm-centre" for several years. Charles visited in July and found that the "rebels of Helston threatened hard," some even claiming that he had brought the Pretender with him. At the same time Charles was amazed and delighted at the change wrought in St Ives, where no threat at all faced him. He wrote that he "walked the streets with astonishment, scarce believing it St Ives."

It was the same throughout the county. Opposition was beginning to abate. In places where the persecution was worst Charles feared for the societies but found to his joy and encouragement that the Lord was raising up "exhorters" — men who stood firm and held the societies together,

standing in the gap and keeping the trembling sheep together. New societies were springing up at this time, e.g. at Wendron and Stithians. Methodism was obviously making very real and deep roots throughout Cornwall.

The impact of these first three years of Methodism is truly impressive. The Wesley brothers had made many true and abiding friendships. They preached to thousands. Many were converted. The societies were visibly increasing and growing in strength and nurturing their own preachers and leaders. In northwest Cornwall the Wesleys had good friends and co-workers in the two ministers Thomson and Bennett and five churches (Trewint, Laneast, Tresmere, Week St Mary and Tamerton) where they could freely preach to the large crowds who gathered. It was here that John saw a "great awakening" unlike any other in Cornwall.⁶

Charles who had a deep passion for Cornwall wrote at the time, "I...adored the miracle of grace,

...Revival!
And it was such
a revival that no one
was left insensible
to its effects...

which has kept these sheep in the midst of wolves. Well may the despisers behold and wonder. Here is a bush in a fire, burning, yet not consumed! What have they done to crush this rising sect? but lo! they prevail nothing!....Many waters cannot quench this little spark which the Lord has kindled neither shall the floods of persecution drown it."⁷

Some persecution continued however and in 1747 it took an unexpected turn when Lavington was made the Bishop of Exeter, his diocese included Cornwall. Lavington did not like Methodists and began his campaign against them by closing the pulpits in N.W. Cornwall to the Wesleys. Only one remained open to them at George Thomson's church. Thomson withstood the Bishop, remaining a firm friend to the Wesley brothers. Lavington continued his attack by publishing pamphlets against Methodism, these had titles such as, "The Enthusiasm of Methodist and Papists Compared". One of these pamphlets contained an accusation against John Wesley concerning his conduct with women, and one Cornish woman in particular. This caused Wesley a lot of trouble. The pamphlet was circulated as far as northern England and was used by his enemies to besmirch his name.

In 1750 John took it upon himself to visit the woman concerned and on questioning her found she had no complaint against him. It appears that Lavington had used her idle gossip without ever verifying the truth of her statements. About this time saw the notable conversion of the Anglican minister Samuel Walker of Truro further adding to Lavington's anxieties. In fact Lavington's attacks appear to have

been a desperate and largely futile measure. His influence was quite limited and by September 1748 the churches in Cornwall were once again open for the Wesleys to preach in.

THE FINAL CHAPTER

From this time the situation in Cornwall became much more settled and Methodism grew peacefully and rapidly. One notable visit of John Wesley was in September 1757. In his journal he records a journey around Cornwall's perimeter and not once is there a mention of mobs, violence or attempted arrests. He found places which had been previously closed to him now welcoming him with open arms. One such place was Mevagissey. "When I was here last," he wrote, "we had no place in the town.... But things are altered now: I preached just over the town, to almost all the inhabitants, and all were as still as night."⁸

One of the hardest places to preach at was Helston, but finally in 1777, on August 20th John reported that "prejudice there was at an end", and that "all the town, except a few gentry, willingly hear the word of salvation."⁹

1777 can be claimed as the year that saw the end of persecution against the Methodists in Cornwall. By 1780 there were 26 Methodist preaching houses in Cornwall, third in number to Ireland with 37 and Yorkshire with 54, Durham was fourth with 15.¹⁰

John Wesley's final and 32nd visit to Cornwall came in July 1789. It's a visit that has been described as a triumphal march. In Richard Watson's words: "when he was last in Cornwall Wesley passed through the towns and villages as in a triumphal march, whilst the windows were crowded with people anxious to get a sight of him and to pronounce upon him their benedictions, yet he says not a word of it all."¹¹

Wesley preached in packed churches and chapels and even in Helston he found the "largest and most serious congregation I ever remember to have seen here." His last comment on Cornwall was, "So there is a fair prospect in Cornwall from Launceston to Land's End."¹²

It cannot be doubted that over a period of 46 years the ministry of the Wesleys completely transformed the lives of the Cornish. From a land of sinners, Cornwall became a land of saints. One old saying used to be that the devil wouldn't cross the Tamar into Cornwall because he had heard that whatever entered Cornwall was made either into a pasty or a saint, and he fancied neither. Claude Berry wrote of John Wesley:

No other individual in history has left such an impress upon Cornwall as Wesley, and if beneath that impress something of our old spontaneity and naiveté was lost, much was buried that was brutal and depraved and did not deserve to survive.¹³

3 Op cit; p.374

4 Op cit; p.375

5 Works, Vol 1; p.505

6 ibid; p.508

7 Journal, Vol 1; p.423

8 Works, Vol.2; p.427

9 In J.S.Simon; *The Last Phase*; p.94

10 ibid; p.160

11 In *Journal* Vol 7; p.528

12 In J.S. Simon; op cit; p.317

13 Claude Berry; *Cornwall*; p.185

What was it that Wesley brought to Cornwall that precipitated such a great change which was felt not only in Cornwall but throughout the British Isles? The answer can be found in one word — revival! And it was such a revival that no-one was left insensible to its effects, even those with no particular religious interest cannot deny the stupendous changes for good that were wrought in British society as the revival took hold and Jesus became known as Lord throughout the land.

The Wesley brothers were men who had a message that burned in their souls with such holy passion that they could not help but proclaim it to all and sundry. That passion was born from the deep conviction that the gospel is the power of God to salvation and that through the preaching of the gospel men and women would meet the Saviour and find all their needs met in Him. It is such passion and conviction that is desperately needed amongst the Lord's people today.

APPENDIX

During times of persecution in Cornwall, God raised up "exhorters" who held the societies together, some of these men became part of "Wesley's army" of itinerant preachers and are worthy of note as they illustrate something of the influence and fruitfulness of John and Charles Wesley's ministries. We shall briefly look at just three of these:

PETER JACO: Born in Newlyn in 1729 Peter Jaco was the son of a pilchard processor. After leaving school at the age of 14 he joined his father in employment. From a young age Peter had "awful thoughts of God" which kept him from youthful excesses. He was aware of his sinfulness but did not know what to do about it. In 1746 he heard his first Methodist preacher and was soon after converted through the preaching of a local tinner. He later became an exhorter and when John Wesley visited in 1751 he appointed Peter over several societies. In 1754 Wesley called him to London and at Conference he was appointed to the Manchester circuit. He faced many difficulties. Once in Warrington he was struck so hard on the chest by a brick that the blood gushed out through his mouth, nose and ears. He often preached three of four times a day, riding 30 or 40 miles with very little of the basic necessities of life. He died in 1781 aged 52 after several years of ill health.

JOHN MURLIN: Born at St Stephen in 1722 he was a farmer and a carpenter, and by his own admission an "enemy to God and his own soul". He swore, gambled and drank heavily. He heard a Methodist preacher in February 1749 and came under conviction of sin. In April he found release for his soul after a long struggle. Soon he was asked to lead a small class and later became a reluctant preacher and was amazed to find God using him to bring blessing. Following this John Wesley asked him to be a travelling preacher at first sending him to west Cornwall. Later he would labour in Ireland, Bristol, London and Manchester. In his latter days he was afflicted by painful rheumatism so that he could barely walk. He had a stroke which left

him completely immobilised, but he continued to maintain his happiness in the love of God. He died in 1799 and was buried in the same vault as John Wesley at City Road Chapel.

RICHARD RODDA: Born in 1743 at Sancreed his parents were "God-fearers" who initially wanted nothing to do with the Methodists. However his eldest sister was converted, followed by his mother. From a very early age (4-6) he developed an awareness of God and sin. In 1756 he came under strong conviction of sin and after seeking rest for his soul for two years, he found peace with God on the 11th June 1758 upon which he wrote a hymn, "Praise God, my soul, whose wondrous love hath drawn thy thoughts to things above." Richard worked in the mines and testified to many miraculous escapes wrought by God's hand. He became a local preacher, often preaching three times on a Sunday, travelling many miles on foot. He met John Wesley while on a business trip to Wales and offered his service to the Glamorgan circuit. He laboured as an itinerant preacher for 33 years and ended his days in London on October 30th 1815 aged 72. Like most of the early Methodist preachers he faced trials and persecutions which he overcame fearlessly and was never deterred from his call to be an itinerant preacher.

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About the Author



PAUL SHERBIRD lives in Truro, Cornwall England with his wife Julie. He pastors a small house fellowship (*Truro Christian Fellowship*) which commenced just over a year ago (2005). The main reason for the formation

of the fellowship was that they could not find an "uncompromised" church in the area and they very much felt led of the Lord to start a work. Paul was saved in 1988, aged 30 after many years of involvement in the drug culture and on the fringes of the occult. In 1992 he entered the *Emmanuel Bible College* where he graduated four years later with a Bachelor of Theology degree. Since then he has served in various church leadership positions (elder; assistant pastor, lay minister) until January 2005. He describes his main ministry as teaching with a strong desire to know and teach sound doctrine.

● For more visit the "About" section of his website: www.spreadthetruth.co.uk

VALE

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as: Knowing when to come in out of the rain; Why the early bird gets the worm; Life isn't always fair; and Maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer suntan lotion or a band aid to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and planned to have a medical procedure.

Common Sense lost the *will to live* as churches became businesses and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when, if you defended yourself from a burglar in your own home the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the *will to live*, after a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, *Truth* and *Trust*; his wife, *Discretion*; his daughter, *Responsibility*; and his son, *Reason*.

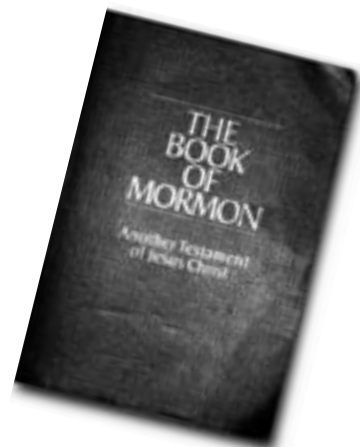
He is survived by the pop group trio: *I Know My Rights*, *Someone Else Is To Blame* and *I'm A Victim*.

Not many attended his funeral because so few realised he was gone.

—Anonymous

Children of a Clayton's God

AN INSIGHT INTO MORMONISM: PART FOUR



By EDWARD BARCLAY

MORMONISM stands or falls upon the testimony of Joseph Smith. Every Mormon missionary you may encounter will, sooner or later, testify that *The Book of Mormon* is true, that

Joseph Smith was a true prophet and that he "restored the church". They will also say that their leader, currently Gordon B. Hinckley, is a prophet who hears from God. Every first Sunday of the month a time is set-aside for church members "to bear their testimony". This is supposed to be faith promoting and uplifting, but I know that many of them struggle with doubts about their faith especially their being acceptable to God. It's good to remember this, as it provides a window of opportunity, especially with loved ones, who have become Mormons.

Mormons, who "bear their testimony" all sound the same, like a cracked record playing over and over again. Just before writing this article I sat through another Sunday morning, listening to Mormons testify. How sad hearing people who are spiritually dead bearing testimony to a 'god' who cannot hear, see or speak; how strong the delusional power of Satan! Here's an example from an incident that took place on Sunday, April 30th 2006 that grieved my heart:

I was attending the ward meeting as usual when the first speaker went up to give her talk. (Normally, in a ward meeting there will be three speakers per Sunday, each asked to give a talk on a specific subject.) This lady said she came into the Mormon Church in 1994 as a "born again" Christian who had been attending an AOG church for a number of years. She said she spoke in tongues and did the normal "Pentecostal things", and then one day she met some missionaries who gave her the *Book of Mormon* to read. They followed her up with their teaching lessons and she was baptized into the Mormon church. There were issues with her speaking in tongues! She was told she had another

spirit (a demon) and she had to renounce this spirit. Some Mormon priesthood holders supposedly exorcised this spirit.

What has to be said here is that even if you profess to be born again you are not exempt from deception. Some may say that the woman wasn't

in Baptist churches too. So you can expect incidents like this lady turning to Mormonism to increase in the near future. Unfortunately many professing Christians don't read and study their Bibles! How can anyone who professes to follow Christ know what His teachings are if they don't read what He has to say? They trust in what is preached from the pulpit instead of checking what is taught.

When the Toronto abomination was running in the late 1990s, my family and I were attending a local AOG fellowship where the pastor encouraged everyone to "jump into this thing" without checking first what they were actually jumping into. I confronted him about the many wrong things that he was saying from the pulpit

and showed him that he was actually taking verses out of context. I presented him with evidence from many reliable and well-respected sources, but he refused to listen. This went on for a period of weeks until I had a visit one Saturday morning from the associate pastor and the board of elders. I was accused of causing division and sowing discord so I politely asked them to show me from scripture where I was wrong in the things that I was saying. They couldn't. My point is that they were deceived.

The spirit of deception is very strong in the Mormon church. This deception runs from the head of the church down to the grass roots members. An analysis of the historic Mormon church reveals that its entire foundation was laid on deception, as I hope to prove. I will show that Joseph Smith was deceived and now continues to deceive 12 million Mormon members. The trap that ensnares an individual is in the *Book of Mormon* (BOM) itself.

And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost. And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things (Moroni 10:4-5).

The onus is placed on the individual to pray with a sincere heart and REAL INTENT and a manifestation

An analysis of the historic Mormon church reveals that its entire foundation was laid on deception, as I hope to prove. ... Joseph Smith was deceived and now continues to deceive 12 million members

truly born again, but my response would be, "How do you know the state of the woman's heart? Only God knows the thoughts and intents of a person's heart" cf. Hebrews 4:12. What grieves me most is the fact that this woman may have blasphemed the Holy Spirit by attributing the works of God to Satan, which was the unforgivable sin referred to in Mark 3:22-30 (cf. Matthew 12: 31-33). I have personally witnessed the true "gift of speaking in tongues". I am also aware that in some Charismatic and Pentecostal circles there is false teaching that tongues can be learned. I have personally witnessed many shocking incidents of this abuse in church. There is an old saying, "The best deception is the one that runs closest to the truth".

The question that really needs to be asked is "What can be done to avoid believers falling into the trap of deception?"

One simple and effective answer is to counteract false religions and cults with solid biblical exposition of the Word of God. Unfortunately this is very rare today especially amongst Pentecostal and Charismatic churches and it's starting to show

uncontrollable laughter. Today the practice of "tongues" is scorned upon in the mainstream Mormon church. It is not practiced in Elders or High Priest Quorums—<http://www.irr.org/mit/story3.html>. It may be practiced in the Temple, where "Adamic" language or, as Mormons refer to it, the Heavenly Language is supposedly spoken—<http://www.saintswithoutalos.com/n/tongues.phtml> (Be careful this is a PRO Mormon site).

1 In the *Annals of Mormon History* you find references to manifestations of "Tongues", identical to those witnessed in the Toronto Blessing with people being wildly thrown around the room by the "spirit" and

of “Burning in the Bosom”² is generally regarded as the sign you will receive. If you don’t receive acknowledgements that the BOM is true then you haven’t prayed sincerely or with real intent so your integrity comes under suspicion. I have witnessed this many times within Mormonism. To those of you who have loved ones caught in this trap or who know friends or workmates investigating Mormonism a very effective way to torpedo the attack is to ask the person, “Where in the Bible does it say to do this?” Also if you have the opportunity ask the Mormon elder, “Is your faith based on feelings?” (In other words is their faith experiential?) Ask them where does faith come from. They will give you a number of answers none of which will be scriptural. Take them to Romans 10:17—*“So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God”* (KJV).

Then emphasise strongly that faith comes by hearing God’s Word not praying about a book that is nothing more than a spiritual trap. I have often said to Mormons quite bluntly that praying about a book has no basis whatsoever in scripture, doing that and seeking a sign is like a bank robber praying about his next heist. His desire is to rob a bank so that his life can be gratified and the same applies here. The correct biblical method is to *“try* (i.e. prove) *all things”* (1 Thessalonians 5:21) by using the Bible as a yardstick. Unfortunately this problem is also in the Christian church, especially amongst Pentecostals and Charismatics with their false teachings of the Toronto, ALPHA and Pensacola movements. The foolish leaders who jumped in first, instead of “testing the spirits” (1 John 4:1), have ensnared the people and together they have gone headlong into deception. The same leaders are now caught up with the false Apostles and Prophets, the unbiblical Spiritual Warfare and the Transformations movements espoused by C. Peter Wagner, George Otis, and Cindy Jacobs et al.

Mormon missionaries and members will exert subtle psychological pressure on any individual who is investigating the church to cause them to join with the offer to belong to a loving, caring family and to have fellowship with likeminded people. Many people just buckle under the pressure so that they can be accepted and have a feeling of belonging. All mind control groups use this tactic to win converts.

Question—should a Christian pray about the Book Of Mormon and look for a “burning bosom” sign to verify whether it’s true or not? Answer—NO, the Bible teaches us to be like the Bereans.

These were nobler than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so (Acts 17:11 KJV).

We are to search the scripture, test what is taught and hold on to what is true. Any new “revelation” must be tested. If it contradicts scripture then it

2 The Burning in the bosom is a manifestation most Mormon’s receive. I have spoken to many LDS members who claim this after they have prayed about the *Book of Mormon*. I have always likened it to having heart burn. This Manifestation according to Mormons confirms that *The Book of Mormon* is true and that Joseph Smith is a true prophet from God. Should a true Christian pray about the Book of Mormon? Absolutely No!

must be rejected. God always puts in place checks and balances. If prophecy is given in church it must be judged against scripture, but unfortunately this does not happen often enough and people start to go off at tangents. Pastor Aeron Morgan has just released his *The Biblical Testing of Teachings and Manifestations*, which is most timely in the present climate of today’s church. I strongly suggest that you get a copy of this book and read it carefully and prayerfully. It lays out beautifully, line upon line precept upon precept, the correct biblical pattern to test all things.³

The church is in such a mess because its leaders have been deceived and they have gathered around them men deceived like themselves who do not want to follow biblical guidelines just as scripture foretells:

Mormons will exert subtle psychological pressure on any individual who is investigating the church to cause them to join with the offer to belong to a loving, caring family and to have fellowship...

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own desires they shall accumulate for themselves teachers, having itching ears they shall turn their ears away from the truth, and shall be turned aside to myths (2 Timothy 4: 3-4).

I am committed to the canon of scripture and to its testimony that in the last days God has spoken totally, finally and completely to us in, through and by His Son:

God, who at sundry times and in diverse manner spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, Has in these last days spoken to us by [his] Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, by whom he also made the worlds (Hebrews 1:1-2 KJV).

To understand the essence of Mormonism you really have to investigate the life of Joseph Smith, which in finalising my series I now propose to do briefly by answering two questions:

- 1) Is the Joseph Smith of today’s Mormonism the Joseph Smith of history?
- 2) How did the Mormons come by their holy book, *The Book of Mormon*?

JOSEPH SMITH Man of history or human invention?

There are many fine books about Joseph Smith e.g. *Upon His Own Hand Upon Papyrus* by Charles M. Larsen (available by download at: <http://www.irr.org/MIT/Books/BHOH/bhoh1.html>) and Fawn Brodie’s book *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet*, and the forty or so books written by Jerald and Sandra Tanner that

have exposed Smith for who he really was.

Born at Sharon in Vermont, USA in 1805, in 2005 Mormons celebrated the bicentennial of his birth, bordering in my opinion on gross idolatry. The Mormon church’s magazine *Ensign*, (which can be downloaded from their website <http://www.lds.org/gospellibrary/pdfmagazine/0.7779.592-6-1-2005.00.html>) devoted the January and December edition to Smith. The church has a heavy bias towards Smith and the “Restoration”. If the foundation (i.e. that of Joseph Smith) is broken down then, the whole facade of Mormonism’s false gospel will crumble in a heap.

So then, how does history portray the real Joseph Smith? Was this man a true prophet of God who restored the true “church” and “priesthood” back to earth in 1830? How did Joseph Smith receive the “divine revelations” and can these “revelations” be substantiated by the Bible? Who was the real Joseph Smith? In other words is he the same person portrayed by the Latter Day Saints (LDS) church today as he was back in 1830? All these questions require us to decide what is fact and what is fiction.

Joseph Smith is a remarkable character for someone who lived for only 39 years. In so short a time this man set up a religion, a bank in Kirtland Ohio, which incidentally failed because it issued its own currency without the permission of the United States Treasury⁴. Joseph Smith was indicted and arrested numerous times yet managed to escape⁵. He built the city of Nauvoo, which at the time was the largest city in Ohio. He became General of the Nauvoo Legion (a militia unit and it has to be noted that Smith had no military training) and ran for President of the United States. He was a polygamist who at his death in 1844 had over 33 wives. Of these wives two were fourteen years old AND ELEVEN OF THEM were under the age of twenty!

What about Smith’s Military career? Wikipedia, the internet encyclopaedia gives a good background on the Nauvoo Legion: “The Nauvoo Legion was a private militia employed by Joseph

4 <http://www.utlm.org/onlineresources/josephsmithsbank.htm>—Has a great write up on the banking incident. Warren Parrish, who had been an officer in the bank and had apostatised from the church, made this statement: “I have listened to him [i.e. Smith] with feelings of no ordinary kind, when he declared that the AUDIBLE VOICE OF GOD, INSTRUCTED HIM TO ESTABLISH A BANKING-ANTI BANKING INSTITUTION, who like Aaron’s rod SHALL SWALLOW UP ALL OTHER BANKS (the Bank of Mormon excepted,) and grow and flourish and spread from the rivers to the ends of the earth, and survive when all others should be laid in ruins.” (Painesville Republican, February 22, 1838, as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, page 297). The Bank Failed! “Thirteen suits were brought against him between June 1837 and April 1839, to collect sums totaling nearly \$25,000. The damages asked amounted to almost \$35,000. He was arrested seven times in four months, and his followers managed heroically to raise the \$38,428 required for bail. Of the thirteen suits only six were settled out of court — about \$12,000 out of the \$25,000. In the other seven the creditors either were awarded damages or won them by default.” Joseph had many additional debts that never resulted in court action. Some years later he compiled a list of still outstanding Kirtland loans, which amounted to more than \$33,000. If one adds to these the two great loans of \$30,000 and \$60,000 borrowed in New York and Buffalo in 1836, it would seem that the Mormon leaders owed to non-Mormon individuals and firms well over \$150,000.” (*No Man Knows My History*, pp. 199-202) ISBN-13: 978-0679730545 by Fawn Brodie.

3 For details of purchase, go to www.aeronmorgan.org where you can locate (1) advert for the book; (2) cost of the book, plus p/p for the different countries (viz. USA, UK, Australia, New Zealand etc); and (3) the postal address (or email/phone) you can contact to place any orders.

Smith, Jr and Brigham Young during the Latter Day Saint movement until 1870 for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the LDS Church; see also "Mormon"). The Legion was named for the city of its inception, Nauvoo, Illinois, although it only operated there for six years. Although the charter authorising the Nauvoo Legion created an independent militia, it could be used at the disposal of the state governor or the president of the United States as well as for the mayor of Nauvoo. Joseph Smith himself was Nauvoo's second mayor, and the Nauvoo court martial also appointed him as highest-ranking officer of the legion, a lieutenant general. This rank is one step above major general which most contemporary militias employed as their commanding rank. **One motive for the higher rank was to prevent Smith from being tried in a court martial by officers of lesser rank.** In 1837 the Missouri militia had contemplated an illegal court martial against Smith, only a civilian at that time.

The tenth president (1970-72) and prophet, seer and revelator of the LDS church, Joseph Fielding Smith, made this statement:

Mormonism, as it is called, must stand or fall on the story of Joseph Smith. He was either a prophet of God, divinely called, properly appointed and commissioned, or he was one of the biggest frauds this world has ever seen. There is no middle ground. —*Doctrines of Salvation*, Page 188.

To appreciate the significance of this incredible statement you must have an understanding of Joseph Smith's First Vision Account.⁵ There are nine different versions of this account. All of them vary as to date, content, the actual age of Smith and they effectively contradict each other. The LDS official account states that Smith was fourteen and that there was a religious revival taking place in the Palmyra district at the time. Allegedly, Smith became burdened as to which church he should join so he went into the woods to pray. James 1:5 was the verse Smith was allegedly given.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men liberally and not upbraids; and it shall be given him (James 1:5 KJV).

Mormons love to quote this. Every Mormon missionary will at some stage quote it to you. Looking at the actual context (i.e. James chapter 1) will quickly disarm this verse. All cults will twist and manipulate scripture to make it fit into



FROM WIKIPEDIA: **MILITIA (United States)** *There is a long history of militia in the United States, starting before the country became a nation, with the colonial militias normally consisting of all adult male citizens of a community, town, or local region. This practice was continued after the signing of the U.S. Constitution, and remained relatively unchanged until the late 1800s. After the civil war, state guard units composed of select militia were created. After 1903, the militia was divided into two groups, unorganised and organised. Organised units were created from portions of the former state guards and became state national guard units. Some states later created state defense forces for assistance in local emergencies. Privately organised militias, not affiliated with any government organisation, and usually formed by citizens suspicious of the activities and politics of federal and state governments, blossomed in the mid 1990s. The Constitutional Militia Movement consists of citizen groups who espouse strict construction of the U.S. Constitution according to the original understanding and intent of the Founding Fathers of the United States, especially in regard to the right to keep and bear arms (see Second Amendment to the United States Constitution). Constitutional Militias train in the proper and safe use of firearms, that they may be effective if called upon to uphold liberty, protect the people in times of crisis (i.e. disasters such as Hurricane Katrina), or to defend against invasion and terrorism. U.S. Constitution Art. I Sec. 8 Cl. 15 & 16. According to Title 10, USC, Section 311, all able bodied males between the ages of 17 and 45 not serving in the armed forces or state national guard units are considered the unorganised militia, as well as all commissioned female officers of state national guard units. "That the People have a right to keep and bear Arms; that a well regulated Militia, composed of the Body of the People, trained to arms, is the proper, natural, and safe defence of a free state..." —George Mason, declaration of "the essential and unalienable Rights of the People," later adopted by the Virginia ratification convention, 1788.*

their doctrine. James chapter 1 verse 5 deals in context about coming under trials and tribulation. Albert Barnes' *Notes on James 1* makes these comments:

The general subject of temptation or trial, James 1:1-15. It is evident that those to whom the epistle was directed were, at that time, suffering in some form, or that they were called to pass through temptations, and that they needed counsel and support. They were in danger of sinking in despondency of murmuring and complaining and of charging God as the author of temptation and of sin. This part of the chapter comprises the following topics:

1. The salutation, James 1:1.
2. The subject of temptations or trials. They were to regard it, not as a subject of sorrow, but of gladness and joy, that they were called to pass through trials; for if borne in a proper manner, they would produce the grace of patience, and this was to be regarded as an object worth being secured, even by much suffering, James 1:2-4.
3. If in their trials they felt that they had lacked the wisdom, which they needed to enable them to bear them in a proper manner, they had the privilege of looking to God, and seeking

it at His hand. This was a privilege conceded to all, and if it were asked in faith, without any wavering, it would certainly be granted, James 1:5-7.

The claim Smith was making is unscriptural and it has been deliberately twisted to deceive the unwary. It is also worth noting that a search of church records in the Palmyra district does not mention any revival there in 1820, which Joseph Smith's First Vision Account claims. **The historical record clearly shows that a small revival occurred in 1824 amongst the Methodists and Baptists.** This is four years after what Smith claims. These records are verifiable from the existing parish records.

This piece of information published by the Institute of Religious Research is most helpful (<http://www.irr.org/mit/fvision.html>). I highly recommend this site for research.

NO 1820 REVIVAL: Joseph Smith's neighbourhood experienced no revival in 1820 such as is described in Joseph Smith's First Vision Account, with supposed great multitudes joining the Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian churches. According to early sources, including church conference reports, newspapers, church

5 Smith was arrested numerous times, but had a knack of escaping from custody. However when he was arrested and imprisoned at Liberty Jail (1844) measures were taken to ensure that he could not escape. Smith managed to receive two smuggled revolvers which he used in the fire fight at Liberty Jail which ultimately led to his death. <http://www.mission2mormons.org/timeline.html>; <http://www.centerplace.org/history/misc/js3mem/111334.htm>; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyman_Wight

6 There are nine separate accounts of the First Vision, which all vary about Smith's Age, date and time when this event occurred. An excellent source is —<http://www.irr.org/mit/First-Vision-Accounts.html>. To write about each account would require a large amount of space. It took the church until 1838 to come up with the "official" account. This First Vision account has caused the LDS great embarrassment as it really shows Smith to be a fraudulent liar and a deceiver. The LDS Church's roots are firmly anchored in deception from the very beginning.

periodicals, presbytery records and published interviews, nothing occurred in 1820-21 that fits Smith's description. There were no significant gains in church membership in the Palmyra-Manchester, New York area, during 1820-21 such as accompany great revivals. For example, in 1820, the Baptist church in Palmyra received only 8 people through profession of faith and baptism, the Presbyterian church added 14 members, while the Methodist circuit lost 6 members, dropping from 677 in 1819 to 671 in 1820 and down to 622 in 1821⁷.

Smith claims that during his time of prayer (based on James 1:5) he received a direct visitation from God Himself and Jesus Christ both in bodily forms. God told him not to join any churches, as they were all abominations. To discerning Christians this should immediately ring alarm bells. Interestingly enough the LDS church portrays Smith falling backwards when he received this 'visitation'. Most of those who fell during the so-called "Toronto Blessing" likewise fell backwards.

Throughout scripture God's holy men always fell FORWARD on their faces before God and unholy men fell backwards. When the guards came to arrest Jesus they fell backwards.

Judas then having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, come there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said to them, Whom do you seek? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said to them, I am he. And Judas also, who betrayed him, stood with them. As soon as he had said to them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground (John 18: 3-6).

Daniel fell on his face before God.

Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my natural colour was turned into deathly pallor, and I retained no strength. I heard the sound of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then I was in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground (Daniel 10:8-9).

John likewise in the book of Revelation fell on his face before the Lord Jesus Christ as did Joshua before the Captain of the Lord's Host.

And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me saying, "Don't be afraid I am the first and the last" (Revelation 1:17).

And it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there was a man standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went to him, and said to him, Are you for us or for our adversaries? And he said, No; but as captain of the host of the LORD I am come now. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down and said to him, "What has my lord to say to his servant?"



Mormonism frequently alters church history by whitewashing or covering over the facts. The unfavourable aspects get altered or covered up completely. This is exactly what happened with accounts of the First Vision.

(Joshua 5: 13-14).

The current Latter Day Saints (LDS) church president, prophet, seer and revelator, Gordon B. Hinckley, stated in their general conference:

Our whole strength rests on the validity of that vision. It either occurred or it did not occur. If it did not, then this work is a fraud. (Gordon B. Hinckley, "The Marvellous Foundation of Our Faith," *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, pg 80)

It is important to look at what other Mormon church leaders have said concerning this. You must remember that these men claim to be prophets of God who are divinely inspired.

Joseph Smith, 1st church president, founder, prophet, seer and revelator said in November 1835—

"...I received the first visitation of angels when I was about 14 years old..." —Personal writings of Joseph Smith, pg. 84.

Brigham Young, 2nd church president, prophet, seer and revelator said—

"Do we believe that the Lord sent his messengers to Joseph Smith, and commanded him to refrain from joining any Christian church, and to refrain from the wickedness he saw in the churches, and finally delivered to him a message informing him that the Lord was about to establish his kingdom on the earth..." —*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 18, pg. 239

George Q. Cannon, apostle, councillor to LDS presidents Young, Taylor, Snow and Woodruff stated -

"But suppose that the statement that Joseph Smith says the angel made to him should be true—that there was no church upon the face

of the earth whom God recognised as His, and whose acts He acknowledged—suppose this were true..." *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 24, pg. 135

Brigham Young, 2nd church president, prophet, seer and revelator stated -

"The Lord did not come with the armies of heaven ... but He did send his angel to this same obscure person, Joseph Smith jun., who afterwards became a prophet, seer, and revelator, and informed him that he should not join any of the religious sects of the day, for they were all wrong." —*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 171

Clearly the historical record varies from the official church line. There is no mention in any of the church's records of the visitation of God the father or Jesus. Mormonism frequently alters church history by whitewashing or covering over the facts. The unfavourable aspects get altered or covered up completely. This is exactly what happened with the accounts of the First Vision. Unfortunately for the LDS church all the claims about this First Vision are in the public arena. They are available in the LDS church's own writings, but are rarely read so people remain ignorant of the fact that Mormons have re-written their history.

It is worth noting, in passing, that Joseph Smith was a disobedient "prophet". In 1828 he tried to join the Methodist church despite his "god" telling him that all the churches were abominations. The Methodists refused him membership because of his occult practices. In 1826 Joseph Smith was arrested and found guilty of "money digging". Today's term is simply "FRAUD". He practised divination with a "seer stone" to seek after buried treasure.

In the First Vision Account, Smith is portrayed in 1820 as a pious young boy who by 1826 is arrested and found guilty of fraud who then translates the BOM using occult means. The historical Joseph Smith simply does not line up with the Joseph Smith falsely and deceitfully portrayed by the LDS church today as a prophet of God. The question needs to be asked, "Are these the ways and results of a true prophet from God?" The obvious answer is "No".

The next question that needs to be asked is how did Joseph Smith translate the *Book of Mormon*? Was it a translation using the correct linguistic tools or did Smith use other means at his disposal? First hand evidence is what we need to look at to answer this question.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE.

About the Author



EDWARD BARCLAY has been married to Rosalind for 21 years. They have two sons, Timothy and Michael and a foster son, Jaie. Ed and Ros are members of CWM-Fellowship, Brisbane where they attend with their family on a regular basis. Ed does a great deal of research for a number of Watchman ministries and has been involved in pastoral and other forms of ministry since 1997.

⁷ See Geneva area Presbyterian church records, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA; Records for the First Baptist Church in Palmyra, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, NY; Minutes of the [Methodist] Annual Conference, Ontario Circuit, 1818-1821, pp.312,330,346,366.