

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

A BIBLICAL ANALYSIS OF RELIGIOUS & SECULAR MEDIA

RESTORING HONOR CHEERS, JEERS, SMEARS

The leftist media were—and still are—apoplectic at the idea that FOX News commentator Glenn Beck, would have the audacity to hold what they assumed would be a gathering of right-wing radicals on the day set aside to honor the late civil-rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. They consider Beck subversive to their socialist dream. How dare someone they hate so much usurp a great humanitarian's special day to spew hatred, bigotry, and just plain badness! How dare someone on the right side of the political spectrum detract from the leftist ideals they believe embodied King's legacy!

One controversy surrounding the August 28 gathering involved calculating the number of people in attendance. Estimates ranged from as few as "thousands" to as many as 500,000. CBS put the figure at around 87,000; NBC stated, "tens, perhaps hundreds of thousands; ABC said, "more than a hundred thousand. Minnesota Representative Michelle Bachmann estimated one million.

Although the National Parks Service no longer officially estimates crowds, one official for the NPS estimated the crowd to be somewhere between 300,000 to 325,000 people.

I don't know what the numbers were, but aerial photos show that the areas on both sides of the Reflecting Pool that stretches from the Lincoln Memorial to the Washington Monument were virtually packed. One side alone holds some 250,000 people.

Although all the major news media reported on the rally, their coverage was scant at best. The sheer size of the crowd demanded attention, but there was very little reported about what was said, or who said it. Generally the impression given was that the upstart Beck was using the rally as a right-wing (in some cases a less inflammatory "conservative") platform for bashing everything decent about America. Accusations of bigotry, hatred, racism, and virtually every not-very-nice invective had been used prior to, during, and after the event. Political cartoons abounded in many major newspapers and Web sites.

Were these invectives and accusations of racism, bigotry, hatred and fear justified?

It is not for me to defend Glenn Beck. Indeed, later in this article I have a few concerns as a true believer in Jesus that must be aired. But after viewing the entire event on C-Span's Web site (<http://www.c-span.com/search.aspx?For=Restoring%20Honor>) I must say in all honesty that I saw nothing in the slightest to justify the leftist smear attacks. On the contrary, Beck displayed graciousness to everyone. He did not use the platform to push

any political agenda (although abortion did enter into the picture as a moral issue), nor did he show animosity toward anyone on the left, including Barack Obama. Beck's stated purpose was to honor the military services, and in particular the Special Operations Warrior Foundation, which serves the families of military personnel killed or wounded in action. Another stated purpose was to call the nation to repentance and prayer for healing. Joining him were people of all ethnic and religious back-grounds. This was hardly indicative of racism, as we will

see as we address some excerpts from his and others' speeches:

Glenn Beck:

What is it today that America truly believes in? We have very little trust in most of our institutions. But there is one thing that still is 15 points higher, at the top of the list on things that America trusts. Our military.

Our fighting men and women do the things that most of us don't even want to think about. They do it while we're asleep; they do it while we're at play.

The point is that they do it because it is their calling. We have asked them to do it.

I wanted to find people of honor to be able to show you today, and I wanted to be able to raise money for an honorable group—raise awareness for an honorable group.

The group I found was S.O.W.F.: Special Operations Warrior Foundation. *(Continued on page 3)*



Media Spotlight is a ministry to the Body of Christ, bringing understanding of the ways in which the world shapes our thinking and lifestyles through the influence of the mass communications media.

God's Word exhorts, "buy the truth and do not sell it" (Prov. 23:23). Therefore we do not sell *Media Spotlight*. Begun in 1977, *Media Spotlight* was the first ministry on a national scale to address the ungodly nature of the secular media—motion pictures, television, toys, games and myriad other things that contribute to Christians living no differently than the rest of the world.

The mass media have impacted the Body of Christ as much as they have society. Many Christians are so dependent upon the media that they aren't aware of how lukewarm they have become. We have many testimonials from readers who tell us that, because of *Media Spotlight*, they have become aware of the effect the media have on their thinking, and are now more selective in their choices.

But the problem of ungodliness is not exclusive to the secular media. Of major concern are the religious media that present messages contrary to God's Word. *Media Spotlight* addresses the impact that religious teachers have upon believers in Christ, whether for good or for evil.

It has escaped the understanding of many Christians that what they believe is more often shaped by the teachings and traditions of religious men and institutions than by Scripture. Most teachers in the institutional churches rely more upon their theological disciplines than on the pure Word of God. Yet the wisdom of the world is no substitute for God's Word, even if offered from the pulpit or in the Christian media.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 24:24 that in the last days false Christs and false prophets would arise and would show great signs and wonders, "so that, if possible, they will deceive the very elect." He also states in Matthew 24:12 that in the last days the love of many toward Him would grow cold because evil would increase in the world. If we believe Him, then we would be foolish not to guard ourselves against deception. There is little time to waste in the short span of life granted us by God. We must choose today whom we will serve. **MS**

Scripture quotations by *Media Spotlight* writers are from the King James Version of the Bible, rephrased in modern U.S. English unless otherwise stated.



A Personal Note

Dear Friends,

One of the problems with publishing on a quarterly basis is the inability to stay up-to-date on events that affect us as believers in Christ Jesus. Often we wish we could publish news and commentaries that would be more timely. We realize that by the time we get *Media Spotlight* to our printer and then in the mail to you, the information may not be fresh. Yet the cost of producing a journal of this size on a more consistent basis can be prohibitive in light of our limited finances and lack of staff. For these reasons we are contemplating an e-mail newsletter to supplement our printed edition.

In our recent letter of thanks to our supporters we notified them of this, and a number have responded that they would like to receive such a communication. Whether or not we proceed will depend upon the number of readers who respond positively to the idea.

If you would be interested in receiving electronic articles from us via e-mail, please let us know as soon as possible.

Be assured we will not share your e-mail address with anyone else for any reason. Nor will we use this means to solicit support. Our position on not asking for support will remain for both the printed and electronic editions of *Media Spotlight*.

We will, however, have links for responding to our articles and for those who wish to contribute something to help out.

Some communications may include a single article, or multiple articles, depending upon the issues we address at any given time.

So again, please let us know either by e-mail or letter if you would like to be included.

We remind you that *Media Spotlight* must not take away from studying Scripture. There are many good information sources that, while valuable to varying degrees, may be distractions from more godly pursuits including not only Bible study, but the ministering of good works to others. The technological marvels of the modern world can play havoc with one's service to our Lord.

So please be sure that we won't contribute to any lack in that service on your part.

Thank you for allowing us to minister to you in this small way. Our prayer is that you and your loved ones will be blessed in all your godly pursuits by our heavenly Father.

In Jesus' love,

Al and Jean

RESTOR- ING HONOR RALLY



(Continued from page 1)

Paul Jale, pastor and direct descendant of Mayflower immigrants:

Lord God, sovereign Almighty, ruler of the nations, King of kings, and Lord of lords, the Holy One, the Righteous One, You are the King of the earth. All nations belong to You. And You were the one addressed in the first 1606 charter that opened English settlement to these shores. It was You that was addressed, that the Gospel of Jesus Christ should be the central focus of every settlement. It was You our forefathers knelt to, erecting a wooden cross on the sandy shores of Virginia. It was You that was addressed in the Mayflower Compact whose first words were, "In the name of God, Amen." It was You the Pilgrims knelt to and blessed the God of Heaven. It was You that Governor Winthrop wrote, "We shall be a city set upon a hill." It is you, Lord God, that brought William Penn, and modeled peace with the First Peoples. It was you, Lord God that brought the black [robed] regiment of preachers all across the continent to preach your words, to prepare Your people to be able to stand for liberty. And it was You that was addressed to the Declaration of Independence as the Creator, as the Author of all unalienable rights. It was You, Lord God, that was declared as the One that created all equal. And it was You, Lord God, who called us to account when we broke the treaties with the First Peoples. You called us to repentance. And You, oh God, called us to repentance when we did not live up to our creed, and we did not treat everyone as equal.

But Lord, we found out that You are a God of forgiveness; You are a God of covenants; You are a God of restoration; You are a God of healing. And You have healed us, and You are healing us. And we come now to the Mall in Washington, and we come to You in humble repentance for the shedding of innocent blood. And we come to You in repentance for not modeling marriage among Your people. And we come to You, once again asking for healing, for restoration, for recovery, and for reconciliation. And we know You'll do it, because You're God.

And Your Son, Jesus Christ, is the eternal Redeemer, the King of kings, the Lord of lords. And so we honor You, for Your Word declares You will honor those that honor You.

We come back to You today, and we see You as the restoring God, the King of kings, and in Christ's name,

and for the advance of Your Kingdom, we once again say, "May You, God, bless America." May we be one nation under God.

There was much more truth to what Jale said about America's Christian roots than in Barack Obama's statement that America is no longer a Christian nation (See *Media Spotlight*, Vol. 33 - No. 3).

Sarah Palin, former governor of Alaska and vice-presidential running mate to John McCain:

Thank you so much! Thank you! Are you not so proud to be an American! What an honor. What an honor. We stand today at the symbolic crossroads of our nation's history. And all around us are monuments to those that have sustained us over the years in word or deed. There in the distance stands the monument to the father of our country, and behind me the towering presence of the Great Emancipator. He secured our union at the moment of its most perilous time, and freed those whose captivity was our greatest shame. And over these grounds where we are so honored to stand today, we feel the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., [Applause] he, who on this very day, two score and seven years ago gave voice to a dream that would challenge us to honor the sacred charters of our liberty, that all men are created equal.

Now in honoring these giants—these giants who were linked by a solid-rock foundation of faith in the one true God of justice—in honoring them we must not forget the ordinary men and women on whose shoulders they stood. The ordinary, called for extraordinary bravery. I am speaking of course of America's finest: our men and women in uniform, a force for good in this country, and that is nothing to apologize for. [Applause]

Abraham Lincoln once spoke of the mystic cords of memory stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land. And for over two hundred years those mystic cords have bound us in gratitude to those who are willing to sacrifice to restrain evil, to protect God-given liberty, to sacrifice all in defense of our country. They fought for its freedom at Bunker Hill. They fought for its survival at Gettysburg, and for the ideals on which it stands, liberty and justice for all, on a thousand battlefields far from home.

It is so humbling to get to be here with you today, patriots—you who are motivated and engaged and concerned, knowing to never retreat. I must assume that you, too, knowing that we must not fundamentally transform America as some would want; we must restore America, and restore her honor! [Applause]

Now I've been asked to speak today, not as a politician. No, something more; something much more. I've been asked to speak as the mother of a soldier. And I am proud of that distinction.

You know, say what you want to say about me, but I raised a combat vet, and you can't take that away from me.

(Continued on page 12)



New Vatican rules for sex abuse by clergy

On July 15, the Vatican revised its rules dealing with sex abuse cases within its ranks, and applied the same sanctions against clergy who molest the mentally disabled as against those who molest children. The statute of limitations for disciplinary action was increased from 10 years to 20 years from the victim's 18th birthday. The same sanctions were made to apply to clergy who possess or distribute child pornography.

The rules address the canonical procedures and penalties for the most serious sacramental and moral crimes, and came as the Vatican attempts to deal with hundreds of new revelations of priests who committed unspeakable acts upon children, as well as those of bishops who covered for them, and Vatican officials, including popes, who have turned a "blind eye" to the problems for decades.

The new rules codified into church law procedures approved in 2003 for disciplining abusive priests. If the evidence against a priest is overwhelming he may be defrocked without a lengthy canonical trial.

Catholic groups promoting women's ordination into the priesthood criticized the new rules because those rules call the attempted ordination of women a "grave crime," and subject those attempts to the same punishments as those for sexual abuse.

Abuse victims have called the new rules "administrative housekeeping" because they make no substantive changes to current practice, but merely codify them into church law.

Monsignor Charles Scicluna, the Vatican's sex crimes prosecutor, stated, "That is a step forward, because the norm of law is binding and is certain." But he acknowledged that the document is just a set of rules that depend upon proper application.

"It does not solve all the problems," Scicluna said. "It is a very important instrument, but it is the way you use the instrument that is going to have the real effect."

Critics point out that the new rules make no demands upon bishops to report clerical sex abuse to police, and provide no canonical sanctions for bishops who cover up such abuse.

"The first thing the church should be doing is reporting crimes to civil authorities," said Andrew Madden, a former Dublin altar boy who filed the first public abuse lawsuit against the church in Ireland in 1995. "That's far, far more important than deciding whether a criminal priest should be defrocked or not," he told The Associated Press in Dublin. "The church's internal rules are no more important than the rules of your local golf club."

Scicluna defended the Vatican's failure to require bishops to report sex abuse to police, saying that all Christians are required to obey civil laws. "If civil law requires you report, you must obey civil law," Scicluna said. But he added, "It's not for canonical legislation to get itself involved with civil law."

COMMENTARY

How would canonical legislation "get itself involved with civil law" by the Vatican requiring bishops to report these heinous crimes? Getting involved with civil law means attempting to change or enforce civil law; it doesn't mean one may not report abuses in accordance with civil law. What the bishop is saying is that the Roman Catholic Church does not have to recognize civil law if it doesn't want to.

Now, if civil law is ungodly, then it is to be expected that moral people would not obey it. But the civil laws that require crimes to be reported to the police are not ungodly; they reflect government acting righteously.

The hidden issue here is that the Roman Catholic Church considers itself a law unto itself; it does not recognize civil law as legitimate as long as civil law is not operating under the Roman Catholic Church's perceived mandate to rule all governments, unless it chooses to recognize civil law. That mandate for dominion over the nations has never been abolished by the Vatican. The pope is still believed to be the Vicar of Christ on earth, and therefore all civil governments must be subject to his authority.

Just because the Vatican had its fangs blunted by the Reformation and succeeding ideologies, both godly and ungodly, does not mean it has abandoned that belief. Its ecumenical posturing is designed to bring all of Christendom under the Vatican's authority, with the ultimate goal of world domination.

At the same time, the pope and his subordinates don't want their messes exposed any more than possible.

When I was a Catholic I heard rumors about babies' bodies being buried under convent buildings, but I dismissed it as anti-Catholic rhetoric. Not having witnessed or suffered abuse by the priests and nuns under whom I gained my grammar school and high school education, I couldn't believe such saintly people could be guilty of anything so horrible. And I'm sure most are

not. But in view of the Vatican's history of covering up the church's sex crimes, and with the approval of the most admired pope in modern history, John Paul II, and his successor, one must wonder how deep go the ungodliness within Roman Catholicism.

This codification dealing with the Roman Catholic clergy's sins against innocent children reflects the continuing laissez-faire attitude toward these sins. It is nothing more than eyewash, meant to put off its detractors.

The message it sends to rogue priests is, "Don't do it. But if you do do it, don't get caught."

But then, that's been its position all along. ❖

G8 Religious leaders meet

Beginning in 2005, religious leaders from various countries have met in parallel to G8 political leaders' summits. This gathering of G8 religious leaders is called World Religions Summit: Interfaith Leaders in the G8 Nations—the United States, Canada, France, the U.K., Germany, Italy, Japan, and Russia, working in conjunction with the European Union. This year 80 senior leaders of the world's religions and faith-based organizations, with 13 youth delegates, from more than 20 countries representing Aboriginal, Bahá'á, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Shinto, and Sikh religious traditions convened June 21-23 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The theme of the Summit was "Living with the Earth: Message from World Religions."

The purpose of the World Religions Summit is stated thusly: "to challenge the G8 nations to live up to commitments made to the world's most poor and vulnerable citizens. The leaders also gather to look to the future in ways that will bring about compassion and hope." The goal is to "move toward equity and justice for all children, women, and men."

The religious leaders called for united action to pursue three goals: the end of poverty, care for the earth and investment in peace. They also reaffirmed their commitment to demonstrate solidarity with the poor, to "confront consumerism" and change their lifestyles "to give testimony to better stewardship," and continue to work together to provide leadership that will engage their communities to work for the good of all.

Industrialized nations were blamed for everything from destroying the environment to creating in poorer nations conditions of poverty, war, disease, and other evils.

Prior to the official opening of the summit, participants toured houses of worship of various religions in Winnipeg.

The summit opened with a message of peace and a prayer led by American Indian spiritual leader Dave Courchene, AKA Neeghani Aki Innini, or Leading Earth Man, an elder with the Anishnabe tribe of Manitoba. Courchene's address included the lighting of a sacred fire in a tepee erected in the quadrangle of the University of Manitoba. Throughout the summit the sacred fire was maintained by a cadre of youth called "fire-keepers." Tobacco pouches allegedly carrying prayers were cast into the fire accompanied by drumming and Anishnabe sacred songs.

Yukei Matsunaga, president of the Japan Buddhist Federation, offered insight into his religious motivation to support the Summit:

"From ancient times the Japanese people have believed in the existence of life in the mountains and rivers, trees and flowers, and have revered that life in their traditional culture, as a divine presence. I feel that in turning our minds to religious traditions once again, we should be able to develop plans which surmount ethnic and religious differences and create an harmonious coexistence with all religious persuasions on earth."

At the final session Dave Courchene again took the podium to encourage attendees to put the Great Spirit at the center of their lives. Said Courchene:

Nature is a reflection of the fullness of life that we are surrounded by, and how we depend on nature or Mother Earth to provide all that we need to be able to live and to survive. I remember an elder saying to me one time, "Do you want to know about life? Then let me take you to the land; let me take you to the earth. And there's no greater way that we can learn and understand the sacredness of life than going back to the earth that we refer to as 'our mother,' the earth."

In closing the session Courchene called upon the sacred singers from his tribe to sing a song that invokes the Great Spirit's blessings upon those in attendance.

COMMENTARY

The goals of the World Religions Summit are noble, certainly nothing with which any compassionate person can find fault. Their solution, however, is not to encourage development of resources and manpower in the poorer nations, or to call for despotic government leaders to change their ways. According to the G8 political leaders and, in this case, religious leaders, the solution is the redistribution of wealth from developed countries to emerging and undeveloped countries. Essentially it is global socialism at work.

Naturally, those who oppose this solution are deemed "heartless," "lacking compassion," "selfish," and other pejorative terms. But the truth is that citizens of developed countries such as the United States, the UK, and most of Western Europe, have been generous on the personal level, not because of government coercion, but because of the biblical ethic in which they have been brought up. Add to the billions of dollars funneled into poor countries by Christian charities the trillions of dollars in foreign aid by Western nations, and especially by the United States, and one must wonder how much good it has really accomplished. Those trillions of dollars of combined government and private charity aid poured into poor countries over the past century have not been able to rid those countries of poverty, disease, and premature death.

In the case of private charities, most of the aid has gone to the people directly. Aid from governments has gone to the governments directly, most of which are despotic and use the aid to fatten the coffers of government leaders. Those

government leaders do not truly want their people to be delivered from poverty. Their poverty is an excuse for those leaders to beg for more foreign aid from complicit government leaders in the West. They are content to allow private charities to give to the people, while keeping government aid for themselves.

On top of that, Western governments continue to deliver billions of dollars' worth of weapons into the hands of those despotic governments, giving them the ability to resist any change to their regime.

This dirty little secret is really no secret at all. Yet the pious religious leaders at the G8 World Religions Summit toe the globalist party line in calling for more redistribution of wealth from the wealthy nations to the poor nations.

Their pious denunciation of "consumerism" ignores the truth that the more goods that are purchased, the more jobs are made available. Wealth is not static. There is no set amount of wealth that must be redistributed in the quest for equity between the wealthy and the poor. Businesses create wealth and provide jobs for those unable or unwilling to create wealth for themselves. Socialism's myopia clouds that truth and seeks instead to use governments to take from the producers and give to the non-producers. And the more poverty socialism creates, the greater the call for more of the same.

Such altruism may be due, at least in part, to naïveté on the part of these religious leaders. We cannot judge their intentions. But there is no doubt as to the anti-Christ nature of these religious leaders. Nowhere in the Summit is the name of Jesus Christ invoked for instruction, guidance, or dependence. Instead, these religious leaders took the opportunity to engage in pagan religious activities, invoking non-existent earth deities and ignoring mankind's only true help in the person of Jesus Christ.

That is to be expected among world religious leaders, but it is disconcerting to see leaders within Christianity engage in these pagan practices.

Dark days lie ahead. And the religious leaders of the world, including alleged "Christian" leaders who turn to those pagan deities for "interfaith" allegiance are the worst contributors to that darkness. They have rejected the Light of the World for the darkness of anti-Christ's kingdom. ❖

Judge overturns Calif. ban on same-sex marriage

U.S. District Chief Judge Vaughn Walker on August 4 overturned California's Proposition 8, the ballot initiative that was approved by voters in 2008. Walker stated that "California has no interest in differentiating between same-sex and opposite-sex unions."

Citing extensive trial evidence to support his finding, Walker wrote in his decision, "The evidence shows conclusively that moral and religious views form the only basis for a belief that same-sex couples are different from opposite-sex couples."

He also cited extensive trial evidence to support his finding that there was not a rational basis for excluding homosexuals and lesbians from marriage.

Homosexuals and lesbians celebrated with cheers, some hurrying to San Francisco City Hall to apply for marriage licenses.

Washington lawyer Charles Cooper, in defense of Proposition 8, argued that it is "crucial to the public interest" to limit marriage to opposite-sex couples. Supporters of Proposition 8 testified that same-sex marriage would undermine the institution of marriage. They contended that children fare best when raised with both a mother and a father.

On the other side, Former Solicitor General Theodore Olson, considered a conservative icon, joined with David Boies, a leftist who opposed George W. Bush's election before the U.S. Supreme Court in 2000, to argue against Proposition 8. Calling on social scientists, psychologists and experts on marriage, Olson and Boies, presented studies that showed children raised in same-sex households do just as well as children born into opposite-sex families.

Walker ordered a stay of his decision until appeals can be heard, negating the opportunity for homosexuals and lesbians to immediately take advantage of his decision.

COMMENTARY

Christians and others who still hold to a biblical ethic are understandably upset about this decision, particularly since Judge Walker, though considered a conservative, is rumored to be a homosexual, which he has chosen to remain silent about. According to a San Francisco Chronicle column, his homosexuality is an "open secret" in legal and homosexual activism circles.

Walker hasn't addressed this speculation, nor has he responded to a request for comment by The Associated Press.

Walker's presumption to speak for the state of California, saying that the state has no interest in differentiating between same-sex and opposite-sex unions, demonstrates the elitism that characterizes our elected and government-appointed aristocracy. It implies that the state is not the people, but the government. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and Attorney General Jerry Brown refused to defend the marriage ban contrary to how the people voted.

Now, popular opinion, even expressed at the polls, is not necessarily the rule of law. The state and federal constitutions are the rule of law. That's why any voter-approved initiative is subject to scrutiny by the courts. However, a constitutional amendment, legally enacted as Proposition 8 is de facto not contrary to the rule of law. It amends the rule of law according to the will of the people. Yet even amendments must be considered in light of the spirit of the law, and whether or not it is contrary to the Constitution of the United States.

Since the federal government has not taken a legal stand on the issue of same-sex marriage, and the U.S. Constitution does not address it, then it seems reasonable to expect that a state's community standards as evidenced by the vote of the people should be allowed to stand.

But if that's the case, then should the people vote to enact something truly evil, must believers in Jesus accept it without protest?

By all means we may protest, but if so, our protest must not be on a social basis. For every pragmatic argument we present, the opposite side will present theirs. Evidence the opinions of professionals that children are just as well adjusted with same-sex “parents” as are children born to opposite sex parents.

The basis for our counter to all arguments in favor of same-sex marriage is that there is only one person who can define marriage, and that person is the one who instituted marriage. When God created man and woman He determined that marriage is a union between a man and a woman. Throughout history, even in the most perverse societies, it was never even considered that marriage could or should be defined in any other way. In short, millennia of human existence and billions of people throughout history have defined marriage as between men and women. If that doesn't present to Judge Walker a rational basis for excluding homosexuals and lesbians from marriage, he lacks rationality himself.

Only at this late date as we approach the end of this age has evil grown so great that homosexuality is deemed not only acceptable, but even admirable. Only now has there ever been a claim to the institution of marriage by homosexuals. Governments are acquiescing to this perversion out of expediency and/or ideological preference. But no matter what government calls it; no matter what piece of paper they may attain; no matter how many people applaud it, homosexuality can never be marriage in the true sense, simply because God, who instituted marriage does not recognize it.

We see, then, that at the root of the same-sex marriage proposal is a conflict of basically two different world views. On one side is a world view held by the majority of citizens in the U.S., and evidently in California, based on the biblical ethic that judges homosexuality contrary to good morals; people intrinsically know right from wrong. On the other side is a humanistic world view that judges the biblical world view as contrary to human empowerment and exaltation of the human spirit. In the words of Isaiah, those who adhere to this world view call good evil, and evil good.

The problem for believers in Jesus is that many do not understand that this world system is under the dominion of Satan, and will remain so until the Lord returns. Many Christians want to make the world their home rather than their mission field. But the Lord tells us that evil will grow worse as the end of this age approaches. When He returns it will be to confront the evil that has taken root throughout the world. Anti-Christ's kingdom must be established before the Lord returns.

Does this mean that we should forsake standing for what is right? Of course not. What it means is that we recognize the fallen condition of mankind, and expend our energies to win souls to Christ rather than attempting to win society to morality. Morality won't get anyone into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus said that if His Kingdom were of this world, then His servants would fight.

In a free society we must expect the basest aspects of human nature to become more and more manifested over time. Whereas

at one time, due to the influence of the Gospel, Western culture had championed the biblical ethic (if not saving faith in Jesus Christ), each succeeding generation has moved further and further away from that biblical ethic. Soon the worst kinds of sin will become so commonplace that we will not recognize the world in which we grew up. Already we have seen incredible changes in the morals of American society since as recently as two decades ago. There is nothing in man that offers any hope that it will get better, particularly in view of the Lord's question of whether He would find any faith on the earth when He returns.

Is this fatalistic? Defeatist? Pessimistic?

No. It is realistic in light of God's Word.

We will not win the world for Christ, as some Christians are striving vainly to do. Christ will win the world for Himself when He returns. Any effort on our part to achieve what He has put into His own hands is presumption.

So what do we do?

We maintain ourselves as lights to the world, recognizing that there are still individual souls to be saved; there are still many people who need our help and support in the trying times that lie ahead. We continue to trust our God for our sustenance and well-being.

On an individual basis we may certainly use whatever influence the Lord grants us to confront evil, but judgment must begin at the house of God. The Body of Christ has become so worldly that many members choose either to conform to the world, or to try to take back the world, or both. Either position is carnal and contrary to the Spirit of God who should be at work in us. He will do His work in us, but we must surrender our wills to Him; He does not force us to do what is right.

Let us not fret over this latest turn in the world's inexorable march to destruction. Let us rather look up, because our redemption draws near. ❖

Eloping couple stoned to death

Hundreds of Muslims in a northern Kunduz province of Afghanistan, on August 18, stoned a young couple for eloping. A 25-year old man and his 19-year-old bride were executed for violating “social law” under Taliban rule in accordance with Sharia law. Family members joined in stoning the couple after tricking them into returning to their home.

On August 8, in northwestern Badghis province, a 41-year-old widow, made pregnant by a man who she said had promised to marry her, was given 200 lashes with a whip, then shot to death. This was ordered by the local Taliban commander, Mullah Yousef, in Qadis district.

COMMENTARY

Lest you think these are rare examples of radical Islam under the Taliban, earlier in August the national Ulema Council of Afghanistan brought together 350 religious scholars who, with government religious officials, issued a joint statement calling for increased punishment under Sharia law, including lashing, stoning and amputations. The truest picture of Islam is found in fundamentalist Islamic countries. The “religion of peace” at work. ❖

A MOSQUE NEAR GROUND ZERO WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?

Under the Constitution of the United States, and according to the Bill of Rights and virtually every federal and state law, lies the principle of freedom of religion. Although the vast majority of the founding fathers of this republic identified with Christianity and/or the God of the Bible to some degree, they recognized that governments must act benevolently toward all of the nation's citizens regardless of religious beliefs. Only ancient Israel, as a theocracy guided by God's prophets, could legitimately legislate against false religious practices.

Currently there is a large and passionate debate as to whether or not the city of New York should allow a 13-story mosque/community center to be built close to Ground Zero where the World Trade Center was destroyed by Islamic jihadists on September 11, 2001. The planned site for the mosque is currently occupied by a 152-year-old building that was struck by debris from the World Trade Center attack. Opponents of the mosque sought to have the building preserved as an historic site. But on August 3, New York City's Landmarks Preservation Committee voted against preservation, opening the way for construction of the mosque. New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg applauded the decision, saying, "We would betray our values and play into our enemies' hands if we were to treat Muslims differently than anyone else."

The next day, the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) founded by Pat Robertson, filed suit to block the construction of the mosque. ACLJ is representing a New York City firefighter who survived the attack.

Many Christians and Jews are actively protesting the mosque as an affront to the memory of the 9/11 victims. They do not wish to consider any difference between avowed peaceful Muslims and the radical elements of Islam that fomented that attack.

Some people have become near violent in their expressions. It has been reported that a crowd gathered around two Egyptian men near the site who were speaking Arabic, shouting at them, "Go home!" and "Get out!"

As it turns out, the two men, Joseph Nassralla and Karam El Masry, are not Muslims, but Egyptian Coptic Christians who

work for a Christian satellite TV station called "The Way," based in California.

They said they had come to New York to protest the building of the mosque.

In spite of Nassralla's protest, "I'm a Christian," the crowd had become so menacing that NYC police officers had to rescue the men. "I flew nine hours in an airplane to come here," Nassralla said.

This sad incident demonstrates how irrational people can become in the face of passionate issues.

On the other side are many Christians and Jews who wish to exhibit goodwill toward Muslims and insist that not all Muslims are responsible for the attack. After all, they say correctly, under the guarantee of freedom of religion the government must not stand in the way of any religious group that wants to build a structure for worship. That is why in some areas there stand in close proximity to Christian churches Jewish synagogues, Buddhist shrines, Hindu temples, Islamic mosques and sundry other religious structures.

For the most part the adherents to these varied religious traditions co-exist peacefully, and even, in this present age of ecumenical goodwill, co-mingle in inter-faith worship services. However, according to zoning laws, city governments do reserve the right to determine where houses of worship may be built. The area for the planned mosque allows for worship centers.

Apart from engaging in interfaith services, exhibiting goodwill toward those of

other religions is how it should be for believers in Jesus. Our Lord has not commanded us to treat as enemies those bound by false religion. On the contrary, we are to love them and to share with them the good news of God's love demonstrated in the giving of His only-begotten son to die for our sins:

But God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

Regardless how repugnant false religious practices may be to us (they are all the more repugnant to the true God), we are not to disparage those who engage in them. At the same time, however, we are to resist the propagation of false religion where we are given the opportunity to do so. But our resistance must not take the form of violence, hatred, or antagonism toward those caught up in unbiblical religion; it must take the form of spiritual warfare. Our weapons in that spiritual warfare are the Word of God and prayer, as well as overt resistance and education through the presentation of spiritual truth and facts



that bear on the issues. We love those who resist the truth, but we are also to confront them with the truth or with facts that may hinder their progress in propagating their spiritual error.

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write to you of the common salvation, it was necessary for me to write to you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. (Jude 3)

This applies to dealing with spiritual error both inside and outside the Body of Christ.

Unfortunately, it is now fashionable within so-called “Christian countries” to not only forego contending for the faith, but to acquiesce to spiritual evil. Out of a misplaced sense of goodwill and community spirit, Christians go beyond passive acceptance, and actively engage in the defense of spiritual error.

As a result, militant proponents of spiritual error are emboldened to push all the more to impose themselves upon the populace. And among all the world’s religions, none comes close to Islam in attempts to impose itself upon the generous nature of those whose sense of fair play compels them to acquiesce. No other religion than Islam has as a mandate from its founder the subjugation of the entire world to its philosophy by any means. No other religion wages active warfare upon nations in the name of its god. And no other religion builds monuments to its conquests.

That’s not to say that other religions haven’t attempted these things to some degree. Witness the early years of the papacy and the resulting Dark Ages. But whereas Roman Catholicism had to face the reality of the Protestant Reformation and tone down its designs on world conquest, at least for the present time, Islam from its inception until the present day has been engaged in active warfare against one nation or another. Its hatred for the “Christian” West compels its advocates to stand on the side of Islam in deference to citizenship.

Yes, true believers in Jesus also stand on the side of Christ in deference to our earthly citizenship. Jesus’ Kingdom is not of this world; we are merely pilgrims in whatever nation the Lord has placed us. The difference is that we are not called by our God to overthrow our nation and impose God’s Word upon its citizens. Our task is to be witnesses of Jesus Christ, calling out of the world those who would willingly obey His Word. All others we leave for God to deal with however He sees fit. In the process we are to expect persecution and tribulation from the world, against which we are not to resist.

The current debate over the construction of a mosque at Ground Zero should cause us to reflect on just what the Lord expects of us. We should make distinctions between how we see this issue as believers in Jesus as opposed to how we see it as citizens of the United States of America.

Yes, our citizenship is in Heaven, but the Lord also expects us to be true to our citizenship on earth. We are to obey government; we are to honor magistrates; we are to see our land first as a missionary field, second as our dwelling place on earth. As good citizens we recognize that nations have the right to defend themselves against the aggression of other nations or ideologies that seek to conquer them. We also recognize that

nations rise and fall at the behest of God. A nation that turns to evil He will cause to be brought down. Although we recognize how this nation has turned from the true God and our Savior, Jesus Christ, we do not know that God has abandoned it yet. So we continue to warn the brethren of impending calamity, while at the same time contending against the inroads of the enemy.

That is why we must address this issue regarding the proposed mosque near Ground Zero.

First, the attack on the World Trade Center was at the least allowed by God, perhaps as partial judgment against the United States for its sin in turning away from His Word that He has so generously made available to us. That attack may be the first truly serious inroad of jihad against the United States. We must not think for a moment that this event transpired without God’s knowledge and permission.

Second, it’s true that there are many Muslims who are not militant, but are Muslims in name only, just as most Christians are Christians in name only. These Muslims were truly devastated by the 9/11 attacks, and oppose militant jihad.

Third, there are few Muslim leaders, including Muslim clergy, who are not sympathetic to some if not all the aims of the jihadists. One would be hard pressed to find a Muslim cleric who would not like to see Israel driven into the sea, or to see Sharia law governing all nations.

Fourth, world conquest is and always has been the goal of true Islam, regardless how many individual Muslims may be so in name only. The problem is that it is virtually impossible to know exactly what any Muslim thinks in regard to jihad, simply because the Koran allows Muslims to deceive “infidels” for the greater good of Islam. One Muslim may be telling the truth when he says he is against terrorism, while another Muslim may be lying. Further, many Muslims define “terrorism” as any attack against any Muslim, even if that attack comes in response against Muslim aggression. Thus, when some Muslims say they are against terrorism, you may have in mind Islamic jihad, while he has in mind Israel’s defense against Hamas’s and Hezbollah’s rocket attacks upon Israeli citizens, or U.S. intervention in Muslim countries for the sake of combating jihad. It is necessary to define terms when engaged in conversation with Muslims whose philosophy allows for lying to those outside Islam.

Hidden meanings are employed by despotic ideologies. They were found in Nazism, Communism, even socialism. The forked tongue of anti-Christ ideologies is to be expected since the father of lies is the Devil, as attested by Jesus Christ:

You are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and did not live in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it. (John 8:44)

We may love our Muslim neighbors, but, sad to say, until they turn to Christ we cannot trust them.

With all this in mind, we may consider what is happening in this debate about the mosque near Ground Zero.

Proponents for the mosque state that it would be part of a community center to be available to people of all religions, and

will be a place for moderate Muslims. It would be operated by a group called the Cordoba Initiative. The mosque is a project of the American Society for Muslim Advancement and the Cordoba Initiative, which promotes cross-cultural understanding between Islam and the West. The organizations purchased the building in 2009 and plan to break ground later this year. It is said that in addition to the mosque, the high rise building will also contain a prominent Islamic center that would be a national model of moderate Islam, with a board made up of Jewish, Muslim and Christian leaders

There are a number of reasons for concern even in the face of these seemingly benign designs.

One reason for concern is the name, "Cordoba Initiative." The city of Córdoba was the center of Islam's conquest of Spain until Ferdinand III of Castile reclaimed the city. Córdoba was the capital of the Spanish Muslim dynasty of the Umayyads (756-1031). The Great Mosque of Córdoba (La Mezquita) was built in 785 on the site of a Catholic church dedicated to St. Vincent. Over the next two hundred years it was expanded to make it the third largest structure in the Islamic world. To name the mosque near Ground Zero or the organization promoting it after Córdoba is to imply that the 9/11 attacks were part of Islam's conquest of the United States.

It has always been the practice of Islam to build mosques on the sites of their conquests, often in place of churches that stood there.

Another reason for concern is the idea of promoting "cross-cultural understanding between Islam and the West." This is code for "dialogue" in which Muslims have no genuine desire to understand anything about the West than they already know. Their real aim is to disarm the "infidels" by feigned words of "cooperation" so that they may continue their inroads into Western society with the ultimate goal of conquest through immigration and procreation. Should militant jihad become necessary due to resistance by the infidels, that, too, will be used. If this sounds uncharitable, it isn't; it merely acknowledges the truth that this is Muhammad's tactic for conquest as revealed in the Koran. First, if peaceful means may be used to bring the infidels into submission, then that is the preferred method; failing that, terror and destruction would be acceptable, even preferable.

Yet another reason for concern is the secrecy surrounding the funding of the mosque. Cordoba Initiative's director, Imam Faisal Abdul Rauf, has refused to disclose those sources which some suspect may be tied to Islamic terrorism. Also, at one time Rauf suggested in a television interview that U.S. foreign policy was at least partially responsible for the 9/11 attacks. The policy, of course, is the United States' support of Israel.

Sadly, his suggestion bears merit, but that does not negate Islam's avowed goal of world conquest in accordance with the commands of "Allah" (read Muhammad) in the Koran.

The argument posited by proponents of the mosque is that Muslims have the right to exercise their freedom of religion just like anyone else. This was Barack Obama's position on August 6, in stating that Muslims have the same right to freedom of

religion as everyone else in America. Prior to that, Obama had skirted the issue. Obama's words were part of a speech to a gathering at the White House that evening to observe iftar, the evening meal that breaks the day's fast during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. Fearing a backlash against Democrat politicians currently running for office, White House spokesman Bill Burton "clarified" Obama's statement: "What he said last night, and reaffirmed today, is that if a church, a synagogue or a Hindu temple can be built on a site, you simply cannot deny that right to those who want to build a mosque."

That is true in a free society. However, opponents of the mosque are not saying that Muslims don't have the right to worship; they just believe that a mosque so close to the site of Islam's attack against the United States is at best in poor taste, and at worst a symbolic act of Islamic conquest. Other sites have been offered to the Ground Zero mosque proponents, but they have been categorically rejected. They do not care what anyone else thinks; they must build this mosque.

Echoing somewhat Barack Obama, a Hamas co-founder says that Muslims "have to build" a mosque near Ground Zero. Mahmoud al-Zahar said Muslims "have to build everywhere" so that Muslims can pray just as do Christians and Jews. Hamas is a terrorist organization that wants Israel driven into the sea.

House Minority Leader John Boehner stated that the decision to build the mosque isn't an issue of religious freedom, but a matter of respect. "The fact that someone has the right to do something doesn't necessarily make it the right thing to do," said Boehner. "That is the essence of tolerance, peace and understanding."

Although some family members of 9/11 victims do not oppose the mosque, most are angered by the prospect of its being built so close to the ground they consider sacred to their loved one's memories. Debra Burlingame, a spokesperson for some victims' families, and the sister of one of the pilots killed in the attack, lamented Obama's stance. "Barack Obama has abandoned America at the place where America's heart was broken nine years ago, and where her true values were on display for all to see," said Burlingame. She sees building the mosque at Ground Zero as "a deliberately provocative act that will precipitate more bloodshed in the name of Allah."

In an Associated Press article, journalists Pauline Jelinek and Julie Pace cited Obama's desire to reach out to the Muslim world as an impetus for his support of the mosque:

Obama surely knew that his words Friday night at a White House dinner marking the holy month of Ramadan not only would make headlines, but be heard by Muslims worldwide. The president has made it a point to reach out to the global Muslim community, and the more than 100 guests at Friday's dinner included ambassadors and officials from numerous nations where Islam is observed, including Saudi Arabia and Indonesia.

When Obama first took office, Muslim leaders had high hopes from his presidency, even as he kept his distance from them during the campaign and rebutted false rumors that he was Muslim.

We are not convinced that the rumors were false or that Obama is not a closet Muslim. He is certainly not a Christian in the true sense. No true believer in Jesus would engage in and/or celebrate the religious activities of false religious systems.

Some may lay that charge to George W. Bush as well, since he, too, has held commemorations to Muslim holidays, and has demonstrated an affinity toward Muslim purposes. It may be argued that that's just state diplomacy, but that doesn't hold water where religion is concerned. But it does suggest that Islam is more than a religion; it is a political force that demands consideration by nation states, just as does Roman Catholicism.

We may argue whether or not many, if not most, Christian religious systems are also false, but we understand that ignorant, naïve, and weak Christians may get involved in them. But when a professing Christian celebrates a religion that denies Jesus as the Son of God, he reveals that he is not a true believer in Jesus.

Lost to many Christians in the discourse about this mosque and how it represents Muslim conquest of America is the idea that this could be a judgment from God. As a nation founded on the biblical ethic represented in our founding documents and early history, Christianity in America has progressively abandoned true faith in Jesus Christ and settled for a Christianized form of religiosity.

The nation has become more and more paganized, not only through its immigration policy, but also through conversion of many from Christianity to pagan religions and New Age mysticism.

We are alarmed that Islam has become so bold of late, but we neglect to place the blame where it truly belongs: on the churches in America that have turned from solid ministry based on God's Word to feel-good religion in the name of Jesus.

All this said, as believers in Jesus we may voice our concerns; we may oppose construction of this mosque; we may vote out of office those who support it. Or, as some believers do, we may abstain entirely from becoming involved in the world's affairs, letting God have His way; it's not up to His people to become embroiled in the world's disputes.

Whatever course believers in Christ may take, what we must not do is grow irrational or become apoplectic about this. Nothing transpires without our God's knowledge and permission. If it is His will for America that this nation fall to the barbarism of militant Islam, then it will happen. If and when that time comes we must trust Him and continue to pray for the preservation of America. In either case, let us thank Him.

In the meantime, regardless of our concerns, let us not forget to love our enemies as He commands us to do. ❖

Gay bar near Ground Zero mosque?

Greg Gutfeld, of the homosexual Web site, *The Daily Gut*, is planning to open a bar for homosexuals near the Ground Zero mosque, catering especially to homosexual Muslims. Says Gutfeld:

The goal, however, is not simply to open a typical gay bar, but one friendly to men of Islamic faith. An entire floor, for example, will feature non-alcoholic drinks, since

booze is forbidden by the faith. The bar will be open all day and night, to accommodate men who would rather keep their sexuality under wraps but still want to dance.

Bottom line: I hope that the mosque owners will be as open to the bar as I am to the new mosque. After all, the belief driving them to open up their center near Ground Zero, is no different than mine.

My place, however, will have better music.

Gutfeld's displeasure with Islam's professed antipathy toward homosexuality masks God's displeasure with both homosexuality and Islam. But I must admit that his music will be better. ❖

A Different Kind of Drug Problem

This note from a "Concerned Citizen" has been reproduced in newspapers and on the Internet. We thought our readers would get a chuckle out of it.

The other day, someone at a store in our town read that a methamphetamine lab had been found in an old farmhouse in the adjoining county and he asked me a rhetorical question, "Why didn't we have a drug problem when you and I were growing up?"

I replied, I had a drug problem when I was young: I was drug to church on Sunday morning. I was drug to church for weddings and funerals. I was drug to family reunions and community socials no matter the weather.

I was drug by my ears when I was disrespectful to adults. I was also drug to the woodshed when I disobeyed my parents, told a lie, brought home a bad report card, did not speak with respect, spoke ill of the teacher or the preacher, or if I didn't put forth my best effort in everything that was asked of me.

I was drug to the kitchen sink to have my mouth washed out with soap if I uttered a profanity. I was drug out to pull weeds in mom's garden and flower beds and cockleburs out of dad's fields. I was drug to the homes of family, friends and neighbors to help out some poor soul who had no one to mow the yard, repair the clothesline, or chop some firewood, and, if my mother had even known that I took a single dime as a tip for this kindness, she would have drug me back to the woodshed.

Those drugs are still in my veins and they affect my behavior in everything I do, say or think. They are stronger than cocaine, crack, or heroin; and, if today's children had this kind of drug problem, America would be a better place.

God bless the parents who drugged us.

Let a pig and a boy have everything they want, and you'll get a good pig and a bad boy.

(From Uncle Ben's Quote Book, Benjamin R. DeJong, Harvest House Publishers, 1977)

RESTORING HONOR RALLY



(Continued from page 3)

Palin then introduced three extraordinary heroes of military combat, after which Beck again took the platform to praise the nation's military men and women, and to challenge those watching to be individuals of faith, hope, and charity:

Glenn Beck:

It is no longer enough in our country just to look at these brave heroes. They cannot be the only ones that do the tough things. We as individuals—if we want our country to survive—we must begin now to look at our own selves. We must be individuals of faith, individuals of hope, and individuals of charity. ...

I would like to humbly ask that maybe as civilians we go back to that original intent, and for civilians we begin to look for merit in one another; we begin to look for honor—people who have done the tough things and have stood against the tide because it was right.

Today we begin to award the new Badge of Merit, “Restoring Honor.” Today we will award three medals to civilians who have done the right thing throughout their life, and touched the lives of other people. So our children can see regular people making tough decisions and living their life the right way.

To restore America we must not only restore honor, but in doing so we'll restore heroes. Our children need people to look up to. Well, those people are not giants like that [sweeping his hand toward Lincoln Memorial]; they are giants everywhere. They are us as individuals.

After a stirring audio-visual narration on the meaning of faith, Dr. Chief Negiel Bigpond of the Yuchi Tribe of Oklahoma presented the medal for faith to C.L. Jackson, pastor of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church of Houston, Texas. After describing Jackson's accomplishments, Bigpond gave his own rendition of MLK's “I Have a Dream” speech:

Chief Bigpond:

I have a dream, also, that all men, black, white, yellow—whatever color—that the red man, the Native American people, will come to give honor. To come out of the woods; to come out of the reservations, over thirty-three hundred, sixty-five tribes, to come out of those reservations, to come and give honor to God, where honor is due. That is my dream: that all our people would come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

But at this time we're here to honor Pastor C.L. Jackson.

Would you give the Lord a hand and the praise!

Jackson recounted when, as a young black man, forty-eight years prior, he stood listening to Martin Luther King, Jr. give his “I Have a Dream” speech. Jackson had come from Mississippi on a bus, defying the threats that the bus would be blown up.

After another audio-visual presentation on the meaning of hope, St. Louis Cardinals manager Tony La Russa came forward to present the medal of honor for hope to Albert Pujols, Cardinals' first baseman and an immigrant from the Dominican Republic. Pujols is on record for disagreeing with Arizona's challenged law against illegal immigration. Hispanic himself, he has sympathy for others wishing to come to America. Yet Beck chose to set aside disagreement on that issue and to award him the medal for hope because of Pujol's dedication to many causes for his community, even during the baseball season. The Pujol's family foundation works with kids and adults suffering from Down Syndrome.

During his speech, Pujols, who calls himself a “born-again Christian,” spoke of his faith in Jesus Christ:

My job as a believer is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Twelve years ago I made the best decision of my life, and that was to follow Jesus Christ.

The third medal, for charity, was presented by retired Texas Supreme Court Judge Raul Gonzalez to billionaire industrialist Jon M. Huntsman for his myriad contributions to charities and the founding of the Huntsman Cancer Research Institute. Huntsman has also supported shelters for battered women and the homeless, and has given millions of dollars to different universities.

Unable to be at the rally due to the wedding of his granddaughter on that day, Huntsman's award was received on his behalf by Emma Houston, a black woman treated for cancer at Huntsman's Cancer Research Center, who opened by saying, “I bring you greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.” She then read Huntsman's statement of thanks for the award, which stated, “many other people are far more deserving.”

One person after another, white, black, Hispanic, American Indian, came forward to extol the virtues of America. Several gave praise to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Rabbi Daniel Lapin was also present, but he did not speak, nor did anyone else who might not have been identified as a Christian. Non-Christians present were respectful and endured all the praises to Jesus without protest.

No speaker voiced disgruntlement at the government, Barack Obama, or other leftists. Indeed, Beck took a moment to point out that there was disagreement among those present with him on the platform, but that all agreed America needs to restore its former honor and commitment to God:

These men and women here don't agree on fundamentals; they don't agree on everything that every church teaches. What they do agree on is God is the answer.

In contrast to the words spoken at the Restoring Honor Rally, were the words of some (not all) speakers at Al Sharpton's Reclaim the Dream Rally held at Dunbar High School in Washington, D.C. While acknowledging that steps toward racial equality had come some distance since King's famous speech, one after another lamented that enough isn't being done. Some took the opportunity to besmirch not only Glenn Beck, but the hundreds of thousands in attendance at the National Mall. After their counter rally they went to the Mall to heckle the Restoring Honor attendees as they were leaving.

William Spriggs, Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Labor Department, dismissed the Restoring Honor Rally as unworthy:

So, I am glad to be here. This is not—this is not—the counter rally. I am happy to be here at THE rally, because no one else can claim our vision or our dream.

Spriggs then accused former President George W. Bush of running up the biggest deficit in American history while delivering the fewest jobs! Talk about audacity.

It's one thing for a government official to support such a gathering; it's just wrong to choose to honor some of the nation's citizens and dishonor others. Spriggs reveals that, as a government official, he does not represent all the people. He is firmly in the pocket of the left, as are all of Obama's appointees.

Franklyn Richardson, pastor of Grace Baptist Church in Mount Vernon, NY, and chairman of National Action Network, asked, "Why are we here, and the other group is at the Mall?"

Richardson went on to say it's all right that the others were at the Mall because "we're in the White House."

The applause after that statement revealed the mind-set that sees the White House under Barack Obama existing for the benefit of minorities rather than for the benefit of all Americans.

The keynote speaker, of course, was Al Sharpton who began by repeatedly shouting, "No Justice!" to which his audience countered, "No peace!"

No peace? What happened to Dr. Martin Luther King's appeal to non-violent resistance? Besides inflaming feelings of anarchy, Sharpton, in so many words, claimed that the "others" had hijacked King's dream. Yet that's exactly what he has done.

This is not to say I'm against racial equality; it is to say that these people do not represent civility in achieving that equality.

One of the more inflammatory speeches came from Jaime Contreras, Director of the DC Metro Area Service Employees International Union:

It is a shame what is happening today at the Lincoln Memorial where the great Martin Luther King gave the "I Have a Dream" speech.

Shame on them, right?

Today, civil rights leaders, union leaders, religious leaders, and others are joining together to really commemorate Martin Luther King's forty-seventh anniversary of the March on Washington and the "I Have a Dream" speech.

We are here to let those folks at the Lincoln Memorial know that they don't represent the Dream. ...They represent hate mongering, and angry white people; that's who they represent.

Now, the happy white people are here with us today, right?

I say again to those people at the Lincoln Memorial, "Shame on them."

What would be the outcry had someone at Beck's rally used the phrase "angry black people" to describe Sharpton's rally? Obviously Contreras, as a leader of others, didn't have a clue about what was really happening at the Restoring Honor Rally. Perhaps he should have been at the Mall to hear Alveda King, niece of Martin Luther King, Jr.:

Praise the Lord! Give the Lord the glory! Hallelujah Lord Jesus! Glory! Hallelujah!

Well, you know what? It's absolutely wonderful for Glenn to use his popularity and influence to bring us together, to focus not on an election or political cause, but to focus on honor, and on the content of our character, and not the color of our skin.

King then introduced a number of people, all black, who stood with her on principle.

Beck gave the concluding speech with an impassioned plea for America to turn back to God and to make individual commitments to pray on their knees in humble acknowledgement of their place before God. He also asked that Americans acknowledge the sins of the past with a commitment to live better for the future, trusting that God will yet bestow His grace upon the nation.

He then called upon wounded veteran Dave Roeber to give the closing prayer. Among Roeber's words: "God, bless this nation. We thank You for our president; we thank You for our Congress; we thank You for our land, but God we thank You that you rule in the hearts of these people, and all things work together for good to them that love God and are called according to His purpose, on eight and twenty-eight of the Book of Romans on this glorious day."

Thank You for our president?

Yes, that's a valid prayer, because God gives every nation its leader. It doesn't matter if we agree with the leader or even like him. He is God's choice for the moment. And whether he works for good or for evil, it is within the will of God for his purposes concerning the nation. This is why the apostle Paul states in Philippians 4:6-7 that we are to give God thanks in ALL things, and are not to be worried about anything. We should thank God for whatever He is doing through Barack Obama. Perhaps God sent Barack Obama to America to wake us up.

But was Glenn Beck, a Mormon, sent to lead the awakening?

God's people have often worked with unbelievers for mutual temporal benefit. By unbelievers I don't mean those who are blatantly ungodly or godless—those who purposely promote evil and work against the true God. There are many unbelievers and adherents to Christian and non-Christian religions who are righteous in the sense of holding to the biblical ethic that has guided Western Civilization for centuries. They recognize that the laws of God governing human conduct and government promote the highest form of civilization. The founding of this

nation was carried out by Christians working with non-Christians who held to the biblical ethic. Together they forged not a perfect government, but one that recognized the God of the Bible in its founding documents—a government that respected the God-given rights of individuals to live according to their consciences, while protecting against those whose consciences are seared by unrighteousness. Yet their actions were forged in a spirit of rebellion against their king. But God used them to establish the government He wanted at the time.

Our heavenly Father has demonstrated in His Word that He will bless even the heathen if they live in a manner consistent with His laws for personal conduct. His appeal to the city of Nineveh is an example of His mercy toward those who are not His people. The Scriptures tell us that Nineveh repented of its sinful actions, but they don't tell us that the city turned to YHWH as its only God.

That said, we must make some distinctions. Although we may join with those of varying faiths for temporal benefit (what true Christian would refuse to help others save someone from a fire, regardless of those others' beliefs?), we cannot ignore the problems that arise when believers in Christ join with adherents to other religions in spiritual matters. Not the least of those problems is compromise of true faith in Jesus. Government de facto touches on religion because government is a moral institution. And Glenn Beck, as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ, Latter-day Saints (LDS or Mormonism) is taking his stand on moral and religious grounds. Also, the LDS teaches that Mormons, as the only true believers, will one day rule the earth (dominion theology of its own sort). So there is more to Beck's political position than meets the eye of the uninformed.

When a true believer in Jesus joins hands to pray with those who reject Him, or who hold belief in a different Jesus, they negate their testimony that the true Jesus of the Bible is the only way to the Father. They also give credibility to the false gospels represented by those who represent false religions. That is the problem with interfaith and ecumenical religious activity. Glenn Beck poses such a danger to the Body of Christ.

In human terms Beck appears a righteous man who earnestly desires to work for the good of others. He has been unfairly besmirched by his detractors on the left. He is even vilified for being a Mormon by some Christians. No man should be vilified for what he believes, but he must be rejected as a leader by true believers in Jesus if what he believes is contrary to God's Word. Glenn Beck is such a man. Although not evil in his intentions he falsely represents himself as a Christian while adhering to belief in the Jesus of Mormonism.

The Jesus of Mormonism is not the eternal Word of God; Mormon doctrine states that Jesus is a spirit being who was procreated by God the Father to be one of many such sons, one of whom is Satan. He entered into the womb of Mary through physical intercourse between her and God. Mormonism states that, in His prior spiritual state, Jesus (as Jehovah) had to attain His own salvation so that He could be the Savior of mankind.

Mormons should not take offense that I say they worship a different Jesus. Some of their own church leaders have stated

that they worship a different Jesus than that of traditional Christian denominations. But they indict those denominations of having the wrong Jesus.

Just a few other Mormon teachings that Beck represents:

- God, whom the Mormons call "Elohim," was once a mortal being on a planet similar to earth; He had to overcome his own sin nature to attain to godhood.
- The God of the Bible is not the only god. He is the God of this universe only. There are countless other universes ruled by other gods. Each populated planet under these various gods have their own tempter and their own savior. Each god has had to overcome his own sin nature to attain to godhood. This includes Jesus.
- Faithful Mormon men may become gods of their own universes and populate them through the physical procreative process with many women. Fifth LDS president Lorenzo Snow coined the phrase, "As man is, God once was; as God is, man may be" (Articles of Faith, pg. 430).
- One cannot be saved eternally unless one undergoes the Mormon temple initiation rituals and remains faithful unto death to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
- Women cannot be resurrected unless they are called forth from the grave by their husbands.
- The Bible is not the only Word of God; the Book of Mormon is "another testament of Christ," equal to the Bible. In truth and in practice, the *Book of Mormon* is superior to the Bible which the LDS institution teaches has been corrupted.

There are many, many other diabolical LDS teachings, but these should suffice to demonstrate how Mormonism perverts the truth of Scripture, and why true believers in Jesus may not join in fellowship with its members.

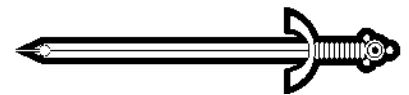
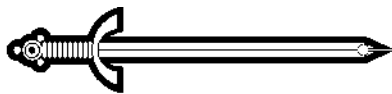
Now I don't know how much Glenn Beck understands about these perverse teachings, or if he is even aware of them. I've related them to Mormons and some have said they never heard of them, or they have denied the LDS church teaches them.

Beck did allude to the *Book of Mormon* teaching that the native peoples of America are descendants from the so-called "lost tribes" of Israel:

The story of America is the story of humankind. 5,000 years ago, on the other side of the planet, God's chosen people were led out of bondage by a guy with a stick, who was talking to a burning bush. Man first began to recognize God, and God's Law. At the same time those things were happening, on this side, on this land, another group of people were gathered here, and they, too, were listening to God.

How these two people were brought together again happened because people were listening to God. They didn't have the right to worship God the way they saw fit. And so they got down on their knees. And they didn't want to come to this land; they just did because they

(Continued on page 19)

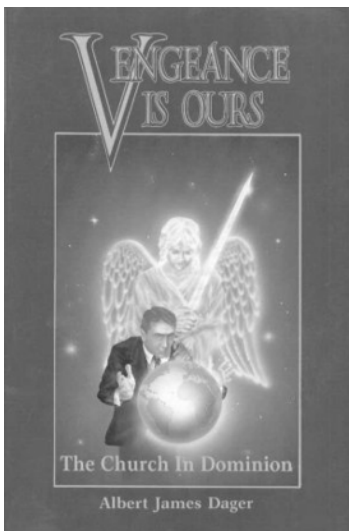


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The products in this catalog have been carefully selected to provide knowledgeable and accurate information on subjects that are of vital importance to the Body of Christ. Some are not available in bookstore and/or are produced by little-known publishers. We cannot vouch for every thought presented. We urge you to test all things. Do not substitute any of these for Bible study.

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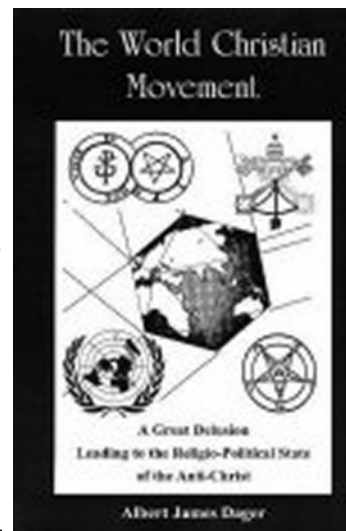
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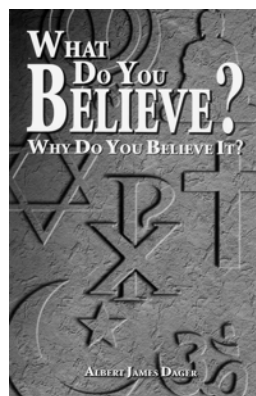
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What we believe, whether a religious or secular philosophy, impacts our lives. What you believe is important not only to you, but to those whom you influence in life. Yet most people cannot offer empirical evidence for their beliefs, resting rather on emotion and their upbringing. Can you give a reasoned explanation for why you believe what you believe? Can you say for a certainty that your beliefs are superior to all others? You may accept or reject what the author says, but at least you will be able to assess your own beliefs as true or false.

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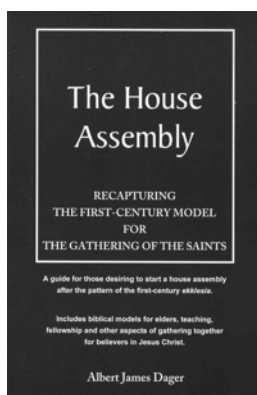
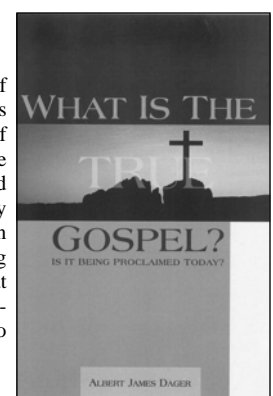


WHAT IS THE TRUE GOSPEL?

Albert James Dager - 110 pages

Jesus proclaimed what He called "the Gospel of the Kingdom." He then commissioned His disciples to go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom to all the nations. But even from the beginning there have been false gospels proclaimed by those claiming to be messengers of God. Today we are witnessing a great apostasy based largely on institutional traditions. Many false gospels emanating from pulpits, radio, and television—even many that seem to glorify Jesus—differ from the Gospel proclaimed by Jesus. This book points the reader back to Scripture to discover the original Gospel.

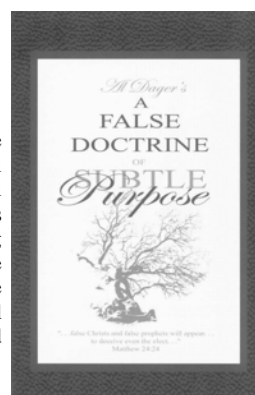
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**THE HOUSE ASSEMBLY: Recapturing
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PURPOSE**
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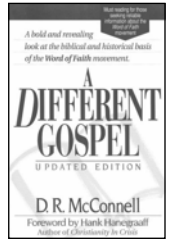


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D.R. McConnell 225 pages

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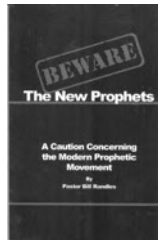


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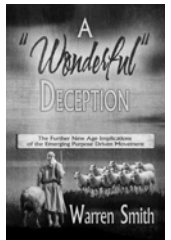


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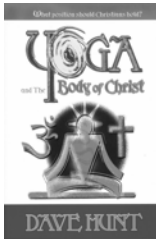


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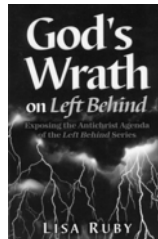


GOD'S WRATH ON LEFT BEHIND

Lisa Ruby 214 pages

Many deceptions have found their way into these end-time fiction books. This exposé reveals how the "Christian" characters reflect ungodliness, working for anti-Christ, denying Jesus, lying, stealing, and cheating. Add to these the unscriptural end-time scenario.

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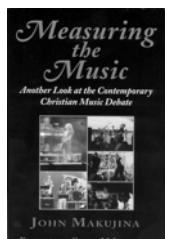


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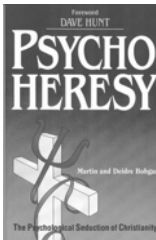


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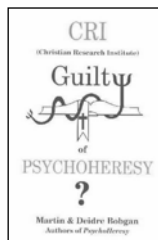


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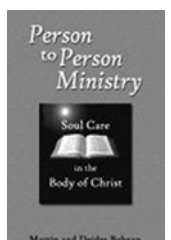


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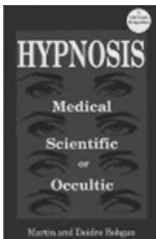


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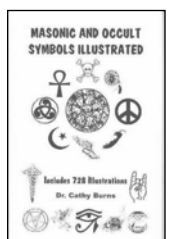


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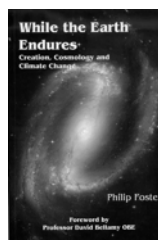


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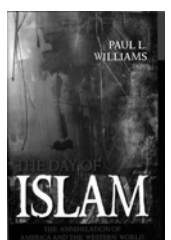


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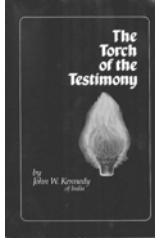


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THE TORCH OF THE TESTIMONY
John W. Kennedy 251 pages

A 2,000-year history of the Christians and churches that have stood outside the Catholic-Protestant tradition. Originally published in India in 1964; little known in the West. We don't recommend some of this publisher's other items, but this is a gem.

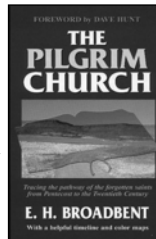
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The real story of the faith is not the one recorded in secular or religious history, which has largely been tainted by Roman Catholic influences. This classic will thrill you with stories of unknown heroes of the faith who have stood firm for God's truth. Wonderful.

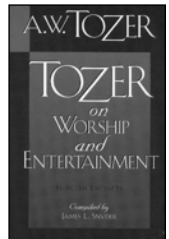
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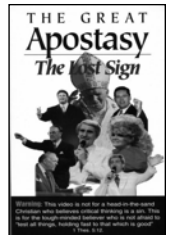
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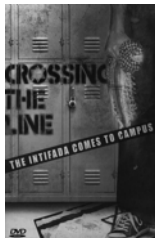
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RESTORING HONOR RALLY

(Continued from page 14)

felt that was what God was telling them to do. And with malice toward none they got into their boats, and they came—God’s chosen people: the Native Americans and the Pilgrims.

Regardless of how much affinity may exist between believers and those who proclaim a different Jesus, Christian leaders must never give credibility to a false religion by lauding one of its most visible adherents. Thus, it pained me to hear Christian leaders at the Restoring Honor Rally laud Beck on the basis of his faith.

Additionally, Pastor C.L. Jackson called Beck a “servant of God” and “son of God.”

In the broadest sense, everyone is a servant of God because God works His purposes through all men. And all men are sons of God as descendants of Adam, who is called a son of God in the genealogy of Jesus (Luke 3:38). But Jackson was lauding Beck as a special servant of God and a unique son of God. This gives great credibility to the Mormon religion in the minds of naïve or unknowledgeable people. It is especially dangerous to the faith of Christians who may now open themselves to the Mormon religion as a viable avenue to serve God. Who knows how many young, and naïve Christians will start attending LDS services? Or, God forbid, submit to LDS temple initiation, which is demonic and rooted in founder Joseph Smith’s Freemasonry?

Just as disconcerting were these words from Jackson in his prelude to the story of the three faithful women in the Bible:

As God sent His Son to this earth so that we could all gather—and I think that’s the dream and the vision of Glenn Beck. ...

I saw him—Glenn Beck—eyes full of tears as he said what they had given for all of this to happen. So what would Jesus, if He stood here right now, what would be expected of this great audience?

And when you study, you’re going to see where there were three women in the ministry of Jesus Christ. Now you know there was many, very many, many men, but there were three classical women stood out in His ministry, just like you stand out in the ministry of Dr. Glenn Beck.

Comparing Glenn Beck to Jesus being sent by the Father to the earth to gather us together borders on blasphemy. By placing true believers in Jesus under “the ministry” of Beck, Jackson compromises their faith.

And what would Jesus expect of the audience? Well, for those who claim true faith in Him, He would expect them to be separate from such false brethren and to serve His Kingdom above any other kingdom or nation regardless the consequences.

Another example of misplaced ecumenism was Alveda King concluding her speech with, “God bless you, Glenn! Hallelujah!”

God’s Word tells us not to wish God speed (e.g., “God bless”) to anyone who brings a different gospel, else we become partakers of his evil deeds (2 John 10:10-11).

Yes, Glenn Beck’s Mormon gospel is evil. That doesn’t mean he is evil, at least not within the intents of his heart. But the Mormon gospel is evil, and those who wish for God to bless Beck are wishing for God to bless the evil gospel he represents.

Now I do at times ask God to bless unbelievers. But when I pray that within my heart, our Father knows that I am asking that He bring them to salvation—the greatest blessing they could receive. Although I care about their temporal welfare, I am far more concerned about their spiritual welfare.

Unless that qualifier is stated, then to openly wish a non-believer to be blessed by God for his spiritual contribution to an ecumenical gathering is indeed partaking of his evil deeds.

I do pray for Glenn Beck. I admire the man for his courage and integrity. But I cannot wish him God speed when it comes to spiritual matters.

Even Dave Roever, well-known for his testimony of faith in the true Jesus, prayed that God would “give Glenn Beck a huge blessing for what he’s done in this country for us today.”

I don’t wish to judge Dave Roever or Alveda King. I chalk up their error to lack of discernment, so much of which is lacking among Christians today. The lack of both discernment and spiritual understanding among Christians is due to unqualified men and women who think their calling is to pastor God’s people. They preach to the lowest common denominator, and, apart from a very few, never address the deceptions that abound today.

They love the applause of men and are flattered when asked by famous people to be part of those people’s missions. They overlook the harm they may be doing to the souls they are pledged to protect. They concern themselves more with the evils of the present government than they do with the evils of religion. For many of them, patriotism has become more important than the truth of God’s Word.

I don’t say patriotism has no place in our lives. I respect the military personnel who live such selfless lives for our benefit, recognizing also that they have often been misused and abused by the government they serve under. However, we must also understand that because of the ungodliness of those in higher command, including presidents, homosexuals share in the honors that men like Beck wish to bestow upon the military in general.

I love America. My love is for the people and the decency that has characterized American society since its inception. But I also recognize that decency would not be characteristic of America any more than any other country were it not for the influence of the true Gospel among its founders and its populace.

Even the beneficent ideals of the left can be traced to the humanitarian aspects of the Gospel. Remove the influence of the true Gospel, and the eventual result will be a descent into barbarism. And that is where the leftists are leading the nation as they stray further and further away from God’s truth.

It isn’t necessary that all Americans repent and become believers in Jesus Christ for God to restore us. But there must be a groundswell of righteous thinking predicated upon His Word. Glenn Beck’s Restoring Honor Rally may be a step in that direction. But true believers in Jesus cannot make the mistake of equating righteous living with righteousness in Christ. ❖



ANTI-CHRIST

PART XIV

THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY

Having returned from being tempted by the Devil in the wilderness, Jesus came again to John the Baptist. It is then that John testified of Jesus being the Messiah—the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. And more than that—the Son of God:

The next day John saw Jesus coming to him, and said, “Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who has preference over me for He was before me.’ And I did not know Him. But so that He should be made known to Israel, therefore I have come baptizing with water.”

And John bore witness, saying, “I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove from Heaven, and it stayed upon Him. And I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water, the same said to me, ‘Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, it is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’

“And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”

Thus began the ministry of God’s only-begotten Son. For when Andrew and Peter heard John the next day again say, “Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world,” they followed Jesus and became His first disciples. The following day Philip and Nathanael joined Jesus as His disciples.

On the third day after His baptism Jesus attended a wedding feast in Cana in Galilee where, upon the urging of His mother, He turned water into wine. He appears to have done so reluctantly, after telling Mary that His time had not yet come to reveal Himself as the Messiah. This was the first of His miracles, and caused His disciples to put their faith in Him.

Since the time of His temptation in the wilderness until that time there is no record of anti-Christ opposing Jesus. It would be only a matter of days, however, before Jesus Himself would set the stage for the opposition that would eventually lead to His death on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins. It was the time of the Passover, sometime around the year AD 27, the exact year being unverifiable:

And the Jews’ Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem and found sitting in the temple those who sold oxen, sheep and doves, and the moneychangers. And when He had made a whip out of small cords He drove them all out of the temple—along with the sheep, and the oxen—and poured out the changers’ money, and overthrew the tables, and said to those who sold doves, “Take these things away! Do not make My Father’s house a house of merchandise!”

And His disciples remembered that it was written, “The zeal of Your house has consumed me.”

Then the Jews answered and said to Him, “What sign do you show us, seeing that You do these things?”

Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

Then the Jews said, “This temple was in construction for forty-six years, and will You raise it up in three days?”

But He spoke of the temple of His body. (John 2:13-21)

This is the first recorded confrontation between Jesus and the Jewish leaders who, having succumbed to rabbinical Judaism in place of the faith given to Abraham and passed down through the Law of Moses, had become complacent in their religion. They saw no problem in making merchandise of God’s people. And they resented this intruder into their money-making schemes.

This was no rash action on the part of Jesus. He took some time to braid the whip He would use on the merchants and moneychangers. His action was calculated, and He knew it would draw the opposition of His enemies.

Still, no overt opposition came His way, although the Pharisees were keeping an eye on Him, and knew that He was gaining and baptizing more disciples than had John. When Jesus learned of the Pharisees’ interest in Him, knowing of their evil hearts, He left Judea and returned to Galilee. He was not yet ready to be delivered into their hands.

On His way to Galilee He passed through Samaria where He met a woman at Jacob’s well. There He revealed to Her that

He was Israel's Messiah (John 4:4-26). Because of the woman's testimony about Jesus many Samaritans came to see and hear Him, and in just two days among them many believed in Him.

Jesus' ministry to the Samaritans was judged as evil by many Jews because the Jews despised the Samaritans whom they considered interlopers and not of pure Israelite stock. The alienation began after the Jews returned from the Assyrian Captivity, believing that those occupying Samaria were aliens from Kutha in Mesopotamia. The Jews referred to the Samaritans as "Cuthim" in a pejorative sense. However, Scripture reveals that not all Israelites from the Northern Kingdom were exiled by the Assyrians; many remained in their land as their subjects. It's highly probable that many of those true Israelites intermarried with non-Israelites during the times of the Assyrian and Babylonian Captivities, but they continued to strongly identify with the religion of the Israelites.

The Samaritans claimed that they held to the true religion of the ancient Israelites prior to the Babylonian Captivity, and that they preserved the true religion, as opposed to Judaism, which they believed was a related but altered religion brought back by those who returned from exile.

Jesus' ministry to the Samaritans, as well as His parable about the Good Samaritan, would cause the unbelieving Jews to further reject Him, believing that the Messiah would have nothing to do with the Samaritans. The hatred of the Jews toward the Samaritans would be one of anti-Christ's weapons in his design to destroy the Messiah.

After spending two days in Samaria, Jesus returned to Cana in Galilee where, as His second miracle, He healed the son of a nobleman.

Although Jesus as Messiah would become anti-Christ's greatest target, his attack against this new work of God was first formed against John the Baptist:

But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him for Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils that Herod had done, added yet this above all: that he shut up John in prison. (Luke 3:19)

This verse is parenthetical in Luke's account of John the Baptist's ministry, placed between John's proclamation to the Jews to repent and be baptized, and Jesus' baptism which we know was performed by John. Most likely John was imprisoned by Herod not long after Jesus' baptism because John himself had said that he must decrease and the Lord must increase (John 3:30). Also, John's imprisonment came before Jesus embarked upon His first public ministry.

King Herod, though he liked to hear John the Baptist, succumbed to the anti-Christ's desire for John's death. Although saddened to do so, when Herodias instructed her daughter to ask for John's head on a platter after Herod had promised her anything she wanted for having danced so well before him and his guests, Herod had John beheaded. His cowardice is also a trait of anti-Christ.

Leaving His hometown, Nazareth, Jesus went to live in Capernaum, by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah:

Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first He lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who live in the land of the shadow of death, the light has shined. (Isa 9:1-2)

This was the beginning of Jesus proclaiming the same message as that of John the Baptist; "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near."

At first, His fame spread throughout the whole countryside as He taught in the synagogues. People praised Him. Then He returned to Nazareth. There He provoked the people to turn against Him:

And He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up. As was His custom, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read. And there was delivered to Him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He opened the book, He found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of YHWH is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim the Gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of YHWH."

And He closed the book, and He gave it back to the minister and sat down. And the eyes of all those who were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say to them, "This Scripture is fulfilled in your ears today."

And all bore Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?" (Luke 4:16-23)

So far, so good; all spoke well of Him, bearing witness of Him. But then:

And He said to them, "You will surely recite to Me this proverb: 'Physician, heal yourself; whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.'"

And He said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in His own country. But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah when the heavens were shut up three years and six months—when great famine was throughout all the land—but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Sarepta, a city of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

And when they heard these things, all those in the synagogue were filled with wrath and rose up, and threw Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built so that they might throw Him down headlong.

But passing through the midst of them, He went His way and came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and

taught them on the Sabbath days. And they were astonished at His teaching because His word had authority. (Luke 4:24-32)

Jesus knew that speaking the scriptural truth of God's mercy toward Gentiles while passing over the afflictions of the Jews would incite the hatred hidden within the hearts of His listeners. He fully knew what their reaction would be.

One ploy of anti-Christ is to portray Jesus as nothing more than "loving," "kind," and "generous" toward everyone in order to disarm people to His true nature and demand for holiness in His people. This is but one example of how He provoked those who at first saw nothing offensive in Him. He made sure they were offended in order to reveal their true hearts.

This incident set the match to the greatest conflagration of warfare between the Kingdom of Heaven and the kingdom of darkness thus far seen on earth. It was the beginning of the end for both the Messiah's days on earth in this present age, and Satan's power over the hearts and minds of men.

Returning again to Galilee, Jesus demonstrated His authority over nature by having Simon Peter take Him in his boat to cast a net for fish. Peter obeyed, even though he and his companions had been fishing all night and had caught nothing. When the catch of fish was so great that Peter required his partners in another boat to help, and both boats began to sink, Peter said to Jesus, "Leave me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!"

From there Jesus began to call those additional men who would comprise His company of apostles. Zebedee's sons, James and John immediately left their father's boat to follow Him upon His word, "Come! Follow Me!"

This was no casual encounter. No doubt James and John had heard Jesus speaking on the shore of Galilee, and would have witnessed the miracle of the fishes.

Taking these men, Jesus went to Capernaum where He taught in the synagogue and caused more people to marvel at His teaching authority. His first recorded encounter with the minions of Satan's kingdom also took place there:

And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, saying, "Leave us alone! What have we to do with You, You Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know You, who You are—the Holy One of God!"

And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Hold your peace and come out of him!"

And when the unclean spirit had torn him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him.

And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What thing is this? What new teaching is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him!"

And His fame quickly spread abroad throughout all the region around Galilee. (Mark 1:23-28)

This was the Kingdom of Heaven's first direct attack against the kingdom of Satan. Until this time Jesus had worked miracles of healing and demonstrated His authority over the natural realm; now He demonstrated His authority over the spirit realm.

The unclean spirit residing in this man was most likely hidden, manipulating the man to do unclean things, perhaps unknown to his contemporaries. He may even have been one of the religious leaders whose hidden sins might never have come to light had Jesus' presence not provoked the unclean spirit to reveal himself.

This incident also prompted the people in Capernaum to bring to Jesus all the sick and those who were possessed by devils.

Leaving there, He went throughout all of Galilee proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom, healing all the sick, and casting out devils. Large crowds from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and all across Jordan followed Him. After a few days He returned to Capernaum, and further provoked antagonism toward Himself:

And they came to Him, bringing someone sick of paralysis who was carried by four. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. And when they had broken it up, they let down the cot in which the sick from paralysis lay.

When Jesus saw their faith He said to the sick from paralysis, "Son, your sins are forgiven you."

But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, reasoning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

And immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned so within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason these things in your hearts? Which is it easier to say to the sick from paralysis, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, and take up your cot, and walk'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins (He said to the sick from paralysis), 'I say to you, arise, and take up your cot, and go your way into your house.'"

And immediately he arose, took up the cot, and went away in front of them all, insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen this before!"

And He went away again by the seashore, and the multitude came to Him, and He taught them. (Mark 2:3-13)

We're not told the further reaction from these particular scribes, but we know that the scribes as a class consistently plotted against the Lord.

After this incident Jesus saw Alphaeus's son Levi (Matthew) sitting in the tax collector's place. He said to Levi, "Follow Me," and he did. The Lord's association with Levi further provoked the religious leaders of the Jews to try to find fault with Him:

And it happened that as Jesus sat at dinner in His house, many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples, for there were many, and they followed Him.

And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eat with tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, "How is it that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?"

When Jesus heard it, he said to them, “Those who are whole have no need of the physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast, and they came and said to Him, “Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?”

And Jesus said to them, “Can the children of the bride chamber fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they shall fast in those days. (Mark 3:15-20)

The Jews put much emphasis on outward cleanliness and the keeping of the Law before others. They were quick to judge sinners and those who did not wash their hands before eating. Here, for the first time recorded, Jesus addressed the spiritual vs. the mundane conditions that separate the truly holy from the outwardly holy. In so doing He stirred the anti-Christ sentiments of the religious leaders who were jealous for their outward righteousness.

This conflict would be exacerbated when He next healed the invalid man by the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath day, provoking the Jews to seek His death. They became even more enraged when He said, “My Father is at work here, and I work.” They sought all the more to kill Him because He had not only broken the Sabbath according to their tradition, but said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

The conflict has raged over the centuries over whether or not Jesus is God in the flesh—the Word of God who was in the bosom of the Father from eternity, and who came forth from the Father to create all things. The denial of His divinity is a mark of anti-Christ:

For many deceivers have entered into the world, who do not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an anti-Christ. (2 John 7)

Jesus Christ (Jesus the Messiah) is testified to be the Word of God who became flesh (John 1). All Scripture and the faith of the saints from the creation of man to the present rest upon this truth. Anyone who denies this truth is anti-Christ according to God’s Word. The vast majority of mankind reject this truth, placing themselves in the camp of anti-Christ. But the conflict between Satan and Jesus as the Word of God would settle the issue once for all when Jesus would rise from the dead. This is why belief in the bodily resurrection of Jesus and His faithful saints is essential to the true faith. Those who do not hold that hope have no hope.

Jesus’ entire walk was warfare against the kingdom of anti-Christ. Everything He did—every good work—set Him against Satan’s minions, both men and devils. And it was the Law of Moses that was the catalyst He used against His enemies:

“Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you—even Moses in whom you

trust. For had you believed Moses you would have believed Me, because he wrote of Me.

”But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My Words?” (John 5:35-47)

Throughout history anti-Christ has attempted to pervert God’s Word as a means to deceive mankind. He succeeded in deceiving the Jews through their religious leaders who had taken the Word as a set of rules by which they could keep the people enslaved to those religious leaders’ dictates. They perverted the meaning of the Sabbath and all the Law which was given as a blessing to Israel. Instead of blessing, the religious leaders had turned the Law into a curse and subjugated the people to their religious tenets.

When Jesus came He set the record straight, accomplishing several objectives: 1) He set free the people who believed and followed Him; 2) He exposed the evil of rabbinic Judaism that enslaved the people; 3) He destroyed the works of the Devil; 4) He showed the way to the Father for all who believe; 5) He made the way for the Gentiles to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And He did many other things that are too numerous to mention (John 21:25).

Many of Jesus’ works took place on the Sabbath for good reason. The Sabbath was established by God as a delight for Israel—a time to rest from their labors. It was holy to YHWH, but the religious leaders of the Jews had made the Sabbath a burden to the people. The Sabbath had become a time of sorrow rather than a time of delight—a time when the people were bound to the point where they could expect nothing good. Jesus showed that the Sabbath was being misrepresented; He demonstrated that it was always intended to be a time for good. Thus He healed and delivered many on the Sabbath. This stirred the ire of the religious leaders who, in their self-righteousness, desired to keep the people under bondage.

When He and His disciples went through the wheat fields on the Sabbath, plucking grains to eat, the Pharisees exclaimed, “Look! Your disciples do that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day!”

But Jesus pointed them to their own Scriptures to recall how David and his men ate the show bread in the tabernacle, which was unlawful, and how the priests seem to profane the Sabbath by working in the temple. His words were meant to bring understanding that God never forbids good works or necessary work for Him on the Sabbath.

But their traditions overrode their understanding and took precedence over God’s Word.

It is much the same today when legalists within the Body of Christ attempt to impose the traditions of men for the sake of outward righteousness.

The hearts of the Jewish religious leaders had become so calloused that they refused to rejoice at the work of God to heal the people. Instead they used those works as a means to find fault with Jesus so that they could kill Him.

The anti-Christ spirit is so perverse that it cannot rejoice at good; it must destroy anything that is truly good—that is, anything that comes from God. Anti-Christ will accuse the

righteous of being evil, calling good “evil,” and evil “good.” This the Pharisees did to Jesus:

Then there was brought to Him one possessed with a devil, blind, and mute, and He healed him, insomuch that the blind and mute both spoke and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, “Is this not the son of David?”

But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, “This fellow does not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils!”

And Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out devils by Beelzebub, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.” (Matthew 12:22-28)

It was during this event that Jesus warned the people about blaspheming against the Holy Spirit—knowing the truth of God at work and willfully rejecting it, even calling it the work of the Devil. This is apostasy of the worst kind that Jesus said will not be forgiven.

In spite of the Lord’s consistent display of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of the Scriptures, coupled with His unfailing miracles, none of these things having been witnessed in such fashion since the creation of man, the religious leaders hearts became more hardened against Him. After He had chastised the Pharisees and lawyers during a meal to which a Pharisee had invited Him, they all the more opposed Him and sought how to entrap Him (Luke 11:53-54).

Some might say that this is to be expected, seeing how Jesus consistently provoked and even humiliated His detractors. But there is no excuse for refusing the light of truth regardless how that truth is conveyed. Jesus knew their hearts; He knew their thoughts; He knew that many followed Him for reasons other than those that stem from pure motives. Some followed because they wanted to receive some good thing from Him—a miracle, food, temporal benefits. Some followed because they wanted to find fault in order to solidify their position among the people. Some followed because they wanted to learn how to manifest the same power. Few followed because they wanted to know the truth that could conform them to holiness.

It is no different today. Witness the religious charlatans who make merchandise of God’s people, promising health, wealth, power and prestige. They preach false gospels in order to acquire filthy lucre.

And there are many who continue to find fault with Jesus and with the Word of God because they refuse the conviction of God’s truth. Were Jesus among us today they would seek to kill Him anew.

Knowing the nature of man, Jesus chose to teach in parables so that the hearers would not understand. Contrary to false teachers who say He taught in parables—calling them “word pictures”—so the people would understand:

And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?”

He answered and said to them, “Because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but it is not given to them. For whoever has, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance. But whoever does not have, from him shall be taken away even that he has.

“Therefore I speak to them in parables. Because seeing, they do not see, and hearing, they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, ‘By hearing you shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing, you shall see and shall not perceive.’ For this people’s heart has grown callous, and their ears are dull of hearing, and they have closed their eyes lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. (Matthew 13:10-15)

Jesus was revealing that most men are willfully blind and deaf to truth. Rather than cater to their blindness and deafness, He hid the truth of the Kingdom of Heaven from them except in parables. He explained His parables only to those to whom He chose to explain them.

Yet He spoke plainly certain truths to those who opposed Him—truths that exposed their evil hearts. They evidenced the truth He conveyed to His disciples that if one were to cast one’s pearls before swine, the swine would trample them in the mud and then turn against those who cast them there.

Jesus gave the pearls of truth about the Kingdom of Heaven, and the result was that the Jews as a whole turned on Him and killed Him.

Nor did Jesus go easy on those whom Scripture says believed in Him. He got to the heart of belief to expose the evil intent behind the belief of many:

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed in Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are indeed My disciples, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man. How do you say, ‘You shall be made free?’”

Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is the servant of sin. And the servant does not abide in the house forever. But the Son abides forever. Therefore, if the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.

“I know that you are Abraham’s seed, but you seek to kill Me because My word has no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with My Father, and you do that which you have seen with your father.”

They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father!”

Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek

to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth which I have heard from God. Abraham did not do this. You do the deeds of your father.”

Then they said to Him, “We are not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God!”

Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God. Nor did I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand My speech? Because you cannot hear My word.

“You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and did not live in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie he speaks of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth you do not believe Me.

“Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I speak the truth, why do you not believe Me? He who is of God hears God’s words. Therefore, you do not hear them because you are not of God.”

Then the Jews answered and said to Him, “Do we not say well that You are a Samaritan and have a devil?”

Jesus answered, “I do not have a devil, but I honor My Father. And you dishonor Me. And I do not seek My own glory; there is one who seeks and judges. Truly, truly, I say to you, if a man keeps My saying he shall never see death.”

Then the Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You have a devil! Abraham is dead, and the prophets, and You say, ‘If a man keeps My saying he shall never taste of death!’

“Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead! Whom do you make Yourself to be?”

Jesus answered, “If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing; it is My Father—of whom you say that He is your God—who honors Me. Yet you have not known Him. But I know Him, and if I should say I do not know Him I shall be a liar like you. But I do know Him, and keep His saying. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.”

Then the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?”

Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”

Then they took up stones to cast at Him. But Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple going through the midst of them, and so passed by. (John 8:31-59)

We see in this passage of Scripture that anti-Christ lurks in the hearts of all men—even those who believe, at least at first. These people had heard the Lord and believed in Him. Yet He knew that their belief was flawed—that their hearts were infected with the anti-Christ spirit which would turn against Him given the right impetus.

He told them even before it was in their heads that their hearts sought to kill Him. And He was proved right. His words

confirmed that He is the Word of God who has existed from eternity, being YHWH, the only-begotten Son of YHWH the Father.

How can Jesus and the Father both be YHWH?

YHWH is God’s name. We all bear the names of our fathers. Jesus—the Word of God who came forth from the Father—bears the same name as His Father: YHWH. It is He who walked with Adam; it is He who spoke with Abraham, Moses, and others throughout His pre-incarnation. This is why He could say, “Before Abraham was, I AM.” This is also why John the Baptist said that Jesus was before him, even though, physically, John was about six months older than Jesus.

Jesus’ revelation of Himself as the Word of God, making Himself equal with God, was the final straw in his enemies’ minds that made Him worthy of death. It was the truth the anti-Christ spirit used in a futile attempt to destroy the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Jesus again turned many of His disciples against Him when He said that in order to attain eternal life one must eat His flesh and drink His blood. They took Him literally, and did not understand that His words were spirit (John 6:63). Again He demonstrated a nature contrary to many modern portrayals.

Even among the apostles the anti-Christ spirit worked to sow division. There came a time when they began to argue who was the greatest among them. Jesus put them to shame by telling them that he who wants to be first, must be last, emphasizing that service in the Kingdom of Heaven must be accompanied by humility—just the opposite of the anti-Christ spirit of pride and self-promotion.

At one point He demonstrated this by washing the apostles’ feet. And He rebuked Peter for not wanting Him to do so, exposing Peter’s lack of obedience, until Jesus told Him that unless He washed Peter’s feet, Peter had no part in Him.

We do not normally think of Peter’s protest as the spirit of anti-Christ, but anything, no matter how great or how small, is anti-Christ if it is contrary to the will of God. Even if it comes from a pure motive such as Peter’s, not to allow the Lord to humble Himself before him.

It may not seem proper to the natural mind that God should serve His children, but consider: do parents not serve their children, especially when the children are still in infancy? Does it not take humility for a parent to clean a child or to pick up after him? Is God not a better parent than any human being?

We must allow God to do what He wishes to do, regardless how we perceive His service to us with our natural minds.

This doesn’t mean we make demands on God; it doesn’t mean we take Him for granted; it doesn’t mean we don’t continue to serve Him. It means we conform our minds to the mind of Christ who did not think equality with God to be something to grasp, but left His place in Glory and became humble to the point of dying on the cross at the hands of His own creation (Philippians 2:5-8).

The anti-Christ spirit worked against Jesus even through His own brothers who taunted Him to go to the Feast of Tabernacles in Galilee and perform miracles there.

The same spirit was at work among the crowds that followed Jesus, not only taunting Him, but sowing seeds of doubt among those inclined to hear Him.

Often the religious leaders attempted to seize Jesus; crowds attempted to stone Him or cast Him off a cliff; these occurrences followed His affirmation of His deity. But until His time came, they were powerless to harm Him. And the Jews were divided whether He was from God or the Devil.

Even when Jesus demonstrated His power over death by raising Lazarus, the anti-Christ spirit was hardened all the more in those who refused to believe in Him.

Then many of the Jews who came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed in Him. But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees and told them what things Jesus had done.

Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What do we do? For this man does many miracles. Thus, if we leave Him alone all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation."

And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish.

And this he spoke not from himself, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation. And not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

Then from that day forth they took counsel together in order to put Him to death. (John 11:45-53)

Caiaphas spoke prophetically in the role of high priest, that the Messiah must die for the people. Only his anti-Christ spirit kept him from realizing or understanding the prophecy.

Adding to their sin, the chief priests even plotted to kill Lazarus because many Jews believed in Jesus on account of Lazarus being raised from the dead.

How blind is the anti-Christ spirit to want to undo the work of God in the name of religion.

As Jesus entered Jerusalem to the shouts of "Hossannah!" "Blessed is He who comes in the name of YHWH!" and "Blessed is the King of Israel!" His enemies were plotting His death.

Again Jesus cleansed the temple of the merchants and moneychangers, all the more inciting the anti-Christ spirit to kill Him. But the religious leaders were afraid of the people, many of whom were following Jesus. They knew that if they were to take Him it must be done in secret.

Their opportunity came during the week leading up to the Passover.

Then the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled together at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and determined that they would take Jesus by deceit and kill him. But they said,

"Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people." (Matthew 26:3-5)

Now the feast of unleavened bread, which is called the Passover, drew near. And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill Him, for they feared the people. Then Satan entered into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, being among the number of the twelve. And he went his way and consulted with the chief priests and captains how he might betray Him to them. And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude. (Luke 22:3-6)

Matthew tells us that Judas received thirty pieces of silver for betraying Jesus, the sum recorded in Zechariah (11:12-13).

Thus did Messiah's earthly life come to an end, ignominiously crucified in the presence of His enemies, taunted and humiliated. The Son of God—the eternal Word of God in the flesh of man—hung among criminals for the crimes and sins of all mankind since Adam to the last yet to be born.

Anti-Christ had gained the victory he so eagerly sought. Certainly he had thwarted God's plan to restore Israel by putting to death the God he so hates.

How would God ever gain the victory now?❖

**NEXT:
THE RESURRECTION AND
THE BEGINNING OF THE TIME OF
THE GENTILES**

SOME GOOD NEWS

SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROVES BIBLE COURSE

The Chino Valley School District in California voted 5-0 to adopt a Bible course that will be available to high school seniors beginning this fall. The course, entitled "Bible as/in Literature and History," is designed to present the Bible's influence in history, literature, religion and politics.

Fred Youngblood, president of the Board of Education, stated, "It is my belief that better understanding the Bible will help all students with their decision-making process."

The decision came after the Calvary Chapel Chino Hills congregation strongly lobbied for it. Opponents say that Christians would hit the roof if the Koran or other religions' books were used in public schools. They evidently don't know that that's been going on for the past three decades.

The board of education must make sure that the course does not stray from California's education code and state laws. It must remain neutral in its religious teachings and may present the Bible only as a significant piece of literature.

That may be, but it's good that students will be exposed to the Bible in any case. It is a rarity in public schools these days that the Bible is allowed to be read in class, even as only literature and/or history.



Do Muslims block intersections in New York City every Friday?

An Internet story speaks of Muslims blocking the intersection of Madison Avenue and in New York City:

A Christian Nation cannot put up a Christmas scene of the baby Jesus in a public place, but the Muslims can stop normal traffic every Friday afternoon by worshipping in the streets... Something is happening in America that is reminiscent of what is happening in Europe. This is Political Correctness gone crazy...

This is an accurate picture of every Friday afternoon in several locations throughout NYC where there are mosques with a large number of Muslims that cannot fit into the mosque - They fill the surrounding streets, facing east for a couple of hours between about 2 & 4 p.m. - Besides this one at 42nd St & Madison Ave, there is another, even larger group, at 94th St & 3rd Ave, etc., etc. - Also, I presume, you are aware of the dispute over building another "high rise" Mosque a few blocks from "ground zero" - With regard to that one, the "Imam" refuses to disclose where the \$110 million dollars to build it is coming from and there is a lawsuit filed to force disclosure of that information - Just some facts FYI - But then, you have your own troubles with the "immigration" problem and the new AZ law - November can't come soon enough.

Accompanying the above text are four pictures, two of which are reproduced here.



The Truth

These photos do in fact show Muslims blocking traffic at an intersection of New York City. But this is not a weekly occurrence due to overcrowding of mosques. They are photos of an event that has taken place once a year since 1985, when the Muslim Foundation of America organizes a Muslim Day parade (see poster below).

The celebration includes a gathering of Muslims at the corner of Madison Avenue and 41st St. for their Dhuhr (midday) prayer.

There are five daily prayers in Islam: *Fajr* (pre-dawn); *Dhuhr* (noon); *Asr* (afternoon); *Maghrib* (sunset); *Isha* (evening).

The fact that these prayers impede traffic and cause undue problems for New Yorkers gives "infidels" good reason to be annoyed at Islam. It is hoped that Christians would conduct themselves in a manner that would not cause consternation in others. Our testimony is too important to risk for our own "causes."

Preservation of our testimony is also reason why we should check out these things before passing them on. Truth is more important than finding fault in those with whom we disagree. ❖

Editorial

Illegal Immigration

What is the biblical response?

By Albert James Dager

One of the most passionately debated issues in the United States today is that of illegal immigration. On one side are those who insist that the United States must do all it can to protect itself from the invasion of aliens illegally crossing our southern border. On the other side are those calling for compassion and easing of restrictions on immigration.

A well-publicized event regarding illegal immigration is the state of Arizona's enacting of a law that takes a hard stance, requiring police to check the immigration status of anyone they suspect may be in the country illegally. On July 28, portions of that immigration enforcement law were blocked by Judge Susan Bolton of Federal District Court. She issued the injunction in response to a legal challenge brought by the Obama administration which deems the law discriminatory. The administration argued that immigration policy is the exclusive responsibility of the federal government. Arizona argued that the federal government is not doing enough to enforce its laws, and is leaving the states vulnerable to the perils associated with illegal immigration.

Arizona is one of the principle points of entry for illegal aliens, and Governor Jan Brewer backed the state's immigration law out of concern for the safety of the state's citizens.

There are few readers of this article who are not already well versed on the details of this issue. Some Christians are taking a hard stance, and would like to see the U.S. government take effective action to enforce the immigration laws already on the books. Others want Congress and the Obama administration to ease up on enforcement and legislate an easy path to citizenship for the some 12 million illegal aliens already here.

Christians taking the former position believe that the government must do all it can to protect its citizens; it should not tolerate lawlessness. Christians taking the latter position claim that Jesus was a friend of the poor and would be against the state taking a hard stance. They want Americans to be compassionate to the plight of poor Mexicans whom they say are merely seeking a better way of life. Which side is right from a biblical perspective?

I believe they are both right. It is the command of the Lord that His people love all men, even our enemies, and that we consider the plight of the poor:

My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there comes into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in fine clothing, and there comes in also a poor man in shabby clothing, and you have respect for him who wears the good clothing, and say to him, "You sit here in a good

place," and say to the poor, "You stand there," or, "Sit here under my footstool," are you not then partial in yourselves and have become judges with evil thoughts?

Listen, my beloved brethren, has God not chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom that He has promised to those who love Him? But you have despised the poor. (James 2:1-8)

Yes, many Mexicans and others who cross illegally into the United States are merely looking for a better way of life. They are not consciously trying to undermine the United States; they are trying to survive as best they can. They often risk their lives attempting to cross the deserts of the southwest. Would any true believer in Jesus refuse to help illegal aliens they find suffering from dehydration as a result of their long trek through arid country? The truth is that many of the ranchers and farmers whose properties front the border do leave water in strategic places for just that purpose. At the same time, they oppose illegal immigration and would turn in any illegal alien they could.

So while we recognize the need to help individuals who are in distress, we also recognize that, unfortunately, the consequences of their actions must be borne by the citizens of this country.

A distinction must be made between individual action and the actions of government to protect its citizens. Governments are established by God for the good of the people. It is His desire that all governments act righteously, but the reality is that most seldom do. Yet because government (even evil government) is necessary to maintain order in this fallen world, God's Word also condemns lawlessness and has harsh words for those who resist government:

Let every soul be subject to the higher authorities. For there is no authority but from God. The authorities that exist are appointed by God.

Therefore, whoever opposes the authorities, opposes God's arrangement, and those who oppose shall receive judgment to themselves.

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Will you then not be afraid of the authority? Do that which is good, and you will have praise from him, for he is the servant of God to you for good. But if you do that which is evil, be afraid, because he does not bear the sword in vain, for he is the servant of God, an avenger to execute wrath upon him who does evil.

Therefore you must be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. (Romans 13:1-5)

A government that does not act in the best interests of its citizens is not a righteous government. And although we see the government as a monolithic structure for good or evil, the fact remains that government is made up of fallible individuals. Therefore any government is only as righteous as the individuals who administer its functions. Sadly, there are few in government today who may be considered righteous even in the humanistic sense, let alone the biblical sense. And this is why we have so many critical issues that threaten the security of the United States.

I speak as a citizen of the U.S. because this is the country in which God has placed me for my tenure on this earth, and so

I must be subject to the laws of this country. I am not an internationalist except in the Body of Christ. My allegiance is to the Lord Jesus Christ and to my (His) brethren in Christ before it is to any country, but as a citizen of the U.S. my citizenship commands that I be loyal to this country. No believer in Jesus can be a traitor to his country. That does not mean one may not disobey a government that demands one act contrary to the Word of God. Christians who aided Jews in Hitler's Germany were not committing treason; they were not attempting to destroy Germany, but to preserve it in the face of an evil government.

Just so, if our government were to require us to kill illegal aliens we'd have to resist that command.

But no one is asking that illegal aliens be killed. Arizona was merely trying to task its law enforcement agency with enforcing the laws that the federal government has largely ignored.

Another aspect of this issue has to do with criminals and terrorists entering through a porous border. It's no secret that drugs and weapons are being smuggled into the U.S. via underground (literally and figuratively) passages. Nor are all the illegal aliens Mexicans; many are coming from Asian and Middle Eastern countries as well as Central American and South American countries.

The following figures attest to the ungodliness that illegal immigration imposes upon this country:

- \$90 billion spent yearly on welfare and social services for illegal aliens;
- \$12 billion spent yearly on primary and secondary education for illegal aliens;
- 30% of all federal prison inmates are illegal aliens;
- Millions of pounds of drugs, including cocaine, meth, heroin, and marijuana are smuggled into the U.S. yearly;
- Thousands of illegal aliens have come from countries that support Islamic terrorism.

These are just a few of the tragic consequences of lax enforcement of current immigration laws, but this alone should spur the government to take a hard stand against illegal immigration.

The decision to send 1,200 U.S. Army troops to the southern border might make it seem as if Obama is finally acting in the best interests of the nation he is supposed to help protect, but those troops (if they ever get deployed) are allowed to do nothing more than observe and report. They may not take any direct action to deport or even restrain illegal aliens.

Instead of addressing the illegal alien problem by enforcing the law, Obama has chosen to sue Arizona on behalf of non-American invaders. He has taken the side of foreigners against the citizens he has sworn to protect. But, then, he prides himself on being an internationalist above being an American. This is fine for individuals who have no sacred duty to the people, but Obama swore on the Bible to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. That means he must protect and defend the citizens of this country, not sue them to impose lawlessness upon them. Thus, he again proves himself unworthy to be called by the name of Christ.

Additionally, the Obama administration on August 20 submitted a 29-page "Universal Periodic Review" (UPR) to the UN Human Rights Council outlining areas of alleged abuses of human rights occurring in the United States, including Arizona's S.B. 1070 legislation. This effectively submits U.S. Immigration policy to the UN for review and possible sanctions. The review is by a troika consisting of Japan, France and Cameroon.

Once government begins to pick and choose which laws it will enforce and which it will ignore, fear grips its citizens. A government that acts arbitrarily is dangerous; citizens fear becoming victims of their government. Arbitrary government is despotic government. It cannot be trusted to protect and serve all the people. Those who benefit the government will be protected; all others are subject to persecution. This is the historical perspective. When the unrighteous rule, the people mourn.

If Obama doesn't like current immigration law he should work to overturn it. But he knows that would be extremely unpopular among the citizens. He would rather act lawlessly himself in defending lawlessness. His is unrighteous government.

In view of the problems associated with illegal immigration, it is not uncompassionate to desire the government to do its job and work diligently to seal the border. Yes, it would mean that some Mexican poor would have to remain in their country and do the best they can. But the economic strain upon the U.S. is already so great that their continued invasion threatens the stability of this country.

It was disingenuous of Mexico's president to chastise Arizona for trying to protect itself (with Barack Obama nodding his head). Were his own government doing its best to enhance the lives of Mexico's citizens, there would be no need for them to flee that country in droves. He needs to clean up his own backyard before hurling insults at Americans who are fed up with having to pay the price for his ineptitude.

Is this harsh? Yes. It is an indictment against ungodly government. We may be obliged to obey and respect government leaders, but that doesn't mean we cannot expose their evils.

Now, in the event I am accused of being racist and prejudiced against Mexicans, I feel compelled to say that my Lebanese father emigrated from Mexico. He spoke perfect Spanish, and played the violin in a mariachi band. My best friends in grammar school and high school were of Mexican descent, and two of them are still among my best friends.

I've had the blessing and privilege of ministering to our brethren in Mexico on a number of occasions, and am very close to one particular church there.

Before beginning Media Spotlight I worked six years with a ministry to Latin America.

I've said all this to let our readers know that my heart is with those Mexican people who are trying to find a better life here. But I cannot condone the lawlessness of which they and our government are guilty.

So what is our responsibility as believers in Jesus? By all means we are to be compassionate to the truly poor among us. But we must also decry the ungodly lawlessness not only of illegal aliens but of our own government leaders. ❖



MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

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Dear Al,

I received your letter this week and was saddened to see you hold still to the unbiblical—as well as unscientific—“Gap Theory” view of satanic fall between Gen. 1:1 and 1:2, with a re-creation of earth, etc. Scripture is very plain on creation being recent with no agreement with old-earth proponents. Lots of credibility has been lost with your teaching this junk.

G.C., North Liberty IA

Dear G.C.,

I have very little credibility with most Christians already. I’ve often said I’m not dogmatic about this because Scripture is not as clear about the creation timeline as many think. There are many believers in Christ who perceive an ancient creation in Scripture. I would just like to see the young-earth proponents be as tolerant toward the ancient-universe proponents as the latter are with the former.

In Jesus’ love,

Al



Media Spotlight,

I am currently in a California state prison. I’m hoping that you don’t hold that against me.

I found one of your books on a table here in the prison yard. I asked around to see if it belonged to anyone. No one claimed it, so it was meant to be mine.

Your publications are very informative, and I am interested in reading more of your reports and any other material that you might have available for me to read.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I’m looking forward to reading more of your Media Spotlight publications.

M.M., Blythe, CA

Dear M.M.,

We not only do not hold it against you that you are in prison, we are blessed to hear from you. We have a good number of readers who are in prisons around the United States, and we are encouraged by their desire to know God’s truth and live by it under their very difficult circumstances. We have added you to our mail list, and have sent you some publications.

In Jesus’ love,

Al



Dear Brother,

Thank you so much for my *Media Spotlight*. All I can say is that Benny Hinn, Todd Bentley, and Rodney Howard-Browne are doing so much harm to churches in South Africa. Gal. 1:8 calls this another gospel—an abomination.

Benny Hinn calls the pope the greatest man of God on the planet. He preaches in Rhema Church with Ray McCauley. It’s all about money, power, and false unity.

My enemies, I must forgive and pray for. But the enemies of the Cross—god’s enemies and the anti-Christ spirit of iniquity—are not what the Gospel calls me to unite with.

Praise God I found a church that still preaches the Cross, sin, repentance, and the blood of Jesus, just as Paul teaches.

But many others come to South Africa for gain. Benny Hinn told people that for the next half hour God will pour out His Spirit, and all who come forward and give five thousand rand or more will be millionaires within a year. People ran to the front.

The only one who got that blessing was Benny himself.

No wonder we are called sheep. How can people not see through this? There’s

not enough warning. Things are getting very bad. You hear more and more Christians who don’t know where to find a true church. The true foundation is Jesus, and Him crucified.

Thank you for standing in the gap and keeping us informed. God bless you.

K.L., Cape Town, South Africa



Dear Beloved in Christ Jesus,

I’m really looking forward to the next *Media Spotlight*. My folks read my copy when I finish it.

I pray the Lord blesses you and continues to bless the ministry. I still don’t have a steady income, but the Lord is providing for my needs. I wish I could contribute more, but here’s five dollars that I’m able to spare right now.

I greatly appreciate what you’re doing to keep readers informed and encouraged to trust in the Lord in these perilous times.

I’m greatly enjoying freedom! It’s still my habit to rise before sunup to pray and read my Bible. I then exercise and jog. I’m becoming more involved in Christian ministry, and it’s a blessing!

I’ve taken over prisoner correspondence for Foundation for His Ministry. I write elderly widows who don’t do computers. I also play guitar with a friend who hosts a Bible study at the local convalescent hospital. We are blessed to play and sing songs of worship for the elderly who so enjoy it as they sing along. I also play guitar for Sunday school, prayer meeting, and Bible study.

God is good! Praise the name of Jesus! I love His name!

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Spirit be with you!

Love,

C.P., Laguna Woods, CA

Dear C.P.,

It’s always wonderful to hear from former prisoners who are still keeping on with the Lord. Often people come to Christ during a crisis, but when the crisis has passed they leave their first love. Our prayer is that all the prisoners who read *Media Spotlight* will continue on after they are released.

Thanks for your letters, two of which I’ve combined here. They are a great encouragement to us.

In Jesus’ love,

Al

Albert Dager,

Enclosed is a donation for your work.

I'm in agreement with your doctrinal stands except on eternal security. I have to go with the Prince of Preachers, i.e., Spurgeon on that.

Sadly, we know churches have been split on disagreements like eternal security, marriage super of the Lamb, the rapture, etc., etc.

You know, Al, I guess all of Christendom has many disagreements. Paul and Barnabas, etc. It's like eternal security. Spurgeon, DeHaan and Pink agree; Al Dager disagrees.

The rapture has split whole denominations. Speaking in tongues—millions believe it's the evidence of salvation. Some think you're not saved if you don't. No musical instruments in church. The list goes on and on.

So we can disagree.

Another example is guns. Some Christians believe that under no circumstances would they use a gun for self defense. I asked one if he walked in the house and some thug was choking his wife, would he say, "Forgive him for he knows not what he's doing," or would he use his weapon or even just his hands?

Some say trust God totally. "Remember, he's an enemy but you love him."

You say the U.S. was founded upon rebellion against the king of England. A better word would be "tyranny from the king of England."

And you used the words, "God does not wrap Himself in the American flag. That's what the liberals say whenever patriotism is mentioned.

Thanks for putting out your excellent newsletter. Count on my continued support.

Pray for us.

C.S., Delton MI

Dear C.S.,

I'm flattered to be named alongside such distinguished brothers in Christ. I'm not so sure it's justified.

Jean and I are blessed to be in a house assembly where issues like these do not cause undue concern. We recognize that others in the Body of Christ differ with us on many issues, but our primary concern is to love one another. An occasional lively debate need not result in schism over these issues or disagreements about how free or not we are in Christ. We also recognize that there are some doctrines that cannot be tolerated

—such as those that deny the deity of Christ, the efficacy of His blood, and many others. Yet we would not cut off anyone who wishes to learn. Our only requirement is that they not teach their aberrant doctrines in the assembly, or try to exert influence upon the brethren either inside or outside the assembly. We've never had to demand that anyone leave; they seem to see the need to do so on their own. Some have even left us because of disagreement over eternal security, deliverance teachings, and other things.

Thank you for your words of love and your support in spite of disagreements. The Body of Christ is of one Spirit. We all see some things differently, perhaps because of those from whom we've learned, or our own biases, etc. But Jesus said that all men would know we are His disciples by the love we have for one another (John 13:35). Also, the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit as to who is one in Christ with us (Romans 8:16).

Al



Dear Al and Jean,

Hello. I have been subscribing to your publication, *Media Spotlight*, for years and can easily say it is perhaps the best publication I have come across to this day. And to receive it free of charge makes it a great blessing to my life.

It has been instrumental to my spiritual growth as a disciple of Christ, and it still is. For that, I just wanted to say thank you, and to let you both know that I appreciate the work you do.

You mentioned in the summer 2010 issue that many prisoners lament that they couldn't get sound scriptural teaching from their chaplains who are very liberal in their teaching. It's upsetting to read this because I know how true it is due to my own personal experience. To know that it is common elsewhere leaves me at a loss for words.

Being hearing impaired, and knowing how to communicate with other deaf individuals through sign language, I conduct Bible readings with them on a weekly basis. I explain to them what I've learned that has helped me in my walk with God. Unfortunately I am alone in bringing God's Word to them at the moment. To prevent myself from teaching something that is contrary to God's Word, I simply read the text in sign language and share some insights with them.

I so am terrified of making any mistakes that whenever I have found myself to have said something in error, I always make it known to them. I've gotten a healthy respect for God's Word and love every bit of it through my interaction with the Bible, and through your publications as well.

Jean, your article, "Disruption and Restoration" was quite an uplifting piece that I needed at this time in my life. Thank you!

And Al, I loved what you shared in the column titled "From Our Fellowship," and hope it will become a regular feature in future publications, particularly since I lack such insights from my chaplain and others.

Thank you again for your publication, and I look forward to more of them. Believe it or not, it does help me in my walk with God, and makes my time in prison a bit more bearable.

Yours in Christ,

D.K., Vacaville, CA

Dear D.K.,

I also am terrified of making mistakes when it comes to the Word of God. It is so precious, and must be handled with reverence and a desire to learn so that we may properly obey our heavenly Father.

I pray the Lord will continue to bless you as you seek to serve Him in your difficult circumstances.

In Jesus' love,

Al



Dear Al and Jean Dager

"The Islamizing of America's Churches" exposes the incredible spiritual blindness and lack of concern for the Christian faith in today's professing church. We have watched with amazement since 9/11 as the terrorist religion that is seeking to destroy is promoted and applauded for how peaceful they are. It looks like a very successful act of salesmanship.

God bless you in your labors for Him.

G.W., Richfield, PA

We wish we could include all the letters we receive. Please know that we read each one personally. We regret that we are often late in replying to those that require answers. We'll do our best to get to them. If you haven't heard from us after three months, please write again. Some questions require lengthy research. Not having a staff keeps us from always being able to give a timely response. Thanks for your understanding.

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Jean's Turn

**LIFE - A PRECIOUS
BLESSING**
1 Peter 3:7

Today I joined three friends for lunch to celebrate one friend's 80th birthday. It's become a tradition for the four of us to go out to lunch together for our birthdays. But this one was truly special for our youthful and lively friend! We thank God for this gift of 80 years of abundant life. To top it off, the Lord provided such a beautiful day—sun shiny, blue skies with the temperature in the mid-70s. (Yesterday it was cloudy and rainy.) As we sat in the hilltop restaurant, we were blessed with a glorious view of Bellevue, Lake Washington, Seattle, and the majestic Olympic Mountains beyond Puget Sound.

I admit that for me, sometimes birthdays can be quite sobering. This is when I'm thinking about aging and realizing how fast the years fly by. However, upon waking each day, I do so with a prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord for bringing me through the night and giving me yet another day of life. I was a little surprised when I heard Al mention at our recent house assembly meeting that he, too, awakes each day with the same prayer! He reminded us of how vulnerable and helpless we are as we lie asleep in our beds—as vulnerable as babes in their cribs. We are trusting the Lord for His protection to keep us safe throughout the night.

Life is one of the most precious gifts we receive from God. In 1 Peter 3 we read not only about the relationship between wives and husbands, but in verse seven he also speaks of God's children as heirs of the **gracious gift of life**.

If you check the Sword Publishers catalog, you will see that we are offering a new devotional book. It's a hardback entitled *Voices From the Past*. It contains writings from the works of early Puritans such as John Bunyan, William Cooper, Jonathan Edwards, William Gurnall and many others. In spite of problems with some Puritan teachings, I've found that these

Puritan authors' writings are rich in wisdom as they teach about both our earthly and eternal lives.

In one of Thomas Manton's teachings, he addresses Hebrews 10:19 concerning our confidence in entering into the holy places by the blood of Jesus. In one portion he states: *"As we draw home quickly, let us grow more heavenly-minded every day; and seek the things above. The reason man is so haunted with the world, and the things of a worldly interest and concern when he comes to prayer, is because his heart is taken up too much with these things."*

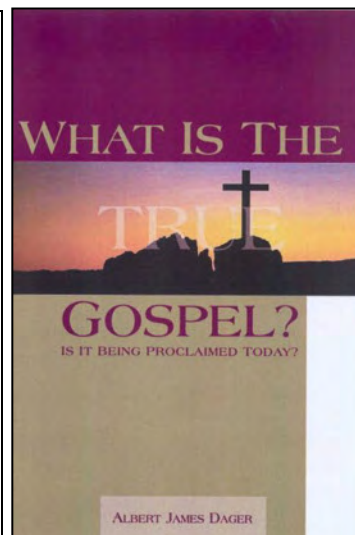
I'm thanking the Lord for the gift of life He's so graciously given me, remembering the words in the much loved Psalm 139, verses 13-16:

"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well my frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body."

Each day of life is a gift from our heavenly Father. Let us remember the apostle Paul's exhortation to present ourselves daily as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. This is merely our reasonable service. ❖

Jesus proclaimed the Gospel of the Kingdom, and commissioned His disciples to do the same.

Many false gospels have arisen since then. A great apostasy based on the traditions of religious institutions substitutes a weak easy-believism in place of the true Gospel of the Kingdom. *What is the True Gospel?* points the reader to Scripture for understanding the true Gospel that Jesus proclaimed.



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