



## WAS BARACK OBAMA RIGHT? IS AMERICA NO LONGER A CHRISTIAN NATION?

**W**hen Barack Obama stated that “America is no longer a Christian nation,” he raised the ire of many Christians, particularly those of the Evangelical persuasion. But was he wrong? Is America still a Christian nation? Was it ever a Christian nation to begin with?

Although his statement was uttered in 2006, long before he even ran for the presidency, it has attained tremendous exposure since his election. The Internet is replete with video excerpts from his keynote speech at the Call for Renewal Conference sponsored by the Sojourners (a liberal Christian organization) on April 28, 2006.

It is interesting to note that other portions of his speech were not as well received by some of the leftist religious people to whom he was speaking. They did not appreciate his appeal that they should not discount the value of religion in public life and even its role in shaping the thinking of legislators. As much as leftist Christians like to pose as tolerant, and claim to be Christians of differing Protestant and Catholic persuasions, they adhere to a strict secularist approach to government. Obama addressed the appeals to God that many famous Americans in public life have made for their causes:

Imagine Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address without reference to "the judgments of the Lord." Or King's "I Have a Dream" speech without references to "all of God's children." Their summoning of a higher truth helped inspire what had seemed impossible, and move the nation to embrace a common destiny....

But what I am suggesting is this: secularists are wrong when they ask believers to leave their religion at the door before entering into the public square. Frederick Douglas, Abraham Lincoln, William Jennings Bryan, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King—indeed, the majority of great reformers in American history—were not only motivated by faith, but repeatedly used religious language to argue for their cause. So to say that men and women should not inject their "personal morality" into public policy debates is a practical absurdity. Our law is by definition a codification of morality, much of it grounded in the Judeo-Christian tradition.



Obama also emphasized his friendship with Rick Warren, T.D. Jakes, Jim Wallis, and Tony Campolo, social gospel proponents whom he regards as leaders in “the larger project of American renewal.” That renewal centers on an emphasis of social programs based on what Obama called “some overlapping values that both religious and secular people share when it comes to the moral and material direction of our country.”

Obama seemed to be trying to reach some middle ground between those who are totally secularist and those who believe religion—particularly Christianity—should form the basis for government policy. Since that time we have seen how his policies have largely ignored the Evangelical Christian influence and leaned heavily toward a leftist religious posture that is virtually in line with the atheistic secularist position. The same causes that fire the atheist, fire the “liberal” Christian. Reality demonstrates that Evangelical Christianity, though straying much from a purely biblical position within churches that identify with Evangelicalism, remains diametrically opposed to the liberal Christianity that characterizes most of the mainline Protestant denominations and a large segment of Catholicism.

Obama's position comes as no surprise to Evangelical Christians whose discernment is intact. Although he presents himself as a Christian, his ideological stance reveals that this is

*(Continued on page 3)*

## WHY MEDIA SPOTLIGHT?

*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.

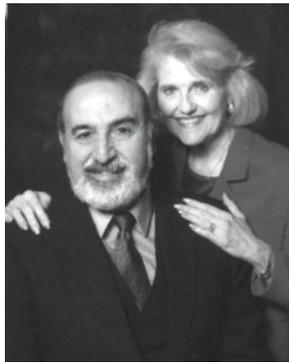
The mass media have impacted the Body of Christ as much as they have society. Many Christians are so dependent upon the media that they aren't aware of how lukewarm they have become. We have many testimonials from readers who tell us that, because of *Media Spotlight*, they have become aware of the effect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

We've received a number of letters from readers telling us that they have not received *Media Spotlight* for awhile. We've checked, and all are on our mailing list, so they should have been receiving them all along. Also, we haven't heard from many of our regular folks for the past few months, so we're wondering if *Media Spotlight* is getting "lost" somewhere along the way. We've had our mail tampered with in the past, but it's been awhile. Needless to say, this could result in dire consequences. So we are asking that you let us know if you received this issue. If you would just mark the envelope attached at the center with the word "Yes," and return it to us, it would help us greatly. No other obligation should be implied. Although a number of readers might not do this, at least we'd be able to get a general idea of how many may be missing, and perhaps some locations where the problem may be occurring.

The issue you are holding is the product of a new computer system and desktop publishing program that we were compelled to put in place of Al's old system. The old computer we planned on merging with our recording equipment couldn't cut it. Besides lacking power and storage space, it produced a hum on the sound track.

We're able to utilize our recording equipment and send audio to the computer for editing, so that's not a problem. The problem has been loss of time in having to switch to a new desktop publishing program for *Media Spotlight* because our old program isn't compatible with the new Windows 7 operating system. So Al is still in the process of learning the new program, which is considerably different.

We've had quite an increase in readers among prisoners requesting that we send *Media Spotlight* to them. Word gets around in the confined spaces of prisons.

Many prisoners lament that they can't get sound scriptural teaching from the chaplains who are for the most part affiliated with denominational institutions, and are often very liberal in their teaching. We're thankful for those independent prison ministries that bring the light of God's Word to thirsty souls.

This is one reason why we incorporate teaching along with our analyses of the messages emanating from the various media. Those analyses have been helpful to many over the years, but our purpose is not only to expose error, but to use our analyses as springboards for teaching. There are many truths of Scripture that are not being addressed in the pulpits or in the Christian media. Often certain truths don't line up with the theological presuppositions of pastors and teachers whose Bible knowledge has come largely through institutional systems. Those truths could cause them to lose much of their attendance and financial support.

We can attest to that. When we started in 1977, addressing ungodly content in the secular media, *Media Spotlight* was well received. Some pastors requested that we send bulk quantities for their congregations. But when we began citing spiritual error in the churches and in the Christian media we lost a large number of readers.

Some might say we lost favor because we're too far off base. Our own errors cannot be tolerated by the real truth seekers. We'll have to let the Father judge that. But we are thankful that by our Father's grace we've been able to continue these 33 years. The faithful brothers and sisters in Christ who have stood with us over the years must also be thanked for their sacrifices. We couldn't do this without you.

Thank you for your love and support.

*Al and Jean*  
Al and Jean

# WAS BARACK OBAMA RIGHT?

(Continued from page 1)



nominal at best. And in view of his consistent antagonism toward Christianity and his attraction toward Islam, many question whether he may be a closet Muslim. It is certain that he lacks any real reverence for, or understanding of, Scripture. This was abundantly evident in his now infamous speech to Sojourners. Obama's attraction is not to Jesus Christ as the only way to God, but to a religiousness that embraces any belief system.

The words that have generated such disdain among non-leftist Christians may have been excerpted by those incensed by Obama's statement that "America is no longer a Christian nation," but they were not out of context. Yet we must consider whether or not what he said about America no longer being a Christian nation is true. For that matter, we must consider whether or not America was ever a Christian nation to begin with.

Analyzing Obama's statement requires careful attention to detail. Before he even uttered that phrase he set the stage with the following words in relation to reconciling faith with our modern, pluralistic society:

And if we're going to do that then we first need to understand that Americans are a religious people. 90 percent of us believe in God, 70 percent affiliate themselves with an organized religion, 38 percent call themselves committed Christians, and substantially more people in America believe in angels than they do in evolution.

At first hearing one might think that Christians comprise only 38 percent of the population; what may easily escape one's attention is the word, "committed." Most likely, Obama spoke truthfully that only 38 percent of Christians are committed. That may even be a generous assessment. Yet recent polls indicate that almost 80 percent of Americans consider themselves Christians of some persuasion. And although this is a significant slippage from previous polls that put that figure closer to 95% at one time, Obama's ultimate words to the effect that America is no longer a Christian nation were disingenuous; they conveyed a false impression to promote his appeal to common ground for his social agenda.

In fairness, Obama did offer an addendum, using the word "just" apparently as an afterthought:

Whatever we once were, we are no longer a Christian nation—at least not "just"—we are also a Jewish nation, and a Muslim nation, and a Buddhist nation, and a Hindu nation, and a nation of non-believers.

In all honesty, considering that not all who call themselves "Christian" are truly of the Faith, and speaking from a purely

pragmatic standpoint, it's hardly truthful to equate all other religions with Christianity when speaking of what America is in terms of its religious identity. Obama gave the impression that all these religions share equally in that identity. But the facts speak otherwise when we consider the true religious demographics of the United States, at least as reported by the highly respected Pew Forum as late as August, 2008:

- Christians of all denominations (includes Evangelicals, Protestants, Catholics, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc.) 77%
- Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus combined 5%
- Other Religions 1%
- Non-affiliated Religious/Atheists/Agnostics 17%

Now, we must make the distinction between "Christianity" and pure biblical faith. If we consider only those who are what Obama calls "committed" Christians, I doubt many of them would be truly committed to biblical faith as opposed to some form of Christian religion. Yet the fact remains that in terms of religious demographics, every other religion outside of what is called Christianity in America is insignificant relative to the nation's religious identity. Even understanding that Obama hasn't an inkling of what constitutes true biblical faith, his inference that Christianity is on a par with every other religion in America reveals a hidden disdain for his professed religion. It isn't so much what he said as the way he said it, displaying an almost haughty attitude and a smirk. His following words revealed even further his disdain for the Bible, as well as a woeful misunderstanding of what it says:

And even if we did have only Christians in our midst, if we expelled every non-Christian from the United States of America, whose Christianity would we teach in the schools? Would we go with James Dobson's, or Al Sharpton's? Which passages of Scripture should guide our public policy? Should we go with Leviticus, which suggests slavery is okay and that eating shellfish is abomination? How about Deuteronomy, which suggests stoning your child if he strays from the faith?

Or should we just stick to the Sermon on the Mount—a passage that is so radical that it's doubtful that our own Defense Department would survive its application? So before we get carried away, let's read our Bibles. Folks haven't been reading their Bibles.

A true believer in Jesus reveres the Word of God and studies it so he can properly discern truth from error. This we must do in order to understand fully the implication of Obama's ignorance and disrespect for the true Faith. His reference to the Old Covenant under the Mosaic Law in a disparaging manner reveals a woeful ignorance of, or disregard for, the context of those laws. Under the Mosaic Law slavery was a means to repay debts that could otherwise not be repaid. It did not resemble slavery as practiced in the early history of the United States. Certainly it didn't resemble slavery as practiced since the beginning of time even until today in some heathen nations. After seven years, regardless of the unpaid portion of the debt, Israelite slaves were

(Continued on page 13)



## Texas board reverses social-studies trend

The Texas State Board of Education adopted a hotly debated social-studies curriculum on May 21, which replaces the curriculum that had been strongly influenced by leftist elements on previous boards. After receiving strong criticism from leftist politicians, educators and social organizations, the board approved the curriculum that will determine which important political events and figures some 4.8 million students in Texas will learn about for the next decade. Texas standards are also used by textbook publishers for other states who base their materials on Texas' guidelines.

Some of the more critical areas that met opposition included the teaching that the United States is a constitutional republic, not a democracy, questioning the rationale for judicial language supporting the concept of separation of church and state, rejection of the modern use of B.C.E. and C.E. ("Before the Common Era," and "Common Era") in place of B.C. ("Before Christ") and A.D. ("Anno Domini" ["Year of our Lord"]) for dating historical events, and the strengthening of requirements to teach the Judeo-Christian influences that guided the nation's founders. Students will also be required to evaluate efforts by international organizations, such as the United Nations, to undermine U.S. sovereignty.

The curriculum was approved by a vote of 9-5 along party lines, with Republicans voting for, and Democrats against, the curriculum. One Republican board member was absent for the vote.

Critics, including Rod Paige, former U.S. Education Secretary under George Bush, and NAACP president Ben Jealous, blasted the curriculum, claiming that it watered down history, particularly regarding slavery and the civil rights movement.

Critics also accused the board of politicizing the curriculum. Republican board member David Bradley responded, "Of course it's political. So what's your solution? Would you support a benevolent dictator?"

Bradley pointed out that curriculum revision has always been political, but this time the ruling faction has changed since the last time social-studies standards had been adopted ten years ago. "We took our licks; we got outvoted," he said. "Now it's 10-5 in the other direction. We're an elected body; this is a political process. Outside that, go find yourself a benevolent dictator."

### COMMENTARY

This is different. It's probably the first time since the 1950s that any major curriculum has not been highly politicized by the Marxist, anti-Christ elements that have ruled what have become the government indoctrination camps commonly referred to as "public schools." We know that the world is anti-Christ, and that it will remain so until the Lord returns (and even, at least to some extent, after that), so we don't expect, nor should we desire, that the government become an arm of Christianity. We've seen how "Christian" government led to the dark ages and persecution of true believers under the papacy, and later under Calvin and other Reformed leaders. But at least perhaps some truth may trickle into the minds of children through this bold move by the Texas State Board of Education.

In a way it's kind of amusing to see the apoplexy generated in the midst of the leftists who have enjoyed unfettered control over those minds until now. Perhaps it won't last long, but thank the Lord for the respites He gives us from the irrational anti-Christ domination of this world. ❖

## Pat Robertson feted for supporting Israel

Pat Robertson, founder of the Christian Broadcasting Network and host of *The 700 Club*, was honored for his longstanding support of the nation of Israel during the sixth annual Jerusalem Prayer Banquet on May 13. Also honored was Irwin Hochberg, vice chairman of the Zionist Organization of America and chairman of the Executive Committee of the Middle East Forum. Hochberg has also served in various capacities for other organizations dedicated to the support of Israel.

Some 300 Christian and Jewish leaders participated in the banquet. Asaf Shariv, consul general of Israel in New York, was a featured speaker.

The Jerusalem Prayer Banquet bills itself as "a special leadership initiative that has become the premier gathering of high level Christian and Jewish leaders together in the U.S., with a focus on celebrating Jerusalem and our shared values, while advancing Christian support for Israel." The annual banquet is used to help send students to Israel as part of the Israel Experience College Scholarship Program, which, according to the JPB Web site, "takes the best and brightest from campuses across the U.S. to Israel, bringing them back as educated ambassadors for our Judeo-Christian worldview." Robertson and Hochberg were honored as JPB's Christian and Jewish leaders, respectively, by the establishment of scholarships in their names.

## COMMENTARY

God has a plan for Israel, and according to Scripture, the Jews will occupy Jerusalem before the Lord returns. But what is taking place in that tiny country situated in the midst of Muslim enemies is not the prophesied gathering of Israel from out of the nations. Those prophecies will be fulfilled by the Lord Jesus when He returns. However, the Zionist nation of Israel is God's means to establish the scenario for the Lord's return. And for that reason we are supportive in spirit for the nation. But we are not supportive of the anti-Christ haters of Jesus who, according to Scripture, are blinded in part until the time of the Gentiles has ended. The nation of Israel, which Christian Zionists so strongly support, is just as anti-Christ as the Muslim nations surrounding it. Both will play Christians to get what they want.

Although we are to love the Jews, we are no less commanded by God to love all men, including Muslims. That doesn't mean we turn a blind eye to the evils that are perpetrated by anti-Christ, regardless of their religious or non-religious belief systems. Apart from true believers in Jesus, the whole world is anti-Christ.

Our calling as disciples of Christ is to be witnesses of Him to the lost—to people of all religious or non-religious philosophies, including Jews, Muslims, and professing Christians. Yet we see in neo-Evangelicalism a turning away from witnessing about Christ to joining with anti-Christ elements for the purpose of misguided religious zeal or temporal benefit. Zionism may not pose the same threat of physical destruction that Islam does, but its goals are anti-Christ and self-serving just the same.

The idea that we can join in fellowship with non-believers is a denial of Jesus Christ as the only way to the Father; it tacitly states that one may approach the Father without faith in His only-begotten Son. And as practiced by the Jerusalem Prayer Banquet, and other inter-faith ecumenical approaches, it is a denial of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; it is a disservice to those Jews, Muslims, or people of other beliefs, to withhold strongly imploring that Jesus is the only way to the Father.

It is not a biblical demonstration of love to withhold the Gospel from the Jews or anyone else. Jesus Christ crucified is a stumbling stone to the Jews and an offense to others (1 Corinthians 1:23). Rather than speak the hard truth to the Jews, Pat Robertson and most Christian Zionists would rather just throw money and verbal support to the state of Israel. In the process they are honored by their anti-Christ benefactors whose ancestors cried out for our Savior's destruction.

Thank God they did. **MS**

# Lesbian Christian singer okayed by Ted Haggard

Appearing April 23 on CNN's *Larry King Live*, Jennifer Knapp, award-winning Christian musician, asserted her belief that being a lesbian is not incompatible with faith in Jesus Christ. Knapp had earlier come out as a lesbian through interviews with *Christianity Today* and the homosexual publication *The Advocate*, as well as the news agency Reuters. Appearing with Knapp were Bob Botsford, senior pastor of Horizon Christian Fellowship in San Diego, California, and Ted Haggard, former head of National Association of Evangelicals (NAE).

Botsford took the position that although he loves Knapp, he believes her celebrity status within the Christian community compromises the Scriptures that speak of homosexuality as a sin, and may lead young Christians to succumb to like temptations.

Haggard took the middle road, saying that we shouldn't judge homosexuals who claim to be Christians because they are in a "process" of growth.

After allegations in 2006 that he had engaged in homosexual relations and indulged in methamphetamine use with male prostitute and masseur Mike Jones, Haggard resigned as pastor of New Life Church in Colorado Springs and as head of Association of Life-Giving Churches, both of which he founded, as well as from leading the NAE. After undergoing intense counseling with three ministers, Haggard claimed that he is a "heterosexual with issues." Those "issues" surfaced on *Larry King Live*.

Much of the banter on the program involved King asserting support for Knapp and taking her side in opposition to Botsford. King began with the statement, "Jennifer Knapp reveals how a God-loving woman rejected church teachings to be true to herself."

Said Knapp, "I would say that there is a certain portion of the evangelical community that definitely disagrees with homosexuality being in conjunction of anyone calling themselves a believer. That has been my experience within the evangelical community. However, I've also had a great deal of experience

*(Continued on page 30)*

## ERRATA

In our previous issue we included David Hocking's name along with a number of well-known Christians who have divorced their wives, remarried, then continued in ministry as if nothing had happened. This was an unintentional error on our part. David Hocking was exposed for having had an extra-marital affair, but he never got a divorce. He and his wife are still together. We wish to set the record straight.

We don't put David Hocking in the same theological camp as most of those others we mentioned. Our point was that no matter what one's theology, even if perfect, a public scandal brings a reproach against the name of Jesus. We lamented David Hocking's public failings when they occurred, but we still consider him a brother in Christ. Our intent was to sound a warning against being too cavalier about how our lives impact others both inside and outside the Body of Christ, and that the message often given is that one may scandalize the Lord, then after a "sufficient" amount of time continue as if nothing had happened. And that this can occur even among the most reliable leaders within the Body of Christ. We are sorry for not being more careful, especially when we implore others to be, and apologize to David.

# THE ISLAMIZING OF AMERICA'S CHURCHES

## HOW SOME PASTORS ARE SELLING OUT THE FAITH

By Albert James Dager

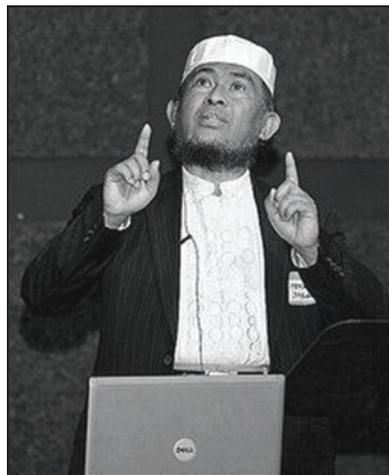
It started with Bill Hybels, pastor of Willowcreek Community Church in Barrington, Illinois. Shortly after the 9-11 attacks, Hybels brought Egyptian Muslim imam, Fisal Mammauda onto his church's stage as an opportunity for his congregation to exercise "discernment" in understanding Islam. Islam, of course, was the real victim of 9-11, at least from Hybel's perspective. Prior to giving ear to Mammauda, Hybels preached a sermon entitled, "Religion Gone Awry." The message was that Christianity is the religion that has gone awry because of backlashes against the Muslim community in America. He stressed that Islam is not a violent religion, and that Christians should get their facts straight before airing their views on the subject.

The performance was a defense of Islam, with Hybels lobbing softballs to Hammauda, asking him to explain what Islam really teaches. The answer, in short, was that true Muslims are peaceful and were against what took place on 9-11. In the process, Hybels allowed Hammauda without protest to preach his gospel of salvation by good deeds in the name of Allah. Hybels appealed to Christians that they should respect and understand Islam. (See "Hybels appeals for tolerance toward Muslims," *Media Spotlight*, Vol. 24 - No. 3)

Next came Rick Warren, a disciple of Hybels, and internationally recognized as the pastors' pastor. Warren has called for cooperation between Muslims and Christians to implement his P.E.A.C.E. plan.

Little-by-little, church-by-church, Muslims are gaining access to Christians in order to propagate their faith and to disarm Christians to the reality of Islam's violent nature—a nature that was spawned with the emergence of their "prophet" Mohammed in the early seventh century. Mohammed and his later disciples have spread Islam across the world through the power of the sword. But that is not allowed to be mentioned. Instead Christians are treated to the earlier, more benign suras of the Koran that spoke well of Christians and Jews while Mohammed was trying to convert them to Islam; his later call for Christians and Jews to be killed for rejecting Islam are never mentioned. Nor are the countless wars in the name of Allah occurring all over the world today ever spoken of.

The Islamizing of the churches has been a relatively silent process. But with each inroad into a church the Muslims have become more bold in proclaiming their false teachings that denigrate Jesus and blaspheme the true God, YHWH.



IMAM MOHAMAD JOBAN PROMOTES ISLAM AND DENIGRATES JESUS AT HARAMBEE CHURCH IN RENTON, WA

The putsch from Islam is largely being carried out by the Muslim Brotherhood, the Sunni Muslim movement founded in Egypt in 1928. The Muslim Brotherhood is the motivation behind most of the terrorist movements in the world including al-Qaeda and Hamas. Its goal is world domination by Islam. Working closely with the Muslim Brotherhood is the Center for Christian and Muslim Understanding at Georgetown University, and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). CAIR is the non-profit fund-raising organization that has been documented financing Islamic terrorism. Former Muslim, Brigitte Gabriel, states in her book, *Because They Hate: A Survivor of Islamic Terror Warns America*:

Of all the Islamic organizations in America, CAIR has risen to the top as the most visible, most outspoken defender of Muslims in the United States. Masquerading as a civil rights organization, CAIR has had a hidden agenda to Islamize America from the start. Its cofounder and chairman, Omar Ahmad, a Palestinian American, told a Muslim audience in Fremont, California, in 1998: "Islam isn't in America to be equal to any other faith, but to become dominant. The Koran should be the highest authority in America, and Islam the only accepted religion on Earth...."

Despite its links to terrorism or providing support to terrorists, CAIR grew to become a major player in Islamic American politics. The organization is lobbying in Washington, D.C., and working hard in fighting the United States government under the name of civil rights and civil liberty while complaining against every security measure our government is trying to take to fight terrorism at home.

CAIR has refused to come out and condemn terrorist organizations such as Hamas, Islamic Jihad, al Qaeda, al Gamaat al Islamiya, the Muslim Brotherhood, and Hezbollah by name. (pp. 137-138)

These same facts are confirmed by the daughter of a Muslim shahid (jihadist martyr for Islam), Noni Darwish, in her book, *Now They Call Me Infidel: Why I Rejected the Jihad for America, Israel, and the War on Terror*, (Sentinel, 2006).

CAIR's statements against terrorism are so vague as to be meaningless. They never call out Islamic terrorism by name, and never speak ill of any Islamic terrorist organization.

CAIR is essentially an unofficial arm of the Muslim Brotherhood. These organizations are attaining increasing inroads into churches in America under the pretense of dialogue for greater understanding of Islam and Christianity. The problem is that the programs presented as "dialogue" are totally one-sided promotions of Islam and denigrations of biblical faith, designed to disarm Christians and lay a guilt trip on anyone who would think ill of Islam—even its most radical elements.

Hitting close to home was a recent "dialogue" at a Renton, Washington, church on March 30. Harambee Church, which identifies itself as "Reformed," partnered with the Washington state chapter of CAIR to host such a dialogue in which three pastors and one minister from this area took the stage with a number of Muslims to instruct the congregation on the teachings of Islam and how they differ with what that church teaches. Attending were some 300 people—a mixture of Christians and Muslims.

(Harambee is a Swahili term that means, "Together pushing forward." The idea is to join with diverse groups in a common cause. The stated common cause of Harambee Church is "the Glory of God, and the living, embodied proclamation of His Son through His Spirit living within the community.")

Somehow, in this dialogue with Muslims, the glory of God and the proclamation of His Son through His Spirit, were miserably lost.

### **The Koran is one of the holy books:**

In his twenty-minute opening presentation, Michael Ly, a pastor at Harambee Church, de facto equated the Koran with the Bible by calling them both "the holy books." While introducing the Christian leaders on the stage for the Question-and-Answer session following presentations by Ly and Muslim imam Mohamad Joban, Ly referred to "the holy books" and described himself as an avid reader:

Let me introduce real quick the Christian leaders here with me: Dave Childers, here. He's a friend of mine. He's a member at Highlands Community Church in Renton, long-time member and long-time Christian minister. Obviously me, Michael Ly; I'm a young, avid learner of the holy books and I'm a leader here; considered an elder and a pastor at this church. John Prince, Pastor John Prince; he's the lead pastor of this church body, Harambee. And Mike Gunn who is the founding pastor of Harambee. He founded this church several years ago, and many of you may know another church—a big church—named Mars Hill. Mike was one of the founding pastors of that church as well. So that's the Christian leaders here.

At the close of the session Ly offered free Korans to the people:

All the books—all the holy books on the tables are for you to take home. So if you want a Bible, an Arabic-English Koran, take home, they're here for you to take home and enjoy.

In an appeal to stop the attempts by Christians to convert Muslims to Christ and Muslims to stop trying to convert Christians to Islam, Ly stated:

This is what I've learned—and I've learned this by studying the holy books. And I've learned this by studying the lives of the prophets: that Allah created this kingdom for us to live in. He created a kingdom for humanity to live in. And he wants humanity to be with him in it. And the two largest faiths in the world—Christianity and Islam—the two largest faiths in the world that represent more than 50 percent, maybe over 70 percent of the human race on earth, okay? For centuries—for centuries—Christians have been coming to Muslims and telling them, "You need to convert to Christianity in order to be part of the kingdom of Allah. For centuries Christians have come to—and maybe some of you have experienced that—Christians have come to you and said, "You need to be part of the 2 billion that claim to be Christians, and you need to come over to our circle and leave Islam, stop being a Muslim, pray like we pray, eat what we eat, in order to follow Allah; in order to enter into his kingdom.

And many Muslims have come to me as well, and they come to our Christian friends here, and said, "You must leave the Christian circle; you must leave the 2 billion and join Islam, and take on our customs, and take on our prayer styles in order to enter into the kingdom of Allah.

Well, from my perspective from the holy books, and from what I've learned from the prophets, I feel this conversation needs to stop. This kind of conversation needs to stop. Instead, we need to go back to the holy books, and we need to read the holy books together. And we need to study the lives of the prophets together, and learn what they teach us about what it means to go into the kingdom—what it means to stay on what we call, "the straight path."

So I want to go back to some of the major prophets; I'm not going to cover all of them tonight. We don't have time; we only have twenty more minutes to cover some of the major prophets that are talked about in both the Koran and the Bible, but I'm going to talk about it from a biblical perspective. And what we believe as a church—what we believe the prophets teach about the straight path and about entering the kingdom, and this is what we believe as far as we would believe.

Speaking of "the prophets" within the context of studying both the Bible and the Koran leaves the impression that Mohammed was a true prophet of God. At the very least it solidifies that belief for the Muslims hearing it. Worse, it may cause new believers in Jesus to start studying the Koran with the misunderstanding that it is a holy book—a book inspired by God—and that Mohammed's words are truth. No matter that Mohammed denies that Jesus is the Word of God incarnate, or insists that He didn't die for our sins—that He didn't die at all, but someone else took His place on the cross.

The problem isn't the simplistic scenario Ly expressed—trying to convert people to change their diets or the way they pray. The two belief systems are 180 degrees removed from each other. The Gospel of the Kingdom proclaimed by Jesus is not the same message Mohammed imposed by force. The nature of God, of Jesus, and of the Holy Spirit as taught by Islam are in diametric opposition to biblical faith. Every essential tenet of biblical faith is not only denied in the Koran, it is attacked.

And since when did the Lord tell us to abandon the command to go into all the world and make disciples for Him? When did He say we should stop proclaiming the Gospel to Muslims? That is what Ly implies by his words even though he merely stresses not trying to change their diets or manners of prayer. By equating the Koran with the Bible as “holy,” Ly puts a stumbling block in the paths of not only Muslims but Christians.

There is only one truly holy book. The word “holy” means sanctified—separated by God for God. The writings of Israel's prophets and those of Jesus' apostles comprise the only holy book—singular—the Bible. There are no other holy books.

### Islam Call to Prayer

It has been reported by several sources that the Muslims invoked the Islamic call to prayer during the gathering, which praises Allah. It was reported to have been on the church's Web site, but either the report is in error, or the call to prayer has been removed.

### Allah invoked by pastors

Yes, you read correctly in the section above. Ly called God “Allah.” In fact, throughout the evening all three pastors referred to the God of the Bible as “Allah.” They chose to use that name no doubt out of deference to their honored guests. So we learned that, according to these Christian pastors, Allah created the universe; Jesus is the son of Allah; Allah is to be glorified; Allah is the Almighty God, *ad nauseum*. The rationalization is that Allah is just the word for “God” in Arabic, and that it is used by Arabic-speaking Christians when referring to God. It is no different than using the word “god” in English, which has its etymological roots in pagan Germanic myth.

The etymology of the word “god” has been lost to generations over the centuries. No one associates the word with Germanic myth. The word, “Allah,” however, is uniquely peculiar to Islam. Anyone hearing that word will think the speaker honoring the name Allah is either a Muslim or a Muslim sympathizer.

So maybe Arabic-speaking Christians do use the name Allah, but that's because that name was imposed upon all Arabs centuries ago. Besides, these pastors were speaking English, not Arabic; we don't call the true God “Allah” in English.

For that matter, the idea that Allah is just the Arabic word for “God” is not true. Allah is the name of the god of Islam before anything else. Allah was originally the pagan Arabs' moon god which Mohammed randomly took to be the one, true god of Islam. He might just as well have picked the name of the Arabs' sun god or any other god. The authoritative *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* states this about the name Allah:

ALLÁH is the proper name of God among Muslims, corresponding in usage to Jehovah (Jahweh) among the Hebrews. Thus it is not to be regarded as a common noun meaning ‘God’ (or ‘god’), and the Muslim must use another word or form if he wishes to indicate any other than his own peculiar deity. Similarly, no plural can be formed from it, and though the liberal Muslim may admit that Christians or Jews call upon Alláh, he could never speak of the Alláh of the Christians or the Alláh of the Jews. Among Christians, too, a similar usage holds. In the current Arabic Bible versions, ‘God’ is uniformly rendered *Alláh*, but when ‘the Lord God’ occurs, it is rendered *arrabbu-iláhu*, ‘the Lord, the *Iláh*,’ where ‘the *Iláh*’ is an uncontracted form, retaining its force of a common noun with the article, from which *Alláh* has been shortened through usage. The Muslim, too, who usually derives and explains *Illáh* as meaning ‘worshipped,’ uses it and its plural *Áliha* in the broadest way, of any god, explaining that such is possible because worshippers believe that their god has a claim to worship, and ‘names follow beliefs, not what the thing is in itself’ (*Lisán*, xvii. 358). But more ordinarily, in referring to the gods of the heathen, a Muslim speaks simply of their images or idols, *asnám*, *authán*.

The origin of this goes back to pre-Muslim times, as Prof. Nöldeke has shown... Muhammad found the Meccans believing in a supreme God whom they called Alláh, thus already contracted. With Alláh, however, they associated other minor deities, some evidently tribal, others called daughters of Alláh. Muhammad's reform was to assert the solitary existence of Alláh. The first article of the Muslim creed, therefore—*La iláha illá-lláhu*—means only, as addressed by him to the Meccans, ‘There exists no God except the one whom you already call Alláh.’

Naturally, this precise historical origin is not clear to the Muslim exegetes and theologians, but that Alláh is a proper name, applicable only to their peculiar God, they are certain, and they mostly recognize that its force as a proper name has arisen through contraction in form and limitation in usage.

This is a work of scholarship, not a polemic against Islam. It was published in 1951, long before the current conflict between Islam and the West, and long before some compromising Christians in the West began to use “Allah” in place of “God.”

Consider some salient points:

- “Allah” has no plural form, whereas “god” does: “gods.” Therefore, there can be no “allahs,” as there can be “gods”;
- There is no “Allah of the Christians,” or “Allah” of the Jews.” Allah is peculiar to Islam, even though out of ignorance or compulsion, Christians in some Muslim countries use the name “Allah.” This is not a logical or worldwide practice;
- If Muslims in the West were truly honest, they would refer to Jesus and YHWH as *authán*, idols or false gods. They

won't do this because they want everyone to convert to Islam, if not totally, at least in acknowledging their god, Allah, by name, as the only god;

- Allah was the name of the pagan Arabs' supreme god. He was never known as such outside of the tribal confines of the Arabs. Mohammed merely had the Arabs drop the worship of their other false gods, and retain worship of their supreme false god. Is it fitting, therefore, to refer to YHWH by the name of a false god? Never.

By referring to the true God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jesus as "Allah," the pastors were invoking a false god. And just because the Muslims claim to worship the God of Abraham doesn't make it so. Jesus said:

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man comes to the Father except by Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. And from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." (John 14:6-7).

Whoever denies the Son, the same does not have the Father; he who acknowledges the Son also has the Father. (1 John 2:23)

Muslims do not have the Son because they deny that Jesus is the Son of God; they say "Allah has no son." If Allah has no son, then Allah is not the God of the Bible.

We'll allow that these Christian pastors may have used "Allah" in place of "God" ignorantly. But this is such an elementary truth, even a novice believer should be able to counter the idea that Allah is the God of the Bible.

As pastors and leaders in the Christian community they should have done their homework before attempting to placate the anti-Christ Muslims on their church stage. The blasphemies that came forth in that building they call a church should have been met with indignation, not with cloying acceptance. In truth, they never should have been given an opportunity to be said in the first place.

### **Jesus is not the Son of God**

Joban often stated the belief that Jesus is not the Son of God:

Muslims do not believe that Jesus was the Son of God. God is so powerful and self-sufficient that he does not need a son, or any kind of partner. Yeah?

This was stated near the end of his presentation. He then screened a Muslim propaganda movie that allegedly re-enacts a confrontation between a Christian and a Muslim before a benevolent king of Abyssinia who wants to hear what the Muslim has to say. The Christian is angry, obnoxious, and hateful; the Muslim is calm, rational, and kind. Here are just a few samples of the film's dialogue beginning with the Muslim's claim that "The miracle of Mohammed is the holy Koran."

**Christian:** A book! A book! Written by an illiterate! Attributed to God!

**Muslim:** I think the emperor has heard enough. I'm mindful of Pentecost when God sent down tongues of fire upon the heads of Christ's apostles, so they could speak the many languages of the world that they knew not before.

**Christian:** But do such miracles happen in our times? I've heard enough! You've made a poor case!

**Muslim:** When we suffered persecution in Mecca, Mohammed told us, "Go to Abyssinia, the land of the righteous king where no man is wronged!"

**Christian:** What they call persecution was fair punishment! Why did your prophet send you to me?

**Muslim:** Because you believe in the book of the one god as we do. He sent us because he knew our heart, god would protect us.

**Christian:** Talking to him is like drawing water from a mirage.

**King:** But they've now laid a duty on me to listen to them, my friend.

**Christian:** Go on!

**Muslim:** For years, we worshipped wood and stone—images of our own manufacture. We lived in ignorance of god. We had few earthly laws and no heavenly laws. The rich neglect the poor! The poor, from the natural pity of man, whereby he lifts his brother up when he is fallen, this is seen by them as upsetting social order. To this inhumanity has come a man whom god chose. And in that we believe!

**King:** You're overcome. I beg you to collect yourself."

**Muslim:** "I speak of the messenger of god. Mohammed teaches us to worship one god; to speak truth; to love our neighbors as ourselves; to give charity. Even a smile can be charity. To protect women from misuse. To shelter orphans. And to turn away from gods of wood and stone!

**Christian:** I cannot keep still and hear this blasphemy! We are an ancient civilization! To call our gods wood and stone is to speak ignorantly of them! The idol—the form—is not what we worship, but the spirit which resides within the form.

**King:** I agree that idolatry is not always fully understood. Thank you.

**Christian:** Now let me bring him back to the women.

**Muslim:** God made woman to be the proper companion to man! She is different, but equal.

**Christian:** Equal!? We buy them; feed them; clothe them; use them; discard them! Women equal to us!?

**Muslim:** God created man from one male and one female! You must respect in all women the womb that bore you!

**King, to Christian:** Why are your 300 gods so tongue-tied? Why, his only god is eloquent.

**Muslim:** God has spoken to us before, through Abraham, Noah, Moses, and through Jesus Christ! Why should we be so surprised that god speaks to us now through Mohammed.

**Christian:** Who taught you those names?

**Muslim:** They are names in the Koran.

**Christian:** (unintelligible) when he was an orphan minding sheep!

**Muslim:** And when your Christ was a carpenter. But Christ says, “You are (unintelligible).” Mohammed says, “It is like two rays from the same lamp.”

**Christian:** They are lying to you. They deny Christ. “You worships three gods,” they say! “Father, Son and Holy Ghost,” they say! They say, “God cannot have a son; Christ is not the Son of God!”

**King:** Speak to me of Christ.

**Muslim:** We say of Christ what our prophet has taught us: that god cast his holy spirit into the womb of a virgin named Mary, and that she conceived Christ, the apostle of god.

**Christian:** “The apostle,” he said. Not the Son! Not the Son!

Not one of the slanders against Jesus was met with rebuttal by the Christian leaders. Nor did these Christian leaders dare state where Islam is in error, or say anything Muslims don’t already know about what Christians believe. To iterate what someone already believes while the other person consistently rejects and ridicules those truths does not constitute a true dialogue.

Although the Muslims consistently denied that Jesus is the Son of God, only one time did one of the Christian leaders allude to the truth, and that was merely in passing while explaining something else. Mike Gunn offered this faltering tidbit while answering the question from a Muslim, “In Islam, we don’t inherit any shame sin from Adam. Why in Christianity we’re responsible for sin we didn’t make, but Adam and Eve did?”

Uh, yeah, uh, in Christianity we teach inherited sin—Adamic sin—uh, that man is born into a sinful-base, and it’s not just based on actions. Actions are external; they’re not necessarily, uh, a result of anything particular—just an action. And there’s issues of the heart. The Bible talks a lot about heart issues and how sins can be very much part of our thought life, and who we are as humans. Jesus Himself spoke about that it’s not what goes into a man’s mouth that defiles a man, but that which goes, comes out of a man’s mouth which defiles him—things of hatred, and bitterness, and so on. As a matter of fact, I’d answer the question of why do we have this tension, I would tell you it’s an issue of sin is why we have this tension. And I think we all know in this room, that deep down we are sinful, and deep down, you are sinful, and I am sinful, and I think we know that. And Jesus really brought this out in His, His reality in saying that, that you heard it’s wrong to look, to commit adultery, but I tell you if a man has looked at a woman with lust in his heart he’s already committed adultery. So it’s not the action itself, but the actual—the problem’s an issue of our heart, because it’s the bitterness and hatred that we have in our heart that ultimately works itself out into the actions. And sometimes I think that some humans work those actions out a little bit worse in public than others, but in reality we’re holding bitterness and hatred in our heart. We are not different, really, than the murderer,

and Jesus Himself says that. And so when we think about this, this idea, and particularly as it relates to Christ’s death, as we understand it, is that, uh, the sacrifice of anything—but particularly of our Lord and Savior Jesus—shows us the heinousness of sin next to the holiness of Allah. And I think that that’s what we really need to understand—that our righteousness, and our actions, good or bad—don’t reach the holiness of Allah in any way. And so there’s a gap that still remains between us and Allah as far as being holy. And so we really believe that Allah is merciful, but he’s also just. And justice calls for the greatest justice to be done. And if somebody murders somebody, that justice is to be the death penalty. And we know, all through the Law, including sharia law, that the death penalty is given to some people for justice. But the difference is—and that’s true of the Law of Musa [Arabic for Moses]—is the death penalty is true for those that are deserving of the fiery hell. But the beauty, and the mercy, and the grace of god is sending his own son to pay that penalty on our behalf as the great sacrifice, which means that Allah felt the pain of that sin and sacrifice in such a way that, I think, if he didn’t, that he would not know even what evil is completely about. But Allah understands evil from a truly Christian perspective because the evil of humanity was placed on the cross on the back of Jesus Christ to pay that penalty.

This was the only mention by any of these men about Jesus being the Son of God. But even in this, Gunn exposed a woeful lack of qualification to teach.

In his mind he is referring to the God of the Bible as Allah. So when he says that except for the sacrifice of Jesus, “Allah” [God] “would not know even what evil is completely about,” he indicts God as clueless. God had already dealt with Satan and his angelic followers; He had already witnessed the destruction of the cosmos through that spiritual battle. He set aside a garden in the midst of that chaos and created a man to guard it. He placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden (how could He have created that tree if He didn’t fully understand evil?); He had witnessed the sin of Adam and its effect upon humanity to the point of having to destroy all but eight souls to start over again. He was the one who established the need for the sacrifice in the first place. Had He not fully understood evil, why would He have done so?

Even more incredible, Gunn says that “Allah understands evil from a truly Christian perspective.”

Okay, let’s allow for a mental lapse. But we can’t let a comment like that go unchallenged. The truth is just the opposite. Christians understand (or should understand) evil from God’s perspective, because His Word tells us what evil is. And one evil revealed in Scripture is to deny Jesus Christ as the Son of God. By allowing the anti-Christ Muslims to spout that evil to their congregation these men clearly show that either they don’t understand evil from God’s perspective, or they just don’t care to think about it. Their agenda to “dialogue” with Muslims takes precedence over God’s Word.

I'm sorry, but there is no other conclusion that can be drawn from this disgraceful event. In the face of the onslaught against the nature of our Lord and Savior, they could manage to speak of Him as the Son of God only once, and even that got botched.

It struck me that, although there were some 150 Christians in attendance, there was applause for a number of Muslim anti-Christ statements, but no one applauded these statements that came the closest to proclaiming the Gospel. Utter silence. It's as if there was greater love for error that place than for even a modicum of truth.

### **Jesus is Messiah to the Jews only**

During the Q&A session, the question was asked, "Is Mohammed considered the Messiah?"

The Muslim answering stated that, no Mohammed is not the Messiah. He went on to say that Jesus was the Messiah, but only to the Jews. He is not the Messiah for mankind.

### **Another Jesus**

So what did the Muslims say about Jesus? In a nutshell, Islam teaches that Jesus was merely one of the prophets of Allah, but that He is not divine; He is not the Son of God; He is not the Word of God who became a man; He was born to a virgin, Mary, but He did not die on the cross. He was rescued to "the heaven." Someone else was crucified in Jesus' place. Jesus will come back to earth and set foot in Damascus; His purpose in coming back will be to show the world that He is only a human being, and that He is not the only-begotten Son of God; Afterwards He will die to show that He is not God in the flesh. These were all clearly stated by the Muslim representatives. There were no direct challenges to these false teachings. Nor were there ever any challenges to anything Islam teaches. It was all a one-sided denigration of faith in Jesus Christ.

This truly fulfills the Scripture:

If he who comes proclaims another Jesus, whom we have not proclaimed, or if you receive another spirit, which you have not received, or another gospel, which you have not accepted, you might well bear with him. (2 Corinthians 11:4)

The "Jesus" that the Muslims proclaim is another Jesus; he is not the Jesus we have received. Yet these Christians bear with the people who proclaim that different Jesus. And they not only bear with them; they applaud them.

### **Mohammed is the promised Comforter**

During his answer to the question whether Mohammed is considered the Messiah, the Muslim speaker went on to speak of Mohammed, beginning with a recitation from the Koran:

"Oh children of Israel," so his message was for the Jews, "Oh children of Israel, I am come as a messenger unto you, believing in what you already have," which is the Torah, which is the book of Musa. He's not coming for any new laws, He's coming to confirm what you already have. "And I'm giving glad tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Akhmed." And Akhmed in Arabic is another name for Mohammed, the name of our prophet.

We believe that in the Bible this particular verse transpires in John 12 where He says—Jesus says to His apostles—He says, "For I have many things to teach unto you. I have many things to continue to teach you, but ye cannot bear them now—ye cannot hear them now. How so be it, when he, the spirit of truth, shall come, he will guide you into all truth. Whatever he will hear he will utter. And He will honor Me."

So we believe that the spirit of truth translated in some of the Bibles that I saw on the tables today is "comforter," or "helper," the [unintelligible] presentation had *para-cletos*, which is the Greek word for the blessed one, refers to our prophet—refers to our prophet. So we believe that the Messiah is Jesus, however, we also believe that in the Bible as well as in the Koran consistently, Jesus spoke of another messenger to come after Him, to complete the revelations that He could not complete with His disciples. Thank you.

Michael Ly merely went on to the next question. There was no "dialogue" with this or any other perversion of Scripture these people spouted.

Would it have been so difficult to clarify of whom Jesus was speaking? Is Scripture not clear that He was speaking of the Holy Spirit? We can start with the verse alluded to by the Muslim, which is in John 16, not John 12:

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth, for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatever He shall hear, that He shall speak. And He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive from mine, and shall show it to you.

"All things that the Father has are mine. Therefore I said that He shall take from mine, and shall show it to you." (John 16:12-15)

Mohammed did not glorify Jesus. That would be abhorrent to Muslims. At best Mohammed tried to honor Jesus in order to please the Christians he was attempting to convert to Islam. He may even have believed that Jesus was a prophet, but he denied the true Jesus and substituted "another Jesus." Nor did Mohammed show the disciples "things to come." There are no prophecies in the Koran other than, perhaps, predictions that Islam is destined to rule the world.

John earlier quoted Jesus about who would be sent after Him:

"But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit—whom the Father will send in My name—He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said to you." (John 14:26)

Mohammed has not been faithful to bring to remembrance everything that Jesus said to His disciples. Nor did he come during that time, but centuries later. In the meantime, the Gospel went forth in the power of the Holy Spirit, not Mohammed.

The claim that Mohammed was the "paraclete" borders on blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, but we must leave room for

the truth that Muslims may still come to Christ even after believing this lie. It is blasphemous, but it is evidently not the unforgivable sin Jesus mentions in Matthew 12:31-32.

Even so, we should reasonably expect such a blasphemy to be countered by men entrusted with the care of the Lord's people, not met with silence or, worse, thanks for sharing.

### More about Mohammed

Here is one incredible "dialogue" between Joban and Ly:

**Joban:** Mohammed continued, went to the heaven. He met also with Adam, and Abraham brought him, until he was met god (*sic*), and he came back to Mecca, and he brought a gift. And that gift was a prayer [unintelligible].

**Michael Ly:** And, uh, from a Christian perspective we don't know if Mohammed did, but we want to trust our Muslim friends, and history, and so if Mohammed did, that's great, and I'm sure he learned many things there.

**Joban:** The story can be read, number one, in chapter 17 of (unintelligible) and also in chapter sura, I think it was, 52.

**Ly:** Wonderful.

This is "wonderful"?

And Ly doesn't know if Mohammed went to "the heaven" and met with "god," but if he did, "that's great"?

### A convert to Islam

One of the panelists was a woman who had converted to Islam from Evangelical Christianity. She spoke of how she and her family continue to love each other, and that the best way to get along is to "stay away from the hard issues."

After her "testimony" of conversion the audience applauded her. Earlier, when it was mentioned that she was there as a convert to Islam, Ly merely said, "Wonderful" in response.

Are we to believe it is "wonderful" that someone converted from faith in Christ to a satanic deception? Or that a boy learning the Koran is to be admired?

Where are these people's hearts? Where is the zeal for Jesus Christ that at one time characterized Evangelicalism?

### Excuses

Of course, there were the obligatory comments that not all Muslims are terrorists (we know that), and that the severe aspects of sharia law, such as honor killing of women, are not Islamic, but "cultural." This is typical of CAIR propaganda.

The likewise obligatory guilt trip is dumped on the Christian audience with statements that imply Muslims are the real victims of misunderstanding. After all, terrorists are merely a small faction within Islam. And the media present Muslims in a bad light. Also typical of CAIR propaganda.

The media have for the most part been painting Muslims in a good light. Major networks and movie studios now have Muslim "advisors" to advocate against any possibility of Islam being viewed poorly, thanks also to CAIR. Whenever Muslims are seen as terrorists it comes to light that they are merely pawns in the nefarious designs of either Russian or German overlords, or some such thing.

We are also told that Christians need to stop fearing Muslims, and fear only God.

There is truth to that. But it does not negate the threat Islam poses to the faith and to the nation. Do these naïve Christians really think that these same Muslims would be so beneficent were Islam the controlling force in America? The fact that they work with organizations that funnel funds to terrorists should be a clue to the clueless. Wherever Islam controls, people of other religious beliefs suffer, more in some countries than others.

### Conclusion

As for true give-and-take in these "dialogues," would any Muslim imam invite Christians into his mosque to say that Mohammed is not a true prophet of God? Or to say that he was a false prophet, or that Islam is a satanic religion? Would anyone ever be able to say anything negative about any aspect of Islam, no matter how small? Never.

These Christian leaders who kowtow to Islam are not even good enough to be called hirelings as described by Jesus, who run when they see the wolves coming to feed on the flock. They open the gates and invite the wolves in, then stand there smiling while the flock is being devoured. Then they tell the wolves to come back at a later date; they'll have more lambs for them to eat. **MS**

This issue should have gone to press at least a week earlier. But because of the importance of this article I felt I should contact Michael Ly in order to give him a chance to repent of this evil. He invited me to meet with him and David Childers, and I agreed, asking a close brother in Christ, Dave Lamb, to go with me.

The concerns expressed in this article were largely disregarded. Ly attempted to justify using the name "Allah" by pointing out the etymology of the word, "god," etc. Every issue Dave Lamb and I brought up went either unanswered, was justified, or the subject was changed. We were accused of being in fear, having a different theology than they have, and were generally disregarded.

Ly would not acknowledge us as brothers in Christ, telling us that he doesn't know us. Why should he accept what we say when there were seven pastors present at the event, and they considered it a success. Also, he had heard from theologians, pastors, and other religious leaders who applauded their efforts.

I believe I offended them when I said that this encouraged me because it proves the need for ministries like Media Spotlight that try to bring discernment to the Body of Christ. I **know** I offended them when I said that they were listening to their flesh and not to the Holy Spirit. David Childers accused me of proving I am offensive and unloving by such a judgment, and Ly said the meeting was over.

Not wishing it to end at that point, I acquiesced that I should have said, "I think you are being led by your flesh, etc."

After about an hour of no give-or-take on either side, Ly and Childers said they had to leave, so we parted. They said they would pray about it. I left them with a sample of *Media Spotlight* so they could see what we are about, and with four copies of a letter expressing my concerns similar to those in this article. Two of the copies were for Mike Gunn and John Prince. I sent the same letter to Jim Amandus, pastor of Highlands Community Church in Renton, WA, and Mark Driscoll, pastor of Mars Hill in Seattle, because their churches were mentioned at the Harambee event. As of the time we went to press we have not had any responses. Should we hear anything, we will let our readers know. *AJD*

# WAS BARACK OBAMA RIGHT?

(Continued from page 3)



to be released unless they decided for themselves to remain with their masters (Deuteronomy 15:12-18). The Old Covenant Law also insisted that slaves be treated kindly and be provided for. Instead of such indentured servitude today, we have bankruptcy laws that often resolve debtors of having to pay what they legitimately owe, leaving their creditors on the hook.

Eating shellfish was called “abomination” not because eating it was disgusting, but because touching any unclean animal prevented the eater from entering into the congregation. Unclean animals according to the Old Covenant Law were those that scavenged off the dead. Thus, no one touching anything dead, whether directly or indirectly, was allowed to approach YHWH without first being ceremonially cleansed. The uncleanness acquired from eating scavengers could not easily be cleansed; it was within the body. To enter into the sanctuary in that condition would be an abomination.

Children were not regularly stoned in Israel. Stoning was the punishment for willful rebellion against authority, whether parental or congregational. It did not apply to young children who may have been naturally resistant to correction, but to those of age who posed a threat to the community by their willful rebellion.

All these laws were for the preservation of Israel until the Messiah came to bring the New Covenant to that nation.

The Sermon on the Mount applies to individuals who would be faithful to Christ; it does not apply to nations that must take means to defend themselves against their enemies.

But only someone who studies God’s Word would understand these things. Those who throw the Old Covenant Law in the face of those who believe in righteous government display not only disdain for God’s Word, but disdain for the righteousness that God desires for the guidance of government. Barack Obama has certainly revealed such disdain on his part.

What he was really suggesting is that, in spite of his appeal to religiousness, God’s Word has no place in government. That is really what was behind his “America is no longer a Christian nation” comment. Obama and the Marxist sycophants with which he has surrounded himself truly do disdain God’s Word.

But was what he said true? Is America no longer a Christian nation?

By saying “no longer,” he was implying that at one time America was a Christian nation. And that is true, at least nominally. By virtue of its founders and the vast majority of its population the United States of America may be considered a Christian nation. But it has never been a Christian nation in biblical terms. God never instituted America as a theocracy,

although some of the early Pilgrims did attempt to impart a Calvinistic form of government in some of the colonies. References to Jesus Christ as Lord in their founding documents attest to that. But the United States, as a constitutional republic, did not insist upon Jesus Christ being Lord over the nation. Considering that many of the founders were Freemasons and deists we recognize that truth. Yet at the same time, even those Freemasons and deists, when referring to “God,” had in mind the God of the Bible. They were not thinking of pagan gods when they used the word.

As well, when the motto, “In God We Trust” was first imprinted on U.S. currency, there was never an inkling that those words referred to any pagan god; they referred to the God of the Bible because He is the God who was in the consciousness of the vast majority of Americans, including those in government who commissioned those words. Even today that reference is valid, and it continues to be placed on newly designed currency.

Does this mean that the U.S. government should impose biblical faith, or any religious system, upon its citizens? Of course not. What it means is that from its inception until this present administration the U.S. government has referenced the God of the Bible in all its invocations. Even Barack Obama recognizes that the so-called “Judeo-Christian” ethic forms the basis for our jurisprudence. Yet he has done all he can to distance his administration from that reference. He perpetuates the myth that the government must not consider the God of the Bible above any other god. Yet the truth is that the government can acknowledge the God of the Bible—the God referenced by the vast majority of the population—without imposing biblical faith upon its citizens. Acknowledgement is not imposition. In truth, that has been the history of the U.S. government from its inception until this administration. Acknowledgement of YHWH, through His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, as the guiding hand behind the nation (in truth, He is the guiding hand upon all nations) does not impose anything on those who disagree with that truth, or even hate Him. They are free to practice any religion, or no religion, as they see fit.

To impose any religious tenets would go against the Lord’s words that His Kingdom is not of this world. We do not seek a theocracy or a “Christian state.” But we are well aware that when the righteous rule the people rejoice, and when the wicked rule the people mourn (Proverbs 29:2). The righteous are those who live by God’s Word; the wicked are those who disdain God’s Word.

Who knows how many presidents and other politicians throughout America’s history have been anti-Christ? Certainly they would never have dared reveal it; they would have kept their anti-Christ thoughts to themselves lest they suffer the political ramifications. But no longer.

Previous administrations may have demonstrated a disdain for God’s Word through their actions, but they never were so audacious as to speak their disdain. Obama is the first to exhibit such audaciousness through his disdain for God’s Word not only by his actions, but by his words.

I suppose we can credit him with honesty there at least. **MS**

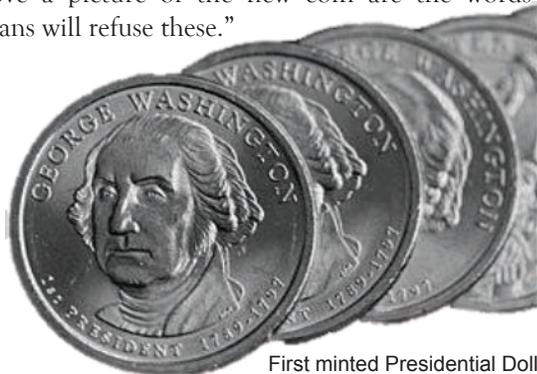


The Internet has proven a valuable resource for attaining truth in many areas. It has also proven a bane to truth by affording easy dissemination of untruths. We address some unfounded rumors that are circulating the Internet.

### The government has omitted “In God We Trust” on the new dollar coin.

One unfounded rumor has to do with the minting of a new gold-colored dollar coin. The messages begins, “It has begun... Refuse new coins!”

Above a picture of the new coin are the words “True Americans will refuse these.”



First minted Presidential Dollar coins.

The message continues:

This simple action will make a strong statement.

Please help do this...Refuse to accept these when they are handed to you.

I received one from the Post Office as change and I asked for a dollar bill instead.

The lady just smiled and said “Way to go”, so she had read this e-mail.

Please help out. Our world is in enough trouble without this too!!!!

U.S. Government to Release New Dollar Coins

You guessed it

‘IN GOD WE TRUST’ IS GONE!!!

If ever there was a reason to boycott something, THIS IS IT!!!!

DO NOT ACCEPT THE NEW DOLLAR COINS AS CHANGE

Together we can force them out of circulation...

Please send to all on your mailing list!!!

This rumor has been circulating since 2007 when the first Presidential \$1 coins were initially minted. In accordance with

the Presidential \$1 Coin Act of 2005, the mottos, “In God We Trust” and “E Pluribus Unum” as well as the year of minting and the letter designating the mint from which the coins emanated were included as edge-incused inscriptions in order to allow for “larger and more dramatic artwork” on both sides of the coins.



First minted Presidential Dollar coins showing edge-incused Mottos “E Pluribus Unum,” and “In God We Trust.”

To be brief, “In God We Trust” was always on the coins. Placing the mottos on the edge did cause some to object on the basis that they would wear off before the life of the coin had expired. The initial response to the objections was that the coins would most likely not be widely used, so that would probably not be a problem in most cases. That argument did not hold sufficient water to be seriously considered. So with passage of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008, Congress changed the specifications and instructed the U.S. Mint to move “In God We Trust” from the edge to the front or back of the Presidential \$1 coins “as soon as practicable.” The motto “In God We Trust” was placed on the front of the first Presidential \$1 coin issued in 2009, bearing the likeness of William Henry Harrison (below).



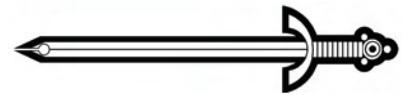
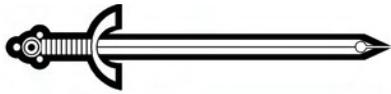
It is concerning that people (Christians as well as non-Christians) take at face value messages that are forwarded to them, and then forward them to others without first checking the facts.

When I received these e-mails from more than one source I checked them out with three fact-checking organizations: FactCheck.com, TruthorFiction.com, and Snopes.com.

Although, as we’ve said in past issues of *Media Spotlight*, we believe Snopes.com has its own issues of political bias, there are still a number of other reliable fact-checking Web sites at our disposal.

This is important because false rumors that are spread by Christians reflect poorly on the Faith. Non-Christians are propagandized sufficiently by the leftist media to look at Christians as kooks. It doesn’t help that we give them fodder for their cannons.**MS**

(More Rumors on page 19)



# Sword

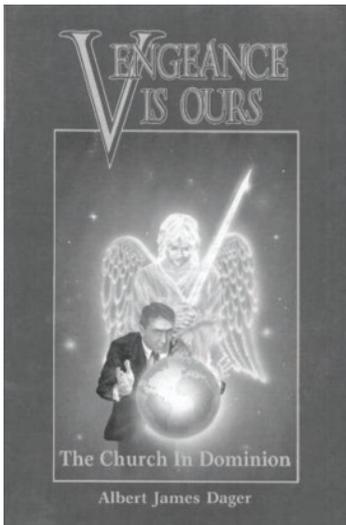
## PUBLISHERS

### CATALOG OF BOOKS & VIDEOS

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.

**ALL PRICES INCLUDE POSTAGE & HANDLING TO U.S. ADDRESSES ❖ FOREIGN POSTAGE COSTS ARE ON ORDER FORM**

## Books From Sword Publishers



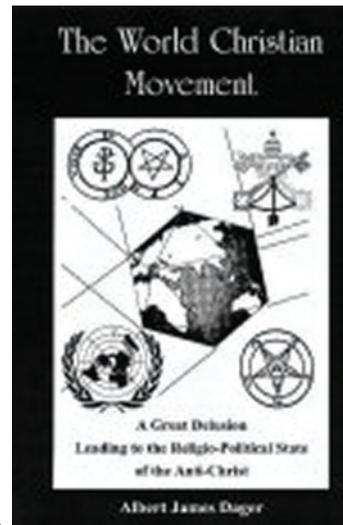
**VENGEANCE IS OURS:  
The Church in Dominion**  
Albert James Dager - 283 pages

A militancy is stirring in the breasts of some Christians in response to the evils that beset society. Tens of thousands attend spiritual warfare seminars hoping to learn how to "take dominion over the earth." A call for vengeance on God's enemies and a restructuring of society under God's Law is being heard.

But is it the Christian's responsibility to take control of society and reconstruct it in accordance with God's Law?

Vengeance Is Ours is the only book available that analyzes the various forms of dominion theology, from Manifested Sons of God to Christian Reconstruction.

**B-1001 Paperback \$10 - 1 lb.**



**THE WORLD CHRISTIAN  
MOVEMENT: A Great Delusion  
Leading to the Religio-Political  
State of the Anti-Christ**  
Albert James Dager - 233 pages

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is being compromised as we learn that it is no longer proper to proclaim Jesus Christ as Savior unless done so within the context of the world's pagan religions. We are told that God speaks through Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius and other "holy men."

Major Christian voices are sounding this siren song of compromise and denial of Christ. Will you recognize the deception in your church? This book offers the only information available on the World Christian Movement—an important subject

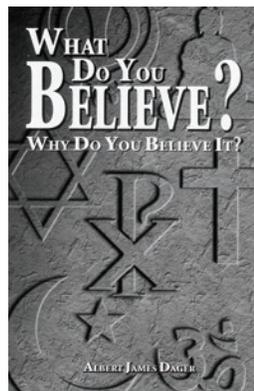
**B-1055 Paperback \$14 - 1 lb.**

**WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE? Why Do You Believe It?**

Albert James Dager - 102 pages

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.

**B-1075 Paperback \$10 - 1 lb.**

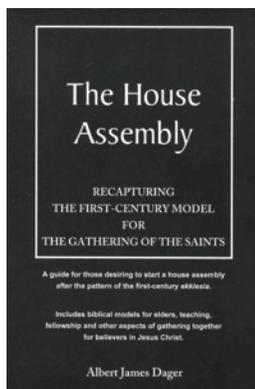
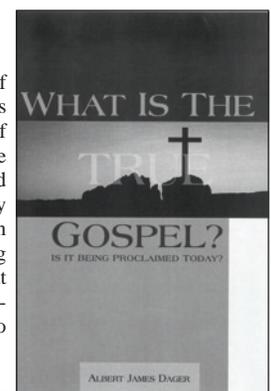


**WHAT IS THE TRUE GOSPEL?**

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.

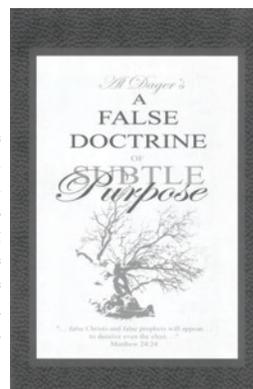
**B-1081 Paperback \$8 - 1 lb.**



**THE HOUSE ASSEMBLY: Recapturing  
the First-Century Model For The Gather-  
ing of the Saints**  
Albert James Dager - 221 pages

Many Christians are experiencing the inevitable results of religious institutionalism: denominational traditions; abusive pastors; false teachings; anecdotal sermons; favoritism and other unscriptural teachings and practices. This book is a guide for those desiring to start a house assembly after the pattern of the first-century *ekklesia*. Includes examples of the author's experiences in the house assembly, as well as biblical models for elders, teaching, fellowship and other aspects of gathering in love.

**B-1074 Paperback \$12 - 1 lb.**



**A FALSE DOCTRINE OF SUBTLE  
PURPOSE**  
Albert James Dager - 106 pages

Thousands of churches and tens of thousands of pastors are being strongly influenced by the writings of Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Community Church in California. His two best-selling books, *The Purpose-Driven Life* and *The Purpose-Driven Church*, have taken churches by storm. But are Warren's teachings and methodologies truly biblical? This book reveals many of Warren's unscriptural teachings. It is not a polemic against Warren, but a careful analysis of his teachings and methods lauded not only by Christians, but by the world. (*Media Spotlight* articles)

**B-1080 Paperback \$10 - 1 lb.**

# Books From Other Publishers

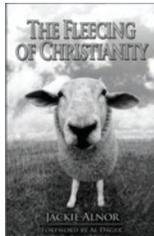
## THE FLEEING OF CHRISTIANITY

Jackie Alnor

221 pages

A look at the shadowy world of the TBN dynasty. The author reveals some personal secrets of Christian media "stars," but she tries to keep the polemic down. We don't agree entirely with her eschatology, but this book is worth the read.

**B-1100 Paperback \$12 - 2 lbs.**



## THE SIGNS AND WONDERS MOVEMENT EXPOSED

Peter Glover, Editor 112 pages

Four ministers, Mark Haville, Chris Hand, Philip Foster and Peter Glover, look at this contemporary movement, some of its proponents, and the nature of its claims and practices. They warn against spiritual gullibility.

**B-1027 Paperback \$9 - 1 lb.**

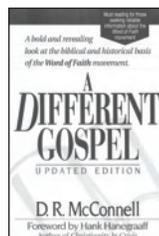


## A DIFFERENT GOSPEL

D.R. McConnell 225 pages

An exposé of the word-faith movement from a theology instructor at Oral Roberts University. Traces the origins of word-faith from E.W. Kenyon's science-of-mind connections to the plagiarism of Kenneth Hagin and beyond.

**B-1005 Paperback \$12 - 1 lb.**



## WEIGHED AND FOUND WANTING

Bill Randles

209 pages

A Pentecostal pastor looks at the Toronto Blessing. Read why the author believes that this current "Renewal" is actually a judgment from God, and possibly the great delusion spoken of in 2 Thessalonians 2!

**B-1008 Paperback \$10 - 1 lb.**



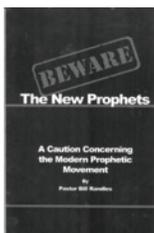
## BEWARE THE NEW PROPHETS

Bill Randles

132 pages

Randles has touched on a subject of great importance: the re-emergence of the Latter Rain Movement with its aberrant theology and careless eschatology. Will help the uninformed as well as those already aware of this deception to understand its threat.

**B-1043 Paperback \$10 - 1 lb.**



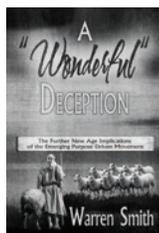
## A WONDERFUL DECEPTION: The Further New Age Implications of the Emerging Purpose Driven Movement

Warren Smith

229 pages

A former New Ager reveals how Christian leaders, whether wittingly or unwittingly, are guiding followers into spiritual deceptions.

**B-1099 Paperback \$12 - 1 lb.**



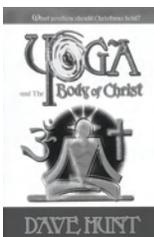
## YOGA & THE BODY OF CHRIST

Dave Hunt

170 pages

Yoga is revolutionizing the fitness movement and extending its reach directly in the churches and lifestyles of Christians. Every Christian should be informed about the true origins and effects of yoga and its ungodly roots in Kundalini "serpent power."

**B-1096 Paperback \$9 - 1 lb.**



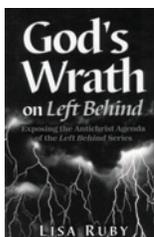
## GOD'S WRATH ON LEFT BEHIND

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.

**B-1071 Paperback \$10 - 1 lb.**



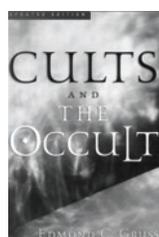
## CULTS AND THE OCCULT

Edmond C. Gruss

260 pages

This update of the 1974 classic offers up-to-date information on what major cults and occult elements are saying. Why do they attract so many people? This and other questions are answered about J.W.'S, Mormons, Christian Science, Baha'I, and more.

**B-1093 Paperback \$10 - 2 lbs.**

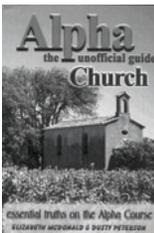


## ALPHA: THE UNOFFICIAL GUIDE-CHURCH

McDonald & D. Peterson 247 pages

A special handbook on the Alpha Course and its relationship to the Body of Christ. Compares Alpha's teachings vs. Scripture. The result of years of research with information vital to those whose churches have adopted Alpha.

**B-1084 Paperback \$10 - 1 lb.**

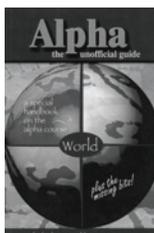


## ALPHA: THE UNOFFICIAL GUIDE-WORLD

McDonald & D. Peterson 256 pages

A handbook on the Alpha Course and its relationship to the world and other religions. Compares Alpha's teachings vs. Scripture. The result of years of research with information vital to those whose churches have adopted Alpha.

**B-1083 Paperback \$10 - 1 lb.**

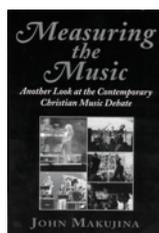


## MEASURING THE MUSIC

John Makujina, Ph.D. 369 pages

Discusses the hot issue of Contemporary Christian Music, emphasizing biblical principles and musical science. A study needed in today's climate of anything-goes "Christian" entertainment. Destroys the myths of liberal interpretations of music in the Bible.

**B-1052 Paperback \$15 - 2 lbs.**

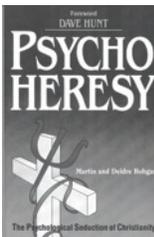


## PSYCHOHERSEY

Martin & Deidre Bobgan 259 pages

Exposes the fallacies of psychological counseling and psychotherapy, encouraging a return to the biblical foundations for Christian living. A most important book written by experts on the field of psychology and its inroads into the churches.

**B-1011 Paperback \$12 - 1 lb.**

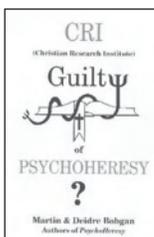


## CRI GUILTY OF PSYCHOHERSEY?

Martin & Deidre Bobgan 144 pages

A response to Bob and Gretchen Passantino's series on psychology in Christian Research Institute's *Christian Research Journal*. The authors charge the Passantinos and CRI with psychoheresy—the integration of psychological theory with Scripture.

**B-1028 Paperback \$10 - 1 lb.**

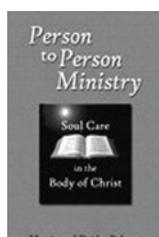


## PERSON-TO-PERSON MINISTRY

Martin & Deidre Bobgan 250 pages

Reveals the innate sinfulness of problem-centered counseling; shows how it leads Christians into feeding the flesh and quenching the Spirit. Gives reasons why Christians must abandon the problem-centered approach in favor of becoming Christ-centered.

**B-1097 Paperback \$12 - 1 lb.**

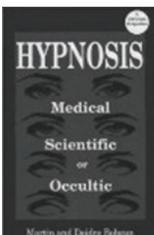


## HYPNOSIS: Medical, Scientific, or Occultic?

Martin & Deidre Bobgan 142 pages

Hypnosis induces an altered state of consciousness no different from shamanic states of consciousness. Although passed off as scientific, and even medical, hypnosis is at its core occultic and potentially lethal.

**B-1085 Paperback \$10 - 1 lb.**

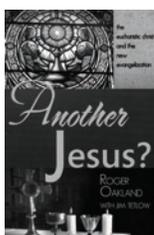


## ANOTHER JESUS? The Eucharistic Christ and the New Evangelism

Roger Oakland 185 pages

Distinguishes true commemoration of the Lord's death vs. the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, which posits that the bread and wine become the very body and blood of Jesus, and are to be worshipped as God.

**B-1095 Paperback \$9 - 1 lb.**



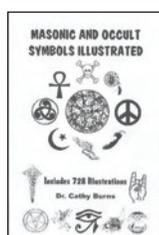
## MASONIC & OCCULT SYMBOLS ILLUSTRATED

Dr. Cathy Burns 543 pages

A researcher into the New Age, Freemasonry, and the occult uncovers the hidden meanings behind symbols that we see around us every day: logos, hand signals, illustrations, etc.

A handy reference for researchers.

**B-1026 Paperback \$18 - 2 lbs.**



## THALES TO DEWEY: a History of Philosophy

Gordon H. Clark

561 pages

A comprehensive overview of the history of thought. Part 1: Greek attempts to determine the nature of reality; Part 2: medieval thinkers who tried to reconcile Christianity and secular philosophy; Part 3: modern thinkers.

**B-1031 Paperback \$21 - 3 lbs.**



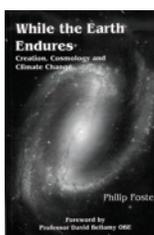
## WHILE THE EARTH ENDURES: Creation, Cosmology and Climate Change

Philip Foster

238 pages

Challenges the myth of man-caused global warming, trusting God's Word that, as long as the earth endures, it will provide for man's sustenance. Also challenges some Christian traditions.

**B-1098 Paperback \$12 - 1 lb.**



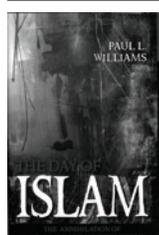
## THE DAY OF ISLAM: The Annihilation of America and the Western World

Paul L. Williams

288 pages

Not a Christian book, but every Christian should read it. One caveat: you'll wish you hadn't. This book will spur many Christians to get serious about their walk and their prayer life.

**B-1090 Hardback \$23 - 2 lbs.**

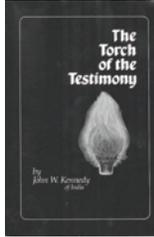


# Books From Other Publishers

**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.

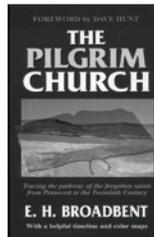
**B-1022 Paperback \$11 - 1 lb.**



**THE PILGRIM CHURCH**  
E. H. Broadbent 448 pages

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.

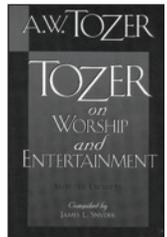
**B-1053 Hardback \$23 - 2 lbs.**



**TOZER ON WORSHIP AND ENTERTAINMENT**  
A.W. Tozer 209 pages

Does Christian entertainment really glorify God, or does it pander to carnal instincts in the name of Jesus? Tozer's insights are often quoted by even the least reliable teachers, but that does not negate the truths he offers here.

**B-1056 Paperback \$9 - 1 lb.**



# Videos

**HOMEGROWN JIHAD: Terrorist Camps Around the U.S.**  
PRB Films 105 Minutes

The explosive documentary with never-before-seen footage of terrorist compounds in the U.S. under the leadership of radical Pakistani cleric Sheikh Mubarak Gilani. "Soldiers of Allah" are being trained to wage war in the U.S.

**DVD-2029 \$15 - 1 lb.**



**WITNESSES OF JEHOVAH Good News Defenders** 50 Minutes

How the Watchtower Society controls the lives of 6,400,000 members. Traces its history from its first days, exposing the scams and false prophecies used to expand its empire. DVD has both English and Spanish tracks.

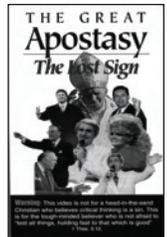
**DVD-2027 \$15 - 1 lb.**



**THE GREAT APOSTASY: the Lost Sign**  
The Christian Sentinel 90 Minutes

Somewhat amateurish, but dynamite expose of charismania at its worst. A wake-up call, and a show-and-tell demonstration of the unclean spirit of anti-Christ in our midst.

**DVD-2019 \$20 - 1 lb.**



**ISRAEL, ISLAM & ARMAGEDDON**  
Berean Call 60 Minutes

Shows how the current attempts to achieve Middle East peace are fraught with peril, why it is impossible for Jerusalem to know true peace in this age, how anti-Christ will attempt to destroy Israel, the truth about Vatican intentions, and the Palestinian myth.

**V-2022 (VHS) \$20 - 1 lb.**



**TERRORISM: The New War on Freedom**  
Jeremiah Films 50 Minutes

Tells the truth about the violent nature of Islam. Hatred of everything non-Islamic is fundamental to that religion, not just to the "radical" elements. This video offers strong documentation of the anti-Christ, anti-Jewish agenda of Islam.

**V-2023 (VHS) \$24 - 1 lb.**



# Music

**AMERICA'S 100 FAVORITE HYMNS (Boxed Set)**  
Brentwood Music

All four volumes of America's 25 Favorite Hymns in one set.

**CD-3006-2 \$40 - 2 lbs.**



# Order Form

ITEM #	TITLE	QUANTITY	\$/UNIT	AMOUNT

CHECK ENCLOSED       VISA       MASTERCARD

ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_

EXPIRE DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ POSTAL ZONE \_\_\_\_\_

<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	
Washington Sales Tax 9.8%	
Foreign Postage (See Chart Below)	
<b>TOTAL:</b>	

**PLEASE SEND ORDER TO:**  
**SWORD PUBLISHERS**  
 PO BOX 640  
 SEQUIM, WA 98382-4310  
 (360) 477-4180  
 www.swordpublishers.com

**INTERNATIONAL POSTAGE RATES**  
**CANADA OR MEXICO**  
 1-4 LBS. \$12.00      5-20 LBS. \$34.00  
**OTHER INTERNATIONAL**  
 1-4 LBS. \$14.00      5-20 LBS. \$56.00

# Media Spotlight Special Reports & Journals

QUANTITY	TITLE	QUANTITY	TITLE
_____	ABORTION: Some Cogent Arguments	_____	LAKELAND OUTPOURING: (Vol. 31 - No. 2)
_____	ALL ECUMENICAL ROADS LEAD TO ROME (Vol. 23-No. 2)	_____	LIFE AFTER DEATH: Should We Believe the Testimonies?
_____	ALLEGIANCE: To Whom Do We Pledge? (Vol. 25-No. 3)	_____	LOST TOMB OF JESUS: A Death Blow To Christianity?
_____	ALPHA COURSE: Chapter & Verse on Alpha's Jesus (Vol. 25-No. 4)	_____	MARTIAL ARTS & THE CHRISTIAN
_____	AMERICA 2000: Education for the New World Order	_____	MASONIC HISTORY OF AMERICA
_____	ANGELS & DEMONS: Are Reason & Faith Mutually Exclusive?	_____	MUSIC: What Difference Does It Make?
_____	ANGELS ON ASSIGNMENT: Or Demons of Deception?	_____	ORIGINS OF CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS
_____	APOSTOLIC REFORMATION: New Move or Old Deception?	_____	PENSA COLA: Revival Or Reveling?
_____	ARE YOU IN A CULT? Questions to Answer	_____	PROMISE KEEPERS: Is What You See What You Get?
_____	BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: Are the Gifts for Today? (Vol. 26-No. 3)	_____	PROMISE KEEPERS: Washington D.C. Covenant
_____	BIBLE CODE: Is God's Name Etched Upon Our DNA?	_____	PSYCHOLOGY: Science Or Religion?
_____	CELEBRATION 2000: Neo-Orthodoxy & New Evangelicalism	_____	PURPOSE-DRIVEN PROGRAM: A Growing Phenomenon In The Churches
_____	COALITION ON REVIVAL (COR): A Biblical Analysis	_____	REBECCA & ELAINE: Can Christians Be Demon Possessed?
_____	The COMING ELECTION: Who Is Our Authority? (Vol. 31-No. 3)	_____	RECESSION: What? Me Worry? (Vol. 31-No. 4)
_____	COVENANTALISM: A New Name For An Old Spirit	_____	RENOVARE: Spiritual Formation Groups On The Rise
_____	C.S. LEWIS: The Man and His Myths	_____	RICK WARREN TRIP TO SYRIA STIRS CONTROVERSY
_____	DA VINCI CODE: Gnostic Revival (Vol. 29-No. 2)	_____	ROMAN CATHOLICISM: Is It A Cult?
_____	DELIVERANCE: Demonization and the Christian	_____	SIX ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINES The Nullify Salvation By Grace
_____	JAMES DOBSON: A Critique	_____	GARY SMALLEY: The Psychology Of Matriarchy
_____	DOES HELL EXIST? Is It Eternal? (Vol. 21-No.2)	_____	SPIRITUAL WARFARE FOR PARENTS: Important Safeguards Against Worldly Influence
_____	DUNGEONS & DRAGONS: A Look At Fantasy Role-Playing Games	_____	TERRORISM IN AMERICA: Where Are We Headed?
_____	EMERGENT CHURCH: A New Path To An Old Religion (Vol. 28-No. 4)	_____	THIS PRESENT DARKNESS: Spiritual Warfare - Fact Or Fantasy?
_____	ETERNAL SECURITY: What Hath Calvin Wrought? (Vol. 26-No. 1)	_____	UNICORN: Fabled Beast Of Myth And Magic
_____	FACTS & FALLACIES OF THE RESURRECTION: Did Jesus Really Die On A Friday and Rise On Sunday?	_____	U.N CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD: The New World Order vs. Parental Rights
_____	FINDING GOD IN THE LORD OF THE RINGS: What's the Difference Between Harry and Frodo?	_____	VINEYARD: History, Teachings, & Practices
_____	FIRST E.U. PRESIDENT: Defender of Fundamental Values of Christianity" Reveals Globalist Agenda (Vol. 33-No. 1)	_____	WAS BARACK OBAMA RIGHT? Is America No Longer A Christian Nation? (Vol. 33-No. 2)
_____	FOUR TEMPERAMENTS: Astrology and Personality Testing	_____	WORD-FAITH/POSITIVE CONFESSION
_____	GLOBAL WARMING: Can Man Destroy the Earth?	<b>AUDIO CASSETTES</b>	
_____	GOSPEL IN THE ZODIAC: A Biblical Analysis	May also be downloaded as MP3 files from our Web site: <a href="http://www.mediaspotlight.org">www.mediaspotlight.org</a>	
_____	HALLOWE'EN: Should Christians Be Apart?	_____ 101	ABORTION with HOW DO WE PRAY FOR AMERICA?
_____	HOLY LAUGHTER: Rodney Howard-Browne & The Toronto Blessing	_____ 102	MUSIC with MOTION PICTURES
_____	BENNY HINN: Pros & Cons	_____ 103	PSYCHOLOGY
_____	IF THEY COME FOR YOUR CHILD: Guarding Against State Intrusion	_____ 104	DELIVERANCE
_____	INAUGURATION PRAYERS: (Vol. 32-No. 1)	_____ 105	HOLY LAUGHTER (2-Tape Set)
_____	INNER HEALING: A Biblical Analysis	_____ 106	THE WORLD CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT (5-Tape Set)
_____	ISLAM: Religion of Peace or War?	_____ 107	ALL ECUMENICAL ROADS LEAD TO ROME
_____	ISLAMIZATION OF THE CHURCHES (Vol. 33-No.2)	_____ 108	WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE? WHY DO YOU BELIEVE IT?
_____	JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES: Their Teachings vs. Scripture		
_____	JOEL OSTEEN BITES THE DUST: Another Victim of Larry King		

**NOTE:** We are in the process of refurbishing our recording capabilities and hope to begin recording important articles and making them available on CD's, cassettes, and MP3 downloads from our Web site. After Al's heart problems began and breakdowns of equipment took place, we just fell way behind, but we plan to begin with our most recent articles, and work our way backwards over time if the Lord permits. This will be a major project, and we ask for your prayers for strength and the resources to accomplish this task.

**WE DO NOT CHARGE FOR OUR REPORTS.  
IF YOU WISH TO SEND A GIFT, PLEASE  
MAKE PAYABLE AND SEND TO:**

**MEDIA SPOTLIGHT**

**PO BOX 640 SEQUIM, WA 98382-4310**

[www.mediaspotlight.org](http://www.mediaspotlight.org)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ POSTAL ZONE \_\_\_\_\_  
 COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

ENCLOSED GIFT TO MEDIA SPOTLIGHT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## MORE RUMORS

(Continued from page 14)

### Barack Obama has instituted a policy forbidding military personnel to speak at faith-based functions

Another rumor being widely circulated in e-mails is the assertion that Barack Obama has forbidden military personnel to speak at faith-based public events. The message, allegedly written by a Charlie Stokes, Area Agronomy Agent in Aberdeen, Missouri, states:

I wanted to give ya'll some disturbing information on our wonderful president.

I work with the Catch-A-Dream Foundation (<http://www.catchadream.org/>) which provides hunting and fishing trips to children with life-threatening illnesses. It is a great program needless to say. This past weekend we had our annual banquet/fundraiser event in Starkville. As part of the program, we had scheduled Sgt. 1st Class Greg Stube, a highly decorated U.S. Army Green Beret and inspirational speaker who was severely injured while deployed overseas and didn't have much of a chance for survival. Greg is stationed at Ft. Bragg and received permission from his commanding officer to come speak at our function. Everything was on go until Obama made a policy that NO U.S. SERVICEMAN CAN SPEAK AT ANY FAITH-BASED PUBLIC EVENTS ANYMORE. Needless to say, Greg had to cancel his speaking event with us. Didn't know if anyone else was aware of this new policy. Wonder what kind of news we all will receive next?

This rumor, circulating since May, 2009, is based on fact: Sgt. 1st Class Greg Stube's scheduled appearance at a Catch-A-Dream fundraising event was canceled, but it wasn't because Catch-A-Dream is a faith-based charity; it isn't. It was because military personnel are barred from speaking at any charity fund-raising events, whether faith-based or not.

The policy is likely in place to prevent the military from being inadvertently implicated in fund-raising scams, and had been in effect long before Obama took office. The Obama administration continues to support faith-based organizations.

According to Dr. Martin Brunson, the Catch-A-Dream foundation's executive director, he received a written response from the U.S. Army Special Operations Command in late March, 2009, stating the following:

Sgt. 1st Class Stube forwarded your request to us for review. We regret that we cannot support the annual Catch-A-Dream Foundation Benefit Banquet with participation by SFC Stube. Army and Department of Defense regulations prohibit direct support to fund-raising activities. I've scrubbed the regs to determine if there were possibilities that we might apply to justify our support, but I found none.

The event is one we would truly like to support because of the wonderful work you do for children and their families. We extend our sincere best wishes for a phenomenal event.

It is understandable that Christians would get upset over the idea that government might withdraw support from "faith-based" organizations, but why should believers in Jesus want the government's support. Government support comes with government oversight. And government oversight will eventually mean making a choice between control or separation anyway. ❖

### Photo shows Barack Obama praying in a mosque at the White House

The picture below is being widely circulated with the the following indictment against Barack Obama:



Subject: Fw: LOOK WHO'S PRAYING!

And what was it he said to all of you that were in Washington, DC last week: don't question my religion?

HE PRAYS WITH THE MUSLIMS!!

This is OUR President at a MOSQUE prayer session LAST WEEK AT THE WHITE HOUSE, on the site where the INAUGURATION is held every 4 years!

He canceled OUR CHRISTIAN "NATIONAL!!! DAY OF PRAYER"... NOW... THIS.

For Obama to continue as our president is an INSULT TO OUR FOUNDING FATHERS! AND DISGUSTING TO EVERY RED BLOODED AMERICAN\*\*\*

Forward this to every American Citizen as the media won't!

There are a number of problems with this message: 1) Obama did not cancel the National Day of Prayer; he chose not to participate; 2) There is no mosque in the White House; 3) the background is clearly not that of the White House; 4) this picture was taken by White House photographer Pete Souza when Obama visited the Sultan Ahmed Mosque ("Blue Mosque") in Istanbul during his April 2009 visit to Turkey.

There are no pictures of Obama actually praying in the mosque. All visitors are required to remove their shoes out of respect. One may protest that a true believer in Jesus would not conform to that custom, or even enter a mosque, and we agree. But as much as we understand Obama's anti-Christ leanings and his lack of true commitment to biblical faith, we are concerned how Christians are quick to demonize him in ways that cast him as a genuine victim of misplaced religious zealotry. God commands that we not bear false witness against anyone, no matter how we dislike that person's beliefs and/or actions. We may claim ignorance, but we have a responsibility to learn the truth before spreading what we think may be real news. **MS**



# ANTI-CHRIST

## PART XIII

### THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH

**T**he first four thousand years of human history can be seen as little more than preparation for the most important event the cosmos would ever see. Throughout that time God was preparing for the moment when He would send into the world the Savior of mankind. And not of mankind only, but of the entire cosmos.

Scripture calls the time of this Savior's appearance "the fullness of time":

But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we may receive the adoption as sons.

And because you are sons God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"

Therefore you are no longer a servant, but a son. And if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. (Galatians 4:4-7)

There is much more to this than meets the eye. Indeed, it takes the Spirit of God to illumine our minds to comprehend the magnitude of what took place some two thousand years ago. The "fullness of time" refers to a specific moment in the history of the universe when God Himself would enter into the human experience for the specific purpose of redeeming the lost and revealing His Kingdom to mankind. Through this He opened the way for those born under the Law, which was given because of the transgression of man, to be brought into the family of God—to become adopted sons and joint heirs to His Kingdom.

To accomplish this great manifestation of His grace toward us He first had to reveal His holiness in contrast to the unholy nature of man. He did this by selecting from among humanity one particular man, Abraham, whose faith He honored by bringing forth from him a nation set aside—sanctified—through the giving of the Law. The Law, given through Abraham's descendant, Moses, demonstrated God's righteousness and the obedience He demands of those who would be redeemed from the curse of sin.

We have seen how, throughout history, God preserved that nation, Israel, in spite of repeated attempts by anti-Christ to destroy it or, at the least, to render it ineffective in fulfilling God's plan of redemption. Yet in spite of anti-Christ's strongest efforts, and Israel's consistent failings, God nurtured the nation and preserved it until the fullness of time. Now Israel's grandest purpose would be fulfilled: the Messiah (the Anointed) promised from the time of Adam's fall would come into the world.

This was not an afterthought of God, regardless of what some hyper-dispensationalists might say. God's redemption of mankind was planned from the foundation of the world:

...you were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold from your vain conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot who truly was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for you who, by Him, believe in God who raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory so that your faith and hope might be in God. (1 Peter 1:17b-21)

The foundation of the world (Gr: *kosmos*) refers to the creation "in the beginning" (Genesis 1:1). The Gospel of John reveals that the person who created all things is the Word of God who became a man:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and not even one thing that was made, was made without Him....

And the Word became flesh and lived among us (and we saw His glory—the glory of the only-begotten by the Father), full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-14)

There have been many throughout history who have claimed to be God's Messiah, but only one person came in "the fullness of time"—the specific time prophesied by the angel Gabriel as recorded by the prophet Daniel:

Seventy sevens are determined for your people and for your holy city to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem until the Messiah the Prince shall be seven sevens, and sixty-two sevens. The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

And after sixty-two sevens Messiah shall be killed, but not for Himself. And the people of the prince that shall come will destroy the city and the sanctuary, and their end shall be with a flood, and until the end of the war desolations are determined. (Daniel 9:24-26)

This is a specific prophecy of a specific time regarding the nation of Israel and the Messiah. Verse 24 states that a specific time of seventy seven-year periods (lit. seventy “sevens,” or seventy times seven years—490 years) would pass until God’s dealing with Israel would be completed.

To “seal up” the vision and prophecy meant to complete it. To anoint the most Holy meant the coronation of the coming eternal King when He comes into His earthly Kingdom.

The part of this prophecy relevant to this writing is verse 25, where Gabriel states that the Messiah would come seven sevens plus sixty-two sevens (483 years) after the decree to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem. It was from the time of that decree that the 490 years would commence. The Messiah would come into Jerusalem after 483 years, or seven years before the end of God’s dealing with Israel. Let us see what history has proven:

The initial decree for Israel to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple came from Cyrus, king of Persia in the first year of his reign (cir. 539 BC). This was not specific to the building of the wall of Jerusalem, but only to the temple. However, due to much opposition from Israel’s enemies, the decree was not implemented. The work did not go forward until Artaxerxes I gave the decree to Nehemiah to return to Jerusalem to build the wall. The Book of Nehemiah records the events. It was in the 20th year of Artaxerxes’ reign (465-425 BC) that Nehemiah went to Jerusalem to lay the groundwork to rebuild the wall (Nehemiah 2:1). This would put the decree in the year 445 BC.

Historians put the birth of Jesus at between 7 BC and AD 6. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states:

The course of Jesus’ life and the geographic setting of his ministry can only be given in rough outline. The details are surrounded by many uncertainties. The period within which his ministry and death occurred may, however, be narrowed down with considerable accuracy on the basis of a synchronistic dating of the appearance of John the Baptist in the 15th year of Tiberius (Luke 3:1)—i.e., AD 28/29—which is confirmed by non-biblical sources. But the year and place of Jesus’ birth are uncertain. Mark and John say nothing about them. The only sources for them are the widely divergent birth and

childhood legends in Matthew 1 and 2, where Jesus’ birth and early lot are set in the time of Herod I and the change of regime (4 BC), and the narrative of Luke 2, which links Jesus’ birth with the first registration in Judaea under the emperor Augustus (AD 6). There is also historical evidence of a census carried out about 8 BC. With all of this in mind, many sources estimate the year of birth as 7-6 BC. (The use of BC [before Christ] and AD [Anno Domini, or “in the year of the Lord”] was not common until the Middle Ages.)

If we allow that Jesus began His ministry at about the same time John the Baptist came on the scene according to New Testament accounts, then we would add 445 BC to AD 29 to reach the approximate period of 474 years. Jesus would minister for approximately three to four years before being crucified. He came into Jerusalem being hailed as the King of the Jews or Messiah a few days before His death. Add four years to 474 years and we have 478 years. This still falls a few years short of the 483 years according to Gabriel’s prophecy to Daniel.

Allowing for inaccurate dating of ancient events, five years is a blink of an eye over the span of nearly 500 years. The reasonable question to ask is, who else in the history of Israel fits the role of the Messiah prophesied in Daniel’s encounter with Gabriel?

The dating of Daniel’s writing has been set by historians at somewhere between 616-536BC. It was not written after the fact of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem. Even secular historians do not dispute the events of the last week before Jesus’ crucifixion.

Most strikingly, the prophecy states that Messiah would be killed immediately after His appearance:

And after sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be killed, but not for Himself: (26a).

So Messiah would come 483 years after the decree to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and would immediately be killed. For what purpose, then, did He come? He died, “not for Himself,” but for those whom He came to redeem for His eternal Kingdom.

But what else was happening among the nations during this time in history? Could there have been any significant challenges to Jesus’ claim of being the Messiah?

Strangely, no event of any historical importance took place during the time from Jesus’ birth until His death and resurrection. No important historical figure, religious or political, arose within any nation including Israel or Rome to impact history in any meaningful way. God did not allow for anyone to enter into history during the time of the Messiah’s prophesied appearance. Jesus Christ is the only person from that time to impact history, and His impact has been greater than any person who ever lived before or since.

There is no legitimate disputing that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies recorded in Daniel, Isaiah, and every book of the Law and the Prophets. These foretold of His healing ministry, of His suffering and death, and of His resurrection, as well as the coming millennial Kingdom of God on the earth with the Son of God on the throne in Jerusalem.

According to Daniel, the Messiah would be killed at the end of the 62nd seven-year period. The last seven-year period—the 70th seven-year period—would see the end of God’s dealing with Israel. In the middle of the last seven-years the temple would be destroyed and the sacrifices cut off. This occurred in AD 70 under the Roman general Titus. From the time of the Messiah’s death until the middle of the 70th seven, some 37 years passed. These 37 years were a time of the Gospel going forth to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the world according to Jesus’ command to His disciples (Acts 1:8). From the middle of the 70th seven-year period until the present, some 2,000 years have transpired. This interim period until the second half of the last seven-year period is what Jesus called “the times of the Gentiles”:

“And when you shall see Jerusalem encircled with armies, then know that the desolation of it is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of it get out, and do not let those who are in the countries enter there. For these are the days of vengeance, so that all things that are written may be fulfilled.

“But woe to those who are pregnant, and to those who nurse in those days! For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” (Luke 22:20-24)

This period of destruction is what Scripture calls the time of “Jacob’s trouble”, out of which the Lord Jesus will deliver Israel, and David will again be on the throne (Jeremiah 30:1-11).

The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple after Jesus’ death is confirmed by many historical accounts. Jesus’ ministry and death are also confirmed by historical accounts. But the most compelling accounts are found in the Gospels that relate the fulfillment of ancient prophecies attributable to no one in history other than Jesus Christ. The prophetic nature of Scripture is the signature of God Himself. No other writings have that signature. Yet the god of this world system—Satan—has blinded the eyes of most men to regard Jesus as nothing more than a man who may have been “anointed” or “christed” according to New Age philosophy.

If the perfect record of fulfilled prophecies in Scripture are anything, they are compelling reasons why Scripture must be believed. No writing of strictly human origin can possibly be 100% accurate, particularly when compiled over thousands of years by many different men.

During those thousands of years prior to the appearance of the prophesied Messiah, anti-Christ worked diligently to destroy faith in Him. Now that He had arrived, anti-Christ would have to increase his efforts. And those efforts began almost immediately after His birth.

When Jesus was born there was great fanfare, but not among the world’s elite. Rather, the announcement of His birth came to the most lowly of men—shepherds guarding their flocks.

Commiserate with His humble birth in a stable, and the humble nature of His walk on this earth, the Messiah came with words of reconciliation from God His Father:

And there were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, look, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were very afraid.

And the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for, look, I bring you good news of great joy that shall be for all people. For to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign to you: you will find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men!” (Luke 2:8-14)

God’s offer to mankind is peace—reconciliation—between Him and all mankind which has been separated from Him by their sins. Some modern versions (e.g., English translations of the Latin Vulgate) have rephrased this verse to say, “peace toward men of good will,” implying that God’s grace is limited to certain people who possess a will to do good. But that is not what Scripture says. God’s grace is extended to all mankind through His Son, Jesus the Messiah. The fact that not all mankind will receive His offer does not alter that truth. Anything other than that truth opposes the good news or “Gospel” of Jesus Christ.

The announcement of Jesus’ birth did not escape notice of anti-Christ. Certainly he was impacted by the appearance of the heavenly host. He must have known immediately that his efforts to oppose God would have to be stepped up if he were to maintain his dominion over the earth.

The most logical step would be to have the Messiah killed while still a helpless infant. But God is always prepared for His adversary’s efforts against Him.

Anti-Christ’s first attempt on the Messiah’s life would come through the person of Herod, king of Judea:

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, look, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east, and have come to worship Him.”

When Herod the king heard these things, he, and all Jerusalem with him, were troubled. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together he demanded from them where Christ would be born. And they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet, ‘And you, Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not the least among the princes of Judah, for out of you shall come a Governor who shall rule My people Israel.’”

Then Herod, when he had privately called the wise men, diligently asked them what time the star appeared.

And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the young child, and when you have found Him, bring me word again so that I may also come and worship Him." (Matthew 2:1-8)

The anti-Christ spirit in man doesn't care wherein truth may lie; it doesn't consider the consequences of opposing truth. Although not Jewish by birth, Herod Antipas was descended from Herod Antipater, founder of the Herodian dynasty over Judea through appointment by Julius Caesar. The Herodians "converted" to the Jewish faith for practical purposes, but their history of cruelty was lamented by the Sanhedrin.

Even so, Herod understood that Messiah was prophesied to come. His reason for learning the place of Messiah's birth was not so that he could worship Him, but so that he could kill Him. Herod had no fear of God, but placed his position as king above that of God. His spirit was that of anti-Christ who first conceived of dominion over God's creation:

How you have fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you who weakened the nations are cut down to the ground!

For you have said in your heart, "I will ascend into Heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God! I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north! I will ascend above the heights of the clouds! I will be like the most High!" (Isaiah 14:12-14)

The anti-Christ spirit always seeks dominion in place of God. It is a blind spirit whose hatred of God is so intense that it causes its own destruction. Herod's spirit was that of anti-Christ: knowing the truth of God yet working to destroy that truth.

When the wise men were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, the anti-Christ within him was stirred to commit one of the greatest acts of infanticide in recorded history. Outsmarted by God, he flew into a rage and had all boys ages two years and under in Bethlehem and the surrounding area slaughtered. But His earthly father Joseph had also been warned in a dream to protect the child by fleeing into Egypt until Herod's death.

That same spirit of anti-Christ within Herod that has no fear of God works even today in the United States of America, as well as all over the world, where infanticide of a much greater magnitude is carried out daily in abortion clinics.

The transgression of the wicked within the heart reveals that there is no fear of God before his eyes. For he flatters himself in his own eyes until his iniquity is found to be hateful.

The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit; he is lacking to be wise, and to do good.

He devises mischief upon his bed; he sets himself in a way that is not good; he does not hate evil. (Psalms 36:1-4)

All sin is man's attempt to assert himself above God, whether in small ways or in great ways. It is the spirit of anti-Christ against which even the children of God must guard themselves. By God's grace we have a mediator, Jesus Christ, who has taken upon Himself the chastisement for all our sins (Isaiah 53:5).

His sacrifice was not only in His death, but in His life that was lived in total obedience to His Father in Heaven. His life was one of constant resistance against the anti-Christ who sought to destroy Him and His calling.

After Herod's death Jesus was brought by his earthly parents to the city of Nazareth in the province of Galilee. The accounts of His life as a young boy are limited aside from His astounding the teachers in the temple with His understanding and knowledge of Scripture (Luke 2:42-47).

The interim between that event and the beginning of His ministry has become the stuff of legends promulgated by the imagination of fallen men. The anti-Christ spirit, unable to destroy the Lord Jesus, has concocted fantasies that question His divine nature as the Word of God. He is said to have traveled to the East where He learned magic and the wisdom of seers to work miracles (or seeming miracles). Those who say this attempt to limit His abilities to that of a man who can conjure spirits or tap into the spiritual realm to achieve mystical powers.

Such things don't exist except with the aid of devils, but foolish people, unwilling to accept the idea of a sin nature for themselves, can't abide the truth that God provided a Savior to pay for their sins. They, too, have lifted themselves in their imaginations above the heights of the clouds. They want to believe that Jesus is nothing more than an enlightened man—another Buddha or "ascended master." And despite the truth that Scripture is the only history of Jesus that bears the prophetic signature of God, they choose to disregard the elements that prove His divinity (except to devise within their imaginations the idea that all men are gods, albeit some more advanced than others in their alleged godhood).

Some may ask why the Bible doesn't say anything about Jesus' youth beyond His experience in the temple at the age of twelve. The simple answer is that during that time He was growing in wisdom and stature (Luke 2:52); His time to be revealed as the Messiah and King of Israel had not come. It was a period in His life of which God chose to remain silent. The silence of God's Word regarding Jesus' early years gives anti-Christ opportunity to test men's hearts whether or not they would believe that Jesus is who He said He is—the only begotten Son of God—the Word of God who became a man. When the time did come for Him to be revealed, it would be with dramatic evidence of His divinity:

Then Jesus came from Galilee to Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. But John forbade Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and You come to me?"

And answering, Jesus said to him, "Allow it to be so now, for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness."

Then he allowed Him.

And when he was baptized, Jesus immediately went up out of the water, and look, Heaven was opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Him. And look, a voice from Heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:13-17)

This anointing by the Father, sending upon Jesus His Holy Spirit, was the beginning of the Lord's ministry. This startling

event did not escape the anti-Christ's notice. Just as with the announcement of Jesus' birth, he recognized that God was at work, and it was time to get to work himself. This time, however, he would try a different tactic: he would attempt to beguile Jesus just as he had Eve and so many after her:

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was hungry. And when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."

But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took Him up into the holy city and set Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, cast Yourself down, for it is written, 'He shall give His angels charge concerning You, and they shall bear You up in their hands lest at any time You dash your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus said to Him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'You shall not test the Lord your God.'"

Again, the devil took Him up into an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and said to Him, "I will give You all these things if you will fall down and worship me."

Then Jesus said to him, "You get away, Satan, for it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.'"

Then the devil left Him, and, look, angels came and ministered to Him. (Matthew 3:1-11)

Jesus did not go into the desert haphazardly; He was led by the Spirit of God specifically to face temptation by Satan. It is evident that the devil was present when the Father proclaimed at Jesus' baptism, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." His first two tests appealed to that claim: "If you are the Son of God."

The anti-Christ also knew that eventually all the kingdoms of the world would be given into Jesus' hands at the proper time. Satan's final test was to tempt Him with the fulfillment of that destiny without having to go through the work and suffering ordained by the Father. Here, again, he was attempting to place himself above the stars of God. That is the ultimate goal of anti-Christ. It is not to destroy men's souls; it is not to wreak havoc on the earth through natural disasters; it is not to cause sickness and death. All these are subordinate to accomplishing his determined purpose—to establish himself as equal to God. He will even do "good" (e.g., healing, signs and wonders) if that will serve his purpose.

Still, the anti-Christ's kingdom is one of darkness and death. Jesus worked against this kingdom of darkness through the casting out of devils, the healing of sickness, the raising of the dead. Satan knew that an intruder had come to disrupt his kingdom—to bring light to men in darkness so that they could become that intruder's disciples to do the works that He did.

The kingdoms of this world are in the hands of anti-Christ, and they will remain so until the Lord Jesus returns to wrest them from him. Jesus' disciples are called to be a light in the darkness of this world that is under anti-Christ's headship. Just as Jesus resisted the temptation to rule in this world in order to serve in the Father's Kingdom, so His disciples must do the same. The servant is not greater than the master (John 13:13-17). Jesus is our example of how we should live our lives in this perishing world (vs. 15).

The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness was but the beginning of a protracted conflict between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. As we study the life of Jesus we will see the true nature of anti-Christ revealed in terms more palpable than ever seen before or since Jesus walked the earth. **MS**

## NEXT THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY

*I will bless YHWH at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.*

*My soul shall make its boast in YHWH; the humble shall hear of it, and be glad.*

*O magnify YHWH with me, and let us exalt His name together.*

*I sought YHWH, and He heard me and delivered me from all my fears.*

*They looked to Him, and were enlightened, and their faces were not ashamed.*

*This poor man cried, and YHWH heard him and saved him out of all his troubles.*

*The angel of YHWH camps around those who fear Him, and delivers them.*

*O taste and see that YHWH is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him.*

*O fear YHWH, you His saints, for there is nothing lacking for those who fear him. (Psalms 34:1-9)*

### HIS NAME IS YHWH, NOT ALLAH

**Tired of the same old Christianity? Try Progressive!**

Why continue to swallow the stale taste of the historic faith when you can try something new 'n' different? Our theology soup is loaded with exciting extra-biblical ingredients and spices from the East to fortify your spiritual journey. Frankly, we don't know what's in this stuff, but that's what makes it so mysterious and yummy!

**PROGRESSIVE**  
Creamy Theology Soup

sacredsandwich.com

Clever ad from SacredSandwich.com:

# EDITORIAL

## Campus Christian club appeals to Supreme Court

### At odds with non-discrimination policy of university

**O**n Monday, April 19, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a suit brought by Christian Legal Society Chapter of the University of California Hastings College of the Law v. Leo P. Martinez, *et al*, regarding whether or not an exclusively religious club has on-campus rights and privileges if it discriminates on the basis of belief. Can a Christian organization bar practicing homosexuals from membership?

The University of California, Hastings, argued on behalf of the respondent, Leo P. Martinez, insisting that the university's nondiscriminatory "all comers policy" must apply equally to all on-campus organizations regardless of the core beliefs of those organizations. The law school has denied official recognition to Christian Legal Society (CLS) on the basis that its bylaws require members and leaders to adhere to its religious views, and bars membership to those who advocate for, or participate in, homosexual conduct. According to the law school, recognized student organizations must not deny membership to any student on the basis of status or beliefs. CLS argued that the policy regarding status (race, gender, etc.), is constitutional, but that its policy on belief is unconstitutional because it can force organizations to admit people diametrically opposed to the organization's beliefs. This in turn could cause disruption of the religious organization's activities and could even lead to a hostile takeover by groups determined to destroy the organization, or at the least render it ineffective.

From the very beginning of the arguments posed by CLS's legal counsel, Michael W. McConnell, the case devolved into argumentative challenges by certain justices, even to the point of interrupting Mr. McConnell on numerous occasions. It seemed as if the justices were arguing the case for the University of California. That is, until it came time for the university's counsel, Gregory G. Garre, to present his case. Garre likewise faced difficult challenges from the justices.

Particularly antagonistic toward CLS, however, was Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who not only challenged McConnell, but on at least two occasions helped prompt Garre in his arguments when he floundered.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor asked McConnell if he was suggesting that if a group wanted to exclude black people, women, handicapped, or any other form of discrimination that the school has to accept them as a recognized on-campus group. Although McConnell made a distinction between status and religious beliefs, some of the justices kept questioning him along that same line, as if they didn't understand what he was saying, or they couldn't comprehend the distinction.

Justice Stephen Breyer seemed especially confused as evidenced by this particular exchange after McConnell made a distinction between discrimination based on race v. religion:

JUSTICE BREYER: Isn't this just the opposite? You have to let anybody in, anybody, regardless of their status or beliefs. So you can't discriminate on the basis of status or belief. That's what the policy says I just read (sic). It doesn't say you can, it says that you can't.

MR. McCONNELL: It's that the group may not confine its leadership based upon its beliefs.

JUSTICE BREYER: That's what you say, but that's not what the policy says. The policy says that you have to let everybody in, regardless of their status or belief.

MR. McCONNELL: Right. And our view is the status half of that is perfectly constitutional and the belief half of that is not.

Justice Breyer continued with the argument that a school should be able to determine whether or not it wants to get into the business of determining which organizations may or may not discriminate on any basis because it may be too much trouble.

Throughout the course of questioning most of the justices that lean to the left didn't appear to understand McConnell's position that discrimination based on belief, but not on status, should be allowed for religious organizations. McConnell stated, "If the student organizations are not allowed to have a coherent set of beliefs, there can be no diversity among them."

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg countered with, "It is that they [the university administrators] say, 'Yes, we believe in diversity among groups, but we also believe in diversity within the group; that's a good thing.' They are not backing off from: 'We think diversity among groups is fine.'"

The issue of homosexuality in relation to CLS's policy turned out somewhat vague. Justice Breyer asked whether or not CLS would allow admittance to homosexuals who believe in abstinence until marriage, but also believe in working to pass legislation legitimizing homosexual marriage. McConnell replied that since the organization believes in the definition of marriage being between a man and a woman, homosexuals could be excluded from leadership, but not from attendance. However, he also said that a homosexual is able to attend all the activities, but what CLS objects to "is being run by non-Christians."

This can be a slippery slope. Many homosexuals claim to be Christians, so if the CLS's policy is in place merely to prevent non-Christians from taking over the organization, it is in for a lot more legal challenges in the future. Particularly if, in winning this case, this argument is offered as evidence of its concern about non-Christians as opposed to homosexuals acquiring offices and influence.

CLS's position is being championed in the Christian media, particularly among those on the Christian right who believe that Christians are entitled to the benefits of the world system. Are they correct? Or should Christians just acquiesce to the injustices of the world?

On their side are the actions of the apostle Paul who appealed

to his Roman citizenship in order to avoid being beaten (Acts 22:24-29), and also appealed to Caesar rather than have his fate decided by the Jewish authorities (Acts 25:1-12).

What makes CLS's case different from Paul's? Both are appeals to Caesar for redress of grievances. Why shouldn't CLS bring its case before the Supreme Court of the United States? After all, shouldn't CLS be entitled to the use of public property and public funds in order to function on campus?

The fact is that CLS can operate on campus, as pointed out by Justice Sotomayor who stated that CLS may apply like any other non-student group or recognized student group. She also said that she was confused as to exactly what McConnell was saying. And again McConnell had to iterate the distinction between recognized and non-recognized student groups, and remind that CLS has consistently been denied the right to meet on campus. He also stated that every time CLS tries to get access to campus facilities they are stonewalled. Said McConnell: "The record shows that every time CLS has requested permission to meet they have gotten a complete run-around. They have been told: 'Well, you have to apply through your lawyer,' and then they don't get an answer on time, and when they get an answer it's: 'Well, because you are not a registered student group... There is no room for you.' He also pointed out that CLS has been left out of the student organization fair at the beginning of the year where groups introduce themselves to new students.

The problem is that while CLS may technically be entitled to use campus facilities upon accepted application, CLS may not enjoy the benefits of an on-campus organization such as preferential treatment in the use of facilities and open access to all facilities. As well, a certain amount of funds are spent in accommodating recognized on-campus organizations. These benefits are not afforded CLS who claims that it has been unfairly discriminated against by the university's administration.

Well, this just isn't fair. But, then, where in Scripture does it say that the world would be fair in its treatment of God's people? Jesus warned us that the world would hate us because it first hated Him:

"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.

"If you were of the world, the world would love its own. But because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

"Remember the word that I spoke to you, 'The servant is not greater than his lord.' If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also.

"But they will do all these things to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me." (John 15:18-21)

He also warned us that in this world we would have tribulation, but that we should be cheerful in the midst of that tribulation because He has overcome the world (John 16:33).

Nowhere does He say that we have any rights in this world. Whatever "rights" we have in the world are granted only at the behest of the world. If we insist on our rights as citizens of this world we are in essence saying that this world is our home.

Notice I used the word "insist." Paul appealed to his Roman citizenship; he appealed to Caesar. But had he been denied those appeals he would not have cried about it, insisting that he was being treated unfairly. Paul understood the difference between the kingdoms of this world and the Kingdom of God. He knew that his citizenship was in Heaven and not in Rome.

This is a spiritual citizenship that transcends that of our mortal existence.

Yes, we may appeal, but in that appeal we must not compromise our biblical standard, or acquiesce to the world's demands if they cause compromise with God's Word.

The harm to CLS is minor in comparison to what is happening to our brethren throughout the world. What "rights" do our brethren in China or the Middle East enjoy? In every Muslim country Christians are persecuted. Even in Israel, although Gentile Christians are accommodated, Jews who come to believe in Jesus Christ are persecuted, not so much by the state as by their fellow Jews, with the state turning a blind eye.

Yes, the time may come in the United States when believers in Jesus will suffer true persecution. When that happens all these annoying inconveniences will seem like nothing more than the nuisances they are.

What price will accommodation by the world cost Christians who appeal to the world for redress of grievances? And be sure that somewhere down the line some cost will be extracted.

Already CLS is willing to accept homosexuals in its ranks as long as they are not allegedly practicing their sin. But that in itself is opening the door to the influence of homosexuals in its ranks.

And that's the problem with Christian organizations that employ membership roles. Jesus did not say He would build His organization or institution. He said He would build His *ecclesia*—His called-out assembly of disciples.

That doesn't mean Christians cannot gather in other ways besides the local assembly; certainly there is room for campus groups and other such. But these are usually restricted to members who meet certain social criteria; they are not the Body of Christ at large. As such, they must either abide by the rules of the secular institution under which they operate, or they must separate themselves.

Separation may mean they cannot enjoy certain temporal benefits, but what is that in light of the calling upon the lives of the individuals in those organizations?

I believe the best thing that can happen to CLS is for the Supreme Court to rule against it. Then it will truly be free to honor the Lord in all its activities without having to answer to the world system that hates Him. **MS**

*As of the date we went to press there has been no further hearing of this case. Nor have we heard of a future date for adjudication.*



In this column we share a lesson from one of our house assembly meetings. It has been written as a narrative, but contains the thoughts of those who shared together. There is no single teacher in our assembly. This writing is a compilation of the thoughts expressed at one particular meeting, as well as additional thoughts I have added in producing it. *AJD*

**J**eremiah, was not a popular prophet. None of God's prophets have been popular, but some of the things Jeremiah had to say about Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar were especially onerous to the Jews. They believed that, as God's chosen people, they were somehow immune to judgment. That was the fatal mistake that caused them to wallow in their iniquity with seeming impunity. It fell to Jeremiah to tell them otherwise:

YHWH says this: "He who remains in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, but he who goes out to the Chaldeans shall live, for he shall have his life for a prey and shall live."

YHWH says this: "This city shall surely be given into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which shall take it."

Therefore the princes said to the king, "We beg you, let this man be put to death, because he weakens the hands of the men of war who remain in this city—and the hands of all the people—in speaking such words to them, because this man does not seek the welfare of the people, but the hurt." (Jeremiah 38:2-4)

Suppose someone were to say, "Americans, this is what God says: 'Islam is going to conquer you, and you are going to be sent as captives to Iran.'" Moreover, suppose he said, "God says this: 'You had better go without a fight.'"

What would be the reaction of most American Christians? They'd yell, "Traitor!"

Jeremiah was called a traitor; he was accused of purposefully weakening the army and the will of the people in order to injure the nation. In the world's eyes there's no other word for this than "treason."

Suppose we were in a similar situation today. Whom do you think would be the first to call the bearer of that news, "traitor"?

I believe it would be the so-called "Christian Right"—primarily Evangelicals.

I'm not saying that those who identify with the Christian Right are wrong about everything. In fact, I am in agreement with many things they say, particularly regarding the reasons this nation has given itself over to ungodliness in virtually every area of importance—the government; the media; education; business. I would say with them that the answer to America's ills is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that if men would only surrender their wills to the will of God He may bless the nation and preserve

it from destruction. I would also agree that the calamities that have come upon America in increasing numbers and intensity signal God's displeasure with a nation that at one time held strongly to the biblical ethic upon which the founders established our government, and which, for the most part, guided those same areas of importance for much of the first 200 years.

From a pragmatic viewpoint I understand how they would resist the idea that America should suffer God's judgment. It's within man's nature to resist tribulation. Human pride does not relish the thought of subservience to a higher power in Heaven or on earth. The flesh doesn't want to hear those who warn of such judgment. And except the Lord gave me His grace, I would probably be one of the resisters, particularly if I weren't convinced that the impending calamity were His will.

In such a scenario we would truly need God's grace; we would have to be able to listen to and heed His voice in any circumstance that seems detrimental to us.

I say, "heed His voice," with the understanding that unless God is speaking, anyone acting to lead their people into captivity would be committing treason. The distinction is whether or not God is speaking. This requires discernment and the wisdom He has promised to those who ask for it (James 1:5).

The Jews in Jeremiah's day lacked discernment and wisdom. They assumed that because they were special, God was going to come to their rescue. Their protest against prophesied judgment stemmed from lack of knowledge about the nature and person of God; it considered only what man thinks of as "love" without understanding that true love often requires discipline in order to correct the object of that love. It also stemmed from pride, often from national pride. Many Christians in America today have such a national pride. They seem to believe that God wraps Himself in the American flag.

There is also pride in being a Christian, which leads to an arrogant attitude toward non-Christians. Some even teach that it is okay for Christians to take advantage of non-believers because "the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just" (Proverbs 13:22). This is the same pride that Israel manifested in its refusal to surrender to God's judgment. They thought they were better than anyone else on the basis that they were God's "chosen people." But being chosen does not negate the need to be obedient and humble before God and men. Israel became a spoiled brat in spite of God's chastisement. It is no different with Christianity today. Bratty kids expect that everything is going to go their way. If something doesn't go their way they throw a tantrum and blame others for their own faults. They live in a fantasy world of privilege, largely because their hiring pastors have been permissive, not holding them to the hard elements of God's Word.

The two major eschatological schools teach either that the "Church" is going to rule the world (dominion theology), or that it will escape tribulation (the pre-tribulation secret rapture teachings); both neglect God's requirement for holiness and obedience in His people, believing that their privileged position precludes judgment of any kind. They look for comfort through either exaltation or escape. There will be a rude awakening.

God often uses the ungodly elements of the world to bring judgment upon His people. Just because we are in Christ does not mean we will escape judgment if we are living disobediently. While we are in these mortal bodies we are subject to authorities who are servants to Satan's world system.

All over the world, people—including many Christians—live in fear of their governments. Yes, even here in the "Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave." And that is by government's design. Governments want their citizens to live in fear, because that is how they keep them under control; that is how the people are made to support the ungodly system in which they must live.

The world is Satan's domain for the present, but it remains so at the behest of God who uses evil to test the hearts of men and to accomplish His own purposes for our lives.

Contrary to what we often hear in the Christian media and from some pulpits, those who are in Christ are not victims of this fallen world. Many voices in Christianity lament what they consider the victimization of Christianity by the world. They cry, "Woe is us; we are being treated unjustly by the world." They want to change the world so that it will be more accepting of Christians. But our Lord has not called us to change the world; He has not called us to be at home in this world; He has not given us a mandate to rule the nations without Him present on the earth. That time will come after His return, and following the resurrection of the saints. Rather, God's Word says, "Those who would live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12). Friendship with the world is enmity against God (James 4:4), and it will remain so until He returns.

We are pilgrims in a foreign land, and we are at the mercy of the authorities in this foreign land until the Lord redeems it.

Looking at Jeremiah's situation, what happened to him? Fearing the princes of Judah, Zedekiah the king had Jeremiah thrown into a dungeon where he was submerged to his armpits in muck. His adversaries wanted to silence the voice of God. Except for the pleas voiced to Zedekiah by Ebed-melech, an Ethiopian eunuch, Jeremiah would have perished there.

Ebed-melech was more righteous than the Jews. He perceived that what had been done to Jeremiah was evil. He had more faith in the true God than had the king, the princes, and probably most of the people.

After Jeremiah was released he told the king that if he would go willingly to the king of Babylon's princes he would live, and the city would not be destroyed. He also warned him that if he didn't do so, he would not escape, and the city would be destroyed. But when the Babylonians came, Zedekiah attempted to avoid capture by fleeing to Egypt. So God delivered him into the Babylonians' hands, whereupon they killed his sons in front of him, then gouged out his eyes. Thus came the end of Zedekiah's reign.

God had warned Zedekiah that he was not to flee to Egypt for protection, but Zedekiah was disobedient. Had he led his people into captivity willingly, everything would have gone well for them, and Jerusalem would not have been destroyed. God even promised that after seventy years He would bring the people back. But this meant that the vast majority going into captivity would not be coming back; they would have died in the captivity.

In the midst of Israel's distress something remarkable happened. Nebuchadnezzar gave Jeremiah a place of honor. This pagan king recognized Jeremiah's gift from God when Jeremiah's own people not only rejected him, but persecuted him.

Is there perhaps some grace for Nebuchadnezzar? Certainly there must be for Ebed-melech.

I can't say how far that grace goes; only God knows that. But later on Nebuchadnezzar recognized YHWH as the only true God, even though he allowed the false gods of the Babylonians to be worshipped by the people. Scripture records how God blessed Nebuchadnezzar after causing him to go mad for a season until he recognized YHWH's power (Daniel 4:34-37).

Like many pagans, Nebuchadnezzar knew of YHWH, the God of the Israelites, but it's possible that he merely recognized YHWH as the most powerful among all the gods. As king over a pagan nation he was obliged to allow his subjects to worship the gods they wished to worship, but He made a proclamation that YHWH is the God above all gods. For that, God blessed him, and did not require that he destroy every vestige of paganism in Babylon. God's command for destruction of pagan worship was for the Land He had granted to Israel. Only there did He command that idolaters be put to death. But He never issued such a command to any other nation or for any other place, although He often judged the nations Himself, not so much for their idolatry as for the degeneracy of their actions.

God has allowed pagan nations to thrive provided they did not devolve into licentiousness. Just so, believers in Jesus are not called to destroy paganism in our midst. Nor are we called to establish a theocratic or theonomic (rule by God's Law) society. We are called merely as witnesses of what Jesus Christ has done to redeem men, and to offer His redemption to the lost. For that we can expect persecution not only from the world, but from those within Christianity who lack understanding and who have gone after religious error. Unbelievers are often more loving and sympathetic toward believers whom they see suffering for their faith than are some Christians. Much persecution against true believers in Jesus has come at the hands of Christian church institutions, both Catholic and Reformed.

Who will receive greater condemnation—those who, having no knowledge of God's Word, persecute believers in Jesus, or professing Christians who persecute those trying to live by God's Word rather than by those Christians' institutional decrees?

It's easy for Christians to judge non-believers; they see as totally worthless the good that non-Christians do. But God's Word indicates that He honors the good works of non-believers.

Christians are often quick to point out Isaiah 55:8-9 as an indictment against non-believers: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says YHWH.

But they neglect what follows: "For as the rain and snow come down from the heavens and do not return there, but water the earth and cause it to bring forth and bud so that it may give seeds to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My Word be that goes forth from out of My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing where I sent it" (Isaiah 55:10-11).

Couple Isaiah 10:11 with Jesus' words in Matthew 5:45, spoken after He commanded His disciples to love their enemies: "For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

Perhaps these words in Isaiah are for believers as much as for unbelievers. If God has grace toward the ungodly, who are we to withhold grace from them? Or to judge or condemn them?

How far God's grace goes toward those outside faith in Jesus Christ, I don't know. I know the fate of those who hate Jesus Christ and who willfully reject Him—to the God-haters—those who willfully pervert the Gospel. But there are so many others in the world whose fate we must leave to God.

Take the Ethiopian Ebed-melech. We know nothing more about him than that he took Jeremiah's side. He wasn't able to enter into the congregation of Israel at the temple, but would have had to remain in the court of the Gentiles. Yet an unfaithful Israelite priest could enter the holy place. An unfaithful high priest could even enter the holy of holies provided he accomplished all the ritual cleansing required under the Law. He could then claim that he stood in the presence of YHWH. Yet Gentiles who had greater faith and greater love for YHWH than did some of the priests could not mingle with the Jews in the temple area.

But in Christ, everything changed. So how do we judge?

Jesus said, "He who is not against us is on our side" (Mark 9:38)

What does that mean? Does it mean that non-believers who love and care for believers in Jesus—who comfort believers during times of distress or want—are on Jesus' side?

The context of Mark 9:38 has to do with someone who was casting out devils in the name of Jesus, yet who was not from among His chosen disciples. But may it not also apply to those who, though lacking faith in Jesus, care for His disciples?

The following verse 39 says, "For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."

The Lord doesn't elaborate, but He says that the Father will reward those who care for His children.

One might argue that the water must be given in the name of Jesus, which would imply that the giver is a Christian. But that isn't entirely clear. Could the water not de facto be given in Jesus' name simply because the recipient is a believer in Jesus?

Scripture seems to indicate that not all non-believers will suffer the same degree of punishment, nor will all believers receive the same degree of reward. In truth, not all believers will receive rewards (1 Corinthians 3:10-15), and some may suffer differing degrees of punishment (Luke 12:47-48).

Is this contrary to the accepted Evangelical understanding of grace that has no consideration for works?

In the Book of Revelation we are told that at the Great White Throne Judgment, the dead, small and great, will stand before God, and there will be two books opened; one is called the Book of Life. The dead will be judged according to their works by what is written in those books. That includes the Book of Life. Those whose names are found in the Book of Life will be judged as well, not just by their faith, but by their works. God's salvation is purposed for good works, not just for idle belief.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has previously ordained that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10)

This is not meant to denigrate the biblical truth of salvation by grace, but much teaching in the Body of Christ puts so much emphasis on just believing, that obedience to God's Word and His desire that we work for His Kingdom is largely neglected.

The judgment of believers is another study. My point is that we must be careful not to judge those outside the Body of Christ. Our judgment must be reserved for those within the Body of Christ, and even then for the purpose of preserving the integrity of the Gospel, and/or to bring a brother correction for his own spiritual benefit. If we judge merely to satisfy our own self-righteousness—or even our own sense of righteousness, then are we not unfaithful to God's Word, and in sin.?

God knows the heart; we do not. Nor do we know the work God is doing in the lives of others. We do not know the mind of God beyond what is written in Scripture.

Bringing this into practical consideration, when Barack Obama speaks, do I know the mind of God in relation to Obama's words?

In some ways, yes. We know from many of his words and his actions that he is an anti-Christ. But is it possible that God is speaking through Obama? Is it possible that God is speaking through Nancy Pelosi, or Harry Reid, or Barney Frank?

I'm not saying that they are speaking the Word of God. What I'm saying is that we may speak the truth about these people and about the things they propose, but we must understand that they are there by God's design. If we don't believe that, then we don't believe His Word (Daniel 4:17; Romans 13:1-8). Either God establishes all authority as His Word says, or His Word means nothing. And obedience to His Word is the crux of overcoming.

To think we overcome by faith while disobeying the commandments of the Lord is erroneous. That's not overcoming; it's a refusal to enter into the Land reserved for those who overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil through discipline according to God's Word. There comes a time when the Lord says, "Okay, if you refuse to go into the Land, then you won't go in."

Just as Israel refused to go into the Land because of unbelief, many Christians won't enter into the Promised Land of the millennial Kingdom because of unbelief.

What of those who disdain the idea of the millennial Kingdom—who choose rather to believe that Christianity will one day triumph over the nations without Jesus' return? Would their unbelief qualify them to inherit the Kingdom they reject?

We are not talking about eternal salvation. Although Israel succumbed to unbelief and had to wander in the wilderness for forty years, the people still had access to God. But they lost the reward of entering into the Promised Land. Just so, the reward of the millennial Kingdom of Christ is reserved for those who overcome the world and have hope for that Kingdom.

There is only one Truth, but there are billions upon billions of lies, not only in the world, but in the Christian institutions. We must study God's Word to show ourselves approved, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. **MS**

# Ted Haggard

(Continued from page 5)

with many other denominations who openly accept the rich diversity of the types of believers that are within their community, and it's been a great honor for me to be in participation with many of them."

King and Knapp consistently badgered Botsford, placing him on the defensive and accusing him of "judging" when he is a sinner himself. Botsford made the distinction between embracing one's sin and attempting to overcome one's sin.

Haggard took the position that both Botsford and Knapp are "in process" of growing in Christ, so there should be tolerance for both sides of the issue.

## COMMENTARY

Larry King has consistently rejected the God of the Bible and of the faithful among his ancient ancestors. Often he has taken delight in confounding weak leaders within Christianity who waffle on the truth of Scripture under his challenging questions. As for Knapp, the issue isn't that she rejected "church teachings," but that she has rejected the Scriptures that speak clearly against homosexuality as a sin against nature. She made the excuse that it's a matter of interpretation of the original languages. This was a challenge against Jesus' question, "Why do you call Me 'Lord' and do not do what I say?"

It is claimed that Jesus never said anything against homosexuality, laying the "blame" on Moses and Paul. But this is a denial of the Scriptures as the inspired Word of God. Jesus did not have to iterate every teaching in detail to make that teaching valid. It is enough that the Holy Spirit gave the Word of God to men, and that Jesus affirmed the teachings of Moses and commissioned Paul as an apostle.

Rejecting Scripture in order to be "true to oneself" is the sin of pride, which underlies all sin. Satan was being "true to himself" when he sought to rise above the heights in order to be like God. Pride causes man to distort the truth into something his soul can use for its own gratification. Man searches for an excuse to sin rather than reject the sin in the desire to please God. This is revealed in Knapp's excuse for believing that homosexuality can be compatible with Christian faith.

This is a problem among many who call themselves "Christian." They receive affirmation from others who call themselves "Christian" and choose to direct their lives according to that affirmation rather than by the Word of God. Knapp has chosen to align herself with the "liberal" elements within Christianity that regard the Bible as a "living document" open to interpretation according to one's personal proclivities. Although many homosexuals may deny that their "orientation" is a choice, Knapp, among others, has made a choice on which "interpretation" to accept and which to reject.

It doesn't matter what some denominations think one way or the other. What matters is the clear teaching of God's Word.

The onslaught by King and Knapp against Botsford was pitiful. Such dialogues demonstrate how unwise it is to try to

publicly bring the light of God's Word to someone who has consistently rejected that light. It is a certainty that King will badger and talk over someone with whom he disagrees. He is in the catbird seat, and he is an expert at playing the game.

Botsford is to be commended for attempting to bring truth into this dark arena. But he allowed King to sidetrack him into discussing his "choice" to be heterosexual. Botsford didn't choose to be heterosexual; heterosexuality is natural to God's creation. It is not to be compared to that which Scripture calls "against nature" (Rom. 1:26) and "an abomination" (Lev. 20:12).

By saying he made the choice to be heterosexual, which is obviously not true, Botsford unwittingly fell into the argument over "sexual orientation" as a matter of choice or non-choice. It isn't a matter of choice vs. non-choice; it is a matter of God's natural order vs. sin. When we allow the world to set the rules of the game we place ourselves at a disadvantage.

Sadly, Botsford missed the opportunity to correct King, but, admittedly, it was likely very difficult to think clearly in the maelstrom of evil being hurled at him. Again, a good reason to think twice (and pray fervently) before accepting the position of "guest" on *Larry King Live* or, for that matter, any public arena controlled by unregenerate men.

Eventually Knapp began to castigate Botsford for judging her, telling him "You're not that man in my life. Speak to your congregation."

Botsford's defense was that he is a role model to stand up for truth. Knapp respondee, "In your congregation and your community."

"I'm here as a representative of Jesus Christ," said Botsford.

King immediately jumped in with, "But you are judging; you are judging!"

It never seems to occur to people who accuse others of judging that they themselves are judging the person whose judgment they don't want to hear.

We all make judgments. The question is, on what do we base our judgments. It is hypocritical to make judgments based on our subjective thinking. It is scripturally justified to make judgments based on God's inerrant Word. This is why Jesus admonished the people not to judge according to appearance, but to apply righteous judgment (John 7:24). His other admonitions against judging had to do with hypocritical judgment—judging others while we remain unrepentant.

If anyone has been consistently guilty of unrighteous judgment it is Larry King who makes a habit of judging Christians for their stand on God's Word. But that is to be expected from unbelievers; we are not to condemn those outside the Body of Christ, simply because they do not have the light of God within them through the presence of the Holy Spirit. But we are to judge those within the Body of Christ because they de facto claim to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Botsford's ultimate, righteous judgment on one who claims to be a Christian (Knapp) is that she wants to justify her sin. Her indignant response was that he was assuming that they both agree that homosexuality is a choice and a sin, both of which she denies.

Ted Haggard chimed in:

“I think both of them have some good points. I really appreciate what Jennifer is saying and what she is going through. And I think her big premise is that she is on a journey just like every one of us are. She accepts the fact that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, that God is working in us, that we have his Scriptures to work with. And it is true people read them differently and people interpret them differently. And the pastor has a point in saying it is his role as a pastor to try to be salt and light, and represent the Word the way it's read. I do think, though, that the important overall message is that we emphasize personal relationship with God, and the core of everything that we say is this wonderful delight in who Jesus is and what He does. He accepts the fact that we've all fallen short. He accepts the fact that there [is a] broad range of sins. We humans say one is more important than another. But he talks about how all of it separates us. And he accepts the fact that we are all on a journey that won't be completed until we see him face-to-face. So the pastor is right. Let me finish this. The pastor is right in that he sins. And Jennifer is right in that she sins. Both are saved by the grace of God. And it would be good for them not to judge each other.”

To King's question, “Do you, Ted, believe that homosexuality is a sin?” Haggard replied, “I believe that when people don't fulfill God's perfect plan for their life, they're falling short and they're sinning. And I think people sin all day, every day, and that everybody, regardless of the complex nature of their sexuality or whatever—everybody needs the grace of God.”

That waffle has a lot syrup on it.

Yes, sin is sin. But the issue is the justification of sin. Where there is no repentance there is no forgiveness. One may speak of God's alleged “unconditional love,” but that's ignoring the reality that to enter into His love one must surrender one's will to His. Otherwise one remains outside His love which is manifested through His forgiveness upon repentance.

Haggard further waffled by saying, “When the pastor says Jesus is Lord of his life, that is true. But he is still in process. It could be some other violations that he has. But the core of the Christian faith is a relationship with God, where God lovingly walks us through....So Jennifer has a group of believers she meets with. They study the Scripture. They can go on that. They can do that process. That process obviously is not going to be Pastor Bob's church. It will be another group of believers which is why we have a diversity of churches.”

Jennifer Knapp did justify her sin, continuously. Not telling someone they have to walk the same path is not the same as not justifying her sin. One can care less how others live their lives; it is insisting that one's way of living is not unrighteous when in truth it is unrighteous that is justification for one's sins.

Haggard's lame excuse that everyone is in process doesn't excuse anyone's sins. His implication that Jennifer Knapp is growing spiritually ignores the reality that she has slipped backwards into a sin that is consuming her. That is not growing “in process.” It is trampling underfoot the blood of Christ. **MS**



## FEEDBACK

Dear Jean,

I would like Al's book, *A False Doctrine of Subtle Purpose*. I am swamped with Saddleback. They are trying to dominate the Protestant services at this prison. Our bulletin a month ago said that “Rick was dedicated to turn today's inmates into tomorrow's pastors.”

That is real spooky. I am watching the Bible being replaced by Rick Warren's videos. And I saw 200 KJV pew Bibles thrown out and replaced with 200 *The Message* pew Bibles.

I need help! I have been a servant of God Almighty for 22 of my 25-year incarceration. And I know this is wrong, bad, ungodly, and evil.

Please send my request.

In Christ's service,

MB, Ione, CA



Dearly Beloved in Christ Jesus,

You faithfully supported me while I was serving time in prison, and now have honored my request to receive *Media Spotlight* at my new FREE home address.

Yes, I'm free now! And the Lord is blessing me! I'm doing Christian ministry voluntarily, working for a mission, and doing correspondence with prisoners. I'm also playing guitar for Sunday school, and have played at a convalescent home and a hospital. You sent *Media Spotlight* to me for those hard years I was serving prison time. It helped encourage me and also entertained me. I always passed it on to the next person that wanted to read it.

Thanks Al and Jean. Keep up the wonderful work you're doing, serving our Lord Jesus Christ!

J.C., Laguna Woods, CA

Dear J.C.,

Thank you for blessing us with news of your freedom, and for letting us know you are serving the Lord.

Al and Jean



Dear Ones,

Thank you for sending me a duplicate copy of the issue that never arrived. Your publications feed my spirit man so richly that I don't want to miss any issue. Your material is right on for these times we live in.

In His love,

N.M., La Verne, CA

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.



## Jean's Turn

### DISRUPTION & RESTORATION

I was a little apprehensive on my way to the nursing home to visit Lucy who had recently been admitted. Lucy is a tiny, five-foot tall redheaded lady that I became acquainted with through my water fitness class. She's known there for her bright smile and cheerful countenance. She and her husband raised six children, and they now have 20 grandchildren! However, her life took a sudden downturn when she tripped and fell at home and broke her collarbone. While being treated at the hospital, all the symptoms of full-blown Parkinson's disease came upon her. I was told she was confined to a wheelchair and quite depressed.

I've been praying for her. At the time of my visit, Lucy had perked up considerably. She had received physical and occupational therapy, and now hopes to walk again with the aid of a cane.

Disruptions in life are common to all of us. But when the big disruptions occur—perhaps the loss of a loved one, serious illness or accident, severe personal losses, or any number of occurrences, we can experience the feeling of complete devastation for a time.

I'm reminded of all the emotional upheaval I went through when Al first had heart bypass surgery. Then just a few years later, even more so when he suffered cardiac arrest. The Lord was merciful and took tender care of us through it all. He graciously restored us. I'll be forever thankful!

As difficult as they may be, trials are a necessary part of life. Some suffer much more than others. As believers we depend upon our Lord's strength to pull us through. Faith is our anchor. He will not fail as we put our complete trust in Him.

*The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to Him in Song. (Psalms 28:7)*

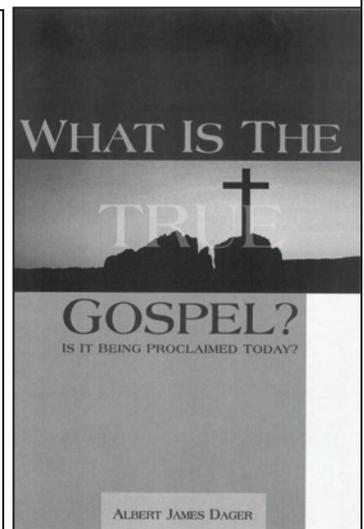
These days, the world's eyes are focused upon a volcanic eruption—Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull volcano and it's disrupting effects upon air travel. Al and I didn't live in Washington at the time Mount St. Helen's volcano erupted in 1980. The *Seattle Times* reported that within three minutes of detonating, it produced a massive landslide, reducing the mountain's summit by 1300 feet, and destroying 230 square miles of forest. For years there was much disruption in the tourist industry and commerce because of that event. But now, after thirty years have passed, the *Seattle Times* states that "the eruption created an entirely new ecosystem." More than 130 new ponds and two new lakes were birthed at the foot of the volcano. Frogs, toads and salamanders have colonized; a wide variety of plants have sprung up; herds of elk and other animals have populated the area. This is surely a vivid example of complete devastation followed by the miracle hand of God's restoration!

May this be an encouragement to those who are undergoing disrupting and perhaps even devastating circumstances in their lives. Our God is able to bring you through.

*You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created. (Revelation 4:11)*

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. This book points the reader back to Scripture for understanding the significance of the true Gospel Jesus proclaimed.



Order at [www.swordpublishers.com](http://www.swordpublishers.com)