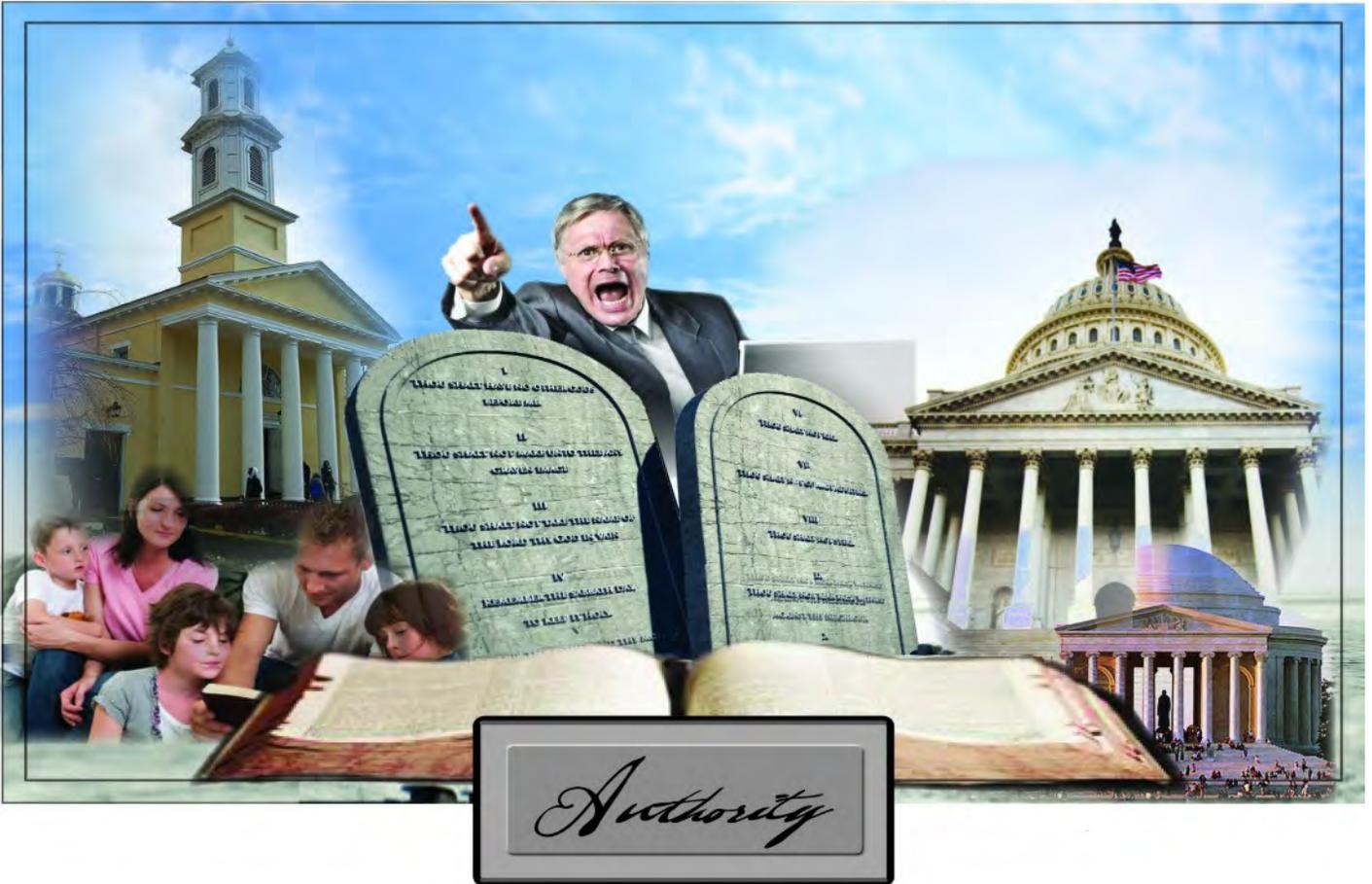


MEDIA



SPOTLIGHT

A BIBLICAL ANALYSIS OF RELIGIOUS & SECULAR MEDIA



The Biblical Approach

By Albert James Dager

EVERY YEAR, WITH increasing intensity, we hear from news media of lawlessness, anarchy, disrespect for and abuse of authority. This, not only on the part of average citizens, but on the part of government officials at the highest levels. Sadly, this is expected of a fallen world; man's ego resents having to answer to a higher power, whether temporal or spiritual. And it is the level of disrespect for spiritual authority that measures how much temporal authority will be disrespected. Godless people become rebellious people on all levels.

From the time we are born until we surrender to the true God of the Bible, we are rebellious in our spirits. Even then

we have to constantly struggle against our carnal nature that wants to assert our will over the will of those who hold authority over us.

From infancy we have needs, and we want them met without delay. That is okay for infants; they have no other way to survive. But it is not okay once we reach an age where we know right from wrong. That age varies from person to person, but it isn't usually more than two-years-of-age that one begins to assert oneself against one's parents' authority. There's a reason they're called "the terrible twos. If not held in check, each progressive year will see more and more rebellion.

(Continued on page 8)

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

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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 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. ❖

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



A PERSONAL NOTE

Dear Friends,

For this first issue published upon entering our 39th year, we have redesigned *Media Spotlight*. The masthead has a new type font, and we have attempted to make our pages more airy for a cleaner look. We hope you like this new format.

We will also be focusing on the graphics used to illustrate the content of our lead articles. Carrie Nelson, who has been producing the graphics for our “History of Anti-Christ” series, as well as occasional other articles, has offered to lend her talents for our lead articles as well. We are grateful for her kindness.

It seems as if problems sometimes come in bunches. The past few months have brought a number of challenges that have tried our patience and set us back in our schedule to produce this issue. It has been a comedy of errors that began with our bank selling our branch to a smaller bank. We were told that everything would remain the same, and that we would have the same access to on-line banking that was so convenient with our former bank. Well, that wasn’t true. Our new bank’s on-line banking site would have been a marvel 15 years ago, but compared to what we had, it’s cumbersome and doesn’t provide all the features our previous bank had to offer. It also takes up to four steps to accomplish what our previous bank’s site did in one step.

That’s just the start. The new bank is more “streamlined” in processing deposits. Instead of using deposit slips, the teller scans each check through a scanner. If we have more than one or two checks, the teller has to double check the scanner’s accuracy by entering each check by hand on a calculator. Then she checks that total with the scanner’s total. If they disagree she has to do it over. And over. And over. Until they come out in agreement. One problem is that most checks are handwritten, and not all are very legible or dark enough. The first time Jean deposited a number of checks, she waited some fifteen minutes at the counter while the teller kept trying to get the totals reconciled.

That’s just the start. After a month-and-a-half, we still haven’t received our checks for our new accounts with this bank.

So we decided to drive an hour to another city and reopen all our accounts with our old bank’s branch there. That has had its own set of problems, but they have been resolved after a few weeks of trying.

In the midst of this, Al’s hard drive on his computer failed. A good brother in Christ who we befriended after moving to Sequim last year is a former computer technician. He has gotten everything running up to snuff. But Al did have to reinstall all of his programs and, in the process, upgrade some.

Other problems have added to these, but we don’t wish to burden our readers with everything. Suffice it to say that the Lord is working all things out for our good.

It is our prayer that you, dear friend, are being blessed and are rejoicing in the Lord for all things. Our continued thanks to those of you who remember us in prayer before the Lord, and who help us with your kind gifts.

In Jesus’ love,

Al and Jean

RISEN

A Review

By Albert James Dager



IMAGINE YOURSELF A skeptic regarding the resurrection of Christ, who encounters situations that baffle you. You cannot explain the fervor of His disciples who insist that they have been visited by Him, have eaten with Him, and are willing to suffer for their testimonies. Put yourself backwards, some 2,000 years in history as a Roman Tribune tasked by Pontius Pilate to find the body of Jesus in order to prevent a feared rebellion by the people who are being told He is alive.

That is the premise for *Risen* that Christian movie reviewer Ted Baehr calls “a powerful evangelistic story of the Resurrection.”

The official website for *Risen* quotes Tyler O’Neil of PJ Media:

Like *The Passion of the Christ* before it, *Risen* actually gets the Bible story right.

On the official poster for *Risen* we can read, “Witness the manhunt that changed the course of human history.”

Please. There is no secular or biblical history of such a manhunt. And if there were, it didn’t change the course of human history. Not even the Lord’s resurrection changed the course of human history. The course of human history has always been set by God and prophesied in His Word. That course included the Lord’s death and resurrection.

Even so, Christian leaders are praising the film not only for its artistic and technical quality, but as an inspiring biblical epic.

Except it isn’t biblical.

Yes, it contains some biblical scenes, but they are tainted by the inclusion of non-biblical fictionalization.

Nor does it, as claimed by O’Neil, “get the Bible story right.”

At the center of the story is Roman Tribune Clavius (Joseph Fiennes), who oversees the crucifixion of Jesus. When it is discovered that the body of Jesus is missing, and the two guards had fallen asleep, Pontius Pilate (Peter Firth) sends Clavius on a quest to find the body and display it publicly. Pilate fears the people would be taken in by rumors of Jesus’ resurrection and foment a revolution.

The sleeping guards story is *de regueur* in Gospel stories, as if to cater to the Jewish excuse for the claim that the Lord’s body was stolen by His disciples.

So, too, are British accents. But this film puts an unintentional humorous twist on that. The upper class

Romans speak with British accents, while the rank-and-file soldiers sport Cockney brogues.

The movie is pretty compelling fiction up until the point where Clavius discovers that the Lord’s disciples are in the upper room of a house. Then it turns, lacking for a better word, hokey.

Clavius kicks in the door to find Jesus sitting at a table surrounded by His disciples and Mary Magdalene (portrayed, as usual, as a converted prostitute). Stunned, Clavius doesn’t know what to think. He saw Jesus die, and even himself instructed his soldier to pierce His side. How could He be alive and showing no signs of the torture He endured?

Then getting the Bible story “right,” he witnesses Thomas coming into the room and falling at Jesus’ side. There, he sees Jesus put Thomas’s hand in the wounds of His body.

Suddenly Jesus disappears, after telling them to meet Him in Galilee.

Clavius decides to leave his post and follow the disciples to Galilee where he helps them fish to no avail until someone on the shore tells them to cast the net on the right side of the boat.

As Clavius becomes one among the apostles, he still can’t fathom what is happening even after seeing Jesus heal a leper (who just walks away as if nothing particularly unusual had happened to him).

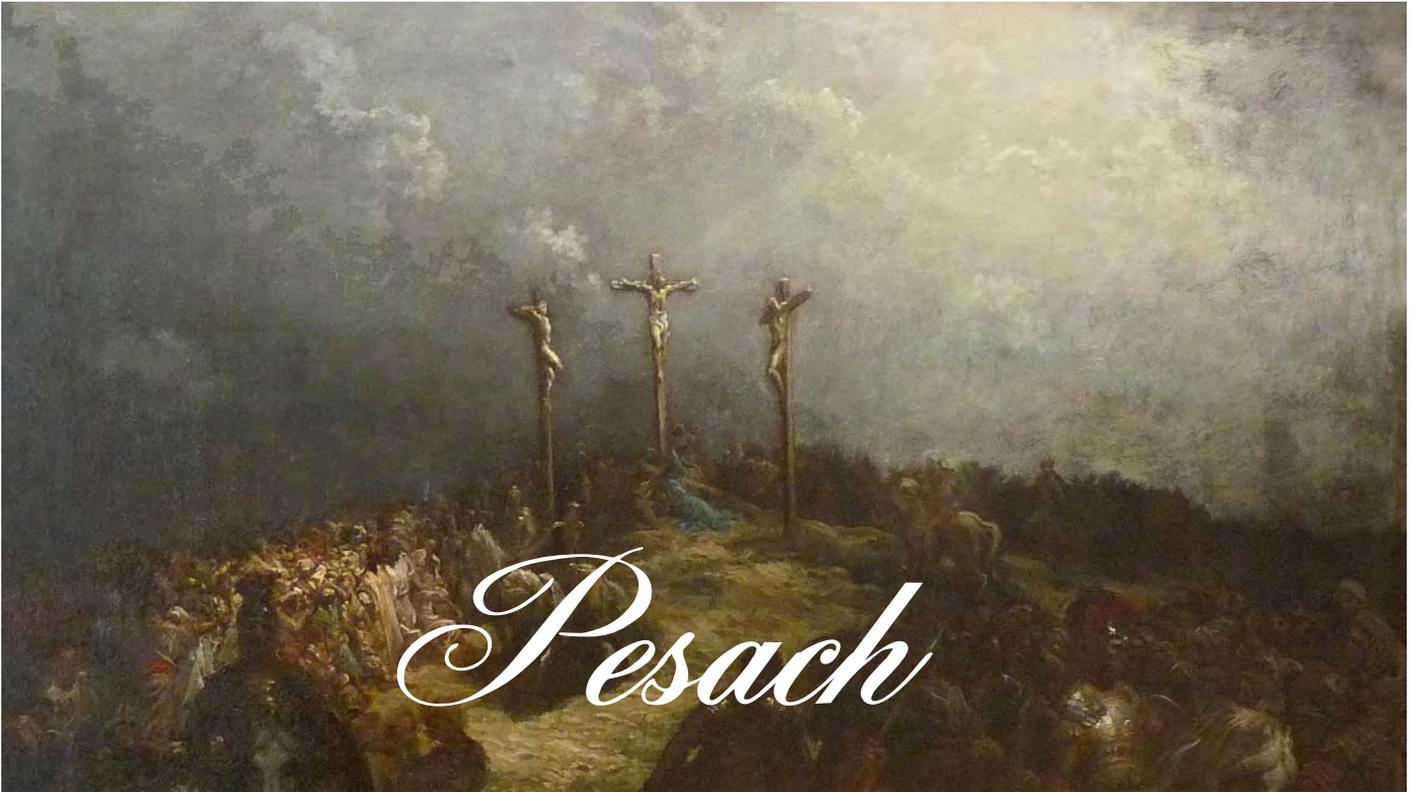
Asked by Peter to become one of them, Clavius declines, saying that he is forever changed, and deciding to go back to Pilate.

Like all biblical epics, this one is difficult to sit through for any discerning believer in Christ. The liberties taken with Scripture disqualify it for serious consideration as scripturally accurate, even if some aspects of it are true to Scripture.

Pardon me, but I do not believe the Word of God is open to man’s conjecture and fantasy no matter the intentions of those who brutalize it for any particular reason.

But today’s Christians view Scripture as something that can be molded to suit anyone’s imagination. As long as it can be made into a compelling drama—an entertaining take on an otherwise convicting and often not-so-pleasant truth—then it can be “fun” to view it from the perspective of religious media producers.

There is much more that could be said, but I don’t wish to waste any more space on this subject. ❖



WHEN YAHWEH BROUGHT Israel out of captivity from Egypt He commanded His people to observe a feast day every year to commemorate the night before they were released from bondage to Pharaoh. That night was called *Pesach* (Passover), because it was the night that Yahweh brought his final plague upon Egypt—the death of the firstborn child in every Egyptian family, including Pharaoh’s—and passed over the Hebrews’ homes that were marked with the blood of a lamb:

YHWH spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, “This month shall be to you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying in the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house. And if the household is too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb.

“Your lamb shall be without blemish—a male of the first year. You shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. And the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take from the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the lintel of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the meat in that night, roasted with fire. And they shall eat it with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs.

“Do not eat it raw or boiled at all with water, but roasted with fire—his head with his legs, and with its center. You shall let nothing of it remain until the morning, but that which remains of it until the morning you shall burn with fire.

“You shall eat it this way: with your waist girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand. You shall eat it in haste.

“It is YHWH’s Passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and animal. I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt. I am YHWH.

“The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

“This day shall be a memorial to you, and you shall keep it a feast to YHWH throughout your generations; you shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever.

“Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall put away leaven out of your houses, because whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.

“In the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done in

them, except that which every man must eat; only that may be done by you.

“You shall observe the feast of unleavened bread because in this same day I have brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day in your generations by an ordinance forever.

“In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.” (Exodus 12:1-18)

The Passover represents not only Israel’s release from bondage to Egypt, but the release from bondage to sin for all whose faith is in Yahweh, the only true God.

This year, 2016, the Passover will fall on April 22, according to the Gregorian solar calendar, and Rabbinic Judaism’s lunar calendar. But Rabbinic Judaism has concluded this year a leap year or “pregnant” year, adding a 29-day month called Adar II, and thus pushing Nisan 14 (Abib 14), Passover Day, to April 22.

Yahweh never instituted a leap year; that is an invention of Rabbinic Judaism in order to bring the Hebrew lunar calendar into closer conformity to the Gregorian solar calendar. The current rabbinic calendar evolved over time, incorporating elements of the Babylonian calendar. So the Hebrew year is about eleven days shorter than the solar Gregorian calendar. Thus, the Hebrew calendar adds one month seven times within a 19-year cycle. Barring the leap year month of Adar II, Passover, would fall on March 22, 2016.

Adar II is not the only tampering with the Hebrew calendar by Rabbinic Judaism, which has also concluded that the Jewish civil new year begins on Tishri 1, leaving the ecclesiastical year beginning on Abib 1. Thus the current Hebrew year according to Rabbinic Judaism coincided with September 14, 2015. This is known as Rosh Hashanah, which is not found in the Torah. But Yahweh made no distinction between “ecclesiastical” and “civil” years.

Rabbinic Judaism, which incorporates elements of Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism), has so convoluted the calendar instituted by Yahweh that it is virtually impossible to ascertain the proper times for Israel’s feasts today. Might this be part of God’s plan to prevent any real opportunity to worship Him apart from honoring His Son, just as the destruction of the temple has done?

Even so, the Hebrew calendar has remained faithful in respects to the seventh-day Sabbath which has never been changed since it was instituted by God.

Unfortunately, even so-called Messianic Jews are affected by Rabbinic Judaism, and most will commemorate Passover and all the feasts according to its calendar. Christendom will continue to celebrate its pagan Easter festival on the first Sunday after the full moon that occurs on or soonest after March 21, but calculations vary from East to West. This year,

the full moon closest after March 21 will be Tuesday, March 22, so Easter will fall on Sunday, March 27.

I have offered this information for our brethren who wish to commemorate Passover this year, so they may understand that the Hebrew feasts are not honored by Yahweh, having been fulfilled by the sacrifice of our Lord. Even so, I see no reason not to commemorate Passover, only with the understanding that any commemoration carries no intrinsic appeal to God’s grace. Unfortunately, this issue will arrive too late for some to make an informed decision, but I leave that in our Lord’s hands. He knows our hearts. Perhaps this information will be of use for some.

Even so, it behooves us to understand some distinctions between Rabbinic Judaism’s practices and those instituted by Yahweh. For example, we find quite a distinction between the Passover meal and the Seder of Rabbinic Judaism.

Exodus 12 – The Original Passover Meal

We’ve already discussed Yahweh’s instructions for the Passover, but we will iterate the portion related to the meal:

“Your lamb shall be without blemish—a male of the first year. You shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. And the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening, and they shall take from the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the lintel of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the meat in that night, roasted with fire. And they shall eat it with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs.” (Exodus 12: 5-8)

The Passover meal is not the same as the Seder, which came out of Rabbinic Judaism. The only elements to the Passover meal kept by Moses were lamb, bitter herbs and unleavened bread made of flour mixed with oil. Exodus 29:40 tells us that it was also eaten with a drink offering of wine. Rabbinic Judaism’s Seder adds many other elements.

Deuteronomy 16:5-7 gave Israel additional conditions for observing the Passover:

“You may not sacrifice the Passover within any of your doors, which YHWH your Eloyhim gives you. But at the place that YHWH your Eloyhim shall choose to place His name in, there you shall sacrifice the Passover at evening, at the going down of the sun, at the time that you came out of Egypt. And you shall roast and eat it in the place that YHWH your Eloyhim shall choose, and in the morning you shall turn and go into your homes.”

Leviticus 23:5-8 addresses the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which Passover Day precedes:

“In the fourteenth day of the first month at evening is YHWH’s Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the

same month is the feast of unleavened bread to YHWH; for seven days you must eat unleavened bread.

“In the first day you shall have a consecrated gathering. You shall do no laborious work. But you shall offer by fire to YHWH seven days. In the seventh day is a consecrated gathering. You shall do no laborious work.”

THE LORD’S PASSOVER MEAL

Matthew 27:17-30 relates how our Lord observed His last Passover before being crucified:

Now the first of unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus, asking, “Where do you wish that we prepare for You to eat the Passover?”

He said, “Go into the city to such a man, and say to him, ‘The Master says, “My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.”’”

The disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they made the Passover ready.

Now when the evening came, He sat down with the twelve. And as they ate, He said, “Truly I say to you, that one of you will betray Me.”

They were exceedingly sorrowful, and each began to ask, “Lord, is it I?”

He answered and said, “He who dips his hand with Me in the dish, the same shall betray Me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.”

Then Judas, who betrayed Him, responded and asked, “Master, is it I?”

He said to him, “You have said it.”

As they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.”

And He took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “You drink all of it, for this is My blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on, until that day when I drink it anew with you in My Father’s Kingdom.”

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.

In contrast to the prevailing Roman means of reckoning a day from midnight to midnight, the Hebrew day is from sunset to sunset. Thus there are two evenings to a Jewish day: 1) when the sun sets beginning the day; 2) when the sun sets ending the day. John 18:28 confirms that the traditional eating of the meal was during the second evening, as that is when the priests ate it:

Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the hall of judgment. And it was early, and they themselves did

not go into the judgment hall lest they would be defiled, and so that they may eat the Passover.

Yet the Law given by Yahweh to Moses did not stipulate a particular time of the day on Abib 14 one was to eat the Passover other than “in the evening.” So Jesus ate His Passover during the first evening of Abib 14—the first of two evenings in that day (after the sun had gone down on Abib 13)—in order to fulfill the Law and yet later offer Himself as the perfect Lamb to be sacrificed for the sins of the people.

The apostle Paul relates how “the Lord’s supper,” as he called it, should be approached by believers in Christ:

For I have received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus took bread the same night in which He was betrayed. And when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat. This is My body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.”

In the same manner also, He took the cup, when he had eaten, saying, “This cup is the New Covenant in My blood. As often as you drink it, do this in remembrance of Me.”

For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you demonstrate the Lord’s death until He comes.

Therefore, whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup of the Lord irreverently, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he who eats and drinks irreverently, eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this reason many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord so that we would not be condemned with the world.

Therefore my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

And if any man is hungry, let him eat at home so that you do not come together into judgment. (1 Corinthians 11:23-34)

The “Communion” practiced in the churches today is not the Passover, but merely a ritual that was gleaned from the Lord’s sharing of the cup and bread with His apostles. He did not say to do it often, but, “As often as you do it, do it in remembrance of Me.”

There are some who believe He was saying, “As often as you do this Passover, do it in remembrance of Me.” But Paul seems to indicate that the bread and cup were shared at the love feasts of the first-century believers in Jesus:

Therefore, when you come together in one place it is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating, everyone takes his own supper before others, and one is hungry, and another is drunk.

What? Have you not houses in which to eat and to drink? Or do you despise the assembly of God and shame those who do not have? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you. (1 Corinthians 11:20-22)

ON WHICH DAYS DID JESUS DIE AND RISE AGAIN?

Christian tradition, derived from Roman Catholicism, insists that Jesus was crucified on "Good Friday," and rose on "Easter Sunday." But that is not possible, else His prophecy recorded in Matthew's Gospel that He would be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights would be proven false.

Then some of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, "Master, we would see a sign from you."

But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and there shall be no sign given to it but the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the huge fish's stomach, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matthew 12:38-40)

The Lord gave up His spirit around noon on 14 Abib (the sixth hour according to Mark 15:33-37). He said He would be in the heart of the earth (Hades) for three days and three nights—approximately 72 hours. We know the women came to the tomb at the end of the weekly Sabbath as it was drawing on, or dawning, toward the first day of the week (Matthew 28:1), and the tomb was already empty. If the Lord was in the heart of the earth sometime after noon on 14 Abib, then He would have risen at about the same time three days later.

The day after Passover Day was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened bread—a "high day" (John 19:31). It was not the weekly Sabbath; that would come two days later. After the high Sabbath day, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought and prepared spices to anoint His body (Mark 16:1). They rested on the weekly Sabbath day, then came the next day to the tomb, which was the first day of the week.

The King James Version of Mark 16:1 says the women "had bought sweet spices," giving the impression that the women already had the spices. But the word so translated is merely *agorazo*, which means went to market, or bought. The KJV translators, being Church of England scholars, were evidently trying to reconcile the tradition of a Friday crucifixion with the women going after the Sabbath to buy the spices. They couldn't have bought the spices after the Sabbath and still come to the tomb at the beginning of the

Sabbath. So they had to make it appear as if the women had already bought the spices. But why would they have? They didn't know the Lord was going to be crucified. Scripture tells us that the disciples didn't understand what He meant when He told them of His impending death.

The answer is simple: again, there were two Sabbaths that week—the "high day" and the weekly Sabbath.

The only conclusion is that the Lord died and was buried on a Wednesday according to the Gregorian calendar. Thursday was the high Sabbath, Friday was the day to buy and prepare the spices, Saturday was the weekly Sabbath, during which the Lord rose from the tomb. He had to have risen sometime after noon on the weekly Sabbath in order to have been in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. Any day other than the weekly Sabbath, and any time after sunset on that Sabbath, would mean He was in the heart of the earth for less or more than three days and three nights. The three nights confirm three full days and three full nights, not three partial days, as taught by some. If the first day of the week, or Sunday, was the day of His resurrection, then He would have died and been entombed on a Thursday, and would have had to rise sometime after noon on the first day of the week. But the women came to the tomb near dawn on the first day of the week, and He had already risen.

Yet in spite of this obvious truth, there are traditionalists who continue to insist that the Lord died on a Friday and rose on a Sunday. They don't wish to be confused by the facts even though the facts are borne out by Scripture.

There are a number of fallacies associated with Christ's death and resurrection. For a thorough treatise on this subject, see our special report, *Facts and Fallacies of the Resurrection*.

There is also a fallacy associated with death in general that says the dead have no consciousness. It is true they are not conscious of what transpires on earth (Psalm 6:5). But for those who believe in soul sleep, or the dead being unconscious, besides the Lord's account of Lazarus and the rich man in Hades, Scripture tells us that He preached to the spirits in captivity:

For Christ has also suffered once for sins—the just for the unjust—so that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit, by which He also went and preached to the spirits in prison, who sometime were disobedient, when once the patience of God waited in the days of Noah while the ark was prepared, wherein few—that is, eight—souls were saved by water. (1 Peter 3:18-20)

How could He have preached to the dead if the dead are without consciousness? Was Christ without consciousness as well? If so, how could he have preached to the dead? Isn't God's Word wonderful when compared with the traditions of religious people who lack understanding?❖



(Continued from page 1)

If the rebellion isn't broken early, the future bodes ill not only for the rebel, but for all with whom he comes in contact.

If we wish to leave childhood and reach the stature of mature citizens of God's Kingdom, we must put away our childish thinking and behavior that panders to self.

Today rebellion is on the increase largely due to the inability or unwillingness of parents to assert their authority over their children. And children are quick to take advantage.

Man's sin nature may be a reason for rebellion, but it is not an excuse. God has placed within everyone at an early age a conscience to know right from wrong. Yet rebellion permeates every aspect of human society, and it is reflected in television productions, motion pictures, and even within religious instruction. There was a time when fatherhood was revered in the media and from the pulpits. Television programs such as *Leave it to Beaver*, *Father Knows Best*, and *The Waltons* portrayed fathers as respected, wise, and sensible heads of their households. *Leave it to Beaver*, especially, ended with father Ward Cleaver offering kind, sensible advice to "The Beaver" and his brother Wally after their misguided antics had gotten themselves or someone else in trouble. His wife June backed him up and was the epitome of wifehood and motherhood.

Schmaltzy, right?

By today's rebellious standards, yes. By biblical standards, no.

As we look at authority on different levels, we will consult God's Word for the seemingly counter-intuitive instruction on how believers in Christ should act toward authority, as well as exercise authority.

THE HOME

It begins at home. Unless authority is properly respected and exercised in the home, all other aspects of society will suffer.

Today's rebellious standards consistently portray parents (especially fathers) as buffoons, jerks, clueless, weak, and even cruel. They are made the butt of jokes not only in entertainment, but in advertising, and, sadly, even in the pulpits of churches. Children take advantage of them and ridicule them, calling them names (even calling them by their first names). The kids are too hip with lip. In the media, where a parent may have some semblance of sanity, it is usually the mother who is more intelligent, wise, assertive, and even brave.

Satan hates God's authority, and he desires that men hate it as well. By conditioning people to look upon the human father's authority as dismissible, he guides them toward dismissing God's authority, even under the guise of religious instruction.

The most basic of human interactions according to godliness rests in God's commandment, "Honor your father and mother" (Exodus 20:12).

It is no coincidence that our heavenly Father placed this as the first commandment dealing with human relationships. It follows the first four that address our relationship to our heavenly Father. Nor do I believe it is a coincidence that the first Hebrew word alphabetically is 'ab (father). In God's economy, the head of all things is 'Ab (Yahweh Father) followed by 'ab (human father).

One cannot say he respects his 'Ab while disrespecting his 'ab. Nor, for that matter, can he say he respects his human father if he disrespects his human mother.

I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God. (1 Corinthians 11:3)

That is the first order of all authority on earth, even before the authority granted to governors or anyone else outside the home.

Therefore, the father is the head of the mother. A child of any age, even into their nineties, who disrespects his mother, disrespects his father. Thus he disrespects Christ, and ultimately our heavenly Father.

But it doesn't end there. If a child disrespects these essential and close relationships placed by God in authority over him, he will disrespect all authority in the world—employers, governors, law enforcement, judges, prison guards (I purposely placed them in that order, because that's the order of progression [or regression] rebellious children too often follow).

It doesn't matter how ungodly a human parent may be. It is by virtue of his or her position that he or she commands respect. Unfortunately, this basic lesson in human-to-human and human-to-God relations is seldom if ever addressed from the pulpits of the vast majority of churches.

In the home, it goes even further, with the need of younger children to respect the authority of the older children, with one exception. Biblically, once he reaches puberty the oldest son is next in authority after the parents. In ancient Israel under God's economy, the eldest son took care of the family upon the father's death. He would even conduct his mother's affairs for her. But he had to work for her welfare above his own, thus demonstrating that exercise of authority is really service for the benefit of those under authority.

I realize this is completely irrational to today's feminist-oriented society and churches, but I'm only offering God's Word. The reader is free to do what he (or she) wishes. But

I will say this: those believers who lament the world's compromises on God's Word should examine themselves to see where *they* compromise as well. Too many who call themselves Christians say that Scripture is their sole authority. But in practice, they accept Scripture as their authority only where Scripture doesn't challenge their personal desires. This is true not only of the average Christian, but of Christian leaders.

Be warned: it's a slippery slope.

It will be protested, "But that's the Law! We're under grace!"

How often I've heard this as an excuse not to live according to God's plan, or for a reason to act contrary to His Word. Do those who protest thus not understand that the Law was given by God's grace? There is no Age of the Law vs. the Age of Grace. God's dealing with man has always been by grace, including the giving of the Law. Grace is not a license to live by our own dictates; grace is given so we can put away our old nature and receive Christ's nature to live in obedience to the Father just as He lived in obedience to His Father.

Certainly we are not saved by keeping the Mosaic Law (Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16). But we cannot break God's moral laws with impunity and say there is no consequence, either in this life or the next.

Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world does not know us because it did not know Him.

Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Every man who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure.

Whoever commits sin also transgresses the Law, for sin is the transgression of the Law. And you know that He was revealed to take away our sins, and in Him is no sin.

Whoever abides in Him does not sin; whoever sins has not seen Him, or known him.

Little children, let no man deceive you: he who does righteousness is righteous even as He is righteous.

He who commits sin is of the devil, for the devil sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested: that He might destroy the works of the devil.

Whoever is born of God does not commit sin, for His seed remains in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

In this the children of God are revealed, and the children of the devil: whoever does not do righteousness is not of God—neither he who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:1-10)

The writer of Hebrews offers a dire warning to believers in Christ:

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for He who promised is faithful), and let us consider one another to provoke to love and to good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another—and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries.

He who despised Moses' Law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much severe punishment do you suppose, shall he be thought worthy who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant with which he was sanctified an unholy thing, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

For we know Him who has said, "Vengeance belongs to Me; I will pay back," says the Lord." And again, "The Lord shall judge His people."

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Hebrews 10:23-31)

This was written to believers, not to the unsaved.

Some argue that the Hebrews addressed here were never believers in the true sense, but that is a serious error. These have been "sanctified" by the blood of the covenant made by Christ. It is not speaking of the Old Covenant with Moses, which could not fully sanctify. Only the blood of Christ can sanctify fully. And only true believers in Christ are sanctified by His blood.

Others insist this is just a statement of what would happen if believers could fall away, but they can't fall away, so it doesn't apply.

That is a terrible approach to Bible hermeneutics. Why is it a fearful thing for believers to fall into the hands of a living God?

We can argue back and forth whether this means loss of salvation or loss of rewards, but at the very least it would disqualify one from entering the Kingdom when Jesus returns. There are those who believe, but are careless in their walk with Christ. Might they be the ones shut out when the Bridegroom returns? Might they be the ones gnashing their teeth in great sorrow at having missed out on that blessing?

In any case, do we want to take that chance? Do we want to excuse our sins on the basis of reliance on a misunderstanding of God's grace to overlook our rebellion? What kind of faith or love toward God is that?

Now, we must make a distinction between the Law of Righteousness and the ordinances that were nailed to the cross with Jesus, and under which we are no longer bound. Those ordinances, “touch not, taste not, handle not” (Colossians 2:20-23) had to do with preserving the nation of Israel until her Messiah came and fulfilled those things, thus releasing them from their impossible demands. They were part of the sacrifices necessary until the perfect Sacrifice was offered upon the cross.

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, blotting out the handwritten ordinances that were against us—which were contrary to us—and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross. (Colossians 2:13-14)

These Scriptures are not addressing the Law of Righteousness based on the Ten Commandments. If the Law of Righteousness were not still in effect, there would be no such thing as sin. Sin is the transgression of the Law (1 John 3:4).

As we saw in 1 John 3:10, he who does not love his brother is not of God, and transgresses the Law of Righteousness. And who is my brother? Is not every member of my household my brother? That includes my father and mother who are in authority over me. They are my brethren. If I disrespect them, I show that I do not love them. And if I do not love them, then I am not of God.

What if parents are at odds, and there is severe conflict in the home? We would hope this not be the case in a believer’s home, but that hope is not always satisfied.

What, too, if a parent—especially a father—is cruel and unloving, or just overbearing or prone to making stupid mistakes?

He is still the father, and must be respected. That is the test of a true believer—to suffer under unrighteousness yet without sin. Few of us will be called upon to die as martyrs. Suffering for Christ more often means dying to self will.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise) so that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth. (Ephesians 6:1-3)

Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. (Colossians 3:20)

“All things” does not mean “some things” that suit you. The promise of long life is not only spiritual; it is rational. Children who obey their parents are less likely to find themselves in situations where their lives are at risk. It’s a general promise, and even obedient children are sometimes taken at an early age. But when that happens, we rely on God’s judgment to preserve the soul:

Precious in the sight of YHWH is the death of His saints. (Psalms 116:15)

Let’s face it kids. You think you know more than your father, don’t you? You see him as a purveyor of outmoded thinking. Well, you’re right. The world has changed since he was your age. But human nature hasn’t changed. It’s still rebellious, and you are subject to the temptation to rebel. Yet although the world has changed, I can attest that it hasn’t been for the better. More important, God and His Word have not changed, nor will they ever.

It’s not up to you to assert yourselves over your parents’ will. It is up to you to obey God and His Word, and thus obey your parents “in all things.”

Sorry if that irks you. Live with it, and please our heavenly Father. You’ll find that the older you get, the smarter your parents are.

Here, a word to fathers:

And you fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)

Don’t bug your kids just to assert your authority. Give them room to grow. You may be able to force them to act righteous, but you cannot force them to be righteous. Just as we are called to be witnesses for Christ to the world, yet not force the world into conformity to His Word, a parent can only train up his children in the way they should go with the prayer that they will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6). Yet all authority must be exercised with humility, gentleness, and love. Otherwise it will produce rebellion.

But a word of warning to children of all ages. Just because your father (or your mother) does not exhibit humility, gentleness, and love in dealing with you, doesn’t give you an excuse to disobey or disrespect him. You are still bound to God’s Word for your own actions; otherwise you admit that you are not a true believer.

Your parents gave you life. That in itself is sufficient reason to respect them and be thankful for them. Okay, so they aren’t perfect; they are cruel, evil people (or so you think). But the life they gave you affords you the opportunity for eternal life in God’s Kingdom. Is that not worth suffering for, today? Or are you so prideful that even God’s promise of eternal life isn’t worth being bothered?

If parents are at odds and there is severe conflict in the home, unless the father (or mother, nowadays) is threatening life and limb, the woman (or man) is called upon to suffer for Christ. The man may resist, but the wife is not to resist her husband’s authority or demean him to the children (this latter sin is especially grievous). A godly woman prays for her ungodly spouse; she remains his helper as intended by God; she instructs her children in godly attitudes toward their father.

I understand that just because a man claims to be a believer in Christ doesn’t make him so, nor does it cause a truly

believing husband and father to act properly toward his family. But God's Word is clear for all who profess faith in Him:

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Called Out [*Ecclesia*] and gave Himself for it so that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word—so that He might present it to Himself a glorious congregation, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the Called Out.

For we are members of His body—of His flesh, and of His bones. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Called Out.

Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she revere her husband. (Ephesians 5:25-33)

Likewise, you husbands live with them according to knowledge, giving honor to the wife as to the weaker vessel and as being heirs together of the grace of life, so that your prayers are not hindered. (Ephesians 3:7)

There are men who are not unkind to their families; they try to exhibit love in many ways. But they cause their family to suffer because they are lazy. They are forever trying to find a job, but for some reason can't do so. Their problem isn't always lack of jobs; but their unwillingness to take any job available, at least until they can find what suits them. They bounce from job to job because they don't "fit in." Rather than suffer for their family and allow God to build His character into them, they make excuses why they can't support their family. This discourages the wife, and if she isn't also willing to suffer for Christ in that situation, she leaves him, breaking up the family. Take heed to this, men:

If anyone does not provide for his own, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. (1 Timothy 5:8)

Even so, it is not up to the wife to instruct her husband in godliness or criticize what she perceives as his failures. It is up to her to pray for him and be an example of humility, possessing a gentle spirit of love and kindness toward him. If she suffers wrong, it is God who will justify her His own way.

If she is faithful, God will make a way through her difficult situation. Except for fornication, she is not to divorce her husband. To do so is contrary to God's Word and reflects lack of faith on her part.

Yet if she and/or her children are in danger, she should be free to separate, yet remain unmarried (1 Corinthians 7:11).

Her husband's standing before God as her head must not be denigrated. Rather, in all things she must revere him:

Likewise, you wives, be in subjection to your own husbands so that if any do not obey the Word they also may without the Word be won by the conduct of the wives while they behold your chaste conduct coupled with fear—whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing gold, or of putting on apparel, but let it be the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a humble and quiet spirit, which is of great price in the sight of God.

For after this manner in old times the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands, even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord—whose daughters you are as long as you do well and are not afraid with any alarm. (1 Peter 3:1-6)

Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Called Out, and He is the Savior of the Body. Therefore, as the Called Out is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. (Ephesians 5:22-24)

There's that word "everything" again.

If the man is the head of the woman as Christ is the head of the Called Out, then it is up to the man to lead his wife and children through life. Not in the way promoted by Christian feminists like Promise Keepers and Gary Smalley. These teach men to lead their wives and children where their wives and children want to go. That is not what it means to be the head.

Nor does it even mean the man should lead his family where he wants to go (although that may be okay in temporal situations). It is really incumbent upon the man to lead his family where the Lord wants them to go.

Admittedly, God's instructions are difficult words. But they are not mine. I'm just the messenger; don't shoot me. If you dispute God's Word, go to God about them.

And if you, as a child (of any age) think the command to honor your parents is too harsh, you, too, go to God with it.

EMPLOYERS

The command to honor all authority doesn't end with the home; it extends to society. Scripture gives difficult instructions to employees, but not in that term. Rather it is to servants and slaves (Gr: *doulos*):

Servants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ, not with eye service, as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, doing service with good will as to the Lord, and not to men,

knowing that whatever good thing any man does, he shall receive the same from the Lord, whether he is slave or free. (Ephesians 6:5-8)

A believing employee must respect his employer and all whom his employer places above him. He must not speak to others against his employer no matter how ungodly in action or in fact his employer may be. He may certainly address his concerns with his employer in a respectful manner. Rewards for being a faithful employee must not be the motive of respect; a desire to obey Christ and live godly must be the motive.

The same is true for believing employers:

And you masters, do the same things to them, forbearing threatening, knowing that your Master also is in Heaven—neither is there respect of persons with Him. (Ephesians 6:9)

Believing employers must make sure their employees are well compensated, able to earn a living wage. It is because many employers take advantage of their employees that ungodly unions were created, ungodly demands are made by those unions, and the communist ideology pitting the rich against the poor has proliferated throughout the world, including in the United States of America.

Just as good employees generally have job security, so, too, good employers will have job security unhindered by disruptions from disgruntled employees.

GOVERNMENT

It seems that with every increasing step of authority, ungodliness increases as well. Although instituted by God, governments are among the most ungodly institutions on earth, and for good reason: Satan is the god of this world system. His influence reaches into every institution, including government, economics, religion, science, technology, medicine, *ad infinitum*. Even so, God has ordained that government is necessary to keep men's baser instincts in check. As ungodly as all governments are, they still serve the purpose of maintaining order in society. Sometimes order is maintained through harsh means; sometimes order is maintained through benevolent means.

When government becomes evil, the people suffer, but an evil government often reflects the evil of the society governed. In the United States, and to a lesser degree other nations in the West, government has been mostly beneficent, at least until of late. The more that professing Christians in the West have strayed from the God they claim to worship, the more their governments have strayed from righteous exercise of authority. As the people become lawless toward God, they become lawless toward their government. As they become lawless toward their government, the government becomes lawless toward them. It's the serpent consuming its own tail.

In all cases, government must be honored as something instituted by God for the overall welfare of mankind, even when lawless toward its citizens.

Remind them to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready for every good work. (Titus 3:1)

Believers in Christ are not called to rebel against or even speak evil of governors, but to abide by all laws no matter how unjust, unless the law conflicts with the Word of God and would place the believer in a position of compromise. Such are recent laws forcing right-thinking people to cater to sexual perversion, thus compromising their consciences, or suffer the consequences of draconian fines and prison sentences. In such a case, we must stand up for God's Word and say as did the Lord's disciples, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

But what about John the Baptist who spoke against Herod for taking his brother's wife for himself? John spoke openly, telling Herod that it was not lawful for him to have his brother's wife (Mark 6:17).

Speaking the truth against evil is not rebellion; it is the righteous response that warns the people not to engage in the same evil, or to condone it even for governors.

Herod was not a Jew, but an Idumean gentile whose family converted to the rabbinic Judaism of that day. He identified himself as a believer in Yahweh, but he was openly sinning against Yahweh.

For the most part, ever since the United States was founded, the presidents and most other magistrates at all levels of government have identified as at least nominal Christians. When they act contrary to the faith they claim to embrace, it is a righteous response to their evil to call them on it before the nation. It is perfectly alright to call a lawless Barack Obama on his pandering to blatant evil, his lies and obfuscation, and his unrighteous governance. But we must not demean him as a person.

It is fashionable among Christians to call Obama names, ridicule him in diverse manners, and hold him in contempt. I confess that I have been guilty of giving less honor than his position deserves at times, and have had to check my spirit. Can't say I've always been successful, but I believe we must strive especially hard to resist the temptation to sin against God by sinning against those He has placed in authority over us.

The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of testing, and to reserve the unjust until the day of judgment to be punished, but chiefly those who walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government.

They are presumptuous, self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities, whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring railing accusation against them before the Lord. (2 Peter 2:9-11)

Let us not be found speaking evil of dignities.

This applies to all aspects of government including law enforcement officers, judges, juries, prison wardens and guards—every aspect without exception.

THE BODY OF CHRIST

I've saved this portion until last because it involves a lot of issues and conflicts between God's Word and those who teach and hold authority over His people. This is the most serious area of need, especially in this day when so many institutions that call themselves "churches" are woefully lacking in biblical authority.

Today there are many self-appointed "apostles" and "prophets" (and even "pastors") that claim authority over the Body of Christ, making something of themselves while making merchandise of God's people (2 Peter 2:1-3). Because most pastors do not warn against the deceptions in their midst, the people have become easy prey for wolves in sheep's clothing. Many devout believers are like the Jews in the days when the Lord came the first time:

When he saw the multitudes He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weak and were scattered abroad like sheep with no shepherd. (Matthew 9:36)

Truly the words of Isaiah resound today:

"For the pastors have become brutish, and have not sought YHWH. Therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered. Many pastors have destroyed My vineyard, they have trodden My portion under foot, they have made My pleasant portion a desolate wilderness." (Jeremiah 10:21)

"They have made it desolate, and being desolate it mourns unto Me. The whole land is made desolate because no man lays it to heart." (Jeremiah 12:10-11)

That said, there are some pastors today who have hearts for the spiritual welfare of the people over whom they exercise authority. Unfortunately, they are few and far between. Most work for the benefit of their religious institution more than for the benefit of the people. Even those whose hearts are right in that respect are part of an unscriptural institutional religion.

Even so, if one decides to place himself under the authority of a religious leader, he must not rebel against that leader. He may call the leader to task for his unrighteousness; he may with respect offer help for the leader to change from his position of unrighteousness. But he may not attempt to overthrow or otherwise demean the leader. Paul is our example when confronted by the high priest in his day:

And looking earnestly at the council, Paul said, "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."

And the high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth. Then Paul said to him, "God shall strike you, you whitewashed wall, for you sit to judge me according to the Law, and command me to be struck contrary to the Law?"

Those who stood by said, "You revile God's high priest?"

Then Paul said, "I did not know, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of the ruler of your people.'" (Acts 23:1-5)

Paul's humility must be an example for us all. As difficult as it is, we must remove ourselves from the penchant to lash out at others—especially those who hold positions of authority among the saints, even though they are unqualified for such positions.

Yet let those in authority over God's people take warning. Our Lord will not hold blameless those who abuse His people, and place their own welfare above their welfare. Better to toil in obscurity with little to show for one's efforts, than to be a world-renowned great expositor of the Word of God, leading some megachurch with impure motives.

OUR ULTIMATE AUTHORITY

In closing, I offer this caveat regarding all areas of submission to authority. Whether in the home, in the workplace, in government, or in the Body of Christ, our first loyalty is to Christ and our heavenly Father. God's Word is our final authority.

It doesn't matter what any earthly authority says if it conflicts with God's Word. If any authority demands or even requests that we act contrary to God's Word we must decline with respect. We must not lash out or rail against them, just as Michael, when contending against Satan for the body of Moses did not bring a railing accusation, but said "The Lord rebuke you" (Jude 9).

We allow God to deal with those who would abuse us.

God's Word is our ultimate authority. His Word tells us in many instances that we are to obey all authority. To resist any authority when it does not compel us to act contrary to God's Word, or even our conscience, is sin.

Even we are not our own authority. There is a popular saying among rebellious youth, "You're not the boss of me." Well, you're not the boss of you, either.

A child who does not want to obey his parents will reap the consequences. So, too, a wife who resists her husband's headship, an employee who resists his employer's authority, or anyone who resists the law, whether God's or man's.

Finally, let us consider the basis for all these instructions from God's Word (I have touched only on a miniscule portion). That basis is love for all—even our most bitter enemies—whether of our own household, our own place of business, our society, our fellowship. Whether in authority or under authority, may we honor God with our service. ❖

Anthony Duarte

February 24, 1928 – March 5, 2016

ON MARCH 5, 2016, our dear brother-in-law, Tony, passed from this life. Tony married Al's sister Mary not long after she graduated high school. The week prior to their wedding, Mary babysat a little girl who shortly after was diagnosed with polio. On their honeymoon, Mary came down with the symptoms of polio and they had to return home. Mary was admitted to the hospital and began what would be a long journey of recovery. She had become pregnant, and would spend her entire pregnancy in an iron lung.

I (Al) was just a junior in high school at the time, and not fully cognizant of all that was entailed in Mary's illness, but I knew it was serious. Our parents would take me to visit Mary, both at the hospital where I was distressed to see her wasting away physically, and afterward at the rehabilitation center. Tony stood by her through it all, and in subsequent years as she battled one serious disease after another: lupus, rheumatic fever, spinal meningitis, breast cancer. Now she is suffering from the effects of post-polio syndrome that keeps her from being able to do a lot of things. But if there is anyone on earth who is stronger than my sister, I don't know who it would be. She has endured so much, and has always pressed on in spite of pain and physical weakness.

Lesser men would have bolted, not wanting to deal with it all. Near death on several occasions, Mary would recover, and Tony would be there; how often I saw him worried for her. I don't know if she even realized how much he worried.

Together they raised three wonderful children: Kathy, the firstborn who survived through Mary's stint with polio in the iron lung, with no ill effects; a son whom she insisted be named Rick (aka "Ricky" because she loved Desi Arnaz's character in *I Love Lucy*); and Christine (Chrissy), who has helped Tony and Mary in their machine shop as office manager.



TONY, LEFT, AND TWIN BROTHER EDDIE

I couldn't be more pleased with how their kids turned out. Not to say there haven't been downsides to the more than 60 years of marriage and raising kids. Every family has them. But the last time we were in California, I had an opportunity to speak with Tony and to thank him for standing by my sister through all the illnesses she had suffered in the past. For the past several months Tony had been suffering from pulmonary fibrosis, and was on oxygen constantly. He told me that now she was standing by him. He expressed gratefulness for her and told me he loved her.

Tony was born in Massachusetts, one of triplets. One child didn't survive, but he and his twin, Eddie, were very close. As young boys they were taken by their mother to her native Portugal and raised there. In time, they returned to the United States with their mother and other siblings.

Just two years ago, Eddie passed away from the same disease that would take Tony.

Tony wasn't one to demonstrate a lot of emotion, but when I left the Catholic Church, causing conflict with my mother and sister, he would get upset with me for causing them pain. As a result, we were never as close as I would have liked, but I truly loved him and was always grateful to him for Mary's sake.

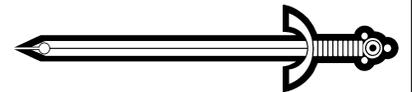
Jean loved Tony from first meeting him, and was always kind to him. She was especially solicitous toward him the last time we were with the family, knowing that his time was short.

It won't be the same for us the next time we visit the family. Tony's presence will be sorely missed.

I hope our readers don't mind my departure from the normal publishing of information on this page in order to pay homage to a dearly-loved brother. ❖



THE DUARTE CLAN IN EARLIER YEARS – TONY, LEFT, NEXT TO JEAN; MARY SECOND FROM RIGHT, THIRD ROW



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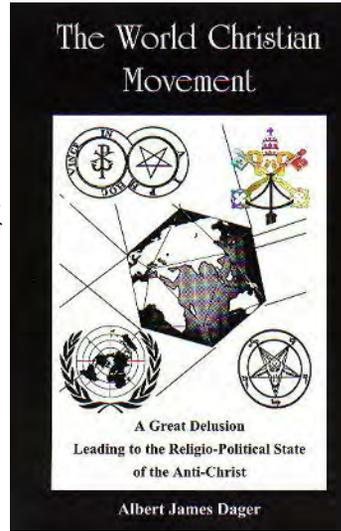
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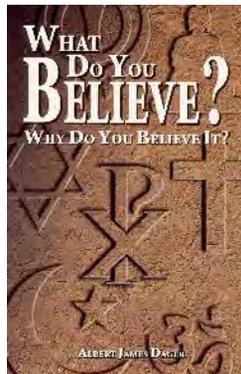
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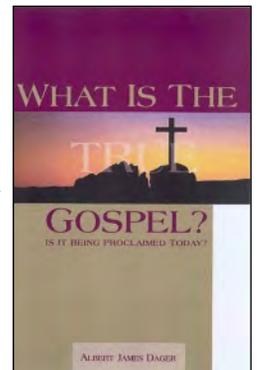


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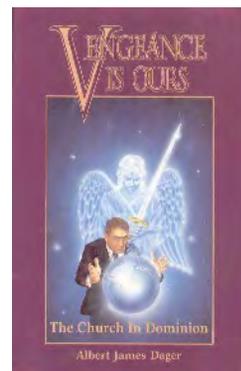
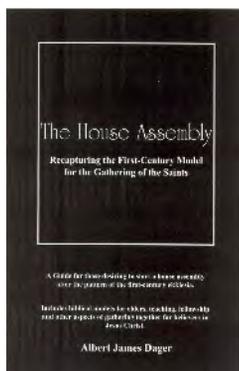


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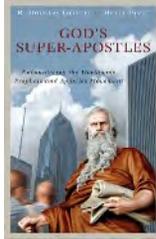
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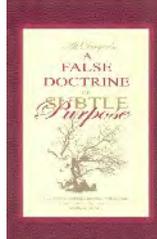
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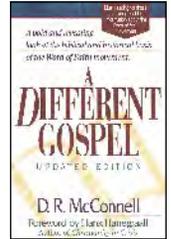
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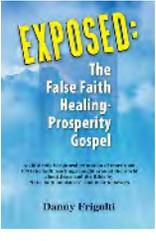
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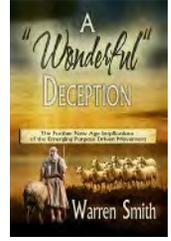
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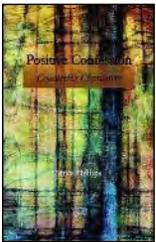
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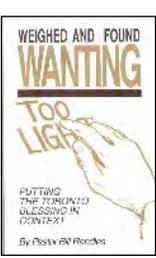
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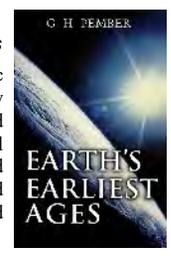
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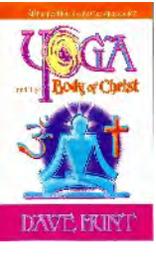
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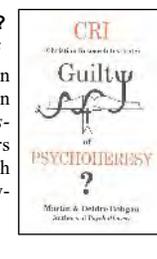
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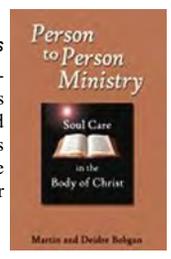
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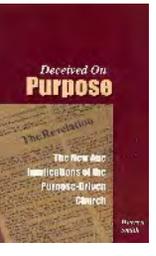
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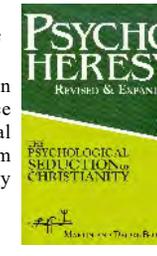
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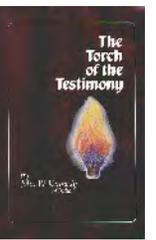
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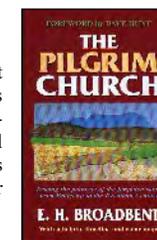
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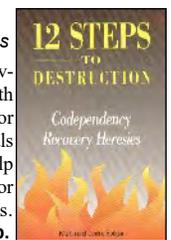
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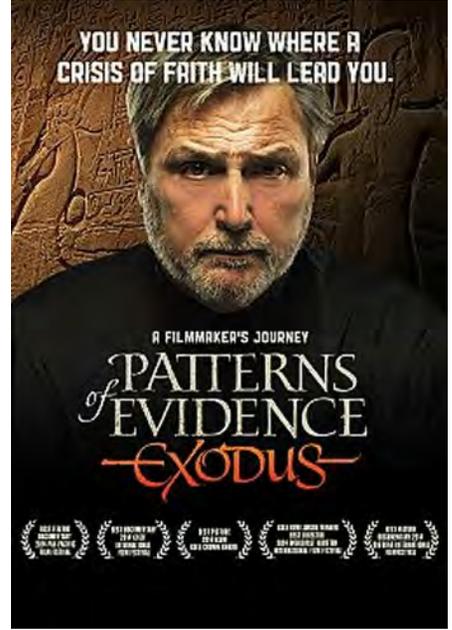
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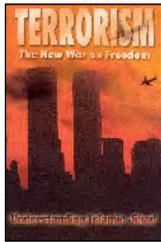
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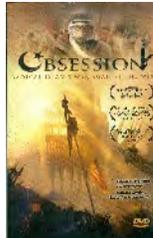


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There's Plenty of Love in the Churches

By Alan Martin

I DON'T KNOW WHAT all the talk about the need for more love in the churches today is about. There is plenty of love in the churches. Christians are very loving. There is probably more love than ever in the churches today.

God's Word prophesied that men would be loving in the last days. He indicated that men's love would be abounding in many ways. Paul prophesied that during the perilous time of the last days men would be characterized by their love. He stated clearly that men would be "lovers of themselves" and "lovers of money." He even said that men would be "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."

The problem in the churches today is not that men do not have love; it is rather the things they are loving.

Jesus indicated much the same. He stated that men would always be loving. They will love the one they are serving, and hate the one they are not serving.

Religious men are especially loving, just as the Pharisees in Jesus' day were loving. They loved the praises of men more than praise from the one and only God. Men love themselves; men love money; men love pleasure; men love darkness. Men even love another love.

Yes, it's true. Jesus said to the assembly in Smyrna, "You have left your first love." He did not say they were no longer loving, but they were loving someone or something else in place of their first love, Jesus Christ.

Jesus also said that the very religious Jews loved their traditions more than they loved the commandments of God. They loved being greeted in the marketplace, and they loved the best seats in the synagogue.

People are full of love, especially for the world. They can love so much that, like Demas, "who having loved this present world," they depart from walking with godly men.

What did Jesus mean when He said, "Because iniquity will abound, the love of many shall grow cold" (Matthew 24:12)?

The key is the definite article "the" love of many. There is one kind of love growing cold today, and it's the only love that Jesus ever indicated would become rare on the earth. It is the love of the truth.

Men love religion. Just look at all the churches, temples, mosques, high places, covens, seminars there are.

The cults are all very loving. They specialize in making everyone feel warmly accepted. They teach man's love for man as the answer to achieving spiritual fulfillment. But Jesus taught that we must receive the love of the Father if we would experience the same unity He shared with His Father.

What men are loving less and less is sound doctrine or truth. Paul said that the time would come when men would no longer endure sound doctrine, but would turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

Men love myths; they also love lies more than the truth. God has a special reward for those who "receive not the love of the truth": a strong delusion. He sends this strong delusion upon those who are perishing because they have refused to love the truth, and instead take pleasure in unrighteousness.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Those who refuse the love of the truth are refusing to love Christ.

Jesus also said to His Father, "Your Word is truth." Those who refuse the love of the truth are refusing to love God's Word. Yet they love to be taught. They "heap to themselves" teachers to tell them what their itching ears want to hear.

There is power in the love of God. We can read about it in the Song of Solomon. It says that love is as strong as death, as unyielding as the grave, is a blazing fire, a mighty flame that many waters cannot quench. It goes on to say that if one were to offer all the goods of his house for love he would be utterly scorned.

People turn to God for many reasons: fear, loneliness, depression, emptiness, confusion, help, and other more noble reasons. But none of these motivations will keep a man in God. Only one thing will keep a man seeking, keep him praying, keep him serving, keep him striving after righteousness. That is the love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. This is why we must keep ourselves in the love of God.

It takes being strengthened in the power of the Holy Spirit in the inner man to understand this love that surpasses knowledge. If we grasp this love, the whole Body of Christ will build itself up in it. We will learn to love God with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

It is this love that is woefully deficient in the churches.

Jesus said the world must learn that "the Son loves the Father, and always does what He requires." He then added that we must not only receive this love, but we must remain in it by obeying His command:

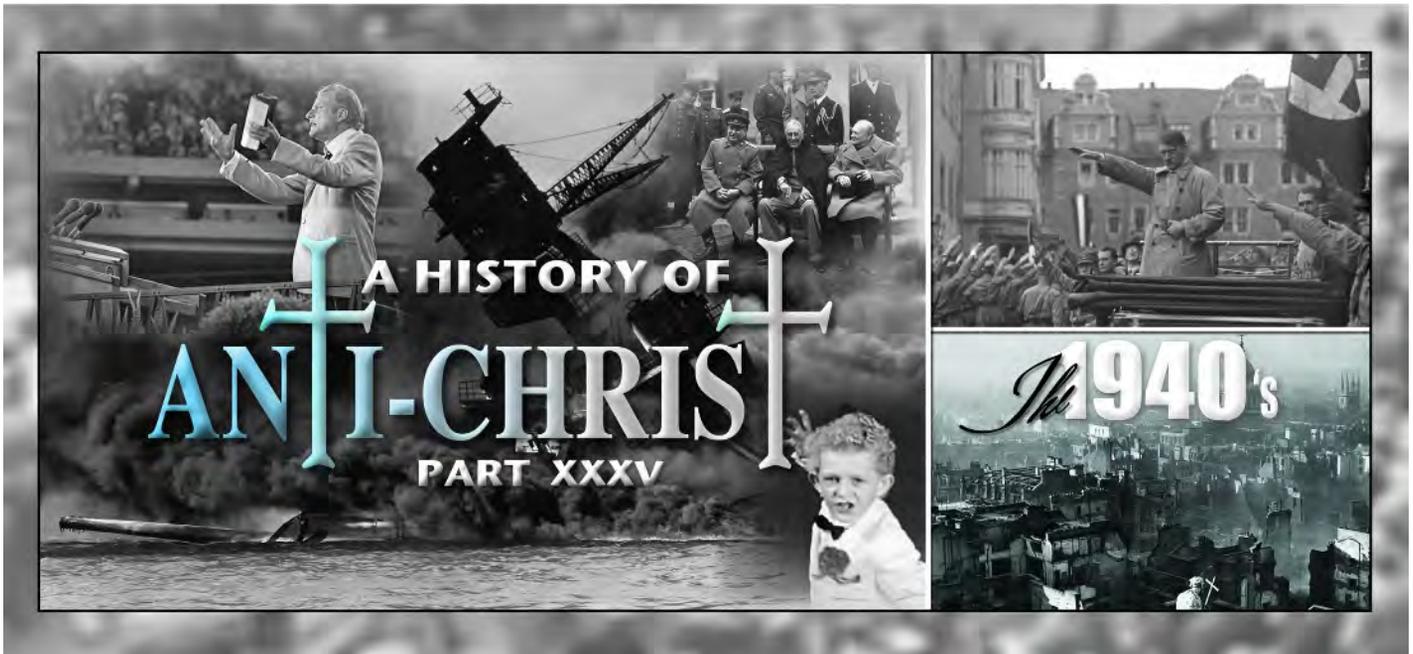
"If you keep My commandments you shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love" (John 15:10).

God, in mercy baptize us in Your love shed abroad in our hearts by Your Holy Spirit.

Brethren, catch the spirit of this great old hymn:

*More love to Thee O Christ, more love to Thee.
Hear now the prayer I raise on bended knee.*

This love is the fulfillment of all the Law and the Prophets. ❖



THE SECOND HALF of the 20th century was without doubt the most eventful period in all of history up to that time, both in religion and secular society, beginning with the prelude of the 1940s. Despite (or, more likely because of) Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s socialist New Deal, the United States was still deeply entrenched in the Great Depression. Having had enough of the deprivation, Americans were becoming disenchanted with what they perceived as half-way measures to solve the economic malaise. Foolishly thinking that even more of the same government oversight would fix the problem, many were seriously considering communism as the answer.

Yet rather than prioritizing their budgets to buy the essentials of food, clothing, and shelter, for many there was always enough to support the alcohol, tobacco, gambling, drug, and prostitution industries. In the midst of the Depression, on April 3, 1941, El Rancho Las Vegas, the first casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, opened. It’s no secret that mob money built this Mecca of gambling in the United States, which became known as “Sin City” because of the added attraction of legalized prostitution. The casinos couldn’t rely on only wealthy clientele, but depended on the average citizen to keep their coffers full.

Certainly many were drawn to gambling because of their dire financial straits; the industry counts on the needy who hope to strike it rich, even at the cost of their family’s welfare.

This nation, in which at the time some 95% of its citizens would identify as Christian, was being guided by anti-Christ on the path toward moral degradation even while God continued to bless us according to His inscrutable purposes.

CHRISTIANITY

Due to the impact of radio and the printed media, Christianity in the United States, especially, embarked on the Age of the Evangelist. Although public evangelism

became and still remains prevalent, particularly within Pentecostalism, evangelists are mentioned only three times in Scripture (Ephesians 4:11; 2 Timothy 4:5; Acts 21:8), and only the apostles Philip and Timothy are named as evangelists (Acts 21:8; 2 Timothy 4:5). Also, there are no specific instructions in Scripture on how evangelism should be conducted, whether on a one-to-one basis or in mass meetings, or in the assembly, on street corners, or in public venues; it seems that all methods are okay.

The reason what passes as evangelism exists today is that it is part of the larger “Christian” concept of having “professionals” minister the Gospel, causing average believers to think they are not qualified to do so, just as they believe they are unqualified to teach, pastor, or engage in any other of the five-fold ministries unless they have undergone formal training, preferably at a religious institution’s sanctioned Bible college or seminary.

The word “evangelist” derives from the Greek *euaggelistes*, which denotes “a proclaimer of good news.” It is closely associated with the Greek *aggelos*, which means “messenger,” and is most often translated “angel.” An evangelist is one who proclaims a message of good news, or the Gospel. There is nothing in Scripture to suggest that evangelists must travel outside the assembly to do their work (that is the role of the apostle—one who is sent, which included Philip and Timothy). Yet the tradition of the Christian churches has been to send missionaries whom they *consider* evangelists to spread the doctrines of their particular religious institutions. They do not proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom as much as they proclaim the Gospel of personal salvation coupled with a call to membership in their denominations. The Gospel of personal salvation is part of the Gospel of the Kingdom, but it is not the whole Gospel that the Lord commanded be proclaimed throughout the earth (Matthew 24:14). (See our book, *What is the True Gospel?* [Sword Publishers].)

As good as the intentions of missionaries may be, and although many souls have been brought into the Kingdom through their efforts, anti-Christ has managed to dampen the complete Gospel of the Kingdom through his influence upon Christian religious institutions.

The 1940s saw the rise of evangelistic “crusades” that brought thousands of people to tent meetings and open-air venues to hear the Gospel of personal salvation. Men like Billy Graham focused strictly on personal salvation, while Pentecostal preachers incorporated promises of healing for physical and emotional maladies, as well as poverty.

Marjoe

On January 14, 1944, in Long Beach, California, a baby was born who would become a cause celebre among gullible Christians and seekers of truth. Because he displayed a remarkable speaking ability at an early age, his parents arranged for him to become an ordained preacher who they would take along on what was called the “revival circuit.”

Hugh Marjoe Ross Gortner took the revival circuit by storm, preaching hell fire and damnation under the guidance of his father Vernon, a third-generation evangelical minister. Under his parents’ tutelage he learned how to perform dramatic gestures and emphatic lunges. At four years of age he performed a marriage ceremony attended by the press and photographers from *Life*.



Marjoe practicing his dramatic gestures.

Marjoe (his stage name—a combination of “Mary” and “Joseph”) was taught by his parents how to use money-raising tactics such as selling “holy” articles at revivals, claiming they could be used to heal the sick and dying. Through such tactics his parents raised some three million dollars by his sixteenth birthday. Shortly

after, his father absconded with the money.

Disillusioned, Marjoe left his mother and became a hippie, traveling aimlessly until his early twenties when he decided to go back to the circuit in order to make money. He developed a stage presence modeled after popular rock stars, and would work until he had enough money to live half a year without working. Then he would pick up where he left off, fleecing gullible people with promises of healing and God’s blessings on their finances as they gave to support him.

Many people went forward in response to Marjoe’s theatrics, unaware they were being given some truth with more lies.

In 1971 he gave a final “revival” performance in California, Texas, and Michigan, followed by a film crew for documentarians Howard Smith and Sarah Kernochan.

Backstage, he gave interviews to them, explaining how he and other healing ministers operated to fleece the people. The documentary, *Marjoe*, won the 1972 Academy Award for Best Documentary.

As a result of his exposé, many who had trusted him and his message became disillusioned and rejected the faith they professed under his preaching.

With new-found fame, Marjoe entered the world of entertainment as an actor and musician.

Billy Graham

Billy Graham began as an evangelist for the newly formed Youth for Christ, co-founded by Torrey Johnson and the Canadian evangelist Charles Templeton. In 1947 Graham struck out on his own to begin an outreach with several *Billy Graham Crusades* each year, which continued until his retirement in 2005.

When he scheduled a series of revival meetings in Los Angeles in 1949, Graham attracted the attention of newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst who put out the word to his newspaper chain to “Puff Graham.” This led to Graham becoming a national figure with coverage in the wire services and national magazines.

It can be said of Graham that when he stood at the podium he had the spiritual gift of evangelism, or at least the natural talent, to impress perhaps millions of people with the Gospel of personal salvation. Yet away from the podium he has dismayed many believers with the idea that the Gospel must be coupled with social activism, including international efforts against nuclear proliferation and “climate change.” As well, his cooperation with Roman Catholic prelates in funneling Catholics who respond to his message into the Catholic Church has been a source of consternation. Then, too, with his suggestion that Muslims and members of other non-Christian religions worship the same God as believers in Jesus, Graham’s service has been tainted by anti-Christ. But we will leave to our heavenly Father the final judgment on that service.

Franklin Hall

At about the same time Billy Graham was coming on the scene in the mid-40s, several Pentecostal “evangelists” were drawing huge crowds to their campaigns. One of the earliest was Franklin Hall who in the fall of 1946 established a “major fasting and prayer daily revival center” in San Diego, California. Hall was assisted by Jack Walker, father of child evangelist Davillo “Little David” Walker. Hall’s message of fasting as a means to bring about revival and the “restoration” of the “Church” spread throughout the Pentecostal world. Hall’s teachings became increasingly bizarre, eventually centering on the idea of immortalization. He claimed to have achieved a degree of immortalization (what he called “body-felt salvation”) which allegedly affected everything that came in contact with his body. He wore a light colored jacket for



Franklin Hall

seven years which he said had never been cleaned or aerated, but resisted all spots, stains, discoloration, or body odors though worn repeatedly over seven years in travels on 200 airplanes.

Hall dabbled in astrology and American Indian mysticism, as well as other occult practices, including those pertaining to UFOs. In spite of many rambling, occult-laced teachings verbally and in print, Hall found favor among many Pentecostal

leaders of his day because of his claims to heal people of diverse ailments. Out of this emphasis on healing and supernatural manifestations, anti-Christ would soon form a new movement called “Latter Rain” that would take the Pentecostal world by storm.

William Branham

In 1948, William Branham, a Baptist preacher turned Pentecostal, was greatly influenced by Franklin Hall’s booklet, *Atomic Power With God Through Fasting and Prayer*. Branham gained notoriety for his teachings on what he called “God’s Seventh Church Age,” which is supposedly the final move of God before the manifestation of His Kingdom throughout the earth. He claimed that the angels to the seven assemblies in Revelation were men who appeared at various times throughout “Church” history bringing new revelations that led “the Church” into progressive stages of sanctification. As indicated on his tombstone, Branham was thought to be the angel to the “Church” of Laodicea—the end-time “Church.”

Branham denied believing in oneness doctrine, but he had his own form of oneness doctrine that defined God as one person who manifested Himself as three different “attributes”: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, rather than three persons, the Son and the Holy Spirit having proceeded from the Father—of the same nature and essence as the Father. Like Hall, Branham delved into the occult, and believed that the Word of God was given in three forms: the Zodiac, the Egyptian pyramids, and the written Scriptures.

Due to early childhood influences, Branham had an aversion toward women, which led to his doctrine of the “Serpent Seed.” He taught that when Eve stated “The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat,” she meant that the serpent had seduced her sexually, resulting in the birth of Cain. Since then, he believed, evil has been passed from generation to generation through women, who keep the seed of the serpent alive in the earth.

Space doesn’t allow for a full accounting of Branham’s unscriptural and occult foundation to his teachings, but anti-Christ was able to use him mightily to bring about the stirrings within Pentecostalism for what he professed was the latter rain new move of God that would bring about the Kingdom of God on earth through the perfection of God’s people. Eventually the teaching came about that the perfected saints would wreak vengeance upon the ungodly through supernatural means in order to bring about righteousness in the earth even as Jesus remained in Heaven. This came to be known as “Kingdom Theology,” or “Dominion Theology.”

The Sharon Brethren

In the fall of 1947, two former pastors for the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, George Hawtin and Percy G. Hunt, joined in an independent outreach which had originally been started by Herrick Holt, pastor of the North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Church of the Foursquare Gospel. That outreach became Sharon Orphanage and Schools. Holt had been teaching that God was about to do a “new thing” in accordance with the prophecy in Isaiah 43:18-19.

The leaders and work at Sharon were greatly influenced by Franklin Hall and William Branham. As Sharon’s influence spread among Pentecostals, particularly in the United States and Canada, the phenomenon known as the Latter Rain Movement developed with an emphasis on supernatural power, healing, and signs and wonders. From the Latter Rain Movement sprang a number of famous “healing evangelists” such as John G. Lake, Oral Roberts, T.L. Osborn, Rex Humbard, etc. Although the Latter Rain Movement is believed to have ended, its influence is strongly evident today in all the so-called “healing ministries” that continue to proliferate and influence Christians all over the world, including Benny Hinn, the Kansas City Prophets, the Toronto Blessing, the Brownsville Revival, and virtually all signs-and-wonders hoaxes including John Wimber’s Vineyard Christian Fellowships (although since Wimber’s death some Vineyards have distanced themselves from some of the more bizarre elements of that movement).

All such movements, while claiming to glorify Jesus, have their roots in the bizarre, unscriptural teachings and practices of the Latter Rain Movement which, in turn, can be traced to William Branham and Franklin Hall. Through these, within a few short decades, anti-Christ was able to turn the innocent beginnings of Pentecostalism into a virtual sideshow of signs-and-wonders chicanery. Many Christians became convinced that they had to be touched by some popular “healer” in order to receive a blessing from God. They forgot that where two or three are gathered in His name, He is in their presence (Matthew 18:20).

Yes, the primary context of Matthew 18:20 has to do with discipline in the assembly. But if the Lord is in the presence of two or three in that circumstance, is He not present in all circumstances? Yet many Christians are led to believe they must travel to one venue or another to “find Jesus.”

Agnes Sanford

In 1947, a different kind of “healer” came on the scene with the publication of her book, *Healing Light*. Agnes Mary White Sanford combined Jungian psychology, occult healing theories, and Scripture which she incorporated into her “inner healing” philosophy. That book, and subsequent others, took the Pentecostal (and later the charismatic) world by storm. (See our special report *Inner Healing*.)

Where is God in all this?

That’s not to say that God hasn’t worked through these things; He is still sovereign and will use evil to bring about good according to His purposes (Romans 8:28). But that does not excuse the evil, or the penchant to follow or justify that evil because of any good that results. Often God will allow evil to proliferate, even in His name, in order to drive those who reject His truth as the only truth further into their deception.

(For an in-depth understanding of these teachers and movements see my book, *Vengeance is Ours: The Church in Dominion* [Sword Publishers 1990]).

These movements, and the teachings of the men and women associated with them, proliferated through word-of-mouth testimonies and promotion from Pentecostal pulpits. Radio ushered in the age of electronic evangelism, not so much by mainstream Christian denominations as by Pentecostal preachers who further influenced Christians in the West. With the later advent of television, their aberrant theology has further expanded until today. They do not glorify the Father or the Son as much as they do the Holy Spirit, which is contrary to Scripture:

“When He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth, because He will not speak from Himself, but whatever He may hear He will say. And He will tell you of things to come. He will glorify Me because He will receive from Me and will tell it to you. Everything the Father has is Mine. Therefore I said that He will receive from Me and will tell it to you.” (John 16:13-15)

Most people must see to believe. And if there are any miracles, signs, and wonders, whether from God or from other sources (occult philosophies also claim such), when the miracles cease, “belief” ceases as well.

The World Council of Churches

The student and lay movements of the 19th century and the 1910 Edinburgh world missionary conference gave impetus to a move toward an ecumenical fellowship of churches that was prompted by a 1920 encyclical from the Orthodox Synod of Constantinople. Leaders from more than 100 churches voted in 1937-38 to found a World Council of Churches (WCC), but the outbreak of World War II delayed its inauguration.

Although elements that would form the WCC were working for ecumenical unity and social services since 1938, the WCC was not formally inaugurated until its First Assembly ten years later in 1948 with 147 member churches.

Over the decades, anti-Christ presented the faulty premise of unity among Christian institutions as unity in the Holy Spirit among believers. Eventually the WCC would engage in ecumenical fellowship with Roman Catholicism. Supposing that unity among institutions was God’s idea of the unity of believers, the WCC has devolved into a liberal social justice organization where the purity of the Gospel has been relegated to the back seat, if it even exists at all in its pure form anywhere within the institution. Today it is nothing more than a “Christian” United Nations focusing on social action without regard to doctrinal purity.

WORLD WAR II

Although much of the Third World remained largely unchanged during the 1940s, Europe and the United States were greatly impacted by change, as were Russia, Japan, and China, primarily because of their roles in World War II and its aftermath. Societal upheaval occurred especially in the United States because of the nation’s new-found role as the greatest superpower among all nations from all time. Yet there was much more to the picture than the masses were allowed to know.

It is disconcerting to even think of the possibility that both world wars, the rise of Bolshevism in Russia, the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt, and the seizure of power by Adolf Hitler in Germany, were orchestrated by an international cabal of financiers largely made up of the Wall Street financial elite (aka the Eastern Liberal Establishment). This led to the establishment of socialism in the three major continents—Soviet socialism in Russia and Eastern Europe, New Deal socialism in the United States, and National Socialism (Nazism) in Germany. Until now, Roosevelt’s New Deal socialism has not been as devastating as the socialism in Russia and Germany (and other nations to which it has spread). This is only because the American free enterprise system coupled with a faith in Jesus Christ among a large portion of the population have until recently been bulwarks against the more radical forms of socialism.

The idea that certain elements of Wall Street and the U.S. government working to pull the United States and Europe into a war that would adversely affect their social and moral status at the cost of millions of innocent lives suggests that citizens of America and Europe have been dupes of treasonous actions on the part of super capitalism and their governments (including the United States Government) at the highest levels. Yet history has proven that the outcome of these and related intrigues in international politics have led us to where we are today: on the verge of a global super government that will rise as the basis of the anti-Christ’s kingdom.

When we speak of Wall Street's role in the rise of Hitler, we do not mean the vastly major elements of Wall Street businesses, but a cabal of supranational financial and industrial corporations that manipulate the governments and economies of the world.

A full treatise on the global conspiracy's fomenting of World War II and its attendant evils is not possible in this short space. The best I can offer is an outline and sparse list of some of the entities involved.

The Financial Cabal

As early as the 1920s, shortly after Germany's humiliation at the hands of the Allies following World War I, German industrialists with ties to the United States were at work to rebuild the German Wehrmacht, contrary to terms of the Versailles Treaty. American financiers and industrialists, working with the international banking community, supplied the necessary financial aid and technology for Germany's rearmament largely through the German-American chemical giant I.G. Farben.

A 1933 report from the Commercial Attaché with the U.S. Embassy in Berlin reported to the State Department, "In two years Germany will be manufacturing oil and gas enough out of soft coal for a long war. The Standard Oil of New York is furnishing millions of dollars to help."

The Standard Oil Company New Jersey transferred to I.G. Farben the hydrogenation patents and technology to produce synthetic oil. Control of synthetic oil output in Germany was held by the I.G. Farben subsidiary, Braunkohle-Benzin A.G., which was created in 1926 with Wall Street financial assistance.

Historians generally attribute the buildup of Hitler's Third Reich to the "accidental" help of American and multi-national corporate and financial institutions who had no idea of or design in Hitler's rise to power. But the evidence suggests a considerable degree of premeditation on the part of the heads of those institutions.

American-born Canadian historian Gabriel Morris Kolko stated:

The business press [in the United States] was aware, from 1935 on, that German prosperity was based on war preparations. More important, it was conscious of the fact that German industry was under the control of the Nazis and was being directed to serve Germany's rearmament, and the firm mentioned most frequently in this context was the giant chemical empire, I.G. Farben.¹

German cartels in the United States received profitable loans through the reparations commissions, the Dawes Plan and later the Young Plan, approved and sponsored by the U.S. Government, and engineered by central banks in the

¹ Gabriel Kolko, "American Business and Germany, 1930-1941," *The Western Political Quarterly*, Volume XV, 1962, p. 715.

U.S. controlled by the Federal Reserve System (a private banking system that controls U.S. financial policy). Central banks of other nations also contributed to the scheme.

Who were the New York international bankers who formed these reparations commissions? Historian Antony C. Sutton explains:

The 1924 Dawes Plan experts from the United States were banker Charles Dawes and J.P. Morgan representative Owen Young, who was president of the General Electric Company. Dawes was chairman of the Allied Committee of Experts in 1924. In 1929 Owen Young became chairman of the Committee of Experts, supported by J.P. Morgan himself, with alternates T.W. Lamont, a Morgan partner, and T.N. Perkins, a banker with Morgan associations. In other words, the U.S. delegations were purely and simply, as [historian Carroll] Quigley has pointed out, J.P. Morgan delegations using the authority and seal of the United States to promote financial plans for their own pecuniary advantage. As a result, as Quigley puts it, the "international bankers sat in heaven, under a rain of fees and commissions."

The German members of the Committee of Experts were equally interesting. In 1924 Hjalmar Schacht was president of the Reichsbank and had taken a prominent role in organization work for the Dawes Plan; so did German banker Carl Melchior. One of the 1928 German delegates was A. Voegler of the German steel cartel Stahlwerke Vereinigte. In brief, the two significant countries involved — the United States and Germany — were represented by the Morgan bankers on one side and Schacht and Voegler on the other, both of whom were key characters in the rise of Hitler's Germany and subsequent German rearmament. Finally, the members and advisors of the Dawes and Young Commissions were not only associated with New York financial houses but, as we shall later see, were directors of firms within the German cartels which aided Hitler to power.²

Owen Young was the major financial backer for Franklin D. Roosevelt in the United European venture which sought to take advantage of Germany's hyperinflation in 1925.

Hitler's Minister of Economics for Germany, Hjalmar Horace Greeley Schacht, and Nazi industrialist Fritz Thyssen, both credited the 1928 Young Plan (successor to the Dawes Plan) with bringing Hitler to power.

Concerning Schacht's cooperation with Young and the J.P. Morgan interests as part of a vast system of cooperation and international alliance, American historian Carroll Quigley, professor of history at Georgetown University, stated:

² Antony C. Sutton, *Wall Street and the Rise of Hitler* (Cutchogue, NY: Buccaneer Books, 1976), pp. 24-25.

...the powers of financial capitalism had another far-reaching aim, nothing less than to create a world system of financial control, in private hands, able to dominate the political system of each country and the economy of the world as a whole. This system was to be controlled in a feudalist fashion by the central banks of the world acting in concert, by secret agreements arrived at in frequent private meetings and conferences. The apex of the system was to be the Bank for International Settlements [B.I.S.] in Basle, Switzerland, a private bank owned and controlled by the world's central banks which were themselves private corporations. Each central bank, in the hands of men like Montagu Norman of the Bank of England, Benjamin Strong of the New York Federal Reserve Bank, Charles Rist of the Bank of France, and Hjalmar Schacht of the Reichsbank, sought to dominate its government by its ability to control Treasury loans, to manipulate foreign exchanges, to influence the level of economic activity in the country, and to influence cooperative politicians by subsequent economic rewards in the business world.

In each country the power of the central bank rested largely on its control of credit and money supply.³

It is no coincidence that the banks involved in the B.I.S. were the central banks of the four major powers on both sides during World War II: Britain, France, the U.S., and Germany.

Major players among the international bankers were the Jewish banking family, the Warburgs. From 1933 until 1938, Max Warburg, a son of Moritz Warburg, the director of the Warburg Hamburg, Germany, bank served on the Nazi Reichsbank, reporting directly to Hitler's finance minister, Hjalmar Schacht. In 1938 he immigrated to the United States. Prior to World War II, he served on the board of directors of Interessen Gemeinschaft Farben (I.G. Farben), the giant German chemical firm that produced Zyklon B gas used in Nazi internment camps. Zyklon B, an insecticide, was used to kill lice and stop typhus disease in the camps, and it is disputed whether it was later used as a means to exterminate prisoners at death camps. However, the Kilgore Committee Report of 1942 accused all I.G. Farben board members of having full knowledge that Zyklon B was being used to murder civilians in death camps, but had no intent to halt its production, or at least its distribution to the Nazi genocide effort.

Max's brother Paul Warburg served on the board of directors for I.G. Farben's American subsidiary, which was also associated with Standard Oil. After the war, all board members of I.G. Farben were convicted of war crimes except Paul Warburg. In fact, only the German principals in the companies involved in aiding Hitler were indicted, while no American was.

³ Carroll Quigley, *Tragedy and Hope, A History of the World in our Time* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), p. 324.

There are a number of conspiracy theories involving the international banking community in which certain prominent banking families are accused of fomenting wars on behalf of the Illuminati's goal of world domination. That includes one of the most famous families, the Rothschilds. One can find many theories in books and on the Internet accusing the Rothschilds of these nefarious deeds. Most merely restate what has been stated before, but there is little empirical evidence to place the "smoking gun" in the Rothschilds' hands. It is true that the Rothschild bank helped finance Britain in its war against Napoleon, but that's about it. There is no empirical evidence linking them to Hitler. Evidence suggests that family members had different opinions regarding Germany's Fuhrer.

For example, some supported Zionism, while others opposed the creation of a Jewish state. Lord Victor Rothschild was against granting asylum or helping Jewish refugees escape Hitler's pogrom during World War II. On the other side, Walter Rothschild (2nd Baron Rothschild) was the addressee of the Balfour Declaration to the Zionist Federation, which led to the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948.

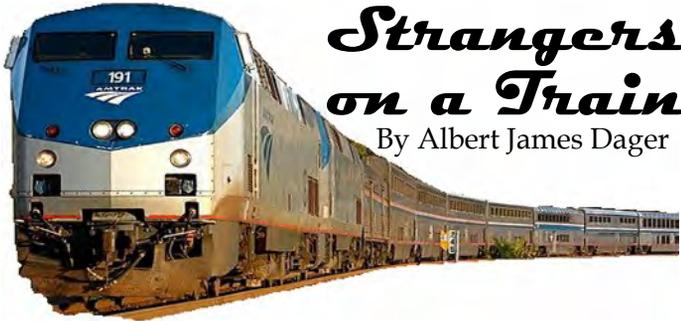
It well may be that elements of the Rothschild family were complicit in fomenting World War I and World War II, at least to some degree, but unlike the Warburgs no empirical evidence has ever been uncovered. Most "evidence" is anecdotal.

However, the idea that several international banks are owned or controlled by Jews has been fodder for anti-Semitic sentiments that blame all the world's evils on "the Jews." The truth is that many international bankers are not Jewish, and in fact are comprised of Asians, Europeans, and Arabs, among others.

That doesn't diminish that certain Jews make up a large segment of the conspirators to inculcate a global government. In 1917, many Bolsheviks were Jews. Soviet communism would be the next step toward globalism.

As for American-owned supranational corporations that aided Hitler by helping build Germany's war machine to one degree or another, government documents and historical research have shown that the following were complicit: General Electric, Henry Ford, General Motors, DuPont, to name just a few. They have been part of the military-industrial complex of which Dwight D. Eisenhower warned.

The most nefarious conspiracy, which has been proven via historical documentation, is that of Franklin D. Roosevelt striving to implicate the United States in the war in Europe according to a promise he had made to Britain's Prime Minister Winston Churchill. To close this installment we will leave it that Pearl Harbor was no surprise to Roosevelt or Churchill, and there was no legitimate reason for the United States to enter the European Theater against Germany. Just because Hitler was prompted to declare war on the U.S. didn't mean we had to take the bait. ❖



Strangers on a Train

By Albert James Dager

RECENTLY, JEAN AND I took Amtrak's Coast Starlight train to Southern California. We prefer the train to flying because it's so relaxing and offers a day of rest both before and after the busy days spent visiting my sister Mary and her family, as well as friends and brethren in Christ. Although old, the Coast Starlight is one of Amtrak's best trains—far better than the Italian-built Talgo commuters that have replaced most of the old, more comfortable coaches.

Unless it happens to be in dock for repairs, the Coast Starlight usually has a parlor car for use by passengers who book a sleeper room. The parlor car has comfortable barrel chairs that allow us to enjoy the passing scenery in comfort. Jean likes to read while I listen to music on our cell phone. The parlor car offers a limited menu for those who wish to dine in a more private setting than that offered by the dining car. In the dining car, passengers share their tables with strangers.

We opted to dine in the parlor car the first day, but decided to take advantage of the more varied menu in the dining car on the second and last day of our trip. We have often met very interesting people while sharing a table with them, and we never know what direction the conversation may take.

On this particular trip we were seated with another couple for lunch, both of whom had interesting accents. The husband, Frank, is especially interesting. He is 80-years of age, and continues to act on stage, including as a one-man-performer doing drama while playing multiple parts. He has acted at various venues in America and Europe.

The interesting thing about this couple is that Frank is an Irish atheist, and his wife Moira is a Scottish Jehovah's Witness. What a combo!

We learned this after commenting on their wonderful accents. After they told us of their ethnic backgrounds, Jean stated that they would never guess my ethnic background. They puzzled for awhile, then Moira suggested I might be from Middle Eastern lineage, to which I replied, "Lebanese."

Well, that prompted Frank to express his consternation over the whole Middle East mess going on today, saying that he doesn't agree with all the religious conflicts that are now, and have gone on since forever. That is when he said (somewhat proudly) "I'm an atheist."

What a wide open door that was.

I can't tell you all we spoke about, but as the conversation continued I knew the Holy Spirit had hold of my tongue. I agreed with Frank that religion is evil, and I explained to him that religion is God's worst enemy because it dulls one's spiritual perception of truth and leads people away from the true God of the Bible. Scripture after Scripture came out as I responded to his objections to any form of religion including biblical faith. During our conversation we learned that Moira is a Jehovah's Witness, but she had little to say. I suspect she was happy on one hand that someone was speaking to Frank about God, while on the other hand disagreeing with some of the things I said because of her J.W. beliefs. But she never posed a problem as Frank took in what I had to say.

He is a very polite and kind person, and I'm sure didn't want to be rude, but he continued to resist most all that I had to say to him. The whole scenario was very interesting, because in the dining car the attendants want people to eat and move on because there is such a large waiting list; they don't want people dawdling over the table for longer than necessary.

Don't get me wrong; they don't apply the least pressure, but we all know they need the space. In this case, although we were in the middle of the lunch time, there were plenty of empty tables, and we felt no pressure as we continued for over an hour.

Throughout our encounter, Frank would pause to contemplate what I said, then he would shake his head and say, "I still don't go for it," or something to that effect.

Moira and Jean sat silent for the most part. When Moira would start to object to something I said, I would say something that somehow caused her to return to silence.

At one point, Frank really paused, screwing his face, and it seemed as if he was going to respond with at least some acquiescence. But all he said was "How did I get into this?"

So I told him how. I explained that before boarding the train I had prayed, asking the Lord that if there were someone on the train to whom we were to minister, He would bring them to us.

Frank seemed taken aback by this, but, again, he just wasn't going for it. Even so, this didn't bother us, because we knew the Lord was at work in this "chance" meeting.

At a certain time, I knew it was time to stop talking, and allow the Lord to take over in His time. As we parted, it was with cordiality and silent prayers on Jean's and my part for the Lord to do a work in both their hearts.

When traveling on a train, one often encounters the same people one has met while dining together, and there is always a cordial greeting. It seemed that we ran into either Frank or Moira, or both together, more often than usual. On one occasion Frank smiled and made a comment about not being able to get away from us. Once off the train, we seldom run into the same people, and if we do, it may be one time. We must have run into Frank and Moira at least twice in Los

Angeles’s Union Station, and then again outside while waiting for our rides. And, again, each time Frank seemed to sense that this was unusual.

Now, there are those who would ask, “Why didn’t you try to close the deal”? “Didn’t you try to get him to say ‘The Sinner’s Prayer’”?

It isn’t always time to “close the deal.” It is more important to be led by the Holy Spirit. We know that one person plants, another waters, but it is the Lord who gives the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6-9).

There have been times when someone to whom I have witnessed has made a decision to follow Christ. There have been many more times when we have parted ways with nothing more than the assurance that the Lord had us speak with them for His purpose, but with no immediate response.

It isn’t our burden or responsibility to make converts; it is our responsibility to be witnesses of Christ’s redemptive

work, and to proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom. Beyond that, it is God’s job to give the increase in His time through His method.

I hope our readers will remember to keep Frank and Moira in prayer.

It is also my hope that readers will relieve themselves of the pressure to “close the deal” every time they have an opportunity to be a witness for Christ.

When we focus on getting results, or counting how many people we can get to follow us, no matter what form our ministry takes, we don’t have our focus on Christ and His will. If we are led by the Holy Spirit, we needn’t concern ourselves with what He does through us. We need only be concerned that we not fail Him.

Patience, humility, gentleness, kindness, and above all, love, are the elements to Spirit-led ministry—not notches on our Bibles.❖

Russian atheist faces prison

VIKTOR KRASNOV, A Russian atheist, is facing up to a year in prison for saying on the European social networking site VKontakte, “there is no God,” according to his attorney, Andrei Sabinin.

Human-rights activist Pavel Chikov posted on his Facebook page that the incident occurred during a 2014 discussion during which Krasnov also stated, “The Bible is a collection of Jewish fairy tales.”

Krasnov, 38, is on trial in his native city of Stavropol in southern Russia. Charges were filed in the fall of 2015, and the trial began Monday, February 29.

In those charges, Russia’s Investigative Committee accused Krasnov of “offending believers’ feelings.” Offense against religion was criminalized in Russia since 2012, when a punk rock band performed an anti-Putin song at Moscow’s Cathedral of Christ the Savior in February of that year.

Krasnov is being prosecuted under a 2013 law, known as Article 148, that criminalizes acts that insult people’s religious feelings and beliefs. If convicted he could face up to a year in prison or a fine of 300,00 rubles (4,000).

COMMENTARY

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the Russian Orthodox Church has been steadily gaining more and more influence over the politics of Russia. Vladimir Putin has often promoted what he calls traditional values, and has promoted the Russian Orthodox Church as the moral authority for the nation. Because of the Russian Orthodox Church’s influence in Putin’s government, it is virtually illegal to belong to any other church institution, and woe to those who offend the sensibilities of the Russian Orthodox hierarchy.

Perhaps the politicians in the Russian government are especially sensitive to anti-religious speech because of the U.S.S.R.’s history of brutality toward Christians and Jews during its heyday. Perhaps the Russian Orthodox Church believes it has a mandate from God to punish infidels as it and its counterpart in Rome persecuted unbelievers (and believers of different Christian religions) in years past. Or perhaps it’s a combination of these that has prompted the Russian government to persecute the once exalted class of atheists.

Whatever the case, it is not God’s will that His people persecute or force anyone to acquiesce to religious dictates.

Yet this account of Krasnov’s predicament contrasts how the United States of America and its arch-rival Russia have completely switched sentiments toward Christianity. Our once “Christian” nation has become more anti-Christ, while the once anti-Christ nation of Russia has become intolerant toward those who criticize Christianity (and other religions).

This switch has its parallel in the politics of the two countries on several levels, not the least of which is their different approach to threats to national security.

As much as Putin may be acting contrary to U.S. policy in the Middle East, and on other fronts, one has to admit that he shows more backbone and deference for his country than the leaders in the current U.S. administration show toward theirs.

Even so, both nations are acting contrary to God’s Word. Seems one can’t win for losing.❖

Everything is
WRONG
That is
ALMOST RIGHT!

Uncle Ben’s Quote Book, Benjamin R. DeJong (Baker Book House, 1974)

FEEDBACK . . .



Dear Al and Jean,

Thank you so much for your faithfulness in sending me the newsletter. I have finished reading Al's book, *The Day of Yahweh*. The pre-wrath teaching rather appealed to me, but I always felt there was something wrong about it. You "hit the nail on the head"!

Thanks again. Please keep me on your mailing list.
In Christ,

S.C., Punta Gorda, FL



Dear Brother and Sister Dager,

I am a life-incarcerated inmate, converted behind bars to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and I live free unto Him in my bonds.

I've been receiving *Media Spotlight* for some years, and use it as an additional witnessing support. Your thorough research and biblical perspective reflect Holy Spirit guidance and truth.

Many inmates are religiously unaffiliated and shun the tracts offered through the chapel. However, our special reports are the articles in *Media Spotlight* have a more practical appeal because their approach is more informative than evangelistic in content.

I have mailed most of the special reports (and even sections of the *Media Spotlight*) to several friends and family on the outside, and they were well received. That is why I'm requesting subscriptions for the persons named in the enclosed attachment. I'm hoping one of them will be kind enough to order *The Day of Yahweh* and have it sent to me. I've wanted it for some time!

May His continued anointing and blessings be upon you in all the good work done in His Holy Name.

Your brother in Christ,

P.C., Dallas, PA

Dear P.C., We were happy to send you a copy of *The Day of Yahweh* as a gift.



Al and Jean,

Just spoke yesterday at our church on "Sanctification: My Way or God's Way," and I used this quote from Al on my PowerPoint presentation:

"The end does not justify the means. The proper focus must be on the means itself, as well as on the end. Results are not the final arbiter of truth; one's pious demeanor is not the final arbiter of truth; one's ability to call down fire is not the final arbiter of truth. God's Word is the only and final arbiter of truth."

It is a GREAT quote which I have used several times, and I just wanted to encourage you that #1, I am still out here, alive and "kicking," and #2, you two have been such an encouragement to me over the years, and still are. Keep fighting the good fight!

E.R., Waukesha, WI



To Staff,

Could you please provide report titled "Masonic History of America" and "What to do If the State Comes For Your Kids." Will send stamps as donation ASAP.

One question if you have a minute: why would a loving God allow this mess??

Love,

N.X., Corcoran, CA

Dear Media Spotlight,

Bless you all in Jesus.

3 John 1:2: "I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health just as your soul prospers."

Thank you for your information in the magazine on ISIS and all the rest. I am grateful. I let other Christian inmates read it and they pass along to others to read.

The painting reminds me of wild flowers on a wall or ledge, like springtime. Here in the Valley of Central California, after our four-year drought, we have gotten lots of rain. The hills are lush green. New and more rain is coming, praise God. Our prison is near Travis AFB, Fairfield, the town next over from Vacaville, California. It's been blue skies and white clouds. Really pretty.

I've been looking for my son for 20 years. The Lord showed me these Scriptures: Lev 25:10 and Micah 4:6.

A friend of mine, his whole church prayed for me, and on September 18, 2015, I got blessed by a letter from my son. I have three grandchildren now.

Praise God! Unexpected blessing! Thank you Jesus!

Thank you again for your fellowship and the love of Jesus for the Christians behind prison walls (Matthew 25:39).

Love in Jesus,

J.D., Vacaville, CA

NOTE: This is a composite of two letters. The painting to which J.D. Refers is a watercolor doodle of flowers on the margins of the paper. In the other letter he added watercolor balloons. He adds these doodles to letters he sends us. They help brighten our day. Thanks, J.D.



Dr. Mr. Dager,

God bless you, and thank you for your gifts, *Vengeance is Ours* and *The Day of Yahweh*.

I was floored by the information you set out in describing the so-called Church in Dominion Theology. Many times I have run across its adherents, including people calling themselves prophets and apostle this, apostle that. I now know where it came from. Before your book I just couldn't figure it out.

Please continue in your ministry to keep us informed. After reading your *Media Spotlight* I decided to put off buying books for now so that I can support your ministry with a small donation.

God bless,

L.W., Pontiac Correctional Center, Pontiac, IL



Dear Al and Jean,

Thank you for sending the *Media Spotlight*. Thank you for doing reviews on the movies. I don't care for movies, but I do like to share with others your reviews on them.

Hollywood knows nothing about the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!!! May God continue to bless this ministry!!

M.M., Panama City, FL

Dear N.X.,

We have sent the publications you requested.

To answer your question, if God didn't allow this mess He would have had to wipe out mankind as soon as Adam sinned. But He is patient, allowing men to either come to Him for salvation and a change of heart, or to continue in rebellion through love for their sins.

What man does is on man's head; God cannot be blamed for it. Rather, He offered man a way to atone for his sins, as Romans 5:1-10 says:

Therefore, being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation works patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope. And hope does not make us ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us. For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous man (yet perhaps for a good man some would even dare to die) but God exhibits His love toward us in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Ultimately, He will return to put down all rebellion and establish His Kingdom upon the earth. That is our hope through the resurrection of our bodies at His appearing. We are blessed to know that we are here and able to be a part of His Kingdom simply because He did not wipe out mankind, but allowed us to continue in our sins out of patient love for us.

I hope this is of help and encouragement to you.

In Jesus' love,

AI



Dear AI and Jean,

We have received your publication for many years. Although my husband is not born again, he reads Media Spotlight and it has provided opportunities to share with him about the Lord on numerous occasions. I appreciate your continued faithfulness to the truth in God's Word, especially as the waters get increasingly more muddy.

May our precious Lord hold us tightly.

C.M., Gunnison, CO



Dear AI and Jean,

Thank you so much for all the work you put in the special report on *Quantum Christianity*. That was a lot of work but worth every line and effort you put into it.

Some of the facts took me back to the '60s, '70s, and '80s when I was caught up in the shepherding movement. Thank God, He moved me out of that!

Also, I see the enemy is still up to his same old tricks coming sometimes from a different angle. But then there is a whole new generation to deceive. It's amazing how the mind works and what it will latch onto at any given time.

God's Word tells us to be careful, check the spirits, study to show yourself approved. But when we are vulnerable the enemy comes in.

The last warning from Jesus was "Be not deceived." I could hardly believe I was!! I could hardly believe there are people out there who believe in parallel universes. I know they are always looking for "hidden" truths, a "deeper" walk, the elites, the true Chosen, the Bride and the concubines (which are everybody but them, the enlightened). They can take a Scripture and interpret it in a way you could never think of. And, of course, we had to be careful of our families, maybe not even associate with them much.

What a mess. And to think the mind would go in that direction even after being taught the Word of God. Scary!!

Thank you again for producing this fine work. Blessings to you and yours.

In Him,

M.S., Seaford, DE



Dear AI and Jean,

I enjoy the *Media Spotlight* articles. It is so easy to be deceived. Your articles have helped me very much.

Thank you, and may God continue to bless your ministry.

R.U., St. Louis, MO



Dear Media Spotlight,

I would like to start off by saying, THANK YOU! for providing true godly Christian information. This is rare nowadays with all the deception and ungodliness that is running around.

The world is headed for some hard times, biblically speaking, and I need to be informed. Your newsletter truly shines light where darkness once was.

As you may know, I'm in prison preparing myself for the Lord's work upon release. I'm not in a position to donate any kind of financial support, but I can put your ministry in prayer and come before the Throne to petition the Lord to continue to bless you.

I truly appreciate any spiritual materials that you are able to send me.

May our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Almighty God El Shaddai, continue to prosper and bless you.

Sincerely,

A.M., Bowling Green, FL



Dear Mr. Dager,

Thank you for your ministry. Never have I learned so many details on certain subjects until I started reading *Media Spotlight*. I'm very excited to know my wonderful friend signed me up to receive your wonderful publication. I believe your publication will help me grow. But as an inmate, I do not have the funds to donate to pay for the service. I pray you don't discontinue my subscription.

Thank you for what you do.

Sincerely in Christ,

A.T., Chino, CA

Dear A.T.,

We do not remove anyone from our mailing list unless they request we do so, or our publications are returned as undeliverable.

Dear Friends, Al and Jean,

I did read your special report. My first thought was, "Even so, come, Jesus!!"

To let you know, I couldn't read it all at once!! So dark, and the Lord is in control. PTL!

Our enemy is roaring around to see who he can deceive and devour.

Another area in our churches today that are needing to understand: music.

Woe!! All that LOUD drum beat, so much repeating a thought.

The teens are the leaders in their torn jeans and tight clothes.

Hymns? Lost or ignored!

Sing along:

"Great is Thy Faithfulness";

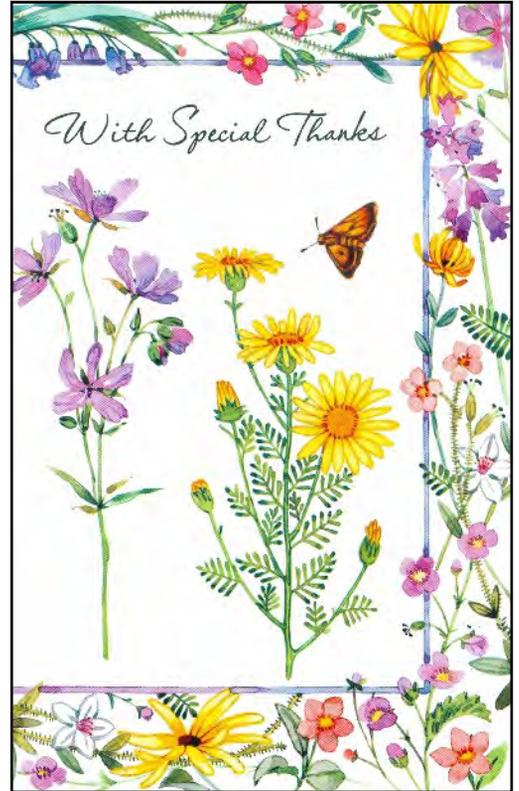
"I Need Thee Every Hour";

"Beneath the Cross of Jesus."

I thank God for your teaching--NEEDED!

A pilgrim,

R.H., Cedar Rapids, IA



We wish to share this unexpected blessing of a Thank You card received from the apologetics class at one of the prisons whose inmates receive Media Spotlight. For obvious reasons, we have blotted out legible last names.

Dear Albert and Jean,
the apologetics class would like to thank you for all your support and help - they love Media Spotlight

Thank you!
I enjoy media Spotlight
Darren

Thank you for the blessings in media Spotlight and your books.

Thank you for every thing -
Al & Jean,

Thank you so much for media Spotlight. God bless!
Gloria (El Guapo)

ALBERT & JEAN,
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR EVERY THING FROM ALL OF US AT "A.C.F."
"MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALWAYS!"
IN CHRIST. - JAMES

Sincerely,
James

Thanks for all your help to me
Fred

Thank you!
your media Spotlight has been very very good for my new walk with the Lord!
Stacy

Sincere Thanks,
Andy

Thank you for all your help. Greg

Thank You And God Bless You And Your Ministry

THANK YOU BOTH FOR YOUR SUPPORT
La

Thankful for all the help we get in prison. Thank you so much, keep you all in prayer
Peggy

Thank you for all your help. God Bless
Greg

Thanks, GOD BLESS and Marathra!
Marty

Thank you Mr & Mrs Deger for your books. Martha

Thank You FOR ALL THE HELP, GOD BLESS
Steve

A humble, heartfelt thank you for all of your kindness.

* May your Ministry continue for many of years, and with my deepest Thanks too both -u- Al & JEAN. May God continue to smile on all you do. Your Brother in Christ
* Gary



Jean's Turn

My Friend, Virginia

May 15, 1919 – October 8, 2015

By Jean Dager

LET ME TELL you about my friend, Virginia Nonis. She lived an amazing 96 years on this earth and has graduated to live eternally with her beloved Jesus.

She believed Jesus when He said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25.26)

Al and I first met Virginia around 1990. At that time, she served as a caretaker for a young woman, Carrie, who suffered from MS, and was confined to a wheelchair. I was impressed with how gently Virginia took care of Carrie even when Carrie became frustrated and out-of-sorts. Virginia was in her early 70s at the time, but she just soldiered on, doing her best to meet Carrie's needs. Eventually Carrie had to be moved to a full-care facility where she passed away before age 40.

We got to know Virginia well when we began hosting a fellowship in our home each week. Often she would join us even though having to drive a distance in her car that was a bit "rickety" and not too reliable. One of her sons did whatever repairs he could to keep it running.

The last time she joined us, she was unable to back it out the driveway, so one of the brothers in the fellowship did it for her. At that point, she decided she'd better give up her car.

We kept in touch by phone, and would occasionally pick her up at her assisted living home and take her to lunch. Once she asked us to take her to a nearby cemetery so she could place flowers on graves of people she wanted to remember. By then, we knew what Virginia's life purpose was all about.

Her passion was the Lord she loved so dearly, and her mission was to share Him with whoever she met no matter where she was. She went out of her way to be a witness for Christ. She was a mighty prayer warrior, often fasting as she appealed to the Lord on behalf of others. Her great faith was an inspiration to many besides me.

Al and I were both privileged to pray with her on many occasions as she sought prayer for others. It was obvious that she possessed a generous and cheerful heart toward anyone in need. She lived quite simply but made it her business to help the downtrodden whether or not they knew the Lord. Daily in prayer, sharing her faith and providing as much temporal help as she could, she was a wonderful testimony for Christ. Even though she eventually lost her eyesight and spent her remaining years living in an assisted living facility, she continued to be a fervent witness for the Lord.

Sadly, we were not informed of her passing until recently. We were, however, able to make contact with her pastor, Marty, who conducted weekly services near her assisted living home. As we would have expected, Virginia was well-loved by all who knew her. The brethren there provided a wonderful memorial service on her behalf. At the memorial service, certain "Famous Virginia Quotes" were shared, as follows:



"Self-pity is a poor fertilizer"

"Virginia goes where angels fear to go!" (Her mom always said)

"The Devil's in the mix!"

"One with God is a majority"

Those who knew her said, "She believed she was called to be a Watcher on the Wall of the City of God."

Virginia will be missed but surely not forgotten. ❖

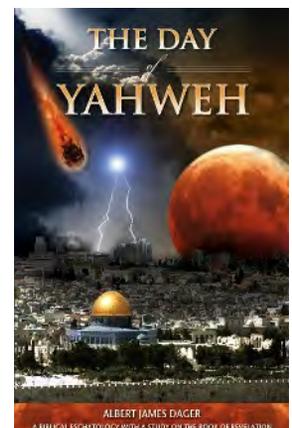
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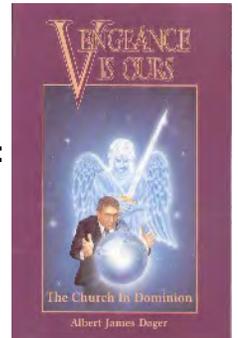
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