



Australia
Diakrisis

A Ministry of Teaching

*But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age...to discern (diakrisis) both good and evil (Heb. 5:14)
Whom shall He teach knowledge? and whom shall He make to understand doctrine?... (Is.28:9)*

Newsletter of TA Ministries Vol.2, No.37

November/December 2005

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TA Ministries is a non-denominational faith ministry, *teaching, informing and equipping* the church.

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The editors may not necessarily agree with all the views expressed by subscribers in this newsletter.

We welcome comments and articles contributed by readers. Unless otherwise requested, these may be included in following newsletters at the discretion of the editor.

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This Newsletter is distributed bi-monthly *free* of charge. The cost to this ministry is approximately \$20.00 per subscriber annually. Any donations to help with these expenses is received with gratitude.

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Sub-Editors Comment

Early retirement? - don't think so. Any daydreams of retirement from this ministry were just that - dreams. Not long ago you would have thought the apostasy, the great falling away in the Church, had reached the point where nothing more would surprise anyone...wrong...deception continues to engulf us and has pervaded corners of the Christian realm thought unassailable just months ago. It's a locomotive on an incline with failing brakes...

Lutherans clamour for union with Rome, Anglicans wrangle over homosexuals in ministry, Presbyterians withdraw investments from Jewish projects, Pentecostals peddle the Health and Wealth heresy and Baptists fall headlong into the Church Growth and 'Purpose Driven' movements.

The false revivals of the late 80's have given way to the 'Emergent Church' with it's 'growth' principles, producing millions of spurious conversions. The 'Purpose Driven Life' has invaded once sound churches worldwide - mostly unaware that the program is also being marketed to other faiths - such as Judaism - that alone should be enough to warn the leaders off - but it doesn't.

If you feel that the entire methodology of 'doing church' in the last few years hasn't suffered a seismic shift - what of this from the Sept/Oct2005 edition of U.S. Christian magazine 'Rev?': *'The world needs more growing churches. To achieve that goal, you need to attract a crowd so that you can turn that crowd into believers who are growing and making a difference in the world. Here is a bundle of practical ways to woo people into your church. Worship services must be upbeat to encourage guests to come back. The worship may be meaningful, but if people are less energized when they leave than when they arrived, what good is that? The message may be full of truth, but if listeners are thinking of their 'to do' lists for after church, what good is that? Services that lack energy will not be attractive to people who are deciding whether to return. Here are some ways to raise the energy level in worship: Begin by pumping up the volume. The impact of the same song sung by the same talented artists played at the same tempo will vary according to the volume. Louder music creates more energy. You should also consider the volume of the music played before and after services. If it's loud, people will begin to talk over the music, and the energy level in the room will increase'*.

No longer content with being the remnant Jesus affirmed the Church to be, pastors in CEO mode are busily applying business stratagems to their work. To do so they must strive to make their gospel palatable, fun, and above all, rewarding to the pampered, self sufficient baby boomers and generation X.

We've suffered through 'Toronto Blessing' hysterics, Brownsville swoonings, *Promise Keepers* vowing, *Jabez* praying, *Alpha* mania, *gold* dust falling, *Church marketing*, and *Purpose Driven!* What can possibly be next?

We must adhere to the principle of 'Sola Scriptura' and allow the Lord Jesus Christ to build *His* Church. Not one of the 'programmes' in recent Church history has produced the promised 'revival' or growth assumptions! Nor will they. The Remnant Church is a 'little flock' and is promised the hatred of the world - not the acceptance received by mega-churches nowadays.

No, it's not yet time to take our leisure. Much work is ahead as the deceptions deepen and become more subtle. Stay tuned! **Mike Claydon**

The 'Self-Esteem' Myth

...The 'self-esteem myth' - [is] the idea that an individual's self-esteem is central to success, happiness, performance, and behaviour. This idea that self-esteem is an essential part of a healthy personality is now virtually institutionalized in American (and Australian) culture. A quick visit to the local bookstore will reveal a myriad of titles loosely arranged under the category 'self help'. The entire educational structure, especially at the elementary level, takes self-esteem as a basic imperative for the educational process...

Now, a team of researchers has taken a closer look at the idea that self-esteem is a crucial factor in personal happiness, achievement, and behaviour. Their research conclusively destroys the self-esteem myth and demonstrates that the nation's obsession with self-esteem was never based on science in the first place.

The researchers, Roy F. Baumeister, Jennifer D. Campbell, Joachim I. Krueger and Kathleen D. Vohs, published their findings in the January 2005 issue of *Scientific American*: 'Boosting people's sense of self-worth has become a national preoccupation. Yet surprisingly, research shows that such efforts are of little value in fostering academic progress or preventing undesirable behaviour'. This article...should serve as a reminder that the reign of pop psychology has produced social effects that continue to influence the minds and lives of countless Americans (and Australians). Many of the most cherished assumptions of secular psychology run into direct conflict with the Christian worldview. The self-esteem myth is a prime example of how unbiblical thinking can lead to countless problems...

The team aims their sights at the self-esteem movement and, in particular, at the *National Association for Self-Esteem [NASE]*, a group which aims to 'promote awareness of and provide vision, leadership and advocacy for improving the human condition through the enhancement of self-esteem'. But, as these researchers counter, 'regrettably, those who have been pursuing self-esteem-boosting programs, including the leaders of NASE, have not shown a desire to examine the new work, which is why the four of us recently came together under the aegis of the American Psychological Society to review the scientific literature'...

These scientists discovered that many of the advocates of self-esteem have no idea what self-esteem is, and have no means of measuring it. It turns out that most of the theorists and investigators who have been dealing with the issue have simply asked persons what they think of themselves. As these researchers argue, 'Naturally enough, the answers are often coloured by the common tendency to want to make oneself look good...psychologists lack any better method to judge self-esteem, which is worrisome because similar self-ratings of other attributes often prove to be way off'.

Interestingly, this quartet of scientists reviewed the literature that argues for a correlation between physical attractiveness and self-esteem. As it happens, those who register self-esteem also report themselves to be physically attractive. The complicating factor in all this is that others do not see these individuals in the same way - at least in terms of their physical attractiveness. As these authors explain, 'What seemed at first to be a strong link between physical good looks and high self-esteem turned out to be nothing more than a pattern of consistency in how favourably people rate themselves'...The researchers argue that both high self-

esteem and low self-esteem are rooted in a person's larger worldview and self-concept. Those with low self-esteem...are not merely negative about themselves, they are negative about everything...While self-esteem advocates have argued that high self-esteem leads to a lowering of social prejudices, these researchers found exactly the opposite: 'people with high self-esteem appear to be more prejudiced'.

This team also accused self-esteem proponents of confusing correlation and causation. 'If high self-esteem brings about certain positive outcomes, it may well be worth the effort and expense of trying to instill this feeling. But if the correlations mean simply that a positive self-image is a result of success or good behaviour - which is, after all, at least as plausible - there is little to be gained by raising self-esteem alone'.

When it comes to academic performance, the evangelists for self-esteem have argued that raising students' feelings about themselves would lead to greater academic achievement. The team found 'that...multiple studies, certainly do not indicate that raising self-esteem offers students much benefit. Some findings even suggest that artificially boosting self-esteem may lower subsequent performance'. In other words, telling children they are doing well when they are actually doing poorly is a destructive lie that misleads the student and, if anything, leads to even further frustration.

Another claim routinely made by self-esteem advocates is that adolescents are likely to show more sexual restraint and behavioural control if they demonstrate high self-esteem. 'The results do not support the idea that low self-esteem predisposes young people to more or earlier sexual activity. If anything, those with high self-esteem are less inhibited, more willing to disregard risks and more prone to engage in sex...When it comes to alcohol consumption...some studies have shown that high self-esteem is linked to frequent alcohol consumption. All this suggests that adolescents with high self-esteem may translate much of that confidence into risk-taking behaviour.

An individual's high self-esteem does seem linked to a personal sense of happiness...the team raises again the question of correlation versus causation. Does self-esteem produce happiness, or does happiness tend to boost self-esteem?

What about all those self-esteem programs?...*'We have found little to indicate that indiscriminately promoting self-esteem in today's children or adults, just for being themselves, offers society any compensatory benefits beyond the seductive pleasure it brings to those engaged in the exercise'*...Those pushing the self-esteem agenda hold sway throughout the educational establishment, the psychological community, and the culture at large. An entire industry of self-esteem enhancing seminars, conferences, books, and therapeutic programs means big business and big money. Furthermore, the idea that self-esteem - feeling good about ourselves without reference to reality, achievement, virtue, or behaviour - is a prerequisite to contentment is...seductive and dangerous.

The Christian worldview completely reverses this cycle. The Christian finds satisfaction, not in a sense of self-worth, but in knowing the one true and living God...the gospel makes clear that the Christian's identity is found in Christ - not in the self. As a matter of fact, this is one of the most transformative and liberating realities of the Christian faith.

('Apostasy Alert' - Excerpt from article by R. Albert Mohler, Jr.)

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editors)

Christians Possessed by Demons?

Dear Mike, I was interested in your reply (Sept/Oct/2005, P.11) to the concern about demonic deliverance for Christians. I agree with Terrys editorial about how we approach difficult biblical issues, making sure we are rightly dividing the Word of truth. I raise the question: have you applied this principle in order to conclude that it is impossible for a regenerate person to be possessed by a demonic power? Many Christians react with fear, unbelief, and ignorance on this matter but I hope you are more objective than that.

However, I do not agree that 1Jn.5:18 supports your conclusion because you would also have to hold the doctrine of sinless perfection which John's epistle is clearly against (1Jn.1:8). To rightly divide the epistle we must bear in mind the two natures of the believer. It is our new life in Christ which cannot sin (1Jn.3:9) and which cannot be touched by the wicked one (see Col.3:3 and Rom.8:38,39; Eph.2:6). We can still walk after the flesh (Gal.5:13) and manifest its fruits (vs.19-21) and Satan can sometimes get an advantage (Eph.4:27) through this, even to demonic control, but not ownership (2Tim.2:25,26; 1Cor.6:19,20). Christians can be affected by doctrines of demons and seducing spirits (1Tim.4:1) which we have been instructed to forsake (Eph.4:17-19). An example of this is the excesses of the Charismatic movement which can vary in the degree of effect and control. James 3:15 describes the character of such as earthly, sensual and devilish (demonic). Many of these people are genuine believers. Notice verse 10 'My brethren, these things ought not so to be'; but the ground is false doctrine.

It is important to understand how demons can operate in a person. This is demonstrated in the accounts of the maniac of Gadara in Mk.5 and Lk.8 and of the lunatic son, Matt.17 and Mk.9. Notice that the demon is not the person and the person is not the demon. Sometimes the afflicted person has a degree of control over their body and mind, sometimes not. The word 'oftentimes' is used in Lk.8:29 and Matt.17:15. The Lord does not link the demon to their sin but rather has compassion on them as of those attacked. It certainly wasn't the lunatics fault (Mk.9:21).

To tell a person who has repented of sin and trusted in Christ that he or she is not saved is cruel and untrue. Jesus said he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. We have no scriptural right to make the gospel, eg.Jn.3:16, conditional. Do we doubt the efficacy of the blood of Christ? Demonic possession should be understood as meaning eternal ownership of the soul.

May this shed some light on the subject. Yours in Christ,
(G.H., Qld.)

Sub-Editors reply: We have taught on this in *Diakrisis* July/August/2002, P.5,6 'Neil Anderson, *Demonisation & Sola Scriptura*'. There is a danger here that we play with words to our confusion, (eg. 'demonic control', 'possession', 'ownership'). That Christians can be 'possessed' with demons is unthinkable if one considers the truth of a Christian being indwelt with the Holy Spirit and being the 'temple of the Holy Spirit'! No believer mentioned in Scripture ever had an indwelling demon, let alone was delivered of one. However, we are not here saying a demon cannot 'oppress' the mind of a Christian, (2Cor.10:3-5).

It is not a matter of Christians reacting 'with fear,

unbelief, and ignorance on this matter'; it is rather a matter of this new doctrine of Christians being possessed by demons *not being found in scripture*, and running counter to the doctrine of Sanctification and the Holy Spirit - defying 1,900 years of 'the faith once delivered'. It is actually new teaching adopted near the 20th century.

1Jn.5:18 says nothing about the heresy of 'sinless perfection'. Similarly, 1Jn.3:6-9: The expression, 'he cannot sin,' is in a Greek tense that means contemporaneous action - ie. *habitual* sin. Similarly in verse 8 and 9: verse 8 is literally translated 'the one who practices sin.' Of course there is a distinct contrast drawn between the divine and human natures of man. But again, *this does not speak of demonic possession!*

Most of the scriptures you cited have absolutely nothing at all to do with the demonic. Collosians 3:3 does not refer to a spirit being sinless. It actually refers to our passions *in the flesh*; Rom.8:38,39 and Eph.2:6 have nothing to do with either the flesh or the demonic. Of course one can 'still walk after the flesh' (you quote Gal.5:13), but that is not demonic possession. Gal.5:13,19,21 also has nothing to do with being possessed or controlled by demons, but rather refers to the *fleshly* members within us. Similarly, 1Cor.6:19,20 is speaking of fornication, not demonic control. *This is where so many Christians go wrong - they fail to distinguish between the flesh and the demonic!* 1Tim.4:1 too is speaking of last days apostasy from the truth and lies in ones *conscience*. At best it is speaking of oppression of the mind, (2Cor.10:3,4,5). Similarly, Eph.4:17-19 is nowhere speaking of demonic possession but rather fleshly thinking. 2Tim.2:25,26 is referring to Christians avoiding, and separating from, those that oppose truth, including false teachers.

You say: 'James 3:15 describes the character of some as being earthly, sensual and devilish (demonic). Many of these people are genuine believers'. However, James 3:15 is describing *fleshly thinking* as 'devilish' (an adjective literally meaning 'demon-like'). It does not refer to any Christian being demon possessed! One of the worlds foremost New Testament Greek scholars, Spiros Zodhiates, in a commentary on this word, lists the cases of demon possession and states: 'In view of the fact that Jesus Christ has absolute power over the demons, it is impossible for a demon to possess a believer in whose heart Christ dwells'.

You say: 'It is important to understand how demons can operate in a person'. But why is it important? Far better to know 'Christ crucified'! You then cite Mk.5, Lk.8 and Matt.17 - all of which depict *unregenerate people!*

You say: 'To tell a person who has repented of sin and trusted in Christ that he or she is not saved is cruel and untrue. Jesus said he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. We have no scriptural right to make the gospel, eg.Jn.3:16 conditional.' We have never taught such a monstrous thing!

The Bible says: 'Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new', (2Cor.5:17). Does this allow for possible demonic possession? We think not.

Mike Claydon

Erratum

In the previous edition of the *Diakrisis* newsletter we incorrectly stated that the founder of the Australian Christian Life Centre movement, Frank Houston, was banned from preaching for life in New Zealand prior to him leaving that country for Australia, when in fact the ruling was passed subsequently. We sincerely apologise for this error.

Jack Van Impe Finally Joins Rome

Jack Van Impe who was widely known as 'the walking Bible', has become a Roman Catholic. His telecasts have in the past reached 160 nations through 825 international radio and television stations.

Until 1984, Van Impe stood with Bible believers and opposed popery, but then he published a book, '*Heart Disease in Christ's Body*', and in it he indicated that he had moved to the position of ecumenical neutrality and away from Biblical truth.

Then came Van Impe's video, released in the Autumn of 1993, '*Startling Revelations: Pope John Paul II*'. Advertising for the video stated: '*Dr. Van Impe who formally warned that the Roman Catholic Church is a false apostate church has now made a complete about-face by accepting the pope and so called traditional Roman Catholicism as being part of the body of Christ...He not only claims that Pope John Paul II was a genuine Christian but also considers him to have been a true prophet and defender of the faith*'.

Now in a recent broadcast, Jack Van Impe has explained his conversion to the Roman Catholic church, comparing it to the conversion of the Apostle Paul. He states that he was once a right wing fundamentalist who put down Catholics, but now he has been converted.

The Burning Bush, May 2005, states: '*It but proves that a head knowledge of the Bible is not evidence of true conversion. After all, none can quote the Scriptures like the devil!*'

('Faith & Freedom' May/2005)

'Another Gospel' (2Cor.11:4; Gal.1:6-9)

'Life is meant to be lived as an increasing adventure in prosperity. God's intention is to prosper the righteous so that they can demonstrate the power of His Kingdom on earth. Prosperity is not an option but a mandate and responsibility given to all who believe in the authority of the name of Jesus. We are called to show forth the wonders of His increasing Kingdom, and this clearly requires an increasing measure of affluence so that we can have an increasing measure of influence'. (Assemblies of God Website)

'Christian Psychology'

'Christian Psychology' as the term is used today is an oxymoron. The word psychology no longer speaks of studying the soul; instead it describes a diverse menagerie of therapies and theories that are fundamentally humanistic. The presuppositions and most of the doctrine of psychology cannot be successfully integrated with Christian truth. Moreover, the infusion of psychology into teaching of the Church has blurred the line between behaviour modification and sanctification'.

('Our Sufficiency in Christ' by John MacArthur, P.59)

Billy Graham Asked Where the Pope Is

On an April 4th 2005 *Larry King Live* television program on CNN, King asked Graham, '*There is no question in your mind that Pope John Paul II is with God now?*'. Graham responded, '*Oh, no...I think he's with the Lord, because he believed. He believed in the cross. That was his focus throughout his ministry, the cross, no matter if you were talking to him on a personal issue or an ethical problem, he felt that there was the answer to all of our problems, the cross and the resurrection. And he was a strong believer*'.

For Graham to make such a statement is to lend credence to a false gospel which claims that salvation comes to those who merit the favour of God by their works. Pope John Paul II served as the chief herald of this damnable false gospel throughout his many years as leader of the world's Roman Catholics. (*Foundation Magazine*, March/April 2005)

Editors Comment: The late Pope believed and taught that Jesus is sacrificed repeatedly on Roman Catholic altars, contrary to Hebrews 6:6; 9:26-28; 10:10; that Mary is a co-mediator with Christ and can lead people to Christ, contrary to 1Tim.2:5; that righteousness is not imputed to our account but infused through sacraments, contrary to Rom.4; that we are saved through faith + the sacraments...

These teachings affect the *person* of Jesus Christ and the atonement - the *work* of the cross. Such a false gospel cannot get anyone to heaven. The Roman Catholic religion has always viewed the Protestant Gospel as 'anathema' ('cursed').

Billy Graham once exposed Roman Catholicism as a false religion, but now has joined the swelling ecumenical ranks of those who have apostasised from their original position.

Rick Warren's Church

(Advertising for Warren's church activities):

'Try One of Our Worship Venues! We have something for everyone! One of our few 'traditions' at Saddleback is to keep trying new ways to tell the good news of God's love. What is a worship venue? It's a live feed of the message on a large bright LED screen. It's live bands with different styles than in the Worship Centre. It's a smaller, more intimate atmosphere for worship. AND you can even bring your coffee with you into the service!...This is where you hear all the familiar sounds of Saddleback. The teaching is live every weekend and is videocast to our other venues...

...in Tent 2: For those who like guitar-driven rock band worship in a concert-like setting that you can FEEL! Rev it up in worship and get ready for the videocast message...

...Room 404: Get away to the islands for a time of worship, complete with hula and island-style music. Message is by videocast. There's a potluck 'luau' right after the service on the first Saturday of every month (food, fun, fellowship and hula lessons)...

...Fridays 7:00pm in Worship Center...Country music, boots and buckles are all part of this worship experience with videocast message. Line dancing for novices and experienced dancers happens after the service. (Note: Children and youth programming not available this venue.)'

'...there shall be false teachers among you...And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you...' (2Pet.2:1-3)

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editors)

A 'Different Gospel'?

The following is a facsimile received in September from an Australian Independent Baptist pastor and author. Previously the writer had sent two 'personal' letters, the second to which Mike Claydon replied. We received no answer. We then received a phone call in which we were accused of not evangelising, being 'heretics' and other more personal character judgments. The fax and the phone call did not address any of the points or questions raised in Mike's letter of reply. We have contacted the writer since then, informing him that we wished to publish his name in full but we have received no reply. Because of the persistent charges laid, we feel a defence is warranted.

(Underlining is in the original facsimile)

'Here are...errors that you are propagating:

1) *You are preaching a false and different Gospel to 1Corinthians 15:1-4 that 'Christ died for our sins, was buried, raised again the third day...' because by believing Limited Atonement and Unconditional Election', you will not know if a lost person you are speaking to is elect or not. Therefore you can never say with certainty that Christ died for his sins ['our' = yours and mine]. If you don't tell him this you are not preaching the gospel that Paul preached.*

How do you know if a lost person is elect or not? You don't.

2) *You discourage Christians from sharing the gospel because by inescapable logic, if the elect are guaranteed to be saved and then non elect can never be saved, then absolutely nothing you do or don't do can change their eternal destiny. You may not like to admit this logic, but this is the case. So many people see this.*

3) *You are blaspheming Jesus Christ by making him a liar and false advertiser when he offers salvation to 'whosoever will may come' when you claim that he already knows that the non elect cannot come to Christ for salvation. This is giving Christ the attribute of the devil as a liar and a deceiver...*

Note: To simplify and clarify point 1)

A) You believe that Christ died only for the elect (Limited) + only elect can be saved (Unconditional Election)

B) You don't know if the lost person you are speaking to is elect or not (true?).

C) Therefore you can never tell a lost person that Christ died for his sins, as Paul could when he told the Corinthians in their unsaved days that Christ died for our sins (our = His and the lost Corinthians sins) in 1Cor.15:1-4.

D) If you don't tell a lost person this, you are not preaching the gospel.

Regards, K.P., [Cherrybrook, Sydney]

Editors' Comments as per points above:

1) You say we 'are preaching a false and a different Gospel to 1Corinthians 15:1-4...'

As mentioned to you before and explained clearly in our newsletters (eg. March/April, 2004, P.3), we do not teach the atonement as 'limited', in that the blood of Christ is *sufficient* for all human sin. But it *will* in the end

be *effective* for only some, considering 'few' will *ultimately* be saved, (Jn.10:11-15; Heb.10:14; Matt.20:28; 1Cor.15:22; Matt.1:21; Rev.5:9,10). Can anyone deny this fact? We simply do not teach that Christ's death and shed blood is not *sufficient* for the whole world!

We do not know, and are not meant to know, if 'a lost person we are speaking to is 'elect' or not'. We are to present the Gospel to *everyone*! It is God who 'draws'.

The 'our' in 1Cor.15:1-4 you refer to is *not* referring to the unsaved! The passage reads: '*...BRETHREN, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you... Christ died for our sins...*'

You say: '*How do you know if a lost person is elect or not? You don't*'.

You have answered this correctly. That's why we preach to 'every creature'! Why are you questioning us about knowing who the 'elect' are when you have previously stated you don't believe in this Biblical doctrine for individuals anyway?

In response to your further 'clarifications' on Point 1)

A) You say we 'believe that Christ died only for the elect (Limited)'. No, we say He died for the sins of the whole world.

You say we teach '*only the elect can be saved (Unconditional Election)*'. The Bible calls saints the 'elect'; they are the saved ones. If one is not elected how can one be saved? Are you suggesting salvation is 'conditional'? Conditional on what? The books of Romans and Ephesians dispels 'conditions'.

B) You say '*you don't know if the lost person you are speaking to is elect or not...*'. Absolutely true. That's why we preach to *all*, and leave the opening of hearts to receive the message - to God alone!

C) You say '*Therefore you can never tell a lost person that Christ died for his sins*'. Yes, we can. His shed blood is sufficient for the sins of the whole world. We must show the person he has broken God's holy law, that he is totally lost. That God has provided a way for salvation and that person must ask for mercy and forgiveness, and turn from his ways. What happens after that is entirely up to God. Have you never had someone do all these things and yet remain unsaved? We know of persons you have had pray 'the sinners prayer' and 'make a decision' - to then be told they are 'saved eternally', who have never shown evidence of genuine regeneration, yet continue to feel falsely secure. Remember, we can '*believe in vain*', (1Cor.15:2; Jn.2:23,24).

Again, you say the 'our' in 1Cor.15 refers to the Corinthians in their *unsaved* state. This is a novel and false interpretation we have never heard of before! Paul was here speaking to his saved '*BRETHREN*'! Elsewhere in Corinthians (more than 23 times) he repeatedly refers to them as '*brethren*'!

D) You say '*If you don't tell a lost person this, you are not preaching the gospel*'. When the true Gospel is preached a person is being told that Christ died as a substitute to save those who believe - that His sacrifice was sufficient for the sins of the world (although 'few' will be saved). This sacrifice satisfied God's wrath and justice, who then

raised Jesus from the dead. The Gospel is Jesus dying in our place, His death, burial and resurrection, affording us the imputation of His righteousness. Nothing makes a person seek God more fervently than when they have their heart opened to receive this Biblical Gospel! *It is the same Gospel that has been taught by the great evangelists down through the running centuries!*

2) You say we ‘discourage Christians from sharing the gospel...’ Funny, several of our issues of ‘Diakrisis’ have offered (free of charge) the *Eternal Questions* booklets for readers to give to the unsaved. There has been a big response to this book and fruit as well. *Please show us on which page of that book a false gospel is presented.*

The people involved in this ministry will testify to the extent of our evangelism both in the ministry and at home. We are primarily and unashamedly a *teaching ministry* rather than an evangelistic one.

You say ‘*if the elect are guaranteed to be saved and the non elect can never be saved, then absolutely nothing you do or don’t do can change their eternal destiny*’. At the end of the day that is *hypothetically* correct. But sadly, you are applying fallen human extended logic to the Sovereign Grace of God in the election of the Saints. This ends up in the heresy of ‘hyper-Calvinism’. God has allowed the saints to be partakers in the reward for saving souls *by the command to preach the Gospel*. It is God who opens hearts: Acts 13:48 ‘*And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed*’. The ‘ordained’ here is Greek Perfect Passive. It is an act by God *done to man* (passive voice) and at *a prior time* with consequences to the *present* (perfect tense). No amount of mental gymnastics or selected commentaries can change the obvious meaning of this verse! Only by the drawing of the Holy Spirit will the ‘all’ that the father has given, come, (Jn.6:37).

3) You say we are ‘*blaspheming Jesus Christ by making him a liar and false advertiser... when he offers salvation to whosoever will may come*’.

This phrase ‘*whosoever will may come*’ is simply not in the Bible! The closest is Rev.22:17 - referring to the New Jerusalem and to God’s ‘servants’ (vs.6) taking ‘*the waters of life freely*’.

You say we ‘*claim that He already knows that the non elect cannot come to Christ for salvation*’. It’s not a matter of ‘cannot’ - they *WILL NOT!* Man is unable to come to God in and of himself for salvation unless the Holy Spirit draws him first! Rom.8:7: ‘*the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, NEITHER INDEED CAN BE*’. Rom.3:11: ‘*There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God*’. (See also Jer.17:9; Is.64:6,7). Jn.6:44,65 ‘*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day...65 ...Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father*’.

Romans 9 has a solemn warning to those who would disbelieve and contradict God’s choosing, election and predestination. Rom.9:15-20 ‘*...I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth*

mercy...18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. 19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?’

You say: ‘*This is giving Christ the attribute of the devil as a liar and a deceiver*’. The Gospel we preach is the Gospel that saved us. We will continue to preach ‘*Christ crucified*’. In your phone call you made a (negative) statement that England is what it is today because of the likes of Spurgeon and his/our ‘false gospel’. We have never before heard such statements about the ‘prince of preachers’, one of the greatest *evangelists* in history.

We will continue to preach exactly the same Gospel as that of Hugh Latimer, John Owen, John Bunyan, William Carey, George Whitefield, John Newton, Jonathon Edwards, Charles Spurgeon, David Brainerd, John Eliot, John Paton, Martyn Lloyd Jones, Tyndale...the list is long and distinguished. The great historic confessions also give clear evidence pertaining to the ‘doctrines of grace’. The *London Baptist Confession of Faith* of 1689 (you are a Baptist pastor after all) states just such a ‘Gospel’. Were all these great divines ‘*blaspheming Jesus Christ by making him a liar and false advertiser...?*’

To summarise what we believe and what the historic church has taught from century to century:

1. God chooses man in salvation. Man does not choose God (Eph.1:4,5; Jn.15:16; Rom.3:11).

2. Man is unable to come to God of himself for salvation unless the Holy Spirit draws him first (Rom.8:6,7; Rom.3:10-11; Jer.17:9; Is.64:6,7).

Only by the drawing of the Holy Spirit will the ‘all’ that the father has given, come (Jn.6:37).

3. God elects, chooses His people of His own determination (Eph.1:5,9,11; 1Thess.1:4; 1Pet.1:2,10; Tit.1:1; Rom.8:33; 11:5,7; Col.3:12; Rom.9:15-18; Gal.1:15,16; Jn.6:37; 5:21...etc).

4. The blood of Jesus is sufficient for *all* to be saved. But it *will* in the end be effective for only some, considering ‘few’ will *ultimately* be saved, (Jn.10:11-15; Heb.10:14; Matt.20:28; 1Cor.15:22; Matt.1:21; Rev.5:9,10).

Praise God for Jesus who died for our sins! The sovereignty of God in the election, predestination, justification and glorification of His saints - we confess to having limited understanding of. But this we believe!: ‘*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us*’, (Rom.8:29-34).

Terry Arnold & Mike Claydon

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editors)

The Other Side of 'Well Intentioned Dragons'

Hello Terry, I came across your ministry approximately seven months ago through a faithful friend and have been encouraged ever since that this ministry exists. It is thrilling to know that the truth of God is going out and being taught to whoever will listen to the real word of God and its doctrine.

I...have seen all you speak about in churches over the 18 years of my walk with the Lord, even to the extent of being manipulated into the 'modern church' thinking. I seem like a dinosaur to my family or my peers because I have departed and won't tolerate the modern 'worship', 'Christian rock', 'all faiths are okay' thinking.

My husband and I had struggled for some time with what was happening in the church because we knew it didn't add up to what the Scriptures taught, and that much of it was to entice the flesh, not the soul. Young people were in the church participating and doing 'good things' but never seemed to have any real desire to obey God and what He said, but rather whatever the latest 'Christian pop psychology' or 'television program' had to say. It wasn't till some friends exposed us to the 'doctrines of grace' approximately six years ago that it all fell into place. Passages like Jn.6 & 10 and Eph.1 instantly came to mind. It was like a huge light came on and the convictions the Lord had placed on our hearts were only made stronger - which we praise our Lord & Christ for! Please keep being bold for our Lord & Master, Christ Jesus and declare the truth, that others like us who were being forced to join the flood of apostasy will be rescued and see that 'the Lord knows those who are His' and 'let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity', (2Tim.2:19).

I do have a question about one of your recent articles called 'Well Intentioned Dragons' (July/Aug2005). As much as I agree with this...What if members (including deacons) in the church see that the eldership of the congregation is not following a biblical pattern for eldership (seeking a plurality of elders) but has more of the CEO mentality...or...is not qualified according to Scripture? When the desire of the members is to be biblical, for the Lord's sake & His church, ought not they approach him on the matter?

I would like to know your thoughts or recommendations on books regarding this, because those who seek the truth to be established in the church are sometimes 'labelled' as 'dragons' incorrectly? Their intention is not to cause division but to see the Word of God obeyed for His glory...

...Our Lord & God bless you and your labours for His glory and honour and keep you from the evil one.

(Name withheld at editors discretion)

Editors reply: The Bible promotes a plurality of elders. However, some churches for a variety of reasons are unable to establish more than one elder and so adopt a 'pastor and deacons' model. The 'pastor' is biblically the 'elder'. His *office* is 'elder' and his *gifting* is 'pastor', (Eph.4:11). If he is humble this may work OK. But if he is not humble or not completely qualified as required by Scripture, he can develop a 'CEO' mentality and 'lord it over the people', (1Pet.5:3). We have seen this in many churches where the people are *driven* instead of being *led*. These churches can quickly become legalistic which invariably leads to hypocrisy.

If the 'elder' is not Biblically qualified according to 1Timothy 3 and Titus 1 then the deacons need to be approaching him and or ministering to him in grace, attempting to resolve the issue.

Our article on 'Well Intentioned Dragons' was looking at things from a pastoring point of view. However, as you rightly point out there is another side to that when the pastor/Elder is not qualified or there is failure in some area. The difference between a 'dragon' and a Godly Christian is this - the dragon does not operate within scriptural guidelines nor in the spirit of grace. Matthew 18 tells us how to carefully approach a person in sin or who has offended. 1Timothy 5:19 also tells us exactly how we are to approach an elder/pastor. If these guidelines are followed correctly and lovingly in grace, the person is not necessarily a 'dragon'. *It is the approach that matters* - are we ministering *in grace* or in the flesh?

We have teaching tapes on these issues.

Thank you for your encouraging letter.

'ekklesia'

Dear Terry, Mike, I am an avid reader of 'Diakrisis'. Could you please explain the meaning and roots of the word 'church' as used in scripture. I think the Greek word is 'ekklesia'.

(G.C., Sydney)

Editors reply: The roots of the Greek word 'ekklesia' ('church') is somewhat lost in tradition although some commentators believe it came from the idea of the 'synagogue'. This is probably because that is what the Jews had in their tradition before they became Christians. Many believe the word 'ekklesia' was first used to distinguish Christians from the Jews in the 'synagogue'.

The Greek 'sunagoge' for 'synagogue' - means to 'gather together'. 'Sunagoge' is a less sacred term than 'ekklesia'

and not used for Christians except possibly in James 2:2 where it used as a very general term for a *gathering of people* (perhaps saved and unsaved).

'Ekklesia' is translated 'assembly' in one passage (Acts 19:32,29,41) but it is most often translated 'church'. 'Ekklesia' is made up of 'ek' - 'out', and 'klesia' from the root 'kaleo' - 'to call'. Hence 'ekklesia' literally means 'called out' or 'the called out ones' since it is referring to a group of people.

It has a wider meaning for the *universal church* and a narrower meaning for *local churches* in particular places. 'Ekklesia' refers to Christian people *who are called out by God* (Acts 20:28; 1Cor.1:2); called *from sin* and *from the world*, (Eph.5:23-32).

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editors)

MAIL

As this ministry has grown over the years so has the volume of mail we receive. It is impossible for us to answer it all and we hope our correspondents understand this. Every letter and e-mail is read and greatly appreciated. However, we cannot any longer reply to all *hard copy mail*. The time and postage expense has simply become prohibitive. We will continue to answer e-mail queries as time permits - but we ask that patience is shown toward us if this takes longer than expected. Many thanks.

Sub Editor, Mike Claydon

Dear all at 'Diakrisis', my name is... and I am presently a prisoner incarcerated in...USA. I have been here for 15 years and the Lord has been for some years now the most important part of my life. I recently obtained a copy of 'Diakrisis' May/June 2002. I have to tell you I was blown away! Praise God for this ministry!

I am 100% Protestant, a believer in the doctrines of Grace and a proponent of all the 'Solas'. I loved your piece on Benny Hinn! Have you done a piece on Kenneth Copeland, or Kenneth Hagin?

I loved the section on 'Justification - a Truth Under Siege'. I know in my part of the world commonly known as the 'Bible Belt' (yeah right!) - these people will not for a minute listen to a sermon on Justification, when brought from a Reformation perspective. Sermons such as these take away from their glory and pay it to our Father in heaven who alone deserves the glory, honor and praise. Their proud flesh cannot take much of this kind of teaching. That's why they follow along after Benny Hinn, Kenneth Copeland, Kenneth Hagin, Paul Crouch, the list goes on and on. That is why it was so awesome for me to come across your newsletter even though it was years old; the truth changes not, Amen!

I cannot send a donation at this time but look forward to doing so in the near future. I would very much like to receive 'Diakrisis' to use for study and passing to other brothers in Christ. Thank you so much for your time and may God bless the works of your hands as well as every word you speak, all to the praise of His glory.

(Name withheld at editors discretion)

Prayer/Praise Points

- We wish to thank all those who have been praying in light of the last prayer points in Sept/Oct *Diakrisis*. There is hope on the horizon that Terry may be relieved of pastoring/elder duties next year and return to the itinerant ministry with *Diakrisis*. Please pray for health and strength.

'Salt Shakers'

Dear sirs...I applaud your ministry to Roman Catholics and your efforts to educate Protestants in the errors of Catholicism...I enclose a copy of an article from the latest 'Salt Shakers' newsletter. For some time now I have been concerned...that they cannot discern the difference between Roman Catholics and 'committed Christians' as the enclosed article shows. I bring this to your attention...to inform those who want to know the truth...'

(Name withheld at editors discretion)

Editors Comments: 'Salt Shakers' is a group who are pro 'Christian ethics' and against various evils in society such as homosexuality, etc. They inform, research, warn and involve themselves in politics to expose many things they feel Christians need to be aware of...

Their newsletter (Oct/2005) reports of the *Salt Shakers* annual conference where their guest speaker was Tasmanian Senator Eric Abetz, a 'committed Christian'. However, newspapers also show Abetz to be a practising Roman Catholic. Also in the newsletter was the mention of the previous 'media director', Sarah Champness, who is being sued for 'vilification' by a pro lesbian group for articles she wrote in the 'Catholic Leader newspaper'.

No mention is made of the false Gospel of Roman Catholicism.

Dear Terry, I want to say thank you so much for your very quick reply to me regarding the Holy Spirit. I found it interesting, informative, and most importantly accurate. Some of your reply was helpful to me (i.e. the chronology of the Holy Spirit and His work as written in the scriptures). Now I am praying for an opportunity to share much of your reply with my friend...I appreciate your help. Our family continues to pray for you. Thanks again. Kind regards,...

Dear Terry...I enjoyed reading your latest 'Diakrisis', [Aug/Sept/2005], especially the section on Houston/Hillsong on ABC's 'Australian Story'. I have written to media outlets when they have stories like that. I have also written to Peter Costello when he was on a Hillsong Documentary. I have asked the media, Peter Costello, etc, to look into, or do a story on the victims, those who have been misled or exploited by the Assembly of God (AOG) system. Terry, I believe this is what you should do through 'Diakrisis' - encourage people to write to people like Peter Costello and the media to do articles exposing these wolves in sheep's clothing; it is scriptural to expose the darkness.

We are praying for you all, Yours through Christ, (B.N., Sth Aust.)

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