



Diakrisis (Australia)

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'But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern [diakrisis] both good and evil', (Heb.5:14)

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

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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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Editors Comment

To know doctrine and theology is one thing, but to 'experience' it is another. There is somewhat a tension between knowing about God and *knowing* God. This ministry unashamedly focuses on teaching and encouraging Christians to love sound doctrine. But sound doctrine without application in Holy Spirit sanctification can be just useless intellectualism or dead orthodoxy.

To experience the Lord is to experience the salvation of the abiding presence of the Spirit of Christ within. Sound doctrine teaches us we have the full presence of God in us every moment of our Christian life but do we *know* and sense that in reality day by day? Another way of describing this is: are we 'filled' with the Spirit at any moment? We can have tons of doctrine and rightly tick every theological box and yet have not one ounce of spirit felt joy and power. Oh Lord, save us from doctrine that does not produce life!

I wish this were the problem today, as at least the foundation for experiencing the Lord would be supported with accurate teaching about who God is and how we can know Him personally. But I am convinced today that the problem is not too much sound teaching, for most Christians know or study little doctrine. Many are swayed by false teachers, TV preachers who tickle ears, and internet sites that sway the gullible to some new teaching. Christian bookstores sell material that would be shocking a few decades ago. Recently in a major Christian bookstore catalogue I saw a book titled '*How To Feel Good Naked*' with a photo on the front cover of two naked women behind the title of the book. The book teaches Christians how to '*learn to love their bodily selves just the way God made them*'. In another section of the same catalogue there was a completely secular advert for a conference teaching people 'how to make money'. The internet site had not one mention of anything Christian. Yet Christians are flocking to buy these materials. But how can they experience God personally with such material that is devoid of the word of God?

It is sound doctrine that tells *what* we should believe about the God who wants us to experience Him. *If the doctrine is not sound, then our experience of God will not be sound.* It will be based on performance, feelings, emotions and misguided mindsets. Worse, it sets many up for counterfeit experiences of '*another jesus*' and '*another spirit*', (2Cor.11:4). Jesus can be counterfeited through emotion, hype, music and feelings. But a solid foundation of teaching on the person of Jesus and the Holy Spirit will protect us from this danger.

Put simply, most churches today err on the side of seeking experiences rather than sound doctrine. There is a '*zeal of God but not according to knowledge*', (Rom.10:2). The answer to this problem is the same as it always has been - it is to hear *from* God by reading and studying His word, and speak *to* him in prayer. These old paths of knowing God are still God's method of being filled with the Spirit and experiencing the presence of God moment by moment, (Eph.5:18). These are the sources of knowledge and power whereby we grow in relationship to know the security and satisfaction of His abiding presence within. '*...He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*', (Heb.11:6).

Oh Lord, make us ashamed of any lack of desire to study your word and to pray! Lord, make us thirsty for your '*rivers of living water*'! (Jn.7:38)

Terry Arnold

What Do You Mean By 'Church'?

At times I have become discouraged by the lack of commitment I see in many Christian folk toward the concept of being committed to a 'local church'. Many Christians today see little importance in church attendance or a commitment to using their gifts and talents to edifying their brothers and sisters in the body of Christ. My response to this was to write a booklet titled '*Keys To Fruitful Church Membership*' which suggested six keys to being happy and fruitful in church life: 1. We must have an abiding relationship with Jesus Christ and be constantly filled With the Spirit. 2. We must understand the importance of the 'church'. 3. We must understand this (the local assembly) is no perfect church. 4. We must exercise spiritual discernment and distinguish between the important (doctrines) and the less important (preferences). 5. We must understand, accept and trust qualified pastoral authority. 6. We must always 'minister' in grace.

The word for 'church' is '*ekklesia*' which has a wide usage but literally it means 'called out' ('*ek*' - 'out'/'*klesia*' - 'to call'). The '*ekklesia*' are those who are called out of the world and sin. It has a wider meaning of the 'universal church' and a narrower meaning of the local assembly.

In a day when people are failing to see the importance of the local church, old fashioned 'commitment' is falling away. Some might respond: '*but all churches are off the track*'. This premise is not only unscriptural but too often an excuse for a lack of submission and commitment to God's people (the body of Christ), and one to another. God has *always* kept a faithful *remnant*. He said the Gates of Hell will not prevail against the church, (Matt.16:18).

Some today may have valid excuses for a lack of commitment to a local fellowship. Some are unable to find biblical churches in isolated areas, or because of disabilities are unable to commit to a local church. Some may need time to recover doctrinally from false teaching, or emotionally from spiritual abuse. However, the heart of the Spirit within will soon convict the believer of the need for fellowship.

Some say they are 'already in the body of Christ' - the 'universal church'. This is true, but *the living expression of that one universal body is the local assembly*. There are hundreds of local churches in the New Testament, some in houses and other instances where they met more openly (1Cor.11:20). The epistles themselves were mostly written to local assemblies. The early Christians were simply not *lone rangers* but part of a fellowship of believers. The local church gatherings were not something that first century Christians opted out of.

Fellowship in the church is also good training ground in learning how to relate to others. Those with wrong attitudes and unsuspected tendencies to selfishness, may never have these challenged, unless they are in regular fellowship with other Christians in a local church. This is part of the work of the Holy Spirit to sanctify believers.

Today people leave churches for the most petty reasons...someone has upset them or has had a disagreement with them. Paul Brown in his excellent book '*Churches in Trouble*' writes: '*Christians justify their character or temperamental weaknesses, never allowing these to be challenged or brought to the Lord for change, and as a result there is no alteration or progress in that area of their life at all. This can be just as true of leaders as of the rest*

of the membership' (P.173). '*One great tragedy is that when people have sinned they often move off to some other church. Instead of repenting and putting things right within their own church, amongst those who knew the sin and perhaps felt the shame brought to the church and had to cope with the damage, they start again somewhere else*' (P.24). '*If people have really been born again then they will respond to loving correction and guidance and this is something that should be continually going on in a fellowship of God's people*' (P.49).

One of the keys to a happy commitment to a local church is the Godly concept of *giving* rather than *taking*. Too many church goers today are thinking in terms of what they can *get* for their own growth, rather than what they can *give* to the body as a whole. In '*Disciplines of a Godly Man*' Kent Hughes writes of this selfishness: '*I'll come along for the ride. But if things do not suit me, I'll criticize and complain and probably bail out...There are a vast herd of professed Christians who exist as nomadic hitchhikers without accountability, without discipline, without discipleship, living apart from the regular benefits of the ordinances. However, membership in an invisible Church without participation in its local expression is never contemplated in the New Testament*' (P.169,170).

Ministers today need to *teach* the flock about what 'church' is as the '*body*' of Christ, its purpose and unity, the God ordained authorities within, and how to address 'offences'. The Local church is not a gallery where we exhibit the finest of Christians; it is rather a school where we educate and encourage imperfect Christians.

The purpose of the local church is to glorify God, (Eph.3:21). Christ is the head of her and we are the living and interacting parts. In giving glory to the head our *ultimate priority* is to *worship* Him in Spirit and Truth. The local church must be God centred and not man centred; not what people desire but what God demands. It was never *primarily* designed as a place to cater for the 'felt needs' of the people or for the unsaved. It is not a theatre where people go to watch what happens and it is never a place of entertainment.

The church is also not a place for evangelism over and above equipping the saints, (Eph.4:11-13). However, as we '*fellowship*', worship God and teach '*the apostles doctrine*', the Lord will '*add to the church daily such as should be saved*', (Acts 2:42). When these commands are fulfilled the saints will respond in the work of evangelism and discipleship. The result of all this is *edification*...'*let all things be done unto edification*', (1Cor.14:26).

A doctrinally sound local church is a God given tool to assist in the edification, sanctification and maturity of the Christian. Being teachable and Godly involves *submission* and *accountability*. The local fellowship is often the only place where we can be in submission to Godly appointed and qualified elders (Heb.13:17; 1Pet.5:1-5) and in submission one to another, (Eph.5:21; 1Pet.5:5), as the Scriptures command.

'And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as you see the day approaching', (Heb.10:24,25).

Terry Arnold

Lord, Was That You?

The Prophecy:

Earlier this year a Television (TBN) 'prophet' gave a prophecy concerning Fiji. Another Pentecostal minister in Fiji followed this up with 'words from the Lord' concerning an earthquake, tidal wave and destruction in Fiji. The date given 'by the Lord' was June 26th, 2.30pm. The prophecy read as follows:

'Warning!!! Dear friends. Greetings in wonderful name of Jesus. Please read on, be calm cool and collected. DO NOT PANIC. The purpose of this letter is to move you to preparation. Those who are prepared will have confidence when the coming events happen. You have about 3 months, 15 days from this date (08/3/10) to prepare yourself and your family especially for those who live in Fiji. I am Rev.Laione Lutumaimuri Nacevamaca, the senior pastor of Kuriako's Christian Centre, Nadi Airport and Superintendent of Kuriako's Church of God in Christ Fiji, an Author, missionary Bible school administrator and Lecturer. I Have been in the Christian ministry since 1975. I function in the ministry office of pastor, prophet and teacher as in Ephesians 4:11; [I am] a Bible College and Seminary graduate with Dip.Th Bre, MABS Degrees, married with 4 children.

The brief of biodata above is to help you know that I am well balanced as a person and as a Christian brother. In obedience to the Lord God Almighty, I am releasing with love and compassion, this message to you for the first time in writing.

DISASTER: Surely the Lord God does nothing unless he reveals his secrets to his servants the prophets (Amos 3:7)...Toward the end of last year (AD2009), the Nadi Weather Office predicted 11 tropical cyclones during the 2009-2010 cyclone season which will end in April 2010. This prediction moved me to predict Fiji. I received an answer from the Lord God saying...'The predicted cyclone will come, but a more devastating disaster will hit Fiji in June, 2010. Earthquakes and waves will hit the entire land from all directions. After the waves, strong winds and rain will follow'.

I talked to the Lord God some more, asking for more details for the June 2010 disaster. On the 23rd day of November, 2009, the Word of the Lord came to me saying...'This time in June 2010, the disaster will hit Fiji. It will be chaotic, a catastrophe that Fiji has never experienced before'. Immediately I looked at my cell phone clock, it was exactly 2:30pm. My friend, the coming disaster will hit our island nation, Fiji, on the 23rd day of June, 2010 at 2:30pm. This is the date and time. Mark your calendar. Add it to your prayer lists. Get right with the Lord God!! Prepare yourself for it. Be familiar with the disaster DISMAC advices, and follow them. I do not know how long the hit will be, but we all know that the aftermath will be longer. Prepare for food, water, etc. Learn from the little ants and prepare in the summer for the winter. The Holy Bible says in Amos 3:7 'Surely the Lord God does nothing unless he reveals his secrets to his servants the prophesy'.

The Lord God has revealed this and it is my responsibilities to warn you. I have been releasing this message orally, until this one in writing for the first time.

The Confirmation: 'So that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses' (Matt.18:16 NIV)...

Early February 2010, an American based prophet released a prophesy from the Lord through his TBN television program. Part of his prophesies are as follows: 'A disaster will hit the South Pacific in June 2010, especially the islands of Fiji. An earthquake will begin in the Western Coast of America, will cut across the Pacific Ocean and hit Fiji whose surrounding reefs will be peeled off of their foundations, cast into the air before they hit the water again. The hit of the sun will cause the moon to spill things like water into the ocean. Some of which will hit Fiji'. Compare this prophecy with mine and you will understand why Fiji will get hit from every direction. This prophet until that prophecy has never heard of Fiji or been to Fiji. His prophecy confirms the message given to me in Fiji, on November, 2009. I have never met this American prophet or known to him. Again the Holy Bible says in Matt.18:16, 'So that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses'. The message has been established by the mouth of two prophets. Take heed therefore my friend!! As I write this part of the message, the Anointing from the Lord is heavy on me. Tears begin to fill my eyes. The word of the Lord God is assuring me saying, 'Son it will happen as I told you. Tell my people to prepare themselves'. I am always touched by the pains and the losses of the disaster victims. The Lord God Almighty also cares for you and has revealed this months before it happens to give you time to prepare yourself and your family. Please I beg you in Jesus name to take heed and move to prepare yourself. Thank you dear friend for taking steps to prepare yourself and your family; I am truly honoured to remain. Your Sincerely in Christ, Koseni, Levusasa Savunawai II P.O. Box 10396, Nadi Airport, Fiji Islands. Telephone: 6243516 Mobile: 9954608 E-mail:llaione@hotmail.com'.

Assessment:

The above prophesy caused communities on Rabi and Nagigi on Vanua Levu to flee to higher ground believing their villages would be hit by the tsunami. Many Fijians were living in fear and had taken other measures to escape the prophesied disaster. After June 26th the Pastor, Laione Lutumaimuri Nacevamaca, and another supporter, (Bill Gavoka, Fiji Rugby Union chairman), were taken into custody by the government for allegedly 'spreading rumours about the tsunami'.

On the day after the failed prophecy our ministry wrote the following to several ministers in Fiji: 'Dear all...we are asking and recommending that the church in Fiji take a strong stand against such false prophets...The government has already detained the men responsible, **but what will the church do?** These men should be removed from all ministries in their churches and undergo disciplinary action. Other church leaders should also contact the churches involved to make sure this happens...'

The reason why such false prophets and false prophecies abound today is because the church allows them to! It is an embarrassment that the Fijian government will do more than the church would! In the Old Testament these false prophets were put to death! (Dt.13:5; 18:20; Jer.28:16). Although we now live in an age of grace and such punishment is now not applicable, the seriousness of the error is surely no less in the mind of God.

Continued next page >

Already the author has been advised by some in Fiji 'not to judge'. But this flies in the face of the commands by the apostle Paul who advised the Corinthian church to '**judge those that are within**' and even to put them out of the church for serious sinful behaviour, (1Cor.5:12,13). How serious was, and is, a false prophet? We are to '**judge righteous judgement**' (Jn.7:24). We are to reprove, try, prove and contend against false prophets, false teachers and false teaching, (Eph.5:11; Tit.1:9; 1Jn.4:1; 1Thess.5:21; Jude 3; 1Cor.2:15). Jesus said there would be many false prophets in the last days (Matt.24:11,24) and He likened them to '**ravening wolves**', (Matt.7:15). Its that serious.

If any would 'prophesy' falsely then what voice are they listening to? Where did the revelation come from? Can the system of gaining the revelation ever be trusted again?

The test of a false prophet was simple: '**When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken, but the prophet has spoken it presumptuously**', (Dt.18:22). God says of false prophets: '**They speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord...I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied...I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed...they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart...Is not my word like as a fire? says the Lord; and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces? Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, says the Lord, that steal my words...Behold, I am against the prophets, says the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He says. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, says the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them...**', (Jer.23:16-32).

The false prophesy concerning Fiji is just one of many 'prophetic words from God' delivered each month on TV or in many churches around the world. Every week people in Charismatic/Pentecostal churches speak words supposedly from God. Many are foretelling dates, times and events. If they are words from God then why are we not adding them to the canon of Scripture? Do the people who make these prophecies not add to God's Word? (Pr.30:6; Rev.22:18) And what of the people who willingly listen to them?

The whole system of modern day prophesy raises serious questions and begs that Christians answer this question: *How is God's revelation to be delivered to man?*

The fact is - all revelation if it is from God *is authentic and to be obeyed*. Unless revelation is sound and Biblical, then those that hear 'prophecies' today are bound to obey them as authentic if they are really words from God!

What of hearing revelation from God outside of the written Word? Are there such inspired sources other than, or distinct from, the Bible? Do such revelations include '*God told me...the Spirit spoke to me...or...God gave me a vision...a dream...a prophesy*'? Does '**the faith once delivered to the saints**' (Jude 3) also include 'prophetic' revelations given to 'prophets' today?

Almost all of the prophetic words given to men in the Bible were audible or words that clearly *left no doubt*. Apart from these words, God has not chosen to give a new form of communication, nor taught such after the closure of the canon of scripture. In Jude 3 the word '**delivered**' is in the past tense (Greek aorist passive) with no continuing element.

The Greek passive voice shows this body of faith was given to men *by God*. How has this been done? - through the *closed* canon of Scripture - the Bible! This canon is *complete and does not need now to be added to with further words from God*. 'Sola Scriptura' (Scripture alone) as it was originally taught by the apostles, the church fathers and the Reformers, says that the Word of God is sufficient and this excludes foretelling any *new* Words from God!

In the Old Testament God spoke directly '**by the prophets**' (Heb.1:1,2). But now we have '**a more sure word of prophecy**' which is clearly stated as being '**the scripture**', (2Pet.1:19,20). Surely 'the Scriptures' are those written down and accepted unanimously by the early church. This passage also says '**Holy men of God spoke...**' The word '**spoke**' is in the Greek aorist tense and indicative mood - meaning it was done *once* as a *completed act* and *not to be repeated*! New Testament Prophecy is now declaring, expounding and *forthtelling* the word of God *already delivered*.

The New Testament shows God spoke to his people through Jesus Christ, (Heb.1:2) and then subsequently the Apostles and prophets, (Eph.4:11,12). The Apostles acknowledged each others writings (2Pet.3:15,16; 1Tim.6:18 cp Lk.10:7), and the Holy Spirit attests their authenticity, (1Cor.2:11,12). God first entrusted this Word to the Jews as a race, (Rom.3:1,2).

In the Scriptures God has revealed all that is sufficient for life and godliness, (Dt.29:29; 2Pet.1:3). God has consistently warned not to add to His Word at any time, (Dt.4:2; 12:32; Pr.30:6; Rev.22:18,19). We must not go beyond the Word (1Cor.4:6) or seek signs extra to the Word, (Matt.12:39).

One author sums up the case well: '*...The reformers who paid with their life blood for freedom from dominance by the traditions of the church were especially jealous in guarding future generations from the oppressions created by supposed words from the lord. 'Scripture Alone' was their uncompromising cry. Only the written Word of God, an objective standard which all men can see and read, communicates infallible truth to God's people, since God now has stopped using His former methods of revealing His will to the church, (Heb.1:1). But the search goes on for a new way for God to continue revealing His will in ways other than through Holy Scripture. Each new generation offers a slightly different twist on the recurring theme*'...

... 'And why not both? Why not the illumination of Scripture coupled with new revelations of the Spirit? Simply because if you declare a need for both, you have implied the insufficiency of one. You have placed yourself back in the frame work of the Old Covenant, in a time when new revelations were required because of the incompleteness of the old. But Christ is the final Word. No further word for the redemption of men in the present age is needed. In Scripture is found all the truth that is needed for life and godliness...' *

Let the sufficiency of the Word of God not be muddled by today's 'prophets' and the systems of doctrine they aspire to that would teach us to have an ear to hear new revelations from God. The final revelation we have from God is in '**the scriptures**' which is still the '**more sure word of prophecy**', (2Pet.1:19,20)! '**Every Word of God is pure...add you not unto His words...**', (Ps.30:5,6).

Terry Arnold

* '*The Final Word*' by O. Palmer Robertson, P.86,135

'Deliverance' - Quotable

'In the epistles we find absolutely no expectation or command that Christians should be doing exorcisms. Not a mention. Not even a hint that this is something the apostles expected Christian Churches to be involved in...The apostles...performed 'the signs of a true apostle' as Paul calls them. They did not expect all Christians to do these things or perform these signs - in fact, these signs wouldn't have been signs of an apostle if everyone could do them. The New Testament gives absolutely no encouragement to Christians to directly engage with the devil or demons through such practices as exorcism or deliverance or praying against territorial spirits...please forgive me for speaking strongly, but love requires that a clear message be heard: [today] these 'ministries' are not Christian ministries in the New Testament sense. They are profoundly misguided, and should be shut down, never to be re-opened. One very important clue that these ministries are not truly Christian ministries is that they reintroduce the fear of the underworld that Jesus died to banish. The ancient world was afraid to step in the wrong spot in case they came across an underworld space...So, why do these ministries scare the life out of people once again. Why are we warned that we could be under an curse, afflicted upon us by some ancestor's involvement in a Masonic order, or through someone else being involved in the occult? Why are we told that we

accidentally, imperceptibly 'give the devil a foothold', to misquote Ephesians 4:27, which is taken to mean giving the devil an opportunity to take possession of your body, or to seriously influence your life for the worse? (Instead the verse is saying that anger against a Christian brother harms the life and unity of God's people, which is what the devil is also trying to do - so why help him along in his mission? We should be serving Jesus mission)...if any ministry claims to be Christian and raise the old fear again, then it is seriously misguided and is not being governed by the Gospel of God's grace. And I repeat my strong words: such ministries should be disbanded, for they are doing nothing good for the work of Christ in this world and, in fact, are doing harm. Those involved may be well meaning and wanting to help...but to create fear is not the work of God. It is to unwittingly play into the devils hands, because fear has always been one of his favourite instruments (remember Hebrews 2:14,15)...Our weapon is the gospel of Christ and our strategy is to remember it, speak it, believe it, cling to it and pray in response to it!...Perhaps the most damaging consequence of focusing on exorcism, deliverance, and other dramatic forms of so called 'spiritual warfare' is that it diverts our attention from the truth that is so clearly observed in the scriptures...'

('Living With The Underworld' by Peter Bolt; Matthias Press, P.143-147)

Quotables

'A failure in separation is always the cause of apostasy. One degree of deviation from the truth, with time, will put you a long way off course. 'Eternal vigilance' someone said, 'is the price of liberty'. The battle is always for TRUTH & PURITY. Very few men have a stomach for either, because the fighters for the truth and purity are not appreciated and you must be willing to be alone in the battle'.

(Dr.Hobbs, The Projector, Spring, 2002)

'Jeremy Taylor tells us of a certain Acilius Aviola who was seized with an apoplexy, and his friends conceiving him to be dead carried him to his funeral pile, but, when the heat had warmed his body, he awoke to find himself hopelessly encircled with funeral flames. In vain he called for deliverance, he could not be rescued, but passed from torpor into intolerable torment. Such will be the dreadful awakening of every sinful body when it shall be aroused from its slumber in the grave. The body will start up to be judged, condemned, and driven from God's presence into everlasting punishment. May God grant that it may never be your case or mine, but may we believe in Christ Jesus now, and so obtain a resurrection to eternal life. Amen.'

(C.H. Spurgeon, Sermon: 'The Resurrection Credible').

The eternity of Hell: 'And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh', (Is.66:24)

'Sola Scriptura simply means that all truth necessary for our salvation and spiritual life is taught either explicitly or implicitly in Scripture'.

('Sola Scriptura' by John Macarthur & various authors, P.165)

'If there be any doctrine of the Bible which Rome is particularly bitter, it is that we are justified by faith alone, without the deeds of the law. This principle strikes at the root of the whole system of infused and inherent righteousness. It removes all occasion of glorying in the flesh. It prostrates the sinner in the duct, and makes Christ the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the all-in-all of human hope'.

(James Thornwell 1812-1862)

'Since he was cursed who rebuilt Jericho, much more the man who labours to restore Popery among us. In our fathers' days the gigantic walls of Popery fell by the power of their faith, the perseverance of their efforts, and the blast of their gospel trumpets; and now there are some who would rebuild that accursed system upon its old foundation. O Lord, be pleased to thwart their unrighteous endeavours, and pull down every stone, which they build. It should be a serious business with us to be thoroughly purged of every error which may have a tendency to foster the spirit of Popery; and when we have made a clean sweep at home we should seek in every way to oppose its all too rapid spread abroad in the church and in the world'

(C. H. Spurgeon)

Your Comments and Questions

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

Reply From SDA

Editors note: The following was received from L.G. in Sth. Australia. (See samples of the debate with this person in *Diakrisis* Jan/2010; May/2010. Readers should be aware this is the second time this person has ‘repented’ of Adventism. We pray that genuine repentance and discipleship will occur).

‘Resignation from membership in the SDA Church: I’m free in Jesus:...it’s been a very long 5-6yr battle and now by the power of God’s Holy Spirit I am declaring that I am coming out of Babylon, coming out of that state of confusion, I’m no longer running to and fro, being caught up with every wind of doctrine, I have officially left Babylon, and I am only following Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour and following the Bible only, which is God’s inspired Word to/ for all mankind. I left the Seventh-day Adventist Church...have been set free from their false teachings and

false prophecies, Praise God, Hallelujah, I’m free in Jesus, under grace not law.

The reasons why I am leaving the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and why I do NOT wish to stay as a member is because of the following points: 1) I do NOT believe in the Investigative Judgment and 1844 to be Biblically accurate; 2) I do NOT believe the Sabbath is the Seal of God; 3) I do NOT believe that Sunday is the Mark of the Beast and that all who worship God on Sunday go to Hell; 4) I do NOT believe in legalistic once a week only Sabbath observance, because I am resting in Jesus Christ daily. He is my Sabbath rest continually. I rest daily in Jesus even while working. 5) I do NOT believe unrepented people will just perish through eternal fire and be extinguished, but that as the Bible says they will burn forever and ever for all eternity in the Lake of Fire;...L.G. (23/05/2010)’

[From S.F., Vict.] Dear Terry, Thankyou once again brother, for your publication...I always look forward to your editorials. The current one has sparked a question...You wrote: ‘The Gospel is about Christ and Justification, not the Holy Spirit and Sanctification’. It is the second half of this statement that took me somewhat by surprise. [By ‘the Gospel’ I meant the historical event of the death, burial, resurrection of Jesus by substitution for our sins (1Cor.15:1-4). Thus it is about Christ’s work, not the Holy Spirit, and therefore Justification, not Sanctification. Please see that I distinguish here between the work of ‘salvation’ and ‘the Gospel’. The former is most certainly the work of the Holy Spirit, the latter is (according to my limited definition of ‘the Gospel’), only about Christ].

*The Gospel is described in various ways that appear to examine slightly different facets and core elements. It seems to me that the Holy Spirit is turning this single jewel throughout the New Testament to reveal it’s overall magnificence. Colossians 1:23...‘If you continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which you have heard...’ Paul is clearly writing to believers who are ‘in the faith’ yet speaks of the ‘hope of the Gospel’...I have always regarded the Gospel as about being both saved from something...and for something...[Agreed. This is arguably the Gospel in a broader sense. But initially it is justification by the work of Christ. I am seeing ‘the Gospel’ in a limited sense as to the work of Christ on the cross. The message of the cross is what Jesus has done outside of us 2000 years ago, not what His Spirit might do within us (Sanctification)]...Other passages...indicate that the Gospel encompasses the whole scope of a person’s salvation which includes justification, sanctification...[Perhaps I am limiting the term ‘Gospel’ to this - what does a person need to know to be saved - I see this as *the work of Christ on the cross*. The Holy Spirit no doubt brings the message to our hearts, but the message itself, ‘the Gospel’, is about Christ and His work.]*

Dear Terry, Re: The report on John Piper: [July/Aug/2010]...If John had written an ‘excellent article’, why should it now be ‘unfortunate’ that you published it merely because of who he was photographed with in public? [It was not ‘unfortunate’ because of the photograph, but because of his alliance with and acceptance of a false teacher (Rick Warren) to speak to Piper’s people]. You hinted at the fact that even ‘apostasy watchers’ can get it wrong just like Paparazzi who can make anything look like something else with a photo. I wonder (occasionally) whether we magnify some things about others, which we claim is being alert to error, with a zeal that God does not share. [Certainly some of the alerts on this event have ‘magnified’ or misused the photo]. I understand both the error that Rick Warren has fallen into and that we can easily put certain Christian teachers like Piper, on a pedestal, but I don’t think the scant information that was printed in ‘Diakrisis’, with its underlying accusation, was in any way helpful. There could be any number of reasons why John Piper is associating himself with Rick Warren - not the least of which is the possibility that the Holy Spirit is working in Rick’s life to convict him and using John Piper in the process. [Space forbade any more than a ‘scant’ mention. However, I did research this before writing...I listened to John Piper’s excuses he gave to his own people for having Rick Warren speak. The weakness of the arguments grieved me. John brought out any good points he could find about Rick Warren but left the serious errors alone (of which Macarthur and others have exposed). And there was no hint that Rick Warren is being ‘convicted’ to change]. Have you read John’s book ‘Fifty Reasons Why Jesus Came To Die’?...it will prove a blessing... [Yes. Piper has some excellent resources. But to have a teacher speak to ones own people, a teacher who is diametrically opposed to much of what Piper teaches - from a pastoral view, I see this as a betrayal of God’s word and God’s own sheep]

May the LORD continue to give you ‘the tongue of the learned, that you should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary’. [S.F., Vict]

Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear Terry, some time ago I received two CD sermons from the United Church of God Australia [UCG]...I don't know how they got my name...they deny the Trinity and speak of the Holy Spirit as being a 'force' or an 'it'. I sent them an article by you: 'Is The Holy Spirit a Person' (Diakrisis March/99). They sent me a letter back...Could you critique the letter...

(R.M., Gold Coast)

Editors reply: The UCG five page letter is too long to fully answer in this newsletter, but for a brief summary. (Theirs in italics; ours in bold and brackets): *'The Holy Spirit...is not a divine person...the Holy Spirit is referred to as a gift (Acts 10:45; 1Tim.4:14). We are told it can be quenched (1Thess.5:19), that it can be poured out (Acts 2:17; 10:45), and that we are baptised with it (Matt.3:11). It must be stirred up within us (2Tim.1:6), and it also renews us (Tit.3:5). These are certainly not attributes of a person. [Note how the UCG uses the word 'it' in presumption. The scriptures they cite do not have this word 'it' and all are arguments from silence at best since they do not prove the Holy Spirit is an 'it'. The 'gift' in Acts 10:45 and 1Tim.4:14 is a person, the Spirit of Christ, as is shown in Acts 2. The 'Spirit' was the 'paracletos' ('comforter'). John 14 and 16 mentions this 'paracletos' as a person. The 'pouring out' (Acts 2:17) is a manifestation of the spirit, as is 2Tim.1:6. The 'renewing' (Tit.3:5) is the affect of the Holy Spirit. None of these scriptures prove the Holy Spirit is an 'it'...It [the Holy Spirit] is described as appearing as a dove (Matt.3:16) and as tongues of fire (Acts 2:3). Jesus compared it with 'living water' (Jn.7:37-39). [Again, these are all manifestations of the Holy Spirit. God in His glory cannot appear to any human except in some manifestation. The 'tongues of fire' and the 'living water' are manifestations and effects of the Spirit, as were the 'sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind' in Acts 2] In Matthew 1:20 we read Jesus was begotten by the Holy Spirit. [But how does this prove the Spirit is an 'it'?)*

The Holy Spirit is always left out of greetings [Not so. Try 2Cor.13:14 - 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen'. The Holy Spirit is also mentioned many times in conjunction with the Father and the Son: 1Jn.5:7; Matt.28:19; Acts 20:28, etc]. When we read that

the Holy Spirit says, or said something, it is called a personification. Here is an example in Scripture: Proverbs 1:20 'Wisdom calls aloud outside; she calls out'. [This is an example of personification for 'wisdom', not for the Holy Spirit! The following examples of where the Holy Spirit speaks are not 'personifications': Acts 13:2; 21:11; 28:25; Heb.3:7] Some assume the Holy Spirit is a personal entity, based on references in the NT to the Holy Spirit as 'he'. This assumption arises from two factors - the use of gender-inflected pronouns in the Greek...and bias on the part of the translators. [It is true that in Greek the gender is often unrelated to whether the item is indeed 'masculine' or 'feminine'. But this is a strawman argument. The word 'spirit' is neuter in Greek, but there are many scriptures that refer to that as a person. John 14 speaks of 'another comforter'. The Greek is 'allos paracletos'. The word 'another' here is 'allos' and referring to 'another of the same kind' - the same kind as Christ! If it was not Christ or an 'it' then 'heteros' would have been used ('heteros' - 'another of a different kind'). This is one of the many reasons why the Spirit is in Greek and in English called 'he', 'him', 'himself' several times over (read Jn.14 and 16)! This is not 'bias on the part of the translators' but built on much scripture that refers to the Holy Spirit as a person]. When the King James version was produced (early in the 1600's, the doctrine of the Trinity had already been accepted for more than 1000 years. [This is a typical lie of the cults. The Trinity was in fact taught in the first 3 centuries by most of the church fathers! (see Diakrisis May/June/2001).

The plain teaching of Scripture says that the Holy Spirit is a 'He' by the use of the personal pronoun: '...He may abide with you forever...whom the world cannot receive...it sees Him not, neither knows Him, but you know Him because He dwells with you and shall be in you', (Jn.14:16); 'When He the Spirit of truth is come He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself but whatever He shall hear that shall He speak and He will show you things to come, He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine...', (Jn.16:13,14). Other comparable Scriptures are Is.40:13,14; Rom.8:16,26. The Holy Spirit also has a *mind* (Rom.8:27), a *will* (1Cor.12:11), and *emotions*, (Rom.15:30; Eph.4:30; Is.63:10). The Holy Spirit is equated with God in Acts 5:3,4...The early church fathers also taught the Holy Spirit as a person]

In Daniel 7:9-14 it speaks about the 'son of man' who came to the 'ancient of days'...Only two great personages are mentioned here. There is no mention of a third person in the Godhead...Why?

(R.M., Qld)

Editors Comment: The same question could be applied in reverse - there are other times when the Spirit is mentioned and only with the Father or only with the Son. So, it is an argument from silence to ask why the Spirit is not mentioned any time the Father and the Son are mentioned. But there are places where *all three persons*

are mentioned together (eg. Matt.28:19; 1Jn.5:6-8).

What is important here is the context in Daniel 7 - it is about the setting up of the Messiah's kingdom. The 'Son of man' receives it at the hand of the Father. This title 'Son of man' is associated with second coming of Jesus. Jesus used this expression for himself many times (Mk.16:42; Matt.24:30).

The main point and subject of the passage is not about the Trinity but about the Messiah and the kingdom. *And the Father does not give this kingdom to the Holy Spirit but to Christ!*

Your Comments and Questions

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

Meetings - Toowoomba, Queensland

Toowoomba subscribers may be interested in the weekend the 5,6th of September (see itinerary on this page). Terry & Beth look forward to meeting all.

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Prayer/Praise Points

- The distribution of the e-mail newsletter continues to expand. We are re-constructing the website which will have resources and articles people can access.
- Praise the Lord for the many encouraging letters, e-mails and testimonies we receive each month. Many letters of thanks often come from people who have been handed the newsletter by a subscriber. We therefore encourage subscribers to share the newsletters with others. Multiple copies can be ordered each month.
- This is a faith ministry - pray that the Lord will continue to provide every need.
- We will soon be out of stock of the '*Eternal Questions*' booklet which has been a successful evangelistic tool. These have been sold at near cost or used to be given away to non Christians as an outreach. Please pray - our need is that we would have the finances and a printer to print another batch and thus continue this evangelism.

Dear Terry, Thankyou you for the DVD testimony of the man converted from Islam. I was really surprised regards the Moslem agenda. How aware one must be in these times.

I am so blessed that our roads crossed. It has been such a comfort relying on you as a friend and mentor. I miss my...who was also my carer and went to be with the Lord. Will we truly get to see our loved ones again? Meanwhile, the medical expenses are great...I realise it's God's plan - I just cannot comprehend it, but I try to keep my eyes on the one I am going to be with and in extreme joy...

(Y.R., Victoria)

Editors Comment: It would appear we may recognise one another in heaven. At the Transfiguration there was recognition of heavenly characters (Matt.17); and the disciples recognised Jesus in His resurrected glorified state, (Matt.28). But the main interest in heaven will be to behold Jesus and worship him as king of kings. You will be free of your sin and sick ridden body and from pain. Every painful memory and tear will be wiped away, (Rev.21:4). '*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*', (Rom.8:18).

Dear Terry, I always look forward to reading 'Diakrisis' and am only sorry that it is not monthly, instead of every two months. What really amazes me is that there are so many people who are willing to argue against plain scripture...

What are your views on Julia Gillard's admission of atheism?...thanks for being so ready to help people in their walk with God in truth...God bless you and all with you...

(V.M., Vict)

Editors comment: Julia Gillard at least confesses honestly to being a non Christian, (unlike many other politicians who wear the tag 'Christian' when it suits). Her immoral and unchristian views are somewhat to be expected (Rom.8:7; 1Cor.2:14), although opposed and never accepted by Bible believing Christians.

Terry's Itinerary

Sept.5th (Sat) 7am Highfields Baptist, Toowoomba, Qld Ph.46967007 (Family Breakfast)

Sept.5th (Sat) 2.30pm Harristown Assembly, Toowoomba Ph.47135494 or 0428953305

Sept.6th (Sun) 9.30am Highfields Baptist, Toowoomba

Sept.6th (Sun) 3pm Kingfisher lifestyle village, Toowoomba Ph.47135494 or 0428953305

Sept.17-20th Melton (Open Door Baptist) church Camp, Victoria Ph.(03)97473536

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