

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)*

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

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The members of the advisory panel may not necessarily agree with all the views expressed 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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Editors Comment

Each day that the Lord gives us is another opportunity to love, worship and serve Him who is the captain of our souls. We thank all those who have supported and encouraged us this past year.

I believe 2002 will be a year of rapidly expanding current trends. The line between truth and error, the world and the church, has been systematically blurred. *The world has come into the church to take the church into the world.* Pragmatism and worldly ideas are dominating church programmes. The flame of the Reformers cry, 'Sola Scriptura!' - the all sufficiency of the inerrant and infallible Bible, is now almost extinguished. The smorgasbord of Pentecostal/Charismatic teachings has permeated nearly every corner of the Christian sphere, as is shown by the literature sold by most Christian bookshops. The ecumenical movement that builds Satans endtime church gobbles up all of the above errors and marches on to Rome.

Pastors, leaders and teachers, as undershepherds, are responsible for *teaching* doctrine and *warning* God's sheep. If they fail to do this God is surely 'against them' and will hold them accountable, (Ezek.Ch.34).

Two things are lacking with today's Christian leaders: Discernment and an active defence of the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, (Jude 3). Christ said his disciples would be persecuted and rejected. To stand for what is true means rejecting what is false! General discernment is not just a special gift of the spirit but is available to all mature Christians, (Heb.5:11-14). It comes through separation, study and knowledge of the truth of the Word of God, (2Tim.2:15).

A word of balance and caution here: any defence of the faith must be done in love. Never judge the persons salvation or their heart. Never attack anothers character. Discern the teachings of others but in humility esteem the Christian person above ourselves, (Phil.2:3). The two must be separated.

One must also act in God's timing. Many are coming to the knowledge of some truth in a continuous sense. To push them further than what they can understand may even thwart their acceptance of that truth. Speak only as the subject arises and learn when to back off! Give milk before meat, (Heb.5:11-14).

Also let us be scholarly, creditable, well informed and adhere to the facts. Admit any mistakes. We are not the Holy Spirit, nor is anything we write inspired and inerrant in the same sense as the Bible. Deal with major issues that affect salvation where possible.

I am convinced more than ever that literature, (books, articles, tapes, etc.), is a vital key to unlocking minds, exposing error, and rescuing those who might be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, (Eph.4:14). This ministry has seen increasing and encouraging fruit from the distribution of such materials. I encourage readers to distribute the newsletters and send literature, that many may be *informed* and *equipped*. Lack of information is much of the reason why there is such gross apostasy in the modern church.

Although we are to be watching and aware of the times we live in, let us not forget that God is in *total control*! I encourage readers to make 2002 a year in which we challenge ourselves to hunger after the Lord in prayer and seek more understanding of His precious Word. Worship Him in Spirit, in truth, and in the beauty of holiness. Let us proclaim the truths of the Lord Jesus Christ and be jealous of His name! **Terry Arnold**

Philip Yancey - Book Review

In recent times there has been much talk of bestselling author Philip Yancey. Christian Bookshops are buzzing with advertisements and promotional material concerning his books. Recently he was sponsored to Australia by the Seventh Day Adventist organisation. A recent bestseller is titled '*Whats So Amazing About Grace?*'

On opening the first page of the above book I was immediately struck by the list of endorsements. One was by Tony Campolo, a powerful speaker and environmentalist.* Yancey quotes him as once saying: '*The United Nations reports that over ten thousand people starve to death each day, and most of you don't give a sh--.*' (P.201) Dr. Campolo's heresies are myriad*. He is liberal on Homosexuality and believes Jesus is a real presence and mystically present in every person we meet.*

Illustrations: Yancey is no doubt a brilliant writer and his use of illustrations captures the attention of his readers. The book reads like a novel moving quickly from one story of 'ungrace' to another. There are no doubt some passages that worthily and poetically describe grace.

Yancey, however, continually slams the traditional Christian church as legalistic, sad and solemn. In opposition to this he paints a picture of a loving, happy and smiling God. His books are full of his painful perceptions of his early years in church. He says he was viewed as a 'deviant' and demon possessed when at Bible College and he felt 'harassed' and 'confused'. Almost all his illustrations are about extreme legalism or worldly stories of 'ungrace'. By these Yancey attempts to show what grace is not.

Throughout the book Yancey begins with scant references to Scripture before launching into illustrations. With regard to Peters reaction to the unclean foods in Acts 10: '*...the closest parallel I can think of would be if, in the midst of Southern Baptist convention in Texas stadium, a fully stocked bar supernaturally lowered onto the playing field, with a booming voice from heaven urging the teetotallers to 'drink up!' I can imagine the reaction: 'Surely not Lord! We're Baptists. We've never touched the stuff.' That was the kind of conviction Peter had against unclean foods.*' (P.148)

Most of the book contains illustrations straight out of the world and psychology. He uses movie stars, movies, IRA terrorists and extreme stories of injustices.

'Straw men': Yancey is a master at setting up 'straw men' and shooting them down. He continually shows examples of hypocrisy and 'ungrace' in Christianity and says this is '*one of the most common reasons why people reject Christianity.*' (P.203)

He sets ex-president Clinton up as a Christian who is the object of 'ungrace' and 'hatred' by Christians. Yancey excuses Clintons sinful life and cites his good works. Yancey says '*Sure, he messes up during the week - doesn't everyone? - but comes Sunday he goes to church, confesses his sins and starts over.*' (P.227) He also speaks of Hilary Clinton's '*spiritual gifts*', (yet mentions nothing of her interest in the occult).

To top it all off he speaks of *Alcoholics Anonymous* (AA) as one where he found grace displayed as in the NT church (P.275). This is a poor example of grace considering AA was founded by non Christians and the group denies the name of Jesus and substitutes instead a '*higher power*'!

Roman Catholicism/Ecumenism: The Roman Catholic religion is presented in a most favourable light. Throughout the book Yancey favourably quotes Catholic leaders and mystics, as he does ecumenical organisations such as *Promise Keepers*. He says Catholics receive 'the gift of grace' at their communion. (P.277) The Pope is portrayed as a man of grace.

Yancey tells how he was involved in a forum with 10

Christians, 10 Jews, 10 Muslims and stayed at a Catholic retreat, and watched a Gay Mardi Gras while in town. He says '*society needs religion, and it matters little what kind. The nation of Islam helps clean up the ghetto; the Mormon church makes Utah a low-crime, family friendly state...*' (P.249)

Doctrine: Yancey admits he avoids doctrine and there is no clear doctrinal teaching on grace in the entire book. His understanding of Scripture is questionable. He says of the Salvation Army: '*William Booth's lump of yeast now leavens societies around the world.*' (P.254) However, 'leaven' in the NT is actually a symbol of evil rather than good. He also says it was the '*saints*' who arrested Jesus and not sinners. (P.274)

Homosexuality: Yancey has much to say about a homosexual pastor friend. Yancey says: '*I have no desire to delve into the theological; and moral issues surrounding homosexuality...*' He says he can find '*very little*' related to Homosexuality in the New Testament (P.236), and was in fact more concerned about his friend divorcing his wife, than the homosexuality. At this mans request Yancey attended '*the first gay march on Washington, in 1987...I went...as Mels friend. He wanted me nearby as he sorted through some of the decisions bearing down on him.*' (P.164) Yancey then describes how an opposing crowd which included Christians, tormented the homosexuals. '*On the one side were Christians defending pure doctrine...on the other side were 'sinners'...yet the more orthodox group spewed out hate and the other group sang of Jesus' love.*' Yancey then attended some of the services of the homosexual churches and says '*He heard nothing suspect in the theology preached from the pulpit.*' (P.166)

Yancey went to meet the media with his gay friend who said to the press, '*I don't know how Philip feels about every aspect of the issue of homosexuality, and to tell you the truth I'm afraid to ask. But I do know how he feels about me - he loves me.*' (P.172) (Could this be grace without truth?) In conclusion Yancey says of his friend: '*how should I treat him? What would grace have me do? What would Jesus do?*' (P.168) Yancey argues that Jesus '*was a friend of the sinners*' (P.175) but what Yancey does not inform the reader is - *these sinners came to Jesus!* (Matt.9:10; Mk.2:15; Lk.5:29;15:1). Jesus never *fellowshipped* with them and did not remain around people who were in disagreement or who would not listen, (Jn.8:59). Would not real grace have Yancey obedient to Scripture and *separate*? To back up his liberal views Yancey quotes a gay man: '*As a gay man, I've found it easier for me to get sex on the streets than to get a hug in church.*'

In conclusion Yancey says '*God loves us anyhow. Grace declares that we are still God's pride and joy.*' (P.171) Yet Yancey's grace shown by his own illustrations of 'ungrace' would appear cheap and closer to the worlds definition of Grace than it is to Scripture. Yancey says, '*how is it that Christians called to dispense the aroma of grace instead emit the noxious fumes of ungrace?*' (P.229). One wonders if Yancey has ever met an imperfect Christian who shows grace?

Yancey himself sums up my feelings completely: '*On the surface the word [grace] may seem a shorthand expression for the fuzzy tolerance of liberalism...*' (P.172) This is the exact impression I gained throughout the whole book!

We warn readers of Philip Yancey and his books. His view of grace is cheap, worldly, humanistic and seductive. Grace is not taught or shown by contrasts with the ungrace of the world. Grace does not excuse sin. Grace changes a person to be a follower of Jesus and His Word. Grace is given through *faith* in Jesus Christ and with *repentance* towards God.

Terry Arnold *See *Diakrisis*, Dec/98 '*Gotta Have a Hope*'

YHWH, Y'shua, HaMashiach or Jesus...?

In recent years there has been much debate and wrangling over what words we should use for the name of the one who died on a cross and bore our sins. The English speaking world calls Him *Jesus*. Jesus means '*Yahweh is salvation*'.

Recent movements such as the 'Hebrew Roots Movement' are increasingly relying on the Jewish understanding of the Scriptures. In many circles there has been an increasing emphasis when writing the name of Jesus or God to use other believed Hebrew forms of God's name such as *Yeshua* or *Yashua*, *YHWH*, etc.

In one endtime news booklet the author states he is using a new version called '*Clear Preferred Version*' (CPV) written by himself and using such above Hebrew names of God. Instead of *Jesus*, the '*original Hebrew name of Y'shua*' is used.

...Wait a minute! I thought God inspired the writers to put the NT Scriptures down in Koine Greek. Greek for *Jesus* is *Iesous* (pronounced *yair-sous*) which is transliterated from the Hebrew *Yeshua*. Regardless of what one understands of this, these words have been translated into our English as '*Jesus*'!

Although *Iesous* is a transliteration of the Hebrew *Y'shua*, nevertheless God *ordained* it to be written as *Iesous*. Does not the Lord know who we are talking about when we say '*Jesus*'? Why the necessity and emphasis on a Hebrew name when the inspired, inerrant and infallible New Testament was written in *Koine Greek*! Jesus and the apostles both spoke this language and God ordained and moved men to write the Scriptures in Greek, (2Pet.1:21). We get our translations from the *original Koine Greek*!

Why confuse people with *Yeshua* when everyone knows Him as '*Jesus*'? Why don't we be most accurate and use '*Iesous*' and pronounce it correctly as '*yairsous*'...Do we need to have classes to teach people how to pronounce this...just in case God does not hear properly?.

This scramble to find the Lords correct name has led to a labyrinth of opinions and pronunciations and not a small measure of Gnostic thinking. My pronunciation of the original language is sadly lacking perfection but I am more confident I can pronounce the English *Jesus* correctly. I am even more confident that whatever name I use the Lord knows the thoughts before they come off my tongue, (Ps.139:4,23). **Terry Arnold**

William Tyndale

Before William Tyndale there was no Bible in English. Tyndale dreamed one day that the boy who drove the plow would be able to read and know the Scriptures in his native tongue. However, most Greek scholars were fearful of translating the Bible into English, as the Pope held great power and prevented English translations.

For safety reasons Tyndale left England and went to Germany to begin translating the Bible. Roman Catholic Bishops sent spies to hinder his work. Tyndale went back to England to finish the printing. He desperately tried to keep his work a secret but a Roman Catholic priest found out from a drunken printer that the printing was nearly finished. Tyndale fled to Germany again and continued the printing. He later smuggled the Bibles into England in various disguises. The Catholic Bishop of London bought all remaining stocks and burned them. Tyndale went back to the printing press to print more.

Eventually Tyndale was betrayed by a man who he thought to be a close friend. He was kidnapped and thrown into prison. With no trial he was hanged and his body was burned. His last prayer was '*Lord, open the King of England's eyes*'. God saw fit to see his prayer answered and the Bible spread in the language of the people...Lest we forget!

Remission of Sins

When we trust in Jesus Christ alone and His blood sacrifice, we are justified by faith alone in Christ alone and without works, and we have *remission of sins*. The word '*remission*' is used 17 times in the New Testament and 12 times it is followed by the word '*sin*'. The word '*remission*' in Greek means: *to stand away from; to release from*. The root of the word means '*to send*'. We get the word '*missionary*' and '*missile*' from the same root.

The remission of sins has the idea of sending away sins - a removal of sins from our account, a blotting out of sins from our ledger, (see Rom.4). In and of ourselves we are still sinners but Scripture gives us another name - '*saints*'.

The old Adam is still there but he has been '*crucified with Christ*' and God chooses not to see him but only Christ. We stand before God not in our name but in Christ's name. In ourselves we are a poor sinners and filthy rags but having had *remission of sins* - a putting away and cleansing of sin.

This remission of sins has to do with the Old Testament scapegoat as a type. Besides a lamb being sacrificed, a scapegoat was also involved. The priests laid hands on this goat and remitted the sins of the Israelites to the animal and then *sent it away*. *This was a type of the remission of sins to come*.

When Jesus died on the cross our sin was remitted to his account and His righteousness is imputed to all those who will trust Him for who He is and what He did.

Worthy is the lamb that was slain for the remission of our sin! **Terry Arnold**

Hybels Has Muslim Speaker

'Following the Sept. 11 attacks, Pastor Bill Hybels, of the Willow Creek Community Church, was increasingly bothered by reports of hate crimes and misinformation about Islam. 'I was so concerned by the gap between Muslims and Christians that I thought Willow could do something about that,' he said, according to the Chicago Tribune.

That 'something' was to have his church invite a local Muslim leader, Faisal Hammouda, to talk about Islam to a total of 17,000 churchgoers, spread out over four services. 'There are some Christians spreading half-truths that the Koran encourages violence,' Hybels told his congregation. '(When) you take some stuff out of context...we've got major problems.'

Hammouda, a U.S. citizen, an engineer and religious leader in the Islamic Centre in Naperville, first visited Willow Creek as part of the church's world religions weekend in March. In one of his current appearances, Hammouda was questioned by Hybels, on stage in the 4,500-person auditorium. Hybels asked, 'It appears that Osama Bin Laden directed the attack (on Sept. 11)...What do you think?' Hammouda said at first he thought 'it couldn't be a Muslim,' explaining that the Koran does not allow violence against innocent people...'We believe in Jesus, more than you do, in fact,' Hammouda said, drawing laughter when Hybels, smiling, ventured to disagree.

'Muslims consider Jesus and other biblical figures to be Islamic prophets - though not as important as Muhammad - and we have all the prophets from the Bible,' Hammouda said.' (Apostasy Alert, 19th.Oct./2001)

Faith

'Faith is merely the hand that receives the gift of God, and God through His spirit even opens our hand to receive the gift.' (Jerry Bridges, *The Discipline of Grace*, P.51)

Former Anglicans Speak

In the last newsletter (Nov/Dec/2001) we quoted and commented on what Bishop Jensen of Sydney said to the media concerning Roman Catholicism.

One reader criticised us for '*lacking grace and humility*' and that our comments were '*bizarre*'.

In stark contrast to what Jensen said of Roman Catholicism, read what early Anglican leaders said of the Roman Catholic system:

'And for as much as my hand offended writing contrary to my heart, my hand shall first be punished therefore, for may I come to the fire, it shall first be burned; and as for the Pope, I refuse him as Christ's enemy, and anti-christ, with all his false doctrines.' Having said this, Archbishop Cranmer (1509-1556) was pulled down from the trial stage and led to the fire to be burned at the hands of the Roman Catholic religion.

Another Anglican Bishop, J.C. Ryle, issued this warning: *'Once we let Popery get her foot again on the neck of England, there will be an end of her national greatness. God will forsake us, and we shall sink to the level of Portugal and Spain.'*

(We recommend the booklet '*Why Our Reformers Were Burned*' - available from this ministry)

Pope John Paul II's Message

(Message for World Youth Day, 2002):

'You are the salt of the earth...One of the main functions of salt is to season food, to give it taste and flavour. This image reminds us that, through Baptism, our whole being has been profoundly changed, because it has been 'seasoned' with the new life that comes from Christ (cf. Rom 6:4). The salt that keeps our Christian identity intact, even in a very secularized world, is the grace of Baptism. Through Baptism, we are re-born...'

(Apostasy Alert, 2/8/2001)

Paul Crouch - High Finances?

'Evangelists Paul and Jan Crouch recently purchased a \$5 million estate in Newport Beach, CA. The palatial home was described in an Orange County newspaper as 'a palatial estate with ocean and city views.' The Crouches, founders of the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), have lived in a smaller home in Newport Beach for many years.

Sources say Jan Crouch wanted a bigger yard for her dogs. The new 9,500 square-foot home is situated on more than an acre...has six bedrooms, nine bathrooms, a billiards room, a climate-controlled wine cellar, a sweeping staircase and a crystal chandelier...an elevator, a six-car garage, a tennis court, and a pool with a fountain.

It was not reported whether the Crouches personally paid for the estate or whether the nonprofit ministry purchased the property. The Crouches have used TBN money to purchase numerous properties across the country to provide the couple with a luxurious tax-free lifestyle.

One of the Crouch estates is TBN's ranch in Colleyville, TX...The 80-plus acre ranch is located between the city limits of Colleyville and Southlake - two of the wealthiest cities in Texas. The ranch, which contains eight houses and horse stables, is estimated to be worth about \$10 million.

The ministry also provides luxury automobiles - both his and hers - at each location...The Crouches usually visit the ranch about four times each year.'

(28/11/2001 By Rick Wiles, AmericanFreedomNews.com)

Australian AOG - Immorality

Pat Mesiti, formerly AOG *Youth Alive* Director and most recent Director of the *Australian Christian Churches (ACC)*, was relieved of all ministry position on November 4th for immorality.

Clark Taylor Back

Clark Taylor (former head of *Christian Outreach Centres*) was disgraced and fallen in 1990 after multiple acts of adultery. (Previously in 1979 he was cautioned for the same acts of adultery). He is now back with a 750 strong congregation in Brisbane and another church on the Sunshine Coast...with the same miracle claims reported.

Benny Hinn Documentary

In a TV documentary on '*Miracles*' (21-27 April, 2001) mention was made of Benny Hinn's Portland Crusade. Seventy six miracles were claimed on stage.

The TV presenters requested names and details of the miracles. Hinn provided five cases:

Case 1: An old lady with 7 broken vertebrae who was claimed to be healed....They were still broken.

Case 2: A middle aged man with severe difficulties after a logging accident who claimed to be healed....His condition deteriorated yet he refused an operation or medication.

Case 3: A middle aged lady who claimed to be healed after 50 years of diminishing hearing...The doctor testified she had only slightly impaired hearing and that there was no miracle.

Case 4: A young lady who claimed to be healed from breathlessness....However, the symptoms remained. Her mother prevented her from seeing a doctor.

Case 5: A middle aged lady claimed to be healed of cancer....She *died* nine months later.

Second Major Exodus From Potter's House

'Charisma' News reports that another large group of people have bolted from a controversial network of churches criticized for authoritarian leadership.

Up to 160 of the 'Potter's House' movement's 800-odd congregations are said to have left the group recently. According to Charisma, the Potter's House network - officially called Christian Fellowship Ministries (CFM) - was started in 1983 by Wayman Mitchell. A Prescott, Ariz., pastor, Mitchell broke away from the 'International Church of the Foursquare Gospel' to launch his own movement that emphasizes evangelism. Most of the group's churches are in the Southwest, where they also go under the names 'The Door' and 'Victory Chapel'. Some of the pastors who broke ranks recently are apparently upset by the direction CFM appears to be headed, said 'Charisma'. 'There are also claims that Mitchell - whose movement has long been dogged by criticism that it is controlling, intimidating and manipulative - routinely uses foul language and derogatory remarks in the pulpit.'

Mitchell declined to comment to 'Charisma' magazine, but Harold Warner, a longtime CFM associate who pastors a church in Tucson, Ariz., said that Mitchell was not the sort of man many of his critics have portrayed him to be. 'He is a good, strong leader,' he said. 'We are given great freedom to pursue our ministry, and it isn't this horribly oppressive atmosphere.' (Religion Today, 7/12/2001)

Holiness

'We are not cleansed by Christ so that we can immerse ourselves in fresh dirt, but in order that our purity may serve the glory of God.' **John Calvin**

The 'Mystery' & 'Ultra Dispensationalism'

What does the apostle Paul mean by *'the mystery'*, (Rom.11:25; 16:25; Eph.3:3,4,9; Col.1:26,27). Some claim this *'mystery'* was only revealed to Paul alone and that it has to do with a new Gospel given to Paul in a separate and distinct 'dispensation'. If so, it is imperative that we rightly divide the word of truth, (2Tim.2:15).

Some say the 'dispensation' of *grace* began *doctrinally* with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. Others say *historically* it began at Acts 2 with the first indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Still others say it began uniquely and *exclusively* with the apostle Paul to the Gentiles later in the book of Acts, (Acts 13 or later). The latter say it has to do with the *'mystery'* given to Paul alone. This latter view is often termed 'ultra dispensationalism'.

Today those who espouse this view say the Great Commission in Matthew 28 and water baptism is not for us today but was for the Jews only. Some dispense also with the Lords Supper. They say there are two Gospels - the Gospel of the Kingdom and Pauls Gospel.

That Israel is firmly in the eternal plan of God is beyond dispute but we must not let that fact cloud the issue of 'The Church'. She is surely a separate and distinct entity.

This 'ultra dispensational' view was first espoused by E.W. Bullinger who taught a sharp distinction between the Gospels and the Pauline writings. He taught that the church did not begin in Acts 2 but later with a new Gospel to the Gentiles. Bullinger said the Gospels were Jewish and not for us in this 'dispensation'.

Unfortunately Bullinger was not orthodox and was even heretical on many other doctrines. His followers were known for their teaching on 'soul sleep'. Bullinger himself did not commit himself to the final state of the unsaved and arguably encouraged the error of 'annihilation' amongst his followers. Bullinger's teaching on 'entire sanctification' was also the seed bed for much heresy. In his *'Selected Writings 2, holiness: God's Way Better Than Mans'* he confuses Justification with Sanctification and speaks against progressive sanctification, which defies Scripture and orthodox teaching from the early church fathers to the Reformers. (See our article July/August 2001 *'Christians, Sin and Sinless Perfection'*).

The word *'dispensation'* is used by Paul in 1Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 1:10;3:2; and Colossians 1:25. It is the Greek word *'oikonomia'* meaning the stewardship or management/arrangement/economy of a household. The word *Dispensation* simply means a period of time in which God is dealing with mankind

It is arguable that any system of 'dispensation' is not time definite and that there are transitions or overlaps.

So, what is this *'mystery'* spoken of by Paul? In Romans 11:25 Paul speaks of it as a *'blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in'*. Romans 16:25,26 says this *'mystery'* was *'kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.'* Ephesians 1:10 says of this *'mystery'*: *'That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.'* Ephesians 3 says the *'mystery'* was made known to Paul and *'now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit'*, (vs.5).

The *'mystery'* was simply this: *'That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his*

promise in Christ by the gospel', (vs.6). This *'mystery of Christ'*, (Col.4:3) means that in the present age *all distinctions between believing Jews and Gentiles is done away in Christ*; that the Gentiles too would have *'Christ in you the hope of glory'*, (Col.1:27). This does not 'replace' Israel in God's economy.

Jesus Himself spoke of *'other sheep'* who He would bring into *'one fold and one shepherd'*, (Jn.10:16). The *'secret'* of the mystery (Rom.16:25) is not about Jews or Gentiles as such, but a people taken out from either...*to be the same body*, (Rom.10:12; 1Cor.12:13; Gal.3:28; Col.3:11).

Some have placed too much emphasis on a separation of Jews and Gentiles in this Body of Christ. But the Body is *one*. Jews are still being saved today as are Gentiles and placed by *one Gospel* into *one body - the church*. The Father purposed this before the foundation of the world; the Son Jesus Christ carried this out and became the head, (Acts 2:11); and the Holy Spirit placed believers into the body of Christ when He first *indwelt - beginning* with the Jews first (Acts 2), then the Samaritans (Acts 8), then the Gentiles (Acts 10), and those in the *'uttermost parts'* and *'afar off'*, (Acts 19; 2:39). There is an obvious *transition* here! The book of Acts is more an historical book than a doctrinal one. It documents clearly the Ascension and Glorification of Christ and the transition of the Holy Spirit coming to earth for the first time to indwell various groups of people, beginning with the Jews.

In Matthew 16:18 Jesus, referring to the future, said *He* would build *His* church. This is the first time in the New Testament that the word *'church'* (*'ekklesia'*) is used. The church in Matthew 16 is viewed as *one* universal body and the authority is given to the whole church.

1Corinthians 12:12,13 tells us what took place at Pentecost (Acts 2) - individual believers were baptised into *one body*...*'And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved'*, (Acts 2:47). Acts 2 included Jews and also 'proselytes' - Gentiles brought under the covenant of Israel. Although Israel rejected the Gospel a remnant did believe, (Rom.11:5).

All who now turn to Christ in repentance, Jews or Gentiles, are being saved by the one Gospel and into the one body - the one Church. With reference to salvation there was no difference between Jews and Gentiles, (Acts 3:19-21,26). Each must be saved in the same way by Grace. One cannot have two Gospels or two means of salvation. The apostle Peter said the Gentiles that believed were saved by *'grace...even as they'* were saved...and by *'the Gospel'*. He concluded they were saved *'by faith'*, there being *'no difference'* between Jews and Gentiles, (Acts 15:7-11).

A clear understanding of what 'the church' is may help in understanding and reconciling the different dispensational views. The concept of the *'church'* has been interpreted in various ways. Ultra dispensationalists distinguish between the 'New Testament church' and the 'body of Christ'. Some seem dogmatic in defining *when* the church began and believe it did not begin with the first indwelling to the Jews at Acts 2 but rather later in the book of Acts with Paul and the Gentiles. The latter is a relatively new teaching on dispensation and thus the term 'ultra dispensationalism' is used by many. However, is it necessary to establish a set time for the commencement of this church since the book of Acts is transitional in describing the historic acts of the Holy Spirit?

The Greek word for *'church'* is *'ekklesia'* meaning *'called out'*. The church is the called out ones - called out of the world

and sin, and called to God. This church is mentioned in the Gospels and throughout the book of Acts. Those who are elected to the church are called out by Grace alone. They are *'as many as the Lord our God shall call'*, (Acts 2:39).

Years afterwards Paul writes *'I persecuted the church of God...'* (Gal.1:13; 1Cor.15:9). The vital question to ask is - if the Church began later in the book of Acts under Paul's teaching, then just who was this body of people he was persecuting in Acts 8? The church of God to him was one whole. Paul never mentions the church beginning at a set time nor does he distinguish the church as being Jewish or Gentile.

Even though Paul is 'the apostle to the Gentiles' he first goes and everywhere seeks out the Jews. In Acts 13:44 Paul preaches *'the word of God'* to the Jews; in Acts 28 he is still preaching to the Jews *'those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ'*. Indeed, he is found preaching to both Jews and Gentiles throughout the book of Acts, (Acts 18:4,19; 19:10). His Gospel was the same for both: *'Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ'*, (Acts 20:21).

The church is one and indivisible. It is the church built upon the rock. It is the church purchased with His blood (Acts 20:28), and the one Paul persecuted.

Still some say 'the body' in the latter half of Acts and in Ephesians, is separate. But when did Christ become the head of the body? In no other way was the body of Christ brought into existence except by the *Baptism with the Spirit* - after Christ ascended and was glorified. No one can be a part of this body unless they have the indwelling Holy Spirit: *'But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his'*, (Rom.8:9).

Did this first occur at Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost? Did the saints in Acts 19 become the same saints as the brethren in Acts 2? The distinction between Jews and Gentiles was abolished at the cross: *'And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross...And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit'*, (Eph.2:16-22).

The ultra dispensational view is believed by many to be an unnecessary dispensational emphasis on the distinctions between Jew and Gentile in the book of Acts. Certainly it is not a view that is found in the history of the church until recent centuries.

Those that hold this ultra dispensational view contend that doctrines such as the Protestant Justification by Faith Alone were also not taught for many centuries but later taught by the likes of Luther at the Reformation. However, what is missed here is the fact that the Protestant doctrine of Justification was *restored* at the Reformation, having been taught from the *beginning* by the early Church fathers such as Augustine.

In short, none of the great divines taught the 'ultra dispensation' view. It is unquestionably not a part of *'the faith once delivered'*, (Jude 3).

For nearly 2000 years the church has acted on the Great Commission as being for all Christians: *'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen'*, (Matt.28:19,20). Ultra dispensationalists claim the above was for the Jews only. However, critics of this view

contend that it is the words of Jesus to *all*: *'If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings. Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself'*, (1Tim.6:3-5).

The phrase *'the end of the world'* would also suggest that this commission, including water baptism, is still relevant today. Although many who do not believe water baptism is a command for today point to false teachings such as 'Baptismal Regeneration' (being baptised to be saved), nevertheless we should not here throw out true teaching on water baptism as an outward demonstration of what has happened inside a regenerated person. Added to this is the historical precedent of baptism being taught and practised throughout the centuries of Christianity. Water baptism is mentioned as early as 114AD by Justin Martyr, (*Apologia, LXXIX*).

'Ultra dispensationalists' say Paul made light of water baptism when he said: *'I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect'*, (1Cor.1:14-17). However, if one reads the context it will be seen that this is referring to the 'party politics' in which the carnal Corinthians had sadly become engaged. Although Paul did not baptise the Corinthians, the fact is *many Corinthians were baptised*.

Some refer to the phrase *'The doctrine of baptisms'* which is spoken of in a negative context in Hebrews 6:2. The writer here appeals to the readers not to be entangled again with the works one repented of. However, the *'doctrine of baptisms'* here does not refer to Christian water baptism but refers to teachings of the *washings under the law*.

Some also dispense with the ordinance of the Lord's Supper (Communion). However, the difficulty here is that the command to partake of the bread and cup is *'in remembrance'* of Him and *'till he come'*, (1Cor.11:25,26).

Within the Church there is no difference between Jew and Gentile: *'For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved'*, (Rom.10:12,13).

In summary, the *'mystery'* was simply *'That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel'*, (Eph.3:6). This *'mystery of Christ'*, (Col.4:3) means that in the present age *all distinctions between 'believing' Jews and Gentiles is done away in Christ*; that the Gentiles too would have *'Christ in you the hope of glory'*, (Col.1:27).

The book of Acts is transitional and an accurate historical account of the Ascension and Glorification of Jesus and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to various groups of believers, beginning with the Jews.

The body is *one*. Jews are still being saved today as are Gentiles and placed by *one Gospel* into *one body - the church*.

The Great Commission of Matthew 28:19,20 has not changed. They are the 'words of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1Tim.6:3) and 'profitable for doctrine', (2Tim.3:16). The command is to continue teaching that until the end of the world. **Mike Claydon**

David Wilkerson and Prophetic Warnings

David Wilkerson is well known for his prophetic revelations and predictions of the future. He has written books and produced many sermons on these prophecies and visions detailing what he claims God has spoken to him.

Recently Wilkerson preached a sermon in which he claimed that God had shown the calamity of the September 11th catastrophe in New York - 6 weeks prior to the date in which the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York were destroyed with the loss of many thousands of lives.

The following Sunday after the disaster Wilkerson claimed: *'Six weeks prior to the disaster, the Holy Spirit forewarned our pastoral staff that a calamity was coming...in one meeting, I had to steady my knees with my hands, to keep them from trembling in God's awesome presence. During this visitation from the Lord, the Holy Ghost revealed there was a reason for the weeping in our hearts. We were being so moved...A severe calamity was coming to the nation...'*

Wilkerson, as in many of his visions, mentions Revelation 18:10: *'Alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgement come.'* Wilkerson says *'We need to understand where God is in this calamity. And to do that we have to trust His Holy Word alone...'* Wilkerson goes on to say *'...we have to have a word from God.'*

As usual Wilkerson relies heavily on Old Testament Scriptures to back up his visions and revelations. He quotes Isaiah 9:8: *'The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it has lighted upon Israel.'* Wilkerson says of this verse: *'This verse tells us something very important at our own time of devastation. It simply says, 'God always sends His word.'* Wilkerson then goes into Prophetic mode and says: *'I have to speak a word none of us want to hear...if we don't hear God's truth and face it, our nation is doomed. Here is the word I hear the Lord speaking to us right now: 'The Lord shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and join his enemies together...for the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts', (Is.9:11,13) [Verse 12 is left out here - it speaks specifically about the Syrians, the Philistines and Israel].* Wilkerson then expands on this passage and relates it to the current disaster in America and says *'...we risk missing God's message to us.'*

Before continuing with Wilkerson's latest prophecy, a scan of his past prophecies is illuminating. In **1985** Wilkerson wrote a book titled *'Set the Trumpet to Thy Mouth'* in which he recounted a prophetic vision and a direct revelation that God gave to him for the church. This book gave concise details of this message from God in which Wilkerson wrote that America would *'imminently' be destroyed by fire*. The book was liberally sprinkled with the phrases *'imminent'*; *'soon'* and *'very soon'*. Wilkerson wrote: *'Sudden destruction is coming and few will escape. Unexpectedly, and in one hour, a hydrogen holocaust will engulf America - and this nation will be no more...judgement is at the door!...America is about to be shaken...God called me to be a watchman. I hear the Word of God to Ezekiel ringing in my ears, 'Son of man, speak to the children of thy people...'* (P.9,10). *'I believe it is imminent...God will...send fire on us!'* (P.16,17)...*'Soon, very soon, an economic nightmare will explode into reality...America is about to face a time of mass hysteria...our economy spins totally out of control.'* (P.21) *'I see Almighty God even now slowly turning His back on this nation! America is on the verge of committing the unpardonable sin by resisting the Holy Ghost.'* (P.25)...*'this awesome nuclear holocaust...'* (P.32)...*'The end of things is near...'* (P.93)...*'I tremble at what God has called upon me to prophesy.'* (P.112)...'

[The] soon coming judgement on this nation...' (P.126)...*'Soon, very soon, those powers [Pentecostal powers] will no longer be needed...'* (P.152)

With the *'imminently'* and *'very soon'* phrases in mind, and the benefit of more than 16 years hindsight, it is clear that *many of the prophecies have simply not come to pass.*

In the above mentioned book, time and again Wilkerson quotes passages that *specifically refer to Israel* but insists they are for *America*, (eg. Zech.9:16, P.22). He says Israel is the church (P.23); he replaces Babylon with America (eg. Jer.51:64, P.26); and says the prophecies to Israel were a *'dual prophecy'* (P.106) and are about to happen again to America. *'America is modern Babylon...no other nation on earth fits the description of Revelation 18...America is referred to as Babylon.'* (He then quotes Ezekiel 17:8, 12 as being *'for America'*, P.11,12. However, Revelation 17 & 18 clearly show the identity of *'Mystery Babylon'* not to be that of America. At least 14 descriptions are given. She is not a country but a city built on *'seven hills'*!). Wilkerson continues...The *'lady in the harbour'* is the *'Statue of Liberty'* (P.15). He says Jeremiah 21:5 *'is an outright warning to America.'* (P.18) *'Russia invades Israel because the American Eagle is no longer there to defend her.'* (P.20)

On digging into Wilkerson's past prophecies we have found *not a few* startling revelations that have gone totally *unfulfilled*. In 1972 *'The Vision'* written and preached by Wilkerson claimed prophetic stature and produced several major prophecies. These prophecies were supposed to be fulfilled *'within a few years.'* They included: A world wide economic recession/depression was on its way...No economist would be able to explain why the world is in economic upheaval...It would start in Germany, spread to Japan, and eventually involve the United States. There would also be a series of world wide natural calamities. And *God and Satan* would pour out pornography upon the world.

Of the *'economic nightmare'* Wilkerson said: *'Soon, very soon, an economic nightmare will explode into reality. What frightful news it will be!...America is about to face a time of mass hysteria, as banks close and financial institutions crumble, and our economy spins totally out of control. Gold and silver will also lose their value...The chaos that is coming cannot be stopped by our government...Scoff if you choose, but the underlying fears about a collapse will soon become a tragic reality...Senators and congressmen will sit in stunned silence as they realize no one can stop the tailspin into chaos...'* Wilkerson finally concluded that following America's economic collapse, Russia was going to administer a *nuclear strike* to the US with deadly missiles coming from over the North Pole.

In a newsletter called *'Intercessors for America'* there is a prophecy titled *'Preparing For Hard Times: God's Plan Is Heart Preparation First'*.(1) Wilkerson said: *'A few years before the Gulf War, I warned there would be five hundred fires burning in the Middle East. Most people winked at my words. But after the war, there were precisely five hundred and three fires consuming Kuwaiti oil wells, all set aflame by Saddam Hussein. That and many other warnings I've received have come to pass. So these days I listen intently when the Lord is speaking to me about coming events.'*

However, if one goes back and reads Wilkerson's above prophecy published in 1985 in his book *'Set the Trumpet to Thy Mouth'*, there is no reference to *'500 fires'*, although there was a reference to Mid-East oil field fires. The context makes interesting reading: *'Before the great holocaust there will be*

smaller holocausts - the oil fields of the middle east will be ablaze, and the smoke will rise night and day as a warning of the greater holocaust yet to come. There will be bombs falling on oil fields, on shipping docks and storage tanks. There will be panic among all oil producers, and shippers, and upon all nations dependent on that oil.'

But has anyone ever referred to the Gulf War as a 'holocaust'? Were the 'oil fields of the middle east...ablaze'? (The oil fields of Kuwait were certainly ablaze but no others). Were there 'bombs falling on oil fields, on shipping docks, and storage tanks'? Was there 'panic among all oil producers, and shippers, and upon all nations dependent on that oil'? Absolutely not! The price of gas was hardly affected by the Gulf war; there was little if any hysteria; and the oil well fires were put out with amazing rapidity. And why did God miss out on the number of 'oil fires' by three? Actually, the only part of the 'Prophecy' that appears correct is the 'oil fires'.

In his latest prophetic revelation concerning disasters in America, Wilkerson has much in his message that speaks of the immorality of American society and the slide away from Biblical standards. (His past courageous stand against 'Christian rock music' and pornography are well known and we applaud them.) In this latest revelation from God he says the Lord 'spoke' to him 'deep in his spirit' about the idolatry and immorality in society and that God was 'forced to carry out his righteous judgements as a last resort...'

Wilkerson then reminds us of another 'prophetic message nine years ago' delivered Sept 7th, 1992: 'Thirty days of chastisement will fall on New York city such as the world has never seen. God is going to let down the walls. There will be unimaginable violence and looting. The violence will be so ferocious, it will shock the whole world. Our streets will be lined not just with the National Guard but with Militia. A thousand fires will burn at the same time throughout the city. The Los Angeles fires were confined to a few sections of that city, but New York will be ablaze in all its boroughs. Time Square will be ablaze, and flames will ascend into heaven and be seen for miles. Fire trucks will not be able to handle it all. Trains and buses will be shut down. Billions of dollars will be lost. Broadway shows will stop completely. Business will flee the city in an unstoppable haemorrhage...not too long afterward, New York city will go completely bankrupt. The queen city will be cast into the dirt, becoming a city of poverty...I believe I will be here when it happens...'

Wilkerson believes, however, that these predicted events can be avoided but says 'our window of opportunity to respond to God's call is brief'.

In May/June 2000 we reminded our readers of Deuteronomy 18:20-22: '**But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or...How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him'**.

What should we think of such prophecies and revelations even if they did come true (which so many have not!)? What prophets would we listen to and not listen to when major disasters are predicted? How would we discern?

What does the Bible mean by a '**more sure word of Prophecy**'? Does this '**word of prophecy**' include prophecies by Wilkerson and others?

A look at 2Peter 1:16-21 reveals the answers. The whole passage is speaking of *false teachers*, false revelations and a departure from the faith: '**For we have not followed cun-**

ningly devised fables...We have also a more sure word of prophecy..' But what is this '**more sure word of prophecy**'?...the very next verse tells us!: '**Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you...**'

This '**prophecy**' in verse 19 is '**prophecy OF SCRIPTURE**' (vs.20)! What is this '**Scripture**' to any sound Christian but the 66 books of the Bible! This passage says '**Holy men of God 'spake...**' The word '**spake**' is in the aorist tense and indicative mood - meaning it was done *once* as a *completed act* and *not to be repeated*.

Prophecy in the Old Testament was generally *foretelling* and these words were then *written down* for us to have now in the canon of *Scripture*. In the New Testament '*prophesy*' is the Greek word '*prophetes*' ('*pro*' - forth, before; '*phemi*' - to speak). The word primarily means '*to speak forth the Word of God; to tell forth the message of God; to put forth before another*'. New Testament prophecy is generally *forthtelling*. In the New Testament, before the canon of 66 books of Scripture was closed, men spoke words from God. Prophets were communicators of *new revelation* from God.

However, today the Canon of Scripture is closed. The 66 books of the Bible have been unchanged for nearly 2000 years. There is a *curse* on anyone who would add or detract from Scripture, (Rev.22:18; Dt.4:2; 12:32; 5:22; Pr.30:5,6). We are to '**earnestly contend for the faith which was ONCE delivered unto the saints**', (Jude 3). '**God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets. Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son...**', (Heb.1:1,2). Jesus Christ is the final revelation.

Is not Scripture enough to be '**profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works**', (2Tim.3:16,17)?

The Reformation cry of '*Sola Scriptura!*' ('Scripture Alone') is sadly becoming a faint echo amidst the many modern day 'prophets' who would bring new and extra words from God. *The danger in all this is that it takes the peoples focus off a high view of the Word of God. Sola Scriptura* originally had no room for extra revelations, prophecies and visions as words from God!

All things necessary for salvation and concerning faith and the spiritual life are taught in the Bible, and clear enough for the ordinary believer to understand it.

Many Pentecostals worldwide look to David Wilkerson as the last line of conservative Pentecostals. However, a look at his false teaching on worldwide endtime revival and the Holy Spirit (see *Diakrisis* May/June 2000), should alone cause Christians alarm. Following the above *Diakrisis* article we were castigated by Pentecostal discernment ministries for exposing Wilkerson. However, the arguments were all lifting Wilkerson up as a moral and bold leader to which *we agree*. However, to this day not one critique of our article refutes the false prophecies and the documentation we set forward.

We urge the reader to be warned of this man, his teachings and such 'prophecies', and to look to the Word of God - which already explains the sinful catastrophies occurring throughout the world. Scripture is sufficient in our perilous times.

Mike Claydon

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(1)<http://www.ifa-usapray.org/NewsletterHTML/MayPg199.htm>

Graham's Fresno Crusade

'(Following are excerpts from a four-page 'Eye-Witness Report on the Fresno Billy Graham Crusade' by L.A. pastor Dr. R.L. Hymers Jr. who attended the first two nights and has listened to nearly 500 of Graham's sermons and read all of his books...)

Graham spoke on 'The Love of God' Oct. 11, quoting John 3:16...Hymers says something is basically wrong with Graham's preaching - it 'has mellowed'. He disagrees with Graham's ecumenical emphasis, his loud pulsating music and his sending people into liberal and Roman Catholic churches.

But he says the greatest tragedy is in his sermons themselves. 'The old preachers let people know, in no uncertain terms, that they were lost and on the way to hell.' The second night (Oct/12), Hymers said Graham gave nine different ways to be saved: 1. accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, 2. repent, 3. come to Christ, 4. come to faith in the Word of God, 5. open your heart to Jesus, 6. believe that Jesus died on the Cross, 7. get up right now and come forward, 8. acknowledge Christ publicly..., and 9. rededicate your life. Dr. Hymers concludes: 'That kind of preaching doesn't get anyone saved.'...

The 1/11 Ala. Baptist noted that Charles Colson shared the platform with Graham on the final night. And, as in recent years, the final night had a youth-oriented CCM/rock concert, this time featuring DC Talk, Kirk Franklin, etc.'

(Calvary Contender, Dec/2001)

John Avanzini

'A Christian chain letter, which claims to have Tony Blair, Bush, Billy Graham and the Queen as participants, has been slammed as 'blasphemous' by a Free Presbyterian minister. Rev.David McIlveen is urging Ulster Christians to bin the 'Chain of Safety' letter distributed by Texas preacher John Avanzini.

The Belfast cleric has accused the US preacher of exploiting people's fears following the Sept. 11 terror attacks in New York and Washington. The letters were mailed to hundreds of Ulster Christians from Avanzini's Fort Worth headquarters last week. Recipients are told that God will protect them and their loved ones from future terrorist attacks if they join the Chain of Safety. As an added bonus, Dr Avanzini stresses that God will also provide a large material blessing for a minimum payment of £35, but donations of up to £100 are accepted. In his five-page letter, Dr Avanzini claims that on September 8th, God told him to form a protective chain with his friends and partners in which he envisaged all of them inside a spiritual force field of God's protective power. Dr Avanzini says in his letter: 'God gave me a very simple plan. God wanted me to build a chain of safety.' And by moving quickly in obedience to God's direction... 'your link in the Chain of Safety will be protection for those you love'.

...Rev McIlveen said: 'Last week's letter from Mr Avanzini amounts to little more than exploitation...there is a great deal of anxiety and fear among people following the events of September 11th...here...this man is cashing in on and I have to utterly condemn this sick letter. Mr Avanzini holds a very distorted view of the scriptures...he is a false prophet. Jesus told us through His word that in the last days many false prophets would rise, and deceive many.'

...In February 2000, the Australian Office of Fair Trading in Victoria took steps to warn people about Avanzini's moneymaking schemes. Dr Avanzini then claimed God had a portion of the world's wealth set aside for His followers - however, to receive this wealth they had to make a substantial offering to John Avanzini Ministries...'

(Sick Letter Promises God's Protection...at a Price', by John Hagan, Belfast Telegraph Newspapers Ltd.)

Kenneth Hagin's Visit to Hell...Speaks with Jesus

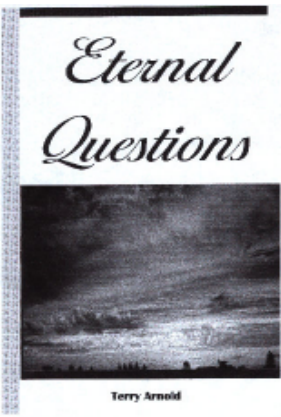
In Kenneth Hagin's October 2001 'The Word of Faith' magazine, in an article titled 'Born Again,' he recounts his three visits to Hell as a 15 year-old boy in the year 1933. The article introduces the visits with: 'Kenneth E. Hagin suffered poor health throughout childhood and at the age of fifteen became bedfast. That night, he died and went to the gates of hell three times': 'As I began to descend into the darkness for the third time, my spirit cried out, 'God, I belong to the church! I've been baptized in the water!...I came again to the bottom of that pit. Again I could feel the heat as it beat me in the face. Again I approached the entrance, the gates into hell itself. The creature that met me the first two times again took me by the arm...I just heard the voice. I don't know what he said, but whatever he said, that place shook; it just trembled. And that creature took his hand off my arm. It was just as if there was a suction to my back parts. It pulled me back, away from the entrance to hell, until I stood in the shadows. Then it pulled me up headfirst.

[Hagin's out-of-body experience then ends up back home]:...I looked at the scroll again, and again looked up to see what I had read about. I saw the skyline of a large city. Looking closer I saw its skyscrapers were burned-out hulls, and portions of the city were in ruins. It was not written that just one city would be destroyed, burned, and in ruins, but that there would be many such cities. The scroll was written in the first person; it seemed as if Jesus Himself were speaking. I read, 'America is receiving her last call. Some nations have already received their last call and will never receive another.' Then in larger print it said, 'THE TIME OF THE END OF ALL THINGS IS AT HAND.' This statement was repeated four or five times. All the gifts of the Spirit will be in operation in the Church in these last days. The Church will do greater things than even the Early Church did. It will have greater power, signs, and wonders than were recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. We have seen and experienced many healings, but we now behold amazing miracles such as have not been seen before. More and more miracles will be performed in the last days which are just ahead, for it is time for the gift of the working of miracles to be more in prominence. We now have entered into the area of the miraculous. Many of My own people will not accept the moving of My Spirit, and will turn back and will not be ready to meet Me at My coming. Many will be deceived by false prophets and miracles of satanic origin. But follow the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and Me, and you will not be deceived. I am gathering My own together and am preparing them, for the time is short. Warn this generation, as did Noah his generation, for judgment is about to fall. And these sayings shall be fulfilled shortly, for I am coming soon. This is the last revival. I am preparing My people for My coming. Judgment is coming, but I will call My people away, even unto Myself, before the worst shall come. But be thou faithful and watch and pray. For the time of the end of all things is at hand.'

Editors Comments: This is a vital part of the Charismatic/Pentecostal gospel - extra Biblical revelations. This is part of 'another gospel' and is cursed by God, (Gal. 1:8). Hagin has already produced many false prophecies and revelations, (see our articles 'Word of faith Movement - A Closer Look' & 'False Prophecies, Revelations & Teachings').

The idea of someone going to Hell and back is unbiblical. The promise of a worldwide endtime revival is anti Scripture and a 100 year old lie. The very opposite is promised, (2Thess.2:3). In every place in Scripture that speaks of endtime signs and wonders - they are 'lying' or false.

****New Book - 'Eternal Questions'****



We are very excited about a new attractive booklet (22 pages) written by Terry Arnold and just released. Already it is being used as a fruitful evangelistic tool. The price (\$2) has been reduced to cover costs only, in the hope that it will be used in evangelism to reach many souls.

For years we have been concerned about the use of 'tracts' that give only parts of the Gospel or a poor understanding of sin. Most tracts today either do not mention sin or do not show its consequences. Hence many do not understand *why* they need to be saved and what they are saved *from*. Added to this is the importance of people understanding *who God is* - His *nature* and His *character*.

This book has been carefully and systematically designed to prepare the heart for a true understanding of the Gospel.

This book concisely looks at who God is; the problem of evolution; how God speaks to us today; who is man; the

problem of sin and its consequences; can religion or works help?; and what is the good news!

This is primarily a book to be given to unsaved people but it will also be very useful to Christians in checking their foundations for salvation and assurance.

This booklet answers questions that may well affect ones eternity. The issues raised are a matter of life and death: Does God exist? What is this God like? Can He communicate with us? Where do we go when we die? Why is the world in such a mess? Why do bad things happen to 'good' people? What went wrong with the human race?

Many people have an understanding that there is a God but few have really considered who *we* are in relation to this God...Why do we exist? Why are we on earth? What meaning is our life to anyone or anything?

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This booklet dares to boldly state that there are clear and simple answers to all the above questions. It contains eternal answers for eternal questions! **Price \$2** + postage.

Quotables!

'And so the way is prepared for that caricature of gospel preaching, that consists chiefly in begging the sinner to come to Jesus before it is too late, leaves the false impression that it is quite in his power to come today or tomorrow, or whatever time may be convenient to him, and that presents a very willing but powerless Jesus, that would ever be pleased to save the sinner, but is incapable to do so unless the sinner gives his consent. The 'whosoever will may come' is presented as meaning: 'All men can will to come whenever they please.' And instead of the truth of the gospel that no man can come to Christ unless the Father draw him, we now hear; 'No, Christ cannot come to the sinner, unless the sinner permit him!' Here is a fair example of it: 'God is ready, God is willing, God is eager, God is anxious, God is pleading for the privilege of washing away the sins of every soul in the precious blood of His son and heir. But his hands are tied, His power is limited, His grace is constrained by you. If you want to be saved, God is willing to save you. If you don't want to be saved, there isn't anything that even God can do to rescue you from that pit of eternal burning.'

That is what becomes of the preaching of the gospel when the truth of God's sovereign grace is either forgotten or denied. Call it the gospel, if you like; to me it is nothing short of blasphemy of the name of the living God! An anxious and pleading God, whose power is limited, and whose hands may be tied by the proud and stubborn sinner, who is less than dust of the balance, is no God, but a miserable idol!

Herman Hoeksema (1886-1965), 'Whosoever Will'

'I have preached myself out of nearly every pulpit in North America.' **A.W. Tozer**

'We have virtually nothing to help us link these creatures [Mammals] to any group of fossil reptiles'

David Attenborough, Evolutionist

('Evolution'): 'The chance that higher life forms might have emerged in this way is comparable with the chance that 'a tornado sweeping through a junk yard might assemble a Boeing 747 from the materials therein'.

Sir Fred Hoyle, Professor of Astronomy, Cambridge Uni.

'The bounden duty of a true believer towards men who profess to be Christians, and yet deny the Word of the Lord, and reject the fundamentals of the Gospel, is to come out from among them. To stay in a community which fellowships all beliefs in the hope of setting matters right is as though Abraham had stayed at Ur. or at Haran, in the hope of converting the household out of which he was called.' **Charles Haddon Spurgeon**, 'Drift Of The Times, Sound The Alarm', 1888

'It is my perception that Christians are no more than five to ten years behind the world in embracing most sinful practices.'

Jerry Bridges

'At the time of his death Spurgeon had a library of 12,000 books and it is said that 'he could have fetched almost anyone of them in the dark'

'The forgotten Spurgeon', P.33

'If there is to be revival in the pews and in the hearts of those in the pews, it must begin in the pulpit.'

Liardon - Homosexual Relationship

'Influential Pentecostal leader Roberts Liardon is taking a three-month leave of absence from his ministry 'to seek professional and church counselling related to a recent short-term homosexual relationship'.

(Charisma News Service, 21/12/2001)

Editors note: Liardon is a prominent author and speaker who has written and preached much about his extra bibli-

cal revelations, journeys to heaven, etc.

Three months is all these men can afford to rest, as their money making empires would take a dramatic tumble from making merchandise of God's people, (2Pet.2:3)!

Surely it is time Christians looked at the doctrine behind the rapid increase in the fall of such prominent high profile Pentecostal leaders.

Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear Terry...Although I agree with you on most of the issues you raise and with the issues of Charismatism, I would urge you not to throw the baby out with the bathwater...God's people are confronted with a very powerful foe...He [Satan] uses his forces, evil spirits to carry out his bidding. Christians can be...indwelt by evil spirits. They have the flesh and that is where demons operate, through the flesh. In God's sight the flesh is just as obnoxious and abhorrent as evil spirits. If we give ground to the devil, evil spirits can enter us...Satan is a legalist and will contest every inch of ground in a believers life, but only according to the will of God. With the sword of the spirit, the word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit we can be more than a match for the devil.

...when Moses was warring against the Amalekites the Israelites had the victory while his sword was raised, but when it dropped they started being defeated. The Amalekites represented the flesh in a Christian. We can overcome the flesh by the sword of God

...Last time you sent me the newsletter I got so sick of all the apostasy, ecumenism and Charismatic exposure that I threw them out. Hearing about the devils work oppresses me.

...Intellectualism...will kill simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ...Intellectualism is the arm of the flesh and it will fail...it exalts the earthly, carnal, human mind.

Please cross me off your mailing list but I wish you God's blessing in the work of exposing evil and unrighteousness...'Walk in the spirit and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.' This would include intellectualism...

Ps. Have you read 'The two Babylons' by Hislop?..(D.S., Bris.)

Editors Reply: Dear D,...

- It is not a matter of 'throwing the baby out with the bathwater' as you say. It is a matter of *balance in truth*. If the roots are error then the roots must be cut. If this means throwing the baby out then throw the baby and the bathwater! The roots of the Charismatic/Pentecostal errors can be traced clearly to a single event and time (1901) as we have written about so often. The Charismatic errors are a direct result of this historical and doctrinal root.

- ...Christians can be 'affected' by demonic activity but cannot be 'indwelt by evil spirits'. This is heresy and was never taught as 'the faith once delivered' until the 20th Century and in the Pentecostal/Charismatic movements.

- The demons do not 'have the flesh' and this is not where 'demons operate'. This is simply unscriptural.

- The 'sword of the spirit' and the 'Word of God' are synonymous.

- It is not a case of us 'being more than a match for the Devil'. God and His work through Jesus on the cross was not 'more than a match' but victory to every believer! We do not need 'to get the victory'. It has already been won! Using Old Testament Scriptures about battles does not wash with the work of the cross.

- You say you get sick of hearing about apostasy, ecumenism, etc in our newsletter and that the work of the Devil oppresses you, yet your own letter is about the work of the Devil and his power, and none of the work of Christ. You equate our newsletter and ministry with 'intellectualism' and this is the 'arm of the flesh'. The 'arm of flesh' in Scripture refers to the Assyrians attacking Jerusalem, (2Chr.32:8). It has nothing to do with intellectualism! I am not advocating 'intellectualism' but the Scriptures do speak of the importance of the mind, (Mk.12:30; 2Cor.10:5; Is.26:3; Phil.4:8; Rom.12:1,2; Ps.19:14)...

Dear Terry,...I don't think we should be publicly saying, 'All Islamic scholars agree that it is the religious duty of every Muslim to use violence whenever necessary to spread Islam until it has taken over the world', unless there is a Muslim source able to verify the proof of this statement. Statements of this type can inflame an already tense situation.

...the reference to the seventy virgins etc. reportedly comes from Palestine Hamas-terrorist leadership. (<http://www.calendarlive.com/top/1,1419,L-LATimes-TV-X!ArticleDetail-41375,00.html>). It is not contained within the Koran...

The world is obviously facing the potential for an apocalypse. We should not exacerbate the very tense situation. I am a deeply committed Christian and a researcher. Keep up your good work...A More correct way of presenting the verses rather than running them together:

'Take not the Jews and Christians as friends...(Surah 5:51)

Slay the idolaters [non-Muslims] wherever ye find them...(Surah 9:5)

Fight against such...as believe not in Allah..'(Surah 9:29,41)

(J.M., Canberra)

Advisory comment (Mike Claydon): This is a fair comment. The 70 virgin idea is not contained in the Koran. However, there is plenty regarding the hunting and killing of unbelievers, and Christians are severely threatened. Are we to be 'politically correct?' Islam is sworn to eradicate Israel...that's reasonably 'incorrect' to me.

Dear Terry & Mike, I read your 'dig' at Rev. Fred Nile in July/Aug, 2001 Diakrisis. Fred Nile is a fellow Christian who is prayerfully and doggedly trying to do God's work to the best of his ability. I thought you might be interested to read his Media Releases, which the media hides...Rev. Nile is trying to do his very best, but obviously cannot please everyone...So please keep up your good work in attacking the thousand of things that are wrong with our society. Attack the Catholic Church by all means, but don't attack your brother in Christ. (K.T., Sydney)

Advisory comment (Mike Claydon):...We feel that it is extremely important for those publicly portraying Christianity to be true to the doctrines of our faith. When Christian leaders and politicians align themselves with false religions, such as Roman Catholicism, we feel to point out their error in doing so.

Every time Fred Nile stands with Roman Catholics on issues, he publicly legitimises their claim to be 'Christian' which they are demonstrably not. The Roman 'church' has martyred millions of our brothers and sisters down through the running centuries and it grieves us to watch the growing acceptance amongst Protestants of this false religious system.

We were not 'attacking' Fred Nile. In this matter he has no defence. Rather than questioning us on our remarks, Christians should be questioning him as to why he would attend such an event. No matter what seemingly good words may come from the lips of Roman Catholic leaders, they represent a religion, which at its very core is 'anti-christ'. To join hands with Roman Catholicism in efforts to better society is compromise and seen as endorsing such a religion...You urge us to 'keep up the good work of attacking the things that are wrong with our society'. But this we do not do! Our only aim at Diakrisis is to defend 'The Faith once delivered to the Saints', not to try and better society. I hope this clarifies our position for you...

Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear all at 'Diakrisis', Did any of you see the article in the Bulletin 2/10...Quote: 'In every state in Australia, Youth Alive organises three events a year in the biggest stadiums, attracting crowds of up to 12,000 who mosh, stage-dive and crowd surf - and sing along to words projected onto a giant screen. 'It's like a big karaoke event,' says Russell Evans, the National Director of Youth Alive 'What the church has done badly over the years is not speak the language of the culture and we're learning to. It's not the style that's different, it's the message.' Unquote.

We don't have to say anything bad about this mob. They do it themselves! What deception. This Russell Evans, I should imagine, would be related to Andrew Evans, former AOG General Superintendent. The younger generation of Evans' were being schooled up for positions when I met a couple of them about twelve years ago. They were into the music 'ministry'... (H.S., Cairns)

Editors Comment: We wrote an article about Youth Alive in Diakrisis July/97. Although it varies from state to state, the music is unashamedly worldly and the results of so called thousands of 'conversions' are more than questionable. Former director Pat Mesiti has recently fallen in sexual sin. Many have reported to us here a perception of worldliness and rebellion at the meetings and in the youth.

Dear Terry...I have just recently left my church of twenty five years (the Salvation Army) mainly because of the use of modern Bible versions and the 'Alpha' programme being introduced. I do believe there is a book out by Chris Hand - a Biblical appraisal of the 'Alpha' programme...Please keep up the good work you are doing. Yours in Christ. (B.B., Sydney)

Editors Comment: The book is titled 'Falling Short' by Chris Hand. The publishers website is: Idos.dayone@ukonline.co.uk

Dear Terry,...I encountered an AOG woman pastor recently...she was very friendly...During conversation I asked her if she knew what the word 'Diakrisis' meant. She said she always wanted to know what that word meant. I told her it meant to discern from God what is right from wrong. She asked if I would be interested in coming to her church one day...I asked her if she was interested in reading a 'Diakrisis' newsletter and she said yes...I know it may offend her but I am prepared to cop it...(name withheld at editors discretion)

Prayer Points

- Pray that the new book 'Eternal Questions' will bear much fruit and will continue to reach the hands of the unsaved.

- Terry & Mike both had accidents within 24 hours of each other late in November. Terry has made a full recovery from rib damage and Mike is making a steady recovery from a broken heel. Pray for Mike's full recovery.

Dear Terry,...Thankyou for 'Diakrisis'...I have passed on some copies, and I'm sure they will be meat to some and poison to others. As I live in the country, I have in the short term become a 'lone ranger'...It's so sad that people who were once men of God are now off the rails. Its a humbling thought that we need to keep a short account of deficiencies in our own spiritual walk, and if we are honest with ourselves, God could quite easily point the finger at us for something not quite right in the area of holiness. May God always receive glory and honour from your ministry, (J.R., SE Qld)

Greetings in Christ. Have you heard of Chiniquy? - an ex-Roman Catholic priest, and...of Dr. Alberto Rivera. I have just read a bit of their material...Roman Catholicism...is definitely a major role player in the end times apostasy. In particular we see something that I believe is a part of the long arm of the Pope and that is the Charismatic movement.

Dear brother, these are certainly desperate times, and I do hope I also have the courage and knowledge that will be needed to fight the foe boldly for Christ as you are. I will certainly be keen on getting your book, 'To Catholics Whom I Love'...I actually find it tough to get time to do all the reading I need to, along with study, run a business, love my family, teach my kids, get physical exercise, and keep my eyes open! Man, I thank the Lord for your tapes. God Bless you. (C.K., Vict.)

Editors Comments: The classic 'Fifty Years In the Church of Rome' by Chiniquy had an impact on me personally in my conversion from Roman Catholicism. It is a heart wrenching true conversion story with good teaching.

Used Christian Books

While in Nth Qld. recently I was impressed with the efforts of a ministry of the New Testament Baptist Church of Mareeba, which has set up a shop and distributes used books, Bibles, Videos, Cassettes, etc. Details are below:

Gods Way Used Christian Books, 117 Byrnes St, Mareeba, Qld, 4880 (PO Box 2249) Ph. (07)40927351 Mob.0402140286

Christian Radio Station

While recently in Albury/Wodonga, (NSW/Victoria) I was asked to preach several sermons on a local radio station. I was impressed by the dedication of Colin Trevaskis who has been given a one hour slot every Sunday evening.

We in this ministry recommend this hour of Christian radio. The details are as follows: **107-3 FM 'Eternity' segment from 7pm-8pm Sunday evenings.**

Terry's Itinerary

Jan.6th 6.30pm Hervey Bay Church of Christ Ph.0411489472

Jan.13th 10am Hervey Bay Church of Christ Ph.0411489472

Jan/Feb 10am (Commencing the **Book of Acts**) Hervey Bay Church of Christ Ph.0411489472

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