



Australia
Diakrisis

A Ministry of Teaching

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

Newsletter of TA Ministries Vol.2, No.25

November/December 2003

PO Box 1499, Hervey Bay, Qld, 4655
Australia

Ph. 0411489472 (Mob.) Fax (07)41240915

Website:<http://taministries.cjb.net/>

E-mail: tam@satcom.net.au

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

Editor: Terry Arnold (Dip. Bib. & Min., Dip. Teaching, Author.)

Sub-editor: Mike Claydon

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

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Editors Comment

Is the church today becoming more God focused or man focused? We would contend strongly that the church today is increasingly becoming *self* oriented in doctrine, behaviour and in worship.

In the teaching of the doctrine of salvation it is not hard to see todays emphasis is on *man*...just ask Christians these questions: Does man seek or choose God for salvation? (*No*: Rom.3:11; Jn.1:11-13)...or does God choose man? (*Yes*: Eph.1:4; Lk.19:10; Jn.15:16). The gifts - are they to edify self? (*No*: Rom.15:1-3; 1Cor.14:17)...or are they for the edification of the church to glorify God? (*Yes*: Eph.4:11,12; Rom.14:19; 1Thess.5:11; 1Cor.14:5,12,26).

Methods of evangelism tend to indicate the doctrine used. Modern methods increasingly highlight our lack of trust in the Gospel as the 'power of God unto salvation'. It is as if God's hands are tied and He must depend on us to convince or entertain people to 'decide' for Jesus. *The focus is increasingly on methods instead of the message. But the Gospel is not man accepting Jesus as His Saviour but that God accepted the Lord Jesus as the perfect and only Saviour 2000 years ago. The Gospel is not man giving his heart or his life to Jesus but that Christ gave His life in the place of sinners. The Gospel is not man receiving Christ into his heart, but that God received the Lord Jesus into heaven as the mediator of sinners. The Gospel is not Christ enthroned in the human heart, but that God enthroned the Lord Jesus at His right hand in Heaven. Do we see the great distinction between these two messages? One is subjective and puts great emphasis on what man must do. The other is objective and puts emphasis on what Christ has already done.**

Is church to glorify God or to edify man? What is worship for - to glorify and lift the name of God or to give 'feelings' of love for God?

Does our music reflect the sovereign nature and character of God or does it speak as much about *us*? ...Again, our music will show our doctrine.

All false teaching is basically man centred or works orientated. Our doctrine and music should point to Christ and who He is and what He has done.

Terry Arnold *(*Firm Foundations*' by Trevor Mcillwain)

*New Videos/DVD: 'Does The Truth Matter Anymore?'

We in this ministry are excited about a set of *five 1hour messages* contained in two videos featuring speaker John Macarthur. These videos (also in DVD) are a professional presentation of a serious malady that exists in the church today; and the solution to restore the power of the church to a lost world.

More than 100 years ago Charles Spurgeon stated: '*Everywhere is apathy. Nobody cares whether that which is preached is true or false...*' Sadly todays modern church is no different. *Truth has taken a back seat to results. Doctrinal purity bends the knee to church unity.* Bible teaching is out and soft sell sermons are in for the sake of making the Gospel less offensive.

These two graphic videos illustrate convincingly the tragic state of the church today. In each episode, Macarthur explores the user-friendly, end-justifies-the-means philosophy and its fruit in today's church. The solution is preached strongly as a challenge to our faith in the all sufficiency of the Word of God. Cost \$49.50 (for 2 videos/DVD's)

The Alpha Course

The *Alpha* course is a British program begun by the Holy Trinity Brompton Church in London, a Charismatic Anglican church well known for its promotion of the 'Toronto Blessing' phenomena. The *Alpha* program is designed to reach unbelievers and is run by most denominations and strongly supported by Roman Catholic churches. The pastor, Nicky Gumbel, is a skilful communicator. In 1997 over 500,000 people completed the course and numbers have grown yearly.

Alpha involves 15 talks over ten weeks usually with the use of videos and often preceded by supper. Non Christians may also be employed as helpers in this programme. (1)

Churches are accepting this programme because many believe it is 'relevant' and non 'threatening': 'The course is fun and unthreatening - just like our Lord Himself!' (2)...*'Stripping the Gospel down to its bare essentials, it makes Christianity accessible to men and women of today's culture.'* (3) But we ask - what has the Gospel been 'stripped' of? What is missing that makes it 'unthreatening'?

The first few lessons are basic presentations of who Jesus is and why He died. The deity of Christ and the resurrection are well presented and illustrated. Week 5 skilfully defends the inspiration of the Bible but adds: 'God also speaks to people directly by His Spirit: through prophecy, dreams, visions, and through other people.' (4) Gumbel adds that God also guides us through 'dreams' and 'prophecy'. (5)

Alpha presents sin as something that 'messes up our lives'. (6) The focus is on 'we'. 'We' are losing and 'we' have our lives in a sinful mess. One author, referring to the *Alpha* course, writes: 'Christ dies to rescue us from the consequences of our sin and to save us from our lost, confused and dark world. Christ comes to remedy our fears...' (7) The *Alpha* Gospel is arguably man-centred, not God centred. God is presented as a God of Love and not a God of wrath also, (Jn. 3:36); the depth of Sin is under-played...we feel sorry for ourselves instead of ashamed of ourselves.

In lessons 8-11 participants are encouraged to go on a 'weekend away' where teaching on the Holy Spirit is given. Subjects are encouraged to be filled with the Spirit as a subsequent experience to salvation and are told: 'Sometimes, when people are filled, they shake like a leaf in the wind. Others find themselves breathing deeply as if almost physically breathing in the Spirit...Physical heat sometimes accompanies the filling of the Spirit and people experience it in their hands or some other part of their bodies. One person described a feeling of 'glowing all over'. Another said she experiences 'liquid heat'. Still another described 'burning in my arms when I was not hot' (8) One person says of this experience, '...I couldn't control what was happening to me. I didn't want to control it...' (9) ...But the Bible says the Jews were 'cut to the heart' (Acts 2:37), not 'tingling all over'!

Speaking in unknown tongues is also taught: 'Ask God to fill you with the Spirit and to give you the gift of tongues. Go on seeking Him until you find. Go on knocking until the door opens. Seek God with all your heart. Open your mouth and start to praise God in any language but English or any other language known to you. Believe that what you receive is from God. Don't let anyone tell you that you made it up...' (10) But the participants of the *Alpha* Course should be asked: what were the 'tongues' of Acts 2:8-11 - unknown or known languages?

Gumbel has related bizarre experiences with phenomena seen in the 'Toronto Blessing' and claims it to be of the Holy

Spirit. (11) He once said: 'I believe it is no coincidence that the present movement of the Holy Spirit ['Toronto Blessing'] has come at the same time as the explosion of the *Alpha* courses...the two go together.' (12) Thus, in section 4, Gumbel promotes uncontrollable laughter and spiritual drunkenness. He says: 'that's what we're seeing today...people getting drunk - not with wine...come to the party where you can get drunk on God...I was at a party like that last night...it was a party thrown by the Holy Spirit...the church is meant to be a party.' Compare this with Scriptures on spiritual drunkenness, where God speaks of spiritual drunkenness as judgement on His people!: '...they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes...' (Is.29:9,10); '...and I will make them drunken...I will bring them down...' (Jer.51:37-40). The Bible always speaks against spiritual or alcoholic drunkenness! The theology of the Holy Spirit in the *Alpha* course is heresy.

Alpha is openly ecumenical and promotes unity between the Roman Catholic and Protestant faiths: 'The *Alpha* course is...adaptable across tradition and denominations...I know of its uses in Catholic...churches'. (13) In talk No.8 Gumbel teaches that the differences between Protestants and Catholics are 'totally insignificant compared to the things that unite us...we need to unite around the death of Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus...' But Gumbel has whitewashed important differences! Catholicism does not believe the sacrifice of Jesus was finished but that it is a continuing sacrifice of the 'Mass', (in defiance of Hebrews 9:25,26; 10:10-18; Jn.19:30)! The death and resurrection have different benefits to Roman Catholics and Protestants. Catholicism curses anyone who teaches we are justified by faith alone without works, (Eph.2:8,9; Rom.3:5). Yet Roman Catholic Cardinals and Bishops support *Alpha*: '...it [*Alpha*] doesn't contain anything that is contrary to Catholic doctrine'. (14) Testimonies presented in the *Alpha* publications have the recipients remaining in the Roman Catholic system.

The *Alpha* teachings (and shown by the testimonies), lack mention of repentance, the cross, and conviction of sin. After week three the *Alpha* course assumes people are already Christians. (16) One person stated: '...I prayed a prayer of commitment...it was like a bench mark...I asked Jesus to forgive me and to come in and to take over my life. I didn't feel anything. It was no big deal and I went back to work'. (15)

Alpha is easy believism and 'another gospel' and it will add many false conversions to those already well documented in today's ecumenical movement. *Alpha* is ecumenical and blurs the lines between Roman Catholicism and Biblical Christianity. *Alpha* starts off by preaching the Gospel but as the course progresses the sessions detail heretical and even dangerous controversial and extra-biblical Charismatic experiences. The above mixtures can only dilute the Gospel.

Terry Arnold

(1) Gumbel, 1997a, P.0 (2) *Alpha News*, Feb/97, P.29 (3) *Alpha News*, April/95 P.2 (4) Gumbel, 1997b, P.75 (5) Gumbel, 1997b, P.112-113 (6) Gumbel, 1997b, P.45 (7) 'Falling Short - the *Alpha* Course Examined' by Chris Hand (8) Gumbel, 1997b, P.156... (9) *Alpha News* April/94, P.9. (10) Gumbel, 1997b, P.167 (11) Video 3, Talk No.9 (12) 'The Spirit and Evangelism', *Renewal*, May/95, P.15 (13) *Alpha Training Manual*; P.63-68, Video 5, Talk 14 (14) *Alpha News*, July/97, P.1 (15) 'Falling Short-the *Alpha* Course Examined' by Chris Hand., P.71 (16) Eg. 'How can I be sure of my faith?'

Feeding Sheep or Amusing Goats? By C.H.Spurgeon

'An evil is in the professed camp of the Lord, so gross in its impudence, that the most short-sighted can hardly fail to notice it. During the past few years it has developed at an abnormal rate, even for the evil. It has worked like leaven until the whole lump ferments. The devil has seldom done a cleverer thing than hinting to the Church that part of her mission is to provide entertainment for the people with a view to winning them. From speaking out as the Puritans did, the Church has gradually toned down her testimony, then winked at and excused the frivolities of the day. Then she tolerated them in her borders. Now she has adopted them under the plea of reaching the masses.

My first contention is that providing amusement for the people is nowhere spoken of in the Scriptures as a function of the Church. If it is a Christian work, why did not Christ speak of it? 'Go ye...' into all the world and speak the Gospel to every creature. That is clear enough. So it would have been if He had added, 'and provide amusement for those who do not relish the Gospel'. No such words, however, are to be found. It did not seem to occur to Him. Then again, 'He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers for the work of the ministry.' Where do entertainers come in? The Holy Spirit is silent concerning them. Were the prophets persecuted because they amused the people, or because they refused? The concert has no honor roll.

Again, providing amusement is in direct antagonism to the teaching and life of Christ and all His apostles. What was the attitude of the Church to the world? 'Ye are the salt,' not the sugar candy, something the world will spit out, not swallow. Short and sharp was the utterance: 'Let the dead bury the dead'. He was in awful earnestness!

Had Christ introduced more of the bright and pleasant elements into His mission, He would have been more popular when He and His disciples went back, because of the searching

nature of His teaching. I do not hear Him say, 'Run after these people, Peter, and tell them we will have a new kind of service tomorrow, something short and attractive with little preaching. We will have a pleasant evening for the people. Tell them they will be sure to enjoy it. Be quick, Peter; we must get the people somehow!'

Jesus pitied sinners, sighed and wept over them, but never sought to amuse them. In vain will the epistles be searched to find any trace of the gospel of amusement. Their message is, 'Come out, keep out, keep clean out!' Anything approaching fooling is conspicuous of its absence. They had boundless confidence in the Gospel and employed no other weapon.

After Peter and John were locked up for preaching, the Church had a prayer meeting, but they did not pray, 'Lord, grant unto thy servants that by a wise and discriminating use of innocent recreation we may show these people how happy we are.' If they had ceased not for preaching Christ, they had no time for arranging entertainments. Scattered by persecution, they went everywhere preaching the Gospel. They 'turned the world upside down'. That is the only difference! Lord, clear the Church of all the rot and rubbish the devil has imposed on her, and bring us back to apostolic methods.

Lastly, the mission of amusement fails to effect the end desired. It works havoc among young converts. Let the careless and scoffers, who thank God because the Church met them halfway, speak and testify. Let the heavy-laden who found peace through the concert not keep silent! Let the drunkard to whom the dramatic entertainment had been God's link in the chain of his conversation, stand up! There are none to answer. The mission of amusement produces no converts.

The need of the hour for today's ministry is believing scholarship joined with earnest spirituality, the one springing from the other as fruit from the root. The need is Biblical doctrine, so understood and felt that it sets men on fire.'

C. H. Spurgeon

The Hypocrisy of Ecumenism

'...Ecumenism is the practice of sharing religious activities while overlooking differences of belief and practice...For many...ecumenism is nothing more than bad religious theatre. Saying it crassly - the unionism of the ecumenical movement is little more than a religious Frankenstein. Even though it walks and talks, the parts just don't fit together.

I often hear people say they don't think God intended all these warring factions in the church; that God prefers unity and cooperation...But...Christianity and ecumenism are built from two different blueprints. Christianity is built on total submission...to the head who is Christ...even if it costs...family, friendships or lives (Lk.14:26)...to deny His word is to deny Him (Jn.8:31-32; 12:47-48; Mk.8:38)...

The blueprint for ecumenism...calls for compromise of Christ's Word and faith in people...The compromise is this: We will set aside what Christ has said so that we can do something together. But...What of Christ should be compromised? What should we leave out when we speak of Christ? Should we ignore what Christ has taught us about the slavery of the human will...the majesty of his 6 day creation?...that Christ has called Himself the one and only Savior of the world...His atoning sacrifice is complete and sufficient...that His righteousness avails for people? And if

we find that someone has perverted the truth about Christ...Should we ignore that...should we not concern ourselves with the defamation or blasphemy of Christ...

Why should we compromise our Savior and His words?...The answers that I hear are: 'We could get so much more done if we just stopped fighting and nit-picking. If we set our differences aside, we could really change the world' ...some of the differences people are thinking about are petty and inconsequential. But the doctrinal differences that separate denominations are not petty or inconsequential...Some say we reach more people if we demonstrate to them we're united...But...reach them with what?...a Savior who has been remolded and reshaped and edited down so that he is not offensive to anyone? Such a Jesus is a false Jesus...that St. Paul called 'another gospel' (Gal.1:6-9).

...God calls on people to conform to Him and His Word, not the other way around...people who embrace such a love and commitment to God's Word are labelled as intolerant, fanatical and narrow-minded. So be it.

...The monstrosity of ecumenical religion and worship...somehow holds together parts and extremities that just don't belong together.

William R. Gabb (From Apostasy Alert, 30th July, 2003)

The 'Aussie Bible'

[The following extracted from various newspapers]

A new version of the Bible was recently published in Sydney. The three wise men are described as 'some eggheads from out east', God's spirit looks like a 'big white cockatoo'...

Peter Jensen [Anglican Archbishop, Sydney] said: 'It was using my language and it talked to my heart'. Author, Kel Richards, admitted frequently laughing out loud as he wrote the *Aussie Bible*. The Bible Society of New South Wales believes it will soon sell out an initial print run of 30,000.

Following are extracts from the King James version (KJV) compared with the 'Aussie Bible':

KJV: '...fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings...'

Aussie Bible: 'The angel said 'Stop looking like a bunch of stunned Mullets. Let me give you the drum, the good oil, it's top news for the whole crew...'

KJV: 'Let us go even unto Bethlehem...they came with haste...'
Aussie Bible: 'So the lot of them shot through like a Toorak Tram to Bethlehem...'

KJV: 'When Herod the king heard...he was troubled...'
Aussie Bible: 'This made Herod as jumpy as a wallaby on hot rocks...'

KJV: 'And John...preached saying 'there cometh one mightier than I...'

Aussie Bible: 'John said 'Look I'm baptising with water. But another bloke is coming, who runs on six cylinders compared to my one...'

KJV: 'Then Jesus...tempted of the devil...'

Aussie Bible: '...old Nick nagged him for 40 days...'

Editors comment: The drift of modern versions continues...

Kenneth Hagin Sr. Dies

Kenneth E. Hagin Sr., has died at age 86. Hagin was part of the Charismatic healing 'revival' in the 1950s and 60's. He launched the worldwide Charismatic 'Word - Faith' ministry from Oklahoma, including *Rhema* Bible Training Centres in 14 nations and *Rhema* churches in more than 110 nations, including the 8,000-member *Rhema* Bible Church in Broken Arrow, Okla., pastored by Hagin's son, Kenneth Hagin Jr.

Australian Charismatic, Col Stringer, paid the following 'Tribute' to Hagin: *It is with great respect and honour that we announce the passing of a great man of God...Although we know he is with the Lord, he is a man that will be sadly missed. Bro. Hagin was not only a man of great spiritual wisdom, he was also a man of honour and integrity.'*

Sub-Editors Comments: At the risk of appearing disrespectful, we remind readers of the facts concerning this false prophet and his teachings. His unfulfilled prophecies are numerous. In *Diakrisis*\Jan-Feb\96 we documented the following by Hagin: '*...not just shortly but now come to pass...the gift of faith shall be in manifestation. No one has ever seen the measure it will be manifested in these days. The working of miracles in the full orbit shall come. Gifts of healing like showers of rain falling everywhere. The glory of the Lord shall shine and be seen on his people. The cloud of His glory shall be seen by many...It shall come to pass this year!...That which has hindered shall be taken out of the way...[laugh] I see it coming...Blinding light...this year - October...We are going with God. We'll go off and leave some...In October in St Louis...it [will] all come. It shall spread all over the nation. Manifestations everywhere...Then you will know the full meaning of the divine glow...your body will work perfectly...the end is at hand...Many shall be turned unto the Lord. Great - beyond your imagination...The rest of this year - 1998-99-2000...saith the Lord...'* (*Holy Ghost Meeting*, Oct.12-24, St Louis; Full prophecy was at: <http://www.geocities.com/~contenders/haginprophecy.htm>)

In '*Diakrisis*' Jan\Feb\2002 we documented Hagin's October 2001 '*The Word of Faith*' magazine article, '*Born Again*,' where he recounted his three visits to Hell as a 15 year-old boy in 1933: '*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...whatever he said, that place shook; it just trembled...It was just as if there was a suction to my back parts. It pulled me back, away from the entrance to hell...Then it pulled me up headfirst. [Hagin's out-of-body experience ends up back home]...I looked at the scroll again...I saw the skyline of a large city...skyscrapers were burned-out hulls, and portions of the city were in ruins....there would be many such cities...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...greater power, signs, and wonders than were recorded in the Acts of the Apostles...more miracles...in the last days which are just ahead...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...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...judgment is about to fall. And these sayings shall be fulfilled shortly, for I am coming soon. This is the last revival...I will call my people away, even unto myself, before the worst shall come...'

We wonder if Hagin is now where it is permissible to hiss like a snake, poke his tongue out like a reptile and cause people to crawl across the floor and howl like animals - as was captured on video?

Hagin plagiarised many of his ideas (some word for word) from the heretical E.C.Kenyon. Hagin's 'Word-Faith' Jesus is one that can be manipulated by a 'force' of faith contained in words to get healing, prosperity or success. This 'Jesus' had to 'born again' in Hell and was tormented there by demons for 3 days and 3 nights. This 'Jesus' that appeared to Hagin gave new revelations and teachings that refuted the historic doctrines of the atonement and deity of Jesus, (see our paper '*Word-Faith Movement - a Closer Look*').

The World Church Age

In a recently published book titled 'Stupid White Men' which sold in the millions around the globe, author Michael Moore penned a prayer to 'god'. It goes like this:

'Dear Lord (God/Yahweh/Buddha/Bob/Nobody); We beseech You, O merciful One, to bring comfort to those who suffer today for whatever reason You, Nature or the World Bank has deemed appropriate. We realise, O heavenly Father that You cannot cure all the sick at once - that would only empty out the hospitals the good nuns have established in Your name. And we accept that You, the Omniscient One, cannot eliminate all the evil in the world, for that would surely put thou out of a job...'

Although blasphemous, this letter is obviously written to amuse. It continues on, asking that this 'god' to inflict miseries on politicians, white leaders (especially the Alumni of Bob Jones University)...the media and the 'Holy Roman Catholic Church'.

However, it captures the spirit of this age - a *universalism of spiritual belief*. Many years ago we began to write of the growing acceptance within the Christian church of the doctrines of apostate religions. At the time, our statements only caused to fall upon us the ire of leaders within the groups guilty of this. We were accused of endeavouring to 'bring them down'. Oh, if only that were possible!

Since then, things have only worsened. 2003 is shaping up as a bumper year for syncretic apostasy. Here's an example: The Australian National *Alpha* Conference is scheduled to be held in Sydney 17-18 November 2003. Not to make too much a point of it, it will be held at the 'Hillsong' Conference Centre. No matter how many times leader Brian Houston is challenged over his acceptance of Roman Catholicism as 'Christian' he flatly denies it.

This conference boasts of being the largest single gathering of Christians involved in running these courses in Australia. It is claimed that Church 'leaders' and others that have attended an *Alpha* Conference have experienced '*far higher degrees of success*' in running *Alpha*, '*with often considerable Church growth*'. This is not surprising considering *Alpha* strips the Gospel of the sting of the law and sin, making it humanly 'relevant' and 'non-threatening' to the world. It and the testimonies thereof are more about mans needs than God's judgement in Christ.

How God coped without *Alpha* during the past two millennia we cannot venture to say. In times past we naively imagined that once the discerning saints saw *Alpha* for what it is, the program would quickly disappear. To the contrary; it has mushroomed, becoming '*wonderfully transportable, already reaching into many stratus of our society e.g. business, homeless, youth, prisons*'...'*You will hear from some of the many people whose lives have been miraculously changed through the Alpha course*' according to conference literature sent out this month by *Koorong Books* to their enormous mailing list.

Here we have, in microcosm, a picture of Christendom today: *People of disparate beliefs joining together in mass 'evangelism' presenting an all encompassing 'god' to vast numbers of people.*

By necessity this must be done in a way least offensive to the hearers otherwise the 'party plan' would be poorly attended. The 'felt needs' of the community must be researched, considered and accommodated. *Alpha*, like it's

dwindling bed mate '*Promise Keepers*', can be introduced amongst churches and cults alike without a murmur of dissent. It is *Gospel Neutral* - and even offers a spiritual thrills and spills (*literally*) '*Weekend Away*' for participants as a grand finale to the course. Here, unknown tongues and the manifestations and antics first seen in Toronto, Canada (the 'Toronto Blessing'), and subsequently Pensacola, Florida, ('Pensacola Revival'), are encouraged ad nauseum.

To confirm that what we say here is correct, the conference organisers have included a series of workshops to be held during the gabfest. In their very own words: '*Attend your choice of special workshops covering Worship, Alpha in a Catholic Context, Alpha in Prisons, Caring for Ex Offenders, Daytime Alpha and Business Alpha...Alpha in the Workplace, Pubs, Hospitals...*'. They don't mean 'Catholic' in the universal sense either...we checked...they mean the religion headquartered in the city which sits upon seven hills.

But perhaps the following endorsements are meant to allay our fears?: '*It is clear that God is using the Alpha course to reach out to people, and to deepen the faith of many*' - (The Right Reverend John Stewart -Administrator - Anglican Diocese of Melbourne); '*Alpha is a doorway through which many walk into faith*' - (Rev. Tim Costello, Past President Baptist Union); '*Alpha shows new ways to go out into the world with the good news about Jesus. It helps Christians spread God's Word and introduce non-believers to Jesus*' - (The Most Rev Peter Watson, Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne); '*I most strongly commend Alpha and its wonderful training program*' - (Rev Prof James Haire, President of the Uniting Church of Australia); '*The Alpha course is changing mindsets and introducing the awesome (everything at Hillsong is 'awesome') life of Jesus Christ to people all over the earth*' - (Brian Houston, Senior Pastor Hillsong Church and National President of the [Australian] Assemblies of God).

Despite Brian Houston's endorsement of this event and *Alpha* in general, the *Assemblies of God* in the US has spoken and declared their stance on the matter of ecumenism. The General Council of the *Assemblies of God* RE-EMPHASIZED a bylaw of long standing in their biennial meeting in St. Louis in 1995. Article IX, Section 11, states: '*The General Council of the Assemblies of God disapproves of ministers or churches participating in any of the modern ecumenical organizations on a local, national, or international level in such a manner as to promote the ecumenical movement because: a) We believe the basis of doctrinal fellowship of said movement to be so broad that it includes people who reject the inspiration of Scripture, the deity of Christ, the universality of sin, the substitutionary atonement, and other cardinal teachings that we understand to be essential to biblical Christianity. b) We believe the emphases of the ecumenical movement to be at variance with what we hold to be biblical priorities, frequently displacing the urgency of individual salvation with social concerns. c) We believe that the combination of many religious organizations into a world superchurch will culminate in the religious Babylon of Revelation 17 and 18.'*

Mr. Houston appears unwilling to abide by this ruling, thereby simply adding to the spiritual confusion surrounding us today. And then this to be sure: '*Alpha provides an important and useful means for learning about Christianity*' - (The Most Rev George Pell [Roman] Catholic Archbishop

of Sydney).

A further example, finishing just before commencement of the *Alpha* show, is the '*Share the Holy Spirit*' conference to be performed at a property just outside Campbelltown, NSW - (September 30-October 5, 2003). At least these conveners have the decency to forewarn that it is '*an Ecumenical Charismatic Conference*'. We've written before regarding this, what is to us an annual outrage; but it needs to be exposed again because it appears to be mutating...

The usual plethora of endorsees and speakers are there. Rev. Fred Nile, Greg Beech (Randwick Baptist); Mary Jones (Wesley Institute); Ted Paynter (Calvary Chapel - Ted has '*a special calling to work with Catholic Renewal and Protestant Renewal Groups*' (The Protestants don't seem to be 'protesting' anymore?); Gordon Gibbs (founding pastor Christian Life Centre Penrith); Rev. Gary Mulquiney (Anglican - Sydney); Brian Pickering (Australian Prayer Network - '*with a membership of 2,900 churches and prayer groups across Australia*');...the list goes on and is expanding yearly.

The '*Protestant*' speakers are now outnumbered two to one by Roman Catholic and Orthodox. Among these, and with the highest profile, is Bishop Kevin Manning (Roman Catholic - Parramatta NSW).

Written statements revealing the attributes of the various presenters are simply staggering; descriptions such as...'*is known as the first Catholic in Australia to receive what is known as 'Baptism in the Holy Spirit'....'he has been a guiding light'....'immersed in this movement of God'....'She is well recognised as an anointed preacher and teacher of the Word of God'....'fully committed to the principle of the Unity of all believers'*.

One of the groups presenting the *YouthFest* within this conference are aptly named the '*Trojan Team*' which is '*made up of people from mainline Protestant, Catholic and Pentecostal Churches*'.

The welcoming blurb on the cover of the Conference literature sums up this curious phenomena: '*There will be worship, prayer, teaching, ministry and workshop sessions that provide opportunities for healing and for an experience of holiness. There will also be the various forms of healing that respective Traditions bring together at the conference. We have a number of people who will teach about holiness from different theological traditions*'. '*Mother Teresa of Calcutta was one such person who lived in our times and was able to live a life of holiness*'.

Vast numbers around the globe now profess to be '*Christian*'. The great endtime world church is upon us. One only has to follow the funeral and memorial services broadcast nationwide and around the world for stars of stage and screen, fallen victims of terrorist bombings, and good Samaritans of every ilk, to understand the doctrines of this new '*Christian*' movement. Denominations fall over each other in the rush to bury or remember them publicly. Unbelievers all, they are given rousing despatches in cathedrals, temples, and on beaches. During the state funeral for country and western singer Slim Dusty, held in St. Johns Anglican Cathedral in Sydney recently, Archbishop Peter Jensen led the congregation in a squeaky rendition of '*A pub With No Beer*'. 1 Corinthians 13 is read as a love poem from God to mankind and Ecclesiastes 3 is translated through the 60's hit '*Turn, Turn, Turn*' A million candles are lit and clergyman, who should know better, assure the congregations that the deceased is 'with

God'. The only doctrines not acceptable within this temple are those of biblical Christianity - and their author!

There are so many '*gods*' being followed amongst this amalgam that it is impossible to keep track of them all, but the numbers might well equal or surpass those available in Hinduism. These deities are only limited by human imagination. The god of this '*church*' saves through faith alone and faith with works; his followers enter immediately into his presence at death, or enter a limbo; he asks that we remember him in taking the bread and wine, and also magically becomes that bread so that he can be '*ingested*'. Devotees speak in unknown languages, foretell the future, heal people who never seem to recover, totter around in a drunken stupor, have their teeth instantly filled and their shoulders dusted with *gold*. Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi, the Dalai Lama, Pope John Paul II and other pagan luminaries are quoted favourably.

To talk of a '*Christianised*' world once brought derision...now it seems inevitable.

Today's ecumenical god of Michael Moore and myriad others is acceptable to the fallen mind. He has found no evil in humankind, loves us all *unconditionally*, is intensely interested in our sordid little lives, requires nothing of creation, teaches contradictory doctrine, answers *all* prayer and welcomes worship from any quarter of the spiritual spectrum. Millions (if the claims being made are true) are being *swept into* this counterfeit ecumenical monster. Pushed along by lying signs and wonders as warned of in Scripture, very soon the world at large will follow after this rapidly expanding beast.

Today, as never before, the genuine and discerning Christian must hold up every spiritual offering to the light of Scripture, and firmly reject what doesn't fit that grid...no matter how warm and fuzzy it appears. As the days of all encompassing religion rush in upon us we must *absolutely* ensure that we are following the *true* God revealed in scripture. And Him only.

At the end of the first century A.D. the Apostle John wrote a stern warning: '*Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeak: For he that biddeth him Godspeak is partaker of his evil deeds*'.

We would do well in taking heed?

Mike Claydon

For many years now (in addition to sub editing *Diakrisis Australia*), Mike has composed two regular e-mail reports titled '*Apostasy Alert*' (up to the minute news on the growing apostasy within Christendom); and '*Israel Report*' (breaking news of prophetic significance in the Middle East).

Both these bulletins are sent free of charge. If you wish to be placed on the mailing list simply send a blank e-mail to Mike at: mbc@nobbys.net.au In the '*Subject*' box type the words '*Subscribe AA*' (to receive the '*Apostasy Alert*') or '*Subscribe IR*' (to receive the '*Israel Report*')...or if you wish to receive both, type '*Subscribe AA & IR*'.

Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear television pastor, I have got some concerns about healing; and am also struggling with 'being saved'! I am now terminally ill with heart disease. I have an 'at rest' heart rate of 110+ (40% above what it should be).

Can we 'claim' healing in the same way as salvation? I struggle to have 'faith' to be physically healed! And if and when you are not healed - the simple (but glib) answer of some is: 'You didn't really have faith to be healed'!

I have about a dozen books, all essentially guaranteeing physical health and healing. So I wonder and question what went wrong?...Can we really 'claim' healing like many Pentecostals say, because 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever'?

Now much to my regret, disappointment and anger (even rage), am I finding out that the 'healing gospel' as proclaimed by many television ministers does not work (as in the much advertised 'healing crusades' of Benny Hinn (twice); Marilyn Hickey and Rodney Howard-Browne)!...If the 'healing gospel' and the 'prosperity gospel' does not work, does the 'salvation Gospel' also not work?

I pray at this extreme time of dying I very definitely do not give up on saving grace. It would be particularly easy to turn against God...but I wonder why I have not been physically healed? I would appreciate some genuine, meaningful reply to this letter...anything would be OK - tracts, Bible verses, booklets, magazines, etc. (I.B., Brisbane, Qld.)

Editors reply: Dear...[I am not a 'Television pastor']...we are praying for your situation and that the peace of God would fill you, that you might know that God is sovereign in all circumstances and that your mind might be at rest.

To answer your questions:

- We don't 'claim' healing in Scripture. But we do 'receive' eternal life on believing.

- Most of the people healed in Scripture were not believers and faith is not mentioned as a requirement to be healed. Those that say that healing did not take place because of a 'lack of faith' are often using this as an excuse for a lack of the true gift of healing as demonstrated by Jesus and His apostles.

- Bodily healing is never guaranteed in this life. Quite the opposite. Our bodies are dying and not redeemed until glorification, (Read Rom.8:23).

- Yes Jesus is 'the same yesterday and tomorrow' but this refers to his nature and character. He simply is not doing the same things today! For example, he is not on earth in a body walking around healing to prove his

Messiahship - that has already been done.

- Yes, the healing Gospel is a false Gospel! 1Peter 2:24 is often used for proof of healing in the atonement. This passage quotes from Isaiah 53:5 where the prophet refers to spiritual healing for Israel. Almost all the references to healing in the Old Testament are spiritual healing. The word 'salvation' is closely related to the word 'healing'. The Old Testament offerings were not for sickness but for sin, (Lev.16:3)! The healing referred to in 1Peter 2:24,25 is clearly spiritual - the forgiveness of sins! The passage says 'bore our sins', not 'our sicknesses'. On the cross Jesus did not bear our diseases but rather our sin. This has been the teaching of the church for 1900 years until the turn of the 20th Century when healing ministries were spawned within the Pentecostal movement!

Some use Matthew 8:16, 17: '...took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses' which is again a reference to Isaiah 53:4. This was spoken 3 years before the cross and the verse claims that Isaiah was fulfilled there and then. This Scripture refers to the earthly public ministry of Jesus as verse 16 clearly shows! Even if we were to accept this Scripture as bodily healing in the atonement it would still be future, (Rom.8:23). In 2Corinthians 12:9 Paul glories in his physical 'infirmities' which were not healed. This word is in fact the same Greek word as in Matthew 8:17. Further, Epaphroditus was 'sick nigh unto death', (Phil.2:27); Trophimus was 'left at Miletum sick', (2Tim.4:20); Timothy took medicine for his sickness, (1Tim.5:23).

In agreement with Paul, Charles Spurgeon once said: 'I venture to say the greatest gift God can give us is health, with the exception of sickness. Sickness has frequently been of more use to the saints of God than health has.'

- Benny Hinn, Marilyn Hickey and Howard-Browne have no proven documented case of any organic healing. Benny Hinn's top five 'healings' were proven false.

- There is no such thing as a 'healing' or 'prosperity' gospel. But there is a salvation Gospel as Jesus put it forth in Scripture. Bodily healing is not the promise of the Gospel, but eternal life is! The 'healing gospel' is 'another gospel' warned of by Paul.

- Why you have not been healed is for God to know. But I know this - we are all dying because we were born in sin.

I have enclosed some reading material as you requested and please remember we pray for you earnestly.

Love, Terry Arnold

Quotables

'I must be frank with you: the greatest danger besetting American evangelical Christianity is the danger of anti-intellectualism...for anti-intellectualism is truly the refusal to love the Lord our God with our minds as required by the first of Jesus' commandments...As God has given us minds, we can measure obedience by whether we are loving with those minds, and disobedience by whether we are not...A sure sign of a genuine reformation of our appalling anti-intellectualism will be the rise of a new generation of Christian apologists'.

(Fit Bodies Fat Minds' by Os Guinness, P.11,18,150)

'The new gospel is based on flawed philosophy (felt needs) and misguided methodology (market driven)...a muted gospel of self esteem and personal fulfilment. The old Gospel was about an offended God; the new gospel is about a wounded us. The old Gospel was about sin; the new gospel is about needs; the old Gospel was about our need for righteousness, the new gospel is about our need for fulfilment. The old Gospel is offensive to those who are perishing; the new gospel is attractive. Many are flocking to the new gospel, but...how many are actually being saved?...'

(Calvary Contender, No.15, 2000)

Your Comments and Questions

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

Editors Thanks

We would like to thank all those who over eight years have supported us and this newsletter in prayer and donations. We have not been in the habit of writing to thank people individually but rather we have thanked the Lord for His provision daily. We praise the Lord that this support has continued to see the truth go out and people saved, rescued, challenged and encouraged. Thankyou!

Dear Terry,...my prayers are constant for you, Mike and workers...I'm so grateful to be a apart of your family, where truth, honour, courage, knowledge, wisdom and above all the love in caring for your readers - believers and the lost.

The truth will set us free...I am free indeed thanks to your ministry. Don't let up - there is so much work to be done. Keep the Lord's good work going. After all, its not what one takes with them that counts - its what they leave behind. God bless always. (Y.R., Vict)

Hi Terry, ...Master's 'Stand For the Truth' should be read by the bulk of Christians in Australia!... (J.V., Darwin)

Dear Terry & Mike, Thankyou for 'Diakrisis'; It is so full of important truth and facts so needed in these times of such confusion and a lack of knowledge...(F.A., Qld.)

Dear Terry, Mike, Thank you very much for your Newsletter. It has been very encouraging to read warnings and teachings without the extremes. I thank God that Jesus' commandments are simple for the 'plain man' to understand, but...not always easy. I pray for your Ministry and hope that through it many will stay on the path that Scripture clearly has marked out for us. God bless. (P.C., Tea Tree Gully, S.A.)

Praise Points

- Thank the Lord for a fruitful Sth. Aust. visit. Many were informed and equipped. Many were challenged to think about what they believed and why...

Prayer Points

- Pray for the Victorian trip and for the 'Tongues' seminar in Albury. Pray for health and energy to fulfil the itinerary.
- Pray for Terry and Mike as they are led by the Lord in the planning of and the future of this ministry.

I thank God for the courageous people like yourselves who accept God's infallible word and who preach the true Gospel of Jesus Christ with uncompromising zeal! We pray that our dear Lord will continue to enrich you through His word and bring Christ's eternal blessings to others through your very important ministry! (K.L., Sth. Aust.)

Spurgeon on Hell

'There is a deep seated unbelief in Christians just now, about the eternity of future punishment. It is not outspoken in many cases, but it is whispered; and it frequently assumes the shape of a spirit of benevolent desire that the doctrine may be disproved. I fear at the bottom of all this there is a rebellion against the dread sovereignty of God. There is a suspicion that sin is not, after all, so bad a thing as we have dreamed. There is an apology, or a lurking wish to apologise to sinners, who are looked upon rather as objects of pity than as objects of indignation, and really deserving the consigned punishment which they have wilfully brought upon themselves. I am afraid it is the old nature in us putting on the specious garb of charity, which thus leads us to discredit a fact which is as certain as the happiness of believers.'

C.H. Spurgeon.

Terry's Itinerary

Victorian Itinerary

Nov.2nd (Sun) 10am & 11am Open Door Baptist, Melton Ph.(03)97473536

Nov.2nd (Sun) 6pm Golden City Baptist, Bendigo (03)54496368

Nov.5th (Wed) 7pm Golden City Baptist, Bendigo

Nov.8th (Sat) 2pm '**Tongues' Seminar**, Lavington Baptist, Albury Ph. (02)60215860

Nov.9th (Sun) 10am, 11am & 6pm Lavington Baptist, Albury

Nov.11th (Tues) 7.30pm Bethel Baptist, Mt Beauty Ph.57541784

Nov.12th (Wed) 7.30pm Bethel Baptist, Mt Beauty

Nov.13th (Thurs) 7.30pm Bethel Baptist, Mt Beauty

Nov.14th (Frid) 7.30pm Bethel Baptist, Mt Beauty

Nov.16th (Sun) 11am & 7pm Rose City Baptist, Benalla Ph.57625220

Nov.19th (Wed) 7.45pm Numurkah Gospel Hall (03)58622341

Nov.22nd (Sat) 7.30pm Calvary Baptist, Melbourne Ph.97285778

Nov.23rd (Sun) 9.45 & 11am Calvary Baptist, Melbourne

Nov.23rd (Sun) 6pm Croydon Independent Baptist Ph.97264481

Nov.30th 10am Hervey Bay Church of Christ, Qld. Ph.41240631

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