



## 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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### Editors Comments

Travelling around various churches in differing affiliations within Australia and New Zealand, I get to objectively observe the issues, the problems and the changes occurring within them. Often I see the very *same* afflictions and tensions occurring in many assemblies *at the same time*. Many pastors and elders are not aware that the same trials and testings they are experiencing are being faced across the rest of the church scene. These occurrences can only be a working of the sovereign hand of God or the wiles of Satan working systematically under the allowance of God.

This ministry attempts to address the issues of the day by informing, teaching and thus equipping Christians with a Scriptural background by which to make righteous judgements. Two of the most recent issues causing concern are: music (particularly with youth); and the Doctrines of Grace - is grace in salvation wholly of God (monogistic); or does man play any part in being justified before God (synergistic)?

I pray that our ministry will be an encouragement to those leaders we come in contact with. Our heart is to see Christians encouraged to return to the Word of God and study to show themselves approved of God and rightly dividing the word of truth, (2Tim.2:15). The Bible says it is possible to be in the '*perfect will of God*' if we as individuals and as churches will present ourselves as living sacrifices; not being conformed to the fashions of this age; but being transformed by the renewing of our minds, (Rom.12:1,2). Only the Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit can do this transforming and renewing!

It is an increasing burden to me that we have a generation rising up who more than ever do not know what true holiness is; who do not know what worship is really for; who are not always able to face an increasingly pagan and hostile world.

Of particular concern to me is that very few Bible colleges or institutes of training are nurturing and mentoring people in the gifting God has given them. Colleges are producing 'pastors' who in many cases are simply not called to pastor, are ill equipped, or simply not biblically qualified. Character and holiness are non issues to them.

There is a need for more colleges and institutes that will work with the local churches and train people in understanding what God's will is in their respective lives - venues that will function in the spirit of Sola Scriptura to teach God's inspired word as inerrant and infallible; colleges that will teach people *how* to study and to use the tools available; places where exposition and interpretation of Scripture are taught as disciplines; where the lost art of apologetics and contending for the faith are taught; where philosophy of ministry is instilled showing the role of Grace and the Holy Spirit to change lives; places that will disciple, mentor and direct eyes, minds and hearts of students to the importance of missions and the great commission...places that will send the students back to local churches and to the mission field both here and abroad.

**Terry Arnold**

## Arminianism, Hyper-Calvinism, Strawmen...and The Truth

In the current debate surrounding the topic of 'Calvinism' some confusion is being caused by the misrepresentation of Biblical truths and the use of emotive 'strawmen'. This article may help cut through the lies and deceptions currently being perpetrated by some authors.

'Strawmen' argumentation misrepresents the issue and renders one side weak. Rather than attacking the real issue the opponent sets up and knocks down the 'strawman'. This is a favourite method with the cults or those who argue from emotion instead of scripture.

### Election:

**Arminianism:** God's election is based on God's foreknowledge of who would choose to obey Him in salvation.

**...Biblical refutation/truth:** Scripture teaches unashamedly that God elects, chooses His people of His own determination (Eph.1:5,9,11; 1Thess.1:4; 1Pet.1:2,10; Tit.1:1; Rom.8:33; 11:5,7; Col.3:12; Rom.9:15-18; Gal.1:15,16; Jn.6:37; 5:21...etc). God's foreknowledge is not dependant on man's ability to choose or decide for Christ. If so, this would not be grace but works! (Rom.11:6). God not only foresees a mans salvation but 'ordains' it by His own sovereign act, (Acts 13:48; Eph.2:10).

**Strawman:** If God elects a people for himself then he must elect and damn the rest to Hell. If so, he unfairly loves only a select group of people.

**...Biblical refutation/truth:** The Bible does not teach an election of any to Hell. This may be *logically* concluded by some but it is *not in Scripture*. It is the stuff of 'hyper-calvinism' and a malicious *misrepresentation* of the Doctrines of Grace.

### Predestination:

**Arminianism:** God only predestinates those who he foresees will choose or decide of their own 'free will' to follow Christ.

**...Biblical refutation/truth:** God predestinates a number of people to be sanctified in Christ Jesus. 'Predestination' comes from the Greek word '*proorizo*' ('*pro*' - 'before' / '*orizo*' - 'to determine'). It clearly means to *determine* or decree *beforehand*. Examples are: Acts 4:28; Rom.8:29, 30; 1Cor. 2:7; Eph.1:5,11. The Greek word is also translated '*ordained*' in some passages.

Predestination and foreknowledge are linked. One implies the other. Some interpret Romans 8:29,30 as meaning God predestinates those who choose or decide of their own 'free will'. Thus this foreknowledge becomes the *cause* of the predestination. This is a serious heresy exposed in earlier centuries! It results in God's predestination being based on a work or an *ability* in man. This defies Scripture which clearly states unsaved man *cannot* and *will not* come to God of his own volition, (Rom.8:6,7; Jn.6:44,65). 2Timothy 1:9 challenges any attempt to put conditions on God's predestination and calling: '*Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.'*

**Strawman:** If God predestines people to heaven then he must have also predestined the rest to Hell...

**...Biblical refutation/truth:** There is no Scripture that

has God 'predestinating' any to hell. If one teaches that God predestinates many to heaven, this does not mean they have to teach God predestinates the rest to hell. This 'double predestination' is again the stuff of 'hyper-calvinism' and a *misrepresentation* of the doctrines of Grace. It is *extrabiblical*.

### Free will:

**Arminianism:** Man has a 'free will' to seek and choose God in salvation. He can choose God of his own ability. He can seek God.

**...Biblical refutation/truth:** The Bible teaches man has a *will* before and after salvation. However, '*free will*' *in salvation* is *never* shown in the Bible *after* the fall of man. Our Adamic natures are *enslaved* and our minds *blinded* by Satan, (2Cor.4:4). Do the following scriptures teach our wills are 'free'? '*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be...*' (Rom.8:7,8); '*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him*', (Jn.6:44).

This is why man in his fallen state is described thus: '*There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God*', (Rom.3:11). This is why salvation is not '*of the will of man, but of God*', (Jn.1:12,13). Salvation is simply '*not of him that willeth...*', (Rom.9:16).

*Grace is God changing our will when enslaved!*

We did not choose God in salvation. He chose us! '*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world...*', (Eph.1:4); '*Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit...*', (Jn.15:16).

The doctrine of 'free will' is a part of the *Pelagian heresy* of early centuries and *continued to be a heresy* during the Reformation. Unbelievably, this heresy is now widely accepted and revived in the apostasy of the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries. It is the very root of Arminian heresy and practise so evident in the modern church.

**Strawman:** If man has no 'free will' he is a robot or puppet...God just pulls the strings...

**...Biblical refutation/truth:** God's sovereignty is not Him forceable 'pulling strings' and rendering us like 'robots'! It is about Him mercifully freeing us from our *enslaved* 'wills'!...And who would not be thrilled to have been freed from that?

### Conclusion:

We must not allow our logic and emotions to interfere with the plain teaching of Scripture. If we do so the following might become a *rebuke* rather than an encouragement?:

*'What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid...I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth...Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?'* (Rom.9:14-21)

Terry Arnold & Mike Claydon

## 'The Perseverance of The Saints'

In line with Roman Catholic dogma and Arminianism, millions of Christians worldwide suffer under the burden of believing that their salvation is not assured. And they have been taught so from a vast number of pulpits across the Protestant denominations.

This, in spite of overwhelming scriptural statements to the contrary. Throughout the churches a confused and shallow theology has allowed what was once considered heresy to become almost the normative position on this subject.

Pentecostalism and Charismatism have been much to blame in this apostasy. They have been the single most damaging catalyst in the setting aside of Reformational doctrine and building the 20th century ecumenical bridge to Rome. Large numbers of Baptist fellowships also hold to this error and in so doing they shun the teachings of one of their greatest divines, Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

Many accuse those that hold to the eternal security of the believer of promoting 'Cheap Grace' or 'Easy Believism'. But to label Grace as 'cheap' is to say that too little a price was paid. That's a denial of Grace. Grace comes as a free gift and cannot involve any payment on man's part...the price paid by God Himself is infinite! Therefore for anyone to think that the works of man can play a part in either earning, or keeping Grace, is to devalue this infinite gift to the level of human effort. Paul declares '*...if by Grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise Grace is no more Grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more Grace, otherwise work is no more work*', (Rom. 11:6). Salvation is not any combination of works and Grace.

We must come to the point of realisation that our works have nothing to do with Justification. Salvation cannot be purchased even in part, because it requires a payment we cannot make. If our Justification and ultimate salvation cannot be bought by good deeds, then it naturally follows that it cannot be lost through bad deeds! The penalty must be satisfied infinitely. Unlike God, we are finite beings.

Some would agree with us that salvation is not earned, but insist it must be 'kept' once received. This overlooks the fact that we received the gift when enemies of God and yet we were immediately acquitted of the penalty for *all* our sin - past, present and future. If Christians have to pay further for the just penalty now fully satisfied, then we are surely the most miserable and deluded of all people?

The argumentation mainstay has always been Hebrews 6 - misread and taken out of context. The text '*if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance...*' follows a dissertation regarding sound doctrine or 'strong meat'. The author is at pains to show that it is '*impossible*' (vs.4) for a believer to fall from Grace and be renewed again by another crucifixion.

But doesn't the word '*again*' mean they had already fallen away and repented at least once? No! This passage is actually one of the *strongest* for showing that a believer *cannot* be lost! The phrase, '*to renew them again unto repentance*' does not mean that they have fallen away and are being renewed again. The '*again*' refers to being saved after having fallen away. That this could not happen even once, let alone multiple times, is clear from the phrase, '*...impossible for those who were once enlightened...if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance...*' (vs.4-6).

The author doesn't say '*when they shall fall away*' but '*if*'.

This '*if*' precedes an 'hypothetical clause' from verses 4-6 with the supposition in verse 6. The nature of the impossibility is tied directly to the phrase in verse six '*to renew*'. Why would it be impossible to be saved again if salvation could be lost? Two hypothesis are given: 1) '*they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh*'; and 2) '*put him to an open shame*'.

In other words, if the crucifixion of Jesus 1,900 years ago was not enough to keep one saved, and if salvation could be lost, then Christ would have to be crucified again for one to be saved again. Furthermore, if Christ purchased salvation at a price we could never pay and gave it to us eternally, He would be held up to 'open shame' for such folly. To expect someone with total inability to bring all this about and then endeavour to hold on to it would be absurd. If Jesus' dying in our place for our sin and rising from the dead is not sufficient to keep us in His hand then He died wasting His time.

This section about 'falling away' is then proved to be hypothetical - something that could never happen. Look at the way it ends: '***BUT, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak***', (vs.9). In other words, falling away does not accompany salvation.

If our sin still holds power to affect our standing in Justification then what amount and what sin would it take for us to be discarded? No scripture is given to inform us of this. We are simply told that '*if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*' (1Jn.1:9) - therefore we can be forgiven all sin! Rarely do you hear a Christian say they were 'saved again' - rather, they confessed their sin and were forgiven.

As if anticipating such teachings the Apostle John wrote in His Gospel account: '*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.* (5:24)...*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out* (6:37)...*And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.* (6:39)*And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.* (6:40)*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.* (6:44)*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.* (6:47)

There are of course many other scriptures which clearly speak of the preservation of God's saints, (Jn.10:28; Phil.1:6; Jude 24). One of the most compelling is Pauls Ephesian statements on the *sealing* of the saints '*until the redemption of the purchased possession...until the day of redemption*' - speaking of the surety of our glorified body, (Eph.1:13,14; 4:30). In Romans 8:29,30 Paul speaks of this glorification as something God has already decreed in the *past* as *finished*!

Our eternal security rests in the work of Christ at Calvary, not in our performance as Christians. We must not confuse Justification with Sanctification. Christ will lose none that the Father has given Him and no one will ever be able to snatch you out of His hand. And that's a promise.

Mike Claydon

## **Europe's Christian Movements Gather Together**

Rome, March 2, 2004: *'More than 150 Christian movements - Catholic, Orthodox, Evangelical and Anglican - will meet May 8 to help add a spiritual dimension to the building of the new Europe. The meeting is expected to attract at least 22 Catholic bishops...[and] bishops of Christian denominations. Plans...were unveiled today at the headquarters of the Community of Sant'Egidio, a lay Catholic group.*

*More than 10,000 people are expected to attend the event in Stuttgart, Germany. At least 141 cities will be linked by satellite to join in the event. Some 100 personalities of political, economic and social life are expected to attend.*

*'For the first time, Catholic, Evangelical, Orthodox and Anglican ecclesial movements will meet to show the spiritual riches of Europe which is moving toward unity', explained Valeria Martano of Sant'Egidio...*

*The Evangelical representative thanked John Paul II for convoking the Catholic movements in Rome and saying on that occasion that 'there are two essential aspects in the Church: the charismatic and the institutional. The charismatic aspect unites us,' Nicklas said. The May meeting will end with Jesus' prayer in the Gospel, 'That they be one', recited by 16 bishops of various confessions. The event will be preceded by a two-day congress, attended by founders and superiors of Christian movements...*

(Apostasy Alert, March 2004)

## **Pentecostal/Charismatics Prophecy About Passion Movie**

*'Charismatics are giving words of prophecy about Mel Gibson's movie 'The Passion of the Christ'. Chuck Pierce says, 'The Passion movie will be very significant in determining a change in the course of Christianity in America' (Christian International web site, no date).*

*He may be right, though not in the way that he foresees; because the fervour surrounding this movie might well produce a Christianity in America that is even scripturally weaker and more ecumenical than today. Diane Fink, a leader in 'Aglow International', says: 'I saw movie theatres all over the nation with people sitting in them apprehended by what they were watching...Theatres will be places where God's presence will be so thick, through not only the depiction on the screen but also the anointing on the film'. Don and Bonnie Franklin prophesied in the name of God: 'I am bringing up one out of Hollywood that will become a worldwide evangelist. I said, he will stand in pulpits and preach the Word of God. He will have crusades, saith the Lord. I am going to bring this man, Gibson, out of obscurity and into prominence in the Christian realm. He will stand as a mighty man of valour. He will be the Word of the Lord. He is a Braveheart'. These alleged 'prophecies' are presumptuous and foolish. God has already spoken about those who add to His Word and corrupt the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are cursed (Gal. 1; 2 Cor. 11; 2 John; Rev. 22).'*

(From: 'Apostasy Alert': Editor Mike Claydon)

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## **'Church Uses Sex, For God's Sake'**

(By Vanessa Walker, Religious Affairs writer)

*'SEX sells. And the most conservative Anglican diocese in the country is hoping it will sell God. Sydney Anglican Media - which is under the control of the Archbishop of Sydney, Peter Jensen - has created a television show on the Ten Network to reel in the godless young couch potatoes.*

*The program, Good Sex, features Christian panellists, including 'sexologist' Patricia Weerakoon and advertising copywriter Janet Evans talking frankly with invited guests about orgasms, penis pumps, masturbation and pornography. Interwoven in the commentary, the team tells viewers that God approves of all sorts of hanky panky - as long as it's inside marriage.*

*Mark Hadley, director of radio and TV for Anglican Media, said the church had the bright idea after Ten offered it an 11.30pm slot on Wednesday nights. 'When we looked at the time slot we said to ourselves there's no way a traditional Christian program is going to work and work well here'... 'Instead...we researched the demographic and looked at the carry-over audience from Sports Tonight...men between the ages of 25 and 35. What is it that captures the attention of*

*men in this age group? We thought, hey, we'll put on a program about sex.'*

*Good Sex, which is garnering an average of 350 e-mail responses a week...is now part of the diocese's evangelical strategy. Under Dr. Jensen, the church aims to convert 10 per cent of the population of Sydney to Christianity by 2012. Dr. Jensen said he regarded the show as great fun with a serious underlying message. 'God created sex. He created it to be very good and we should enjoy it in the right circumstances'... 'Because we reverence what God has made and respect and honour the sexual relationship, we take it seriously. That doesn't mean we're not able to enjoy it - on the contrary, sexual fulfilment is very important.'*

*The show has already run for five of its 13 weeks, but is currently in a hiatus while 'Big Brother Up Late' takes over...*

**Sub-editors comments: Spurgeon once said: 'Anchors are up, winds are out and the whole fleet is getting into confusion. Men in whose sanity and stability I once believed are being carried away with one fancy after another, and I am driven to cry, What next?... We are only at the beginning of an era of mingled unbelief and fanaticism.'**

(MTP, Vol. 29, 1883 P.234 )

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## **The British Scene**

*'Many of our religious leaders are guilty men. Religion has lost its voice in the counsels of the nation because our principal denominations have surrendered their heritage to forces of superstition, atheism and compromise. They have one thing in common. They have discarded the Holy Scriptures as a sole divine guide, innerrant, infallible and authoritative in all matters of faith and morals. The doctrine of Holy Scripture, which reformed our faith and enlightened the*

*World four centuries ago and laid the foundation of our national greatness, has been surrendered to philosophies which darken man's mind and destroy his true liberty and well-being.*

*Our principle doctrines, which at one time would never have been surrendered, are now being rejected with impunity. The church is in crisis and the sooner we wake up to the fact the better.'* (Day One Magazine, England, May/August 2002, 'The Church Crisis', P.3)

## Charles Finney

Among the many 'revivalists' that shaped nations is the name of Charles Finney. To many it appears Finney was the father of some modern teaching and methods, methods which many believe have adversely affected the Evangelical faith. Modern methods of evangelism, Church growth movements, Pentecostal traits, political revivalism are all said to have originated from Finney.

### **Evangelism:**

Finney's preaching was passionate, clear, urgent and he stressed immediate conversion, unlike many of the preachers of his day. He called sinners to repent and believe. It has been written that He was also a faithful preacher of the law and used it well to convict sinners.

He was ordained in 1824 near the end of the second Great Awakening which had seen men like George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards instrumental in bringing millions into the kingdom of Heaven and literally shaking the moral fabric of towns, cities and nations. For a time Finney seemed to be able to fan the flames of revival wherever he went but believed in looking for techniques to bring this about.

In discussions on revivals the names Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, and Charles Finney are often spoken of in one sweeping sentence. However, the history shows vast differences between Finney and such men in the methods used, as well as the results. Finney's lectures on revival in the 1830's represent a viewpoint that is quite distant from Edwards or Whitefield.

The question is asked: how much did Finney mix techniques and man made methods with the Gospel and how did this affect the results? Martyn LLOYD Jones wrote: '*Finney was a man who taught quite definitely that, if one applied a given technique, one could have a revival at any time. This is the essence of Finney's teaching in his book on revivals. But history has surely proved that Finney was quite wrong. Many have tried to plan revivals by using his techniques and have done so honestly, sincerely, and thoroughly, but the desired revival has not come. One of Finney's cardinal errors was to confuse an 'evangelistic campaign' and a 'revival' and to forget that the latter is always given in the sovereignty of God.*' (1)

Certainly Finney put an emphasis on having a person make 'a decision'. He was the first evangelist to ask people to come forward to indicate acceptance of Christ. He first applied the term 'revival' to evangelistic campaigns, (the concept of 'revivalism' having come from the Unitarians beforehand). He also initiated 'enquiry rooms' for after-meetings. His '*anxious bench*' was a precedent to the '*altar call*' of today. Emotionalism at his meetings led to faintings, weeping and other manifestations.

Finney's new revivalism methods caused a split amongst the Presbyterians into two groups - Arminian and Calvinistic. Finney's theology frequently challenged conventional and historic doctrine. He would not accept the Westminster Confession of Faith. Many believe he went to the extreme in not being able to discern between Calvinism, the standard theology of the day, and hyper-Calvinism. Hyper-Calvinism includes the belief that the Gospel invitation is for the elect only. Perhaps he threw the baby out with the bathwater and '*jettisoned them all - and thus repudiated the heart of biblical theology.*' (2) Finney concluded that his own Presbyterian

pastor George W. Gale's belief in human depravity and divine sovereignty were incompatible with evangelism. (3)

Iain Murray who wrote about the history of these times, said: '*Finney certainly had a theology, and it was hostile to historic Christianity in its whole assessment of human nature. Finney's position was that the will decides everything. There isn't a fallen nature in man; there is no need for a man's nature to be changed. All that is needed for a person to become a Christian is for his will to take action. He has got to make a decision, and if he makes that decision, he becomes a Christian. To which the older preachers responded, it's true that to become a Christian, we all have to commit ourselves and receive Christ, but there's a much more serious problem. By nature we are at enmity to God, and we need to be regenerated, and that regeneration isn't in our own hands or power. We can't accomplish it ourselves. Whereas Finney said that this view was heresy; any man who makes the right decision becomes a new creature.*' (4)

There is no doubt that Finney believed in the power of the Holy Spirit, but his methods and theology historically can be shown to have birthed a new generation of 'man centred' evangelism. Murray continues: '*The main theme after Finney was that we have to 'influence' people, and it is justifiable for us to do that in any way we can to bring them to salvation. And bringing people to salvation became identified with getting people to do things publicly that presumably committed them. Whereas the older preaching was that man is in a desperate, lost condition. We are utterly dependent upon God; we must go to our knees and pray. We must preach and pray, because God has given us no other means. The church in a former day would have been looking to God much more than we are today. We are so taken up with the problems of communication and being relevant, and making sure we are understood. We are so absorbed with all of that, that we seem to have lost the emphasis that went before.*' (5)

Finney initially believed the proof of the fruit of his revivals was in the great numbers being 'converted'. However, many historians have noted the large 'backsliding' rates in communities after Finney left an area. Warfield wrote, '*No more powerful testimony is borne...than that of Asa Mahan, [Finney's longtime friend and fellow worker], who tells us - to put it briefly - that 'everyone who was concerned in these revivals suffered a sad subsequent lapse: the people were left like a dead coal which could not be re-ignited; the pastors were shorn of all their spiritual power; the evangelists...I cannot recall a single man, brother Finney and father Nash excepted, who did not after a few years lose his unction, and become equally disqualified for the office of evangelist and that of pastor.*' (6)

A contemporary of Finney said, '*During ten years, hundreds, and perhaps thousands, were annually reported to be converted on all hands; but now it is admitted, that [Finney's] real converts are comparatively few.*' (7) Finney himself became discouraged when his methods ultimately failed and later he accepted a presidency of Oberlin College.

He was to later say: '*I was often instrumental in bringing Christians under great conviction, and into a state of temporary repentance and faith...[but] falling short of urging them up to a point, where they would become so acquainted with Christ as to abide in Him, they would of course soon relapse into their former state.*' (8)

Today we see this same effect with statistics of an 80% failure rate with so called 'conversions'. Many of these come from ecumenical 'crusades' where the gospel is mixed with worldly 'techniques' to produce thousands of 'decisions'.

Murray again summarises in reference to Finney: *'Our Lord talks about stony ground hearers, who receive the Word with joy, but it simply doesn't last. When the altar calls came in, simultaneously came in that method of announcing that we had 500 conversions last night. And that is so remote from biblical Christianity. That brought great disrepute upon the church, because everybody knew that many of these supposed converts didn't stand...The church in former times was, to a much greater degree, light and salt. And it was that because great care was taken in admitting members into the church, so that the church was different than the world. Part of our problem today is that the church in its way of living is so like the world that it is no longer convicting. Think of Paul saying to the Corinthians that if a stranger comes in, he is convicted by God's presence and he falls down. We don't see that now. The church is so close to the world. And that's come about, (the older divines would have said), because we've taken such a superficial view of what it means to be a Christian. Conversion has become demeaned in its significance'*. (9)

#### Doctrine:

Finney claimed a desire to preach almost immediately after his conversion. At this point he was relatively ignorant of scripture and devoid of any theological training. However, because of his legal training, he had a sharp mind and could debate convincingly with anyone. Refusing to attend Princeton Seminary he began conducting his own revival meetings in New York. One of his most famous sermons was titled *'Sinners Bound To Change Their Own Hearts'*. Finney believed it was his own will that determined his salvation.

Much of Finney's theology did not always show in his evangelism but developed over a period of many years. It increasingly revolved around human morality. Finney basically followed teachings similar to Pelagius, a fifth century heretic who was severely condemned by numerous church councils.

Finney believed that original sin was *'anti-scriptural and nonsensical dogma'*. (10) He believed God would not condemn people for being sinners by nature. His logic overrode scripture when he wrote: *'The Bible defines sin to be the transgression of the law. What law have we violated in inheriting this [sin] nature? What law requires us to have a different nature? Does reason affirm that we are deserving of the wrath and curse of God forever, for inheriting from Adam a sinful nature?'* (11)

His understanding of righteousness, guilt, transgression, forgiveness and other terms, were very often drawn from his legal studies and not from scripture. He applied 19th century legal standards to biblical doctrines. He wrote: *'...I have interpreted as I would have understood the same or like passages in a law book'*. (12) From this quote we see that Finney disregarded clear scriptural orthodoxy as in Romans 5:16-19. He put a form of logic, human reasoning and Arminianism in its place.

Pentecostals often refer to Finney and his writings. Finney one day experienced a 'Baptism of the Holy Ghost': *'like a wave of electricity going through and through'*. (13) However, even after this experience, Finney wrote years later: *'Not withstanding the baptism I had received...I went to bed without*

*feeling sure my peace was made with God.'* (14)

He believed in **entire sanctification** or as some people describe it, *'sinless perfection'*. (15) Finney wrote: *'Now as entire sanctification exists in perfect obedience to the law of God, and as the law requires nothing more than the right use of whatever strength we have, a state of entire sanctification is attainable in this life on the ground of natural ability'*. This teaching ran counter to the teaching of progressive sanctification as taught throughout the centuries and greatly influenced the Holiness movement and thus the later Pentecostal movement. In the stream of this new teaching Charles Wesley also wrote a book *'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection'*; yet on his deathbed he admitted he had not achieved it.

When Finney grew discouraged by his results in Evangelism he accepted the position of principal of Oberlin College and there developed his perfectionist doctrines further. With other Holiness leaders such as Phoebe Palmer, he paved the way for what was called by some, 'Oberlin Perfectionism'. This view incorporated a *second* consecration by the Holy Spirit. (16) B.B. Warfield wrote a thorough and devastating critique of Finney's theology on this and other matters. (17)

Finney also attacked **justification** by grace alone through faith alone which the Reformers upheld so strongly. He wrote: *'The doctrine of an imputed righteousness, or that Christ's obedience to the law was accounted as our obedience, is founded on a most false and nonsensical assumption'*. (18) He classified the teaching of imputed righteousness (Romans Chapters 3,4,5), as *'theological fiction'*. (19)

#### Conclusion

Did Finney introduce *leaven* into methods of evangelism that are now evident in modern Gospel presentation? Author, Michael Horton believes so. He writes: *'In Finney's theology God is not sovereign; man is not a sinner by nature; the atonement is not a true payment for sin; justification by imputation is insulting to reason and morality; the new birth is simply the effect of successful techniques, and revival is a natural result of clever campaigns. Finney is not merely an Arminian, but a Pelagian. He is not only an enemy of evangelical Protestantism, but of historic Christianity of the broadest sort'*. (20)

#### Terry Arnold

(1) *'Conversations, Psychological and spiritual'* by Lloyd Jones  
(2) *'Ashamed of the Gospel'* by MacArthur, Appendix 2  
(3) Autobiography, 59-60 (4) Published interview with Iain Murray concerning his book *'Revival and Revivalism/The Making and Marring of American Evangelicalism 1750-1858'*  
(5) Ibid above (6) *'Ashamed of the Gospel'* by MacArthur - citing Warfield 2:26. (7) Cited in Warfield, 24 *'Perfectionism'* by B. Warfield, (2 volumes, 1932)(8) Cited in Warfield, 24(9) Published interview with Iain Murray concerning his book *'Revival and Revivalism/The Making and Marring of American Evangelicalism 1750-1858'* (10) Finney's *'systematic Theology'* (1851) P.179, see also P.249,250,236,245 (11) *Autobiography*,42 P.339, (12) *Autobiography*, 42 (13) *'Charles Finney: An Autobiography'*, P.78 (14) Ibid, P.22. (15) Finney's *'Systematic Theology'*, P. 407, 405-8 (16) For more history of the shift in Sanctification doctrine and the new Pentecostal movement, see *'Diakrisis'* Jan/Feb. 2004 P.5 (17) *'Perfectionism'* 2:1-215 (18) Ibid. P.179 (19) Ibid. P.56-58 (20) Michael Horton, *'Modern Reformation'*, (Article adapted from *'Publisher Abroad'*, Aug. 1996 *'The Legacy of Charles Finney'*)

## Jacob Prasch of Moriel Ministries Admits Truth Re:Dave Wilkerson

For many years now we have been warning of the dangers of the teachings and *false prophecies* emanating from the Pentecostal pulpit of Dave Wilkerson in his *Times Square Church* in New York City. His sermons are published and distributed worldwide. Our newsletter of September 1997 published his writings on the subject of a doubtful last days revival. He said '*even the Azusa Street Revival that gave birth to modern Pentecostalism lasted less than six years*'...and that we were better off seeking a revival within ourselves. However, by May 2000 we were compelled to challenge his contradictory statement that we were now on the edge of a world wide revival in the church (see *Diakrisis* May/June 2000) - and the failing of his many '*prophecies*' preached or published in his books (see *Diakrisis* Jan/Feb 2002). His misapplication, and out of context use of Old Testament scripture to the New Testament Church was also alarming.

In August 2000 Jacob Prasch of *Moriel Ministries* in the

UK weighed in with a vitriolic defence of Wilkerson saying; '[these] *unbalanced misrepresentations of facts about a brother...is more characteristic of the perverted theology of those influenced by Neo-Nazi beliefs we have seen in Australia, rather than any Biblical modality. We find these groundless criticisms of brother Wilkerson carry no serious merit*'.

We are pleased to announce that Jacob has corrected his past judgements and properly discerned Dave Wilkerson's deceptive teachings in an article available on the *Moriel* website. However, Jacob cannot resist the temptation to once again malign us and repeat another of his many false accusations. (We simply are not '*Radical Cessationists*' as he states). But that slur is overshadowed by our joy that he has been truthful enough to reveal his mistake in supporting Dave's ministry. We take this opportunity to again warn readers of David Wilkerson's pronouncements.

Mike Claydon

### **Your Comments and Questions**

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

Dear Terry, The Anglican minister of my church in [Tasmania] said that Roman Catholics do not worship or pray to Mary the mother of Jesus Christ. I am under the impression that RCs do worship and pray to Mary and that this is encouraged by the Pope. If I am correct, can you provide me with quotes and references to support my contention?

(Name withheld at editors discretion)

**Editors reply: Our book 'To Catholics Whom I Love' has several references...but to quote the official 'Catechism of the Catholic Church': 'The churches devotion to the Blessed Mary is intrinsic to Christian worship' (P.253). This then continues with exhortation to 'venerate' Mary...**

The Council of Trent which the 20th Century Vatican II Council upheld in full, stated: 'It is lawful to have images in the church and to give honour and worship unto them - images are put in churches that they may be worshipped'... Absolutely nothing has changed in current RC doctrine from the Council of Trent (1545-1563). And new doctrines (particularly on Mary) have been added continuously since that time...

The Catholic Church makes a distinction between the veneration due to 'saints', ('*dulia*'), the worship, due to God alone, ('*latria*'), and the veneration due to Mary, ('*hyperdulia*'). However, in practice this distinction breaks down and becomes nothing but a play on words. Webster's Dictionary states that idolatry is, '*reverence paid to a divine being and extravagant respect or admiration for, or devotion to, an object of esteem*'. '*douleia*' is used by the Septuagint to express *Divine worship only*, (Dt.13:4; Jdgs.2:7; 1Sam.7:3; 12:10; Matt.6:24; Lk.6:23; Rom.16:18; Col.3:24). The angel refused '*douleian*' in Revelation 22:8. The worshipping of idols is also forbidden under the word '*latreia*' (34 times in the OT, and once in the NT); and under the word '*douleia*' (23 times OT).

The Roman Catholic Church has *deleted the second Commandment* concerning idolatry (Ex.20:4,5; Dt. 5:8,9), from the Ten Commandments in their Catechisms and books, and splits No.10 into two separate Commandments, thus maintaining Ten Commandments!

The church of the first three centuries used no statues and pictures of Christ or the saints...

Dear Terry...your doctrine of ongoing sanctification - I ask you: when does one come to the point of complete sanctification? I have not heard this question answered by any preacher. God says he can make you clean and keep you clean (Jn.8:34-36)...If you don't believe what God says, how are you a Christian?...God calls his people saints, holy...He says 'It shall be our righteousness if we observe to do all the commandments' (Dt.6:25; 7:6)...a sinner is not a Christian...when you have sex with your wife, you are committing adultery, because God does not recognise sinners as his people...if you don't wish to experience God's wrath - the great tribulation, correct your doctrine... (J.T., W.A.)

**Editors reply: - The first question is easily answered by basic doctrine - Glorification is the end of Sanctification.**

- Jn.8:34-36: The phrase '*...Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin...*' is similar to 1Jn.3:6-9 - the word '*committeth*' refers to the *practise* of, or *habitual sinning* and is literally translated '*practices sin*'. The Greek tenses clearly show continuous action. If we did not ever sin we would not die! Our '*bodies of death*' (Rom.7:24) are still subject to the '*law of sin and death*', (Rom.8:2; 7:24; Col.1:22). But '*...if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ...*', (1Jn.2:1); '*...the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us*', (1Jn.1:7-10).

I believe John 8:34 - we should not practise sin.

- Yes, God calls us '*holy*' and '*saints*'. According to 1John a person living in continuous habitual sin should not be called a '*Christian*'.

- Deuteronomy 6:25; 7:6 is to Israel but the principles are to be taken seriously and kept.

- Sex with ones wife is committing adultery?: '*Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled...*', (Heb.13:4); how else do we procreate?

- God's Word states that believers will not experience God's wrath.

## Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear Terry, ...I really appreciate the enormous amount of research and information you give out to your readers. It is most informative and much appreciated...they are a source of valuable reference...Thank you for all your work and detailed studies, which have been so helpful to many'. (J.D., Armidale)

Dear Terry & Mike,...The videos by John Macarthur are excellent and give much room for a great deal of thought...My prayers for you both in this important ministry in these latter days of Grace, Yours in Him, (M.B, Sydney)

### [The following are excerpts from many letters received on this issue]

Dear Terry, We received material from...you sure 'copped a hammering' [see May/June 2004 P.7] but once again emotional and subjective...not using scripture but imposing carnal reasoning...

Dear Terry, Greetings to you at 'Diakrisis'. We were disgusted at the attempt by...to smear your ministry...I relate their refusal to have the 'tongues' tested like many behave with their 'miracles'. If they have nothing to fear, then why the problem? I believe that deep down, they know the truth, but will not subject themselves to scrutiny, rather, they accuse you and also the 'other' charismatics with falsehood, but hide behind their claim of being the 'true Pentecostals'. The true Pentecostals lived 2,000 years ago!...

Terry, Mike, It was pleasing to note your decline of a public debate concerning the Pentecostal movement...In Nehemiah 6 we read of the incident involving Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem the Arab, requesting a meeting...Four times a message was sent, and like yourself Nehemiah said: '...I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?' Also Titus 3:9 speaks of foolish disputes, contentions, etc...keep on rebuking unsound doctrine, by the Grace of God...

Dear Mike and Terry, Thank you for your excellent article 'Debating Calvinism - Five Points Two Views'. It is so refreshing to read something exposing some of the old heresies that are so rife in the church today. Be encouraged there are still many people who believe in the historic doctrine of the Sovereignty of God. I look forward to your newsletters with relish...(J.H., Brisbane)

### Praise/Prayer Points

- Praise the Lord for the recent New Zealand and Sydney trips and the opportunities to teach, inform, equip and encourage lovers of truth...Many doors were opened!

(The following is from a forensic pathologist advisor who investigates claims of healing. We asked him to investigate claims made by a Pastor Willis of SE Qld. who conducts tent healing crusades)

Dear Terry...following is an e-mail I sent to Ps. Willis last year, to date I have not received a reply...

'Dear Ps. Willis, I...understand from your website that you have had some spectacular results. I am referring specifically to Ivan, from Nanango and the lady with a cancerous lump on her neck. I believe these testimonies need to be 'noised abroad'. However, to have an impact on an unbelieving world they need to be medically validated...To this end I would request any medical information (eg precise diagnoses, results of X-rays, blood tests, biopsies, treatment prior to healing, results of tests and examinations after healing etc) that would assist me in analysing these two cases from a Christian medical perspective...If you do not have this information readily available, perhaps you could supply me with the names of the treating physicians so I can contact them personally...In His name,(Dr. Bogdan Hulewicz M.B; Ch.B; F.R.C.Path; F.R.C.P.A Consultant in Forensic Pathology Department of Forensic Medicine, Institute of Clinical Pathology and Medical Research Westmead Hospital Sydney)

**Editors Comments: As usual we have had no reply. We believe such men make merchandise of God's people.**

### Terry's Itinerary

July 11th 6.30pm Hervey Bay Church of Christ, Qld. Ph.41240631

### Sth. Aust. Itinerary

July 24th 7pm (Sat) South West Baptist, Seacliff Ph.83771802

July 25th 10am (Sun) McLaren Vale Baptist Ph (08)85562534

July 25th 6pm (Sun) South West Baptist Church, Seacliff

July 27th 11am (Tues) Adelaide College of Ministries, Klemzig - chapel Ph.83691414

July 28th (Wed) McLaren Vale Baptist Ph.(08)85562534

July 30th 8pm (Frid)South West Baptist, Seacliffe Ph.83771802

Aug.1st 10am (Sun) Hills Baptist, Bridgewater Ph.83884468

Aug.1st pm Murraylands Baptist, Murray Bridge Ph.85354145

Aug.3rd 2-4pm (Tues) Radio interview Ph.0414393300 (08)82402202

Aug.3rd 7.30pm Emmanuel Baptist, Flinders Park Ph.82441977

Aug.6th 7.30pm (Frid)Native Valley Bible Ch., Nairne Ph.83886106

Aug.8th 11am (Sun) Oasis Baptist, Salisbury Ph.82830465

Aug.8th 7pm Wayville Baptist, Black Forrest Ph.(08)82722470

Aug.11th (Wed)Lincoln Bible Church, Pt. Lincoln Ph.86823185

Aug.12th (Thurs) Cowell Gospel Hall Ph.(08)86823185

Aug.13th 8pm (Frid)South West Baptist, Seacliff Ph.83771802

Aug.15th 10.30am (Sun)Emmanuel Baptist, Flinders Pk.Ph.82441977

Aug.15th 6pm Church for You, Elizabeth Park Ph.88212244

Aug.29th 6.30pm Hervey Bay Church of Christ, Qld. Ph.41240631

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