



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)*

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

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Editors Comment

There are '*mysteries*' that the Bible says have been revealed and some that have not been fully revealed. '*The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law*', (Dt.29:29). The Gospel given to the Gentiles is part of the '*mysteries*' of God: '*For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in*', (Rom.11:25). The '*fullness of the Gentiles*' here refers to a definite number of people whom *only God knows*. These are the '*elect of God*', (Col.3:12). These '*elect*' are '*of God*' and not '*of man*'. Obviously there are many things God does not reveal fully. In the matter of election, God in His wisdom has deigned that we do not know who the '*elect*' are that we might preach the Gospel of Christ *to all*.

The responsibility of man for his sin, yet his inability to save himself by any means, cannot be humanly reconciled with the sovereignty of God in choosing, calling, predestinating, electing and justifying men, women and children. Yet today, as in the past, men foolishly attempt to reconcile this divine antimony with doctrines that are regurgitations of past *heresies*!

It was *Pelagius* who developed the view that unsaved man was capable of obedience and could use 'free will' to be saved. His arguments were humanly *logical*. But he confused the *free will* possessed by Adam and Eve *before* the fall, with their *enslaved will after* the fall. He denied the depravity of man. He rejected original sin and believed that it might not pass into nature and that it could be overcome by human means. Pelagius ultimately taught that man could earn God's grace in salvation by his ability to use his 'free will' and his own merit. Pelagianism was unanimously condemned as *heresy* in the Council of Carthage in AD418.

It was *Cassian* who later developed *semi-Pelagian* views which taught God assists men with their wills or in striving to be saved. And so the salvation process was initially *synergistic* (both man and God) instead of *monogistic* (of God alone); that God's grace could fail in attempting to save a person; and that there is not a definite number of elect. These semi-pelagian views were condemned as *heresy* at the Council of Orange in AD529. The Roman Catholic religion at their Council of Trent, increasingly fell on the semi-Pelagian side.

It was James *Arminius* who later produced *five points* ('*The Remonstrants*') which went back again to a synergistic view of salvation. These were condemned as *heresy* at the Synod of Dort in AD1619 with *five points of refutation*.

The 20th Century has seen the *blind acceptance* of all those heresies! The issue here is ultimately the *sovereignty of God* verses *humanism*! Humanism does not want to attribute salvation *wholly* to God because such mysteries as election, predestination, etc. do not seem fair! But God's sovereignty hinges on His nature and character which is fair and just. Perhaps this is why there are a *majority* of scriptures concerning God's sovereignty in comparison to those concerning man's responsibility. Thus we preach the glorious Gospel *to all* and God will do His sovereign work.

Terry Arnold & Mike Claydon

Misused Scriptures!

[2Peter 3:9]

1 *'...beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: 2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior: 3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming?...8 But, beloved, be not ignorant...9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; **but is longsuffering to US-WARD, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.'***

The latter verse 9 is too often quoted to teach that God does not want *any human to perish*. Regardless of whether this premise is true, *this Scripture* is simply not speaking to or about unsaved men but to the *'us-ward'* - the already saved who are called the *'beloved'* (vs.1,8). This scripture is in fact promoting the preservation of the saints in Christ! *The context is to believers and is about the end of this age and the sureness of the Lord's coming*. It is a scripture misused by Arminians and now sadly most of modern apostate Christendom. The context is, and historically has always been, to *believers* - the elect who would be saved and come to continuous repentance.

[Joshua 24:15]

14 *'Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. 15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, **choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. 16 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods; our fathers served.'***

'Choose you this day whom ye will serve' (vs.15) is often used by evangelists and modern day writers to show that we in an *unsaved* state must 'choose' of our 'free will' to accept the Lord in salvation. However, the passage is actually about Joshua addressing *God's people, Israel*, urging *them* to serve God only and turn from *any idolatry*. Israel was already God's *'elect'*, (Is.45:4; Dt.7:6-8; 10:15; Ps.135:4; Lev.20:23; 1Pet.2:9). The subject is not salvation but *idolatry*.

[Revelation 3:20]

'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.'

As with Joshua 24:15, so this Scripture is used to show we must 'decide', 'choose' or 'open the door' to be saved. But the passage is actually addressed to the *church* at Laodicea!

[1Corinthians 14:4]

'He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.'

Many Christians read or concentrate on *one half* of this verse to the exclusion of the other to promote self edification by speaking in an 'unknown tongue'. Paul does not commend this *'unknown tongue'* but rather *contrasts* it with something that edifies the church. I Corinthians continually contrasts the singular *'unknown tongue'* with *'prophesies'* or with the

plural *'tongues'*, (verses 18 and 19 summarise this clearly). Paul never speaks in favour of the *'unknown tongue'*. The *'unknown tongue'* speaker edifies *'himself'*, but the *'prophesies'* edify *'the church'*. The contrast cannot be avoided.

The fact of self edification cannot be ignored. One can edify oneself by various means. However, references to self edification in scripture are *negative!* *No gift is for self but rather for the body of Christ!* The gifts were given to profit all in the body of believers, (1Cor.12:7). Nowhere do the Scriptures promote self edification: *'We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let everyone of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself...'*, (Rom.15:1-2). We are to *'edify one another'*, (1Thess.4:11).

[1Corinthians 14:15]

'What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.' Some Christians use this verse to allow for, or to teach, the practice of speaking in an unknown tongue *without* interpretation. However, the words *'and'* and *'also'* absolutely refute such error. The word *'also'* connects *both 'spirit'* and *'understanding'* (or *'mind'*) together. The command is to pray or sing *with understanding also* and at the *same time*. A literal translation from the Greek is: *'What therefore is it? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray and also with the mind.'* (The word for *'understanding'* is the word *'nous'* which is literally and in most places translated *'mind'*). Paul's main thesis in chapter 14 is his continual plea for *'understanding'*.

The *'spirit'* here is *not the Holy Spirit but the human spirit*, (see vs.14 *'my spirit'*)! Whatever *'praying with the spirit'* and *'singing with the spirit'* is, it must be done with complete understanding in the mind both to the speaker and the listener.

Some Christians also use the phrase *'pray with the Spirit'* to mean the Holy Spirit praying through them in an unknown tongue or a *'prayer language'*. However, if to *'pray in the Holy Ghost'* was speaking in an unknown tongue then the *only* way we should pray is in *'tongues'* or else we would not be *'in the Spirit'*! If this *'praying in the Spirit'* is speaking in an unknown tongue, then we must *always* and *only* pray this way because Ephesians 6:18 says: *'praying ALWAYS with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit...'*

The meaning of *'praying in the Spirit'* was changed in the twentieth century. *The phrase once meant no more or no less than - the Holy Spirit helping us to pray*. When Jesus prayed the Lords Prayer - was it not 'in the Spirit'? What about the great men of God in ages past - did they not pray 'in the Spirit'? It is a fact that this new teaching regarding a *'prayer language'* was never heard of for 1,900 years!

[Romans 8:26]

'Likewise also the Spirit helpeth our infirmities for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered.'

A new 20th century teaching is that the *'groaning'* refers to speaking in an 'unknown tongue'. However, the words *'cannot be uttered'* refute the idea of anything being *spoken*, since the *'tongues'* are *'uttered'* or verbalised.

Terry Arnold

The Problem With Many Modern Tracts

Last year I came across a tract titled 'Re-connecting...Because Life Is About Relationships' distributed by Crossover Australia - a service of the Baptist Union Churches of Australia. It was written by Scott Pilgrim who is described on the back cover as a 'mad keen Newcastle Knights supporter...he has a passionate desire to see people reconnect with the God who created them and loves them.'

On the front cover is a glossy picture of attractive young men and women rollerskating and having fun. Inside are pleasant pictures of people in close physical contact - husband/wife, grandparents/grandchildren, couples embracing, etc.

The tract begins with the 'relationship crisis' being seen around Australia and the great need today for counselling services. It goes on to speak of the great commandment of love and that without a personal relationship with God there will be 'something missing in our lives'. It says people everywhere are seeking to 'reconnect with spirituality in one form or another'; there is 'spiritual hunger' in everyone; and we must 'reconnect' with our 'creator'.

Although the tract briefly speaks of Jesus dying and conquering death, the crux of the tract is that God can satisfy your deepest longings and give you a 'purpose in life' and eternal life in Heaven. We are simply to 'reconnect with the God who created you and loves you'. How are we to 'reconnect'? - simply by 'acknowledging' that He is 'the creator', that we are 'out of relationship with God' and 'through Jesus re-connection with God is a reality today'. 'What we need to do is to surrender our lives to Jesus...'

The tract mentions scripture only briefly twice and near the end. One, (Matt.22:37-39) concerns loving God; the other (Rom.5:8) is the closest the tract comes to the real Gospel. The tract closes with a 'prayer to receive Christ' where sin is finally mentioned as *sin*! A prayer of thanks is given for the 'opportunity to personally reconnect with my creator God...and help me to re-orient my life around you and your purposes...'

At first glance the tract is attractive and loving. But it is

what is *missing* that is indicative of most modern tracts. The tract tells people what they are saved *to* but does not tell the reader what they might be saved *from*! Sin and its consequences are simply missing; God as a judge whose wrath is upon sin is missing; *the very reason for the Gospel is missing*!

The tract does not accurately present the Gospel and arguably presents 'another gospel'! The Gospel is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus who offered Himself as a substitute sacrifice for our sins, (1Cor.15:3,4). *Faith and repentance* are never mentioned. Indeed they are replaced with words like 're-connect'.

Many might argue that tracts are 'ice-breakers' only. But they usually close with a 'sinners prayer' or a 'prayer to receive Christ' which tells the person that what they have done assures them of salvation.

This is typical of many modern tracts. Thousands of 'decisions' may be had from them but they are no doubt producing the huge rate of false professions that trouble the church today. Such tracts simply do not present the Gospel, do not tell people what they are saved *from* and thus do not give the reason *why* they need to be saved.

This is not to say that all tracts are useless.* But if they do not begin with the problem (sin) and its consequences, then *the very reason for the disease of mankind is withheld*; and the *cure*, the Gospel of the substitutionary work of Christ, will not be grasped with *understanding*, and their will be no fruit, (Matt.13:1-9; 18-23; Lk.8:5-15).

The Gospel today is in danger of being lost. Modern methods of evangelism have already mixed the Gospel with public amusements, entertainment, psychology, felt needs and other worldly and appealing measures. So too, today's tracts are softening the sting of the Gospel and the *offence* of the cross.

Terry Arnold

* A good alternative is the booklet 'Eternal Questions', available from this ministry (\$2).

Music - Quotable

'Dear friends, we know that souls are not to be won by music, if they were it would be time for preachers to give way to opera singers. The heaving of the masses under newly invented excitements we are too apt to identify with the power of God...The tendency of the time is towards bigness, parade, and show of power, as if these would surely accomplish what more regular agencies have failed to achieve. Jesus said, 'Preach the Gospel to every creature'. But men are getting tired of the divine plan; they are going to be saved by the priest, going to be saved by the music, going to be saved by theatricals, and nobody knows what! Well, they may try these things as long as ever they like; but nothing can ever come of the whole thing but utter disappointment and confusion, God dishonoured, the gospel travestied, hypocrites manufactured by thousands, and the church dragged down to the level of the world'. (C.H. Spurgeon, 1834-92)

The Sovereignty of God

'One way to test the claim that every Christian holds to the sovereignty of God in the election of the saints is to consider how they pray for the unconverted. Imagine for a moment that God is not sovereign in Grace, but that salvation ultimately depends on the sinner's own choice. How then should we pray? Do we say; 'Dear Lord, I realise that there may not be much that you can do about this, but if there is, please help my friend somehow to become a Christian'?

Of course no one actually prays this way; the very idea is

absurd. But what makes it so absurd is that, deep down, every Christian believes in the sovereignty of God's grace. When we pray for sinners to be converted, therefore, we ask God to do something for them that we know they are utterly incapable of doing for themselves. We ask God to invade their minds, change their hearts, and bend their wills so that they will come to Him in faith and repentance. In short, in our intercession we depend on God to save them.'

Philip Ryken

Vatican Observatory Plans Symposium on Evolution

‘Vatican City: The Vatican Observatory has convoked a range of experts to reflect on a question that at times seems to be forgotten in scientific research: Is there purpose in evolution? The Vatican has already acquiesced to that theory, ‘The effectiveness and integration of biological systems is little less than startling’, the Vatican press office said in a statement when announcing the symposium. ‘Yet in scientific circles, there is a very deep-seated distrust of teleological language, even though researchers may occasionally use the word ‘design’ in an attempt to grapple with the often astonishing adaptive complexes they study’, the statement said.

Hence, the Vatican Observatory from June 24-26 will be host for a symposium organized by the John Templeton Foundation. ‘Put crudely’, the Vatican statement continued, ‘the widely accepted scientific worldview is that human beings or any other product of evolutionary diversification is accidental and, by implication, incidental’. ‘Add the sheer diversity of the biosphere (both past and present) and the random nature of mutations to the occasional environmental disruption, be it bolide [meteor] impact, snowball earth, or sudden greenhouse, and the overwhelming impression is of an evolutionary process that could have gone in a myriad of separate directions’, the statement added.

‘The purpose of this symposium is not to dispute this worldview, but to inquire whether it is sufficient and, if it is not, to consider what we need to know and ultimately how we might discover the requisite information with one or more research programs’, the note announced. The symposium at the Vatican Observatory will gather 13 participants, researchers in the areas of biology, biochemistry, ecology, geology, neurosciences, palaeontology, philosophy of science and theology. They are asked to address five questions:

- Can we speak of a universal biochemistry? - How do levels of complexity emerge, and are they inevitable? - Can we properly define evolutionary constraints? - What does convergence tell us about evolution? - What do we mean by intelligence? - Is intelligence an inevitable product of evolution?

(Apostasy Alert, 22nd June, 2004)

Immodest Dress Issue

(Agape Press) ‘The president of the American Decency Association says pastors around the U.S. have been voicing their concerns about the immodest dress they are seeing in their churches. Bill Johnson, who recently distributed an e-mail message addressing the issue, says the Church needs to counter this trend primarily because Christians worship a holy God. ‘[A]s we come to the house of God on a weekly basis, [we need to recognize] that we are there primarily to bring glory and honour to His name’, Johnson says. ‘It isn’t about our attire, and it certainly isn’t about self’. According to Johnson, numbers of people are expressing ‘great concern’ that individuals - both young and old - are not giving much thought to how they come before a holy God and worship Him. Distractions caused by immodest dress can detract from a person’s worship experience. Johnson says a true Christian would not knowingly contribute to the down fall of another’.

(Religion Today, July, 2004)

Mel Gibson - Quotable

Gibson: ‘I’ve been actually amazed at the way I would say the Evangelical audience has - hands down - responded to this film [The Passion] more than any other Christian group. What makes it so amazing is that the film is so Marian. Mary is a tremendous co-redemptrix and mediatrix.’ (CT magazine)

Editors Comment: Why have Evangelicals so quickly embraced this film by one who teaches such heresy?

Benny Hinn...Lest We Forget

(Benny Hinn, ‘Praise The Lord’, Trinity Broadcasting Network, [TBN] **October 19th, 1999**)

‘But here’s first what I see for TBN. You’re going to have people raised from the dead watching this network[TBN]...I’m telling you, I see this in the Spirit...awesome. Jesus, I give you praise for this, that people around the world...who will lose loved ones, will say to undertakers, ‘Not yet. I want to take my dead loved one and place him in front of that TV set for 24 hours. I’m telling you, I can feel the anointing talking here. People are going to be cancelling funeral services and bringing their dead in their caskets, placing them, my God! I feel the anointing here, placing them before a television set, waiting for God’s power to come through and touch them. And it’s going to happen time and time, so much it’s going to spread. You’re going to hear it from Kenya to Mexico to Europe to South America, where people will be raised from the dead...if some dead person be put in front of this TV screen, they will be raised from the dead and they will be by the thousands. I see rows of caskets lining up in front of this TV...I see loved ones picking up the hands of the dead and letting them touch the screen and people are getting raised as their hands are touching that screen’.

(Benny Hinn, TBN, **May 2nd, 2000**)

‘We are about to see the greatest manifestations of God’s presence ever! A prophetess named Ruth Heflin sent me a word recently...to get ready, to see, physical manifestations of Christ on the platforms in our crusades, that people will have visions of the Lord in the meetings. Those things have happened in the past, I know. In a Thailagua meeting one time in Africa, the Lord appeared to the whole crowd! It is about to begin happening...Expect it to happen also, in your own home!’

Editors Comments: This charlatan and false prophet has been responsible for the shipwreck of Christians and deaths due to such phenomena as ‘slaying in the spirit’ (‘Diakrisis’, June/98) and claimed ‘healings’.

We have for many years documented the numerous false prophecies, (eg. Nov/97; May/June 2000; Oct/Nov 2000; March/April 2001; May/June/2002; and our article ‘Benny Hinn - A Closer Look’). The ‘Signs and Wonders Exposed’ videos (Parts 1&3) also show the false teaching, the lies, and the tragic deaths due to ‘healings’. We urge Christians to spread the information boldly that those deceived might be set free from deception and from following a false prophet.

Christian Nightclubs?

‘Faith-based night spots for youth are popping up as safe hang-out spots. Sure, cigarettes and alcohol are banned and these popular entertainment venues are called ‘Christian’. But the worldly rock music is just as addictive and poses great harm.’ (Calvary Contender, May, 2004)

‘The Church which is married to the Spirit of the Age will be a widow in the next’ - Dean Inge

Evangelism - Puritan or Modern?

Two distinct types of evangelism have evolved in church history - the *Puritan* type and the *Modern* type. Arguably most Christians today only know the latter form. The modern type has increasingly minimised the *preparation* of a mind for understanding the Gospel - ie. as to sin and its consequences; the judgement of God; and thus the *reason* for the Gospel. It is characterised by arranged public gatherings with special preachers - to get people to make 'decisions' or demonstrate an act of faith in Christ. People are usually asked to come to the front or declare their allegiance to Christ in some way.

This type of evangelism traces its roots to Charles Finney in the 1820's. He introduced the '*protracted meeting*' and the '*anxious seat*'. At the end of the sermon he would say: '*There is the anxious seat; come out, and avow determination to be on the Lord's side*'. (1) These were Finneys much opposed '*new measures*'. He also initiated '*enquiry rooms*' for after-meetings. His '*anxious bench*' led to the '*altar call*' of today. Emotionalism at his meetings also led to faintings, weeping and other manifestations.

Finney's understanding of the salvation process was that a person became a Christian when his or her will took action. If the person made a decision, they became a Christian. Finney believed it was his own will that determined his salvation. One of Finney's most famous sermons was titled '*Sinners Bound To Change Their Own Hearts*'.

Finney was a self confessed Pelagian. Pelagius taught that man could earn God's grace in salvation by his ability to use his 'free will' or his own merit. His views were unanimously condemned as *heresy* in the Council of Carthage in the year 418. Like *Pelagius*, Finney developed the view that unsaved man was capable of obedience, could will to do good and could use his own 'free will' to be saved. He denied much of the depravity of man; rejected original sin; and denied that fallen man is unable to repent or believe of himself. Finney's theology and methods characterise much of Modern Evangelism.

Most of Finneys converts fell away as testified by Finney's co-workers and by Finney himself in his later life, (see *Diakrisis* July/Aug., 2004). This same fallaway rate is well documented in Modern Evangelism. Evidence shows more than an 80% 'fall away' rate amongst those Americans making 'professions' for Christ. Statistics reveal most of these people attend a church assembly for *less than a few months*. Billy Graham, in an interview for *Time Magazine*, admitted his reluctance to label half his converts as 'Christians'. (2)

This huge mass of false professions is seen in the broad spectrum of modern Christianity, from the Pentecostal/Charismatic side of the church through to the Fundamentalists. Prominent Fundamentalists such as Jack Hyles, Curtis Hutson and John R. Rice, although fine Bible scholars in many areas, displayed unbiblical understandings of evangelism. These men claimed large numbers of souls saved but the aftermath show the figures were grossly exaggerated with large 'fallaway' rates as previously mentioned.

Puritan Evangelism was remarkably different to that described above. *It was different in method because it was different in doctrine.*

The Puritans were a group that became prominent in the mid 17th Century. They would not conform to the existing Church of England. They believed after the Great Reformation that the church needed further reforming, especially from the left over

rituals and extra-Biblical traditions of Roman Catholicism.

It was the Puritans who invented evangelistic literature. Richard Baxter, Hugh Clark, John Cotton and many others were all great evangelists. Baxter's classic '*Call to the Unconverted*' or Alleine's '*Alarm to the Unconverted*' showed the evangelistic heart of the Puritans.

In contrast to Finney, the Puritans believed that by nature we are at enmity with God and need to be regenerated, and that regeneration is not in our own power. The Puritan type of evangelism was an expression of their doctrine - that the conversion of a sinner is a gracious sovereign work of God alone.

The Puritans did not in general use words such as '*conversion*' and '*regeneration*' but rather used phrases such as '*effectual calling*' - this process they described using various scriptures: Rom.8:30: '**Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified**'; 2Thess 2:14: '**Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ**'; 2Tim.1:9: '**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**'.

To the Puritans the effectual calling was the work of God's Spirit convincing us of sin and renewing or *freeing our wills*. Man could not do this with anything within himself. It is wholly a work of the divine power of the Holy Spirit. One Puritan wrote: '*Ministers knock at the door of mens hearts (persuasion), the Spirit comes with a key and opens the door*'.(3)

The great Puritan, John Owen, said this work is irresistible, not because it drags men to Christ against their will but because it *changes mens hearts* so that they will come freely being made willing to come by His grace. The Puritans believed this was the greatest miracle of God. Where Finney taught plenary *ability*, the Puritans taught *total inability*.

The great revivalist and Puritan evangelist, Jonathan Edwards, placed great emphasis on the sovereignty of God and the effectual calling, as well as the depravity or inability of man. *He was one of the most successful evangelist in history.* After revival swept through his church he said: '*I think I have found that no discourses have been more remarkably blessed, than those in which the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty, with regard to the salvation of sinners, and His just liberty, with regard to answering prayer...*' (4)

The Puritans taught that conviction of sin by the preaching of the law, must precede faith, since no man can or will come to Christ to be saved from sin until he knows what he needs saving from. The first step was knowledge, the second step conviction...then this leads to contrition. The Puritans urged ministers not to short circuit the *preparation process* but to plow up the ground of the heart by exposing sin and its consequences.

The Puritans did not see evangelistic preaching as being separate from other preaching or teaching. Yet Owen wrote that minister's were '*diligently to labour for the conversion of souls to God*'. The faithful Puritan preacher, Richard Greenham, worked 20 years in Cambridge Shire County with only *one* family converted. Yet the same faith honoured Richard Baxter's Kidderminster ministry where in 17 years there were

600 converts of which he claimed none fell away.

The Puritans did not pander to *pragmatic methods* in an effort to secure souls. Pragmatism says that results prove truth, or *if it gets results it works and must be of the Holy Spirit*. In this, Puritan Evangelism differed greatly from Modern Evangelism. It did not employ the use of sports clubs to interest outsiders, child minding centres to create friends within the community, meetings designed to attract the godless. They did not hold witnessing classes and send people to knock on doors, witnessing and inviting people to Church. Although some of these things may have value in and of themselves in a modern age, the Puritans used no entertainment and did not try to sell the church to the disinterested. They rather were motivated by, and well aware of, the power of Scripture. They knew the truth of Acts 2:42,47: ***‘And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved’***.

The use of a ‘medium’ through which to better present the Gospel has become an art form in Modern Evangelism. Stage plays, drama, clowning, testimonies, ‘Christian’ rock music, sport, unbiblical manifestations and other methods from the world are increasingly being used. But these dilute and lower the *intellectual understanding* of the message. When something is added to basic truth it always pollutes and subtracts from it. When these mixtures are used as ‘baits’, the following is often true: *the bait you catch them with may well be the food you will have to continue to feed them with*.

Peter Masters in ‘Stand For The Truth’ refutes the pragmatic thinking in modern evangelism that *‘results count more than the purity of the methods we use’*. He writes: *‘This is the reasoning of an ungodly and immoral age, and it often taints the thinking of Christian people...the Bible condemns the attitude which says ‘Let us do evil, that good may come’, (Romans 3.8). Christians must never ignore the rules of the Bible because compromise seems to lead to success...’*

One author writes: *‘The typical presentation today starts exactly opposite where Paul started. He wrote of ‘the wrath of God...against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men’. But modern evangelism begins with ‘God loves you and wants to make you happy’...(Paul’s) approach was a directly confronting evangelism. He did not do a Community Survey. He did not conduct any special research. He did not try to put together an Evangelism Committee. He just went to the synagogue and the marketplace and preached to whoever was there.’ (5)*

God requires us to deliver the Gospel to all. But how shall they *understand* it without *preparation of the heart*, (Matt.13:1-9; 18-23; Lk.8:5-15)? How shall they truly ‘confess with the mouth’ and ‘believe in the heart’ without being shown *the reason as to why they need the Gospel?* - ie. the depravity of man; his inability to keep and fulfil the law; his sin nature and its consequences.

We are not required to dress up the Gospel or make it more ‘appealing’, for one cannot soften the cross! We are not ‘PR officers’ to bring goodwill between Christ and the world - to make Christ acceptable to businessmen, sportsmen or the Press. We are not mediators making the Gospel more palatable to man.

The power of the Gospel is in the message itself! It needs no outside influence to generate its power. Paul said: ***‘For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first,***

and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written. The just shall live by faith’, (Rom.1:16,17). The word ‘power’ here is ‘*dunamis*’, referring to intrinsic power, *power of itself*. We get the words ‘dynamite’ and ‘dynamo’ from this word. The Gospel message generates power of itself and needs no outside help. This reasoning is further extended in verse 17: ***‘For therein is the righteousness of God revealed...’*** The Gospel itself contains the revelation of the righteousness of God himself in the flesh through the message of the substitutionary death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Much of Modern Evangelism is preaching *another cross*. The old cross has nothing to do with the world; the old cross is not slanted to fit new fashions such as rap and rock music. The old cross is a place of a finished *sacrifice*, (Jn.19:30; Heb.9:25,26; 10:10-12); a place of *bearing of sin*, (Heb.9:28); a place of *reconciliation for enemies of God*, (Rom.5:10; Col.1:20); a place of *death*; a place of *submission*, (Lk.22:42); a place of *humiliation*. God does not improve our old life for it is *a place where we will be crucified*, (Gal.2:20). The old cross is an end to Adams journey in the flesh. We leave the old life at the cross.

There is no pride at Calvary! Modern Evangelism is in danger of taking the ‘*shame*’ and the ‘*offence*’ out of the cross, (Heb.12:2; Gal.5:11).

A.W. Tozer summarises: *‘The cross of popular evangelism is not the cross of the New Testament. It is rather a new bright ornament of a self-assured and carnal Christianity...The old cross slew men; the new cross entertains them. The old cross condemned; the new cross amuses. The old cross destroys confidence in the flesh; the new cross encourages it...The flesh, smiling and confident, preaches and sings about the cross; Before that cross it bows and towards that cross it points...but upon that cross it will not die, and the reproach of the cross it stubbornly refuses to bear’*.

Preachers are to declare Christ to all as the saviour from sin. But to expect immediate response ‘decisions’ today too often focuses on man using his ‘free will’ to ‘decide for Christ’ at any time. This is the result of rejection of the slavery of sin and the inability of man. Modern pragmatic methods are resulting in a huge fallaway rate with resultant hardening and hypocrisy.

The Puritans, although zealous, were never in any spirit of panic with their preaching to unconverted souls. They believed God’s Word does not return void to those who God will choose (Is.55:11). In the historic ‘Awakenings’ the enquiring sinners often read, prayed and *agonised* over their lost condition *for days* before peace descended upon them.

Modern Evangelism is big scale, short term campaigns calling for decisions; in contrast, the Puritans knew of no such thing as ‘crusades’ or ‘campaigns’. Puritan Evangelism was a broader long term effort and generally *local church based*. They understood well *God’s work* in contrast to *man’s work* in evangelism.

We preach God’s message undiluted; and *the sovereign Spirit calls, draws and saves* who He wills and in His time.

Which type of evangelism do you subscribe to - Puritan or Modern? The answer may well be determined by your doctrine.

Terry Arnold

- (1) ‘*Revivals and Religions*’, Ch.14
- (2) David Frost, *Billy Graham in Conversation*, Oxford: Lion, 1998, P.65; *Aust. Beacon*, 8/97, P.5
- (3) ‘*Body of Divinity*’ by T. Watson, , 1869, P.154
- (4) ‘*The Works of Jonathan Edwards*’, Banner of Truth Vol.1 P.353
- (5) ‘*Ashamed of the Gospel*’ by John Macarthur, P.132, 141

John Bunyan

Among the great Puritans who shaped nations appears the name of John Bunyan. He is best known for his writings such as *'Pilgrim's Progress'*, reputed to be the second best selling book of all time.

Following the Great Reformation, the Puritans were the bulwark for ecclesiastical and moral standards within England. In the mid seventeenth Century there were groups of Puritan 'Dissenting' or 'Non-conformist' ministers who preached without being ordained by the Church of England. They refused to subscribe to the *Book of Common Prayer* and any ordinances, festivals or ceremonies that were carried over from Roman Catholicism after the Reformation. They were especially concerned to see Godly ministers preaching God's Word.

In 1572 the Puritans drew up a set of 'admonitions' protesting, among other things, the lack of true ministers in the Church of England. These principles were narrowly defeated and many Puritans, who were the cream of the ministers, began leaving the Church of England to form the English Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist and Quaker denominations. Some remained in the State Church attempting to reform it from within.

The word 'Puritan' became a word of scorn. Yet the Puritans were a passionate group of men who stamped a moral standard and doctrinal purity on England not seen since. The Puritans were also great evangelists and were the inventors of evangelistic literature. They were men of great learning. The Puritan writings and teachings permeated societies around the world. They were sometimes called 'precisians' because of their precision in the Word of God and their doctrine of *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture Alone). When Puritan Richard Rogers replied to a question asking why he was so 'precise' in his views, he answered: *'I serve a precise God'*.

Political and church opponents conspired to get rid of the Puritan ministers. They resurrected an old *'Act of Uniformity'* which stated all ministers had to give complete allegiance to the *Book of Common Prayer*. The authorities prepared the Act to get rid of the Non-conformist ministers. The deadline was 24th. August, 1662. Over 2,000 ministers were ejected from their churches before preaching their last sermons to capacity crowds. The effect was devastating: *'Religion was almost extinguished and in many of her parishes the lamp of God went out'*. (1) *'We had to travel through a century of coldness and dreariness, and barrenness, of Arminianism and Pelagianism, of Arianism and latent Socinianism'*. (2) Bishop JC Ryle wrote of this as an *'injury to the cause of true religion in England which will probably never be repaired...'* (3)

The Puritans began to preach in homes, barns and fields. In response, Parliament then passed a new Act in 1664, *'The Coventicle Act'* resurrected from an old Act dating back to 1593. The Act forbade gatherings of any more than five people apart from family. The Puritans then preached deeper in the forests. In response, parliament passed *'The Five Mile Act'* which forbade meetings within five miles of any town or village. The Act also prevented Non-conformist ministers from living within five miles of a town and forbade them from teaching in schools. Punishments were fines, confiscation of goods, imprisonment or even death.

It was into this history that John Bunyan was born in 1628 in Elstow to a poor family. Bunyan wrote that by age ten: *'I had but few equals for cursing, swearing, lying and blaspheming the holy name of God...'* (4) At an early age he was troubled by

Puritan preaching, had terrible dreams and was afflicted with depression. Yet he admitted *'I could not let go of my sins'*. (5)

When he was age 16 his mother and sister died in the flu epidemic of 1644. He became angry and bitter when his father hastily re-married and so Bunyan fell deeper into sin. *'I was the very ringleader of all the youth that kept me company, into all manner of vice and ungodliness'*. (6)

Soon after, he experienced some 'near death incidents'. Once he fell into a creek and almost drowned and another time he fell out of a boat into a river. In 1644 at the age of 16 he signed up as a soldier in the Parliamentary Army to fight in the Great Civil War against the Royalists. He was one night assigned to sentry duty during a siege. At the last minute a fellow soldier asked to take his place and was killed that very night. Bunyan recognised these events as from God but *'none of these things awakened my soul to righteousness'*. He grew more rebellious. (7)

In 1649, at age 21, he was discharged from the army and married Mary, the daughter of an Anglican Puritan. They lived in extreme poverty. Mary's father had given his daughter two books: *'The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven'* and *'The Practise of Piety'*. Bunyan occasionally read these books and was stirred to 'reform' himself. He went to church on Sundays yet secretly practised his ungodly ways during the week.

One Sunday morning Bunyan heard a sermon by vicar Christopher Hall about the Sabbath and he experienced a deep sense of guilt. But by the time lunch was over he had forgotten the guilt and went to his usual Sunday afternoon sport. During the game he suddenly had a strong conviction concerning his sins but concluded it was too late for him to go to Heaven. *'My state is surely miserable; miserable if I leave my sins, but miserable if I follow them; I can but be damned, and if I must be so, I had as good be damned for many sins, as to be damned for few'*. (8)

One day he was at a neighbours shop cursing and swearing as usual when the neighbours wife suddenly rebuked him. Bunyan felt ashamed, went home and began to read a Bible but could not understand the Epistles. For one year Bunyan 'reformed' his speech and conduct. He was proud of this achievement and what others were now saying of him. His character of *'Mr. Legality'* in *'Pilgrims Progress'* may have been drawn from these experiences.

In the nearby town of Bedford he came across some lower class women talking about the things of God and he listened in secret. They spoke of helpless sinners, of grace and of being 'Born Again'. John realised he was not Born Again and that he was a hypocrite and an *'ignorant sot'*. He returned to listen more to the ladies and he read the Scriptures afresh. (9)

It was about this time he had a vision - of a mountain with one side warm and sunny and the other side cold and damp. Some ladies were sitting on the sunny side and he was on the other side shivering. Between the two was an impassable wall. He could not with all his strength get over the wall. But there was a tiny doorway and with much struggling he managed to squeeze through and enjoy the warm company. He believed the mountain was the church of God. The sunny side was the light of God's mercy and grace to His people. The wall was the scriptures. The door was Jesus Christ. *'The fact that this door was so narrow that I could hardly get in showed me that no one could enter into this life but those who were in real earnest and left the wicked world behind them...'* (10)

Bunyan was in agony for months as to whether grace had passed him by and whether he was among God's elect. *'If I had the whole world, I would have given it ten thousand times over for this, that my soul might be converted.'* (11) Finally he told some friends in Belfast of his plight. He came to understand that he needed a perfect righteousness to present before God and that this righteousness could only be found in Jesus Christ. He cried: *'Lord, do not let this sense of guiltiness go away except it be through the blood of Christ and the application of your mercy through Him to my soul.'* (12)

Soon after, at the age of 25, he met a Non-conformist rector, Mr. Gifford, of St. John's in Bedford. Gifford took an interest in Bunyan and gave him a right understanding of the Gospel, repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ. He was baptised in the river Ouse in the dead of night so as not to attract attention in troubled times.

Bunyan then entered what he called the 'great storm'. A darkness of depression gripped him and he doubted the very existence of God and Christ. In the turmoil he began to again curse and swear and blaspheme God. *'Surely I am possessed of the devil or perhaps am now become insane.'* (13) He occasionally experienced temporary relief from scripture but would fall back into despair. *'I had almost no other thoughts about him [Christ] except blasphemies, and neither my hating these thoughts nor my resisting them helped in the least to keep them away. No matter what I thought or did, they were still there.'* (14) Months went by and he began to ponder on the thought that *'the blood of Christ remits all guilt'*. (15) He gained a short lived peace, but soon sank back into depression. For nearly three years the battles with depression raged.

One day in 1655 he was walking through a field and the thought was impressed upon him: *'Thy righteousness is in heaven'*. In a moment he saw his righteousness was in Christ at the right hand of the throne of heaven. *'I saw also, moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my righteousness worse, for my righteousness was Jesus Christ Himself...now did my chains fall off my legs indeed, I was loosed from my afflictions and irons, my temptations also fled away...Now Christ was all; all my wisdom, all my righteousness, all my sanctification, and all my redemption...I was joined to Him...Now I saw Christ Jesus was looked on of God and should also be looked upon by us, as that common or public person, in whom all the body of His elect are always to be considered and reckoned: that we fulfil the law by him, rose from the dead by Him, got the victory over sin, death, and the devil and Hell by Him; when He died, we died, and so of His resurrection.'* (16) His guilt of sin briefly came back but as he walked back in the house Bunyan remembered Romans 3:24. *'God seemed to be saying to me: 'Sinner, you think that I cannot save your soul because of your sins; behold my Son is here and I look upon Him and not on you, and I shall deal with you according as I am pleased with Him...By this I was made to understand that God can justify a sinner at any time by looking upon Christ and imputing His benefits to Him.'* (17) These events were later to be fictionalised in *'Pilgrims Progress'*.

Within two years he was appointed a deacon in Bedford. People came by the hundreds to hear him and he preached with great earnestness about the need for salvation. He began his sermons with the law, the terrors of sin and the curse of God. As he matured he preached more on the assurance of salvation. He attracted opposition and became the target of slander and gossip. He was accused of being a witch, a Jesuit, of having

whores, a mistress and illegitimate children. He made no reply.

A blind daughter, Mary, and two sons were born, John (in 1655) and Thomas (in 1658). His wife grew ill and before Bunyan was thirty, she died. He married again quickly (1660) being concerned for the welfare of his family.

On Nov. 12, 1660 Bunyan was preaching in a farmhouse 13 miles from Bedford. He began his sermon and was immediately arrested by a constable and hauled off to jail. He was tried at Elstow and charged and sent to jail for preaching unlawfully and refusing to agree with the *Common Book of Prayer*. Bunyan later wrote glowingly of his time with the Lord in jail. He wrote prolifically, saying *'I have seen things here that I am sure I will never in all the world be able to express.'* (18)

During this time in jail his wife Elizabeth gave birth to a stillborn child. Bunyan's heart was breaking with concern for his wife and family who had no means of support. Elizabeth pleaded with the judges to release her husband. Bunyan had not only received an unfair trial but was not allowed to appeal. (It was later discovered that a clerk kept his name from coming up for appeal).

Two years after Bunyan was jailed the *'Act of Uniformity'* was enforced. Six years passed in jail and suddenly he was set free. Against the law, Bunyan gathered his people and spoke excitedly of his blessed time in prison.

Within a few months (1666) he was again put in jail for *a further six years*. Within the first few weeks his daughter died.

In 1671 the Bedford Congregational church acting by faith called Bunyan to pastor their church, even though he was still in jail! Amazingly three days later Bunyan was freed due to an Act of Parliament granting freedom to all such prisoners. Bigger crowds than ever flocked to hear him preach. In 1675 the laws tightened again and Bunyan was fined and threatened with loss of his goods. He went underground and for 18 months ran from the authorities, barely escaping. Meetings were held in remote places or deep in the forest. Eventually he was caught and sent back to jail. His charge was *'refusing to come to church and receive the sacrament'*. (19) It was during this time in jail he had his famous dream and wrote the classic *'Pilgrims Progress'*.

With the help of John Owen, in 1677 the Bishop of Lincoln ordered Bunyan's release. On a trip to London he was caught in a storm and contracted a fever and then Pneumonia. On August 31st, 1688 after 10 days of struggle, he said *'I desire nothing more than to be with Christ, which is better'*. Bunyan stretched out his arms and said: *'take me, for I come to thee!'* At age 60 the Lord took him home. His wife and children were devastated. Elizabeth died two and a half years later.

It has been said: *'Bunyan, hardly less than any other living man, helped to keep the soul of England alive'*.

Terry Arnold

Source: *'John Bunyan, a Biography'* by John Dunn, *New Creation Teaching Ministry*

(1) *'Sermons of the Great Ejection'*, Banner of Truth, 1962, P.7 (2) *Ibid*, P.9 (3) *Ibid*, P.15 (4) *'Grace Abounding To The Chief of Sinners'* by John Bunyan, P.8 Moody Press, 1959 (5) *Ibid*, P.8 (6) *'John Bunyan'*, Word Publishing, 1991, P.20 (7) *'Grace Abounding To The Chief of Sinners'* by John Bunyan, P.10 Moody Press, 1959 (8) *'Grace Abounding'* by John Bunyan, Word Publishing, 1991, P.24 (9) *'Grace Abounding To The Chief of Sinners'* by John Bunyan, P.22 Moody Press, 1959 (10) *Ibid*, P.25 (11) *Ibid*, P.28 (12) *Ibid*, P.35 (13) *'Grace Abounding'* by John Bunyan, Word Publishing, 1991, P.47 (14) *Ibid*, P.51 (15) *Ibid*, P.52 (16) *Ibid*, P.89-90 (17) *Ibid*, P.89 (18) *'Grace Abounding To The Chief of Sinners'*, by John Bunyan, P.109 Moody Press, 1959 (19) *'Pilgrim and Dreamer'* by Ernest Bacon, P.130 Paternoster Press, 1983

Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear Mike, some today are saying that the doctrine of sovereign election (dubbed 'Calvinism') came from Roman Catholicism. They cite the fact that Augustine was Roman Catholic and was responsible for systematising the heresies of the Roman Church and the teachings of 'Calvinism'...

(Name withheld at editors discretion)

Sub-Editors reply: The fact that Roman Catholicism is extremely *Arminian* and thus diametrically opposed to the doctrines of sovereign election should cause one to question the ludicrous notion that 'Calvinism' is rooted at all in Roman Catholicism! Even a glimpse at some of the writings of the Church Fathers *before Augustine and the RC system* will show the doctrines of grace and sovereign election!

It is wise to separate Augustine's early life from his later life. No doubt in later life he did move towards Roman tradition. But in earlier years he wrote some very sound works on Justification by faith alone, Scripture alone, etc. Also, *the Roman Catholicism then was very much in early formation at the time and did not have much of the traditions and teachings they now have*. Augustine did not 'systemise' the traditions of the RC church, simply because most of the traditions came *very many centuries later!* The much later Thomas Aquinas perhaps could be held more responsible. The Roman dogmas were developed over *along* period of time! Most of them were not even heard of in Augustine's day (AD354-430). Augustine had died before the following edicts were made...

AD 431 Worship of Mary
AD 526 Extreme Unction (Sacrament to the dying)
AD 593 Doctrine of Purgatory introduced
AD 600 Worship services conducted in Latin
AD 600 Prayers directed to Mary
AD 786 Worshipping of images and relics
AD 995 'Canonisation' of dead saints
AD 1079 Celibacy of the priesthood
AD 1090 Prayer Beads ('Rosary' - Peter the Hermit)
AD 1190 Sale of Indulgences
AD 1215 Transubstantiation (Bread & wine becomes real body/blood of Our Lord)
AD 1215 Confession of sin at least once per year (Pope Innocent III, Lateran Council)
AD 1220 Adoration of the bread (Host) - (Pope Honorius)
AD 1229 Bible forbidden to laymen - (Council of Toledo)
AD 1439 Doctrine of Purgatory decreed
AD 1439 Seven sacraments affirmed
AD 1534 Jesuit Order founded
AD 1545 Tradition granted equal authority with Bible
AD 1546 Apocryphal books added to Bible
AD 1854 Immaculate Conception of Mary - (Mary declared sinless)
AD 1870 Infallibility of Pope declared
AD 1950 Assumption of the Virgin Mary (Mary rose bodily into Heaven)
(A more complete list is in our book 'To Catholics Whom I Love')

Spurgeon's Tragedy

On October 19, 1856 Charles Haddon Spurgeon Preached at a service at the Royal Surrey Gardens. London was buzzing with talk of this young preacher. He lacked the eloquent sentences of most preachers, but his simple directness spoke to the hearts of his audience. His passion for truth was as strong as the older Puritans he loved and studied.

At nineteen years of age Charles had begun his ministry at New Park Street Chapel on London's south side. The Chapel quickly became too small. Though the Chapel could seat twelve hundred, seats, aisles, and even window-sills were overflowing when Spurgeon preached. Hence, within a year at New Park Street, the chapel was expanded, but still the larger fifteen-hundred capacity building was not sufficient for the now thousands coming to hear Spurgeon. For a time the congregation rented Exeter Hall, which seated forty-five hundred people, but it too proved too small!

Spurgeon then leased the Surrey Music Hall in the Royal Surrey Gardens. This was London's largest and most beautiful building, erected for 'public amusements, carnivals of wild beasts and wilder men'. Many criticized Spurgeon for leasing a building designed for worldly amusements. This hall held ten to twelve thousand people and that number packed the building for the first service on October 19, 1856. It appeared as many people were outside the building as were inside!

The service had only gone a few minutes when there was a frightening cry of 'Fire! The galleries are giving away, the place is falling!' In the panic to flee the building, many people were trampled. Seven died and many were seriously injured.

Spurgeon almost lost his mind from the horror of this catastrophe. He was seriously depressed over the event. His grief was so deep some feared his reason had left him. He spent hours 'in tears by day, and dreams of terror by night'. However, within two weeks Spurgeon recovered sufficiently to preach again. And the crowds were even bigger than before!

In the spring of 1861, the Metropolitan Tabernacle was completed. This would be Spurgeon's pulpit for the next thirty-one years. During those years an average of five thousand people attended each morning and evening Sunday service. Spurgeon's was the megachurch of nineteenth century London. Though he constantly preached, Spurgeon trembled at the multitudes who came to hear him. He was aware of the awesome responsibility of giving them the truth and not just tickling their ears. Thus in his last sermon at Surrey Hall before moving into the Metropolitan Tabernacle, he urged his listeners: '*In God's name, I beseech you, flee to Christ for refuge! Shall there be any of you, whom I shall see on my death bed, who shall charge me with being unfaithful? Shall these eyes be haunted with visions of men whom I have amused, but into whose heart I have never sought to convey the truth?...God avert that worst of ills - unfaithfulness from my head! I pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God!*'

(Sources: Adapted from an earlier Christian History Institute story by Diana Severance, Ph.D.; Additional sources: 'Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens; the Surrey Gardens Music Hall Ministry').

Exhortation To Evangelise!
Offer of Free Video/DVD

Editors offer: Apart from informing, teaching and equipping the saints, we have an increasing burden to see souls come to a saving knowledge of Christ and to provide sound material for this purpose. With this in mind and considering the weaknesses in many of today's 'tracts' (see P.3), we urge readers to consider our 'Eternal Questions' booklet as a 'tract' or an *evangelistic tool*.

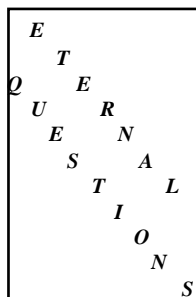
This booklet has already borne fruit as well as helping professing Christians in checking their foundations for assurance of salvation. The booklets are offered *at near cost*

to help facilitate their *distribution to the unsaved*.

We would like to offer a **Free Video/DVD with any order of 15 or more 'Eternal Questions'**. This free video or DVD is a (2 hour) *sampler* of the 2-video/DVD set (5 hrs) '*Does The Truth Matter Any More*'.

Use the '*Eternal Questions*' booklet in conjunction with conversations and contacts with non Christians. Send it to family, give it to hospital patients, use it to teach in Bible Studies, offer it to members of your church to use in evangelism, as a guide for teaching children...

About 'Eternal Questions'



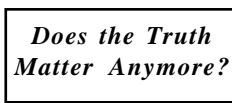
'Eternal Questions' is a very concise presentation of God, man, Christ and the Gospel. This booklet has been carefully and systematically designed to *prepare the unsaved* for a true *understanding* of the Gospel and *why* they need to be saved.

This book concisely looks at who God is; the problem of evolution; how God speaks to us today; who is man; the problem of sin and its consequences; can religion or works

help?; and what is the good news!

Many eternal questions are answered: Does God exist? What is this God like? Can He communicate with us? Where do we go when we die? Why is the world in such a mess? What went wrong with the human race? What about problems with marriage, health, employment, finances, family...? This is primarily a book to be given to unsaved people but could be useful to Christians in checking their foundations for salvation and assurance. Cost \$2

About 'Does The Truth Matter Any More'



This is a set of 2 videos or DVD's containing *five 1 hour messages* featuring speaker John Macarthur. These two videos/DVD's are a gripping and scriptural presentation of a

serious malady prophetically spoken of by Spurgeon over 100 years ago that exists in the church today; and the solution to restore the power of the church to a lost world.

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 pragmatic 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. The power of the Word of God is demonstrated through Scripture itself. This is a must for all churches to show their flock and to encourage them to stand on the Word of God and to resist the philosophies of the world and the methods thereof.

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Your Comments and Questions

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

'In two recent newsletters by Dave Hunt he wrote about 'Calvinism', making some provocative statements as well as asking several questions...How would you reply to these?'

Editors reply: We have inserted our reply within the texts written by Dave. Ours is bold and bracketed.

[Dave Hunt says]: *'For Biblical understanding one must accept or reject Calvinism's view that God predestined before their birth all men either to Heaven or to the Lake of Fire [Dave has been publicly warned that historic 'Calvinism' does not teach such an unbiblical notion. This is a malicious strawman that will inflame emotions! See our article July/August 2004]. Much of scripture involves God's pleadings with Israel to repent. I must either believe that he sincerely desires to bless them all (in which case Calvinism is false) - or that he is mocking those whom he has predestined to eternal torment [Notice the strawman error repeated] and from whom He withholds the very grace they need to repent... [The strawman is now extended and defies Jn.6:37,39,40,44] 'Thy will be done' is cruel and misleading if Calvinism is true, and thus rape, murder, war, lust, etc are all exactly what God decreed according to his sovereign will... [Emotive at best but blasphemous at worst?] What do 'choose you this day whom you will serve' (Josh.24:15), [See P.2 of this newsletter - this was spoken to Jewish believers, God's 'elect'! (Is.45:4; 65:22; Dt.7:6-8; 10:15; Ps.135:4; Lev.20:23; 1Pet.2:9) 'if ye be willing and obedient' (Is.1:19), [Dave only quotes half the verse here!:* ***'If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: 20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword...'*** This has nothing to do with salvation but is about prosperity or judgement to Israel - God's 'children' (vs.2) 'my people' (vs.3) who had rebelled and 'forsaken the Lord', (vs.4). God would not accept their 'sacrifices' (vs.11), 'meetings' or sabbaths', (vs.13). The context preceding and following reveals Israel would either become righteous through repentance (vs.16,17,19), or God would achieve their purification through judgment (vs.20). Dave has again used *replacement theology*]...and a host of other scriptures mean? [What Scriptures?] They are misleading if Calvinism is true, and honest appeals only if Calvinism is false. Is 'Whosoever will may come' a genuine invitation to all, or is it misleading [This verse is *not* in Scripture! The closest is Rev.22:17 - referring to the New Jerusalem and to God's 'servants' (vs.6) taking 'the waters of life freely'] - because only the predestined elect can come?...Was he [Paul] wasting his time, [wherever did Paul claim to know who the 'elect' were?] because Christ hadn't died for most of them and they had already been damned before they were born [Strawman repeated]- or does salvation depend on ones willingness to believe?...How can I preach the Gospel without deciding whether it is a genuine offer of salvation for all or for only the elect?' [We do not need to preach the Gospel with any knowledge of who the 'elect' are! God simply commands we preach the Gospel to all].

[The following from the latest newsletter by Dave Hunt]: *'we are forced to disagree with Calvinism's claim that everything that happens - every tragedy and wickedness - is exactly what God willed from eternity past. That belief would seem to justify the atheists claim...'* [Again, this is not what historic 'Calvinists' taught!] *'God gave man a free will so that we could willingly and with understanding love him and*

each other...the damning truth is that 'the heart...is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked (Jer.17:9)...' [Yes, God gave man a 'free will' **before the fall**. Nowhere after the fall is it taught that unsaved man has a will that is 'free' in choosing God in salvation! Any so called 'free will' to choose God is given by God in salvation. Dave then contradicts himself by admitting the depravity of the human heart]. *'He immediately cast Adam and Eve out...but not without offering them an alternative. They and their descendants could be reconciled to Him...the choice was theirs and their descendants to make.'* [Adam had no will to be reconciled to God! He hid from God. It was God who sought him out! It was God who clothed them! Adam was enslaved by a sin nature as are all those in Adam since. They do not seek after God (Rom.3:11-18) and cannot and will not, (Rom.8:6-8)! It is God who chooses and saves and not because of any 'free will' resident in man but only by His sovereign grace. If man has any ability in himself to be saved then it is *not* grace, it is *not* unmerited favour! ***'And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work'***, (Rom.11:6)].

'The rich man in Hell...his physical tongue is in the grave with his dead body, but he imagines that it is parched with physical thirst..he doesn't even recognise the nature or cause of his thirst' [The rich man only 'imagines'? Dave is known for his rejection of the literal things in Hell. But the text reads a literal thirst and that the rich man did understand fully the nature of his thirst!] *'...now that thirst will burn forever for the water of life that he despised when it was available to the 'whosoever will', (Rev.22:17)'* [See previous comment on this 'whosoever will']. *'Jesus said, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink' (Jn.7:37)'* [This verse is spoken about believers and is also referenced to the day of Pentecost and the indwelling Holy Spirit (see vs.38,39)] *'you will not come to me that you might have life' (Jn.5:40)'* [Reference this with verse 21! ***'For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will'*** and 6:44 ***'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'***].

Editors warning: The deception being repeated by this author has taken on a gravely serious element, in that Dave Hunt knows he is misrepresenting historic 'Calvinist' views, yet here repeats untruths regardless. A reading of the likes of Spurgeon, Whitefield, Edwards, and almost all the historic leaders would show that Hunt is actually attacking Hyper-Calvinism; but also he is teaching semi-Pelagian views of 'free will' which were *heresy* in the early church!

We in this ministry do not nullify the responsibility of man for His sin; but salvation is monogistic - saving grace is all of God's work and *none* of man. Unsaved man's will is simply *not* 'free' but enslaved! Saving grace frees man's will and is God's work entirely! This is not a question of us being 'Calvinist' or 'Arminian' but a matter of *what do the Scriptures say?*; what is 'the faith once delivered'? - what is the historic church teaching on these issues? Why did the early church call what Dave Hunt and others are now teaching a 'heresy'?

The issue is important! It concerns the Doctrines of Grace, the very doctrine of salvation! The waters are being muddied by strawmen, lies and doctrines that are simply plain 'heresy'!

Terry Arnold & Mike Claydon

Your Comments and Questions

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

Pastor/Elder Required

A position is vacant for a fulltime pastor/elder in Sth. East Queensland. Any who might be interested contact Terry Arnold. E-mail: tam@satcom.net.au Ph.0411489472

Editors Note

Many readers on our e-mail list had problems downloading the 'Passion' pdf file. Our Webmaster has since given us the following information:

'The problem is probably at the users end, caused by Microsoft's default settings with newer versions of Outlook Express to help block potential viruses. This setting can be disabled however. I would recommend only enabling it temporarily to access a trusted attachment and then re-enabling the setting to block any potential viruses...This article explains it quite well and shows how to change this setting.... www.updatexp.com

Dear Terry, Thank you so much for the video which you so kindly replaced. We were not going to bother you, but now very glad that YOU bothered. It is a very interesting part of the series...

[Readers, see editors note in *Diakrisis* May/June 2004 P.8 regarding faulty video/DVD 'Does The Truth Matter Any More' and replacement]

Dear Terry, May God bless your outstanding Bible information. I am Italian and I come from a very painful Catholic background and from the heresy and distortion of the Gospel. I deeply discern your writings in 'Diakrisis' and I quote every single word of truth that is made. May God's Spirit protect you and your faithful work in the name of the true Gospel. In Christ with much affection, (A.G., NSW)

Dear Terry, I met you when you preached at our church in Bulls, New Zealand. I bought the John MacArthur book 'Our Sufficiency In Christ' (excellent!!!) and took your 'Diakrisis' newsletters away for reading...they are brilliant, thoroughly enjoyable and enlightening...I was wondering if I would be able to receive these via e-mail...Thank you...All praise to God for the message you delivered the Sunday morning re: 'The Seven Marks of a Christian' by JC Ryle, challenging, encouraging. Thank you. (L.P., New Zealand)

Prayer Points

- Please pray for those who were ministered to in Sth.Aust. Pray that the Holy Spirit continues his work.
- Pray for the workers in this ministry, for wisdom and grace.

Rick Warren

Dear Mr. Arnold...about the 'Purpose Driven Life'...such a lot of people I know are doing the study...it seems to have taken the church like a storm...could you send me something on it...' (P.Q., Vict.)

Editors comment: There are some valuable concepts in the book. However, Warren's exposition of Scripture throughout his works is some of the worst yet cleverest I have seen from any prominent author! Warren often puts forward extraneous ideas that havenothing to do with the text but are then subtly and gradually used to build doctrine. An example of this is his teaching on womens roles in church which I came across recently (Sermon: 'What the Bible Says About the Role of Women'). In Genesis 3:16 he exchanges the word 'rule' for 'dominate'; he says Lydia in Acts 16 'hosted a church in her home'; Chloe was a 'small group leader'; Phoebe was a 'leader in the church'. Then Warren turns 1Tim.3:11 completely on its head and says: '*it sounds like the wives of deacons should have these qualifications [for a deaconess]*'. Yet the passage is clearly referring to qualifications for husbands! (Warren later flatly contradicts himself when he says *women cannot be elders!* Yet the qualification of 'husband of one wife' is the *same wording* for *both elders and deacons!*). Amazingly he then says '*There were obviously women leaders in the church...*' But his premise has been built from speculations and false interpretations!

Warren violates nearly every hermeneutical principle in his interpretation of Scripture. This same sloppiness is seen more subtly in '*The Purpose Driven Life*' where the Scripture references are often misused. A helpful booklet is: '*An Analysis of Rick Warren's 'The Purpose Driven Life'*', (can be ordered from this ministry \$2.90 postage included). Critiques can also be found at: <http://www.biblebb.com/files/pdl.htm>

Dear Terry, Your last newsletter was full of goodies, especially the article on Charles Finney. I was not aware that he was Arminian but it confirmed my feelings...

(J.S., Kyabram, Vict.)

Dear Terry, Thank you for answering my question in the latest Diakrisis' regarding the assertion made by my ex-Anglican minister, that RCs do not worship or pray to Mary. He has since retired/moved on! I also appreciated the article by yourself and Mike regarding Arminianism, Hypercalvinism, etc. You made your points very clear. God Bless.

(Name withheld at editors discretion)

Terry's Itinerary

Sept/Oct - Hervey Bay Church of Christ, Qld. Ph. 0411489472

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