



Australia
Diakrisis

A Ministry of Teaching

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

Newsletter of TA Ministries Vol.2, No.38

January/February 2006

PO Box 1499, Hervey Bay, Qld, 4655
Australia

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

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

E-mail: taminist@bigpond.net.au

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

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

Sub-editor: Mike Claydon

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

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A Considerably Bolder Vatican

There is no doubt, Josef Ratzinger's papacy is shaping up to be an interesting one. As the head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (Formerly The Holy Office of the Inquisition), and now Supreme Pontiff, he boldly defends Roman Catholicisms heretical doctrines in his daily 'audiences' and 'homilies'.

In a recent and emotive homage to the image of the Immaculate Conception in Rome he figuratively placed the 'hopes and anxieties of humanity' with the 'Blessed Virgin Mary' and entrusted to her the future of the 'Church'. Recalling memories of Vatican II in a December 2005 homily, he acknowledged that the moment in which Paul VI proclaimed Mary as Mother of the Church 'remains indelible in his memory'. Said he: *'The [council] fathers suddenly rose spontaneously from their seats and stood applauding, rendering homage to the Mother of God, our Mother, to the Mother of the Church'* later describing the 1960s gathering as the greatest ecclesial event of the 20th century; and concluding: *'I bring the anxieties and hopes of humanity of our time and place them at the feet of the heavenly Mother of the Redeemer, Yes, we wish to thank you, Virgin Mother of God and our most beloved Mother, for your intercession for the Church'*. As if this was not sufficient to make a Christian shudder, the 'Holy Father' has now kindly granted the gift of plenary indulgence *'which may be obtained under the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic Communion and prayer in keeping with the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff), with the soul completely removed from attachment to any form of sin on the forthcoming [Dec 8] solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, by the faithful if they participate in a sacred function in honor of the Virgin, or at least offer open testimony of Marian devotion before an image of Mary Immaculate exposed for public veneration, adding the recitation of the Our Father and of the Creed, and some invocation to the Virgin'*.

Several more staggering announcements have emanated from the Vatican in recent days; To the effect that Rome is preparing to abandon the idea of limbo, [the theological deception that children who die before being baptised are suspended in a space between heaven and hell]. Added to this, nonbelievers too can now be saved! In November 2005 a papal speech stated; *'Whoever seeks peace and the good of the community with a pure conscience, and keeps alive the desire for the transcendent, will be saved even if he lacks biblical faith. They have a spark of desire for the unknown, for the greatest, for the transcendent, for a genuine redemption, With this faith in an unknown reality, they are really on the way to the authentic Jerusalem, to Christ'*.

And yet, with all this evidence to hand, and the statements becoming more strident by the day, the Protestant churches around the globe continue their headlong love affair with Rome. Each day brings new and horrifying news concerning the advancing dialogue of ecumenism.

At the high risk of being found repeating ourselves - we warn all who will listen; flee from this grave, growing and ever-changing apostasy!

Mike Claydon

The Emergent Church

Let us be aware of an important truth. One vital reason for the Bible being written is *'that ye may know that ye have eternal life'*, (1Jn.5:13). Sadly, we live in an age where even the concept of 'knowing' is itself under attack. You will be asked: 'With so many differing groups all using the Bible, how do you even know what it really means?' This doubt concerning the true meaning of God's Word in Holy Scripture is increasingly being raised by pastors from within the Emergent Church Movement. Although we might not like hearing about it (and believe us we'd love to see this movement go away), the Emergent Church is undoubtedly coming to a church near you as more and more Evangelical pastors come under mounting pressure to go with the flow and increase numbers in their churches. Long ago we in Australia, and elsewhere, surrendered the idea that the concept of church, as taught in the New Testament, is primarily for the edification of believers.

Now, thanks to the proliferation of the *'Purpose Driven Life'*, which has twisted this process and reversed it, more and more churches have become so worldly that unbelievers have been flocking to them. The local pastor is now under tremendous pressure to enlarge his church or to be outcast. It is for this reason that many are now beginning to 'reach out' to teens and young adults using entertainment techniques taught in the developing cult of the Emergent Church Movement.

American pastor and author, Rob Bell, writes giving a clue where his fast growing congregation are led astray: *'I was in an intense meeting with our church leaders in which we were discussing several passages in the Bible. One of the leaders was sharing her journey in trying to understand what the Bible teaches about the issue at hand and she said 'I've spent a great deal of time recently studying this issue. I've read what the people on both sides of the issue say, I've read the scholars and the theologians and all sorts of others on this subject. But then, in the end, I decided to get back to the Bible and just take it for what it really says'. Now please understand that this way of thinking is prevalent in a lot of Christian churches...but this view of the Bible is warped and toxic, to say the least...The assumption is that there is a way to read the Bible that is agenda - and perspective - free...This perspective is claiming that a person can simply read the Bible and do what it says - unaffected by any outside influences...When you hear people say they are just going to tell you what the Bible means, it is not true. They are telling you what they think it means'*.

Now, if that appears to be somewhat out of kilter with your view of the study of scripture - then maybe the Holy Spirit is telling you something? This is the Holy Spirit that has promised to guide us into all truth - apparently that is— until we reached the twenty-first century? In our hip, post-modern western world, we have simply dismissed His function as irrelevant now that we've come to the conclusion that there's no such thing as an absolute truth in the Bible for us to be guided into anyway!

When we hear that no one can really know 'what the Bible means' it is actually a statement that we are expected to believe is true. However, if we can't know for certain what is true in the Bible to begin with, then it also follows that we can't really know if this postmodern philosophy itself is true. This is therefore an infantile way of viewing Holy Writ. We

don't like what God has said. God has revealed the truth about our human nature. It doesn't sit well with us. So we just deny the concept of the fall and all its consequences. It is expedient to the task to hand.

The genuine Christian knows that we can't dismiss the concept of truth as easily as that. But those who champion the philosophy of postmodernism in the Emergent Church would have us do so. Biblically we can do away with this false teaching of theirs once and for all. The Apostle John quotes Jesus as asking God the Father to do something very important for His followers - 'Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth', (Jn.17:17). This would not be possible for God to do if there was no way to know what this truth was to begin with. We must also remember that earlier in John's Gospel the Master tells us a few other essential things pursuant to our discussion of the concept of knowing the truth of the absolutes found in Holy Scripture. In John 14:6 Jesus explains to us that *'I Am...the Truth'* and then our Lord says *'he that hath seen me hath seen the Father...I am in the Father, and the Father in me. The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself...'*, (vs.9,10).

It is quite obvious from this that Jesus DOES speak the truth! When He said: *'And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth...But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you'* (Jn.14:16-26) - you can practically guarantee He meant it!

And since these arguments simply cannot successfully be refuted using Scripture, the only recourse left for those who wish to deny this orthodox Biblical teaching is to attempt to circumvent the text of the Bible itself and/or try to get us to doubt the so-called 'western' concept of logic. As if our Creator hadn't revealed His Own logical nature when He established this universe with laws that operate consistently!

The doctrine holds that the Holy Spirit controls the regenerate believer. He is the Spirit of God the Father. Furthermore, we are told that if you are not possessed by the Spirit of the triune God - you are none of His. You are not a member of the Body of Christ in the first place. This is the logical conclusion we arrive at if we are reading scripture in context. Yet the Emergent Church movement has undermined this truth at its very base. By urging its adherents to arrive at their own imaginary interpretation of the text they have jumped the tracks. Satan has sown confusion here by casting doubt on the scriptures and how they were received and written. His suggestion is that they were 'oral traditions' allegedly passed around for at least a generation before being committed to writing - and therefore are not to be taken literally.

This doubt about understanding the truth contained in the Bible is already beginning to sneak its way into the mainstream Evangelical church, but this skepticism is already well entrenched within the Emergent Church. One of the luminaries of this movement, Brian McLaren, considers himself to be a 'post modernist' and free from any constraints of propositional truthfulness. He merely wants the Christian community to embrace a pluriform understanding of truth as a way out of doctrinal conflict and impasse.

The Bible, McLaren argues, is intended to equip God's

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people for good works. He rejects words such as authority, inerrancy, and infallibility as unnecessary and distracting. In a previous work, McLaren had argued that the Bible is 'a unique collection of literary artifacts that together support the telling of an amazing and essential story'.

What is being eradicated within the Church is the understanding that no matter how logical and impressive we like to try and present ourselves as scholars, it is only through God the Holy Spirit that we can truly know and understand what these Biblical texts that He inspired actually say. What this means regarding the writings of the New Testament is this: The length of time that these teachings may have remained in an oral fashion is irrelevant, because Christ has just informed us that God the Holy Spirit would teach those who would go on to write these documents, all things – not some, but all things. And furthermore, He would remind them of everything Jesus taught them.

False teachers like Rob Bell and Brian McLaren within the burgeoning cult of the Emergent Church are not going to go away. The Emergent movement represents a significant

challenge to biblical Christianity. Unwilling to affirm that the Bible contains propositional truths that form the framework for Christian belief, this movement argues that we can have Christian symbolism and substance without those thorny questions of truthfulness that have so vexed the modern mind - and repelled the unbelieving. When it comes to issues such as the exclusivity of the gospel, the identity of Jesus Christ as both fully human and fully divine, the authoritative character of Scripture as written revelation, and the clear teachings of Scripture concerning issues such as homosexuality, this movement simply refuses to answer the questions.

To flee from such teachings is the correct action to take. These heresies may begin in stealth only to explode like wildfire as the Holy Spirit first grieves - then leaves. Church growth mania has assumed gargantuan proportions, and is engulfing once sound assemblies here in Australia and worldwide. It is high time to question our pastors and leaders who propose the methodology of this Emergent Church - and have them attempt to substantiate it's claims from scripture.

Mike Claydon

Danger of Christian Complacency

'The times require distinct and decided views of Christian doctrine. I cannot withhold my conviction that the professing Church is as much damaged by laxity about matters of doctrine within, as it is by sceptics and unbelievers without. Myriads of professing Christians nowadays seem utterly unable to distinguish things that differ. Like people afflicted with colour-blindness, they are incapable of discerning what is true and what is false, what is sound and what is unsound. If a preacher of religion is only clever and eloquent and earnest, they appear to think he is all right, however strange and heterogenous his sermons may be. They are destitute of spiritual sense, apparently, and cannot detect error. The only positive thing about them is that they dislike distinctiveness and think that all extreme and decided positive views are very naughty and very wrong!'

These people live in a kind of mist or fog. They see nothing clearly, and do not know what they believe. They have not made up their minds about any great point in the Gospel, and seem content to be honorary members of all schools of thought. For their lives they could not tell you what they think is truth about Justification, or Regeneration, or Sanctification, or our Lord's Supper, or Baptism, or faith or conversion, or inspiration, or the future state. They are eaten up with a morbid dread of controversy...they live on undecided; and too often undecided they drift down to the grave, without comfort...and, I am afraid, also without hope.

The explanation of this boneless, nerveless, jellyfish condition of soul is not difficult to find. To begin with, the heart of man is naturally in the dark about religion - has no intuitive sense of truth - and really needs instruction and illumination. Besides this, the natural heart in most men hates exertion in religion, and cordially dislikes patient, painstaking inquiry. Above all, the natural heart generally likes praise of others, shrinks from collision, and loves to be thought charitable and liberal. The whole result is that a kind of broad religious 'agnosticism' just suits an immense number of people, and specially suits young persons. They are content to shovel aside all disputed points as rubbish, and if you

charge them with indecision, they will tell you: 'I do not pretend to understand controversy; I decline to examine controversial points. I dare say it is all the same in the long run'...

Now I do beseech all to beware of this undecided state of mind in religion. This is a pestilence, which walketh in darkness, and a destruction that wasteth at noonday. It is a lazy, idle frame of soul, which, doubtless, saves man the trouble of thought and investigation but it is a frame of soul for which there is no warrant in the Bible. For your own soul's sake, dare to make up your mind what you believe, and dare to have positive, distinct views of truth and error. Never, never be afraid to hold decided doctrinal opinions; and let no fear of man and no morbid dread of being thought party-spirits, narrow, or controversial, make you rest contented with the bloodless, tasteless, colourless, lukewarm, undogmatic Christianity.

Mark what I say. If you want to do good in these times, you must throw aside indecision, and take up a distinct, sharply-cut, doctrinal religion. If you believe little, those to whom you try to do good will believe nothing. The victories of Christianity, wherever they have been won, have been won on distinct doctrinal theology; by telling...of Christ's vicarious death and sacrifice, by showing them Christ's substitution on the cross, and His precious blood; by teaching them of justification by faith, and bidding them believe on a crucified Saviour; by preaching ruin by sin, redemption by Christ, regeneration by the Spirit; by lifting up the brazen serpent; by telling men to look and live - to believe, repent, and be converted. This is the only teaching which for centuries God has honoured with success, and is honouring at the present day both at home and abroad.

It is doctrine - doctrine, clear ringing doctrine, which, like the ram's horns at Jericho, cast down the opposition of the devil and sin. Let us cling to decided doctrinal views, whatever some may please to say in these times, and we shall do well for ourselves, well for others, and well for Christ's cause in the World. J. C. Ryle

C.S.Lewis

'Once more the movie world is about to unveil its latest 'blockbuster' in the form of 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' that is based upon the writings of C S Lewis. As happened with Mel Gibson's 'The Passion', much of professing Christendom is viewing this as a tremendous opportunity for both heralding the gospel and for evangelising the lost and so it is clear that they appear to have learned nothing from their similar but misplaced confidence where 'The Passion' was concerned...'

(Take Heed Ministries - Belfast, Northern Ireland)

'Christianity Today' magazine once listed some 'weaknesses' in Lewis's theology: 'His hospitality towards baptismal regeneration, his non-innerrantist views on Biblical inspiration, his affirmation of 'purgatory' and possible salvation of unsaved people who have left the earth'. Martyn Lloyd Jones doubted whether Lewis was a Christian. Lewis is well received by Mormons...Lewis's theology is fatally flawed'.

(Calvary Contender, 15/8/98)

A Quote from C.S.Lewis: *'Of course I pray for the dead...only the most compulsive theological case against it would deter...And I hardly know how the rest of my prayers would survive if those for the dead were forbidden. At our age the majority of those we love best are dead. What sort of intercourse with God could I have if what I love best were unmentionable to Him? On the traditional Protestant view, all the dead are damned or saved. If they are damned, prayer for them is useless. If they are saved, it is equally useless...'*

I believe in Purgatory...Our souls demand Purgatory, don't they? Would it not break the heart if God said to us 'It is true, my son, that your breath smells and your rags drip with mud and slime, but we are charitable here and no one

will upbraid you with these things, nor draw away from you. Enter into the joy'. Should we not reply 'With submission sir, and if there is no objection, I'd rather be cleaned first'. I assume that the process of purification will normally involve suffering...But I don't think suffering is the purpose of the purgation...My favourite image of this comes from the dentist's chair. I hope that when the tooth of life is drawn [death] and when I am coming round [entering eternity] a voice will say, 'Rinse your mouth out with this'. This will be Purgatory. The rinsing may take longer than I can now imagine. The taste of this may be more fiery and astringent...'

(C.S.Lewis, *Letters To Malcom: Chiefly on Prayer*, Ch.20, Paragraphs 7-10, P.108-109)

Editors Comments: *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' is making a resurgence amongst churches. Pastors are being asked to use this material to preach the Gospel. The 'lion' is supposed to be Jesus Christ. But one must ask - do we really need such types, magic, and spiritism to preach the simple Gospel? Are we 'ashamed of the gospel' or is it still the 'power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth', (Rom.1:16)? The film itself simply does not preach the gospel. It is not the death, burial and resurrection of the person of Jesus Christ for us sinners! Douglas Gresham, Lewis's stepson, said recently: 'Churches in Britain and America are promoting the film as a Christian film, but its not...and the Narnia books aren't Christian novels'.*

As for the doctrine of Purgatory: *it was invented in AD600 (Pope Gregory The Great) and officially defined in 1439. It teaches that sin is purged in this 'Purgatory' before entering Heaven. This contradicts many Scriptures (Matt.25:46; Mk.16:16; Lk.16:19-31; Rom.8:1; 2Cor 5:8) as well as negating the 'finished' work of Jesus on the cross of Calvary, (Jn.19:30).*

'Hillsong a Different Hymn Sheet'

The following secular report on Hillsong is revealing:
(Reporter Andrew West):

'Josh Bonnet is a thirty one year old high tech wiz with fashionably tousled black hair and a goatee, who runs the marketing operation for Sydney's 18,000 strong Pentecostal Hillsong Church...I sat in a workshop at Hillsongs annual convention, where Bonnet explained the finer points of web page design and neighborhood outreach...'

Hillsong, an Assemblies of God Church headquartered in Sydney's northwestern suburbs has been in the news...up to 40,000 people from across Australia and the world pass through the doors of its five day convention. The convention is a blend of practical workshops on congregational-building...evangelism and Christian rock concerts.

...Most people attending, and everyone appearing at the conference, looked irredeemably 'hip'. The young Asian woman in front of me in Bonnets workshop actually wore a clinging, rather revealing outfit as did many of her fellow delegates...she nodded approvingly as Bonnet said he would happily borrow from Kylie Minogue's latest CD cover for ideas on how to promote Hillsong's Darlene Zschech, the music pastor whose Christian rock CD's have sold more than five million copies worldwide.

During an address to the conference [Pastor] Houston

told the crowd, 'I love the way young people in our church are released to be young people. They are cheeky and radical and have a glint in their eye'.

...Two politicians spoke, Federal Treasurer Peter Costello and N.S.W. premier Bob Carr; but the loudest receptions were reserved for visiting evangelists from the US and Germany...John Maxwell, Joyce Meyer and Reinhard Bonnke.

A men only workshop did hear about how men need to control their sex drive and that masturbation is the first step to sexual dysfunction, but most of the presentations were explicitly non-political and not especially heavy on theology either. Instead they intended to be of the motivational, self help, 'Seven Habits of Highly Effective People' type, as easily applicable to those building an environmental organization as to a church.

Monash University sociologist and Anglican priest Gary Bouma suggests...'One thing they are not is 'Protestant'. Where worship is stripped to its essentials if anything they are like the Catholic Church centuries ago when it started laying on the grand Mass. The mist from the dry ice that floats above the stage is the 21st century incense, the water sculpture the high altar, the spiky haired rock bands, the modern monastic choir'.

(Extracted from the *Weekend Australian*, 9/10 July 2005)

Swimming Upstream - by R. C. Sproul

I have a friend who plays the stockmarket. Not having the courage to do so myself I like to play armchair investor and talk with her about it. The extent of my wisdom isn't much because my counsel usually comes down to this simple maxim: 'When everyone is selling, buy. When everyone is buying, sell'. Of course the problem is knowing when everyone is doing what. And if she had followed my advice a few years ago and sold when everyone started buying, she would have missed quite a ride. There is wisdom in bucking conventional wisdom. What follows is an attempt to highlight how going against the flow rather than with it may be the practical way to plant a church. I offer the counsel cautiously because I am no arm chair church planter, but one who is just beginning.

The Church Growth Movement has done an outstanding job in capturing the right words. Is there anybody out there not wanting to attract unbelievers to the church of Christ? Is anybody seeking ways to grow the church impractically? The way the theory is couched just about guarantees its being accepted. The problem is the theory doesn't match the words.

Is the church growing because of the church growth movement? Yes and no. Individual churches are growing, but the church is standing still. Though church growth pundits desire to win the lost, usually what happens is they lose the found. Church growth techniques create a giant game of evangelical musical chairs.

The only seekers we tend to draw with seeker sensitive services are believers seeking a different church. By presenting a God who wants us to look at ourselves, who doesn't judge and command, who has a wonderful set of insights on how to have a happy, healthy marriage we put God's imprimatur on narcissism. There's nothing evangelicals like more than to be told that God loves them just the way they are.

But why aren't the seekers coming? They like pop music, so we give them pop music. They like stories, so we give them dramas. They like anonymity, so we let them have it. They like convenience, so we'll change their oil while they're here (this by the way is being done). The problem is that we can do none of these things as well as the world can. Why get up on a Sunday morning and drive somewhere to listen to pop music, when it's as close as my stereo? Why settle for cheesy scripts and sets when the television does it so much better? Why spend an hour getting an oil change when the pros can do it in ten minutes?

The problem with this practical approach, apart from being unbiblical, is that it's just not practical. In fact these two problems, that it's unbiblical and impractical are really one problem. The church growth pundits counsel us to look to the experts for wisdom. They then provide mountains of demographic, sociological, marketing factoids. The experts are Madison Avenue pagans who may know a great deal about how to sell toothpaste, but know nothing about proclaiming the Good News.

We have in the Bible an example of church growth which has never been paralleled. We have the first evangelistic sermon ever preached. And it is recorded for us by the Holy Spirit, without error. Consider how Peter practiced church growth. First the Spirit descended at Pentecost. Do you suppose the unbelievers there were comfortable, at ease, in this strange situation? Did Peter try to mould and control this work of the Spirit?

Peter instead pointed the crowd to the Old Testament, to

the prophecy of Joel. He gave evidence that God was with them. And then he gave a sermon. Did he preach on how Jesus could help you with your finances?; or how to raise your children's self-esteem? Peter's sermon went something like this: 'You all remember Jesus, the one with the miracles that you saw, the one God had sent, the one you crucified'. Wow. That was not very sensitive to the seekers!

Peter went on with more Old Testament evidence for Jesus. And then, perhaps for the sake of those seekers who arrived late to this service he concluded with the bombshell, '*Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ*', (Acts 2:36).

Peter would have found himself in hot water with the 'experts'. They would tell him that people come to church carrying guilt with them, adding to that guilt will only drive them away. But from a strictly practical point of view, if we want to be experimental about this we need to check the response. Luke tells us, '*Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*' Peter answered, '*Repent*'!

That, of course is not the message of choice among the experts. Perhaps they should seek healing for their wounded psyches. They needed affirmation after all. Peter instead pours on the guilt by telling the crowd, '*Be saved from this perverse generation*'. Judgment, judgment. Hasn't Peter heard that Jesus told us not to judge? Doesn't he know judgment drives them away?

Luke then tells us that 3,000 were saved.

The foolishness of the gospel routes the wisdom of the wise. Practically speaking the experts are failures. What they consider failure, on the other hand succeeds.

So what does this tell us about how to grow the church? It demonstrates that we're listening to the wrong experts. Even the pagans know it is wise to counter-program. When everyone is going one way, go the other way. You will stand out. You will be noticed. You will be effective. If there were such a thing as a 'seeker', someone who is looking for something, they would certainly not be looking for more of the same, or a bad imitation of what he is fleeing. When the world gives us mindless drivel, then is the time to say of the church, 'Come in here. You'll get none of the nonsense you're so tired of'. When the world is happy and light, we need to be somber, serious. When the gods of this world are distant, spineless, voiceless, reflections of our baser selves, our duty is to present the one true God, transcendent and immanent, omnipotent and tender, the God who speaks with all authority and wisdom. And we need to reflect not on the perverse generation from which we have been saved, but Him in whom we have been regenerated, Him whose image we are to be.

More importantly this reminds us whence comes true wisdom. Proverbs tells us '*There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death*', (Proverbs 14:12). Ours is a God which confounds the wise, one who tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Practically, if we want to grow churches, we too must begin with the fear of God. If we want wisdom we need to turn in His Word which tells us, '*But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him*', (James 1:50).

'Slain In The Spirit'?

Many Pentecostal ministries do their utmost to disown the heretical foundations, and endeavour to present as more 'moderate' streams of the movement. One of these would be the late Barry Smith's end-time ministry.

Their bi-monthly publication *'The Omega Times'* [Now published in Queensland by the *Reflections and Hay Family Trust* and edited by an Allan Rasmussen] December 2005 edition, features a letter to the editor. It reads:

'What is your take on the 'slain in the spirit' phenomenon that is sweeping through Charismatic churches. I can find no biblical evidence of this and the need for 'catchers' and am concerned that the church I belong to is falling into error. I have done much research on this and would value your opinion, thanks'. Maurice Smith - UK

The editor then attempts to answer this query, thus: [and in so doing continues the ongoing erroneous teaching emanating from these 'ministries']:

'Firstly, this phenomenon is not new and there is biblical evidence. God has used it to demonstrate divine authority (John 18:5-6 when Jesus invoked the name 'I AM' at his arrest). Divine blessing (2 Chronicles 2:5 when the glory fell). Divine call (Acts 9:4-5 where Saul on Damascus Road was instantly 'born again' proven by Saul saying 'Lord what will you have me do') and Divine appearing (Revelation 1:17 & the apostle John). In the 19th century Charles Finney's huge evangelical meetings were marked by the majority 'falling down' under the power. In the 1948 Latter Rain revival the hundred or so ministers who attended spent most of the first day prostrate under the Spirit's power as God dealt with each minister personally. Out of that some of the most dynamic ministries the world has seen emerged. Such as Oral Roberts, A.A.Allen, Tommy Hicks, T.L.Osborn and Kathryn Kuhlmann. Confusion has come through many speaking against this experience, even blaming it on demon power. All this can be swept away and dealt with by one statement, and here it is; 'THERE CAN NEVER BE A COUNTERFEIT UNLESS THERE FIRST IS A REAL' (sic) just as there can never be a lie unless truth exists first! With regard to catchers, I am personally very unhappy with that, but in today's litigious society it is an absolute necessity, because sooner or later, we will find someone suing a church because of physical injury, and that could be a planned set-up by ungodly people. Wisdom must be exercised. (Editor)

'Wisdom must be exercised' would have to be the only sensible teaching in this entire reply. To claim that those enemies who fell at the words of Jesus, or that Saul on the Damascus Road, or John on Patmos, were 'slain in the spirit' as is practiced in Pentecostal assemblies worldwide today, is an incorrect assumption of enormous proportion. And drastically diminishes the import of those occurrences.

They were sovereign, divine acts - not crazy phenomenon conjured up by the feeble will of man on Sunday mornings! Space does not allow for a complete refutation of this behaviour - but we have in the past written extensively on the subject (eg. the book *'Finding the Balance'* and *Diakrisis* Jan/Feb 2003). One of the earliest references to this phenomena dates back to 1770 when a Father Gassner would perform exorcisms on demon possessed people. During this ritual he would say *'...may I be given the sign of supernatural magic; I admonish this thing in the name of Jesus'*. The person would then fall in a trance and spasms would follow. Later a German

physician, Mesmer, considered to be the father of hypnotism, modified this technique to what is now called 'Mesmerism'. One thing is certain - the label 'slaying in the spirit' is not a term that supporters of this phenomenon should use, considering the nearest reference to this in the Bible is when Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead by God for lying to the Holy Spirit!

Today's phenomena of 'falling in the spirit' can be seen not only in hypnotism, but also the New Age movement. The dangers of hypnotism should not be doubted. Anything bypassing the mind must cause alarm and caution. Some have died from the effects of hypnotism.

In scripture when any one healed, laid hands on, or prayed for people, (Matt.19:13-15 and including Pentecost-Acts 2), there is no mention of people falling down. No doubt many of the supporters of this practice see the roots of this phenomena in past revival meetings, where people did fall to the ground. These were called 'faintings'. The fact is that this was not a common thing and it was also under the influence of some of the most powerful preaching in history. John Wesley, George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards wrote of people falling *on their faces in repentance* and crying out to God for mercy and salvation *from their sins*. This is a far cry from the falling *backwards* into altered states of consciousness! *Today's 'falling in the spirit' is not under the preaching of the Word but rather from laying on of hands*. Many of the revivalists such as Wesley stated clearly that many of the 'faintings' were, in their opinion, demonic or fleshly activity.

In all the scriptures where people fell to the ground, there is only one reference to them falling *backwards* - this is when the *enemies* of Jesus met Him at Gethsemane! In every other Scripture, (Dan.8:16-18; 10:7-11; Ezek.1:28; 2:1,2; 3:22-24; 2Chr.5:13,14; Matt.17:5-7; Rev.1;17-19; Jn.18:3-6; Acts 9:4; Acts 26:12-16), there is no evidence that any fell backwards. In six out of these eleven scriptures it clearly states that people fell *forward* on their faces. It must also be remembered that these accounts were rare and revealed a direct confrontation *with God, Jesus, or an angel*! They were human reactions to a divine encounter. Most were immediately told to 'stand up'! There was *no human agent mediating* and no 'catchers' as we see in Pentecostal/Charismatic churches today. They fell forwards and often with *a fear* for their lives! It was never an expected event but a sovereign act of God.

Using the old chestnut of a counterfeit first requiring the 'genuine' in an effort to validate the spectacle of people falling to the floor is simply ludicrous! On that basis any aberrant behaviour can be falsely labelled 'real'! 'Slaying in the spirit' is NOT a counterfeit of anything anyway! It stands alone as a Pentecostal invention!

To further confound and confuse the readers of this publication such demonstrable heretics as Allen, Roberts and Kuhlmann are put forward as testament to the correctness of the practice. Again, we've written extensively over the years exposing the errors taught by these apostates and false prophets, (Jan/Feb/2004, P.7; Jan/Feb/2001, P.4; Nov/97, P.2; March/99, P.6; Nov/99, P.5 July/Aug/2003, P.5)

We write to simply warn our readers of the unbiblical teachings in publications such as this. It's dangerous material and should be avoided at all costs...and quite a saving can be had...they require an annual subscription fee of \$A 45!

Mike Claydon & Terry Arnold

Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear Mike, after reading your article on Jack Van Impe [Diakrisis Nov/Dec 2005, P.4] which was given to me, I asked Dr. Van Impe for verification of his stand and this is his reply.

(N.T., Australia)

Reply From: Jack Van Impe Ministries, December 18, 2005 **[Our editors' reply in brackets and bold]**

Subject: Catholicism

'Concerning your question about Catholicism, I have been the most outspoken critic of the Catholic Church. [Could it have been because the Roman Catholic religion is full of false teachings added to Scripture? So what happened to Van Impe here that he would deny all the false teaching he once exposed in the RC religion?] Then, after being the evangelist for the World Congress of Fundamentalists held in Scotland and hearing Catholics called Papist Rats repeatedly in all the sermons, I felt the hatred that dripped from the lips of these ministers. [We question this severely. We would like to see proof of this 'repeatedly in all the sermons'? Jack has a reputation for being a tad on the side of exaggeration? We have been involved in evangelism to thousands of Roman Catholics and been involved in numerous seminars, etc. Never even once have we ever heard Catholics called such names. But if this did happen then do we depart from the message to Catholics because the methods were wrong? How subjective is this?] I was so hurt spiritually by this attitude that I told God I would personally change my ways. [And renounce what was once 'truth'? - because ministers supposedly were nasty? Again, where is the objective truth here to renounce what one taught against Catholicism!]

Today I preach truth wherever I find it. Scores of Catholics write to tell me they have received Christ because I show love to them where others do not. [Have they received the True Christ though? He died once - Rome's Christ dies daily! The difference is stark....And they don't just receive Christ because someone shows 'love' to them?]

You cannot appreciate what I am saying unless you get my new video which proves that over one hundred thousand Protestants were put to death by other Protestants because they were immersed, [What does this prove though?; what has this got to do with the doctrines of the false RC religion?] or because they proclaimed the thousand year reign of Christ on earth. Presently, four Protestant denominations are proclaiming the greatest error and lie ever in the history of Christendom, [What is this 'greatest error and lie in history'? I guess one has to buy Van Impes videos?] whereas the Catholic Church is going back to its roots about the one thousand year reign of Christ on earth. [The RC church does not believe in a literal 1,000 reign of Christ. So what are its 'roots'?]

This is not a matter of me going back into Catholicism [But yes it is! This is exactly what the article was about. Nothing Van Impe says here contradicts the article in Diakrisis Nov/Dec 2005] but simply warning the world that the term Protestant is not a magic word that does away with the error many of them proclaim. [We would agree with this] I hope this helps you understand my position. [No, it leaves many questions unanswered and does not explain why Van Impe once preached against Catholicism and now glorifies it. The RC religion has not changed! So who has?] The video, The Rapture: Hope or Hoax will shock you. [Jack has always been into 'shocking' people. It sells materials quite well.

Jack has shown his true colours I think even in this e-mail. A great shame, because thousands of Roman Catholics are still going to Hell with a false gospel that is diametrically opposed to the Biblical Gospel. The RC religion still has Mary as a co-mediator; still sacrifices Jesus daily on their altars; still teaches Mary can lead someone to Christ; still curses the doctrine of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ (Rom.4)...the list goes on...Jack Van Impe once knew these were errors but now has been given over to subjective and emotional reasoning?]

Rick Warren and the 'New Reformation'

(Rick Warren at his appearance before the Pew Forum in May 2005 predicting a 'New Reformation' or a 'Third Great Awakening' for America):

'You know, 500 years ago, the first Reformation with Luther and then Calvin, was about beliefs. I think a new Reformation is going to be about behaviour.

The first Reformation was about creeds; I think this one will be about deeds...The first Reformation actually split Christianity into dozens and then hundreds of different segments. I think this one is actually going to bring them together.

Now, you're never going to get Christians, of all their stripes and varieties, to agree on all of the different doctrinal disputes and things like that, but what I am seeing them agree on are the purposes of the church...

Last week I spoke to 4,000 pastors at my church who came from over 100 denominations in over 50 countries. Now, that's widespread. We had Catholic priests, we had

Pentecostal ministers, we had Lutheran bishops, we had Anglican bishops, we had Baptist preachers. They're all there together and you know what? I'd never get them to agree on communion or baptism or a bunch of stuff like that, but I could get them to agree on what the church should be doing in the world'.

Editors comments: For years we have been warning of this man's teaching that has ushered in a new humanistic theology on Church Growth. His methods in 'dividing the word of truth' and his use of scriptures to suit his doctrines have been subtle and deceptive. However, we do believe we are now seeing Rick Warren becoming more open in his rejection of foundational truths and embracing of ecumenical deceptions. Consider this recent statement by Rick: *'I see absolutely zero reason in separating my fellowship from anybody'*. Let the reader compare the above statement with a study of 2Cor.6:14 and Eph. 5:11.

Your Comments and Questions

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

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Dear Terry, You don't know me...but I strongly agree with your stand against the 'Charismatic Movement'. My wife and I have left two former Baptist churches after attending them for about nine years each, because they both went / are going Pentecostal. We now go to the...

The Charismatic Movement has for a while been changing direction, but still remains badly deceived. The current trend is a little away from 'gifts', but is now going further towards 'worship', with their greatest tool being the Contemporary 'Christian' Music.

Therefore, there is an excellent video which I would like to recommend to you, which exposes much about the wrong 'music', and in particular, the 'Contemporary Christian Music'. The video is called 'Pop Goes The Music' by Dr Frank Garlock. It is available from Majesty Music Inc, PO Box 6524 Greenville, SC 29606, USA. Phone 1-800-334-1071. (Make sure to ask for PAL format). There are three messages on the video, with the last one concentrating on the Contemporary Christian Music.

(I.S., Bris., Qld)

Dear Bro.Terry, I want to say a big thank you for 'Diakrisis' mag. I've been a regular subscriber since two years ago. Yes, I enjoyed reading and studying it. As you know I am a pastor and I found your ministry of teaching very helpful and accurate. Keep up the good work. We are upholding you in prayer. The Lord be with you!

(Pastor E.N., Philippines)

Dear Terry,...I found it encouraging to talk with you the other day...

(M.V., NSW)

Prayer Points

- Please pray for our voluntary helpers.
- Continue to pray for Terry as he plans to travel again this year, beginning in Sth. Aust. in April.

Terry, thankyou for the newsletter. You can add to the list of movements and churches that have swallowed the Rick Warren phenomena, the Brethren Assemblies. Since that is my background, I am so shocked that so many of those that I know have, and are doing the studies. It breaks my heart and I have a great burden upon my heart that if the Lord does not come, I fear for the generation of my grandchildren.

I have commenced some messages on the need to recapture convictions from God's word regarding the great doctrines/principles of the gospel and sound teaching....

We are living in times like Isaac experienced when he had to redig the wells of his father, that the Philistines had filled in. These wells provided much refreshment and sustained life, and many of God's people around are famished for life giving water and refreshment from God's word. Some are being confused because of what they hear being taught...

Your newsletter is timely and I have recommended some contact you and view the newsletter. May the Lord strengthen your hands.

(Pastor G.E., Gympie, Qld.)

Dear Brethren in Christ Jesus our Lord at 'Diakrisis'...I will take this opportunity to thank the team for 'Diakrisis' - it is truly a gift from God, and a labour of love on your part. I cannot stress enough the joy with which I receive every new issue, although some of the information contained therein is not joyful, but hardly a surprise in these days of rampant apostasy within the 'professing church'...I have unfortunately not kept my issues of 'Diakrisis' when I moved residence...I desperately want to obtain all back issues...keep up the wonderful work for our sake, and for God. Yours in Jesus Christ,

(P.C., Byron Bay, NSW)

Dear Terry, Praise the Lord for your ministry which forms a vital part of the whole body (1 Cor.12). There is an alarming lack of discernment even among mature Christians who appear quite blind where the ecumenical push is suppressing the truth. Peter exhorted the elders to shepherd the flock of God (1Pet.5) but sadly we have too many elders acting like hirelings. It is pleasing to note you often mention Sola Scriptura. May He continue to bless the work, In his service,

(P.S., Victor harbour, SA)

Hello, I was introduced to your ministry by a friend of mine and in finding your newsletters extremely interesting and enlightening, I would very much appreciate being added to the mailing list...

(S.N., Qld.)

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