



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 Comments

In the September/October editorial Mike Claydon wrote of the 'New tolerance', in which we are being encouraged to not only tolerate other beliefs but also accept them as valid and amoral. Traditional 'Tolerance' used to distinguish between the person and the belief. Now 'all truths are equal' and if we question any we are supposedly 'intolerant' of the persons themselves.

Similarly, the ecumenical movement has opened its arms to nearly every system including those holding to 'another gospel'. Few realise that many churches that would claim to be Bible believing, have a gospel that is diametrically opposed to that of the Roman Catholic system. Even a shallow reading of the teachings of the Roman Catholic religion will show that they simply do not teach that the simple Biblical Gospel of faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ as a substitute for our sins, will alone save the human soul. Instead they openly *add* sacraments, a continuing sacrifice, other mediators (Mary) and various works that affect the salvation of a man's soul. Yet according to Scripture there is only one true Gospel.

Not so many decades ago one could have wondered how the religions of the world could unite, having salvation systems that oppose each other. Yet, now we see this happening before our very eyes! *The emotive glue that helps bring this together is the 'new tolerance'*. The method is to 'find the things that unite'...and forget about the things that differ. But sadly the things that 'differ' are often the very fundamental doctrines of the faith once delivered!

This 'new tolerance' extends to other facets of church life. We tolerate the fashions of the world and its methods and marketing strategies. We tolerate carnal behaviour in churches that years ago would have brought discipline - today it is unloving to 'discipline' Christians who cause offence, sin and trouble in the Church body. We tolerate false prophets and false teachers who bring public shame to the Christian church. We tolerate the music of the world in the church - music that sounds like, looks like, and appeals to the flesh like, that of the world. We tolerate organisations such as 'Hillsong' who make this music and churn out leaders who induce rebellion in the hearts of our young and not so young...and worse, we tolerate the teaching behind the music and wonder why many of the leaders in it have fallen in shameful sin.

We live in an age of 'tolerance'. It is no longer 'loving' to be 'intolerant' in many of these things. It is just not popular to swim against the tide. It is easier to stand for nothing or be impaled on the fence of compromise.

People hate controversy. But a reading of the early church leaders and the greats down through the centuries show that any greatness was within the very act of contending for the faith. Many of them were actually quite 'intolerant' of Roman Catholicism, false ecumenism, and the fashions of the age (Rom.12:2). They were no strangers to 'controversy' and many stood in quite lonely places at various times in their lives.

But it was because of these strong voices that the tide of apostasy was often *held back*. Today, there are so few of these men, and so apostasy is rampant.

Beloved, the scriptures still cry out to '*earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints*', (Jude 3).

Terry Arnold

Islam - Who Has To Apologize?

By Jan Willem Van der Hoeven (Director *International Christian Zionist Centre*)

You want an apology? I and many with me are waiting for an apology from you! You want Pope Benedict to apologize for having quoted a Byzantine Emperor for saying there is something inherently evil in the teachings of Islam in regard to Jihad and Violence. You feel hurt and incensed that these words are an attack upon your faith and prophet.

But what about you again and again attacking the West and Israel, calling the U.S. the big Satan and Israel the small Satan, and daring to call, (openly basing yourself on the teachings of the Quran), Jews and Christians pigs and monkeys! And you want the West to apologize for a Danish cartoon or a quote from the Pope when we have to suffer, not only your violent words but, what is far more serious, your violent acts of war and terror. It is not enough that Mohammed in his comparatively short lifetime waged more than forty wars - sanctified Jihad and violence - and butchered thousands of Christians and Christian communities and Jews in order to spread the teachings of Islam.

Do you now have to show the world, by burning churches and murdering Christians from the Philippines to the hundreds of thousands of Sudanese, from Indonesia to Pakistan - that you are apparently still not a peaceful religion that believes in a merciful God? Not to speak of all the scorn, hatred and indiscriminate killings you heap upon God's own people, the Jews, now back in the land that our God, the only true God, promised them as an everlasting possession.

And you make fun of this, our sincerely held belief, believed by millions of Jews and Christians - calling us pigs and monkeys; but giving yourself in the meantime the right to burn synagogues as you did in Gush Katif and churches from Nablus to Nigeria because we hurt your religious sensitivity.

It is to us that you owe an apology - and we should finally hear that you are sorry to have blasphemed our faiths, caused untold sufferings, rivers of tears through your Allah-inspired acts of inhumane terror, from Munich to the towers in New York, from the Metro in Madrid to the Tube in London, from the thousands Christians in Sudan to the thousands of Jews in Israel, from the children in Ma'alot to the murdered children in Breslan, Chechnya, from the synagogues in Istanbul to the synagogues in Paris.

We want an apology. You claim Islam is really a peaceful religion and Allah all merciful. Then where is that peace

and that mercy in the words I just heard from Ibrahim Mudeiris, one of the Imams of the Palestinian Authority who was caught in a recording and translated by Palestinian Media Watch?: *'Israel is a cancer spreading through the body of the Islamic nation'*, he raged *'And...the Jews are a virus resembling AIDS, from which the entire world suffers'*. *'You will find that the Jews were behind all the civil strife in this world. The Jews are behind the suffering of the nations...It was the Jews who provoked Nazism to wage war against the entire world...We have ruled the world before, and by Allah, the day will come when we will rule the entire world again. The day will come when we will rule America. The day will come when we will rule Britain and the entire world - except for the Jews. The Jews will not enjoy a life of tranquillity under our rule, because they are treacherous by nature, as they have been throughout history. The day will come when everything will be relieved of the Jews - even the stones and trees which were harmed by them. Listen to the Prophet Muhammad, who tells you about the evil end that awaits Jews. The stones and trees will want the Muslims to finish off every Jew.'*

And what about the words of Hamed Al-Tamimi, the director of the so-called Palestinian Authority's Inter Religion Dialogue Department, who recently unleashed a vicious attack on Christian Zionists for *'carrying out their criminal activities against the Palestinian issue and the Palestinian people'*. *'The Zionist-Christian motivation, in addition to imperialist motivation, was behind the cursed Balfour Declaration - Balfour and Prime Minister Lloyd George were Christian Zionists...and the truth is we should not deny [that] these Crusader motivations stand [today] behind the British and American policy in Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, and other Arab and Muslim countries'*. *'They [Christian Zionists] are a group who adopted Satan as God who drives their crazy nature. They have praised depravity and cursed virtue, they have turned the moral scale upside down and have reached [a point] in which forgery, deception, and lying, have turned into descriptions of world policy, which is led by the Zionism on both its branches - the Jewish and the Christian'*.

And you still want an apology from us? We want one from you!

(From *'Apostasy Alert'*, Oct/2006)

Chronology of Christianity

by R.C.Wetzel *'A Chronology Of Biblical Christianity'*

[Continued from past editions of Diakrisis. To be continued]

1584 BC Levi died at age 137

1545 Aaron was born to Amram and Jochebed

1542 Moses was born to Amram and Jochebed

1520 The cities of Troy and Corinth were founded

1502 Moses was driven from Egypt

1500 Caleb was born to Jephunneh of Judah

1483 Gershon and Eliezer were born to Moses and Zipporah

1482 Joshua was born to Nun of Ephraim

1462 The year of Israel's Exodus from Egypt. The Ten Commandments were given from Mt. Sinai.

1461 The Tabernacle first reared up in the Wilderness.

Israel battled Amalekites. Israel departed Sinai, arrived at Kadesh-Barnea.

1460 Israel turned into the Wilderness to wander 38 years

1423 Miriam and Aaron died. Moses died on Mt. Pisgah at age 120. The 'Pentateuch' called 'The Books of Moses' and 'The Law' was written by Moses prior to his death. The events of 'Genesis' are from 3975-1462 B.C.; 'Exodus' 1462-1460 B.C.; 'Leviticus' 1462 B.C.; 'Numbers' 1461 B.C.; 'Deuteronomy' 1423B.C.

1422 Joshua led Israel across Jordan into Canaan. Jericho destroyed. Joseph's bones buried at Shechem.

1415 Joshua divided land of Canaan at Shiloh

Mormonism and Charles Finney...

The whole foundation of Mormonism rests on one vision supposedly received by founder Joseph Smith. Mormon leaders themselves have admitted that if the original vision by Joseph Smith is false then the whole system of Mormonism is equally false.

Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon Church, had a vision of divine beings which lead him to the understanding of the necessity to have a new restored Gospel. However, there are several differing accounts of the vision. Which vision would we accept? Several discrepancies have raised serious concerns for Mormon leaders.

In 1832 Smith recorded seeing a pillar of fire that rested upon him and the person of 'christ' announced that his sins were forgiven him. He was told that all religions were in error and he was to begin a new one. The problem with this account is that he claimed to be 16 years of age at the time which means that the vision was not recorded until twelve years later. In this account there was no mention of other divine beings such as angels or any discussion of other religions or the mention of starting a new one, (these things are all part of later accounts of the same vision).

In 1835 Smith wrote a second account of the first vision stating he was 14 years of age, instead of the original 16 years of age. And added was another divine being appearing with 'christ'.

Yet in 1835, Smith's secretary Oliver Cowdery, mentioned only one angel and no mention of 'christ'.

22 years later the Mormon newspaper mentioned two

divine beings appearing to Smith. This is the current version found in most teachings of Mormonism.

An interesting comparison can be found in the conversion of Charles Finney, Christian revivalist and preacher of that time. Finney preached in the same area where Smith lived, Palmyra.

By comparing the 'conversion' stories of these two men it is interesting that there are many similarities. Could Joseph Smith have copied from Finney? Finney's testimony was well known and printed in many papers at the time. Finney was a controversial figure because of his 'new measures' and emotional tactics used to get people to make 'decisions' at revival and evangelistic meetings.

Both Finney and Smith wrote and spoke of how they were distressed over the state of the denominations. Both went to a grove to pray. Both saw a bright light. Both claimed to have seen the Lord Jesus. Both were 'filled with the Holy Spirit'. Both experienced sensations including those of 'love and joy'. Both heard someone come upon them and got up to see who it was.

Why did Joseph Smith wait 12 years to write and publish his vision? Why do the accounts after that differ and contradict each other? Why did those close to him, including his mother, fail to record anything in their diaries at the time of the supposed vision?

Could Joseph Smith have borrowed from Charles Finney ...and the rest is history?

Terry Arnold

'Understanding The Times' Conferences

Through our *Israel Report* ministry we are now offering our readers the CD's and Audio Tapes of these amazing prophetic conferences held in the U.S. each year, organised by Jan Markell of Olive Tree Ministries,

<http://www.olivetreeviews.org/>

Tape and CD sets are professionally packed and make excellent gifts. *Olive Tree Ministries* does not have the staff facilities to fill international orders - so these products are now available here in Australasia for the first time.

Understanding The Times: 2006 Six tapes or CD's - \$39.95 including GST and postage; Featured this year were Joseph Farah, editor of 'World Net Daily'; prophecy scholar Dr. David Reagan; and discernment leader Roger Oakland on experiential Christianity and Emergent Church. Also, many Q & A sessions are included. To learn more about the speakers, visit their Web sites: www.wnd.com, www.lamblion.com, and www.understandthetimes.org.

Evidences for the End Times: Autumn 2005 Six tapes or CDs - \$39.95 including GST and postage; Main conference speaker Hal Lindsey brought '*The Late-Great Planet Earth*' up to date in 2005 with two hours of teaching and two hours of Q & A. Hal's communication was the best many have heard from him. The Q & A brought out two-dozen other issues related to eschatology and false teachings today. Roger Oakland and Brian Flynn had teaching sessions on Saturday afternoon, once each. Issues covered included

emphasis on the coming one-world religion via contemplative prayer, Christian Yoga, Mary for Protestants movement, Emerging Church, 'seeker-sensitive/church growth movement', experience over sound doctrine and preaching, mysticism in the church, the troubling apparitions of Mary, and more. Oakland heads '*Understand the Times*', www.understandthetimes.org and Flynn is a former 'New Age' medium. His book is '*Running Against the Wind: The Transformation of a New Age Medium and His Warning to the Church*'.

Understanding the Times: Spring 2005; Six tapes or CDs - \$39.95 including GST and postage; Featuring Gary Bauer, and former PLO terrorist Walid Shoebat. Topics vary from Walid's testimony, his views on Islam in prophecy, the war on terror, Washington insights from Gary Bauer, a message on today's lack of discernment and rise of strong delusion, and many Q & A sessions. Our most popular conference with 1,600 in attendance from five states and Canada. Information to help you discern the times and a reminder of the lateness of the hour.

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Catholics, Christians and ‘Rain Prayer’

In November, Queensland [Australia], Roman Catholics and Christian denominations united with the state’s Premier Peter Beattie...in a common prayer to break the drought that still has the state at crisis point.

Catholic Archbishop John Bathersby joined the Queensland Premier and other heads of Christian churches in a launch of ‘*Water: a Time For Prayer*’ at a morning prayer service at St John’s Anglican Cathedral.

According to the campaign’s website, hosted by the Brisbane archdiocese, the week of prayer was ‘*responding to the dire need for rain, to the suffering of all those who are drought affected and to the urgent need to play our part in caring for our natural environment...Prayer services will take place in churches across the state...*’

A common prayer titled, ‘*We pray together across Queensland*’, was released for the occasion. In a letter to Christian communities across the state, the heads of Churches said the situation had reached crisis point. The letter was signed by heads of 10 Christian churches.’

(*Apostasy Alert*, Nov/2006)

Editors Comments: *Could it be that Australia is in drought because the nation is spiritually in drought? Many would blame the secular realm for this but the real reason is found in the state of the church itself! Is there proof of this in Scripture? Yes! The principle for this is found in the Old Testament: God gives the rain, (Job 5:10; Is.43:20; Lev.26:3). God took rain away from Israel when they did not keep His word, (Dt.11:13-17); 1Kngs.8:35,36; Amos 4:7). Rain occurred in many great revivals, (Ezra 10:9) and was a sign of blessing, (Is.44:3:3).*

Ecumenical gatherings like the above are hypocrisy in the sight of God. Can you imagine God approving of Israel joining with other nations and unbelievers in prayer for rain? Recently I was given a flyer sent out by the Church of Christ with a prayer written by a Roman Catholic priest and giving the website of the Sydney Catholic Diocese. Considering I was saved out of the Roman Catholic system and now believe a Gospel that diametrically opposes the Roman Catholic system of salvation, why would I ever want to join hands with, in defiance of Scripture, and pray with them for rain? ...And is God happy with unions between churches and unbelieving politicians?

Ted Haggard

Ted Haggard, the leader of the 30-million-member National Association of Evangelicals, resigned after a Denver man - a homosexual ‘escort’ - said Haggard had paid him for sexual encounters over the past three years. Press reports quoted Haggard as saying that he could ‘*not continue to minister under the cloud created by the accusations*’, which he publicly denied.

49-year-old Mike Jones said he had proof of his trysts with Haggard, including voice mail messages and an envelope Haggard allegedly used to mail him cash. (CNSNews.com, November 03, 2006). Later reports from CNN stated Ted Haggard admitted meeting his accuser and having solicited the gay prostitute for what he terms a ‘massage’. Later still he confessed he was guilty of ‘sexual immorality’. He admitted to purchasing Meth Amphetamine from the same gay prostitute, but claims he didn’t inhale it.

Australian ‘Idols’

(By Katherine Kizilos, *The Age*, Nov.2, 2006)

‘Is there a Christian voting bloc backing certain Australian Idol competitors?...It’s a blazing spring day but inside Dallas Brooks Hall, hundreds of young people are moving in the dim mist created by a fog machine, singing of their love for Jesus Christ. Worshippers are dancing in a tangled, joyful huddle before the stage, crossing their hands over their heads to show they are prepared to carry their cross, jumping up and down to the music so that the floor shakes. The seven singers on stage are jumping, too, and raising their hands in praise as words to the songs flash up on a large screen behind them.

Welcome to the Planetshakers City Church’s Sunday afternoon service, a religious experience modelled on a rock concert. Pastor Russell Evans, who founded the church in Melbourne more than two years ago, says about 2,600 people, aged between 18 and 40, attend the two Sunday services, while 600 to 800 teenagers go to the Friday night Boom youth service at Melbourne High School. His ministry has rapidly increased since he moved from Adelaide’s Paradise Community Church in 2004. (Evans says that while he was in London in 2002, “God spoke to my heart and said ‘Start a church in Melbourne’”, which he duly did.)

The Adelaide church may be best known as the place where former Australian Idol winner Guy Sebastian worshipped and performed. Evans was Sebastian’s youth minister and encouraged the singer to join the Planetshakers band when he was 14. This year, Planetshakers has another link with the television singing competition.

One of the remaining finalists, Dean Geyer, worships at the City Church...Guy Mutton (Mutto), Jessica Mauboy and Lavina Williams all sang in church. So did finalists from other years: Paulini Curuenavuli and Lavina’s sister, Emily...

In the meantime, on Australian Idol, some young singers who started out in church are having the opportunity to stand on a larger stage. Russell Evans says of his ministry: ‘We want to empower people to follow their dream. Having a relationship with God helps us to do that’.

Editors Comment: The world has come into the church to take the church into the world (Rom.12:2).

The Gospel

The message of God is: That Jesus Christ came as God (*Deity*) in the flesh and humbled Himself to die (a *substitute*) in our place as a *sinless, perfect, and finished sacrifice*, and through His *blood* to pay the penalty (*redemption*) for our *sin*. He rose from the dead in the (*resurrection*) power of the Holy Spirit to credit (*impute*) His *righteousness* to those who will believe and trust Him as *Lord and Saviour*. His offer is *eternal life* to sinners who *repent* and have *faith* in *who He is* and *what He did*.

This ‘good news’ is no more than ink on paper unless the Holy Spirit takes it and quickens it to the heart of a man or woman. The seed must bear fruit. Our job in evangelism is to *prepare the soils of hearts* so that when they hear they will *understand*, (Matt.13:1-9,18-23).

It is God who saves. We are ‘co-labourers’ with him in the preparing of those hearts who will believe.

Terry Arnold

'Herald of Hope' and 'Election'

In a recent edition of the Australian *'Herald of Hope'* magazine, editor John Ecob wrote an article titled *'Who are The Elect?'*. His views in this article are indicative of the continuing misrepresentation by teachers today, concerning Church history, the doctrines of the sovereignty of God in the election of the saints, and so-called 'Calvinism'.

The *Herald of Hope* often publishes sound and interesting articles regarding Biblical prophecy and endtime events, but on the issue of the historic 'Doctrines of Grace' they now display a woeful ignorance of this teaching - and have turned Church history on its head in an effort to make a case for what is ultimately Arminianism.

In attempting to answer the question *'Who Are The Elect?'* Ecob errs greatly while attempting to solve the mystery between God's election and man's responsibility in salvation. God's choices were made *before* the foundation of the world and therefore solely according to His Sovereign Will...man was yet to be formed! ***'According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love; Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His Will'***, (Eph.1:4,5).

This election is *entirely of God* and in no way involves man, (1Thess 1:4 ***'your election of God'***; Titus 1:1 ***'The Faith of God's elect'***; Col.3:12 ***'the elect of God'***...)

Ecob states: *'Arminianism was a reaction to Calvinism'*. Yet church history shows a situation that is diametrically opposed to such a notion! The 'five points' [later erroneously labelled 'Calvinism'] issued by the Synod of Dort in 1619 were made to *REFUTE* the *five points* making up the heretical doctrines of Arminius! Historically, *Arminianism predates so-called 'Calvinism'*!

And at the time of the Council of Dort *John Calvin had been dead for 146 years!*

It is astonishing that such a respected magazine as the *Herald of Hope* could print such a falsehood. Surely this shows a lack of scholarship? The tenets of historic 'Calvinism' actually can be found in the writings of the early church leaders and up to and beyond Augustine in the 3rd century! And the Synod of Dort is not the only council which condemned Arminianism. Throughout church history, at each Council, Synod or Diet, one can find that one of the Arminian doctrines or the whole system of Arminianism, was condemned at one time or another.

We wrote gently to John Ecob with suggestions to correct him on at least the history of these things. We have yet to receive a reply.

Ecob writes that *'Calvinistic theology'* is held by *'reformed theologians'*. However, the *'Reformed position'* often includes positions of eschatology other than 'Pre-millennial' - such as 'A-Millennialism'. Dictionaries define *'Reformed'* as: *'pertaining to or designating the body of Protestant churches originating in the Reformation'* (Websters New Collegiate Dictionary). Ecob has painted with a broad stroke of the brush here and doubtlessly thinks that *'Reformed'* means being a *'Calvinist'*?

The real term for historic 'Calvinism' is 'The Doctrines of Grace' and these were taught by *most of the greats*, including the Reformers down through the ages. It is sad that this 'nickname' of 'Calvinism', as Spurgeon put it, has

been tagged to the doctrines that have been taught by the *majority* of leaders down the running centuries until the wholesale apostasy of the 19th and 20th!

The *Herald of Hope* has also furthered the confusion over 'Calvinism' by misrepresenting it as Hyper-Calvinism.

Ecob writes that *'the system of Calvinism'* is summarised by *'five points known as 'TULIP'*. But he fails to mention that the 'TULIP' acronym came to be in existence hundreds of years *after* Calvin and came from a *refutation* of five points of known *heresy* adhered to by the followers of Arminius!

He misunderstands the doctrines of that 'acronym'. He says that before the Fall the angels, Adam and Eve had *'free will'* - but this fact historic 'Calvinism' *does not deny!* The writer confuses *preFall* with *postFall*. After the Fall man's will was *not* entirely 'free' in the true sense of the word and no scripture states that! The doctrine of original sin and the depravity of man teaches clearly that after the Fall, man's heart was captive to sin. Ecob further says *'unsaved man can do good works but these obtain no merit for salvation'*. Yet Scripture teaches that *all our works* are as *'filthy rags'*.

The doctrine of 'Free Will' is part of the *Pelagian heresy* of early centuries and continued to be viewed as such during the Reformation. It stated that man can, in and of himself, 'choose' Christ for salvation. This was, and still is, in utter contradiction to scripture which states man's will has been *enslaved* since the Fall of Adam and Eve and his will is not actually 'free' in the real sense of the word. ***'Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, NEITHER INDEED CAN BE. So then they that are in the flesh CANNOT please God'***, (Rom.8:7,8) - Does that sound like a will that is 'free'? The ***'gospel is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not...'***, (2Cor.4:3,4). Does that sound like a will that is 'free'? Jesus Himself unequivocally said: ***'NO MAN CAN COME to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him...'*** (Jn.6:44). The Scripture describes men as those who love darkness (Jn.3:19), are *in bondage* to sin (Gal.4:3; 6:17,20), and taken *captive* by Satan to do his will (2Tim.2:25), until the Son sets them free, (Jn.8:36). Does that sound like a will that is 'free'? Unbelievably, this heresy is now widely accepted and revived in the apostasy of the 19th and 20th centuries. It is the root of Arminian heresy and practise in the modern church.

The doctrine of 'Total Depravity' does not teach that *'unconverted man has no freewill and cannot choose Christ'* as Ecob writes. Rather, man's heart is simply 'depraved' and *unable* to escape the enslavement from sin *to save himself*, (Jer.17:9; Is.64:6,7; Rom.8:6,7; 1Cor.2:14).

This does not mean man is just a 'puppet' or a 'robot' as some say. Rather, it is God Himself who sets us 'free' from sin's bondage and enables us to choose Him. And who would not be thrilled to be freed to do this! ***'If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed'***, (Jn.8:36).

Ecob in attempting to understand election writes: *'if God does not elect him, then God is appointing him to hell'*. Yet Historic Calvinism teaches no such extrapolated strawman logic. This is the stuff of 'double predestination' and aligns with Hyper-Calvinism.

Ecob then, as so many do, mistranslates 2Peter 3:9 - **'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'**. This verse is speaking to **'USward'** - the saints! The rules governing Greek grammar demand that the **'any'** and the **'all'** cannot refer to any other pronoun but to the previous **'US'**. It is not, in this verse, saying God wants everyone to be saved. One of the first rules of interpretation is *who is it speaking to?* This Epistle is specifically written to the **'BELOVED'**!: **'beloved, I now write unto you'** (vs.1); **'beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing'** (vs.8); **'Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless'** (vs.14); **'Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before'** (vs.17)

The primary context here is about the end of this age and the sureness of the Lord's coming for his 'beloved'. It is a clear exhortation to the 'beloved' to be patient and not to listen to the false teachers (from previous verses) who were 'scoffing' at the promise of His coming. The great commentator Matthew Henry saw the same context here: 'What men count slackness, is long-suffering, and that to us-ward; it is giving more time to his own people, to advance in knowledge and holiness, and in the exercise of faith and patience...' (underlining ours)

This scripture was misused by Arminians in later centuries and now sadly most of modern apostate Christendom! The context is, and historically has always been, to *believers* - the **'beloved'** who would be saved and come to repentance at some point in time.

The editor of *Herald of Hope* is here found denying the sovereignty of God in Predestination and Election. The word 'predestination' comes from the Greek word *'proorizo'* ('pro' - 'before' / 'orizo' - 'to determine'). It clearly means to *determine* or *decree beforehand*. There is no escaping this conclusion! Examples of the word are in Acts 4:28; Rom.8:29,30; Eph.1:5,11; 1Cor.2:7; (The Greek word is also translated *'ordained'* in some passages).

The fact that our election and predestination were *from the foundation of the world* must worry those who attempt to add to such doctrines conditions such as the 'free will' of man *in this life*. Who can deny Predestination and Election is all of God and none of man, when it occurred *before we ever even had any 'will' at all?* **'As many as WERE ordained to eternal life believed'**, (Acts 13:48).

Even our works are ordained *'before'*: **'We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works; which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them'**, (Eph.2:10). 2Timothy 1:9 sums up the eternal counsel in Gods calling and choosing and clearly refutes any attempt to put conditions on God's predestination: **'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'**.

The word 'election' (*'ekloge'*) means a choice or *special selection* done by the free will of God. This election is not *in any way* tied to any ability or will of man but rather in the will of God alone: Jn.5:21 **'For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will.'** This is true 'grace' - unmerited by anything in man.

The *Herald of Hope* article also ignores a defining passage in Ephesians: **'He chose [elected] us in Him before the foundation of the world'**, (Eph.1:4). This was no random selection but a *special selection* as the Greek word states. God did not here look down the corridors of time to see who might 'choose' him. The passage clearly says God chose us for Himself *independent* of any outside influence. It was His choice and apart from any human will. We **'were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, NOR OF THE WILL OF MAN, but of God'**, (Jn.1:12,13). Jesus said to His disciples, **'You did not choose Me, but I chose you'**, (Jn.15:16). Paul said, **'...God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth'**, (2 Thess.2:13).

These clear scriptures do not mean that man cannot make any decisions or is just a 'robot'. Election does not exclude *human responsibility* or the person responding to the gospel by faith. When the elect respond, *they do not respond against their wills*. The election actually frees our wills to accept a glorious salvation!

Numerous Scriptures speak of such Predestination and Election of individuals, (Eph.1:5,9,11; 1Thess.1:4; 1Pet.1:2,10; Tit.1:1; Rom.8:33; 11:5,7; Col.3:12; Rom.9:15-18; Gal.1:15,16; Jn.6:37; 5:21...)

There were other errors in the *Herald of Hope* article and many are evidence that the author is not aware of the true teachings of the Doctrines of Grace and the sovereign election of the saints.

Similar confusion was recently portrayed in an article by popular American speaker, Chuck Missler, (July 11, 2006 e-News issue): *'At the heart of the controversies between Calvinism and Arminianism is the emphasis on the sovereignty of God by the Calvinists and on the sovereignty (free will) of man - or human responsibility - by the Arminians. Calvinism emphasizes that God is in total control of everything and that nothing can happen that He does not plan and direct, including man's salvation. Arminianism teaches that man has free will and that God will never interrupt or take that free will away, and that God has obligated Himself to respect the free moral agency and capacity of free choice with which He created us...'*

Certainly, the Bible does teach that God is sovereign, and that believers are predestined and elected by God to spend eternity with Him. Nowhere, however, does the Bible ever associate election with damnation...Scriptures teach that God elects for salvation, but that unbelievers are in hell by their own choice. Every passage of the Bible that deals with election deals with it in the context of salvation, not damnation. No one is elect for hell...The concept of total depravity is consistent with Scripture...Election and predestination are Biblical doctrines...God will not send anyone to hell, but many people will choose to go there by exercising their free will to reject Christ'.

Notice Missler has no scripture for his logic. He confuses the doctrine of Man's Responsibility to repent - with 'Free Will' to choose Christ. Yet Adam lost any 'freedom' in the garden - he was then only 'free' in one way - to run, hide and sin! Missler also uses the usual strawman of 'election to damnation' which historic Calvinism does not do. He amazingly says that many unbelievers are in Hell *'by their own choice...exercising their free will to reject Christ'*. Nowhere in scripture is this taught. And what of the multitudes who have never heard the gospel or heard of

Jesus Christ? Did they have such a 'choice' for Hell? Even in our western society we know of people who died never hearing the Gospel. In many countries there are Hindus dying every day who have never heard the Gospel! Did they 'choose' Hell? What of the ancient American Indians who for centuries never heard the Gospel - did they 'choose' Hell? How many really would consciously 'choose' Hell?

And what of Missler's doctrine of *'The sovereignty of man'*? Where is this doctrine in scripture and would it not defy the doctrine of the 'sovereignty of God', even by name?

The points of the so called 'TULIP' are seen by many as having a *negative* bias. Yet they were historically taught as *positive*. For example, so called *'Irresistible Grace'* is characterised as a negative term by Arminians, but historically it was taught by the great evangelists and Puritans as a positive *'Effectual Calling'*. Who can deny this in John 6:37-40?: ***'ALL that the Father giveth me SHALL COME to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out...39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day...'***

We admit to a dislike of the term *'Irresistible Grace'* partly because of the way it is misunderstood today; but *'Effectual Calling'* as it was historically taught clearly defines Grace and is a positive truth taught in Scripture.

Similarly, so called *'Limited Atonement'* was taught as a positive *'Particular Redemption'* and this was *not 'limited'*! John Ecob uses the scripture 1John 2:2 - that Christ was a ***'propitiation...for the sins of the whole world'*** - a fact that historic 'Calvinists' do not deny! *'Particular Redemption'* as taught by Charles Spurgeon and others, teaches that the *blood* of Jesus is *sufficient* for *all* humans to be saved. But it *will* in the end be *effective* for only some, (considering 'few' will *ultimately* be saved). If Jesus died for *all* men, then how come *all* men aren't saved? Has He failed in some way? It is an unassailable fact that Jesus' death was not *effective* for all.

Jesus himself said ***'I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep'***, (Jn.10:11) and ***'For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified'***, (Heb.10:14). (See also Matt.20:28; 1Cor.15:22; Matt.1:21; Rev.5:9,10...)

The 20th Century has seen a massive and wholesale departure from the Doctrines of Grace that were once taught by *most*. Church history is being misrepresented. Many of the denominations need to go back and look at their roots! The Baptists would find that their roots were in the Doctrines of Grace! Baptists would simply call their predecessors 'Calvinists' because the early Baptist Confessions were 'Calvinistic' as is seen in the most early *London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689. The Baptists held to this system quite consistently until about 1800!* At this point there was a compromise on the issue of Predestination and the atonement - toward more Arminian thinking. This was partly due to the Wesleyan influence and the movement of Finney, Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell.

Some Baptist publications have consistently misrepresented church history and attempted to convince readers that 'Calvinism' was a new heresy and a departure from the normal and early Baptist beliefs. This is simply untrue and even a shallow reading of the early Baptist history and their Confessions will dispel this myth.

We in this ministry do not teach a 'TULIP' or any other

system named 'Calvinism', since these are mostly so badly misrepresented and are only man's explanations of a refutation issued at the Synod of Dort. But the following are what we have held to for many years and we have had no one as yet refute these 'points':

1. God chooses man in salvation. Man does not choose God. (Eph.1:4,5; Jn.15:16; Rom.3:11).

2. Man is unable to come to God of himself for salvation unless the Holy Spirit draws him first (Rom.8:6,7; Rom.3:10-11; Jer.17:9; Is.64:6,7). Only by the drawing of the Holy Spirit will the 'all' that the father has given, come (Jn.6:37).

3. God elects, chooses His people of His own determination (Eph.1:5,9,11; 1Thess.1:4; 1Pet.1:2,10; Tit.1:1; Rom.8:33; 11:5,7; Col.3:12; Rom.9:15-18; Gal.1:15,16; Jn.6:37; 5:21...etc)

4. The blood of Jesus is *sufficient* for *all* humans to be saved. But it will in the end be *effective* for only *some*, considering 'few' will ultimately be saved. (Jn.10:11-15; Heb. 10:14; Matt.20:28; 1Cor.15:22; Matt.1:21; Rev.5:9,10)

The majority of historic preachers, evangelists, revivalists, theologians were all 'Calvinistic' in that *they taught these same doctrines* - John Newton, John Wycliffe, Martyn Luther, John Knox, John Owen, John Bunyan, William Carey, Murray McCheyne, John Bradford, William Tyndale, Jonathan Edwards, Spurgeon, Whitefield, David Brainerd, John Eliot, John Paton, Augustus Strong, Charles Hodge, BB Warfield, James Boyce, Matthew Henry, John Gill; Robert Haldane, JC Ryle, DL Moody, Martyn Lloyd Jones...It has been said that every martyr held to the Doctrines of Grace: John Huss, Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, John Hooper, John Foxe (wrote the Foxe's book of martyrs), etc.

Where did Spurgeon the Baptist 'Prince of Preachers' stand when he preached: ***'There is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified, unless we preach what nowadays is called 'Calvinism'. It is a nickname to call it 'Calvinism'; 'Calvinism' is the Gospel. If we do not preach Justification by Faith, without works; nor unless we preach the Sovereignty of God in His dispensation of grace; nor unless we exalt the electing, unchangeable, eternal, immutable conquering love of Jehovah; nor do I think we can preach the gospel, unless we base it upon the special and particular redemption of His elect and chosen people which Christ wrought out upon the Cross; nor can I comprehend a gospel that lets saints 'fall away' after they are called, and suffers the children of God to be burned in the fires of damnation after having once believed in Jesus - such a gospel I abhor.'*** (Sermon on The Doctrines of Grace)

Where did George Mueller stand on 'election': ***'Before this period I had been much opposed to the doctrine of election, particular redemption and final persevering grace; so much so that, a few days after my arrival at Teignmouth, I called election a devilish doctrine. I did not believe I had brought myself to the Lord, for that was too manifestly false; but yet I held that I might have finally resisted. And further, I knew nothing about the choice of God's people; and did not believe that the child of God, when once made so, was safe for ever. In my fleshly mind I had repeatedly said, 'If once safe I could prove that I am a child of God for ever, I might go back into the world for a year or two, and then return to the Lord, and at last be saved.'***

'I was brought to examine these precious truths by the Word of God. Being made willing to have no glory of my own in the conversion of sinners...I went to the Word,

*reading the New Testament from the beginning with a particular reference to these truths. To my great astonishment I found that the passages which speak decidedly for election and persevering grace were about four times as many as those which speak apparently against these truths; and even those few, shortly after, when I examined them, served to confirm me in the above doctrines.’**

Author and lecturer, R.C. Sproul, confirms the tension between thinking as a human or trusting a divine antimony: *‘Everybody knows that the Bible speaks of predestination, that the word wasn’t invented by Calvin or Edwards or Luther or Augustine. And so if a Christian wants to be biblical, that person must have some doctrine of predestination. It’s unavoidable. It’s part of the text. It’s part of the content of the Scriptures. It’s a doctrine, by the way, that I fought against more strenuously than any other doctrine of the Bible for the first five years of my Christian life...it was finally Paul’s letter to the Romans that not only convinced me of my errors with respect to this doctrine, but also dusted off the spot where I had previously stood...’*

Let’s close our eyes for a minute and blot out my voice, the voice of Calvin, the voice of Edwards, the voice of Arminius and everybody else. Listen to the Apostle Paul. Imagine if you would that the Apostle Paul is in here speaking right now and you’ve invited him to unpack this difficult doctrine of election. And you heard him saying it’s not of works, but of God who calls according to His purpose (Rom.9:11-13). And now you hear the Apostle Paul asking you a rhetorical question...‘What then, is there unrighteousness in God?’ (Rom.9:14a)...

*I’ve never spoken on the issue without someone coming up to me and saying, ‘It just doesn’t seem right. It doesn’t seem fair that before all eternity - before anybody’s done any good or evil - that God determines sovereignly that some of these people are going to be saved, and others are not going to be saved. That’s not fair’. It certainly would seem that the doctrine of election would indicate that there is some kind of unrighteousness in God. Now let me say this: no advocate of the Arminian view of predestination and election has ever had anyone come up to them after they have given their view and said to them, ‘Hey that’s not fair. That doesn’t seem right’. Because it seems eminently fair, doesn’t it? If God’s election is based upon our choice, right or wrong, who’s going to quarrel with that? But the very fact that the apostle raises this hypothetical objection says to me...that Paul was anticipating certain objections from his readers. And he pulls the plug on the objection. Before they can raise it, he raises it for them: ‘What then, is there unrighteousness in God? It sure seems like it’. What does he say? ‘Well, maybe a little bit’? That’s not what he says!...One translation says, ‘By no means!’. I like the stronger version: **‘God forbid that there’s any unrighteousness in God!’***

...Election from all eternity is election that takes place prior to the fall, but in light of the fall. God is selecting His people from a mass of fallen humanity. And He says, ‘From that mass of fallen people, I am going to exercise My saving grace that the purpose of My election might stand, and I’m going to save some of them...Again if God elected to save everybody, nobody would murmur, nobody would complain...But for reasons we don’t know, God chooses to limit salvation to the elect. So some people get this magnificent grace about which we’re speaking, and the

others get injustice at the hands of God? No. Again, you have a whole universe filled with guilty people - God gives some grace, and the rest He gives justice. Nobody gets injustice!’ (R.C. Sproul, 2002 Conference, Master’s College. Underlining ours)

Spurgeon spoke of the folly of attempting to reconcile two ‘friends’ - the doctrine of the responsibility of man to repent; and the sovereign calling, election and predestination by God. This is the heart of the debate and this is where man is found attempting to reconcile with logic and emotion that which cannot be fully comprehended by man!

To all those who oppose Election, Predestination and the historic and scriptural Doctrines of Grace, let one of the greatest soul winning evangelists in history speak - Charles Haddon Spurgeon: *‘Men hate election just as thieves hate Chubb’s patent locks; because they cannot get at the treasure themselves, they therefore hate the guard which protects it. Now election shuts up the precious treasure for God’s covenant blessings for his children - for penitents, for the seeking sinners. These men will not repent, will not believe; they will not go God’s way, and then they grumble and growl, and fret, and fume, because God has locked the treasure up against them. Let a man once believe that all the treasure within is his, and then the stouter the bolt, and the surer the lock, the better for him.*

Oh, how sweet it is to believe our names were on Jehovah’s heart and graven on Jesus hands before the universe had a being! May not this electrify a man of joy and make him dance for very mirth? Chosen of God ere time began.

Come on, slanderers! Rail on as pleases you. Come on thou world in arms! Cataracts of trouble descend if you will, and you, ye floods of affliction, roll if so it be ordained, for God has written my name in the book of life. Firm as this rock I stand, though nature reels and all things pass away. What consolation then to be called; for if I am called, then I am predestined.’ (‘Predestination and Calling’ by Charles Spurgeon)

Most importantly, where does God stand in all this? We dare not argue about God’s choosing in Election and Predestination or we will be found arguing with God. His reply will be thus: ***‘What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid...I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth...Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?’*** (Rom.9:14-21)

Terry Arnold & Mike Claydon

(For more on the Doctrines of Grace, election, predestination, etc, this ministry has available a series of five short studies by Terry Arnold - free by e-mail; or by hardcopy (Postage/photocopy \$9)

* *‘The George Muller Treasury’* edited by Roger Steer, P.33; *‘A Narrative of some of the Lord’s Dealings with George Muller’* by Muller, Nisbet Volume 1, 1869

Book Review 'Hard To Believe' by John MacArthur

Sometimes you see a problem, yet you cannot express the details in words. I have always been saddened by the deterioration of the line between the world and the church. This book *'Hard To Believe'* by John MacArthur, for me, crystallised many thoughts into a sensible and scriptural array of information concerning the gospel and salvation. This book tells it like it really is - *'Today the consumer mind-set has invaded Christianity'*.

MacArthur opens with: *'The church service is too long, you say? 'We'll shorten it'. (One pastor guarantees his sermon will never last more than seven minutes!). Too formal? Wear your sweatsuit. Too boring? Wait until you hear our band! And if the message is too confrontational, or too judgemental, or too exclusive, scary, unbelievable, hard to understand, or too much anything else for your taste, churches are everywhere eager to adjust that message to make you more comfortable'*.

The thrust of the book is that the Gospel has been watered down with a *'new version of Christianity...[that] promises an 'informal, relaxed, casual atmosphere', 'great music from our band', and that those who will come will, 'believe it or not, even have fun'. That's all great if you are a coffee house. But anyone who claims to be calling people to the gospel of Jesus with those as his priorities is calling them to a lie.'*

MacArthur emphasises that the Gospel *'is not a friendly invitation, it is a warning. If you come to Christ, it may make your family worse, not better. It may send a rift into your family the like of which you have never experienced before. If you give your life to Jesus Christ, there will be an impassable gulf between you and people who don't give their lives to Him'*. (Page 3)

Modern Christianity, MacArthur says, is making the Gospel *'easy to believe'...**'yet the gospel is actually hard to believe. In fact if the sinner is left to himself, it is absolutely impossible...We proclaim a scandalous message. From the world's perspective, the message of the cross is shameful. In fact it is so shameful, so antagonising, and so offensive that even faithful Christians struggle to proclaim it, because they know it will bring resentment and ridicule'*. (P.20-23)

Much of the book is describing a key ingredient within the Gospel that is today being greatly minimised. *'it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save them that believe'*, (1Cor.1:21). MacArthur writes: *'It was this scandalous, offensive, foolish, ridiculous, bizarre, absurd message of the cross that God used to save those who believe. The message of the cross is foolishness, ('moria' in Greek) from which we get the word 'moron'*. (P.25)

'The Greeks wanted wisdom, and the Jews wanted a sign. God gave them exactly the opposite. The Jews received a ('skandalon') a crucified Messiah - scandalous, blasphemous, bizarre, offensive, unbelievable'. (P.26) *'And frankly, it doesn't seem that God could have put a more formidable barrier to faith in the first century. I cannot think of a worse way to market the gospel than to preach that'*. (P.29)...*'the gospel collides with our emotions, it collides with our minds, it collides with our relationships. It smashes into our sensibilities, our rational thinking and our tolerances. It's hard to believe'*. (P.33)

MacArthur then gives a graphic insight into the method

and the history of crucifixion to drive such points home.

Much of the book is about the Gospel itself and what it is and *is not* designed to do. This philosophy of ministry is absolutely vital to preachers and teachers of the Word of God. MacArthur says: *'The message of the cross is not about felt needs. It is not about Jesus loving you so much He wants to make you happy. It is about rescuing you from damnation, because that is the sentence that rests upon the head of every human being. And so the gospel is an offence every way you look at it. There's nothing about the cross that fits in comfortably with how man views himself'*. (P.33)

The reader might at this point ask the same question as did the disciples: *'who then can be saved?'*, (Matt.19:25; Mk.10:26; Lk.18:26). Jesus answered this question many times in Scripture: *'...With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible'*, (Matt.19:26); *'No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him...'*, (Jn.6:44,65). MacArthur sums this up: *'The fact is, according to Scripture, if God did not sovereignly open the eyes of the spiritual blind, no one would ever see'*. (P.35)...*we hear all the time that getting saved is easy. 'Just sign this card!' 'Just raise your hand!' 'Just walk down that aisle while the choir sings one more stanza!' 'Just recite this prayer!' 'Just ask Jesus into your heart!' It all sounds simple. The only problem is that none of those actions has anything to do with real salvation...That sort of invitationalism implies that Jesus is some poor pitiful Saviour, waiting for us to make the first move to allow Him His way. It implies that salvation hinges on the human decision as if the power that saves us were the power of human 'free will'*. (P.83)

MacArthur then shows historically where this 'easy believism' and 'easy gospel' originated: *'Up to that time [19th Century] American evangelists were, for the most part, 'Calvinistic', that is, they believed that sinners are saved by hearing the message of the gospel while God the Holy Spirit awakens them from sinful deadness. But [Charles] Finney took a different path. He made emotional appeals and taught that salvation required no sovereign regeneration by God, but only the act of the 'human will'*. (P.84) *'One of Satan's pervasive lies in the world today is that it's easy to become a Christian. It's not easy at all'*. (P.85)

MacArthur then says what many modern evangelists and ministers do not want to admit: *'I am convinced that the visible church today is literally jammed full of people who are not Christians but don't know it. When I hear statistics such as two billion people in the world are Christians and two billion aren't, then I wonder who has established the criteria for being Christian'*. (P.95)

He also tackles the thorny issues: *'I can't believe how many times I've talked with people in the homosexual movement who insist they are born again Christians because they believe in Jesus, can recite their creed, tell you the date they were saved, and so forth. My answer to them is, 'If you were Christians, you wouldn't sin continually, as you do, and defend it. You would be brokenhearted and repentant, and you would pray to have your life changed'*. (P.98)

The seeker sensitive Gospel has invaded our churches and this book tackles that issue: *'I was talking to a pastor at a seeker-friendly church about his idea that prospective*

Christians needed to, 'feel welcome and accepted', before anything else. 'No threats and no judgemental baggage'. I asked, 'If you had a person living in sin come to your church, would you confront him?' He furrowed his brow and shook his head disapprovingly. 'Oh, no! We'd want him to feel loved and welcome'. My eyes widened. 'How long would it be before you would actually say something about that?' 'Maybe a year and a half, two years', he said smiling, 'Because then he would really feel a part of things.'

That was shocking to me. Is there some virtue in leaving a man in his sin for the sake of being accepted? 'Well that's the difference between your church and our church', I said finally, 'openly practicing sinners come to our church and they either get saved or they don't come back'. (P.162).

To back up the premise that many in churches today are really not regenerate, MacArthur gives a challenging list of signs of a true Christian. (P.169)

For those who preach, teach and witness, there is much encouragement and many hard sayings in this book: 'The goal of Christian preaching, the goal of presenting the gospel, the goal of the church is not to just open the door so wide that we can suck everybody in and make them feel comfortable. The goal is to preach the truth to as many people as possible, so that we can sort out the true from the false'. (P.173)

At every turn, the subject comes back to the premise: the gospel must not be watered down to be made 'easy' or 'to offend anybody, to make church fun and entertaining, resulting in some kind of synthetic gospel that doesn't have enough truth in it to save anybody'. (P.191)

An interesting section in this book is where the author refutes the increasingly modern understanding that those who have never heard the Gospel or have not been given 'opportunities', can still be saved by 'revelation'. (P.197) 'Paul said God has given man reason, and reason looks at creation and concludes certain things about the power and the nature of the creator. And he's without excuse. The problem is, that doesn't lead him to God because, as Romans 1:18 warns, men 'suppress the truth in unrighteousness'. Man is so wicked, vile, and ungodly that his depravity negates the possibility of his coming all the way to God on his own natural powers'. Passages in Romans are looked at and shown to be damning man, not excusing him. (P.201) 'Imagine what would happen when 1Cor.2:14 is dropped in front of them. 'But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, nor can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned'. (P.203) 'If you can be saved without the gospel then salvation is by works. Nobody is going to be justified before God that way. There is only one way to be justified, Paul went on to describe it in Romans 3:22. 'The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ to all and on all who believe' (P.210) 'Views of inclusivism, natural theology or wider mercy are heresy' (P.211) 'Natural revelation is sufficient to damn but not to save'. (P.212)

This book I found to be simply riveting. It clarifies much of the philosophy of preaching, teaching and evangelism.

There are times when you read a book and truth grips you from inside. This is one of those books!

(Available from this ministry. Price \$19.90+postage \$5)

Terry Arnold

Quotables!

Contend For the Faith (Jude 3)

'When it comes to defending the Gospel, where do you see it in this age? I hoped that many would be found among Baptists who would care for the truth; but now I come to the conclusion that it is with many, as with the showman when asked which was Wellington, and which was Bonaparte: 'Whichever you please, my little dears. Pay your money, and take your choice!'

Free will or free grace, human merit or Christ's atonement, it does not matter now. New theology or old theology, human speculation or divine revelation - who minds? What do they care whether God's truth stands or the Devil's lies? I am weary of these drivellers! The thorns have choked the seed in the pulpits and in the churches as well as in private individuals. Oh, that God would return! Oh, that His Spirit would raise up among us people who believe indeed, and prove the power of their belief!

Charles Spurgeon, (Sermon: 'Sown Among Thorns')

The Sovereignty of God

'He appoints the course of nature and directs the course of history down to the minutest detail. His decrees therefore are eternal, unchangeable, holy, wise and sovereign. They are represented in the Bible as being the basis of the divine foreknowledge of all future events, and not conditioned by that foreknowledge or by anything originating in the events themselves'.

Loraine Boettner, 'Biblical Faith' P.4

Revelation

'As Christians, we have already been given all that we need to know for Justification and Sanctification. We will be given no new knowledge until Jesus returns. We do not need and will not be given, before Christ's second coming, any further insight into the mysteries of God. This is made abundantly clear by the Biblical assertion that we are not to think or speculate 'beyond what is written', (1Cor. 4:6).'

Peter Glover, UK

Modern Evangelism

'There is nothing humbling about the experience of Christianity offered by much of modern evangelism. It flatters us by telling us that God loves us and has a wonderful plan for our lives, when we are really destined for wailing and gnashing of teeth. It makes us into little gods by telling us that we have free will and - for fear of offending us - hides from us the awful fact of our bondage to sin and Satan'. Alan Morrison, Europe

Creation or Evolution?

Reptiles..to..Birds?..the evolutionary 'link' is missing... 'The origin of birds is largely a matter of deduction. There is no fossil evidence of the stages through which the remarkable change from reptile to bird was achieved'.

(W. Stinton, Evolutionist,)

Your Comments and Questions

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

Bible Versions

Dear Terry, the leaders of my church think that the NASB, NIV etc. are more accurate than the KJV and NEWKJV (NKJV) because they are translated from (three) earlier 4th century manuscripts that were found in 1850...Are the other versions more accurate than the KJV because they were translated from the 'majority of earlier manuscripts', rather than the majority of all manuscripts in total?...

(Name withheld at editors discretion)

Editors reply: Dear...This is a complicated subject which I will try to simplify briefly. There are several issues at the heart of this debate: The *textual* issue, *translation* styles, the issue of *preservation*...For me *preservation* is very convincing?...

The Textual Issue:

There are two texts which form the basis of most Bible versions - the 'Received Text' ('Textus Receptus') or the Westcott and Hort 'Critical Text'.

The Textus Receptus (TR) is based on the *majority* of texts which is the basis for the King James version (KJV) and arguably to some extent some other versions such as the 21st Century KJV (KJ21) and the NewKJV (NKJV).

This TR accurately represents the Majority of texts (about 5,000) and stood the test of time until the 1850's before Westcott and Hort used a newly 'discovered' *minority* of texts that were apparently dated earlier. Most of the modern versions (NIV, NASB, etc) come from this 'Critical Text'.

The new versions have confused many by stating they have the 'majority of earlier texts' - this is true and false. *They may arguably have 'early' texts but not the majority of overall texts.* They have about 3% in comparison to 97% of overall texts. The claim that 'early texts mean more accuracy' does not stand up to scrutiny. Two of the most corrupt manuscripts (Sinaiticus and Vaticanus) are reputed to be two of the oldest manuscripts.

The Majority Text, which the *Textus Receptus* represents, shows an extraordinary amount of agreement within the manuscripts themselves. The 'Critical Text' arguably does not have this consistency, even though they are so few in number compared to the Majority manuscripts (97% - 3%).

Most modern versions, coming from the 'Critical Text' have *verses missing*, yet these verses *are* in the Majority of Texts (eg. Matt.17:21; 18:11; 23:14; Mk.7:16; 9:44,46...). The *Textus Receptus* which was taken from the Majority of texts (many thousands) does not have these verses missing.

I have two Greek Bibles - one from the Textus Receptus (representing the majority texts) and the other from the Westcott and Hort 'Critical Text'. I can show passages (eg. Mk.12:41) where the Textus Receptus has 'Jesus' and the Critical Text has 'he'. The two Greek words are entirely different and would never be mistaken by a translator. So, my preference is to read versions that come from the majority of texts. I am convinced the Textus Receptus is the accurate reading of that. When teaching I have found it a distinct advantage to use the KJV as it is more *word for word accuracy* when doing

exegeses with Greek and using a Strongs Concordance.

The problem is that there are two different viewpoints - one says the earlier manuscripts are better (even though they come from a *minority* of texts by comparison). The other says the majority of texts have been *preserved* for more than 1,600 years before a 'discovery' in 1850 by two men (who were arguably 'liberal' in doctrine).

However, I am not a 'KJV Only' extremist and have a distinct distaste for some of the unscholarly arguments in 'KJV Only'. Their arrogant attitude seems to also pervade the issue. I have met too many 'KJV Only' Christians who view other Christians, (those who do not use the KJV), as carnal or in some way inferior. Using the KJV Bible only, has in many circles become a badge of 'orthodoxy', an orthodoxy often harshly *imposed* by 'KJV Only' legalists.

A common error in 'KJV Only' extremism is the *comparison tests* of versions with KJV. This is fraught with deception because the comparison should never be made *with the KJV as the yardstick* but rather against a *parent Greek text* as the truth. The KJV has gone through *three* major revisions since 1611AD with more than 100,000 very minor changes. The KJV is a remarkably accurate translation, but it is still a *translation*.

There have been many books written endorsing the KJV which are quite unscholarly. 'New Age Bible Versions' by Gail Riplinger was popular for many years. Having no background in Greek or Hebrew, Riplinger has made numerous errors including inaccurate footnotes, distorted facts and has included emotive falsehoods.

Translation Styles:

There are two basic methods of translation - '*Formal Equivalence*' and '*Dynamic Equivalence*'. 'Formal Equivalence' attempts to translate the Greek text word for word. 'Dynamic Equivalence' attempts to translate the Greek into today's cultural understanding. 'Formal equivalence' undergirded the work of the translators who produced the KJV and they translated the Greek as far as possible 'word for word'. On the other hand, the NIV translates more to a 'Dynamic Equivalency' - more paraphrasing or 'phrase by phrase'.

This author admits a bias towards 'Formal Equivalency' over 'Dynamic Equivalency', due to the effectiveness this has on expository teaching and exegetical study. I have also found in working with the cults that the KJV is more helpful in its literal and formal equivalency when correcting their deceptive Bible versions.

Preservation:

Many of these issues will no doubt affect doctrine and it is at that point that the issue becomes serious! *Most of the modern versions are on a slide to doctrinal inaccuracy.*

Did the great reformers and teachers, including Spurgeon, not have the Word of God? Most of them used versions such as the KJV which came from the Textus Receptus. Who will be foolish enough to say that translations from the majority of texts which were *preserved* by God for over 1,600 years are now in error! I dare not.

Your Comments and Questions

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

From the Editor: Diakrisis 'Search'

This ministry has now been publishing *Diakrisis* (Australia) for 11 years with 88 issues in total. When the editor is asked questions on various topics he 'searches' past newsletters to obtain more evidence than that which may be on file in our office. Some of the articles in back issues are valuable when reviewing topical teaching or issues to do with people and events dating back many years.

Subscribers can obtain this same search facility themselves simply by purchasing from this ministry a re-writable CD with all newsletters in Acrobat pdf and then adding each newsletter as it arrives by e-mail each month.

The later versions of *Acrobat Reader* have an excellent search facility which enables readers to search any particular word or phrase throughout all the back issues of *Diakrisis*. Simply go to Acrobat Reader; then to 'search'; scroll to the file where you would have the pdf newsletters contained; type in the word or phrase to search; and click on 'search'. The list of documents will be shown according to the dates of the newsletters. You can read them there, or copy for use, etc.

Those who are not computer literate but have computers, could have a computer literate person show them how to do this in minutes.

We recommend this when information is required on any particular topic. This can be a useful tool in study or in sending out information to those we might be ministering to.

The re-writable CD of back issues can be obtained from this ministry (\$15.90 + postage)

Dear Terry, Thankyou for your information sent on Joyce Meyers. Although her programmes have often good ideas - what is now evident is her 'mans wisdom' more than God's wisdom...

(E.&J.H., Tas.)

Hi Terry, Thanks for continuing to produce the newsletter I do find it an interesting read. I must admit I try and not read it when I am caught in the slough of despond as the content of the newsletter isn't of an encouraging nature when it comes to pointing out the errors and false goings on in the church today. (Sorry brother, but I am given over to despondency and negativity all too quickly, however the Lord is working on that in me).

...In your article on Steve Irwin, you state that 'Crikey' is a slang term for Christ. I have never heard that before and must admit I never would have made that association. Could you please explain how you came to that conclusion and with what history and references that support it?

(Name withheld at editors discretion)

Editors reply: There were 12 pages in the newsletter. At least 4 pages were teaching on 'positive' topics (eg. two pages teaching on the Perfect Will of God)? So I pray that you were edified at least by them?...

As for the word 'Crikey' - I do appreciate many readers would not have known the association.

Many dictionaries give information on this word and all stating similar assertions - here are some quotes from various: *'Etymology: euphemism for Christ...Date: 1838, England - used as a mild oath...Used euphemistically for Christ as a mild expression of surprise, especially in Australia and New Zealand, and not-so-often in Britain...a shortened corruption of 'Christ the king' to express displeasure at a happening or event...Originally men of the English...working class Midlanders used this word instead of saying 'oh god'. Later Australians borrowed the word from English prisoners...the word 'crikey' was a slang word in Australia...It's a euphemism for 'Christ' and is an expression of astonishment...'*

Dear Mr. Arnold, Things are changing rapidly in the church. Sport seems to be more holy than God. And respect for where we are on a given Sunday, at our meeting place, is not there any more. We seem to have lost the awesome respect and adoration of just who God is. It is very sad indeed...God richly bless you. (C.K., W.A.)

Praise/Prayer Points

- Praise the Lord for a fruitful 2006 and pray for more fruit this year, 2007. Pray that many will be *informed, taught and equipped*.
- Pray for Terry's return to travelling. Pray for continued discernment and wisdom in what Terry and Mike teach in their various writings and bulletins.

Terry's Itinerary

April/May - SYDNEY
Full Itinerary to be printed in next issue (1st March)
Contact this ministry if you would like to be part of this itinerary.
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