



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

#### **All Roads?**

We know those who accuse us of hammering a subject too hard and too often, may have a point. But what are we to do? As watchmen we are charged with sounding an alarm if danger looms - and looming it is. At the risk of garnering yet more ire from our ecumenical brethren - it is still timely to expose the plunge the Church is taking in an effort to join with Rome to 'evangelise the world'.

The Vatican has managed to seduce once sound Christian leaders into linking arms with them in attempts to rid the world of a plethora of societal ills. And in doing so they portray this apostate religious system as 'Christian'. How can they be so blind toward the history of Rome's crimes against the Church of Jesus Christ? It's not as if it has been hidden! Libraries worldwide have shelves groaning with the writings of victims of the long and gruesome 'Inquisition'.

This has all been swept aside as celebrity leaders of successive movements welcome Rome and her damning gospel with open arms. It's difficult to find a Christian nowadays who is fully cognisant with the blasphemies of Catholicism - and the curses placed upon the Biblical Gospel by their dreadful councils.

Some samples: '*If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to obtain the grace of justification...let him be anathema*'; '*If anyone says that after the reception of the grace of justification the guilt is so remitted and the debt of eternal punishment so blotted out to every repentant sinner, that no debt of temporal punishment remains to be discharged either in this world or in purgatory before the gates of heaven can be opened, let him be anathema.*'

How can supposedly intelligent people ignore this and strive to be part of such apostasy? But ignoring it they are - and as long as they persist in doing so and lead others to do likewise, we will continue to sound the trumpet.

**Mike Claydon**

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**Mike & Terry**

## 'Self-Esteem'?

We Christians have a habit of taking something straight out of the world and baptising it into the name of Christianity. This has created the growth of a massive Christian 'subculture'. If worldly amusements are out, we have 'Christian television' and 'Christian radio'. (I have often turned the car radio on and thought I was tuned to a secular rock station before suddenly being told it was 'Rhema Christian radio'). If rock music is of the devil, how about 'Christian rock'. If senseless and bloody violence is out and such sports as wrestling are not Christian, then we instead have Christian groups like the *Power Team* - a group of professional wrestlers who packed auditoriums around the world to demonstrate that being 'plugged in' to Jesus was responsible for their success in breaking blocks of wood with their foreheads and other such (senseless?) feats. If occultic Witchcraft, magic and spiritism are forbidden, then we Christianise them and have C.S.Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and Wardrobe* or Frank Peretti's tales of supernatural warfare among angels and demons in the mythical city of Ashton - after all, they are only 'make believe'? If *Alcoholics Anonymous* with its 'higher power' is not Christian, then we replace it with a 'Christian' ten step programme. If psychology is non Christian, being invented by three men who were God haters, then we simply invent 'Christian Psychology'!

In the second half of the 20th Century, with the increasing prominence of psychology, the 'self esteem' fad took off in the USA like an express train and has not stopped since. Like all non Christian fads, Christians took hold of it and agreed that many problems of behaviour and relationships were caused by a lack of 'self esteem'. The solution for life's problems was to develop a good 'self image'.

Yet this 'self esteem' fad was devoid in the lives and teachings of the great church leaders down through the running centuries. Revivalist Jonathan Edwards appeared not to have any view of 'self esteem': *'Often I have had very affecting views of my own sinfulness and vileness; very frequently to such a degree as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping...when I look into my heart and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss infinitely deeper than hell...'* And the great missionary William Carey's epitaph read: *'Born August 17, 1761. Died June 9, 1834. A wretched poor and helpless worm'*.

The Scriptures too are devoid of the idea of 'self esteem'. Rather, there is a mass of scriptures referring to the sinful and depraved heart of man. 'Self' is actually diametrically opposed to the message of the Gospel unless it is used in negative and sinful terms to explain the heart of man - the very reason why there is the Gospel. The epistles consistently write of Christian behaviour and fellowship with our brethren as being *outward* focused and not anything to do with *self*.

However, one scripture that is wrested from its moorings for support of 'self esteem' is Matthew 22:39: *'...Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself'*. But this love for our neighbour is a love of *equity* - *we owe to our neighbour what we might expect for ourselves* - *'And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise'*, (Lk.6:31). Any 'self-love' here is also in *spiritual* terms for our soul. It is a long way removed from the modern teaching of 'self-esteem'! The passage actually never commands us to love ourselves. The word '*love*' in Matthew 22 emphasises the

humbling serving love of Jesus Christ for rebellious sinners, not the 'self-esteem' of feeling good or liking oneself.

Our problem is not lack of 'self esteem'. Our problem is self deception. Listen to what Paul wrote!: *'...in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud...'*

Amazingly, *secular* experts have realised the falseness of 'self esteem'. In a column in the *US News & World Report* (May 18, 1998) John Leo wrote, *'The self esteem movement is one of the marvels of our time. It goes on and on, even though its assumptions are wrong and its basic premises have been discredited by a great deal of research'*.

A team of researchers published their findings in the January 2005 issue of *Scientific American*. Their research conclusively destroyed the self-esteem myth and demonstrated that the nation's obsession with self-esteem was never based on science in the first place and has little value in fostering academic progress or preventing undesirable behaviour. They found that *those with low self-esteem are not merely negative about themselves, they are negative about everything*. The team found that raising 'self-esteem' does not offer students much benefit. Some findings even suggest that artificially boosting self-esteem may lower subsequent performance. Despite all this research, like evolution, (another *theory*), the need for 'self esteem' is now accepted as fact!

The mission of the church is not to give people 'self-esteem'. The Gospel must address the very opposite in man - the sinful and depraved nature. The great evangelists of old pressed to make man feel as low in sin as possible before they ever offered them the esteem that is available in Christ.

Psychologists may accurately describe people who are depressed and observe patterns in social and personal history, but for the Christian any such observations must be run through the grid of scripture. That grid simply has no place for the world's current teaching on 'self-esteem'

Author John MacArthur writes: *'Never before, not even in the medieval church, have Christians been so obsessed with themselves. Self-esteem, self confidence, self this and self that have replaced talk of God's attributes. Ironically, it has created the opposite of its intentions. Without the knowledge of God in whose image we have been created and the grace which has made us the children of God, narcissism, or self-love, quickly evolves into depression'*. (P.169 '*Fools Gold*')

An entire industry of self-esteem enhancing seminars, conferences, books and programs means big business and big money. *Christians have bought into this culture*. But the idea that 'self-esteem' - feeling good about ourselves - is a pre-requisite to contentment, without reference to reality, character or behaviour - this is deception. The concept is just not found in scripture, which constantly directs the Christian to look outside of themselves to others. Nowhere in scripture is there self edifying or 'self esteem', but rather the phrase *'edify one another'* is all too common, (Rom.14:19; 1Thess 5:11; Eph.4:11,12).

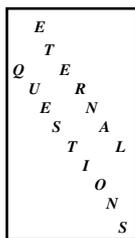
The Christian finds satisfaction, not in a sense of self-worth, but in knowing the one Saviour and living God. The gospel makes it clear that the Christian's identity is found *in Christ* - not in the depraved or fleshly self.

**Terry Arnold**

## Stock SELL OUT

### Books

#### Free Booklet - 'Eternal Questions'



**1 copy Free** with any product ordered.

This attractive 22 page booklet with full colour cover is widely used throughout Australia as a fruitful soul winning tool.

This booklet has been carefully designed to prepare the heart for a true understanding of the Gospel. It concisely looks at who God is; the problem of evolution; how God speaks to us today; who is man; sin and its consequences; religion and works;...and the good news! This is primarily a book for the unsaved but it is also useful to Christians in checking foundations for assurance of salvation.

#### 'Finding the Balance'



This early book by Terry Arnold concisely looks at both sides of such topics as spiritual gifts; Tongues; 'falling in the spirit'; discernment; the 'Toronto Blessing'; unity; ecumenism; apostasy...Useful reference book. **Was \$8.90; Now \$2.00**

#### 'Tongues & The Baptism With The Spirit'



The tried and tested material in this unique book will unlock the mystery for some, explain the difficulties for others, and provide for all, a proven and workable method of understanding and teaching on the subject of tongues.

This book provides concise exegesis of the well known passages in the New Testament. Excellent reference book. (81 pages) **\$8.90**

### Videos

#### 'Signs & Wonders Movement-Exposed'

(3 Videos): Part 1: *Miracles*; Part 3: *Music*. **Was \$29.50 each, Now \$10.00 each or \$15 for the two videos!** These hard hitting videos expose the ministries of certain evangelists, including Benny Hinn, (Part 1) and the effect of music on the listeners (Part 3). They document irrefutable evidence of the fraud, false claims and charlatanism of some of the 'Faith leaders' of today.

#### 'Does The Truth Matter Any more?'

This is a set of 2 videos containing five 1 hour messages featuring speaker John MacArthur.

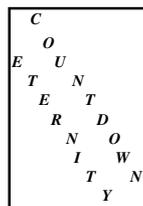


These two videos are gripping and scriptural presentations of a serious malady that exists in the church today and spoken of by Spurgeon over 100 years ago; and the solution to restore the power of the church to a lost world.

In each episode, MacArthur explores the user-friendly, end-justifies-the-means pragmatic philosophy and its fruit in today's church. The power of the Word of God is demonstrated through Scripture itself. This is a must for all churches to show their flock and to encourage them to stand on and trust the Word of God.

Cost: **Was \$49.50; Now only \$20** (2 videos\5 hours).

#### 'Countdown To Eternity'



This graphic and fast moving video looks at several areas in the context of Bible prophecy - moral decay; Israel; technology, etc. Speakers include Chuck Missler, Roger Oakland and Chuck Smith. A great icebreaker to non Christians.

**Was \$29.50 Now only \$10.00**

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'Signs & Wonders Movement-Exposed' (2 videos)	Special \$10.00 each or \$15 for two		
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## Christian Persecution

*'Around 250 million Christians worldwide will face persecution in 2007, simply for following Jesus Christ, according to persecution watchdog 'Release International'...*

*...Most persecution takes place in four distinct 'zones': those of Islam, Communism, Hinduism and Buddhism. But persecution is growing fastest of all in the Muslim world. Governments in even moderate Muslim countries often fail to safeguard the rights of their Christian minorities, explained RI. Abuses suffered by Christians include kidnapping, forced conversion, imprisonment, church destruction, torture, rape and execution.*

*One of the world's worst abusers of religious freedom is Saudi Arabia, guardian of Islam's holiest sites - Mecca and Medina. Saudi Arabia forbids all other religions. A Muslim found 'guilty' of converting to Christianity could face the death sentence for apostasy. And anyone who leads a Muslim to Christ faces jail, expulsion or execution... 'this is a government that hands out the death sentence for its own citizens who want nothing more than the freedom to choose their own faith. And while Saudi bans all Christian literature, it spends billions of dollars each year propagating Islam around the world'.*

*'As China prepares for the Olympic Games, western governments would do well to remember that China detains more Christians than any other country.'*

*(Apostasy Alert)*

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## 'Peace-Loving' Palestinians?

*'The whole world seems to be trying to push the Israelis into the elusive 'two-states-living-side-by-side-in-peace' solution. And all of this despite an avalanche of hard evidence that there is no such thing as a 'peace-seeking Muslim Palestinian'. Just ask the Christian Palestinians who have been driven from their centuries-old homes in Bethlehem by them...*

*...It is hard to imagine that the world can possibly be so wilfully ignorant of the obvious as it is when it comes to the so-called Israeli 'peace process'. The Palestinians don't want peace. They clearly and outspokenly want the annihilation of the State of Israel. One doesn't have to read between the lines to discover this shocking truth. It couldn't be more obvious...PA Interior Minister Sa'id Siam spoke last week: '...We will leave this world as martyrs without recognizing Israel'...No diplomatic double-speak there....Furthermore, this 'Everlasting Hatred' is being perpetuated in the Palestinian school system...But the world continues to insist that the Palestinians want peace, despite the evidence...*

*...Hammas and Hezbollah have decided to bury their differences between their Shiite and Sunni sects and cooperate in their shared goal: the obliteration of Israel...It is a matter of settled Palestinian law that selling land in the Palestinian-controlled territories to Jews is a capital crime punishable by death.*

*...The 'civilized' world leadership knows the national goal of the Palestinian people is the destruction of Israel...'*

**(By Hal Lindsey (www.hallindsey.com) 24 March 2007; excerpted from 'Israel Report')**

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## Pope - Ecumenical leader

The Pope recently received a Group of Muslim, Jewish, and Christian Leaders:

*'Benedict XVI says that interreligious research and dialogue are not mere options, but rather vital imperatives for today's world. The Pontiff said this today when receiving in audience members of the 'Foundation for Interreligious and Intercultural Research and Dialogue', established in 1999... 'The foundation seeks to find the most 'essential' and 'authentic message' that Judaism, Christianity and Islam can give the world'.*

*During the audience, Metropolitan Damaskinos handed the Pope the foundation's first achievement: the joint edition, in their original languages and according to chronological order, of the sacred books of the three monotheist religions: the Torah, the Bible and the Koran.'*

*(Vatican City, Feb. 1, 2007, Excerpted from 'Apostasy Alert')*

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## Indulgence Offer

*'The Holy See [Pope] ...stated that a plenary indulgence is granted to faithful who take part in the celebrations of the World Day of the Sick... 'A plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful that, with the usual conditions - sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer for the Holy Father's [Pope's] intentions - and with a spirit detached from all sin, take part with devotion, next Feb. 11, ...in a sacred ceremony celebrated to implore God for the objectives of the 15th World Day of the Sick...The decree continues: ...the plenary indulgence, on the condition that, ...[they] take part spiritually with desire in the above-said celebration and offer to God, through the Virgin Mary,...'*

*(Vatican City, Feb. 5, 2007, Excerpted from 'Apostasy Alert')*

**Editors Comments: The custom of 'indulgences' is the teaching of releasing souls from 'Purgatory' or lessening ones own time in 'Purgatory' by good works. The Roman Catholic 'Purgatory' is supposedly a place apart from Heaven and Hell where unforgiven ('venial' or 'lesser') sin is purged away. The Bible never mentions this place and the teaching strikes at the very heart of the all sufficient and completed work of the Cross.**

**The doctrine was not a part of the Church until about AD 600 when Pope Gregory the Great began talking about a 'third state'. The dogma was officially defined in 1439 at the Council of Florence and is still an official teaching today, being clearly restated at the Council of Vatican II and in recent Roman Catholic papers.**

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## Have You Read the Bible Cover to Cover?

*'The majority of Christian teaching emphasizes individual doctrines of the Bible rather than presenting the Bible as one complete, interdependant revelation of God. Heresies, misinterpretation and overemphasis of certain Scriptures, and denominationalism can, in most cases, be traced to this lack of chronological and panoramic Bible teaching'.*

*('Firm Foundations' by Trevor McIlwain, P.5)*

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## The Hillsong Phenomena Revisited

Increasingly we are being asked 'should we be encouraging people to attend *Hillsong* events or sing their songs in our churches?' The answers lie in the foundations, theology and now the fruit of this ever-growing movement.

### **The Foundations**

In 1986 husband and wife team, Mark and Darlene Zszech, along with a Pastor Pat Mesiti were leaders in a 'band' that outreached to high schools. (Mesiti founded *Youth Alive* and in later years was *Executive Director of Teen Challenge NSW* and *National Director of the Australian Christian Churches*). During those early years the Zszech's were introduced to Brian and Bobbie Houston's *Christian Life Centre* in the Hills district, Sydney (an offshoot of *CLC Darlinghurst, Sydney*). There a Geoff Bullock was the director of the music ministry. They combined writing and singing talents and '*Hillsong*' was born. The music gained great acceptance with young people and then in an increasing number of churches throughout Australia. Today there are few churches that have not adopted some *Hillsong* Music.

In the early nineties Geoff Bullock had an adulterous affair and subsequently divorced his wife and married the woman he had conducted the affair with. Darlene Zszech took over his position as 'worship leader' at the *Hills CLC*.

In an interview in May 2006, more than a decade after the event, Bullock claims '*they stole my soul*'. The interviewer, Jennifer Sexton, of the *Australian*, wrote: '*Christmas Eve 1994 was the end for Bullock. He had rehearsed the choir and band to play the standard church repertoire for three Christmas services. Just hours before the first service, Houston discovered Bullock had not rehearsed traditional Christmas carols. 'He just tore me to shreds and then left me to do three services', Bullock claims. The partnership ended that night...Bullock claims that when he departed, a campaign of whispering about his morality and sexuality filtered throughout the church. When he broke up with Janine a few months later, his subsequent relationship with a married woman (whom he later married) was, he says, twisted to become the reason he had been forced out. At the same time, Houston preached about dark forces intent on undermining the church. 'They ran a huge campaign to discredit me', fumes Bullock*'. (1)

The problems for *Hillsong* continued - in 2002 Pastor Pat Mesiti was asked to leave the ministry during a highly publicised exposure of his adultery. Brian Houston, *Hillsong's* senior pastor, at the time said, '*This whole area of sex abuse and predatory behaviour is devastating...*' (2) But Mesiti is only one of many in such organisations as *Hillsong* and *Youth Alive* who have fallen. In an interview with the *Sydney Morning Herald* newspaper Brian Houston admitted to disciplining up to five of his pastors each year for sexual misconduct.

In less than three years Mesiti was back in ministry being advertised as a motivational speaker. Today he tells thousands that gaining money and fame is a Godly pursuit.

The formation of the *Assemblies of God (AOG) Christian Life Centre* movement, where *Hillsong* originated, was arguably formed in deceitful circumstances. Letters issued by AOG New Zealand (21/12/01, Wayne Hughes, General Superintendent) and AOG Australia (24/12/01, John Lewis Assistant President) disclose that Frank Houston, formerly

head of *CLC Sydney*, was disciplined in 1999 for '*serious sexual offences*' (NZ letter) that occurred 30 years ago. At least one offence was against a teenage boy. Frank denied the charges for more than 20 years before admitting his guilt. The New Zealand letter banned Frank Houston from AOG platforms in that country.

While the matter of Houston's fall was known in 1999 it had only been openly acknowledged by the AOG at the time when Pat Mesiti's moral fall was publicised.

In 1977 Frank Houston moved permanently to Australia from New Zealand and established the first assembly in Oxford Street, Darlinghurst, Sydney. The problems in New Zealand, the sexual offences and charges of paedophilia were not made known to the ever increasing number of his congregants. In 2002 after having risen to prominence in the Australian AOG, this information surfaced and was openly reported. It was left to his son, Brian Houston, by now the National Superintendent of AOG, to publicly discipline his father and relieve him of his duties. (3)

### **What Do They Teach?**

*Hills Christian Life Centre* is known by many as '*Hillsong*', as the music being produced and recorded there has developed into a great commercial success. The theology emanating from this Pentecostal movement is also unashamedly 'Word of Faith' and 'Prosperity' teaching.

'Word of Faith' was initially founded by Kenneth Hagin and propagated by Kenneth and Gloria Copeland. These people are demonstrably false teachers and false prophets. The false teaching includes heretical teaching on the Deity of Christ and the Atonement. (4) The false prophecies of these leaders are too numerous to mention in this short article but documentation of many of them are freely available. (5) The Word of Faith 'jesus' is manipulated by a force of faith contained in words to give healing, money and success. Its leaders, (Copeland, Hagin, Joyce Meyers, etc), many who have been speakers at *Hillsong*, teach that their jesus went to hell and was tormented by demons for three days as part of the atonement. They also confuse or deny the deity of Jesus while on earth. Of course they may not teach these things while speaking at Conferences such as those held at *Hillsong* but they nevertheless have taught these things in their books and audio tapes.

As head of *Hillsong*, Brian Houston also teaches a full blown 'prosperity' doctrine that holds to the belief that God is willing to be controlled into blessing His people with large amounts of money commensurate to their giving. (6)

His sermons spend much time in teaching a 'giving to receive' theology. The outcome of this is great accumulation of wealth amongst the leaders and thus *Hillsong* has become a multi-million dollar enterprise.

There is no doubt that *Hillsong* (or the attendees that give the money?), perform many good deeds. The church has numerous charitable ministries such as *Mercy Ministries*, (a home established by *Hillsong's* Darlene Zschech for pregnant girls or those with eating disorders) and *Hillsong Emerge* - to help people find jobs and recover from addictions. Thousands of children in Uganda are also sponsored; and *Hillsong* gave \$500,000 to victims of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami.

On the negative side - *Hillsong Emerge* has been accused

in Federal and State parliaments of misappropriating millions of dollars worth of Commonwealth grants. Also Houston failed to declare that he and his wife Bobbie had sold some personal property holdings to a Hillsong's *Leadership Ministries Incorporated (LMI)*, of which Brian is a director. *LMI* is the tax-free entity *Hillsong* set up to help pay the Houstons' income. In breach of Office of Fair Trading reporting rules, no financial statements had been lodged since its inception in October 2001. Only after the property deals were uncovered by *The Australian* were the accounts filed in August 2005. The Houston's incomes did not show how they as a family could afford property worth \$1.738 million over 12 months. (7)

At *Hillsong* much time is spent on teaching about prosperity and giving. Brian wrote and published a best selling book titled '*Want More Money?*'. As the money buckets are passed around at each meeting, the audiences are informed that credit card facilities are available, and cheques should be made out to *Hillsong*. The *Australian* wrote: '*The buckets have holes in the bottom, presumably to discourage parishioners from giving coins...[But] the rivers of cash keep flowing: donations and salary tithes to Hillsong were \$15.3 million in 2004; merchandise, CDs, books and DVDs, returned a further \$6.93 million, while total church revenue has now passed the \$50 million mark - all tax-free thanks to Hillsong's charitable status. The message of Hillsong's prosperity gospel is: the richer you are, the more you can help others*'. (8)

*Hillsong* has become a platform for a wide range of ecumenical church leaders, faith healers and prosperity teachers, many who are heretical and false prophets. The wide scope was evident at a recent Conference (July/2006) when neo-evangelical Rick Warren took the stage, and was followed by radical Pentecostal Reinhard Bonnke, sharing the same event with his blazen display of 'tongues', prophecies and healings. At this Conference Bonnke '*promised married couples who were barren that they would be holding their own baby in their arms in nine months time. He promised cures for cancer, for people with damage to their spines, and those suffering from rheumatoid arthritis. He asked us to stand and place our hands on the parts of the body where we were sick or on the top of our own heads, and promised that we were healed and that our life spans were returned to normal. The fact that he himself wore glasses at all times before, during and after these sessions seemed to matter little to him or the audience*'. (9)

This same evangelist has fraudulently claimed to raise people from the dead and healed thousands. Investigations by various ministries and by Christian doctors have exposed this man as a signs and wonders fraud. (10)

Then there is Darlene Zsech, who no doubt is an attractive and dynamic song leader, singer and motivator for *Hillsong*. However, her presentation has been described by one Christian magazine as '*sentimental, incoherent, and rather light on content - that it was all anecdote, misquoted Bible verses, oversharing and assertion...*' (11) This quote sums up much of *Hillsong* teaching which majors on topical sermons with a shotgun approach to the use of scripture. Very often the scriptures used simply do not convey what the preacher is emphasising. The pre-sermon repetitive beat music also minimises the level of discernment of the hearers. The music captures hearts and emotions well, but does not well prepare the mind to discern truth from error.

We in this ministry are increasingly noticing youth who are copying this *Hillsong* style of presentation and whose speech is fast, erratic and jumping from one thought to another. This 'hype' of *Hillsong* may have youth jumping and proclaiming 'jesus' but where is the depth that is needed when the tribulations and trials of this life hit home?

The lack of a doctrinal base is worthy of serious consideration! Such doctrines as the Cross, the Blood, the Judgement of God, the Sinfulness of Man, the pursuit of Holiness (and thus Separation) and the systematic exposition of the Scriptures - all these are hardly evident in *Hillsong*. When sin is spoken of, and this is not often, it is spoken in psychological terms such as negative thinking and attitudes that destroy God's purpose in *our* lives, and limit *our* potential. There is little or no message that sinful humanity is under God's wrath and condemnation because of our personal rebellion against Him. *Hillsong's* doctrinal foundation does not allow for the Biblical connection between sin, death and judgement. One writer who went to the 2006 Conference stated: '*...not a single example was found expounding Jesus' death as taking the penalty for sin on our behalf so that we might avoid God's wrath on judgement day...They do not proclaim Jesus death as a substitutionary atonement, turning aside God's wrath so that I can receive forgiveness and be saved on the day of judgement. The Gospel is not preached. Its content is not expounded. Its great terms and concept are not taught or explained. Whatever is driving the bus, it's not the Gospel*'. (12)

### **The Music - Is There a Link?**

Is there a link between the *Hillsong* music and the sinful lifestyles and aberrant doctrine amongst the leaders? We have always been sure there is.

There is a rising tide of voices expressing concern over a rebellious attitude reigning in many of our youth who frequent such events as *Youth Alive*, *Hillsong* and other Contemporary Christian music events. Australia's youth in general are already rebellious, self-centred and hate authority. Rock music reflects and fosters this rebellion.

*Hillsong* 'worship' services at times resemble a nightclub and the sensuality displayed from the platform is hardly Godly and holy. Many of the lyrics are about 'us' and not God and promote a worldly 'love affair' with Jesus. The 'mosh pit' at the foot of the stage of some events would do credit to a Jimmy Barnes concert. Any 'gospel' that might be preached at these events is nullified by the effect of the emotional and worldly music which affects the flesh.

Just how close the music and the performances of *Hillsong* Conferences are to the world is illustrated by this testimony: '*The sound hits you like a wave. The bass is throbbing. The drums kick through your diaphragm with each beat. The guitars thrum and swell. The lead singer is a good looking guy with unkept hair and stubble. He stands arms raised, head thrown back. The crowd moves and sways like a rippling sea. We roar. We sing. We stomp. Two guys stand next to me in leather jackets and dreadlocks, repeatedly pumping the air with their fists. They look at each other, and one mouths the word, 'awesome!'. Loudspeakers flank the stage and rise up above the crowd in curved banks. Images flash and morph in sync with the music on billboard sized video screens. As each verse of the song leads towards the anthemic chorus, the momentum builds. The rhythm drives us forward. The chorus arrives in a rush of sound,*

and sweeps us on. The singer holds his mike towards us and gets us to sing. We belt it out. The year is 1988 and U2 is wowing them at the Sydney Entertainment Centre. Bono is on stage telling us how much he loves this town...[Now] Almost every detail is the same, except that the lead [Hillsong] singer is saying how much he loves Jesus...[this] at the Hillsong conference at Sydney...' (13)

There is clearly a lack of distinction from the world, (Rom.12:2; Eph.2:2; 1Jn.2; James 4:4). We would challenge anyone to listen to the music, watch the performers and read the lyrics of Hillsong music and honestly say that it does not mimic the beat, the fashions and even the thinking of this world. If that is not evident to Christians who would read this, then why is it that the secular world sees Hillsong ever so clearly as their own, as is shown in the following quotes?:

'Every weekend at Hillsong churches in Sydney 19,000 people sing, clap and jump through a two-hour tribute to a God who rocks' (Jennifer Sexton, senior writer *The Australian*) (14)

'...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...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...not especially heavy on theology either. Instead they tended 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...' (*Weekend Australian*, 9/10 July, 2005).

It is sad that the secular world sees Hillsong as it really is and often describes it accurately, yet Christians are blind as to just how much Hillsong is of the world! Sadly in many things '**...the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light**', (Lk.16:8).

Paul put no emphasis on worldly methods but on the power of the message itself, (1Cor.2:1,4; 1Thess.2:3-5). We in this ministry are not against all 'charismatic' or lively music, such as 'choruses' that present sound doctrinal lyrics. However, when the rhythm dominates the music, when the noise level is so loud as to drown out voices, (is God deaf?), and when it becomes sensual, fleshly, repetitive (hypnotic) and worldly, then the line between flesh and spirit has surely been crossed! Yes, such organisations as Youth Alive, Planet Shakers and Hillsong will bring in the numbers and many will make 'decisions'. However, these 'results' do not prove anything! Our music and our youth meetings should be *distinct from* rock music and the ways of the world. They should be holy and uncompromised.

Some years ago the Christians in the Soviet Union issued a plea to the west: '*...freedom is bringing another great harm to our churches. This damage is coming from Christians who are sending rock music and evangelists accompanied by rock bands...We are embarrassed by this image of Christianity...We abhor all Christian Rock music...it is true that rock music attracts people to church but not to Godly living...do not desecrate our teenagers with it. Even*

*the unbelievers recognise it is unholy music and they cannot understand how American Christians can be so much like the world. We call this music from hell.*' (15)

Godly music is predominately melody with minimal beat or at least beat that does not override the melody - this music feeds the spirit; but Hillsong emphasizes the rhythmic beat, which will naturally lean more towards the flesh. (16)

With the music there is too an 'image' that is portrayed by Hillsong and its performers. Many believe there is an overt sexuality. This is well underscored by the teachings of 'Pastor' Bobbie Houston. Her three audio tape series '*Kingdom Women Love Sex*' (later renamed '*She Loves and Values Her Sexuality*') have been popular in the largest Christian bookstores. These teachings set out to explain why she feels Christians should be good at 'it'. Such things as 'pelvic floor exercises' and 'orgasms' are discussed. Those who carry too much weight to be attractive she sees as 'retards'. She says: '*We need to be good at sex ourselves so that if the world happens to come knocking we can tell the story of God in our lives,*' Bobbie says, on the tape. '*Without being lurid or untruthful - hello! - we can say [she whispers], 'I have a great marriage and a great sex life' - wink wink, nudge nudge. Yeah, truly.*' Bobbie also offers some practical advice. Fat is out...'*If I carry weight I feel like a retard...How are you going to do anything to surprise your man when you need a hydraulic crane just to turn over in bed?' Have plastic surgery, if it makes you feel better and it is for the right reasons, and 'girls, pelvic floor exercises - can you believe I am saying this? - you know, I have heard that orgasm is not as strong if you are really sloppy in that area'.*

The primary market targeted for the Hillsong merchandise and concerts is our precious youth. On questioning a group of young people who attend Hillsong, the unanimous answer to our question 'How did you become involved in this Church?' was - 'the music!'. The authors have personally met non Christians who frequent Hillsong events because of the music and entertainment factor alone.

The most frightening thing about what Christians think of Hillsong is that many simply do not see the music as pandering to the world or the flesh. The doctrine is accepted as it stands - a toxic mixture of truth and error. One only has to listen to their CD's or read the lyrics to discern that much of the music and the live performances are so close to the world and far from 'holy'. Again, the proof of this is that many of their recordings reach the top of secular charts and are regularly advertised on commercial radio and television. One observer at the 2006 Conference stated: '*Of the two hours or so each of the 14 rallies throughout the week, around half the time was a rock concert, led by Darlene and an array of special guest singers...The crowd seems to thrive on it. As each rally opened, an impromptu mosh pit would form at the front*' (17)

One reader wrote to us about such a typical Conference and highlighted the need for discernment: '*I was attending a four day 'Planet Shakers' Conference in Adelaide with my church's youth group, eager to learn more about God and to grow in my relationship with Him. At first, the conference seemed to be like many of the Christian functions that I had attended in the past: loud music, dynamic preachers and young Christians like me coming together to worship Jesus. However, as the conference progressed I began to notice certain things that didn't 'sit right' with me. I noticed, for*

instance, that there was a nightly half-hour 'sermon' emphasizing the importance of giving as a primary means of obtaining material blessing from God...the worship was unashamedly ecstatic and repetitive, and there were altar calls and mass 'conversions' or 'healings' in nearly every session. Even more unbelievable, though, was the attitude of the conference's director, Russell Evans: at one stage he said that he could 'demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit' simply by throwing a towel at someone who would subsequently fall over! I was shocked at this outright blasphemy, but I was even more shocked at the response I got from my youth pastor, who, when told of my concern, said that Planet Shakers was a 'perfectly normal Pentecostal conference' and that I should just 'chew the meat and spit out the bones'. I was also deeply concerned about the fact that I was the only one out of my entire youth group who had a negative experience of the conference! In fact, I was so distressed about being the only one that I no longer felt like a part of the group, and as a result I began to question my faith. Did I really know who God was? If this was the one true God, then why did I suddenly feel so distant from Him? Why did I no longer want to worship Him? It was at this point that I decided to search for the truth: I took a break from church and began to earnestly pray and study the Word of God for myself. However, I was still pretty upset by the Planet Shakers experience, and so found this to be incredibly difficult: so much so that I came dangerously close to giving up on the faith altogether. The only thing that gave me hope was, in fact, an [audio tape] testimony from your ministry of being delivered from the movement...I identified with so many of the things mentioned, and was relieved to find that there was someone else out there who felt the same way. You confirmed my suspicions about the movement...I worked up the courage to leave the offending church, which I now realise is deeply involved in both extra-biblical revelation and the ecumenical movement. I am currently seeking a new church...I admit my reluctance in committing for fear of being contaminated by false doctrine all over again...' (18)

Many readers might say of *Hillsong* music that 'some songs are OK'. But is this to accept 'leaven' in the lump of truth about which Scripture has much to say? 'Leaven' is a New Testament symbol of sin and error, (Matt.16:12). Paul warns: '...Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened...the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth', (1Cor.5:6-8).

Why is the church seeking to ape the world? The very word 'church' comes from the Greek word 'ekklesia' which means to be 'called out' of the world. Why does the world increasingly love the music being played in many churches today? Why are many Christian singers recently making it big time on the world's music charts and being signed up to the world's best secular record companies?

In the middle of the 20th Century, Tozer wrote: 'Religious entertainment is in many places rapidly crowding out the serious things of God. Many churches have become little more than poor theatres'. When Tozer wrote this the entertainment factor in churches had only just become noticeable on a broad scale. Would Tozer be able today to tell the difference between the world and the church?

Should we sing *Hillsong* songs? Do we not promote *Hillsong* in some measure when we sing their songs? Does

not *Hillsong* benefit financially when we do so? Is not the music the entry point into *Hillsong*'s aberrant philosophy, doctrine and teachings? Do we not compromise God's theology when we sing the songs? Is it not enough that the fruit of *Hillsong* has been adultery, sexual deviancies, broken marriages, thousands of spurious conversions, making merchandise of their hearers and false doctrinal teaching? How can we willingly allow our children or ourselves to attend these events such as *Hillsong*?

*Hillsong* is taking our youth and the church closer to the world and Rome with it's thinking and methods. Brian Houston recently spoken at a US conference at Robert Schuller's apostasy riddled church - and shared the platform with Roman Catholic priests speaking there. The church is called to be separate, holy and '**the pillar and ground of truth**', (1Tim.3:15). We urge parents, teachers, Pastor/Elders and readers to stand against *Hillsong* where necessary.

This article will be seen by many as 'blunt', 'unloving' and 'judgmental'. It is indeed one of our strongest articles to date. But it is time to publicly warn people of a movement that at best is shallow 'feel good' Christianity and at worst a movement that is taking the church into grave apostasy and ecumenism. *Hillsong* has degraded moral standards, it has changed the face of Christian music and presented songs that barely have any sound doctrine in them, it has altered the attitudes of our youth and it is a melting pot of false teaching and false prophecies.

The 'jesus' that *Hillsong* presents is not the Jesus of the Bible. He does not teach, as *Hillsong* does, that miracles will be the forerunner of a world wide end time revival; or that unknown 'tongues' is the evidence of the 'Baptism with the Spirit', (*Hillsong* adheres to this error as an *Assembly of God* church).

The ecumenical jesus that *Hillsong* encourages focuses on love and avoids truth, doctrine, sin and the wrath of God - all vital ingredients of the gospel. The ecumenical jesus is into union at the expense of truth. It says Catholicism is Christian and counts 'decisions' as salvation.

But the real Jesus is non-negotiable on holiness and separation from the world, sin and error. He does not accept mixtures ('leaven') or false teachers and prophets.

The real Jesus teaches us to '**present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God**', (Rom.12:1,2).

#### Terry Arnold & Mike Clayton

(1) <http://www.signposts.org.au/2006/05/04/high-cost-of-faith/>  
 (2) Kelly Burke, 'Religious Affairs' Writer *Sydney Morning Herald*, P.8, March 27/2002  
 (3) *Diakrisis Australia*, May/June 2002; *Sydney Morning Herald* 27 March 2002  
 (4) See our papers 'Word Faith Movement - A Closer Look' and...(5) 'False Prophecies, Revelations and Teachings'  
 (6) *Diakrisis Australia*, May/June 2003, P.9,10  
 (7) <http://www.signposts.org.au/2006/05/04/high-cost-of-faith/>  
 (8) Jennifer Sexton, senior writer, *The Australian*. <http://www.signposts.org.au/2006/05/04/high-cost-of-faith/>  
 (9) 'The Briefing', Jan/2007, P.13  
 (10) *Diakrisis Australia*, various articles free on request  
 (11) 'The Briefing', Jan/2007, P.11  
 (12) Ibid P.16  
 (13) Ibid P.11  
 (14) <http://www.signposts.org.au/2006/05/04/high-cost-of-faith/>  
 (15) Peters & Rychuk, Unregistered Union of churches, Moscow, Nov/91  
 (16) For the effect of music on the body & mind see *Diakrisis Australia* June/98; May/June 2001  
 (17) 'The Briefing', Jan/2007  
 (18) *Diakrisis Australia*, Sept-Oct/2003, P.7

## Quotables

### **Psychology:**

Quotes from 'Our Sufficiency in Christ' by John MacArthur:

'Psychology is not a uniform body of scientific knowledge, like thermodynamics or organic chemistry. When we speak of psychology we refer to a complex menagerie of ideas and theories, many of which are contradictory. Psychology has not even proved capable of dealing effectively with the human mind and with mental and emotional processes. Thus it can hardly be regarded as a science'. (P.60,61)

'However, the following views, popularised by psychology, have filtered down into the church from assorted stuff in the psychological tank and are having a profound and disturbing effect on its approach to helping people:

- Human nature is basically good.
- People have the answers to their problems inside them.
- The key to understanding and correcting a person's attitudes and actions lies somewhere in his past.
- Individual's problems can be solved only by professional counsellors using therapy.
- Human problems can be purely psychological in nature - unrelated to any spiritual or physical condition...' (P.61,62)

'Psychiatrists themselves acknowledge that their profession often smacks of moderns alchemy - full of jargon, obfuscation and mystification, but precious little real knowledge'. (P.62)

'Get the patient to make an absolute commitment to change, then guarantee a cure but do not tell the patient what it is for several weeks. 'Once you postpone, you never lose them as patients', he said. 'They have to find out what the cure is'. One bulimic who ate in binges and threw up five to 25 times a day was told she would be cured if she gave the therapist a penny the first time she vomited and doubled the sum each item she threw up. Says Haley: 'they quickly figure out that it doubles so fast that they can owe the therapist hundreds of thousands of dollars in a few days, so they stop'. (P.65)

### **Power Religion:**

Quotes from 'Power Religion' (by various authors)

'Power Preachers: Authority is derived from the Word, not from the office. If a minister is not faithful to the Word and to the gospel it proclaims, he is a usurper. There is no such thing as 'the Lord's anointed', preachers who are above the Word with whose protection they are entrusted. Any claim to divine authority for commands, expectations, 'revelations', or guidance that are not stated in the pages of Holy Scripture are marks of a spiritual tyrant and Pharisee'. (P.19)

### **Church Growth:**

'Church growth: In Acts 2, it is a matter of spreading the word about the great acts of God in Christ for our redemption. One searches in vain for a successful marketing strategy behind the amazing spread of the Christian faith in Acts.

After Pentecost the very next report is Peter's sermon, and it was not a 'Do I Have a God for You!' sermon, either: 'This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross...God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact', (Acts 2:23,32)

...the believers 'devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer', (vs.42). Imagine average people, many without any advanced education, station, or wealth, sitting up until all hours of the night learning theology! Whenever they met, they broke bread, which is usually taken as a reference to Holy Communion. How many strategies, programs, 'celebrations', and church activities today have replaced the unparalleled experience of the true fellowship we share together with Christ at the 'Lord's Table'? And as for prayer, compare the amount of time given to prayer in our worship to the amount of time spent on announcements, entertainment, and special events. Imagine what would happen if the millions of evangelicals in America alone who claim to be 'born again' became devoted once again to the apostles' teaching!' (P.18)

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## **Chronology of Christianity**

by R.C.Wetzel 'A Chronology of Biblical Christianity'

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

**1103** Samuel was born to Elkanah and Hannah; The name 'Britain' given by Butus of Troy when his Phoenicians invaded England.

**1095** Samson delivered Israel from the Philistines and judged Israel 20 years. Saul, son of Kish was born.

**1080** Philistines defeated Israel at Aphek. Shiloh destroyed

**1076** Samson died in destruction of Temple of Dagon.

**1073** Samuel became judge of Israel.

**1065** Saul anointed as first king of Israel by Samuel.

**1063** God rejected Saul as king over Israel.

**1055** David born to Jesse at Bethlehem.

**1036** Ark of the Covenant returned to Israel and remained in the house of Abinadab for 20 years.

**1030** Saul again rejected by God as king. David anointed king of Israel by Samuel.

**1029** David killed Goliath, the giant Philistine.

**1027** Samuel died at age 76, and judging over Israel officially ended. 1st and 2nd Samuel written by Samuel. ISamuel covers events from 1103-1025B.C.; IISamuel, from 1025-990 B.C.

**1025** Saul died at age 70. David became king of Israel in Hebron at age 30.

## Your Comments and Questions

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

### John MacArthur?

*Dear Terry & Mike, over the years I have noticed you occasionally quote from and write reviews of books by the American 'pastor and teacher', John MacArthur. Some say he teaches 'heresy' on the subject of Christ's blood and that he keeps company with those who have signed the ecumenical document 'Evangelicals and Catholics Together' (ECT). He also congratulated heretical Jack Hayford for the longevity of his deceptive ministry. Some say too that he is into psychology. Could you Comment?*

*I have enjoyed the ministry that you have been called to. Your discerning writings are a vital work in the Church today. May the Lord continue to give you diligence and bless you in your work for Him.*

(G.C., Sydney)

**Editors Comments:** *We do not agree with everything MacArthur teaches but on most things important he is sound and 'orthodox'. However, some fundamentalist ministries have been responsible for a smear campaign against him. There are still one or two 'discernment' ministries (at least one in Australia) who persist in publishing incorrect information. We have written to two of them - one in the US and one in Australia and challenged them with statements and teaching straight from MacArthur himself and his ministry.*

There are four issues here:

#### 1. *The Hayford affair:*

MacArthur sent a congratulatory note to Charismatic pastor Jack Hayford (his church is in close proximity to MacArthur's) for achieving '50 years in the ministry'. We do not agree with this action considering Jack Hayford's heretical teaching over the years which is opposed by MacArthur's strong stand against the Charismatic movement. To 'honour' such a man to us is a stumblingblock to many. We have written to MacArthur's ministry and expressed this.

#### 2. *The Blood Issue:*

MacArthur was accused of disregarding the blood as efficacious in salvation. We followed the controversy carefully when it erupted *a decade ago*. We read a book by a man called Waite and 'quotes' by MacArthur on a fundamentalist website. We then contacted MacArthur. We discovered the quotes were grossly out of context and at times dishonest. We received a reply from MacArthur's ministry which in our opinion cleared him of any 'heresy' (available from this ministry). Some have wrongly called this a 'retraction' which it is not. This letter written by MacArthur clearly settles any concern about his teaching on the doctrine regarding the efficacy of Christ's blood. We also received two hours of audio tapes where MacArthur *publicly* cleared the air on this subject in response to *live questioning* while on stage. We would challenge anyone to listen to those tapes and read his official statement on this issue and then find fault in the doctrines presented. However, we do believe that MacArthur inadvertently went 'out on a limb' to emphasise the death of the Lord over and above the

necessary shedding of the *physical* blood, which sadly gave cause for some people to be confused, and an opening for some to misquote him.

#### 3. *The ECT:*

MacArthur has been one of the most outspoken *against* the ECT. An example of the falseness of some quotes against MacArthur is seen in the following recent quote: *'In January of 1995, the neo-evangelical host of the John Ankerberg Show announced a 2/8/95 seminar to be held at Catholic-sympathizer D. James Kennedy's church (Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida). Other participants in the seminar (to supposedly expose the errors in the ECT) were Ankerberg, Kennedy, John MacArthur, and R.C. Sproul. [Ankerberg produced a 6-part video series of this seminar (titled 'Protestants and Catholics: Do They Now Agree?'), and aired it on six consecutive Sunday evenings starting 3/5/95. Sproul was seated on the grandiose stage with MacArthur and Kennedy...'* [Underlining ours]

The statement above has been used to discredit MacArthur as being yoked with ecumenists or having weakened on the ECT. However, we have the actual video and transcript of the above event which occurred over ten years ago! MacArthur was quite strong against the ECT and *has not capitulated at all since*. The quote above simply does not tell what happened *at that conference night*. The teaching and refutation *against* the ECT was *strong and decisive and without compromise*. And it is *since that time* that Kennedy has weakened on the ecumenical movement. Anyone who reads MacArthur's books will know where he stood and still stands on the ecumenical movement and Roman Catholicism!

#### 4. *John MacArthur being into psychology:*

We find this baffling after reading many of MacArthur's recent books. He has been strongly *against* psychology. We have several pages of quotes that will prove this, (see also P.9 of this newsletter). Here is just *one* quote: *'Not only do psychologists sell supposed cures for a high price, but they also invent diseases for which the cures are needed...Self-image, looks, co-dependency, emotional abuse, mid-life crisis, unfulfilled expectations - today's 'infirmities' were once seen more accurately as the pains of selfishness. Egocentricity has become a major marketing strategy for therapists. Psychology is no more a science than the atheistic evolutionary theory upon which it is based. Like theistic evolution, 'Christian Psychology' is an attempt to harmonise two inherently contradictory systems of thought. Modern psychology and the Bible cannot be blended without serious compromise ...psychotherapy cannot solve anyone's spiritual problems...'* ('Our Sufficiency in Christ', Page 66).

Terry Arnold & Mike Claydon

For further documentation and MacArthur's replies to these various attacks: <http://www.biblebb.com/files/MAC/ECTDOC.HTM> ; <http://www.biblebb.com/files/MAC/ans-attack.htm>

## Your Comments and Questions

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

### [Editors replies in bold and brackets]

Dear Terry,...your recent articles re election have caused a bit of consternation among local 'Diakrisis' readers. [They were meant to...we are a ministry called to expose apostasy. Arminianism was and is apostasy]

The quotes by Spurgeon did sound a bit harsh and arrogant and people may attribute that to you. [If people attribute Spurgeon's 'harshness and arrogance' to us - we will be only too pleased to accept it - because every word we have printed of his remarks are true. The truth often hurts those that have strayed from it?] This subject will probably never be settled on earth and is not required for salvation. [Perhaps so, but it is concerning the doctrine of salvation. It is essential we follow the true God, and not one of our own fertile imaginations? How does one have assurance if we believe our salvation is dependent on our 'choosing'?] I personally didn't ever hear about it for some time after I was saved. [Many would not understand this truth long after salvation but that does not nullify the Biblical doctrine?] Perhaps it is one of the mysteries - like the church - that our all knowing God understands more than we do. [It is not a 'mystery' - our election has been fully explained in scripture - God would not have us ignorant at all of this fact! The 'mystery' is in the futile reconciling of two truths - the responsibility of man to repent / and the sovereign election by God]

Perhaps it is best to only quote the Scriptures and not what men have said. After coming out of the JW's by reading the Bible, I have to get everything from the Word of God alone. [The articles have been full of scripture! But again, look at Ephesians Ch.1 if you will]

Israel is clearly the elect by natural birth and obedience to the Law (circumcision/Sabbath etc.) which marks them as God's peculiar people. [We agree. But Israel are not the only 'elect' in Scripture, Tit.2:14; 1Pet.2:9; 1Thess.1:4; 1Pet.1:2,10; Eph.1:5,9,11; 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...]

In John 4 the Lord tells the Samaritan woman that 'the

Father seeks those who 'worship in Spirit and in Truth' and the principle of man's responsibility is laid down with Adam. [Yes, his responsibility is evident and also his inability to do anything to save himself! Adam and Eve attempted the cover of fig leaves and ran and hid from God. It was God who sought them out and clothed them!] We are saved by faith (Eph 2:8-10) which comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom 10:17). [And this 'Faith' that you speak of is 'not of ourselves', it is a 'gift']

The Church is sent into all the world to preach the Gospel and pray - 'one plants another reaps but it is God who gives the increase' 1Cor 3:6. As a result we are 'born again by the Word of God', 1Pet 1:23. [We fully agree]

People today seem to be happy to have their ears tickled with appeals to the flesh. Prayer seems to be for mainly healing, rain, etc (not in accord with James 5) but there is little fervent prayer - intercession for lost souls - except with those involved with missions. We are co-workers with Christ. [Agree]

While the Holy Spirit 'convicts us of sin, righteousness and judgement to come' and 'the Gospel is the power of God to everyone who believes', this emphasis is lacking today. (John 16:8, Rom 1:16-22)

There is a great need to encourage people to personally study the Bible and hear His voice (John 10), as knowing the Word of will protect us from sin and error. Psalm 119. [Yes, our sentiments exactly in this ministry] For something positive, maybe you could run something like the article I enclose 'How to study the Bible'? Always remembering 1Corinthians 13, Yours in Christ Jesus our Lord. [What is more 'positive' than the doctrine of Sovereign Election of the Saints? And we quite recently did an article titled 'How To Study The Bible', Sept/Oct 2006!] ('For the time has come for judgement, to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the Gospel of God?') 1Pet 4:17. [This verse is speaking to believers - the 'beloved' (vs.12), the 'christian' (vs.16) and the 'righteous' (vs.18)] (D.S., SE Qld.)

Terry, Please remove me from your mailing list, your material is depressing, and never has a word of encouragement. Let the dead bury the dead, get on with that which is important.

C.S., (Independent Baptist pastor, Adelaide)

Terry, I am really enjoying the reading of your publication 'Diakrisis'. Bless you for your tireless endeavours towards the courageous upholding of His glorious truths. (R.P., NT)

Editors Comments: Compare the two letters above. This a common anomaly in this ministry. One person is depressed and sees our writings as 'negative' (common in this age of post-modernism); the other is encouraged by the truth in exactly the same newsletter. The difference is in the mindset and the filter we use for truth and encouragement. Should not truth and scripture encourage us whether it is found to be 'positive' or 'negative'?

### [Sub-editors reply in bold and brackets]

Dear Mike, Terry, I realise you are inundated with mail...but please comment. It seems to me that a great many churches are pushing the barrow which pertain to the following: (A.O., Sydney)

1. Creation. Happened over millions-billions of years and not in six days as per Genesis Ch.1 - The 'Big Bang' is quite acceptable in many of these churches. [True - yet the geological record actually shows evidence of (A) catastrophic flooding & (B) a relatively young rock strata].

2. The Rapture is said to be the belief of doom and gloomers and there is no Biblical backup for holding to the hope of the rapture. [Without an imminent taking out of the church, where is the 'blessed hope'?

3. Israel is said to have been replaced by the church and that God has finished with the nation and the people. [Then why are the nations now all squabbling over Jerusalem?]

## Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear Terry, Thank you so much for ALL the painstaking work and research you (and Mike) have done for 'Diakrisis'. I have just read all of it (March/April) on e-mail, as the articles were too good to wait for the hard copy. The article on marriage, the English Martyr, Church discipline etc. were really good. Thanks again, love in Christ,

(W.&J.I., Adelaide)

Dear Terry...Thank you for 'Diakrisis'. I enjoy reading them very much and commend your plain speaking and courage in defence of the truth.

I was interested in your comments on Spurgeon smoking...Some fifty three ago I met a retired Baptist minister who was born about 1890 and went to Spurgeon college as a young man to study for the Baptist ministry. He told me Spurgeon suffered terribly with gout and he preached many times in agony. He kept a stool in the pulpit and would rest the foot on the stool as he preached. There was of course no cure for gout, but it was believed that the only way to get some relief was to smoke a certain kind of Indian cheroot cigar. Spurgeon smoked these cigars not because it was a custom but to get some relief from his agony.

Amazingly now there are...slurs on his name! If only people knew the truth of this man of God...I believe people are still converted through reading his sermons. Keep up the good work. God bless.

(K.S., Vict.)

Dear Terry, Mike, Thanks again for another great newsletter - always refreshing to the spirit. Specifically thanks for your article 'The secret' To a Successful Marriage'. I praise God for my husband who provides opportunity for my spiritual growth and helps to keep me spiritually 'warm' for the Lord. I pray your article may help many others in their relationship with our Heavenly Father and also with their spouse,

(K.L., Bris., Qld.)

### Praise/Prayer Points

- Pray for the NSW trip, that many hearers will be edified, informed, taught and equipped. Please pray for safe travel.

- Praise the Lord for opposition to this ministry. Pray for humility, discernment and a steadfastness in the editors.

Dear Friends, We are alerted, challenged and fed by 'Diakrisis'. I will be 97 years old in June and am grateful that I am still able to preach once every Sunday. We think the furrow we plough may not be as deep as formally, but are sure that it is as straight as ever. Our guide pegs are two - 'You are always clean because of the Word that I have spoken to you' and 'But now in Christ Jesus, you who were once far off have been made near by the blood of Christ'. Circumstances, wind and tide cause a wavering in the long furrow yet it leads to a cheerful end.

I share a burden with you, perhaps my last. Australia is saturated with idolatry as Israel was in the time of Jeremiah. This idolatry is in the grandstands and on T.V.; so much pleasure and excitement is displayed. Australians are worshippers of idols; religions envelope this too. There is only one who is able to save His own from it and He is alive and walking through the churches...(Ps. D.D., Central Qld.)

### Terry's Itinerary

#### (Sydney & NSW Itinerary)

**May 6th** (Sun) 9.30 am North Ryde Gospel Hall Ph.88503904

**May 6th** (Sun) 6pm Oak Flats Christian Centre, Woolongong Ph.0413042820

**May 9th** (Wed) 7.30pm Marrickville Home Group Ph.95534818

**May 10th** (Thurs) 7.30pm Guildford Christian Assembly Ph.88077725

**May 12th** May (Sat) 7.30 am Oak Flats Christian Centre Woolongong (Family Breakfast) Ph.0413042820.

**May 13th** (Sun) 10am Church for Everybody, Marrickville Ph.95534818

**May 13th** (Sun) 6pm Emmanuel Baptist Church, Glenwood Ph.96743007

**May 16th** (Wed) Ishak Home Group 7.30pm Ph 0425277794.

**May 18th** (Fri) 7.30pm Cootamundra Bible Fellowship. Youth. Ph.69423541

**May 19th** (Sat) 9.30am-3pm Cootamundra Bible Fellowship Ph.69423541 **Seminar: 'Unity, Union and Ecumenism - At What Price?' (Which Gospel?...Unity or Union?...& more)**

**May 20th** (Sun) 10am Cootamundra Bible Fellowship Ph.69423541

**May 20th** (Sun) 7pm Independent Baptist Church, Wagga Wagga Ph.69265804

**May 22nd** (Tues) 7.30pm Camilleri Home Group, Cootamundra Ph.69422582

**May 27th** (Sun) 11.30am Combined churches Wentworthville Arabic Baptist Church/Guildford Christian Assembly Ph.96799442 Ph.88077725

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