



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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PO Box 1499, Hervey Bay, Qld, 4655
Australia

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

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

E-mail: taminist@bigpond.net.au

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

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

Sub-editor: Mike Claydon

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Editors Comments

Recently I watched a *Four Corners* documentary on Christianity in America. One fact hit home - the media will never show Christianity in a good light. Yet, the documentary accurately showed the 'marketing' of Christianity in the West. Professing Christians were shown indulging their passions using the excuses that they were 'serving the Lord' or 'winning people to Christ'. Creationism as opposed to evolution was represented at least with some responsibility, but among the list of 'Christian activities' were: 'Christian wrestlers', Christians in politics; Christian comedians; Christian Automotive clubs; and every other conceivable hobby, sport or amusement that could be 'christianised'.

All kinds of extremists were represented, including a man with a huge family and a worn out wife - 'procreation' here seemed the most important thing. The high profile Ted Haggard was shown passionately advocating moral principles within the family, purity and fidelity; but the media had the last say - at the end of the documentary a caption correctly informed the viewer that he had been recently convicted of grave sexual misdemeanours.

A list of motivational speakers was also featured; healers guaranteed miracles, signs and wonders; and end-time preachers with slick hair and expensive suits put forth their views on the imminent Second Coming.

But one thing came through loud and clear - *the entertainment factor*. At 'Christian' music festivals there were mosh pits, ecstatic worship and a beat that literally shook bodies. The excitement was obvious with attendees saying '*this is the place to get high*'...(high on 'Jesus' of course). The Gospel was never once represented honestly but was presented in such a way as to make fun of Christianity...and the media had abundant 'material' to do this.

The gullibility of many Christians is at an all time high. Christianity in the West is in a sick and sorry state. One can no longer assume that anyone is a true believer by profession alone. I could not help but think of the scripture which speaks of '*many*' who profess Christianity being forsaken by the Lord for their prophecies, works, false miraculous and their hypocrisy, (Matt.7:21-23). The Greek word '*many*' used here refers to a *large quantity in number*. Indeed, '*many*' today have simply 'believed in vain'. It is time to say this - most of what we see today is not real Christianity and '*many*' of its adherents, *according to scripture*, will not possess eternal life!

Recently I was in Fiji where Pentecostalism and other 'isms' are increasingly making inroads into traditional Methodist churches, many of which arguably are 'dead'. But Pentecostalism has taken many of these churches from one extreme to the other with a 'false fire'. Benny Hinn visited Fiji last year, charging a fee to enter his show. Fiji is a poor country and it saddens many there to see such a charlatan take money out of the country and give nothing but lying signs and wonders and interpretations of scripture that defy common sense. Thousands are deceived by the hype. But *good 'entertainment' will always attract*.

We are in a distinct '*falling away*' (2Thess.2:3) and Christians need to '*come out of her*' (Rev.18:4) and seek fellowship with sound teaching, exposition of scripture and the 'meat' that will endure! **Terry Arnold**

YHWH, Y'shua, HaMashiach or Jesus...?

In recent years there has been some wrangling over what words we should use for the name of the one who died on a cross and bore our sins. In many circles there has been an increasing emphasis when writing the name of Jesus or God to use Hebrew forms of God's name such as *Yeshua* or *Yashua*, *YHWH*, etc.

The English speaking world calls Him '*Jesus*', an Anglicization of the Greek *Ihsous* (*Iesous*), itself a transliteration of the Hebrew *Yeshu'a*, meaning 'YHWH is salvation'. *Ihsous* means Saviour (Matt.1:1,16,21). He is commonly referred to as Jesus Christ, where 'Christ' is a title derived from the Greek *Xristos*, (*Christos*) meaning 'Anointed One', which corresponds to the Hebrew-derived 'Messiah'. Thus some prefer the title '*Jeshua Ha Maschiach*'. Others believe the Lord was actually named 'Joshua' in our language.

Confused? That's what many have become, due to those who could well be called 'Judaizers' who wrangle over what name we should be using. Recent Judaistic movements, including what some refer to as the 'Hebrew Roots Movement', rely heavily on a 'Midrashic' interpretation of the Scriptures. Yet a simple exegesis of the original Koine Greek does not reveal these apparently underlying Jewish understandings?

The warning signs of these extremes are often evident when people become very interested in Old Testament feast days and keeping and practising them; obsessive interest in Jewish ways, customs and lifestyles; and studying and reading from Jewish Bibles with Hebrew names inserted. These preferences may not be error in and of themselves, but it is the obsessiveness with which it is often held that can destroy the unity of the local body of believers.

In some publications and Bibles, Hebrew titles for God are inserted into the text. Instead of *Jesus*, the '*original Hebrew name of 'Y'shua'*' is used. But did not God inspire the writers to put the New Testament Scriptures down in *Koine Greek*? Were not these original Greek manuscripts inspired and inerrant?

Greek for *Jesus* is *Ihsous* (*Iesous* - pronounced *yair-sous*) which is transliterated from the Hebrew *Yeshu'a*. Regardless of what one understands of this, *the word Ihsous has been written down in the original manuscripts as the inspired and inerrant name of the one most call 'Jesus'*. Although *Ihsous* is a transliteration of the Hebrew *Y'shua*, nevertheless God *ordained* it to be written as the Greek *Ihsous* (*Iesous*). That word *Ihsous* has been translated into our English Bibles as 'Jesus'!

Who will dare to say that the original Greek is in error when men were borne along by the Holy Spirit to pen such words? And does not the Lord know who we are talking about when we say '*Jesus*'? Why the necessity and emphasis on a Hebrew name when the inspired, inerrant and infallible New Testament was written in *Koine Greek*?

Many scholars and language experts believe that Jesus and the apostles probably spoke Aramaic in every day language but all spoke and wrote in Koine Greek, the 'common' ('koine') language of the day. It was this language that God arranged to have the New Testament Word of God written in. We get our New Testament translations from the *original Koine Greek*!

Why confuse people with *Yeshua* or other Hebrew names when everyone knows Him as '*Jesus*'? And why don't we be more 'accurate' and use *Ihsous* and pronounce it correctly as '*yairsous*'? Do we need to have classes to teach people how to pronounce this...just in case God does not hear properly? My pronunciation of the original languages is not perfect but I am more than confident I can pronounce the English *Jesus* correctly. I am even more confident that whatever name I use the Lord knows the thoughts before they come off my tongue, (Ps.139:4,23)!

This scramble to find the Lord's correct name has led to a labyrinth of opinions and pronunciations, but at the root of it is Judaism and Gnosticism. The devil loves to drive people to extremes!

Jesus of Nazareth is the central figure of Christianity. He is the creator of heaven and earth, the only begotten son of God who died on a cross at Calvary to atone for men's sins and receive those who would believe *in Him*. God is omniscient - all knowing! Whether we call him Jesus or some other Hebrew name, we know, *and He knows*, just who we refer to!

For centuries the English speaking Church has used the term 'The Lord Jesus Christ' and translated that into hundreds of languages around the world. The name of any person will vary depending on where the person is born. A person called 'Michael' in England could be Mike, (North America), Michel (France), Mihael (Ireland) or Mikhail (USSR)...but it is still the *same person* being referred to.

People who would get hung up on Hebrew names for Jesus should consider other names in the Bible. How would they pronounce the Archangel 'Michael' from the book of Daniel? Would they bother with the Hebrew in that case?

There are important scriptures that could be brought to bear on this confusion. Scripture warns of Judaizers and those who would come in and confuse the brethren. The Bible also mentions 'fables' in several places, including '***Jewish fables***': '***For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision...rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth...***', (Tit.1:10-16). The word '*fables*' refers to a tale or that which is fabricated by the mind in contrast to reality. It is the word from which 'mythology' is derived. Such 'fables' are falsehoods and pretences. The same word is used in 1Timothy 4:7. In 2Peter 1:16 they are described as '***cunningly devised***' for the purpose of deceiving others.

We are warned of Judaism just as Paul warned Timothy! Christians need not get caught up in foolish questions and contentions about the law, (Tit.3:9). The fruit of such '***minister questions, rather than godly edifying***' and those who engaged in such have '***turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm***', (1Tim.1:3-7).

Judaistic emphasis and disputing over the name of Jesus also violates the sense of *order* in churches. '***For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints***', (1Cor.14:33). '***In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion***', (Ps.70:2).

Terry Arnold

Rapture or Apostasy?

This article addresses a doctrine that has arisen in recent years and is being again developed and disseminated by such organisations as the Australian *Herald of Hope*. The issue is: The '**falling away**' in 2Thessalonians 2:3 - is it an 'apostasy from the faith' or is it the 'Rapture' of the church?

Arminian Confusion:

But first, a reminder to our readers of our other concern with the ministry of The *Herald of Hope*. Earlier this year (Jan/Feb/2007) this ministry took the prayerful and considered step of critiquing a single article written by John Ecob in the above magazine. This was after contacting the writer and *no reply being received*. The article concerned a false representation of the history of 'Calvinism' and the doctrine of election. Church history was twisted to make a case for Arminianism and against the doctrine of sovereign election. Added to this, there were doctrines attributed to 'Calvinism' which simply were not part of that historic doctrine.

We wrote gently to the editor, John Ecob, offering information to correct at least the history of these things. We were consequently contacted by others with accusations of not contacting the writer, attacking his character and teaching the 'heresy' of 'Calvinism'. Nevermind that these charges were all untrue and that we were simply refuting the error and confusion of the history portrayed. The confusion was obvious to any who have studied the history of The Doctrines of Grace written by those who actually taught it - the Puritans, the Reformers and indeed almost all the great teachers and evangelists.

Perhaps the following list might remind readers of those who would undoubtedly today be labelled 'Calvinists' by our critics: Charles Spurgeon, John Newton, John Wycliffe, Martyn Luther, John Knox, John Owen, John Bunyan, William Carey, William Tyndale, Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, Augustus Strong, Charles Hodge, BB Warfield, James Boyce, Matthew Henry, Robert Haldane, JC Ryle, DL Moody, Martyn Lloyd Jones...and the martyrs who all held to the doctrines of Grace: Huss, Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, Foxe (wrote the Foxe's Book of Martyrs), etc. All these teachers and evangelists were exponents and believers of The Doctrines of Grace which included the Biblical doctrine of unconditional and sovereign election.

It is time to ask this question: those who are annoyed with us for defending the doctrine of sovereign election - would they have Charles Spurgeon preach in their churches? Obviously not. Yet, *nowhere have we taught any more than that which Spurgeon taught on the doctrine of election and indeed the Doctrines of Grace!* The point being made here is this: many, and even most churches today, who view themselves as 'sound' would be shocked if they looked at their historic roots and could see the great 20th Century shift to Arminianism!

The *Herald of Hope* often publishes sound and interesting articles regarding Biblical prophecy and endtime events. We applaud them for this. No doubt many of them are Godly men and some are our friends. We simply do not want to critique this ministry at all, but in recent years there has been no shortage of error written concerning at least two issues - 'Election'; and the interpretation of the 'Rapture' in 2Thessalonians 2:3.

We always give those with whom we disagree plenty of space and warning. But *public error must be corrected or refuted publicly where there is no explanation or correction made - and thereby many readers are ill-affected*. Many are concerned and even confused concerning this new teaching of the 'falling away' in 2Thessalonians 2:3 being erroneously interpreted as a 'rapture' by the *Herald of Hope*.

This confusion has been added to in a recent article by Peter Jackson in the *Herald of Hope*, where the doctrine of election is strangely intertwined with that of the 'Rapture'. He writes (**bold** in the original): '*...once the Holy Spirit indwelling the church is removed, then the man of sin will appear. Paul reinforces this point: 'But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning **chosen you to salvation** through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth' (2Thess.2:13). Election is always to glorification and not to faith. Here the word salvation is used in the same sense as in (1Thess.5:9). 'For God hath not appointed us to wrath (Tribulation), but **to obtain salvation** (deliverance) by our Lord Jesus Christ'. Our salvation will be complete with the redemption of the body at the Rapture...'*

Having begun with the debatable premise that the antichrist cannot appear until the Church is raptured - he then tries to validate that claim by using 2Thessalonians 2:13 - but that text has absolutely *nothing* to do with the 'rapture'! He then appeals to 1Thessalonians 5:9 - putting in his own erroneous translation of the Greek word for 'salvation' in *both texts* as 'deliverance'. Neither does this text speak of the Rapture. His next part of the last paragraph before his 'summary' is pure conjecture - and cannot be backed up by scripture!

And when the writer says: '*Election is always to glorification and not to faith*', what does he mean by this? The scripture used does not address any issue of whether 'election' is '*to glorification*' or '*to faith*'. And again, this has no bearing on the 'rapture'!

However, election is an integral part of salvation as is 'glorification' and 'faith'. Salvation is *through* ('*dia*') the vehicle of faith. As for 'election', the very '*purpose of God*' is in election (Rom.9:11); it is an '*election of God*' (1Thess.1:4); an '*election of grace*' (Rom.11:5). When God '*calls*' people to salvation He also '*elects*' (2Pet.1:10). God's elect are justified and saved from the condemnation brought on them because of sin, (Rom.8:33).

The word here in 2Thessalonians 2:13 is also '*sanctification*', not '*glorification*', although we grant that glorification is the end result of the process of sanctification. But the whole interpretation here is confusing in that it is lacking any connection between election and the 'rapture'! It also arguably fails to realise that *Salvation has in it Justification, Sanctification and Glorification - and all are a part of salvation*. Justification is ones standing before God - an unrepeatable past event (Rom.5:1; Rom.4:1-13), totally passive on man's part and active on God's part (Rom.4 - the verbs such as '*justified*', '*imputed*', '*counted*', '*forgiven*', etc, are all passive - that is, God does it all). Justification gives freedom from the penalty of sin (Eph.1:7; Col.2:13,14) solely because of Christ's work. Sanctification is the present continuum of that salvation (1Jn.3:3; 2Cor.7:1; Phil.2:12,13;1:6), giving freedom from the power of sin

(2Tim.4:18; 2Cor.7:1) as we 'work out our salvation' with the Holy Spirit working within us 'until the day of Jesus Christ', (Phil.1:6; 2:12,13). And glorification is the final saving and future redemption of the body, (Rom.8:21-23; 2Cor.5:1,2). All three encompass salvation - salvation past (Justification), salvation present (Sanctification) and salvation future (Glorification).

Apostasy or 'Rapture'?

The article continues on into another issue which has increasingly concerned us. The *Herald of Hope* has consistently taught in recent years that the 'falling away' in 2Thessalonians 2:3 is not an 'apostasy' from the faith but rather the 'Rapture' of the saints.

'Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away [apostasia] first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition'.

The historic and majority view has been that the word 'apostasia' in this passage refers to the *religious apostasy* that will precede the second coming of Christ. This view has been held by the majority of Biblical commentators such as Calvin, Chafer, Walvoord, Ryrie and Gundry. Some have thought this apostasy to be more of a religio-political rebellion against Christ which will culminate in the Battle of Armageddon (Hogg and Vine, Moore, Morris, Bruce).

The 'Rapture' view taught by the *'Herald of Hope'* is clearly traced mainly to a series of articles by E. Schuyler English, entitled *'Re-thinking the Rapture'* which first appeared in *'Our Hope'* magazine from Oct./1949 to March 1950. Before this time there were only very isolated references to this view as in 1859 from a J.S. Mabie during an address to an annual conference on the Lords coming, Los Angeles, Nov./1895 - which was later published. John R. Rice also suggested this view in 1945: *'I believe that this refers to the Rapture of the saints, when the invisible ties of Gravity will be broken and we will suddenly fall away into the air to meet Jesus.'* (*'The Coming Kingdom of Christ'*, P.152).

However it was E. English who popularised the view which was then followed by Wuest, Walvoord, Lewis, Tan, Ellisen, Wood, Davey and House. Walvoord later recanted and abandoned it. In recent years, this view has been brought forth again.

The epistle begins with: ***'Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand'***, (vs.1,2)

Paul here exhorts the Christians to remain firm and not lose sight of the coming of the Lord. It may be that the Thessalonians had lost their desire to look for His appearing? The phrase ***'by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter'*** could suggest that false teaching had entered in. The phrase ***'is at hand'*** (*'enistemi'*) is in the perfect tense/indicative mood which shows an event occurring in the past with results in the present and referring to a set time. It has been suggested by some that the Thessalonians were wrongly being taught that the day of Christ had already occurred or was present in some way.

The phrase ***'the day of Christ'*** is either taken to be the time when God again deals with Israel, or the Millennial

age. In the New Testament, the *Day of the Lord* is related closely to the time of the second coming of Christ, as in the *Day of our Lord Jesus Christ*, (1Cor.1:8; 5:5; Phil.1:6,10; 2:16). These expressions refer to time periods of judgment by Christ. The *Day of the Lord* at least includes the time of the Great Tribulation, (Cf. Rev.Chs.6-20). Zechariah 14:1-4 shows the events of the Second Advent are included in the program of the *Day of the Lord*. Thus, the *Day of the Lord* and the *Day of Christ* are considered by many to be synonymous.

The phrase in verse 3 ***'Let no man deceive you by any means'*** sums up the first two verses. Paul then states two things which must occur before the coming of the Lord - the falling away - *'apostasia'* and the *revealing of the man of sin*. The adverb ***'first'*** (*'proton'*) modifies both the two conditions - in other words, the day of the Lord is not a reality until first both events have occurred.

Now to the phrase ***'falling away'*** in 2Thessalonians 2:3: The *only other place* the Greek word *'apostasia'* is used is in Acts 21:21 ***'And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake [apostasia] Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after their customs'***. An important method of interpretation is *Scripture interprets Scripture*. *Acts 21:21 is the key to any interpretation of 2Thessalonians 2:3!* Acts 21:21 is undoubtedly a *'forsaking'* of what was originally held - a *religious apostasy!* This scripture should be the ultimate and main test to understand what is meant by the ***'falling away'*** in our text of 2Thessalonians 2:3!

Yet the recent *Herald of Hope* article refers to this *'forsake'* in Acts 21 as *'depart from'* - but in the sense of a 'rapture'. We challenge the writer to interpret this verse correctly and to see that it is speaking clearly of a *religious 'falling away'* from that which what was previously held! - an 'apostasy'. This is simply not a *physical or spatial* departure as in a 'rapture'.

The Septuagint Old Testament references also convey the sense of a non spatial *falling away* and always of a *religious defection*, (eg. 2Chr.29:19: ***'casting away'***; Jer.29:32 ***'rebellion'***). In every one of these instances from the Old Testament (and even other Apocryphal books), the meaning is religious or political defection! In matters of vocabulary and style the Septuagint strongly influenced the New Testament writers, including Paul.

Semantics:

Some teachers at *Herald of Hope* have unfortunately avoided this safe hermeneutical procedure of testing the meaning of 'apostasia' by comparing where else it is used and wrongly concentrated on the cognate verb which *'apostasia'* comes from - *'aphistemi'* which is *'apo'* - 'from' and *'histemi'* - 'to stand; to place'. *'Aphistemi'* is translated *'to put away, remove, forsake, desert'*. The *Herald of Hope* then selects instances where this word could be used for a spatial departure as in a 'rapture'. However, of the 15 New Testament references, many are arguably still used in a negative sense for a religious falling away: For example, Lk.8:13: ***'...these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away'*** (*'aphistemi'*); 1Tim.4:1: ***'some shall depart [aphistemi] from the faith'***; (see also Acts 5:37; 1Tim.6:5; Heb.3:12).

But the point to be made here is that to build a case for

a 'rapture' on this cognate verb 'aphistemi' rather than the actual Greek noun used ('apostasia'), is fraught with danger. Though the root verb may be a help in establishing a meaning, it is only a guide and would naturally show a much wider view. One cannot say the cognate verb determines the meaning of the noun. *The 'apostasia' noun meaning must first be established on its own.* The word used in 2Thessalonians 2:3 is not the verb 'aphistemi' but the noun 'apostasia'! Greek derivatives do not necessarily always carry the same precise meaning of the root words. In Biblical hermeneutics this is the well-known 'root fallacy'* The 'root meaning' is not necessarily found in all derivatives. The meaning and connotation of a NT word are determined primarily from two sources: (1) Other appearances of the same word in the Greek NT; (2) The OT Septuagint.

The word here is not the verb 'aphistemi' but the noun 'apostasia'! The meaning of 'apostasia' is not a spatial departure but a religious defection or a *departure from something that was once held* as is clearly seen in Acts 21:21. It is a departure *from the faith* and is aptly translated in the KJV and other versions as a '**falling away**'!

The *Herald of Hope* has many contributors who hold to a 'King James Only' position and stand strongly against modern Bible versions - why do they disregard the KJV here and prefer to change the word to 'departure' in a physical or spatial sense as a 'rapture'? It makes no sense.

Historical / Other Bibles:

The *Herald of Hope* has attempted in past years to use Classical Greek or other pre-KJV translations to show a 'spatial departure' as a 'rapture' for 2Thessalonians 2:3.

The first of these arguments is that 'apostasia' is a later construction from Classical Greek which arguably can be used for a 'spatial departure'. This is the well known 'Lexical Fallacy'** Outside of Koine Greek literature a spatial departure may be a *secondary meaning* but it is generally not the *primary meaning*. But even here the argument for a spatial departure or 'rapture' is flawed! Lampe's Lexicon of the patristic period lists the 'apostasia' as 'revolt, defection'. And in a search of the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* database from the second century B.C. through the first century A.D., Feinberg did not find a single instance where 'apostasia' means a 'spatial departure'! Even outside of the Bible, Koine Greek literature for 'apostasia' also shows a religious falling away.

Koine New Testament Greek replaced Classical Greek in about 300 BC and lasted until 300AD. The Scriptures were written in *Koine Greek*, not Classical Greek! The Koine Greek Scriptures are inerrant and God breathed! Added to this, the first literal reference to a spatial departure in Greek is not found until the 5th century AD! - in an *apocryphal* writing titled '*The Assumption of The Virgin*' where the virgin Mary and the apostles are taken in a cloud from Bethlehem to Jerusalem. Such fanciful apocryphal writings were rejected by the church fathers and contain chronological, geographical and historical errors and wild stories involving mythical characters.

Any solid proof that 2Thessalonians 2:3 is a 'rapture' cannot be built by playing with other languages such as classical Greek or by reverting to other derivative words in the Greek. The word is 'apostasia' and its common interpretation has been a religious falling away from truth or from beliefs previously held.

The *Herald of Hope* article also makes much of other early Bible translations pre-King James and renders the KJV somewhat inaccurate in its reading of '**falling away**'. Many of these earlier translations mentioned by *Herald of Hope* were translations from Latin. Some early Bibles such as the *Coverdale* and the *Geneva* rendered the word 'apostasia' as 'departure' or put that in marginal notes. This caused some to later argue in favour of a *spatial* 'departing'. However, when these versions were produced Lexical studies in Koine Greek were almost non-existent. Many would agree that these versions were far from accurate in many ways until at least the King James version.

Yet, even here it must be stated that a '*spatial departing*' or '*rapture*' was never understood here by these early translators! Most Lexicons give 'apostasia' as a religious defection and not a spatial departure. Liddell and Scott lists the primary meaning of 'apostasia' as '*defection, revolt*' and gives 'departure, disappearance' as a secondary meaning. However, the only example given for this 'secondary meaning' comes from the 6th century A.D.!

In the Vulgate, Jerome translated 'apostasia' with the Latin '*discessio*' but he also translated 'apostasia' as '*dissension*' in Acts 21:21 which unquestionably refers to religious apostasy and not a 'spatial departure' as in a 'rapture'! The first English Bible by Wycliffe also rendered 'apostasi' as '*discencioun*' ('*dissension*').

The mistake that is made here is to assume the translation of 'departure' was understood as a spatial 'rapture' when these early translators had no doctrine of a 'rapture' in mind when they used this word '*departure*'! The translation of 'departing' does not give any more credence to the 'rapture' view since the English word 'departing' can be used in *both a spatial and nonspatial sense*. In Hebrews 3:12 the KJV says: '**Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God**'. Obviously, this 'departing' is not a spatial one. Numerous other examples could also be cited.

Scripture interprets Scripture. 2Thessalonians 2:3 must be compared with the word as used elsewhere - and that is only in Acts 21:21! There it is obviously a religious defection! Added to this, no evidence exists that the early church fathers understood 'apostasia' to be a 'rapture'. Nor do any of the major Lexicons and dictionaries, (Bauer, Thayer, etc) teach such an interpretation.

There is no evidence that anyone in the church ever understood 'apostasia' as referring to a spatial departure until, at the earliest, the mid 19th Century and then again now in recent times.

The use of other languages and pre-translations simply do not teach a 'rapture' being viewed in 2Thessalonians 2:3. The evidence must be based safely on the actual noun used - 'apostasia' (Acts 21:21; 2Thess.2:3), not a derivative verb such as 'aphistemi'.

The translation of the KJV '**falling away**' reflects how the passage has been historically understood. 'Apostasia' as a 'rapture' should not be considered as part of '**the faith once delivered to the saints**', (Jude 3).

Terry Arnold & Mike Clayton

*Grant R. Osborne, '*The Hermeneutical Spiral*' (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1991), P.66-69. Also, D. A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), P.28-35

** As above

Evangelicals and Adventists?

'Representatives of the World Evangelical Alliance and Seventh-day Adventist Church recently met for a second round of theological discussion that will serve as a key factor in determining whether the Adventist Church will become a member of the WEA. Theologians from both parties met Aug. 5-10 at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Mich., to discuss theological differences, common goals and whether there are enough commonalities for the Adventists to join the WEA family. 'The progress seems to have been that although there are these differences, which no one wants to gloss over, that does not mean there cannot be co-operation and fellowship in other areas, especially in moral matters', explained the Rev. Dr. David Parker, executive director of the WEA Theological Commission, to The Christian Post Tuesday. 'This is similar to other situations where denominations and religious groups may have differences of belief but do hold common values in some areas allowing them some measure of co-operation and joint-action', said Parker...

...The idea for a WEA-Adventist dialogue came several years ago when the Adventist Church approached the WEA Theological Commission. They wanted to be considered more as part of the mainstream evangelicalism than they had in the past...The first WEA-Adventist dialogue was held in Prague, Czech Republic, in August 2006...'

(Michelle Vu *Christian Post Reporter* Wed, Aug.15, 2007)
Editors comments: Not mentioned here is the fact that Adventists teach a different doctrine of the atonement by adding their 'Investigative Judgement'. SDA's also teach that Christ is the Archangel Michael; eating meat and drinking coffee and alcohol is forbidden; the 'Sabbath' must be kept; God has discarded the Jews; Satan is to be bound for 1,000 years on a desolate and uninhabited earth; and the sayings of a demonstrably false prophet, Ellen G. White, have authority equal to scripture! Ellen White also introduced the idea (held by many SDA's) that Sunday worship will be the 'mark of the beast'. The many dates they originally set for Christ's return were all proven wrong. Seventh Day Adventism used to be rightly viewed as a Christ denying, law keeping cult, founded on false prophecies. But that has somehow been forgotten in the modern apostate church. Rather than join with them, true 'Evangelicals' should expose Adventism and evangelise Adventists! We recommend our books on Adventism and the DVD '*Seventh Day Adventism - the spirit behind the church*'.

Jensen/Anglicans Compromise on Catholic Day

'A new recruitment drive by the Anglican Church will see Sydney homes receive bibles and DVDs in a campaign that draws on next year's Roman Catholic World Youth Day. Sydney Archbishop Peter Jensen told the Anglican Synod last night that the two-year campaign, Connect 09, was aimed at attracting followers to local churches. 'In 2008, World Youth Day will raise the level of awareness of Jesus in the community and increase the sense of interest in him...It's going to be very big, like the Olympics. We must be prepared to build on that momentum'. Dr Jensen asked parishes to raise money towards funding the campaign...

(Australian Broadcasting Corp/Tues.Sept. 18, 2007)

The Pope's gospel

(Vatican City, Aug. 26, 2007) *'Heaven is an equal-opportunity destination, but to gain entry one needs a 'passport' stamped with virtues such as humility, mercy and truth, says Benedict XVI...in a reflection he gave on the 'narrow gate'...The Holy Father said that the message of Christ is that everybody has an equal chance of entering through the narrow gate, 'but it is 'narrow' because it is demanding, it requires commitment, self-denial and mortification of one's own egoism'.*

Christ invites all to heaven, he said, 'but with one and the same condition: that of making the effort to follow him and imitate him, taking up one's cross, as he did, and dedicating one's life to the service of our brothers'. 'We will not be judged on the basis of presumed privileges, but by our works'. 'True friendship with Christ', he added, 'is expressed by one's way of life: it is expressed by goodness of heart, with humility, meekness and mercy, love of justice and truth, sincere and honest commitment to peace and reconciliation'. 'This, we might say, is the 'I.D. card' that qualifies us as authentic 'friends'; this is the 'passport' that permits us to enter into eternal life'.

Editors Comments: This is in effect 'another gospel, another 'jesus' and another spirit' (2Cor.11:4), and it openly contradicts much salvific scripture, (Rom.3:27,28; 9:11; 11:6; Eph.2:8,9; Rom.4:5).

This should not surprise us. The Roman Catholic religion has always added to Christ's salvation. Today many Christians are being duped into thinking things have changed within the Roman Catholic system. But in fact not one of their doctrines have changed although the Catholic leaders have certainly become more ecumenical and the language used in some circles is sounding more 'evangelical'. But here is the latest example of the Pope's 'gospel': *'We ask the Blessed Virgin for the gift of conversion for all Christians so that they may announce and give a faithful and coherent witness to the perennial evangelical message, which indicates to humanity the path to an authentic peace'*. (Pope Benedict, Vatican City, Oct.15th, 2007)

We urge readers to be bold and use challenging Gospel materials to reach our Roman Catholic friends. We have many resources available - such as the book '*To Catholics Whom I Love*' and the DVD '*Catholicism - Crisis of Faith*' (which has ex-priests and nuns giving their reasons for leaving the Roman Catholic system).

Israel

'The Western world must have a very short memory. Israel has never hijacked a plane or a ship. Israel has never attacked a school, a bus, or blown up a restaurant. Israel only ever responds to acts of aggression. Israel does everything she can to live in peace with her neighbours. However, not only does the Western political leadership and news media continue to blame Israel for the problems in the Middle East and beyond, they expect Israel to negotiate and give in to these blood crazed Islamic devils who know no other way than terror - ending in cold blooded murder. Lets pray that the Western world will wake up to this simple fact...If the Palestinians put down their guns there will be no war; If Israeli's put down their guns there will be no Israel.' ('Israel Report')

Your Comments and Questions

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

Please take me OFF your mailing list...I enjoyed your book, 'To Catholics Whom I Love' in that I spent 26 years in the Catholic Church...[but] I am disappointed how you dig up sins of other ministries or point out things they once said. I am sure that everyone in your ministry has said things they wish they never said or have committed sins - so is your ministry bad?

If Jesus was alive today (in the flesh), I'm sure your ministry would be making bad statements about Him. I think you are missing the mark. I'm sure you are destroying a lot of young Christian's walk with the Lord...Please do not write back in that I will not get the letter. I'm sure you would beat me with the Bible anyway.

(T.I., Townsville, Qld.)

Editors comments: This letter is sadly typical of many letters we receive which make *no* mention of exactly where we are in error. Hence we are left in the 'dark'?

We are not in the business of '*digging up sins of other ministries*' but rather exposing error that leads to apostasy. And if we have said things we '*wished we never said or committed sins*', we would have retracted, apologised and amended as is our policy always. Were the Bereans '*bad*' in doing what they did? Why were they seen as more '*noble*' than others when they checked teachings with the Word of God to ensure that they were sound? (Acts 17:11)

And this statement: '*If Jesus was alive today (in the flesh), I'm sure your Ministry would be making bad statements about Him*' - alarming considering we have spent the last decade endeavouring to persuade people to adhere to His commandments and teachings! But yes, as you say, we are '*missing the mark*' - of the holiness of God. But thanks be to our substitute, Jesus Christ, who has stood in our place and fully meets the '*mark*' of God.

Where are we '*destroying a lot of young Christian's walk with the Lord*'?

And this statement is common: '*Please do not write back in that I will not get the letter anyway*'. The translation here is: '*don't confuse me with the truth, I prefer to make personal comments and then run away as fast as I can*'.

And finally: '*I'm sure you would beat me with the Bible anyway*' - Well, considering no Biblical references have been used in your letter that is a possibility?

Dear Terry, I am very fond of your teaching, but I don't understand your point in the article 'Pastors/Elders - As They See It' (Sept/Oct/2007, P.5,6). I have problems with those pastors at large...how can I be in those churches and not criticise their behaviour? You wrote an editorial about 'The Descending Darkness' and then you tell Christians to be humble and listen to those pastors...but there are not many good pastors, but rather many merchants of Venice. I want them to come down from their pulpits and stop their lying...they sell the Gospel as cheap merchandise and by self ambition. Be careful when you tell people to submit to their Pastors, because there are not many who are worthy of my respect. 2Cor.6:17 'come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you'. Tell me, which church here in Canberra is worthy to attend? Are they not all ecumenical?

(Name withheld at editors discretion)

Editors Reply: The article was not speaking about pastors/elders who are teaching error or are not true elders or pastors. The article also did mention those pastors who are not sound or who would '*lord*' it over their flock. But you have missed the point of the article which was to show what it is like from a TRUE pastor or elder's perspective. You have every right to criticise pastors who are not scripturally correct, but what of those who are doing the Lord's work? There are some very sound men doing the job of pastoring and eldering.

You say '*there are not many good pastors, but rather many 'merchants of Venice*' - That is true, but again the article was not written about the '*merchants of Venice*' but rather about the Godly pastors out there, many whom I know personally (although admittedly they appear to be a small remnant).

The Bible tells us to submit to '*those who watch for our souls*' - those Godly pastors who are qualified according to Timothy and Titus. There may not be many who are '*worthy*' but the article was written from the standpoint of those who *are* worthy of the Lord's approval. By all means we are to separate from ungodly pastors and churches, but we are not to separate from those who are faithfully teaching His word..

Remember - God always has those few that have not 'bent the knee to Baal'?

'Tetelestai'

'Tetelestai' (from the root word '*teleo*') is the word Jesus used as He gave up His Spirit at Calvary (Jn.19:30). Christians today are mostly taught that He was stating His mission on earth was '*finished*'. However, this arguably does not adequately convey the full meaning of what was uttered.

The Greek word is a Perfect Indicative Passive and verse 28 ('*accomplished*') and 30 ('*finished*') are the only two places this is used in the New Testament. Literally, it reads '*it has been finished/accomplished*'. Perfect tense here is crucial - meaning something done in the past but with *continuing* results into the present time. It is *indicative mood* which means it was a definite/certain event, done

once (with no repetition in view).

The word was mostly used as an accounting term. Scholars gained more insight into the meaning of this expression when archaeologists in the Holy Land dug up a tax collector's office that was almost intact, with all the tax records and receipts. There were two stacks of tax invoices and one of them had the word, '*tetelestai*', on top. In other words, '*paid in full*'. Former prisoners of Rome had their release papers stamped with this word. They had paid the penalty due. These people didn't owe anything anymore. So, when Jesus said '*It is finished*', what is finished? It is the debt we owe God by our sins. It has been paid in full!

Mike Claydon

Your Comments and Questions

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

Sell Out Video Specials!

The following videos have been reduced to clear stock:

'*Countdown to Eternity*' - was \$29.50...

Now **\$9.50**

'*Signs and Wonders Exposed*' (No.1 & 3) - was \$59 for the set of two...

Now **\$15.90 for the two.**

'*Does the truth matter any more*' (John Macarthur - 2 messages - 2 hours) was \$25...

Now **\$6.00**

'*Delivered From the Power of Darkness - A True Story*' (Excellent on demonology and spiritual warfare) was \$25.90...

Now **\$9.50.**

Add Postage: 1 - 3 videos = \$4.50

More than 3 videos = \$8.50

Dear Bro Terry, Greetings in the precious name of our Lord Jesus. I've just read your article/sermon titled 'Pastors/Elders - As They See It'. You've touched the present various aspects of the church in depth and dealt with them wisely, insightfully & Biblically.

What a true sermon that needs to be spoken to every true church in this land. May the Lord continue to bless you and use you in teaching, warning and building up His church in this country. With the Love of Christ

(A.H., Baptist pastor, Sydney)

Dear Mike, a very lucid summary of the Hillsong hype - well done! Very good 'Diakrisis' all round; things are hotting up to boiling point!

(A.W., Sydney)

Praise/Prayer Points

- We are currently involved in sending evangelistic material to some unsaved people. Please pray for wisdom in communicating the Gospel and for the Spirit to draw and change their hearts.
- Praise the Lord for a refreshing time for the editor at a church camp recently in Victoria.
- Please pray for wisdom as we plan travel commitments for 2008.

Hi there Terry, We corresponded some years back...I have not forgotten you or your passion for the truth. I am pastoring a church...for the past 10 years plus this church has been down the Willow Creek line and gone from program to program and produced zero spiritual results...My job is to get the church back on track biblically, train a new group of elders, put in place a godly Youth Pastor who will faithfully disciple and teach our youth, move the worship to something that is more God-honouring, and just preach the Word week in and week out.

(Name withheld at editors discretion)

Editors Comment: We have received numerous and similar reports from churches greatly compromised by the church growth, 'purpose driven' philosophies. It appears at first that attendance increases - yet in the end the loss of true believers is great - and stark evidence of a lowering of standards, in doctrine, holiness and preaching become evident. It is a case of 'the bait one catches with will be the food you will have to continue to feed them with'. People hooked or fed on fads, entertainment and 'milk' will eventually fall away or move to the next new thing.

Quotables

'Infallibility means that something cannot err, while enerrancy means that it does not err. Infallibility describes ability or potential. It describes something that cannot happen. Innerrancy describes actuality'.

(RC Sproul, 'Grace unknown' P.48)

'It's a good thing God chose me before I was born, because he surely would not have afterwards'.

(C.H. Spurgeon)

'It takes a lot of patience and 'thick skin' to put up with criticism and outright opposition that will come when God's servant insists on accuracy.'

(Unknown)

Terry's Itinerary

There have been several enquiries from Brisbane for a ministry trip. A tentative time in Brisbane is being considered early in the first half of 2008. A venue needs to be considered. Any subscribers interested should contact Terry.

November/December:

Nov.25th 9.30am&6.30pm - Hervey Bay Church of Christ

Dec.23rd,30th 9.30am - Hervey Bay Church of Christ

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