

Your Comments and Questions

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

New E-mail Version of Newsletter

We now have a new updated E-mail version of the newsletter with colour and graphics. If you wish to receive *Diakrisis* by e-mail please advise us. This will assist us in distribution and alleviate costs. The e-mail newsletter is distributed earlier (up to 1 week) before the hardcopy. (A link to download Foxit PDF Reader is provided with the e-mail if needed). You can print in the same format as the previously mailed hardcopy (with or without the colour if you wish).

Apologies

We apologise for the delay in the New TV DVD's. (Earlier this year Terry did eight TV interviews (30 minutes each) in Sydney on *Life TV* media channel - see last *Diakrisis* Sept/Oct, P.1 for details and topics). These DVD's should now be available before the end of November. We hope this professional set of two DVD's on topical issues will be a valuable resource to our subscribers.

Prayer/Praise Points

- **Praise the Lord** for Terry's new book '*Foundations For Evangelism*' being published. Thanks to, and may God bless, those subscribers who generously donated towards this project. Pray for a wide distribution of this book.

- **Praise the Lord** for the recent successful Perth trip by Terry and Beth. Several meetings were conducted during the 10 days. Terry gave his testimony on the last night (available on disc). Pray for any unsaved people who were present.

We are so very thankful to the Congregational church at Ryde, Sydney, for providing the airfares, and the Perth churches for providing accommodation.

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'But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern [diakrisis] both good and evil', (Heb.5:14)

Newsletter of TA Ministries Vol .3, No. 24 November/ December 2011

TA Ministries is a non-denominational faith ministry,
teaching, informing and equipping the church.
Editor: Terry Arnold (MABS; Dip. Bib. & Min., Dip. Teaching)

The editor may not necessarily agree with all the views expressed by subscribers in this newsletter.

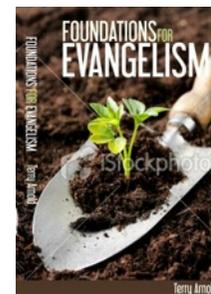
We welcome comments and items contributed by readers. Unless otherwise requested, these may be included in following newsletters at the discretion of the editor.

Articles in this newsletter may be copied or reproduced provided it is in context and proper credit and references are given. We encourage distribution of this newsletter that others might be taught, informed and equipped.

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

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****New Book****

The editor has published a new book '*Foundations For Evangelism*'. It is a critique of modern evangelism doctrine and methods. The Parable of the Sower is expounded and answers are given to much of today's evangelism, which is producing the huge 'fall away' rates. The author believes Matt.7:21-23 shows 'the greatest deception' that needs to be addressed. There is much teaching in this book on how to prepare a heart to receive the Gospel. Excellent as a reference book or for Bible studies. (157 pages) \$19 (postage free)



Editor's Comments

C.H. Spurgeon once said: 'A magazine which is not outspoken, and is destitute of principle, is a literary nuisance'. Thus, in the same spirit we feel it necessary to challenge the post-modern thinking which has become increasingly ecumenical and subjective.

The ecumenical thinking today is 'unity in diversity'. But what does this really mean in objective terms? 'Diversity' literally means 'difference, unlikeness, contradiction, dissimilarity...'. Yet 'diversity' is in fact the exact opposite (the 'antonym') of 'unity'! 'Unity' is literally 'the state of being one, concord, harmony, agreement'...and this is my favourite - 'the absence of diversity'! How can there really be 'unity in diversity' when the two words are opposite in meaning? How can we have 'unity in diversity' in different gospels and different doctrines? What does God say about 'diversities' to do with the Gospel? He says 'a different Gospel' brings a 'curse'! (Gal.1:6-9) The subjective thinking to bring religions together with diverse gospel and unite them is scripturally against the express will of God! How can religions that have a gospel of works be in 'unity' with a Gospel of faith alone? How can Catholicism with its gospel of sacraments and works for salvation be in 'unity' with the Bible's '**not of works**', '**without works**', '**not of ourselves**' etc, (Eph.2:8,9; Rom.4:4-6; Tit.3:5; Rom.11:6...)?

The same thinking has seen ongoing issues confronting the church, such as women in ministry, homosexuality, etc. But the Trojan Horse that is bringing in this new and changed thinking on many such issues, is the ecumenical movement. And it is worthy to note that it is not the Roman church that has changed its doctrine! Not one Roman Catholic doctrine has been changed since the Council of Trent many centuries ago. Rather, it is the modern Protestant church that has run to Rome! Ecumenical 'unity in diversity' is not the invention of Rome, but the philosophy of the Protestant church!

The same thinking plays out in new interpretations of Scripture. On some doctrines there is arguably room for some 'differences'. But why do I think objective thinking is so important in interpretation?...because *the new subjective thinking today threatens the understanding of the doctrine of Grace and thus the Gospel itself*. In modern interpretation, if the plain sense of Scripture does not match the 'love' of God or the philosophy of the world, then gymnastics are done on verses to harmonise them with the god that we have made in our thinking. It often shocks me as to how subjective people will be in interpretation of Scriptures that are really quite plain and objective in their sense. When challenged to read every word objectively, I have found many will quickly escape to other 'safer' Scriptures rather than accept the clear and obvious meaning of the Scripture at hand.

The same thinking is humanising the Gospel, taking the '*offence*' and '*shame*' out of it (Gal.5:11; Heb.12:2) and adding our *ability* to decide in receiving Grace. It is increasingly about 'ourselves' instead of '**not of ourselves**' (Eph.2:8)! If so, then it is not 'grace' - unmerited favour.

...How we think determines our doctrine.*

Terry Arnold

* Other articles that challenge thinking processes are found on our website under 'Articles': 'Bible Principles/Interpretation'.

Terry's Itinerary

Nov.13th (Sun) 10.45am Biggenden Gospel Chapel, Qld. Ph.41271959 0408074743

Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear Terry, Thank you for the article on Hell (March/April 2011). It was very helpful. I appreciate the plain and easy to understand language and presentation. Are you planning to do a similar article on Heaven?

Editor's reply: At your request we have an article on Heaven in this issue.

Terry, I was pleased to see your article referring to 2Pet.3:9 - 'God's longsuffering not willing that any should perish' ['Myth Busters' September/Oct 2011]. I have been teaching such an interpretation for years but have found little support from others. The whole passage is dealing with believers. God does not desire that any who have been saved/redeemed should miss out on all that God intended for them...God is at work in our lives seeking to accomplish His will and purpose in view of that coming day...There is great need for repentance in the professing church today. Relationships amongst believers seem to be treated with such disdain as if it has no bearing upon anything. One leaves one fellowship abusing and swearing and walks into another and takes up a public role in the congregation, thinking all is ok. God will judge such, either in time or eternity. We seem to have lost sight of what God desires, even commands amongst His people...Once again thank you for the article, God's blessings.

(G.E., Gympie, Qld)

Dear Terry, as an older widow I look forward to each issue of 'Diakrisis', keeping me informed on current issues in the church. Thank you for all your efforts, as you spread the good news through the Word of God. Bless you and your team,

(K.W., Taree, NSW)

The Disastrous Legacy of Not Teaching

'This is the disturbing legacy of the 1960s and 1970s. A generation brought up on guitars, choruses, and home group discussions. Educated, as one of them put it to me, not to use words with precision because the image is dominant, not the word. Equipped not to handle doctrine but rather to 'share'. A compassionate, caring generation, suspicious of definition and labels, uneasy at, and sometimes incapable of, being asked to wrestle with sustained didactic exposition of theology. Excellent when it comes to providing religious music, drama, and art. Not so good when asked to preach or teach the Faith'.

Michael Saward: 'Evangelicals on the Move' (Mewbray, 1987)

Your Comments and Questions

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Dear Terry, Have listened to your CD on Hell about 6 times now...Every time I listen to it I try and memorise the Scriptures that you reference...Do people [SDA's] sometimes use the argument of when Saul called up the prophet from the dead and he said, 'who is disturbing my sleep?' to try and argue for 'soul sleep'?

(L.U., Qld)

Editor's Reply: 1Sam.28:15 does not say 'sleep'. It says '...Samuel said to Saul, Why have you disquieted me, to bring me up?...'. (Other translations have 'disturbed'). I cannot find a single version that has 'sleep' and I have never heard this verse used for 'soul sleep' by SDA's. The Hebrew word 'raghaz' literally means 'to quiver'; be moved with fear, i.e., to tremble (Ps. 4:4; Is. 32:10, 11), to quake; to be afraid; to stand in awe; to fret; to be in trouble; to be excited; to be moved for joy (Jer. 33:9); to agitate; to be disturbed (2 Sam. 7:10; Is. 14:9); 29); to provoke to anger, to irritate (Job 12:6). The basic meaning is 'to shake with fear, anxiety, and anger'. If the meaning was 'sleep', then other Hebrew words would have been used.

Many commentators also do not believe this was the real Samuel referred to in 1Sam.28, but rather a 'familiar spirit'.

The following from a missionary subscriber in Africa:

[I] asked the church people two questions. 1. Do you know for sure if you died right now if you would go to Heaven? 2. Why should God let you into His holy Heaven? They had to answer the first question with a 'yes' or 'no' and the second question with a reason...The answers some of them wrote were really sad, (we are talking about peoples immortal souls). Even though we showed they were guilty before a Holy God of breaking His laws, (they were thieves, liars, blasphemers, etc.), they still had no understanding of the Gospel. Their answers were as follows: 1. They all answered 'yes' 2. [Most of] the reasons were according to their own righteousness... 'I have received Jesus as saviour and Lord'; 'I have Jesus in my heart'; 'Because I am holy'; 'Because I am saved and I prayed last night and today I have been meditating during this presentation'; 'Because I do the will of God through the Word'... 'Because the Word of God has confirmed me'; 'Because I am in the house of God, I am not worried'; 'I am saved, Jesus has saved me'; 'I will see God'...Did you notice all the 'I's'. They had no understanding...

'But to him that works not, but believes on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness' (Rom.4:5); 'And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith' (Phil.3:9). It is the righteousness of another (Jesus Christ) that God will only accept. There is no other righteousness; we don't have it in and of ourselves. The work of Christ Jesus is the only ground of our Justification, His active obedience, His sinless life and his passive obedience by his sacrifice at calvary...



Heaven

Some would say that not a great deal is revealed in Scripture about the place called 'Heaven'. Certainly Jesus spoke three times more about Hell than Heaven. But *what is revealed about Heaven is all we need to know.*

I. What is in Heaven

The most that is revealed about Heaven arguably is described in the 'New Jerusalem' of Revelation 21. This city 'comes down' from God out of Heaven. It is described as a beautiful '*bride adorned for her husband*' (vs.2); the glory of God shines in '*stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal*' (vs.11); with '*twelve gates*' (3 on each side); '*at the gates twelve angels*' and '*names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel*' (vs.12); '*the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb*' (vs.14); It is 1,500 miles cubed (vs.16); '*the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass*'; the twelve foundations with walls are '*garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprusus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst*' (vs.19,20); '*the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass*' (vs.21); and there will be '*a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb...on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations*' (22:1,2).

Some may take this description above as figurative only. Regardless, it is given that our finite minds would understand the *perfection* and *order* in Heaven in comparison to an earth that groans with sin (Rom.8:22). The message is that Heaven is incredibly beautiful! Christ spoke of Heaven as a place of '*many mansions*' (Jn.14:2). It is our final home.

In Heaven there will be perfect love; we will '*be like Him*' and '*God is love*'.

In Heaven there will be '*fullness of joy; at your right hand there are pleasures forevermore*' (Ps.16:11). Heaven is joyful because the Lord is there and we thus '*enter in to the joy of the Lord*' (Matt.25:21,23).

In Heaven there will be *perfect comfort*. In Luke 16 Lazarus was '*comforted*' in '*Abraham's bosom*'. To be on the bosom of someone meant to be in his embrace, to be cherished by him as the object of intimate care and dearest affection.

In Heaven our glorified bodies will have similar qualities to the resurrected glorified Jesus Christ '*...we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is*' (1Jn.3:2). Christ's glorified body could still be touched and handled. He ate fish with them, but He also passed through walls (Jn.20:19) and appeared out of nowhere (Lk.24:36). This fully redeemed and glorified body will not suffer ageing or sickness '*for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality*' (1Cor.15:53).

II. What is not in Heaven

In Heaven there will be no pain, tears or sighing (Is.35:10; Rev.7:17; 21:4), **'no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain'** (Rev.21:4); and there will be no more **'need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof'** (vs.23).

In Heaven there are no fleshly lusts or temptation. We will not have 'free will' or a 'flesh' to sin. Our natures will be changed permanently! Thus there will be no selfish desires; we will never perform an unkind deed and never think a sinful thought. There will be no suffering, no division, no disunity, no disappointment.

In Heaven there will be no persons who are unrepentant liars, thieves, fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals: **'the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone...'** (Rev.21:8); **'neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God'** (1Cor.6:9,10); **'envying's, murders, drunkenness, revellings...shall not inherit the kingdom of God'** (Gal.5:21).

In Heaven people will not have gained entry by 'anything of themselves' (Eph.2); not of their wills or their family religion (Jn.1:13).

In Heaven there will be no rust or decay (Matt.6:20).

In Heaven there are no earthly senses. Heaven is not a Heaven of senses, for **'eye has not seen it'**; it is not a Heaven of sounds we have heard, for **'ear has not heard'** it; Heaven is also not a Heaven of our imaginations, for **'neither have entered into the heart of man'** (1Cor.2:9). There are many who have supposedly seen visions of Heaven. Every such vision is either flawed or extra biblical!* Don't place your heart in earthly sensual things, because the senses are the seat of lusts and this earth is doomed and is not our home! There are many professing Christians today who live in such a way that they would actually be shocked and dissatisfied if taken to Heaven! Charles Spurgeon explains: *'Here has been the very ground of that error into which many persons have fallen concerning heaven. They have said that they would like to go to heaven. What for? For this reason: they looked upon it as a place where they should be free from bodily pain. A great mistake; for although we shall have a body free from pain, yet it is not a heaven where our senses shall indulge themselves. The labourer will have it, that heaven is a place, and his body shall be satisfied. We may use these as figures; but we are so degenerate that we are apt to build a fine Mahometan heaven, and to think, there shall we have all the delights of the flesh; there shall we drink from bowls of nectared wine; there shall we lavishly indulge ourselves, and our body shall enjoy every delight of which it is capable. What a mistake for us to conceive such a thing! Heaven is not a place for the delight of mere sense; we shall be raised not a sensual body, but a spiritual body. We can get no conceptions of heaven through the senses; they must always come through the Spirit. That is our first thought. It is not a heaven to be grasped by the senses.'*

* See 'Diakrisis' May/June/2008, P.2

(<http://tamministries.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Visions-dreams-near-death-v2.0.pdf>)

Continued next page >

Scriptures it is the commandments of *Jesus* (Jn.14:15,21) or the apostle Paul, and *after* the 10 commandments and Moses (1Cor.14:37; Col.4:10; 1Thess.4:2). 1John also mentions the word 'commandments' referring to Jesus and the Father, not Moses! Your mindset sees the word 'commandment' as only the Mosaic ten, and worse, you then zero in on the 'Sabbath' *Jesus said if you love me keep my commandments. [He did not say to keep the 'Law' but His 'commandments'. Mostly in the NT it refers to at least the words of Jesus or the entire Word of God] If that meant the Word of God, would that excuse us from obeying his commandments, are they not in the Word of God. [Most definitely! But if you are referring to the 'Sabbath', then please give me the freedom to be 'persuaded in my own mind' to keep the Sabbath on the day I choose? (Rom.14:5,6)]*

I notice you did not comment on other things in my letter...why do you refuse to comment...[As mentioned several times, we cannot physically answer every piece of mail; and you move from one topic to another and do not deal with the errors (eg. Ellen G. White)] In regard to Ellen G. White, all you have to do is speak the truth to be inspired? You claim to speak the truth don't you? ['Inspired' means 'God breathed' and in Biblical terms it means the writings are breathed out by God Himself. If I 'speak the truth' it is God's gifting and blessing. But I dare not claim 'inspiration' for my own writings]...I feel that Adventists teach the most truth of any denomination, that's why I worship with them...[Then you worship with a church that was co-founded by a false prophet and which has added her writings as prophetic and inspired; a church that teaches Jesus was an angel; a church that adds to the atonement ('investigative judgement' of 1844); a church that teaches you have to be keeping the Law to be saved; a church that teaches Hell is not eternal; and one that believes Sunday keeping will be the 'mark of the beast' ...That is enough for me to implore you to 'come out of her']

Dear Brother Terry,...Many churches here [in Sth. Australia] have encouraged woman pastors, teachers...yet Scriptures clearly reject these commands (1Tim.2:11-15; 1Cor.14:37; 1Tim.3:2; Tit.1:6)...Also Homosexuality is no longer considered a sin. Many Churches in Adelaide are promoting the acceptance of homosexuality in their congregations and many have already appointed Homosexuals as pastors, teachers...The Anglican arch-bishop of South Australia advocates embracing the homosexual movement. Yet there is nothing holy about homosexuality (Dt.23:17,18). Many churches here offer a series of different meetings to suit the whims of the people. They do not preach the Gospel and often hype up the people with jungle beat music. The people have no intention of hearing about or turning from their sin...In Sth. Australia we have politicians, clergy, the radio and the ABC, SBS who promote homosexual films and lifestyle. Many of these get public funding...Homosexual marches are led and promoted by church leaders...we must all stand in judgement before Christ... (Name withheld)

Your Comments and Questions

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

[The following is an on going discussion between the editor and a Seventh Day Adventist (K.W., Mareeba, Qld). (For previous see Jan/Feb 2010; May/June; July/Aug; Nov/Dec; Jan/Feb/2011). Editor's reply in bold and brackets].

Dear Terry,...my beliefs are not dependant on the writings of Ellen G. White. I'm a Bible believing Christian first and foremost...I rarely read Ellen's writings...I don't think she was emphasising her own infallibility in the quotes you sent me. [Then you and I have different ways of reading plain English. Ellen White testified in at least eight separate texts that she got her information directly from God and what she wrote was from God. This is emphasised so much it leaves no doubt she claimed to be speaking for God. Again, here is just some of what she said: 'I am just as dependant upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing a vision as in having a vision' (Spiritual Gifts Vol 2, P.293); '**It is God and not an erring mortal that has spoken**' (Testimonies Vol 3, P.257); '**I do not write one article expressing my own ideas. They are what God has opened to me in vision**' (Testimonies No 31, P.63). If I wrote these things I would have subscribers rightfully rebuking me!...]...She was inspired by God in emphasising the coming of Jesus [Was she 'inspired' when she set dates which failed? (See *Diakrisis* March/April 2010, P.6)]

...If you don't believe the 4th commandment is important... 'all His commandments are sure and they stand fast forever and ever' (Ps.111:7,8); 'he who breaks the least of my commandments is guilty of breaking them all' [That's why we need the Saviour who kept the Law perfectly, fulfilled it, and thus is our substitute]...Is each day the same? [That's exactly what Romans 14:1-5 and Col.2:16 says! They tell us not to judge in what day we keep for the Sabbath and to make up our 'own mind'] but what day did Jesus bless sanctify and keep [what Scripture for this?]...was it not his custom to go into the synagogue on the sabbath day? [Jesus was a Jew who kept the Law. Most certainly it was His and the apostles custom to preach to the Jews in the synagogue on many days, especially the Sabbath!] Where in Scripture is that commandment changed to Sunday? [The Jewish Sabbath under the Law has not been changed! The question to answer your strawman is: Where in the NT are we commanded to keep Saturday as the Sabbath? Why are we to 'choose our own day' for the Sabbath? (Rom.14:4-6; Col.2:18). (Personally, Sunday is not my 'Sabbath' - it is often the hardest working day I have in the 6 day week of ministry!). You also confuse the day of corporate worship with the day of rest ('sabbath'). Yet, the apostles and disciples had their services on Sunday in Scripture (Acts 20:7; 1Cor.6:1,2) and attested to by many church fathers in the first few centuries (see our article 'Saturday or Sunday?' (July/Aug 2008, P.5,6). Are you sure you are not the one with a cultic mindset? [Not if Scripture is clear] 'Thou that judest doeth the same things (Rom.2:1) [Who is judging who on what day we must keep!] If the word 'commandment' meant the Word of God, why is it thus translated in good translations. [Because by context and plain English the meaning of the word 'commandment' often does not refer to the 10 commandments (Acts 1:2; Matt.5:19; 22:40). In many

III. What happens in Heaven

In Heaven it is arguable that the supreme delight of all will be to perfectly worship the King of Kings. It will not be the world's rock beat with the world's ecstatic emotions. It will be directed wholly and unbroken to Jesus Christ 'in spirit and truth'.

In Heaven the worship will be unbroken, wilful and without effort (Rev.7:15; 22:3). '**And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever**' (Rev.5:13); '**And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne...**' (Rev.14:2,3).

In Heaven the fellowship will also be unrestricted and Scripture implies that we will recognise others (Matt.17:1-9; 8:11).

IV. Who will be in Heaven

In Heaven there will only be 'perfect' people (Heb.12:23; Matt.5:40; 2Cor.13:11; Phil.3:15; Col.4:12) - those who have received the perfect righteousness of God through the perfect substitutionary sacrifice of the one who kept the Law perfectly. Jesus Christ is that perfect substitute righteousness (Phil.3:9; Matt.6:33; Rom.1:17; 3:21-31).

In Heaven only those who are 'born again' (Jn.3:3-7) 'of the Word of God' (1Pet.1:23) whose names are written in 'the Lambs book of life' (Phil.4:3; Rev.17:8; 21:27) chosen 'before the foundation of the world' (Eph.1:4) will enter God's kingdom. They have had Christ first in their life and believed in Jesus as the perfect sacrifice to satisfy God for their sins. They will forever bask in amazement of God's grace!

Terry Arnold



Wafer 'Miracle'?

In Poland...the wafer was dropped by a priest celebrating communion in 2008. In accordance with church practice, the priest placed the wafer in water to dissolve it. Several days later a nun found...a red mark on it...A special Mass celebrated what they saw as a miracle: the appearance on a communion wafer of a dark spot that they are convinced is part of the heart of Jesus...Two medical doctors determined that the spot was heart muscle tissue, church officials have said. Bialystok Archbishop Edward Ozorowski said during the Mass on Sunday that in history the 'substance of Christ's body or blood has become available to the human senses, and this also happened in Sokolka'. The Vatican is still examining the matter and has not yet officially decided whether to declare it a miracle, church spokesman Andrzej Debski said.

(Sky News, October 03, 2011; Apostasy Alert, Oct.5th/2011)

Editor's Comment: Signs and wonders are not uncommon in the Roman church and in other religions. How do we know if they are from God or from Satan? (Satan can counterfeit signs and wonders (Ex.7). What does the Bible say about signs and wonders in the end times? In every instance where signs and wonders are mentioned with the end times, they are lying or false! (Matt.12:39; 24:24; Mk.13:22; 2Thess.2:9; Rev.13:13).

What Limits To The Apostasy?

Judson memorial church in New York (named after Hudson the great missionary) staged exhibits on 'flag day' - which were so obscene that they were removed by police. On other occasions the pews were removed for dancing; the pulpit replaced for a presentation of 'Winnie the Pooh', and one Sunday a nude couple danced during the service. The pastor, Donna Schaper, had an abortion in her early life and now believes 'abstinence is immoral to the core' and that when she aborted the baby she 'could have chosen to love that life, but chose not to'.
(Adapted from *Faith & Freedom* Oct/Nov.2011)

Jesus 'Silent' on Homosexuality?

The ABC's 'Q&A' TV panel show recently comprised of previous New South Wales premier (Roman Catholic), a lesbian atheist, an agnostic historian and an atheist author...and Ecumenical director of the Australian Christian Lobby, Jim Wallace.

Presenter Tony Jones asked Wallace 'What was the view of Christ on homosexuality?' Australian Christian Lobby's Jim Wallace said 'He [Jesus] was silent on it'. Really? Jesus Christ claimed to be God. All Scripture is divinely 'inspired' - the Biblical texts were written through men under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God. Is not our Lord in full agreement with Paul's writings in the epistle to the Romans? - Yet here sat an Australian Christian luminary unable to answer this important question correctly!...Then he said the Bible contained 64 books [instead of 66]; He cited Romans 13 on the subject [instead of ch.1]...The Atheist author panel member then clearly stated that most people shun homosexual behaviour because it is 'disgusting'; the agnostic conservative historian saw the subject of homosexual 'marriage' as unacceptable; the lesbian blogger reckoned it was the natural thing to do. The Roman Catholic ex-premier shared [contrary to her church] that because Jesus preached 'love' He would be in full agreement with same-sex marriage...The agnostic historian later noted - 'It's pretty easy to sit in an audience like this and laugh at people who disagree with you - you want to talk about same-sex marriage? - go out into the Muslim community and laugh at them!'

(Apostasy Alert, Australia, 20th September 2011)

Presbyterians - First Same Sex Ordination

On Saturday, Oct. 8, 2011 the 'Reverend' Scott Anderson became the **first openly homosexual person to be ordained to the ministry of the Presbyterian Church (USA)**, the largest Presbyterian denomination in the world...[The] audience members gave him a thunderous standing ovation...Anderson chose the Rev. Mark Achtemeier of Dubuque, Iowa, to deliver the sermon. Achtemeier used to be one of the most vocal opponents of gay ordination, but he announced a complete turnaround after friendships with gay Christians prompted him to re-evaluate scriptural teachings about homosexuality. (Apostasy Alert, 10th. Oct)

Editor's comment: 'Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners' (1Cor.15:33).

Some take the phrase '**not under bondage**' as meaning an excuse to re-marry. Yet *all the way through the passage Paul is teaching to remain single!* '**And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother has a wife that believes not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which has a husband that believes not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him...The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord' (vs.10-13,39).**

After all this, why would Paul suddenly contradict himself and allow re-marriage? Also the very next verse 16 supports accepting the partner leaving but *not re-marriage*: '**For what know you, O wife, whether you shall save your husband? or how know you, O man, whether you shall save your wife?**' (vs.16).

The context of this passage is: 1. If there is separation, there is to be *a view towards reconciliation* and the husband is *not to divorce* (vs.11). 2. If one is living with an unsaved spouse, they are *not to divorce them* (vs.12,13). 3. The unbelieving partner is 'sanctified' by their believing spouse (vs.14) - meaning they are specially benefited by divine favour from the life of the believer. 4. The unbeliever has freedom to leave ('*let him depart*') and the believer should be in peace, not 'bound' by duty (vs.15).

Verse 15 does not mean divorce and re-marriage is allowable, because vs.11 still applies - the command to remain unmarried or be reconciled, and not to divorce. This is then confirmed by verse 16 which allows the possibility of salvation in the unbelieving spouse. The tense of '*you shall save*' is future. The believing partner might be the means by which God may save the unbeliever. But *this could never happen if there is a re-marriage!* If re-marriage is acceptable in these circumstances then my own wife could have left me in any one of 8 years, considering she was save 8 years before me! In verse 16 the marriage partner here is encouraged to see the possibility that the other partner might be saved. This should be the prayerful intent of the partner, not any intent to re-marry!

The word '**bondage**' in verse 15 is '*doulóo*' - literally 'slave'; to be under subjection, dependance. The person is no longer bound by any law to *have to stay* with the partner or to strive to preserve co-habitation. The verse says nothing about any re-marriage. Paul clarifies in vs.39: '**The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord**'. This word '**bound**' ('*deo*') here in vs.39 is not the same word as '**bondage**' ('*doulóo*') in vs.15. '*Deo*' is used consistently for the legal aspect of being bound to one marriage partner (Rom.7:2; 1 Cor.7:39), or to one's betrothed (1Cor.7:27). The different word in vs.15 ('*doulóo*') shows Paul is not giving a deserted spouse the same freedom to re-marry that he gives to a spouse whose partner has died (vs.39). The phrase '**God has called us to peace**' on the end of vs.15 refers to the partner being free ('not under bondage') in letting the other go.

Again, those who have divorced or re-married and they see these truths in Scripture, should confess the mistake, seek forgiveness and 'redeem the time' - make the most of the situation they are in now (1Cor.7:24; Eph.5:16; Gal.4:5).

Terry Arnold

against divorce (1Cor.7:10-12). So, why the seeming contradiction or ‘exception’ in Matthew? Firstly, when the *bulk* of Scriptures speak clearly, then we interpret the issue by those Scriptures *first*. Secondly, we then study more intently the apparent ‘exception’. Matthew does not use the word ‘adultery’ (‘*moicho*’) but rather ‘fornication’ (‘*porneia*’). ‘Adultery’ is *after* marriage, not before. ‘Fornication’ is *before* or after marriage. The difference is important. Matthew is a Jewish Gospel and the word ‘fornication’ here is referring to the ‘betrothal’ period (similar to our ‘engagement’ period), and *not* after marriage. This is why Joseph was going to ‘*put away*’ (divorce) Mary *before* the ‘marriage’ (Matt.1:18,19). Scriptures do not contradict each other. The Scriptures in the other Gospels perfectly match this Scripture and they do not have this word ‘fornication’ or any ‘exception’. The two words ‘fornication’ and ‘adultery’ are *different* in meaning as is shown where both words are used together in the same verses (Matt.5:32; 19:9; Gal.5:19). The *before marriage* understanding is also clearly shown in Paul’s advice to unmarried persons: ‘**...to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband**’ (1Cor.7:2). There are no uses of ‘fornication’ specifically for a married person’s ‘adultery’. The so called ‘exception clause’ is *not* for adultery.

In decades of church life I have met many people who are divorced, re-married or separated. Divorced people usually cannot go back to their original spouses. In the Bible subsequent marriages were still ‘marriages’. Jesus recognised the Samaritan woman in John chapter 4 had ‘*five husbands*’ (Jn.4:18). Many find themselves in circumstances having been unaware of what the Scriptures teach concerning divorce and re-marriage. Nevertheless, they are to be loved and cared for as brothers and sisters in Christ although they would arguably not fulfil the qualifications of some offices in local church life (1Tim.3:2,12; Tit.1:6). My advice to them is to Scripturally see the issue, repent before God and ‘redeem the time’ - to make the most of the situation they are in now (1Cor.7:24; Eph.5:16; Gal.4:5).

Re-marriage:

If one person leaves, can the other re-marry? Both Mark and Luke call re-marriage after divorce adultery. It is also clear from *many* Scriptures that re-marriage is only allowed *after the death* of a spouse. ‘**For the woman which has a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he lives; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man**’ (Rom.7:2,3).

Marriage is supposed to be ‘unto death do us part’ (Rom.7:1-3; 1Cor.7:10,39).

But what about 1Corinthians 7:15?:

‘**But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God has called us to peace**’.

It is fascinating how Christians today will ignore *many* Scriptures (in the Gospels, Romans 7 and 1Cor.7) which *plainly teach against re-marriage* (excepting on the death of a spouse); and yet they latch on to *one* Scripture for a reason to re-marry!



The Tide of ‘Same Sex Marriage’ Continues

[Editor’s comments in bold and brackets].

Rev Bill Crews (Uniting Church Minister, Sydney): ‘Today in Australia we all live in a secular non discriminatory society. Churches and other spiritual institutions exist within this society...gay couples should be as free to marry as any other human couple...it is the state that legitimises all marriages’. [Note the ‘secular’ strawman

argument. The Bible calls for separation. It is not ‘secular’ or ‘non discriminatory’]

Rev Rowland Croucher (Baptist Minister, Sydney): ‘How can I, a heterosexual who’s been very happily married for 50 years, tell anyone else they don’t have the right to form a loving, committed, lifelong union and enjoy the fruits of marriage as I have done? Marriage is not a club to be restricted to some. Like the Gospel, it is a blessing to be shared’ [Again, note the Strawman argument. No one is saying ‘marriage is a club’. Yet God does ‘restrict’ it to man and woman! (Matt.19:4-6; Lk.17:27; Rom.7:3; 1Cor.7:10,33-39). And since when is marriage ‘shared’ in the same way as the Gospel?]

Rev Matt Glover (Baptist Minister, Melbourne): ‘When a couple...fully accept the same rights and responsibilities of marriage and treat marriage with the respect it deserves, why should they NOT get married? As a Christian minister, I believe that marriage is under threat from many angles, but also believe that recognising same-sex unions will help return marriage to its rightful place in society’ [A logical but secular argument. What does Scripture say about its ‘rightful place’?]

Rev Roger Munson (Uniting Church Minister, Canberra): ‘As a follower of Jesus...All are welcome and all deserve the dignity due to them as human beings...As a progressive Christian I understand that the Bible must be interpreted in its historical and cultural context but also through the prism of the way of Jesus.

As Christians we need to support those who are excluded and challenge those who through exclusion, dehumanise and discriminate...’. [‘Progressive’ or ‘Biblical’?...and what does ‘historical and cultural context’ mean?...interpretation: ‘Lets change the objective meaning’!]

Rev Leanne Jenski (Uniting Church Minister, Adelaide): ‘As the founder of Christians for Gay Marriage lobby group and as someone who is an ordained minister with a same gendered partner I strongly support the right of GLBT people to marry. I long for the day when my partner Susan and I can finally marry with the full blessing of the ‘church and state’. God is not against us, but unfortunately some Christians are. Be assured there are many Christians out there who stand in solidarity with us’. [‘He that rejects me, and receives not my words, has one that judges him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day’ (John 12:48)]

The Reverend Chris Bedding, Anglican Priest (Perth WA): ‘...It’s time for young Christians across Australia to speak up for an open and hospitable Christianity - even if it means challenging received assumptions...I urge you to support marriage equality as a prophetic act - to subvert the narrative of exclusion and call forth a Christianity which rejoices in God-given diversity’. [Does God give a ‘diversity’ in what He calls an ‘abomination’? (Lev.18:22; 20:13)]

(From the Australian organisation ‘Christians4Equality’ - <http://www.christians4equality.com.au>; cited in *Apostasy Alert*, 4th Oct, 2011)

Mariology

(Rome, Italy, October 5) Cardinal Angelo Amato told attendees at a major Marian conference in Rome that 'if you get lost, take the hand of Mary and she will lead you to Jesus'... 'For conversion to Christ you must go to the Virgin Mary so that she leads us back to Him', he told the delegates, adding that Mary leads us to 'drink from the cool waters of Jesus Christ'. The International Mariological Symposium is organised by the 'Marianum' Pontifical Theological Faculty... Cardinal Amato told CNA that the conference not only widens the Church's knowledge of Mariology but 'serves to deepen knowledge in relation to other issues such as Christology, the Trinity, grace, anthropology or the Bible'... He explained that whenever Christ is manifested in the liturgy, then Mary is there too because 'Mary is in Christ, she is in the body of Christ'...



(CNA/EWTN News; cited in *Apostasy Alert*, Oct./2011)

Editor's Comment: In Roman Catholic teaching Mary often takes the place of the Holy Spirit in leading people to Jesus. In the last decade or two there has been an increase in teaching that Mary is 'co-redemptrix'. She is said to be a 'co-mediator' with Jesus (reader see 1Tim.2:5; Jn.16:23; Rom.8:24; Heb.7:25). The addition of Mary into doctrine was a gradual process after the first few centuries of the church. In AD 431 there was the first open Worship of Mary; AD 600 Prayers directed to Mary (see 1Tim.2:5; Jn.16:23); AD 1854 'Immaculate Conception' of Mary - (that Mary never sinned; see Lk.1:47; Rom.3:23; Lk.2:21-24); AD 1950 'Assumption of the Virgin Mary' - (that Mary rose bodily into Heaven; see Jn.3:13; Pr.30:4); AD 1965 Mary proclaimed 'mother of the church'. None of these are found in Scripture and many flatly contradict specific Scriptures. They are all additions to the Word of God. (See our book 'To Catholics Whom I Love', chapter 7; or our tract 'Roman Catholic Teaching/Bible Teaching').

Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear Terry, in August on 2GB Sydney...they had a 'faith week'; in which a broadcaster interviewed several religious groups (Catholic, Islam, Scientology, Assembly of God, etc). The 'youngest Catholic Bishop' of Sydney, Peter Comonsole, was interviewed. A Muslim rang in and said 'I do not have Jesus as my Lord and saviour; will I go to Hell when I die?' The bishop scooted around the topic but finally said something to the effect that the Muslim 'would be alright'. The broadcaster (a Catholic) agreed, instead of stating from Scripture 'There is no other name' for salvation (Acts 4:12); 'I am the way the truth...no one comes to the father but by me' (Jn.14) and 'He who has the Son has life...' (1Jn.5). I rang the broadcaster and he told me he was not able to rebuke other faiths and he guided me to a Catholic website that compares other religions. You can see why the sheep are scattered as their under-shepherds have no knowledge...

(R.A., NSW)

Marriage, Divorce and Re-marriage

In many years in church life and shepherding the saints, I have come across numerous difficult situations in the area of marriage and re-marriage. It is fraught with pain and at times there are situations not always clear-cut as to what the counsel for the future should be. With that in mind I ask the reader to consider with an objective mind the many Scriptures on marriage and re-marriage. It is an area where many will, and do, differ. The following might challenge some modern views.

Marriage:

The word 'marriage' ('gamisko') refers to a male and female coming together as one. '**...He which made them at the beginning made them male and female...For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they two shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder**' (Matt.19:4-6)

To God '**marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers** [fornicators] **and adulterers God will judge**'. (The word 'whoremongers' here is 'pōrnos' and is elsewhere often translated as 'fornicators'. In some contexts it is a male prostitute; in a wider sense it is any impure person). Thus 'same sex marriage' is anti scripture. The Scriptures consistently speak of men marrying women, not men with men or women with women (Lk.17:27; Rom.7:3; 1Cor.7:10,33-39).



Divorce:

In the Old Testament divorce was tolerated by God under the Law. The Law was temporary until the Messiah would come. In the New Testament in three of the Gospels Jesus makes it clear that divorce was, and is, not His will and that it is equal to adultery, that whoever marries a divorced person commits adultery. '**...Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, commits adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she commits adultery**' (Mk.10:11,12; Lk.16:18). Any second marriage is called adultery because the first one is considered to still be valid. Mark 10:2-9 and Matthew 19:3-8 teach that Jesus rejected the Pharisees' justification of divorce from Deuteronomy 24:1 and reasserted the purpose of God in creation, that no human being separate what God has joined together. *The union of husband and wife in 'one flesh' is paralleled closely with the relationship between Christ and his church* (Eph.5:22-33). When Christ divorces the church, then we may divorce our spouses! (Eph.5:22-33; Rev.19:5-9).

Divorce was generally not accepted by the early church for the first 400-500 years.

But what about the 'exception clause'?:

Matt.19:8,9 '**...Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, commits adultery: and whoso marries her which is put away does commit adultery**'.

This Scripture is only found in Matthew. Both Mark and Luke leave this clause out and plainly say divorce is 'adultery' (Mk.10:11,12; Lk.16:18). 1Corinthians also speaks

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