

## A Ministry of Teaching

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

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

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The members of the advisory panel may not necessarily agree with all the views expressed in this newsletter.

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

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### Editors Comment

How much knowledge do today's Christians have on the essentials of *the 'faith once delivered to the saints'*, (Jude 3)? Written tests show that most professing Christians fail in basic knowledge on essential doctrines of Grace such as *Sola Fide*, *Sola Scriptura* and Justification/Sanctification.

Many today dismiss 'head knowledge' in favour of a 'run with the heart' approach. But Scripture says *'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...'* (Hos.4:6) and have *'...a zeal of God but not according to knowledge'*, (Rom.10:2).

We are not here advocating 'head knowledge' *only*, for this may well *'puff up'*. However, it is God's ordained method to *renew the mind to transform the heart*, and *only* through the Word of God, (Rom.12:2). Today's Church is more often adapting the *opposite* approach as is used by the world and the cults - it is unbiblically addressing the heart to get to the minds.

The current apostasy would not have made such rapid progress if there had been more teaching of sound doctrine. However, the apostasy will *never* be too deep that 'contending for the faith' (Jude 3) and challenging minds will be pointless. It is vital that the church teach, inform and equip Christians on the issues facing the church and expose false teaching and false prophets.

However, in this activity the Lord, through His Word, shows us that in teaching, informing and contending, the *manner* is important! *Our manner of conversation very often affects the reception of the truth we are contending for.* Recently a pastor from another ministry critically wrote to me using rather *personal and emotive* phrases. Such emotive language may well be *offensive* and may well turn the hearer away from the very result we desire. If we *offend personally* we are far less likely to *convince*. Too often it is a case of *shooting the messenger instead of the message*.

In convincing, questioning and challenging we must focus on the *facts* and not in attacking the *person*. Truth without love is carnal and will be devoid of Holy Spirit power. We must draw the persons attention to *facts and Scripture* and allow the Holy Spirit to convict or to challenge the *person*. In all this there is also the need for discernment of *timing*. I recently listened to a person from one church challenging a pastor from another church about a belief they differed on. It seemed that the place, time and manner was amiss. Perhaps facts were being dogmatically *stated* instead of questions being *asked*. Perhaps literature is often a more effective tool to inform those in the body of Christ.

We are to be *'holy in all manner of conversation'*, (1Pet.1:15)... *'But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do engender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will'*, (2Tim.2:23-26). Terry Arnold

### Sydney Seminar

**Topic:** *'Foundations for Evangelism & Discipleship'*: Vital material on true understanding of evangelism; methods; preparation of hearts to receive the Gospel; true/false conversions; law/grace; what is/is not the Gospel; discipleship; etc. **Speaker:** Terry Arnold **Date:** Sat.12th August, 1.30pm - 4.30 **Venue:** Grace Bible Church, Kingswood, Ph. (02)47363619 or Terry 0411489472

## Sanctification Systems - True And False

One of the hallmarks of cults and false religion is a confusion in understanding the differences between *Justification* and *Sanctification*. Even within Christendom the two systems have become so confused that it is arguably now unwise to teach one without teaching the other. The Gospel is being filtered through sanctification rather than Justification.

Justification is an *outside, legal and forensic* work of God for us because of the *substitutionary* work of Christ on the cross. It is a *once only past* act where the penalty of sin is settled forever. It is righteousness *imputed* (credited, reckoned) to the believer, (Rom.4). However sanctification is an *inside* work of the Holy Spirit and is *positional* at salvation and then *progressive*, (1Jn.3:3; Phil.2:12,13; 1Cor.1:2). Sanctification is *imparted* to us *from within* by the Holy Spirit.

*Sanctification* is synonymous with *holiness* and often translated from the same Greek word ('*hagiasmos*'). It means separation *from* sin and the world, and separation *to* God. The problem with some holiness teaching is that justification and sanctification are confused and people begin to strive for a holiness to make themselves feel righteous with God.

It is God's command that we *pursue* holiness, (Heb.12:14: *follow*' - '*dioko*' - *to pursue, press after*). Unlike Justification, sanctification somewhat involves *our* surrender and effort. We are to '*lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us...*' (Heb.12:1) However, *no amount of work in striving for holiness can ever make us positionally right with God (justification)*, but rather it conforms us more and more into the image of Christ, (Rom.8:29; Col.3:10).

Over the last 150 years various new forms of sanctification doctrines have been introduced. Many involve a second experience or a point where we are supposedly given a new level of power to live a sanctified life. However the orthodox historical teaching is that we are *positionally* holy at salvation and then *progressively* worked out in us. This teaching is not only clearly seen in Scripture but also in various confessions of faith (Baptist, Westminster, etc), down through the centuries. These confessions made it clear that the Holy Spirit and the Word of God continued to give power over the dominion of sin which was broken at salvation and that it was ongoing - there being a war between the Spirit and the flesh. The Westminster confession of faith stated: '*The dominion of sin is broken, though the presence of sin is not entirely eliminated. Just as Penicillin may break a fever just destroying the dominion of a disease, and yet some time elapses before every trace of the disease is eliminated, so it is with sin...*'

There is a difference between surviving sin and reigning sin. At the new birth we are given a new nature. It *predominates* over the flesh, (Rom.8:9,10). Although the '*old man is crucified that the body of sin might be destroyed*' (Rom.6:6; Gal.2:20; '*destroyed*' - '*katargeo*' - *rendered inactive, idle, useless*), sin has not been completely annihilated or made extinct. Sin remains in the flesh until the future redemption of our bodies, (Rom.8:21-23). In justification we *have been* freed from the *penalty* of sin, (Col.2:13,14; Eph.1:7); in sanctification we *have been and are being* freed from the *power* of sin, (2Tim.4:18; Rom.6:7,18,22); and in glorification we *will be* free from the *presence* of sin, (Rom.8:21-23; Phil.3:21; 2Cor.5:1-8; 1Cor.15:52-54).

Sanctification/holiness is not limited to any special area of our life but is a total surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and separation from the world and sin. There are no short-cut methods to holiness! Various 'baptisms' or other methods used to gain a pseudo power and holiness are man made methods to produce something that is already promised at

salvation. Such methods remove the necessity of striving against sin by the help of the Holy Spirit and the use of Scripture. '*Be filled with the Spirit*' (Eph.5:18) is a *command* to be *continuously controlled* ('*pleroo*' - controlled continuously) by the Holy Spirit. It is not an outside filling and it is not an event subsequent to salvation. In the original language of Scripture it is not a matter of us having more of the Holy Spirit but the Holy Spirit having more of us!

One of the worst things about human methods of sanctification is the spiritual pride and the separation of Christians into 'classes'. Many systems that teach a superior subsequent work of grace inadvertently produce two classes of Christians - those that have it and those that don't. This in itself is a hallmark of the cults. Even renowned holiness writers like Andrew Murray arguably fostered such distinctions with phrases such as: '*Most Christians have not experienced this*' or '*Most Christians have fallen short at this point*'.

Other systems of sanctification teach we have to be 'emptied' and renounce any effort of our own. However, we are not born again to be empty vessels, but rather the written Word of God '*transforms*' (changes) us by '*renewing*', not emptying our corrupt minds, (Rom.12:2). These systems arguably also avoid the inevitable struggle against sin and a reliance on the written Word of God. Sanctification is inextricably linked to the Word!: '*Sanctify them through thy Word...*', (Jn.17:17).

The holiness experience throughout life is a *battle*, (Rom.7:23-25). We don't get progressively holy by emotional experiences or any other methods but rather by being in the written Word and separating ourselves from sin and the pollution of the world. The Scriptural words linked with sanctification are fighting terms! - '*mortify*', '*crucify*', '*strive*', '*wrestle*', '*fight*', etc.

*The danger in these methods of so-called sanctification is that it arguably causes Christians to relax in the battle against sin.* It is not a matter of '*let go and let God*'. Sanctification involves surrender to the Holy Spirit and the '*feet*' to that surrender is *action*. We are to '*present*' our bodies, (Rom.12:1) and *take up* our cross *daily*, (Lk.9:23; 14:27) and told to '*work out your own salvation*', (Phil.2:12).

Another dangerous system of sanctification was taught by the likes of Charles Finney. Finney taught several heresies (see *Diakrisis*, March/97). One was '*Entire Sanctification*': '*Now as entire sanctification exists in perfect obedience to the law of God, and as the law requires nothing more than the right use of whatever strength we have, a state of entire sanctification is attainable in this life on the ground of natural ability.*' This teaching again goes against the teaching of progressive sanctification as taught down through the centuries and confuses glorification with sanctification, (1Jn.3:2). Even Wesley wrote a book '*A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*' yet on his death bed he admitted he had not achieved it.

Perhaps the biggest problem of the modern sanctification 'methods' is that *they detract from the conversion experience by saying that the new birth was not enough.* Yet, did we not receive '*all spiritual blessings*' at salvation? (Eph.1:3).

May we not confuse what God *has done for* us in justification with what God *is doing in* us in sanctification. Let us not grieve the Holy Spirit and His work with 'experiences' that are not of '*the faith once delivered to the saints*'. May we trust God and His great salvation to combat the presence of sin. Being continuously controlled by the Holy Spirit (Eph.5:18) is not an option but a command that comes with the blessing of salvation. **Terry Arnold**

## The New Age Movement

According to New Age teaching this century is the 'Aquarian Age' - an age to bring 'peace' and a 'divine consciousness'.

The New Age movement has roots in the *Theosophical Society* which combines religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism and teaches the development of a divine nature through development of the self. Some place the roots of the movement back as far as 1875 when a Helena Blavatsky, wife of a Russian General, taught about 'ascended masters' - spirit beings who could give telepathic communications. Others point to Alice Bailey in the 1920's who popularised occultism, mysticism, reincarnation and the divinity of man. Although the New Age Movement is a melting pot of varying ideas and beliefs it is basically a collection of movements of eastern metaphysical thought systems. It is a westernised form of Hinduism. It has channelled itself through alternate practices and alternate medicines with tentacles that reach into almost every walk of life.

The New Age movement says that God is impersonal or a life force; sin does not exist; and there is no judgement. In contrast the Bible says man was created by a personal God; man is sinful and separated from God; and will be judged for his sin unless reconciled to God through Jesus Christ.

In the New Age movement *man is central* and 'salvation' is being in tune with 'divine consciousness' through the self. The New Age movement has *no absolutes*. Truth is relative; punishment not eternal; Jesus not the only way to God and sin is not a recognised term. Despite all this *the movement does not reject the Christian church but rather absorbs it*.

God hates mixtures. In the Old Testament God brought swift judgement on Israel when they mixed other religions with His laws. In the New Testament '*leaven*' is a symbol of sin or false doctrine, (Matt.16:6,11,12; 1Cor.5:6-9). The parable of the woman and the leaven (Matt.13:33), speaks of leaven being mixed with truth. The New Age is a subtle leaven that when mixed with truth attempts to reconcile man and God; self and divinity; and sin and holiness.

Two themes run like threads through the New Age movement: the 'God-man' principle which in varying degrees makes man as God; and an emphasis on the 'self'. It does not take much to see that *these two themes have invaded the Christian church*. The God-man principle is taught openly in the Word-Faith movement and the 'self' teaching is taught in the various self esteem and Christian psychologies. Both water down the doctrine of sin and the depravity of man. Both have been added to the presentation of the Gospel of grace. Both detract from the sovereignty of God. Both lead to occult practices.

Decades ago a flood of Christian books warned the church of the New Age movement. Yet the church has increasingly been infected with various forms of New Age mysticism thinly disguised as religious experiences. *The 'Holy Spirit' of much of the modern church is now accepted by many New Agers*.

The New Age movement may well be a 'sponge' to prepare the way for the antichrist. It promotes a 'Second Coming' in the form of a 'Christ consciousness' and their 'christ' is a reincarnated christ bringing in an ecumenical one world religion and government. **Terry Arnold**

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### Quotable - The State of The Church

*'Much of the church...has substituted programs for prayer, personalities for power, entertainment for genuine worship, prosperity for purity and organizational unity for fidelity to an unadulterated Gospel...Pragmatism has so overtaken the thinking of the people of God that enlarging the numbers in the church is regarded as the criterion of blessing and whatever it takes to accomplish this end is justified. Thus we have great emphasis on removing anything that will hinder this process of attempting to include people in the family of God.*

*A Christian is redefined as 'Anyone believing in Jesus.' Definitions of justification are carefully crafted so that Roman Catholics are not excluded from the effort to bring the church together. Understanding of holiness is adjusted so that lifestyle does not indict one as being out of harmony with an acceptable Christian life. The common cause of 'Reaching the World for Christ' becomes the foundation of the church's unity in spite of the doctrinal differences in essential theological areas...' (Voice, 12/99)*

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### Evangelism Quote

*'I want to make man feel his sins before I dare tell him anything about Christ. I want to probe into his soul and make him feel that he is lost before I tell him anything about the purchased blessing...The Spirit comes to convict before He comes to comfort.'* ('Holy Spirit Power' by Charles Spurgeon, P.24,25)

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### Christian Books?

Recently I flipped through catalogues from major Christian bookstores. The following titles alone are enough to make one wonder where the Christian book market is heading and who are they catering for: **[Editors comments in bold and brackets]**

*'The New Birth Order book': 'First-born, only child?...your birth order powerfully influences who you are, who you marry, the job you choose, and the kind of parent you are..Dr. Leman's classic will help you better understand yourself...and how to be more successful in your work.'*

**[I thought it was God who influences and helps in the above things. Does not the Bible address such issues?]**

*'I'll Have What She's Having'* by Bobbie Houston

**[A line from a popular movie where this was a catch phrase for fornication].**

*'The Five Star Church': 'How do hotels and restaurants earn five star ratings? Is it the people? The service? The*

*amenities?...Learn how to transform your church into a 5-star model...The innovative ideas outline a 'total quality management' approach to church growth.'*

*'Jesus The New Way': 'This 6 part video curriculum presents Jesus as you've never seen Him before...'*

**[I thought the Bible presents Him as He always has been.]**

*'Eat and stay thin'* by Joyce Meyers: *'...this ground breaking book will show you that true weight loss begins with feeding your soul...'*

*'Wow worship'* (Music CD)

*'Heaven - Close Encounters of the God Kind'* by Jesse Duplantis **[Duplantis is a false prophet]**

*'How to succeed at being yourself'* by Joyce Meyers

*'Called to Rebellion'* by Sandy Snay

*'Get the Sex You Both Want'* (Advertising for an article in a 'Christian magazine')

## Southern Baptists & Women Pastors

'Southern Baptists are planning to declare that women should no longer be ordained as pastors. The country's largest Protestant denomination released a statement May 18 that reads: 'While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture,' Baptist Press reported. The statement cites 1 Timothy 2:9-14, which says in part, 'I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man.'...The approximately 1,600 Southern Baptist clergywomen would be allowed to continue to serve, but the Southern Baptist Convention would oppose future ordinations, The Associated Press said. The statement will come up for ratification at the SBC's annual meeting June 13-14 and is considered likely to pass...' (Religion Today, 19/5/2000)

## Christian Wrestling?

'The new 'Christian Wrestling Federation' features the slapping, snarling, and bone-rattling body slams but without the vulgar language and sex. 'We do all the kind of wrestling you see on TV, but leave out the parading women and all the negative stuff,' Rob Vaughn, CWF founder, told The Dallas Morning News. Vaughn, who wrestles as 'Jesus Freak,' is a former college football player and a Sunday school teacher ...The CWF, a North Texas group of about a dozen wrestlers, made its debut May 10 before a screaming crowd of 400 teenagers and their parents at the Family Cathedral of Praise in Mesquite, Texas. One match was an 'anything goes' battle between Vaughn and 'Apocalypse' that featured a garbage can, a table, and a baking pan as weapons, the newspaper said. Other wrestlers go by names such as 'The Beast' and 'Angel.'

Fans at the church seemed to love the show. 'It'll get people to come to church more often,' said Stephen Cade, 16. 'It's fun to watch, and it's for Jesus Christ.' About 30 young people went up to dedicate their lives to Christ or receive prayer after the show...' (Religion Today, 15/5/2000)

## The Latest Manifestation

Many of the 'gold dust' reports have already proved to be faked or delusions. 'Charisma' had two samples from Arnott's church in Toronto tested by US Geological Survey in Washington - both were plastic film and had no trace of gold, platinum or silver.

Yet the reports continue to the amusement of the media: 'Brenda Peters of Midland City found a scarlet feather last month while vacuuming the church. Another, a Russel Page said he was driving at about 70 mph, with the windows down, when he got a wind defying answer from God. 'I looked down and there was a feather just dancing on my knee, with this light coming right down on it...'

(The Birmingham News, USA 12/4/2000)  
(<http://www.al.com/news/birmingham/apr2000/9-e208498b.html>)

## Priests & AIDS

'Roman Catholic priests in the U.S. are dying from AIDS-related illnesses at a rate four times higher than the general population and the cause is often concealed on their death certificates.' (31/1/2000 HT).

**Editors Comments: Many priests with AIDS contract it through homosexual relations. The root cause of this tragedy and of the many reports of sexual molestation by priests is the false doctrine and forced man-made law of celibacy. 'Forbidding to marry' is a 'doctrine of demons' (1Tim.4:1-3).**

## Michael W. Smith

'The Charismatic CCM pop/rock superstar Michael W. Smith has performed at Billy Graham and NRB conferences. Before success, his home fellowship for most of 20 years was Belmont Church (Nashville) which wore the Church of Christ label before going Charismatic, ('Charisma', 4/2000). Smith tells about a Full Gospel Business Men's service that changed his life: '...People started passing out and getting slain in the Spirit...I was out for 15 minutes...Took me forever to get off the floor. And I laughed...I laughed all the way home'...He relates another time of laughing, hyperventilating, 'rolling on the floor, I really believe that that was God.' (Calvary Contender, April 15, 2000)

## Preaching Out...Worship In

'In Charismatic churches, 'worship leaders' and musicians are displacing pastors and preaching. 'Charisma' editor Lee Grady (1/4) tells how his friend Mike Bickle resigned from pastoring a large Kansas City church and started a worship and prayer service that has been running 24 hours a day without a break since September 1999. He has two dozen full-time musicians and at least 20 singers and intercessors. Grady says Bickle believes this kind of continuous worship will soon be the norm and be a key to releasing a global spiritual revival.' (Calvary Contender)

**Editors Comments: Without the preached Word of God, true local revivals will not occur, (I Cor. 1:17-21, II Tim. 4:2-5).**

## Jews Challenge Vatican Over Holocaust

'British Jews have called upon the Vatican to change its policy and open up its records on the Holocaust. The call, by the chairman of the Holocaust Educational Trust, follows an apology by the Pope for Catholic's mistreatment of people of other faiths...

Adolf Hitler said: 'As for the Jews, I am just carrying on with the same policy which the Catholic Church has adopted for 1500 years...when it regarded the Jews as dangerous and pushed them into ghettos, etc...'

...Adolf Hitler was never excommunicated as a Catholic for his crimes against the Jews. Instead, the Vatican considered him to be a hero. Hitler, Mussolini and Franco were backed by the Vatican and this is what a Catholic newspaper in Spain said about Hitler the day he died: - 'Adolf Hitler, son of the Catholic Church, died while defending Christianity [Roman Catholicism]. It is therefore understandable that words cannot be found to lament over his death...Over his moral remains stands his victorious moral figure, with the palm of the martyr; God gives Hitler the laurels of victory...' (Belfast Berean, 2000 <http://come.to/thebelfastberean>)

## Chuck Colson

In a recent book Chuck Colson said: 'The most hopeful words from any Christian leader today have come from Pope John Paul II.' (Jan-Feb Proclaiming the Gospel)

Colson has a high view of Roman Catholicism and the Pope. He has a Catholic on his board. He generally includes Catholics as Christians in his writings. He participated in the false 'Evangelicals and Catholics Together' agreement.

## The Power of The Word

'The Bible did prove dangerous in the sixteenth century; most who read it carefully became Protestants!' ('Sola Scriptura', P.15)

## Evangelicism, *Sola Scriptura* & 'Prophecy'

What are the true meanings of the above terms? We say 'true' because today there appears to be much confusion when these terms are used. The problem is these terms have been *broadened* so much that many Christians are simply unaware as to what they originally meant.

The term '*Evangelical*' now includes almost any who profess to be Christian. However, the original term '*Evangelical*' was historically and doctrinally synonymous with '*Protestant*'. It came into being during the Reformation. The twin slogans of the Reformation were '*Sola Scriptura*' ('Scripture Alone') and '*Sola Fide*' ('Faith Alone'). Sadly, modern Evangelicals have broadened '*Evangelical*' to mean simply the Greek word for '*Gospel*' ('*evangel*'). Thus we now have such groups as Roman Catholics and Pentecostal/Charismatics including themselves as '*Evangelical*'. The former violate true *Sola Scriptura* with *another gospel*; the latter with the addition of extra-biblical revelations, (such as 'prophecy' as in *foretelling* words from God rather than *forthtelling* Scripture). Some have thus coined the phrase '*neo-Evangelical*' to distinguish the modern broad approach in comparison to the original 'Evangelical'.

To be truly Evangelical is to accept the doctrine of '*Sola Scriptura*' (*Scripture alone*). But here we come to another problem - '*Evangelicals*' today have also broadened *Sola Scriptura* so much that the Reformers, who shed their own blood by standing for this truth, would doubtless be horrified to see this diluted.

'*Sola Scriptura*' basically means: '*All things necessary for salvation and concerning faith and the spiritual life are taught in the Bible, and clear enough for the ordinary believer to understand it*'. This was not just a Reformation cry but also a teaching of the early Church fathers. Chrysostom in the 3rd. Century, when teaching on 2Tim.3:15-17 stated: '*You have Scripture for a master instead of me; from there you can learn whatever you would know.*' (1) Indeed, 2Timothy 3:16,17 states clearly that '*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, [God-breathed] and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction [‘paideia’ - instruction of children - has a chastening implication] in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*', (2Tim.3:16). The Greek word here for '*perfect*' is not the common '*teleios*' meaning '*complete or mature*' but is the word '*artios*' meaning '*now complete, sufficient, completely qualified*'. Augustine in the 4th Century taught the same doctrine: '*In those teachings which are clearly based on Scripture are found all that concerns faith and the conduct of life.*' (2) Luther once said: '*Any teaching which does not square with Scripture is to be rejected even if it snows miracles every day.*' (3)

Today many say the Spirit is working *apart* from the Word and in *addition* to the Word. The Signs and Wonders Movement has furthered the errors of prophetic and new revelations, unknown tongues and extra Biblical teaching. A valid response to this is: *if these are Words from God then why do we not add them to the existing canon of Scripture?* The truth is that many of these errors are often *additions* to the Word of God and thus outright attacks on *Sola Scriptura*!

However, today there are now far more subtle attacks on *Sola Scriptura*. The following two statements will show the subtle broadening of this doctrine. (A) *The Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and practise.* (B) *The Bible is infallible only in matters of faith and practise.* ('Faith and practise' here refer to the sum of *Christian* living and includes all that is *needed* to salvation and to live a spiritual life that glorifies

God). The deception is in the latter (B) which leads people to think that *only part* of the Bible is infallible - ie. *that part only that speaks to faith and practice...*The next step to apostasy is to deny that the Scriptures are adequate for faith and conduct.

Outside of the material in the Bible we are free to make choices one way or another. The Bible does not tell us how to repair our motor vehicle and we are free to consult elsewhere for direction. However, all we *need* to know in *spiritual matters* and matters that deal with our *soul* are written in the Word of God - the Bible.

How and why is such a *downgrade* of *Sola Scriptura* occurring? One of the principle causes is that *Christians are looking to the world for answers to spiritual problems.* Two examples suffice to show how Christians have lowered the original view of *Sola Scriptura*.

Firstly, today Church leaders look to the world for methods of church growth and hence we have the modern '*Church Growth Movement*'. This movement unashamedly takes concepts straight out of the world's motivational marketing techniques. A proliferation of worldly techniques has arguably affected the message of the Gospel to such an extent as to make Christian and non Christian hearers comfortable and entertained. The result is that *sin and grace are minimised.*

Secondly, Christians are increasingly looking to the world for psychological methods to cure alcoholics, drug addicts and abused people. Hence churches have adopted self help groups; 'co-dependency recovery' groups; 'ten step' programs - all designed to build *self-esteem, self-fulfilment* and other humanistic and unbiblical values. Churches now have '*Christian psychologists*' on staff. This is despite the fact that *Christian psychology today teaches people to look outside the Bible for solutions to problems that are addressed in the Bible.* Christian Psychology has a *low view of sin*, partly because it has a *low view of Scripture.*

What do the Scriptures say?: '***Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ***', (Col.2:8). '***In times past you walked according to the course of this world...***' (Eph.2:2) '***And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...***' (Rom.12:2). *The only means to transform our Christian minds is the all sufficient Word of God!* Although there are many valuable things outside the Bible, *spiritually all we need to know is in Scripture!*

It is not the Word of God *plus* - that is the message of the cults. Spiritual truth to the Christian is found in the Bible. The power of God to live a Christian life comes from the Holy Spirit, but through the Word. *To know the Scriptures is to know the power of God*, (Mk.12:24)!

How did Jesus handle attacks from Satan? - by quoting the Word of God - '***It is written***', (Matt.4:6-10). Even the symbols of the Word of God, ('*lamp*', '*hammer*', '*sword*', '*seed*'), show it's power. '***For the Word of God is quick*** [gives life continually] ***and powerful*** [energises] ***and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul*** [the mind, will, emotions] ***and spirit***, [the God-breathed principle of life] ***and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner*** ['*kritikos*' - a judge, decider] ***of the thoughts and intents of the heart***', (Heb.4:12). *With the above in mind, do we need psychology!? Do we need Church Growth methods!?* How did the saints of last centuries ever survive without such? - perhaps because they *believed and practised Sola Scriptura!*

The Bible is the rule of God. It has *all* the spiritual wisdom we ever need, (Col.3:16). It contains the *whole* counsel of

God, nothing less, nothing more. For many this thinking is 'too narrow'. Yet God even places His Word *above* His name! (Ps.138:2) *If the Word of God will not change people then forget about using any other methods!*

A more modern attack on *Sola Scriptura* has come from the Pentecostal/Charismatic sector of the church through their understanding of 'prophecy'. Some confusion here stems from the misunderstanding of what 'prophecy' means in the New Testament.

The modern meaning of the verb to '*prophecy*' has in some quarters unfortunately come to mean to predict, to *foretell* the future, or to put forth the mind of God. This is certainly indicative of the Old Testament usage but in the New Testament the primary and general meaning is rather to '*tell forth* [*forthtell*] *the message of God*'. Since we now have the Word of God in written form in a canon of Scripture (4) that is *closed*, the closest thing to this would be preaching or expounding - *forthtelling* the Word of God *already* contained in the Bible.

In the Old Testament the Word of God was being given to men through the prophets and those specifically used by God, (Heb.1:1,2; 2Pet.1:21). The meaning of '*prophet*' in the Old Testament was that of *a speaker of the oracles of God*, one *chosen* by God to speak His Words. Aaron was chosen by God to be a prophet before Pharaoh, (Ex.4,5,7). Many of these men had immediate direct communion with God or God chose to communicate to them through dreams and visions, (Num.12:2cp.vs.6; Nu.12:1-8cp. Jer.23; Amos 3:7,8; Gen 20:7,8,17,18). However, this is not the practice today for we now have the *completed* Word of God! *Today it is surely grievous to God when we look for more than He has given us in the completed Scriptures.*

In the New Testament to '*prophecy*' is the Greek '*prophetes*' from '*pro*' meaning '*forth*' and '*phemi*' - '*to speak*': *to speak forth the Word of God or to forthtell*. The primary meaning of the word '*prophecy*' in the New Testament is to *forthtell*, not to *foretell* as in the Old Testament.

Even where the intent in the New Testament is to *foretell*, almost all the references are quoting something from the *Old Testament*, (Example - Matt.15:7: '*Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you...*'; 1Pet 1:10: '*Of which salvation the [Old Testament] prophets...prophesied of the grace that should come unto you.*') In Luke 1:67 when Zacharias '*prophesied*' he recounts what was *already* promised and *looked forward to* in the Old Testament - that the '*God of Israel*' had '*visited and redeemed His people, and...raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David...by the mouth of His holy prophets...which he swore to our father Abraham...And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest...To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins...*' Again in Acts 2:16,17 on the day of Pentecost the word '*prophecy*' here is not *foretelling* the future but recounting something *already* spoken of in the Old Testament from Joel 2.

There is perhaps only one clear occasion in the New Testament where *foretelling* seems to be the sole intent - that of Agabus in Acts 11:27,28, written *prior* to the closure of the canon of Scripture. However, it must be remembered that we *now* have a *closed canon* - the Bible is now *complete*. The faith has been '*ONCE delivered unto the saints*', (Jude 3). God '*spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son...*', (Heb.1:1,2). To add to the Word brings the threat of a curse, (Rev.22:18,19 cp. Dt.4:2; 12:3).

In the case of the Old Testament, the prophets *foretold* of the salvation yet to be accomplished. In the New Testament,

prophecy was a publication of the salvation *already* accomplished. In the Old Testament prophesying was *foretelling* of a future salvation. In the New Testament prophesying is publication of a salvation in passing.

In Eph. 2:20; 3:5, the prophets were named side by side with the Apostles (meaning the eleven and those who were commissioned by Jesus directly) as the *foundation* of the New Testament church. They are to be understood as exclusively New Testament prophets and are listed in Eph. 4:11 between apostles and evangelists (see also 1 Cor. 12:28). New Testament prophets were for the New Testament church what Old Testament prophets were for Israel. They maintained intact the immediate connection between the church and God. They were messengers or communicators. Such prophets were not ordained in local churches and arguably do not have successors. In Deuteronomy 18:9-22 Cp. Acts 3:22,23 Moses spoke of One who would come and be the Prophet. Jesus Christ was that individual, (Acts 22:22; 3:22; 7:37).

Pentecostal/Charismatics sometimes admit there is an apparent contradiction between their version of prophesying and the sufficiency of Scripture. However, through a gymnastics of terminology they redefine 'prophecy'. They quote many Old Testament Scriptures such as 1Kings 17:1 where Elijah prophesied saying: '*...according to my word.*' However, what must be realised is that *these words went on to become the completed Word of God!*

Modern day Pentecostal/Charismatics say that their prophesying is founded on, and in agreement with, the Word of God and is simply applied to our present situation. They say their prophesying is the revelation of God's Word/will in our present situation. However, they are referring in practice to *foretelling*, rather than *forthtelling* the already completed Word of God. *Sola Scriptura* as it was originally taught says that the Word of God is *enough* and this excludes *foretelling* any new Words from God. Still some quote 1Corinthians 14 where the practice of prophesying is mentioned. However, at the time of the Corinthian church the canon of Scripture had not been completed.

In short, *people who proclaim words directly from God are adding to the Word of God!* They are implying the Bible is not sufficient. They cannot claim *Sola Scriptura* as the reformers taught it! The fact is there is a glaring contradiction between the Pentecostal/Charismatic practice of 'prophesying' as in *foretelling* and the all sufficiency of Scripture. No amount of rearranging or redefining the definitions of 'prophecy' or *Sola Scriptura* will change this.

Logically, anything outside of God's Word does not have to be 'prophesied' to give people direction or to show the will of God. We are *free* to do whatever is outside and not contradictory to the written Word of God. We also have the benefit of prayer and the counsel of many. We simply do not need a 'prophet' or anyone to 'prophesy' such things. The fruit of today's many false 'prophets' and false 'prophesies' should drive us back to a reliance on the *all sufficiency of Scripture*.

In this ministry our hearts cry out to Evangelicals world wide to stand with the Reformers in the true meaning of the word *Evangelical* and proclaim *Sola Scriptura!* Let this doctrine not be polluted by the methods of the world. Let it not be muddied by movements that would have an ear to hear new words and revelations from God. '*Every Word of God is pure...add thou not unto his words...*' (Ps.30:5,6)

**Terry Arnold**

(1) '*Sola Scriptura!*' by various authors, P.7 (2) Ibid P.105 (3) Ibid, P.141. (4) Means rule; measure; complete and regarded as divine.

(TA Ministries, PO Box 1499, Hervey Bay, 4655, Qld., Australia)

## Your Comments and Questions

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

To the editor T. Arnold. I have recently obtained a *Diakrisis* magazine and was disgusted by some of your comments in the editors comments April, 2000...I am an ordained Anglo-Catholic Priest...I have a degree in divinity and I'm well respected in the traditional and ecumenical field. I am also a gay man...Your comments suggests that Christians should not accept gay people. Jesus is a God of Love not hate.

If you really look into the priests...of all parishes you will find there are many hidden gay men & women. It is the sexually confused people...who create hatred that many denominations over the years have subjected so many communities to pain. The misconstrued and uneducated interpretations of the Bible & God's word has hurt so many Christians.

Also the anti Mormon sentiments are showing your bigotry feelings...Jesus gave the second commandment - 'A new Commandment I give unto you that you love one another, even as I have loved you. And by this, all men shall know that you are my disciples.'...If a man has an impure heart, it is between he and God, it is not for the so called Christian to hate him but to pray for him...God is a God of love not hate. We should be teaching love faith and tolerance.

Holiness is an achieved state...God gives holiness with his love. Tolerance is a step to holiness. It was the intolerance and holier than thou attitude that grated on me.

Your comments were recently read at one of the ministers fraternal meetings, and from the nine denominations present, all the priests, pastors and ministers had the same view I have put to paper.

...TA ministries...is on my parish prayer list and also on the prayer list for the ministers fraternal in the... [Sydney] area. Yours in Christ, Rev. Father S.C.B. (D.D.Thl. BA) S.B.

**Editors reply:** Dear...I am sorry you are 'disgusted' in my *one* comment from the 'Diakrisis'/April/2000 newsletter which simply asked the question: 'why is there an increasing acceptance of homosexuality?'. That was the only statement made about homosexuality in the entire editorial you mentioned. From my *one* statement you charged me with suggesting 'that Christians should not accept gay people'. Yet I did not mention gay people but rather the sin of 'homosexuality'.

Unlike you I am not respected in the ecumenical field. The Bible is absolutely opposed to the current ecumenical movement which mixes the true Gospel with false gospels and is forming the end-time apostate church. Some decades ago the bulk of Evangelicals were warning of this deception, yet today the ecumenical movement has blinded the eyes of perhaps even the majority.

Contrary to what you write, Jesus will judge sin including...homosexuality. This sin if not forgiven and repented of will send you to Hell, unless you trust Jesus Christ for His righteousness and His work on the cross. If you have truly done this you should be convicted of such sin and follow His Word - which condemns such sexuality outright.

Yes, God is a God of love but my question to you is: Is He not also a God of wrath? Does He not call for repentance before judgement?

I agree there are many hidden 'gay' priests, particularly in the Roman Catholic religion. The private surveys show the percentage is shockingly high.

I have never said I hate homosexuals but rather that

Homosexuality is sin and an abomination in the sight of God. It never ceases to amaze me that we get accused of 'judging', yet 'gay' people themselves quickly judge us as 'unloving'! Who is judging who here?

...'*Misconstrued and uneducated interpretations of the Bible*'? Homosexuality and Lesbianism are clearly and severely condemned in the Old Testament as an 'abomination' with the penalty of death, (Lev.18:22). In the New Testament it is called a 'vile affection'; being 'against nature'; 'unseemly'; and 'error', (Rom.1:26,27); and this act of 'going after strange flesh' and will bring 'eternal fire', (Jude 7). The Greek word for 'strange' here means 'another of a different kind' and refers to men with men and women with women. Another is 1Cor.6:9,10: '..the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven...nor the effeminate, nor the abusers of themselves with mankind...' The Greek words here for 'effeminate' and 'abusers' specifically refer to Homosexuals and Lesbians.

'Anti - Mormon sentiments...bigotry'? Should I believe in Mormonism when it has a different Jesus, a different gospel and a different heaven and hell?

The 'new commandment' you speak of mentions not only 'love', (which you judge me as not having), but also mentions the word 'disciple'. A disciple is one who adheres to the person and to His doctrine, who takes up his cross and follows the master and His Words.

Yes we should be teaching love, faith and tolerance, but not such that we allow for sin! One word seems to be missing in your letter - TRUTH. What about the truth of God's Word? Love without truth is not love. It is because we love you that we tell you the truth - your sin of homosexuality will be judged...I beg you to repent of this and call upon the name of the Lord to save you. I enclose our Jan/Feb issue which features a more in depth article on homosexuality. I ask you to read it in full.

Please also read this letter and the article to the '*ministers fraternal*'. I am coming to Sydney in August and would meet with you and any in the ministers fraternal that we might enquire into God's Word further.

Yes, please continue to pray for me. We will continue to love you and to help you in any way we can that you might know the power of God and the dominion over sin. With the Love of Christ,

*Reply: Dear Mr. Arnold,...unlike yourself many ministers of the Christian religion focus on a positive God not a negative God...just because some of the disciples did not agree or accept homosexuality does not mean this is wrong. Christ did not condemn homosexuals. He accepted them for who they are. Many of the writers in the Scriptures were not educated...they only knew what they had been taught...who are you to tell me that I or anyone is a sinner. Homosexuality is not a sin...yes Mormons are still Christians...their Jesus is our Jesus...again you know very little, but like to broadcast your opinion as Gospel...with the pompous attitude that I am holier than thou. God is love...I have a strong relationship with my God...my conscience is clear and my 'sin' is between God and myself...*

*Ps. I shall forward your letter to a pastor of the...church he is an openly gay priest in a large Gay oriented Protestant parish. I shall ask him to educate you in the truth of homosexuality...Rev. Father SCB...*

## Your Comments and Questions

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

**Editors note:** In the last issue May/June, P.7, a subscriber wrote about Gumbel and the *Alpha* course. We have since had enquiries concerning the statement that Gumbel said '*Genesis is a myth*'. We remind readers that such letters to the editor are not 'editorial' and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors or advisors. However, the following from the subscriber may help in clarification.

**Subscriber:** Dear Terry, When Gumbel stated on the video that *Genesis* was a myth, this was the thrust of what he said, not his exact words...We recall that it was about lesson 4 when Gumbel made his statement...We then commenced this correspondence [see May/June issue] with Gumbel. Gumbel stated in writing that he could not remember what he had said on the video. We understand that Gumbel has since altered this video.

...We cannot have confidence in someone who does not see *Genesis* as 100% true. After all if he does not believe that, what else does he not believe? What is Gumbel's understanding of sin if he does not believe *Genesis* is literally true? Why did he refuse to answer our questions and refer us to his book instead, which is totally wishy washy embracing theistic evolution and quotes even Buddhists and their beliefs?

In Gumbel's book '*Searching Issues*', Ch. 6, P.103, Gumbel states, talking about *Genesis*: 'Whichever view one takes, it is clear that there is not necessarily a conflict between science and Scripture. In the light of the uncertainty and the difference of opinions among genuine Christians, I think it is unwise to be too dogmatic about the issue (certainly if, like me, you are neither a scientist nor a theologian). The main point of *Genesis* is not to answer the question "How"? and "Who"? (The theological questions). The Bible is not primarily a scientific book, but a theological one.'

I must ask therefore, if Gumbel states he is not a theologian, how is he therefore able to understand a book he states is theological? ...The Bible is either true or not, it is not a dogma to decide whether we should or should not become dogmatised with one part instead of another...His book and *Alpha* is a type of palatable PR. mish mash that does not face the fact that men are sinners and thus lead them truly to Jesus Christ as Saviour! (**Subscriber**)

**Editors Comments:** For a review on why the *Alpha* course is dangerous see *Diakrisis* April/99. This ministry has concerns in two main areas: The section on the Holy Spirit contains serious errors and the course is a tool for false ecumenism. (The Roman Catholic religion has also endorsed it wholeheartedly).

### Praise Points

- Thank the Lord for a new voluntary worker in the administrative side of the ministry

### Prayer Points

- Pray for wisdom in how to manage and delegate the increasing workload. Pray for the upcoming Sydney itinerary

Dear Terry...I do pray for you every day. The section on 'Praise & Prayer points' usually gets read first...Please know that you are constantly in our prayers, with gratitude to God that you are standing up for the truth. Don't get discouraged - in fact, thinking about it, you probably don't, because we have a great strong Father,...(**R.S., Sydney**)

Hi Terry, Hope you are well and the Ministry is thriving and being blessed. I thought you might be interested in the following...I have watched the video on Hinn's site and he does actually state that Jesus has agreed to appear physically on his show in the next few months... (**Name withheld at Editors discretion**)

Dear Terry & Mike,...I have been so blessed by your information and discernment at what is happening within the Christian church. Thankyou for keeping me updated with the false teaching of the Pentecostal churches and also the power which the Pope uses to push ecumenical ideas to draw in other denominations.

...I too have wondered about popular Christian music as the focus is on me and give me, and appears less on reverence to a holy, awesome and powerful God.. Thanking you, (**B.W. Gympie, Qld.**)

Dear Terry, What a refreshing thing it is to receive a copy of your newsletter. Being raised as a babe in Christ with a Charismatic church, then moving and worshipping in a Pentecostal church for over 7 years it is such a deception to have 'spiritual blinkers' on without seeing the truth. Praise God for His mercies that showed myself and my family to remove ourselves quietly and quickly from the...to a 'remnant' church that teaches, preaches and disciples...We have experienced more 'life' in that church than ever before...Praise God this ministry is providing clear literature to reveal the truths of God's Word...Free indeed! (**R.W., Vict.**)

### Terry's Itinerary

**July 2nd** 10am & 6.30pm (6.30pm video on Revival) Hervey Bay Church of Christ

**Sydney Itinerary (to be completed next issue)**

**Aug.11th** 7pm (Frid) Guildford Assembly Ph. 98351513

**Aug.12th** 1.30pm (Sat) Grace Bible Church, Kingswood, Seminar: '*Foundations for Evangelism/Discipleship*' (see P.1)

**Aug.13th** 7pm. Grace Bible Church, Kingswood, Ph. 47363619

**Aug.19th.** (Sat) Church For Everybody, Marrickville

**Aug.20th** 10am Picton Bible Church, Ph. 46810227

**Aug.20th** 6.30pm Church For Everybody, Marrickville

**Aug.22-25** New Tribes Bible College, Rooty Hill Ph.96258118 **Seminars:** (Half-days commencing 8.45am) on **Mormonism** (Tues); **Jehovah Witnesses** (Wed); **Signs & Wonders** (Thurs); **Seventh Day Adventism** (Frid)

**Aug.27th** 10am, 6pm Oak Flats Woolongong, 42961569 (Tentative)

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