

Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear Sir, I would like to thank Terry and all the staff that provide us with such excellent teaching in each issue of 'Diakrisis'. Thank you and may the Lord bless the work you all do.

The 'Editors Comment' in the last issue (Jan/Feb/2011) is an excellent article and right to the point. This kind of exposure is badly needed in this time of such deceitful and misleading teachings. (G.O. Qld)

Website Comments (www.taministries.net)

Finally, issues that I am passionate about. I have looked for information of this calibre for the last several hours. Your site is greatly appreciated...

...[Re: Women in ministry article] You my friend are a blessing. I have been looking through the internet trying to find this precise topic. Thanks so much.

Prayer/Praise Points

- Pray for Terry and Beth as they continue in their travels through NSW, Victoria and Sth.Australia. Pray for health, safety, support and for the truth of Scripture to be equipping hearers in many churches.
- Praise the Lord for the interest shown in the website (www.taministries.net) and for the dissemination of articles. Pray for Terry and the volunteers as they handle the correspondence and the distribution of the newsletter. Pray that the newsletter will be passed onto those who will benefit.

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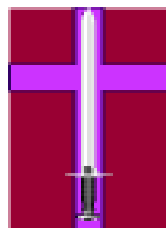
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'But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern [diakrisis] both good and evil', (Heb.5:14)

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March/April 2011

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

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

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

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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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This will greatly assist us in distribution and alleviate costs. The e-mail newsletter is distributed earlier (up to 1 week) before the hardcopy.

Editors Comment

This newsletter is now more than 15 years old. In that time we have been attempting to *inform, teach* and *equip* Christians to be overcomers in an age of postmodernism. Even in 15 years we have seen numerous denominations and fellowships fall away to positions in belief that now are widely accepted, but which just a few decades ago were considered liberal, modernistic, ecumenical or unscriptural error. This is what 'apostasy' literally means - to fall away from something that was once held to. The ecumenical movement is now widely accepted; Roman Catholicism is now Christian; Luther's stand for justification by faith alone has been turned on its head even by his own church; Pentecostal/Charismatic distinctives are now either tolerated or accepted; and women in ministry positions of authority are now accepted by the *majority* of denominations. How the church has changed in just a few decades!

The ecumenical movement has made great inroads into most churches. Churches used to be 'protestant' in that they rejected the gospel of Roman Catholicism as a faith plus works system, instead of faith alone. They rejected the additions to the original faith, such as Mary as 'co-mediatrix'. But all such 'protesting' has been swept away with the ecumenical movement. It is now estimated that over 1,000 Australian Anglicans will fall to Rome next year.* Other 'faiths' and religions are also being accepted. The one world church is already here! Just go to any combined services at various times of the year and you will see most of the denominations fellowshipping with Roman priests or other religions, despite their belief systems being diametrically opposed to each other. If this is not hypocrisy, then what is?

The Pentecostal/Charismatic has had winds of new teaching come and go. The 'Toronto Blessing' in the mid nineties introduced *new* teaching on the Holy Spirit. Scriptures were strained to agree with new manifestations and signs occurring in many churches. Then came a series of Charismatic 'revivals' which promised a soon end time world harvest. Yet what was left was a wake of split churches, failed prophecies and fallen ministries. Amazingly, very few have looked back at this history and questioned which 'jesus' and which 'spirit' was being preached.

Women in ministry has been an issue that has seen nearly every denomination reverse their view. Being more relevant to the world and culturally acceptable has become more important than the objective truths in Scripture on this issue. God's command for women not to '*teach, nor to usurp authority over the man*' (1Tim.2:12) has been ignored. Scriptures that have nothing to do with the issue have been dragged in to build strawmen arguments for women having 'equal rights'. The foundational issue of *headship* has been muffled. And why is this issue only a recent issue, considering it was not prominent until the 60's and 70's?

How have all these changes been brought about? At the root of this apostasy is a two fold attack. The first is the change in philosophy of thinking. Postmodern thinking means we adopt the world's new tolerance view. We sympathise with the thinking of the world. We adopt the musical performances of a fallen world for our church services. We adopt the market driven philosophies of the world to give us bigger

* *Apostasy Alert*, Dec.24/2010

Terry's Itinerary

NSW

March 3rd (Thurs) 7.30pm Cootamundra Bible Fellowship (at Bimberdeen college)
Ph.(02)69431677 or (02)69423541

March 6th (Sun) 10am Cootamundra Bible Fellowship (at Bimberdeen)

March 6th (Sun) 6.30pm Cootamundra. Venue to be decided.

March 8th (Tues) 7.30pm Cootamundra Presbyterian Hall

Vict

March 13th (Sun) 11am Numurkah Gospel Fellowship (03)58622341

March 13th (Sun) 7.30pm Numurkah Gospel Fellowship

Sth. Aust.

March 20th (Sun) 10.30am Waipinga Congregational, Victor Harbour (08)85523755

March 20th (Sun. afternoon after church lunch) Waipinga Congregational

March 25th (Frid) 7.30pm Native Valley Bible Fellowship Ph.(08)83886106

March 27th (Sun) 10.30am Native Valley Bible Fellowship Ph.(08)83886106

March 30th (Wed) Kids Club, Native Valley Bible Fellowship

April 2nd April (Sat) 1pm-5.30pm **Seminar: *The Holy Spirit; Tongues; Healing; Which Gospel?...*** Church For You: 3 Kirk Street, Elizabeth Park, Ph.(08)71801985 or 0417016160

April 3rd (Sun) 10am Church For You, 3 Kirk Street, Elizabeth Park, Ph.(08)71801985

April 3rd (Sun) 6pm Church For You, 3 Kirk Street, Elizabeth Park, Ph.(08)71801985

NSW

April 10th (Sun) 10am Picton Bible Church (02)46810227

April 10th (Sun) pm Picton Bible Church

April 13th (Wed) 7.30pm Ryde Congregational Ph.(02)98889337

April 17th (Sun) 10.30am Bethshan Community church, Wyee Ph.(02)43571378

April 17th (Sun) 6pm Bethshan Community church, Wyee

Is Our Christianity a 'Crutch'?

Today Christians are often charged with the claim that our religion is our 'crutch' and that we are 'weak'...But if this is so then what of the people jailed, slaughtered and burned in times past and still today? The sceptics who make such claims should read the '*Foxes Book of Martyrs*' and ask the question - did they need a 'crutch'? What of Paul who wrote most of the book of Christianity - he was arrested, flogged, mocked, shipwrecked, beaten near to death and according to history finally beheaded!

True Christianity is not about a 'crutch' but about a *relationship* and a *promise*! A true Christian will throw away any 'crutch' when it comes to trials and testings, because the crutch idea will not help! If 'weakness' or a 'crutch' is defined as sin then that is true. We are all 'weak'. But when we are 'weak', are we then not strong in Christ (2Cor.12:10)?

Terry Arnold

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Terry, we are in telling times...the decline of Christianity,...the revelation that Islam, Roman Catholicism and other religions could now easily come together under the Vatican and their Pontifex Maximus. I always wondered how this could be, but events of the last year have revealed exactly where things lie. The Reformation Epoch is OVER. Not to mention men's hearts failing them for fear of those things coming upon the earth? Volcanoes exploding, earthquakes, big ones, everywhere...floods, disasters, fires - all in 2010 alone! How much do Christian have to be shown before they will believe that we would be at the end of the Church Age?...

(M.C. NSW)

'Eisegesis'

'...Poor old Calvin couldn't quite get his head around the fact being chosen into Christ was not being chosen in Christ: 'According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world,...' (Eph 1:4) - ie 'predestination' along with being 'called' and 'chosen' all happen post (after) salvation'

(H.H. Brisbane)

Editors reply: It is desperation to change Scripture when it makes no sense to our grid of theology. This interpretation completely reverses the plain meaning of words! (And it has nothing to do with 'poor old Calvin'). The 'hath chosen' is obviously *past* tense and qualified by the '*before the foundation of the world*'! Look up the same phrase elsewhere: '*Father...for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world*' (Jn.17:24); '*...Christ, as of a lamb...Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you*' (1Pet.1:19-20). (Note the '*but*' in this last verse shows the contrast between '*before*' and '*these last times*'!) The playing of semantics with '*in*' and '*into*' in Ephesians 1:4 has no bearing on the fact that the '*choosing*' and '*predestination*' was done '*before*' the '*foundation of the world*'. The next verse (vs.5) is conclusive: '*Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will*'.

'*Predestination*' comes from the Greek word '*proorizo*' ('*pro*' - '*before*'/'*orizo*' - '*to determine*'). Every example of this word clearly means *to determine or decree beforehand* (Acts 4:28; Rom.8:29,30; 1Cor.2:7; Eph.1:5,11). Here are two examples: '*For to do whatsoever your hand and your counsel determined before* [*proorizo*] *to be done*'; '*But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained* [*proorizo*] *before the world unto our glory*' (1Cor.2:7). How can '*predestination*', '*calling*' and '*choosing*' happen '*post* (*after*) *salvation*' when, by the tense of the verbs and the plain sense of the English, we have already been chosen? And what does the '*PRE*' mean in '*predestination*'? Why not just accept what the Scriptures say *plainly*? Would not a young child understand that '*before the foundation of the world*' at least means BEFORE we existed?

numbers and to lure so called 'seekers' into our churches. The bait we lured them with has now become what we feed them, and worse, what we feed ourselves! The world has come into the church to take the church into the world. This has led to a *lower view of the Word of God, and this is the root for the apostasy of our day!*

For many Christians the Word of God is simply insufficient. In the ecumenical church truth is not something to strive for at any cost. The Pentecostal/Charismatic system simply does not accept that God has finally spoken through the Bible. They insist on more words from God being found in 'prophecies', unknown 'tongues', dreams and visions - all are put forward as 'God's word'. Signs and wonders are often the validation to such new words from God. Yet Jesus warned '*An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign*' (Matt.12:39).

Those who allow for women in positions of authority in pastoring and preaching, subjectively slant the word of God to fit culture or modernism. The qualification of '*the husband of one wife*' (1Tim.3:2) no longer has any function for this modern world, instead 'the wife of one husband' has been added!

The problem of apostasy is rooted in how the modern church views the Word of God. It is simply no longer a '*more sure word of prophecy*' (2Pet.1:19) and it most certainly is no longer '*the prophecy of scripture*'! (vs.20). If it were, churches would not have radically changed their positions over the last few decades! The issue is rooted in the inspiration of Scripture. Is the 66 books of the Bible sufficient? Is it still '*given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*' (2Tim.3:16,17)?

Some readers will see me as constantly 'ranting' about the apostasy, but its a warning I see consistently in the Word of God and one which the Lord has impressed heavily on me year after year as I travel and see the state of the church first hand. I grieve that there is a new generation in church today that simply does not know their heritage! They do not know the cost in blood to give us the Word of God and to know its inspiration and thus its power. Statistics tell us that very small percentages of evangelicals can answer basic questions of doctrine or know their Bible. Worse, only small percentages actually read their Bibles. Most Christians in the west today are simply ill equipped to defend the faith. Part of the blame is laid on pastors and elders who simply are not teaching, warning and equipping. Churches are afraid that teaching doctrine will lose numbers, but it is a fallacy that avoiding controversy will 'keep' people. I have found that people prefer issues to be addressed and that this is actually more 'relevant' to people than the ecumenical attitudes of love with no absolutes. All the modern church growth methods and ecumenical programmes are *not* producing people who understand the most basic tenets of the faith!

We in this ministry pray that if the Lord returns this year that the reader will be found watching and ready. Here is the apostle Paul's words before the close of his life on earth: '*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch you in all things...*' (2Tim.4:2-8).

Terry Arnold

A Servant of the Word

(The following was written by a Presbyterian preacher, Floyd Doud Shafer, in an issue of *Christianity Today* dated March 27, 1961. It addressed the responsibility of congregants)

Fling him into his office, tear the office sign from the door and nail on the sign 'study'. Take him off all mailing lists. Lock him up with his books, his typewriter, and his Bible. Slam him down on his knees before texts and broken hearts and the flick of lives of a superficial flock and a holy God.

Force him to be the one man in our surfeited communities who knows about God. Throw him into the ring to box with God until he learns how short his arms are. Engage him to wrestle with God all the night through. And let him come out only when he is bruised and beaten into being a blessing.

Shut his mouth forever spouting remarks and stop his tongue forever tripping lightly over every nonessential. Require him to have something to say before he dares break the silence, and bend his knees in the lonesome valley of prayer.

Burn his eyes with weary study. Wreck his emotional poise with worry for God. And make him exchange his pious stance for a humble walk with God and man. Make him spend and be spent for the glory of God.

Rip out his telephone. Burn up his ecclesiastical records. Put water in his fuel tank. Give him a Bible, tie him to the pulpit, and make him preach the Word of the living God. Test him, quiz him, examine him, humiliate him for his ignorance of things divine. Shame him for his good comprehension of finances, game scores, and politics. Laugh at his frustrated effort to play psychiatrist. Form a choir, raise a chant, and haunt him with it night and day 'Sir, we would see Jesus'. When at long last, he dares assay the pulpit, ask him if he has a word from God. If he doesn't, dismiss him. Tell him you can read the morning paper and digest the television commentaries and think through the day's superficial problems and manage the community's weary drives and bless the sordid baked potatoes, green beans add infinitum, better than he can. Command him not to come back until he's read and re-read, written and re-written until he can stand up worn, and forlorn, and say, 'Thus saith the Lord'.

Break him across the board of his ill-gotten popularity. Smack him hard with his own prestige. Corner him with questions about God. Cover him with demands for celestial wisdom. And give him no escape until he's back against the wall of the word. And sit down before him and listen to the only word he has left: God's Word.

Let him be totally ignorant of the down street gossip. But give him a chapter and order him to walk around it, camp on it, sup with it, and come at last to speak it backward and forward, until he says about it all things that ring with the truth of eternity.

And when he's burned up by the flaming word, when he's consumed at last by the fiery grace blazing through him, and when he's privileged to translate the truth of God to men, and finally transferred from earth to heaven, then bear him away gently and blow a muted trumpet and lay down softly, place a two-edged sword on his coffin, and raise the tune triumphant. For he was a brave soldier of the Word and ere he died he had become a man of God.

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unto you, let him be accursed' (Gal.1:8)]. The Bible uses the word 'man' to cover both man and woman. [Not always. There are two different Greek words for 'man' - one is generic ('anthropos') meaning 'mankind' and the other is a 'aner' meaning a male person or husband - the latter is not generic. The context usually is obvious]. If your God does not accept women for the heart, soul and mind I believe my God the Father gave to women, then I do not want to belong to any Kingdom ruled by the kind of God you describe.

Gen.3:16 '...your desire shall be to your husband, and he shall rule over you': Adam did not set a very good example for Eve...In what way do you expect me to follow the example Adam & Eve set? [You don't. You follow what God said in judgement to them. He has not taken that order back]...if the husband does not live up to God's expectation, how can the wife look to him? [She looks to God but that does not negate the submission. You cannot ignore the order here. If you ignore submission then how can you ignore the 'pain in child birth' mentioned in the same passage - can that be done away with also?] You have said that a wife can submit to a husband without sinning. But is this really the situation God intended for Adam and Eve? [Yes!] You said you know many men who love and respect their wives as Jesus does. Jesus did not sin. Do you or these men never sin? Scripture says: 'If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us'. [I have never said 'as Jesus does'...I said I knew many men who live as best they can Eph.5...and I never said they were 'sinless']

1Tim.2:11-15 'Let a woman learn in silence with all submission...But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man. For Adam was first formed, then Eve...': Timothy is talking about what he does not allow. He is not saying God does not allow it...he is not quoting words from God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit. [So, does Paul contradict 'God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit'? Is not what Paul wrote 'Scripture given by inspiration of God...for doctrine...instruction...' (2Tim.3:16)? Is this command of Paul in 1Tim.2 the word of God or not?]

Vs.14 'And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.'...It seems to me Timothy did not have enough knowledge of the fall of Adam even if this Scripture is also inspired by God. [Did not Paul write under the inspiration of God?...]how can a woman submit to a husband who does not have correct Bible knowledge with which to teach her? [Submission has nothing to do with the husbands 'Bible knowledge'. You don't submit because of 'Bible knowledge', you submit because of God's Word]

1Tim.3: '...the husband of one wife. One that rules well his own house.'...But I know women who are elders in their church. [Then, are these women 'husbands of one wife'? This is the qualification of a pastor/elder/overseer. They must be 'husbands of one wife', not 'wives of one husband'!] I have no desire to be a Pastor or a teacher or even an Elder. [That is good, because if you did you would need to be a 'husband of one wife']

Your Comments and Questions

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am *'prejudiced against women'...* please **'Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment' (Jn.7:24)]...Never at any time did you tell the men what they should or should not do. You are, by your silence, giving men the authority to be abusive to women, physically, mentally and emotionally. [Biblically, men are to treat women as sisters in Christ and to love their wives as Christ loves the Church. This would not allow them to have the authority to 'abuse' them in any way. The abuse of women is never condoned by me or by Scripture!]**

1Cor.11...This spiritual covering comes from Jesus Christ, not a woman's husband. [Why have you taken out the 'man' (husband) in the order of Scripture here?]

'Husbands, should love their wives, just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy by washing her in cleansing water with a form of words...' (Eph.5:25,26) [The issue is about women in ministry, so lets include the rest of the verses: 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands...the husband is the head of the wife...Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing'] I have yet to meet a husband who has been able to live up to this. [I know several! No one lives it perfectly. But I know wives who will testify their husbands do live up to it] How can a woman always submit to a sinful husband? [Not easily, but the sinfulness does not negate the teaching of submission. Christ is the husband's judge. She does not have to do the sinful things of the husband. You confuse submission with sinning. Submission is a voluntary laying down of ones freedom. It does not mean sinning with the husband]

I myself am separated from my husband. He left me, he committed adultery. I have forgiven him but I also have a greater spiritual awareness than he does and I have greater spiritual knowledge than he does. I submit to Christ, but how can you expect me to submit to a sinful abusive husband? [If you are separated, you don't].

...My salvation is not dependant upon my husband. I am responsible for my own salvation [Of course, Scripture does not say otherwise]

*Paul was preaching to a culture who ignored women. [This does not change what Paul said as inspired Scripture **'profitable for doctrine' (2Tim.3:16)**]. You use verses as the sword of Damocles against your enemies. I believe the Scriptures Paul used as Christ the head of man, man the head of woman, are used as an analogy to teach and guide behaviour to the culture of his day. Not as an unbreakable commandment direct from God. [**ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness' (2Tim.3:16)**]. Muslims have the kind of culture you are advocating. [I don't advocate any 'culture'] Culture changes over time...creation is still evolving...Culture also is still evolving. [Is the word of God 'evolving'. I thought it was 'eternal' and unchanging?]. If the Trinity...agree to reveal new things...are you saying God cannot do this? [Let God answer: **'But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached***

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The Bible - Like No Other Book!

*'...If you want proof that God is who He claims to be, study Old Testament prophecy and **compare it to history**. You'll come away with an **unshakeable foundation for your faith. No other deity can survive this test...For example, there are over 100 historically proven prophecies in the first 35 verses of Daniel 11 alone.***

*...Take a handful of the things you know about the life of Jesus and see if you can find an Old Testament prophecy to match them. For example, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Was there a prophecy to that effect? Yes. It's found in Micah 5:2, **written 750 years before the fact**. Jesus was crucified. Is there an Old Testament prophecy for that? Yes. Psalm 22 actually begins with words the Lord spoke from the cross, verse 16 speaks of them piercing His hands and feet, and verse 18 says the soldiers cast lots for His clothing. **It was written about 1,000 years before the event**. There are **300 more of these...**remember that the Old Testament was **completed over 400 years before the Lord was born**, and its authenticity can be verified beyond question...**you can prove beyond any doubt that God is who He claims to be** and there's **none like Him. You will also come away convinced that the things He has said about the future are just as certain as those He said about the past.***

*One of the signs of the times in which we live is that you can't believe anything you hear about what's going on in the world. It's comforting to know that **there is still one place you can go to find the truth'**.*

Jack Kelley 23 January 2011 [Excerpted]; cited in *Israel Report*

Televangelists Continue

(Lillian Kwon, 'Christian Post' Reporter, Fri, Jan.07, 2011)

'A Senate investigation into the spending of six televangelists concluded with a list of concerns...According to the report, only two of the six ministries - Joyce Meyer Ministries and Benny Hinn's World Healing Centre Church - fully co-operated with the investigation and even implemented financial reforms. 'The reforms undertaken by Pastor Hinn and Joyce Meyer are extensive and are to be commended', the review states. The other four ministries, meanwhile, did not provide responses or provided incomplete ones to inquiries made by the Senate Finance Committee. These groups include Creflo Dollar's World Changers Church International, Eddie Long's New Birth Missionary Baptist Church, Kenneth Copeland Ministries, and Without Walls International Church - formerly pastored by both Randy and Paula White, who are now divorced. The Florida megachurch is currently being led by Paula White. Despite their lack of co-operation, no penalties were handed out...little could be confirmed about the televangelists' current salaries and spending.

The six televangelists preach what critics call the 'prosperity gospel' which teaches that wealth of some form is a sign of God's blessing...The report detailed some of the assets and questionable practices of each of the ministries, including family members holding all the key positions and occupying much of the board seats; generous housing allowances that allow the televangelists to live in multimillion dollar homes; personal use of church-owned airplanes; and compensation to relatives'.

('Apostasy Alert' Jan.10th. 2011)

Hell - The Facts

Jesus spoke much about the place of Hell and its punishment and eternity! Yet today Hell is rarely preached or taught. Most funerals have everyone going to Heaven or 'resting in peace'. Yet Scriptures state clearly that *most* people will end up in Hell.

I'm not saying we should preach Hell every week. But recently someone said to me that the 'warning' to repent has been taken out of the Gospel and the seriousness of Hell taken out of today's Bible teaching. One of the biggest revivals in history was given great impetus by a sermon by Jonathan Edwards 'Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God'. The teaching Jesus gave on Hell surely has its time and place.

This article is an attempt to cover the main tenants of what Jesus taught on Hell. It also refutes some of the false teaching increasingly being adopted by Christians from the cults. A.W. Pink once said 'What is needed today is a scriptural setting forth of the nature of that punishment which awaits the lost - the awfulness of it, the hopelessness of it, the unendurableness of it, the endlessness of it'.

JC Ryle, an Anglican bishop (1816-1900) wrote: 'I can find no scriptural foundation for that smooth talking theology that pleases so many in these days, and according to which everybody will get to heaven at last. I believe that there is a real devil. I believe that there is a real Hell. I believe that it is not love to keep back from men that they may be lost. Love shall I call it?...if you saw a blind man tottering towards a precipice, would you not cry out, 'Stop!' Away with such false notions of love...It is the highest love to warn them plainly, when they are in danger. It is love to impress upon them that they may lose their own souls forever in Hell...'

I. Where is Hell?

In the New Testament there are three places referred to as 'Hell'.

1. 'Gehenna' (12 times 'Hell') - In the NT it is the *final* Hell after the judgement, commonly referred to as the 'Lake of fire', a place of unquenchable fire (Mk.9:45,48). The word came from the 'Valley of Hinnon Hehenna', a rubbish dump, where day and night there was a stench, smoke from fires, and worms. Jesus used the name of this place to describe a place for the unsaved in the end.

2. 'Hades' (11 times 'Hell') - This is now an *intermediate* place of darkness containing the spirits of the unsaved. 'Hades' is cast into 'Gehenna' in the end, (Rev.20:14).

3. 'Tartarus' (translated 'Hell' in 2Pet.2:4) - Peter used it as a dungeon where angels are kept bound.

Hell is a place:

Hell is called a 'place of torment' (Lk.16:28). The Greek word '*topos*' is where we get the English word 'topography'. Judas went to his own '*place*' (Acts 1:25).

Hell is also described as a place of '*outer darkness*' and where there is '*weeping and gnashing of teeth*' (Matt.8:12; 22:13; 25:30); it is place '*without*' (outside of) the gates of the New Jerusalem (Rev.22:15); a place where '*the worm dies not*' and the '*fire is not quenched*', (3 times in Mark 9:44,46,48). In Jude 13 false teachers are said to be assigned to a '*blackness of darkness for ever*'.

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Your Comments and Questions

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

'Private Interpretations'?

Editors comments in bold and brackets. (Name withheld by request)

...Many people, over the years, have received revelation and communication directly from God, Himself [The Bible says final revelation has come through 'his son' (Heb.1:2). The canon of Scripture is also now closed (Jude 3). To add to it brings a 'curse' (Rev.22:18,19)] Mother Therese of Avila...God directed her to write a book about the things He was teaching her. But her Confessor, a man naturally, told her to destroy it. Obviously a man who believes as you do...St. Catherine of Sienna...had mystical visions and received messages from God. [She] preached His Gospel to Church leaders...[These examples are all extra biblical and from mystics. How do we know if they were from God? Is the Bible insufficient?]

About myself...I have received communication and revelation from Him [Jesus]...St. Paul was taken out into the desert and taught by Jesus for 3 years...[So] He has revealed Scripture and what it means to Him personally and asked me to write books which I have done. [What God wanted us to know, Paul wrote his revelations down as 'Scripture'. You are not an apostle. But if your revelations are really from God then why don't we add it to our Bibles? Then, what should I do with God's warning about adding your words to His words? 'No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation' (2Pet.1:20); 'add you not unto His words' (Pr.30:5,6)]...One of the early messages He gave me is that He is angry about the wrong teaching in His Church [So, why might you make him more 'angry' by adding to His word new and fanciful revelations? And does not the Bible already state God's displeasure with 'wrong teaching' in the end times? (2Tim.4:3,4; 1Tim.4:1). Why does God need your extra revelation on this subject?] Do I obey Jesus in this? [Yes, but not through your revelations, but by His word - Scripture. It is that which you will be judged by: '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' (Jn.12:48)] Or do I obey men like you? [Only if they teach the same as Scripture]. You would condemn me for what I have done. [No, God is your judge if you add your personal revelations to His word] How do you know Jesus does not or would not communicate to those He chooses whether it be man or woman? [He does not need to...He already has in His Word! He will never add new revelation to His word. I urge you to commit to the word of God as you see in Scripture. It is all sufficient!]

Women in Ministry

[Name withheld by request] Re; Your CD on 'Women in Ministry': I have listened to your CD 'Women in Ministry'...You are obviously prejudiced against women. [No, Paul gave clear instructions with regard to the ministry of women in the Church. In more than 20 years of ministry I have never had anyone say I

Continued next page >

V. Who will be in Hell?

Certainly Satan, his Demons, the antichrist and his false prophet will all be in the Lake of Fire. But in Hell also will be those who do **'not know God'** and have not **'obeyed the Gospel'** and thus received Jesus Christ as saviour and Lord (2Thess.1:8). We are to **'fear him, which after he has killed has power to cast into hell...'** (Lk.12:5). *We are responsible* if we end in Hell, because we are sinners and are warned to repent.

But what about those who have never heard the Gospel (and there are many in ages gone)? *All* have sinned and all deserve justice and separation from God in Hell. Some people believe that if any simply believed in God they will be somehow saved, but this is contrary to Scripture and the historic faith. Romans chapter 1 speaks of people having no excuse to see that there is a creator, but *that does not save them*. The passage goes on to damn all, not save. No one can be saved unless they come through Jesus Christ and His Gospel (Acts 4:12; 16:30,31; Rom.10:9-11).

Conclusion:

Hell is there to show the Gospel as urgent! To the Christian it is for them to see what they have been saved from and to praise, thank him, and fear God. Christians should thank him that He quickened them to believe and to live a Godly life.

How people view Hell is often how people fashion God to their own moulding. Many cannot stomach a God that sends people to punishment and torment in Hell for eternity. But by this they fashion to themselves a God that is not the God of the Bible! The same error occurs with the doctrine of predestination and election, which are Biblical doctrines created by God, even though they do not fit human, logical or emotional understanding. The God of the Bible is the God who has chosen *some 'before the foundation of the world'* (Eph.1:4) and will send *many* to a fiery torment in Hell forever. It is not something I understand with human logic or emotion! But this is the God who has saved me and this is the God I trust, who says: **'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts'** (Is.55:8,9).

All will either be ruled by perfect justice in Hell or unfathomable mercy in Heaven!

Jesus came as God (Deity) in the flesh to die (a substitute) in our place as a sinless, perfect, and finished sacrifice. Through His blood He paid the penalty of sin. If you truly believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, God promises to credit your sin to Christ and credit His righteousness to you. Because He has risen from the dead He conquered sin. Trust him as Saviour and Lord, turn from sins and He promises to give eternal life, not eternal Hell.

Terry Arnold

Recommended reading: 'Free Grace Broadcaster' Issue 211 on 'Hell'. (This is a series of articles by the Puritans on Hell).

(1) *Institutes of Christian Religion* III, XXV.12 (2) *'The Punishment of the wicked Dreadful and Interminable'* in *The Works of Edward Payson*, Vol.3 (Sprinkle Publications) (3) *'The Eternity of Hell Torments'* in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol.2 (Banner of Truth).

Hell is not 'soul sleep':

On the day of judgement bodies of unbelievers are raised from the grave, united with their souls and cast into the Lake of Fire. Souls that have left bodies are either 'with the Lord' or in 'Hades'.

Some confuse the Old Testament (OT) 'Hades' ('*Sheol*') with the 'grave' ('*Qever*') and thus cult groups (such as SDA) teach the soul 'sleeps' until the resurrection. They quote OT Scriptures such as Ecclesiastes 9:5 which speak of 'sleeping in the dust'. However, this scripture is about the body, not the soul. If one reads on to chapter 12:7 any difficulty is sorted: *'Then shall the dust [the body] return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it'*.

In the OT Hell is always 'Sheol' which corresponds to 'Hades' in the NT. The misunderstanding of 'soul sleep' occurs when, depending on the context, '*sheol*' is translated either as 'Hell' or 'grave'. But the difficulty is sorted when one studies the word for 'grave' ('*qever*'). 'Qever' is only used for the grave, never for Hell (Sheol). In Job 17 we have in vs.1 the body in the 'grave' ('qever'); and in vs.13 the 'grave' is 'sheol' referring to the soul. The two Hebrew words are different: *'My breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves ('qever') are ready for me...13 If I wait, the grave ('sheol') is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness'*. Further proof against 'soul sleep' is found in many OT verses that refer to consciousness in hell ('sheol'): Ezek.32:21 *'The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell ['sheol']'* (See also Is.14:9,10; Ps.16:10).

There is actually little 'doctrine' of Hell in the OT. But in the NT Hell is taught clearly and 'soul sleep' is refuted. In the NT in Matthew 17 Moses and Elijah are speaking (not asleep); in Luke 16 a 'certain rich man' in Hades *speaks and feels*; in Luke 23:43 the penitent thief was told *'this day'* he would be 'with' Jesus; and Paul spoke of being *'...absent from the body, and present with the Lord'* (2Cor.5:6-8).

II. Why is there a Hell?

Hell was prepared for the devil and His angels (demons):

'Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels' (Matt.25:41). Eventually, the devil and his *'false prophet'* will be thrown into Hell (Rev.20:10).

Hell is punishment:

Hell is not remedial. Sin is not paid for in Hell, (as taught by the Seventh Day Adventist). Sin can only be paid for on the cross and by Jesus Christ. **'...but now once in the end of the world has he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself...Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many...'** (Heb.9:26-28).

Hell Exists to show God's wrath and for the glory of God:

This is 'tough' for people to understand if human logic or emotions cloud the fact that God created Hell and foreknew that 'many' people would go there. Christ has the 'keys' to Heaven and Hell (Rev.20:3). The Puritans and the Reformers taught that in Hell God's authority, holiness and justice will be exhibited.

Hell is a place where God's wrath will be demonstrated. **'What if God, willing to**

show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory (Rom.9:22,23). Because of sin God is *'willing'* to show his anger. He will *'make His power known'* to show his authority and justice. By punishing people in Hell He will show the *contrast* of his *'riches of His glory on the vessels of honour'* which he predestined (vs.23 *'afore prepared unto glory'*).

III. What Happens in Hell?

Separation From God

Perhaps this is the worst of punishments - total *separation* from God. There will be total deprivation, no comfort, no hope. There is no Holy Spirit to restrain evil.

It is arguable there are degrees of punishment. Those that had more opportunities to repent of sin could suffer more judgement (Matt.11:21-24). It does appear that some will be *'beaten with many stripes'* and some with *'few stripes'* (Lk.12:47,48).

Punishment

The punishment will be just and unchallenged.

The Bible says the *'worm does not die'* (mentioned 3 times and with the same phrase *'the fire is not quenched'*: Mk.9:44,46,48). *'And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh'* (Is.66:24). People will have immortal bodies (some believe the 'worm' also refers to memory).

There will be *'wailing'* and *'weeping and gnashing of teeth'* (mentioned 6 times: Matt.8:12; 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Lk.13:28)

There will be *'Torment'*. In the end times people who take the *'mark of the beast'* shall *'drink of the wine of the wrath of God...and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascends up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night...'* (Rev.14:10,11).

Jesus also said a certain rich man in Hades *'...being in torments...'* begged Abraham to have mercy *'that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame...'* (Lk.16:23-25). The pain here too is that the rich man sees Lazarus being *'comforted'* but is told of the *'great gulf'* between them and is reminded that Lazarus *'is comforted while you are tormented'* (vs.23).

Finally, the Devil, the anti-christ and the false prophet are all found in the *'lake of fire'* being *'tormented day and night forever and ever'* (Rev.20:10).

Calvin wrote of the punishment in Hell: *'By such expressions the Holy Spirit certainly intended to confound all our senses with dread'*. (1) Edward Payson (1783-1827) a Congregational preacher in USA, wrote: *'There the sinner will see what a God he has offended, what a saviour he has neglected, what a heaven he has lost, and into what a hell he has plunged himself'*. (2)

IV. Is Hell Eternal?

Hell is spoken of as being *'everlasting'*, *'eternal'* and *'forever and ever'*. The

Bible clearly teaches that those who do not 'know Jesus Christ' and 'obey the Gospel' *'shall be punished with everlasting destruction...'* (2Thess.1:9). The fire that destroys is *'everlasting fire'* (Matt.25:41). If this is not proof enough of Hell being eternal and never ending, then the following verse is irrefutable: *'And these shall go away into everlasting ('aionion') punishment: but the righteous into life eternal ('aionion')'* (Matt.25:46). The words here for *'everlasting'* and *'eternal'* are the same in Greek (*'aionion'*). The structure of the sentence means that if Hell is not 'eternal', then heaven is also not 'eternal'! The Greek *'aionios'* clearly is showing a state that is perpetual, abiding, endless in duration. This same word is used of the punishment of the wicked and of fire (Matt.18:8; 25:41,46; Mk.3:29; 2Thess.1:9; Heb.6:2; Jude 1:7). If the punishment in Matthew 25:46 was not truly eternal and instead 'annihilation', other Greek words could have been used. The word eternal (*'aionios'*) is also used of the Holy Spirit (Heb.9:14), salvation (Heb.5:9), the Gospel (Rev.14:6), the new covenant (Heb.13:20) and the resurrected body (2Cor.5:1). If the eternal punishment in Hell is not unending than the above things are also not eternal!

Yet still some cult groups teach that Hell is 'annihilation' because of the words such as *'perish'* or *'destruction'*. But these words do not mean annihilation. The Greek here *'appollumi'* is also translated *'lose'*, *'die'*, *'destroyed'*, *'marred'*, etc. The various contexts where *'appollumi'* is used will quickly show that it does not mean annihilation: In Matthew 9:17 a wine bottle is *'lost'* (*'appollumi'*), not 'annihilated'; there are *'the lost ('appollumi') sheep of the house of Israel'* (Matt.10:6), *'the son of man comes to seek and save that which was lost'* (*'appollumi'*) - not annihilated (Matt.18:11). The parables also speak of things that were *'lost'* (*'appollumi'*) yet *are found again* (not annihilated); the demons plead not to be *'destroyed'* (*'appollumi'*) - they are not 'annihilated', but later put in Hell (Mk.1:24); we are told not to *'destroy'* (*'appollumi'*) a brother by being a *'stumblingblock'* (Rom.14:15; 1Cor.8:11) - the brother is not 'annihilated'; and the *'world...perished ('appollumi') in the flood'* (2Pet.3:6) - the world was not 'annihilated'.

There is simply no changing the meaning of the words *'everlasting'*, *'eternal'* and *'forever and ever'*. How clear does the Bible have to be if people will not accept that *'forever and ever...no rest day nor night...'* means what it says? (Rev.14:10,11).

Jonathan Edwards wrote: *'Be entreated to consider attentively how great and awful a thing eternity is...Do but consider what it is to suffer extreme torment forever and ever; to suffer it day and night, from one year to another, from one age to another, from one thousand ages to another, and so adding age to age and thousands to thousands, in pain, in wailing and lamenting, groaning and shrieking, and gnashing your teeth; with your souls full of dreadful grief and amazement, with your bodies and every member full of racking (pain) without any possibility of getting ease; without any possibility of moving God to pity by your cries; without any possibility of hiding yourselves from Him; without any possibility if diverting your thought away from your pain; without any possibility of obtaining any manner of mitigation, help, or change for the better.'* (3)

Emotionally and logically our finite minds may not be able to comprehend or accept an eternal Hell of punishment. But Scripturally the fact of eternal Hell remains.