



Diakrisis (Australia)

'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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New Free Booklet

This ministry has produced a booklet (40 pages) titled '*The Churches of Christ Restoration Movement and Campbellism*'. This is a concise look at the doctrines currently being taught by Queensland Churches of Christ and other Churches of Christ in Australia. We urge this book to be distributed. (Free with a donation for postage).

The Days of Noah

We are reliably informed that just before Jesus arrives to take us home, those times will be as the 'Days of Noah'. There is an abundantly evident global condition that should alert us to the nearness of this event.

To the extent that Romans 1:18-32 can also be viewed as prophecy, homosexuality is given again as the prominent sign of the end with its evil attitudes and behaviours that define the 'perilous times' of the final days.

The people are 'given over to a depraved mind' as a final consequence of 'suppressing the truth in unrighteousness' evidenced by the shameless exhibition of both male and female same-sexuality (vs.26,27). God's wrath is promised not just for the practice of those things by some, but because of the overwhelming approval of them by society (vs.32).

According to the Babylonian Talmud, same-sex 'marriage' was not practised in Greece, Rome, or Babylon. The one time in history when homosexual and lesbian 'marriage' was practised was...during the days of Noah! There was only one time in history, according to these writings, where men were given in marriage to men, and women given in marriage to women.

The Talmud's writings reveal that 'before the Flood people began writing marriage contracts between men', in other words, homosexual 'marriage'. This is more than homosexual activity - it's giving an official state stamp of approval, a sanctification...of homosexual and lesbian partnership.

Not all that long ago homosexuality was illegal throughout most of the world. And yet in the space of just half a century or so this tiny 1-3% of the population have developed into a global political power bloc with great and swelling influence in the courtrooms and legislatures of the world.

This astonishing transformation surpasses all preceding deceptions foisted upon humanity down the running centuries for its speed and breadth of reach.

Just as alarming in all of this is the appalling apathy amongst God's people. This is surely a sign of the Great Apostasy promised for the time of the end. The love of most for the truth of God is rapidly chilling.

Ephesians 5:21-33 reveals that the melding of a man and woman into one flesh through marriage is a mystery that explains the very relationship of Christ to his bride, the church. Authentic marriage is thus central to the very order of creation and to prophecy.

Is it any wonder then that disrespect of marriage by society generally, and the emergence of the counterfeit 'marriage' of homosexuals specifically, would define the era immediately preceding the end of the age?

The homosexual lifestyle is now not just protected, it is celebrated. Pulpiters can no longer freely proclaim the Word of God on this subject for fear of prosecution - of being charged with 'hate speech', 'homophobia' and worse.

Just what does the significance of the rise of 'Marriage Equality' possess as

an eschatological signpost? More than any other sin, homosexuality represents a direct attack on the nature of God as creator and life giver. This is why it is an 'abomination'. Not necessarily because of the same gender sex act. That's far too simplistic. With God, the intentional distortion of his nature merits death and is given a special designation not afforded to other transgressions.

Paul unveils this explosive revelation in Romans 1 - a passage now labelled as 'an obscure text' by the proponents of 'Marriage Equality'

Homosexual marriage adequately portrays the designs of mankind's enemy and those who extol it as 'progressive' and 'loving' are deeply deceived. The apostate and disobedient church which affirms it - refusing to accept and embrace what God has said on the subject - is likewise stupendously deceived.

Taking then 'deception' as our 'signpost' - homosexual and lesbian marriage is surely one of today's main prophetic drivers. As already stated, Jesus emphatically declared that the last days would closely resemble the 'Days of Noah'. At that time we are told that the earth was full of corruption, crime, violence and sexual perversion. The only righteous people to be found in all the earth were Noah and his family.

As we survey God's creation today would it be possible to ignore the fact that it is increasingly wicked, perverse, dangerous and filled with warfare and violence? Surely not? It is now as it was then.

Depressing? It certainly can be - and yet just as God saved a remnant then, he will do the same today. And He is doing so. This is not a time for despair, but for a looking up as we begin to see so clearly the day of His coming fast approaching.

The political tide for 'Gay Marriage' can become a distraction - not because we shouldn't be paying attention to it - but because it is a clear demonstration of Satan's hatred for humanity and the nature of God. To dwell long upon this rising tide of evil is to take one's eyes off our goal.

No doubt you have noticed that the supporters of 'Marriage Equality' have recently taken to making claims that not only is homosexual/lesbian marriage equal to heterosexual marriage but in some cases it is superior. They cite heterosexual divorce, child abuse and abandonment as reasons why homosexual marriage is not a threat to heterosexual marriage. But such comparisons are false and misleading. They also claim there are 'more important issues' such as homelessness, the environment and education. Yet you only have to look at the aftermath of 'Marriage Equality' in the U.S state of Massachusetts and elsewhere to see that this is yet another deceptive and politically motivated lie.

'Marriage Equality' is a large part of Satan's agenda to deceive the whole world. A very successful one at that. Much of the Church has been caught in this snare. That is both horrifying and tragic. Make no mistake about it, the signs are stark. A great deception has come upon us. More importantly however is that this strong 'signpost' simply proves that our Lord is soon to come.

Mike Claydon; Editor *Apostasy Alert*, Australia

The Robber Barons of Churches of Christ in Queensland (Australia)



To be avoided if you own a property.

The first appearance of the *Churches of Christ in Queensland* [Australia] (which came about 50 years after the movement began in the USA) was a matter of bitter hurt for the Baptist church, which lost out in the process.

There was a small English-speaking Baptist church meeting in a chapel at Zillman's Waterholes (Zillmere), which for about ten years had been home to a thriving German Baptist church; then the majority of its members moved to the Rosewood Scrub area to take up farming in that area, leaving the building for an English speaking church.

In August 1882, a Church of Christ evangelist from Melbourne, Mr Stephen Cheek and a Queensland colleague, FW Troy, were invited by one of the church members (A Thomas Geraghty, a brother-in-law of Troy, who was a school teacher formerly stationed in Toowoomba) to conduct a mission at the church.

Each night of the week Cheek taught openly that *'to be saved men must first believe, then repent, then make confession with the mouth, and then be immersed.'* Several people responded to this teaching which was claimed to be *'the ancient order of things'* according to the New Testament, and were baptised on the Saturday night.

At an **unannounced meeting** led by Cheek, at which only a few Baptist church members were present, the new converts were accepted for membership in the Baptist church.

On the Sunday, Cheek **once again took charge of the service**, despite protests from one of the Baptist deacons, and welcomed the new members into the fellowship of the church. Cheek thus effectively **took over the Baptist church and turned it into a Church of Christ**.

This is claimed by the *Church of Christ* as **their first church in Queensland**. The property was lost to the Baptists despite efforts to **reclaim it legally** through the *Baptist Association*, and the building was used by the *Church of Christ* for ten years until they erected one of their own.

Over the ensuing years the practice of stealing churches continued. Space does not allow for all the details of each outrage - but **it continues today** - and has recently occurred once again in the city of **Hervey Bay** on the Queensland Central Coast.

The elders of this particular assembly of the Queensland Churches of Christ began to be concerned over the doctrines being espoused by the leadership of the denomination - and in an effort to distance themselves from this they, **with the endorsement of the Queensland Churches of Christ**, changed their name to *Hervey Bay Bible Church*.

The property [including a 'manse'] was purchased in earlier decades and eventually **fully paid for** in the 1970's by the congregation **to**, and the deeds

held in a 'beneficial trust' *by*, the *Queensland Churches of Christ*.

A portion of the property was sold at a later date for a considerable sum of money which was deposited into the bank account of the Hervey Bay Bible Church. These funds were used for the day to day operation of the ministry administered by the elders.

When the eldership requested that the title deeds to the property be given into the care of the church members in Hervey Bay the answer to this by the *Queensland Churches of Christ* was to issue a demand for 1 million dollars for the title deeds to the property and if this was not paid within 14 days an eviction notice would be issued. This later eventuated.

A few weeks ago, *secretly*, a *Queensland Churches of Christ* leadership delegation travelled from the head office in Brisbane to meet with the pastor. They offered him a position as a salaried pastor with the denomination - on the requirement that the church revert to its previous name and the elders that disagreed with their Ecumenism and disobedient doctrines be dismissed. Apparently pressure was put upon this pastor and he agreed to their proposition.

The Brisbane group, a deacon and the pastor then drove to the bank and summarily had the dissenting elders signatures removed from the chequing account authority.

The dismissed elders, *adhering to the constitution*, held a members meeting the following Sunday and had them vote on whether they would agree to this new situation.

Over 80% voted against the motion. [The constitution required that 75% be in agreement before any motion was passed] They overwhelmingly did *not* want to revert to being a *Queensland Churches of Christ* assembly. Nor did they any longer wish to retain the pastor who had betrayed them.

Outcome? The members and most of the remaining congregation are now meeting in a *Country Woman's Association* hall down the road, penniless, and without the property they *all paid for*.

Legally? Most probably Grand Larceny - and Misappropriation of Funds? But who can afford to fight City Hall or the *Queensland Churches of Christ*?

Nice work if you can get it?

(*Apostasy Alert*, 25 November 2013)

Uniting Church Takeovers

The hammer is about to fall on 56 Uniting Church properties in Victoria as the church tries to raise \$56 million to pay debts incurred in the calamitous collapse of Acacia College last year...State secretary Mark Lawrence said the sales would affect at least 14 church complexes...Among churches being sold are Brunswick West, Glenroy, Strathmore, Hawthorn West and Doncaster East...

(*Apostasy Alert*, Oct/2013)

The Day They Evicted Our Church

by Terry Arnold

[Names in this article have been deleted because of the threat of ‘defamation’ charges laid against the author]

Fifty years ago A.W.Tozer stated: ‘*Let me go out on a limb a little bit and prophesy. I see the time coming when all the holy men whose eyes have been opened by the Holy Spirit will desert worldly Evangelicalism, one by one. The house will be left desolate and there will not be a man of God, a man in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, left among them. As the Church now stands, the man who sees this condition of worldly evangelicalism is written off as somewhat fanatical. But the day is coming when the house will be left desolate and there will not be a man of God among them. I would like to live long enough to watch this develop and see how things turn out. I would like to live to see the time when the men and women of God - holy, separated and spiritually enlightened - **walk out of the evangelical church and form a group of their own**; when they get off the sinking ship and let her go down in the brackish and worldliness and form a new ark to ride out the storm’.*

For almost 20 years I have been an elder or a pastoring elder in an evangelical Bible believing autonomous church, but one which was affiliated with the *Churches of Christ Queensland*. We have been largely separate in doctrine and in practice and even from any contact with Churches of Christ. Over the last decade the liberal nature of the Churches of Christ in Queensland from time to time bothered some members. Successive leaderships stood apart from any association, but the ‘affiliation’ increasingly bothered some of us, particularly recently when we discovered the denomination was paying monies to the *World Council of Churches*. Patiently we began to inform the people as to the differences in doctrine and philosophy wherever it was necessary. In 2012 we changed our name to *Hervey Bay Bible church* and began enquiries to have the title deeds returned to us for the property owned and paid for in full decades ago by the church membership.

As I write this article the emotions are still raw. In the last few weeks I have seen the worst injustice inflicted by any denomination upon a group of Bible believing people. Rather than allow my emotions to run, it be best if I transcribe the diary, as the entries below are the historical facts.

1. Late in 2012 at an annual General meeting (August) and then at a special meeting (Nov.25th) Hervey Bay Church of Christ (HBCC) changed its name to Hervey Bay Bible Church (HBBC) to ‘*better reflect the beliefs of our church*’ in contrast to the more liberal views, teachings and direction of the Queensland

Churches of Christ (CofCQ). Those CofCQ teachings were exemplified in various magazines and articles which included ecumenism with other religions; women in ministry positions; leaders wavering on homosexuality; baptism as part of salvation; and many other liberal or unbiblical teachings. The name change to *Hervey Bay Bible Church* was carried with a large majority of votes.

2. Subsequent to this name change, which was fully endorsed by CofCQ, the following Sunday a CofCQ executive member attended one of HBBC services. At the end of the service he asked two elders if they wanted HBBC to 'disaffiliate'. [The HBBC leadership consisted of 3 elders and 2 deacons]. The two elders answered that they would be interested in discussing what that entailed and also discussing further why we had changed our name to HBBC, as well as the status of the buildings (paid for over many years by the membership to the CofCQ) with respect to the title deeds being held 'in trust'.

3. Two representatives from the Queensland executive board came and spoke to the two elders on 17th Jan. The two elders attempted to discuss doctrinal differences but one of the executives said '*I am not interested in doctrine*'. The other executive member asked if we thought HBBC were '*the only ones in this town*' (insinuating that we felt we were the only truly 'Christian' group). The author strongly rebuked the man, stating he knew very well we were not a 'cult' and that we did not think or teach that we were the 'only ones'.

The elders felt that both CofCQ men were not listening to what they were attempting to convey about HBBC and its desire to remain 'conservative' (i.e. 'biblical'). The meeting was at times tense and unfruitful. At the end the Queensland CofC men asked 'do you want to disaffiliate?' We stated we would only do that after we had the support of the leadership and the membership. However, the answer to that was that they [the CofCQ] would report to 'Conference' and that they would decide as to what was to happen to HBBC.

Subsequently, HBBC sought solicitors advice as to the legalities of the property and what was the concept of 'deeds' being in 'beneficial trust'.

4. On 26th August 2013 HBBC received a letter from...the 'CEO' of CofCQ stating that HBBC was '*following a different path to CofCQ*' and that this was '*not in the best interests of CofCQ*'. A '*proposal*' was put to HBBC that they '*pay to CofCQ the sum of \$1,000,000*' [one million dollars] to have the title deeds 'returned'; and that HBBC '*resign from membership of CofCQ*'. There was the threat of legal action if an agreement could not be reached to have the land and buildings forfeited to CofCQ. HBBC was given only 14 days to reply.

This above letter was sent *registered mail* on the 10th September 2013 - *15 days later than the date on the letter*. This made it physically impossible for HBBC to reply within '14 days'. (The letter arrived on the 11th of September and was also not sighted by the entire leadership until the following Sunday).

5. We gave the letter to our solicitors and instructed them to reply with a letter stating we would not pay any monies for something the members already owned (in the 1970's) and that CofCQ held the deeds in 'beneficial trust' only. (Unbeknown to HBBC, the solicitor did not send any reply for a month).

6. We then received another letter (25th Oct) from...the 'CEO' of CofCQ stating '*I note I have not received the courtesy of a response*'. This letter was quite stern in tone and it stated '*HBBC is not entitled to the ownership, use or occupation of the church buildings and land owned by Churches of Christ...If I do not receive a satisfactory response from you by 9am on Friday 1st November 2013 then steps will be taken by CofCQ as they may be advised to seek all available legal remedies against HBBC including recovery of possession of the land from HBBC and disaffiliation of HBBC...Please revert to me as to your position by 9am Friday November, 2013*'.

7. The Bible church was surprised by this letter and the short deadline set. They replied that it was '*impossible to meet these demands in such a short period (6 days)...we hope to have the issue discussed and finalised further some time in November and then we will contact you immediately with further notice of our intentions*'.

8. HBBC then discovered that although the letter by CofCQ was addressed '*To the Leadership*' of HBBC it was also sent by e-mail and *blind carbon copied* to various members, causing concern to many of them.

We thus wrote to...(the 'CEO') on the 29/10/2013 and stated our disappointment in members receiving a letter addressed '*To the Leadership*'...We added: '*We humbly and prayerfully ask the board of Churches of Christ to please reconsider resolving this issue in a better manner*'.

9. HBBC received a letter from...[the 'CEO'] and his executive board on Nov.1 stating: '*we consider that you have had sufficient time to consider and respond to our proposal...that proposal is now withdrawn...steps will now be taken...regarding its [CofCQ] property and disaffiliation of the Hervey Bay Bible church*'.

10. HBBC received a final letter dated 8th Nov. stating that: '*Within 7 days HBBC will no longer be permitted to enter upon and use the land at Hervey Bay...CofCQ will seek an injunction relief to restrain HBBC continuing to use and occupation of the land...and seek recovery of funds...*'

11. Two elders and one deacon then discovered that the Qld Churches of Christ executive had made a private offer to the third pastoring elder...'*to continue on as a 'churches of Christ pastor' and that the other two elders*

(including the author) must 'leave the church'. The pastoring elder was given 24 hours by CofCQ to 'respond'. The following day the pastoring elder accepted this offer *without the consent or discussion with the leadership or the members*.

12. The two remaining elders met twice with...[the pastoring elder] and pleaded with him to give the leadership and the members (who had employed him) a vote on this decision. The answer was 'no'.

13. On the Thursday members of the executive CofCQ held an invitation only meeting with a handful of members of the church as well as past members. The two elders and one deacon were not invited.

On that day the bank accounts were altered. Two members of the CofCQ had driven up from Brisbane and were joined by the treasurer/deacon and the pastoring elder and they all attended a meeting at the bank where the two elders, (including the author), had their names and signatures removed from the bank cheque authorisation document. This was done without our permission and was conducted secretly from the eldership or the members.

14. Consequently, the two elders of HBBC instructed...[the pastoring elder] that he would not be preaching that Sunday and that the members would vote on the action by CofCQ and the private agreement by them with the pastor. During the week all members were contacted and asked to attend an urgent meeting to be held before the eviction notice came into effect on Friday. (There had been previous members meetings to update fully the church on the situation as it was progressing).

The members voted on the following: *'Churches of Christ Queensland have decided that from next Friday 15/11/13, Hervey Bay Bible Church will no longer be permitted to enter upon and use the land at Neils St, Hervey Bay. In its place... [the pastoring elder] has informed us that he has made an agreement with Churches of Christ Queensland to pastor a church to be known as Hervey Bay Church of Christ, and...[the treasurer/deacon] is to be part of that leadership. I agree or I disagree with the actions of Churches of Christ Queensland'*.

The vote was attended by 25 members. 2 agreed, 1 abstained and 22 disagreed with the action by CofCQ. The vote was 88% against the action of CofCQ. (A few members were away and out of town, and arguably approximately 8 in total could be said to agree to the action of CofCQ, but chose not to attend or vote).

15. For the sake of the members, HBBC decided not to fight the coming eviction threat and to vacate the premises and begin services elsewhere. The Sunday of the vote there was a mass walkout of members and non members. The next Sunday saw 40 people attend a service in a CWA hall. This was more

than 2/3rds of the entire church. The people who chose to remain in the property as ‘Church of Christ’ were a small minority.

Assessment

Cof CQ acted hastily, and not in accordance with the requirements of their own constitution by disaffiliating HBBC and issuing the threat of eviction. *This was done without the approval of more than 2/3 of the members.* The membership of HBBC viewed this take-over of the land, church buildings, and cash on hand to be a violent and sudden confiscation of their property and assets by the Churches of Christ Queensland.

The land and building purchase price was repaid to the CofCQ over many years by members and attendees and the deeds held in ‘trust’ *for this congregation.* No negotiations were held with the leadership before the private offer was made to the pastoring elder and the bank accounts altered.

HBBC *never saw or had a visit from...*(the CEO of CofCQ) who wrote many of the strong letters (all documentation of correspondence is available). *Nor did the Cof CQ executive ever meet with the leadership of HBBC in the entire 10 months prior to the eviction threat.*

At the time of these actions HBBC and its members were fully affiliated with the CofCQ and occupying the building, having church services, etc. To date, HBBC has never received any confirmation that they are ‘disaffiliated’.

However, the upside of the ‘eviction’ from the denomination is the joy that this author and many in the congregation have had since the take-over. The services have seen wonderful times of freedom and unity. There has been a genuine commitment and willingness by many to be involved in the ministries of the church. The Lord has ‘*severed*’ his people (Lev.20:26).

I am somewhat ashamed that this separation did not occur many years ago. But the leadership’s concern was always a pastoral one for the people in first teaching and equipping them to understand the *need* for separation. Many will disagree with the length of time it took to separate from what has been a liberal/social organisation for many years. But the end result has seen not just a destructive split which often occurs in these situations, but rather a *majority* of people who are committed to Bible truths and separation and with a testimony of the stripping of their property, money, and a ruthless eviction to prove it.

We are living in days when true Bible churches will need to be separated from apostate denominations as they go headlong into apostasy. The worldliness and false liberal doctrines of the major denominations are reaching new proportions. We are commanded to be ‘*separate*’ and ‘*withdraw*’ from those ‘*contrary to the doctrine*’ of ‘*the faith once delivered*’ (2Thess.3:6; Rom.16:17; Jude 3) and to ‘*come out from among them, and be you separate, says the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you*’ (2Cor.6:17).

Terry Arnold

Do We Need To Re-think ‘Original Sin’?

Recently I read an article by a Peter Enns who speculates on the doctrine of Original Sin - the doctrine that sin was passed on to every man from Adam’s disobedience (Rom.5:12).

In an article titled ‘5 Old Testament Reasons to Rethink ‘Original Sin’’, Enns writes: ‘I think I’ve always been a bit uneasy about the idea that God holds me responsible in some sense for something Adam did at the beginning of the Bible...this never made much sense...I’m just putting it out there...So, here’s my question...Where in the Old Testament is Adam’s disobedience in the garden of Eden described as the cause of universal human sinfulness (and guilt)?...I’m not talking about the New Testament. Not yet...But all I’m asking here is whether the Old Testament says that Adam is the cause of it all. I just don’t see it. Here’s why... 1. Inherited sinfulness is not one of the curses on Adam...All three parties are cursed by God for doing so, and those curses have lasting consequences for the human drama...note the consequences for Adam. From now (1) growing food will be hard work, and (2) death will be a fact of life. Note what is not said: ‘And a third thing, Adam. From now on all humanity will be stained by your act, born in a hopeless and helpless state of sin, thus earning my displeasure and making them all objects of my wrath’. If Genesis did say that, it would clear up a lot. 2. True obedience to God is both expected and doable...the Israelites were most certainly capable of not sinning. 3. ...Throughout the entire rest of the Old Testament story, Adam doesn’t even warrant a mention. If Adam was really the person who set the whole world on a downward sin cycle, again, I’m not sure why it’s kept such a big secret. 4. Adam is not blamed for Cain’s act of murder...Cain’s choice to sin was, like his father’s, not imposed on him from elsewhere. 5. Likewise, Adam is not blamed for the flood...
...Still others will respond: ‘But without Adam as the cause of human sinfulness, the entire gospel falls apart’. Rather, I think only a version of the gospel that needs this kind of Adam falls apart...’

Enns also teaches on ‘The Evolution of Adam’ and proposes that biological evolution is fact and that there was no literal Adam or Eve or a literal Fall. When the account of Genesis is denied in this way, it will lead to many of the foundational doctrines that are birthed in Genesis also being denied.

The Problem of ‘speculation’ - ‘has God said?’

The problem with many of these liberal authors is the *speculation*. *Speculation is often the enemy of objective thinking and sound exegesis*. Even if there was no doctrinal statements in the Old Testament concerning the doctrine of Original Sin, are we to ignore the clear statements in the New Testament and say that such a doctrine therefore is invalid?

If the doctrine of original sin is not found in the Old Testament, then what happened to Adam and Eve after their perfect state; why was there judgement;

why were they cast out of the garden; why did they run and hide? What changed them?

Some cite Ezekiel 18:20: '*The soul that sins, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him*'.

This passage is not discussing Adam's sin or Original Sin. The verses following challenge the Jews as to their own sin: '*But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he has committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he has committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he has done he shall live*' (vs.21,22).

Similarly to the Pelagian argument that denies Original Sin, the Jews were complaining that they were suffering because of their fathers. However, in context the verse is part of a passage that states that *if you repent, you will be saved - regardless of the sins of your parents or children*. The previous verses show this clearly and that if one lives righteously they will not be punished. God also promised to give them a new heart of repentance (Ezek.11:19; 36:26).

The idea that the consequence of Adam's sin is passed on to his seed is clearly evident in much of the Old Testament! *All of creation is cursed* (Gen.3). The order and relationship between man and woman is changed. Pain and labour enter the world.

And what of such scriptures as Psalm 58:3 '*The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies*'?

The problem with Enns thinking is the use of human logic and speculation on scripture and on what has been orthodox as '*the faith once delivered*' (Jude 3). Is this not similar to what Satan said to Eve: '*has God said...?*' (Gen.3:1)?

Enns states: '*Inherited sinfulness is not one of the curses on Adam*'. This is a strawman. The curses on Adam are the *result* of disobedience. Disobedience, in breaking the law of God, is sin. A consistent principle in the Old and New Testament is: *sin brings death; death brings judgement*. Enns seems to ignore the fact that *death is inextricably linked with sin*.

Another speculative diversion by Enns follows: '*Throughout the entire rest of the Old Testament story, Adam doesn't even warrant a mention. If Adam was really the person who set the whole world on a downward sin cycle, again, I'm not sure why it's kept such a big secret...Adam is not blamed for the flood*'.

But why is it considered a '*secret*' if Adam is not much mentioned afterwards? And of course Adam is not '*blamed for the flood*'. He did not commit the sin that caused the flood itself. But Adam did commit the ('original') sin that was '*passed on*' (Rom.5:12) to human kind causing them to have a sin nature, as the book of Romans and other books set out clearly.

What of the Gospel?

Finally, the Gospel does indeed *'fall apart'* if there is no Original Sin. If there is no Original Sin then where did we get the sinful nature from; why does every person born have it; and why do they *all* die? What are we being saved *from* if there is no such sin? What use is the Gospel if there was no problem inherited from Adam? Again, why is there death? *Original Sin brought death!*

The Pelagian Heresy Revived...Churches of Christ

Such a denial of Original Sin is a return to an ancient heresy called Pelagianism. Pelagianism, among other teachings, denied that 'Original Sin' was passed on to all.

Today there are some churches that teach this. A classic example of the arguments against 'Original Sin' is found with the *Churches of Christ*. In a booklet titled '*Original Sin*' by A.W. Stephenson, (former principle of Woolwich Churches of Christ Bible college in Australia), the doctrine of Original Sin is denied in the following quotes: '*Why was the practise of baptising infants introduced into the church? It goes back to a view of some early church leaders that babies were born sinners*' (P.3).

The Churches of Christ have a reputation for re-shaping history. (1) Firstly, 'baptising infants' was not introduced because of this doctrine alone. This above statement by Stephenson misses the differing reasons for early infant baptism being introduced. And although the first possible mention of infant baptism is with Irenaeus (AD 185), the general practise of Infant Baptism is not seen until AD 370 and does have much to do with the teaching of 'Baptismal Regeneration' (baptised to be saved), which had developed by then. Augustine (born 354 AD) is considered to have been one of the later Church Fathers who provided the theology that led to infant baptism and then Baptismal Regeneration being more widespread.

But it was not *'some'* early church leaders that believed babies were born in sin. The teaching of 'Original Sin' was in fact *the consensus* of the early church. *This was there long before infant baptism became widespread.* Irenaeus (130-202) who was a disciple of the early Polycarp, passed on the apostles doctrine. He wrote: '*...Adam...We are all from him; and as we are from him, we have inherited his title [of sin]...For we were debtors to none other except to Him, whose commandment we transgressed at the beginning*' (Against Heresies 3:22:4; 3:23:2; 5:16:3). Tertullian wrote: '*...On account of his transgression man was given over to death; and the whole human race, which was infected by his seed, was made the transmitter of condemnation*' (200AD; *The Testimony of the Soul* 3:2). '*...We were made to die in Adam...*' (Against Marcion 5:9:5; 210 AD); Cyprian wrote: '*...born of the flesh according to Adam, he has contracted the contagion of that old death from his first being born...the sins forgiven him are*

Continued next page >

(1) See our booklet '*The Churches of Christ 'Restoration Movement' and Campbellism*'.

not his own but those of another [i.e. inherited from Adam]' (Letters 64:5 of Cyprian). Space forbids the many quotes available from other church Fathers.

The reason why the doctrine might not feature much as an issue in early writings is because in the first few centuries the church Fathers were busy writing on other things. (Likewise, the Trinity also does not feature much until the 3rd century, when aberrant views on the deity of Christ (Arianism) began to surface). Until Pelagius, no church father that I know of opposed Original Sin.

Speculation and Logic again...

Many try to confuse the issue by stating that infants cannot be said to commit 'personal sin'. But that does not mean they are not born in sin, have a sin nature inherited from Adam and Eve, and that they are 'sinners' because of that. *Death cannot be separated from sin. Sin causes death.*

Stephenson continues: *'A person cannot be held responsible for an action if there is no law given to him to act this way or that'* (P.4). But if this is the case then why Rom.2:12 ***'For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law'***. The Bible also says the law is already *'written on our hearts'* (Rom.2:15).

Stephenson continues: *'This suffering of children was a consequence of the parents sin and not of the children's... We must not confuse the act of sin with the results of sin...'* (P.5). But children being born in sin, suffering, pain in child birth, weeds in the garden, etc, are all the result of the inherited consequences of sin from Adam and Eve. Human logic (the Pelagian heresy was saturated with this) does not always agree with scripture. How can one divorce the 'results' of sin with the 'act' of Adam and Eve? If sin is not inherited from Adam and Eve, then why is there death? Why do babies die? There is no escaping the *result* (death) from the *act* (sin) of Adam and Eve. How can one separate sin from death in the following verse: ***'Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men...'*** (Rom.5:12)?

Stephenson's logic continues: *'The children cannot be held guilty for the actions of the parents, even if they do suffer for them'* (P.5). This is somewhat another 'strawman' argument. No one is saying children are 'guilty' because of any 'parents' action. But Scripture unequivocally states that sin was inherited (***'passed on'*** - Rom.5:12) from Adam and Eve. Why did the descendants of Adam immediately then live in an imperfect and sinful world? Why did Cain murder Abel? All after Adam *do sin* and that sin must be judged.

Stephenson's logic now becomes more heretical: *'Paul declared there was a time when he did not know the law (Rom.7:9)...he could not be convicted of sin: he then lived a life of innocence...where there is no law, there is no sin, there was a period of his life when he was not under law and so not a sinner. This must have been a time of his infancy...then immediately sin sprang up (Rom.7:9 - see Jerusalem Bible). Paul, then on his own argument sets out clearly the innocency of his early childhood...'* (P.5,6).

This is sheer 'eisegesis' to fit a bias into the text. Romans 7 is clearly contrasting Paul when he was once in the flesh, in comparison to when he was in the Spirit. Verse 7 does *not* say 'there is no law'. According to many scriptures, Paul was 'under the law' before he was saved. Romans 7:9 also does not say 'he did not know the law' or that 'he was not under the law'. The Jerusalem Bible has 'no law' but the Greek has 'apart from the law', meaning he was not convicted of sin in the past. That's why the next part of the verse says 'when the commandment came'- meaning conviction of sin by the application of the Law. The passage does not teach he 'lived a life of innocence'. That notion is nowhere in the text. Many other scriptures state that the unsaved are under the wrath of God and are children of disobedience (Eph.2). The above is the interpretation of most, if not all, the major commentaries.

If Paul was ever 'innocent' of sin, then why did he say he was the 'chief of sinners'? (1Tim.1:15) And why '***all have sinned and come short of the glory of God***'...and many other scriptures? Nowhere does Paul 'set an argument' for 'the innocency of his early childhood'. This is wresting the scriptures to suit. He who says we have no sin is deceived (1Jn.1:8) and calls God a liar (1Jn.1:10).

But it gets worse from Stephenson and the Churches of Christ: '*where there is no sin there is no need for forgiveness...Innocent children are not in need of baptism because they have no sin to be forgiven...They need no baptism until they are sinners. We must not confuse the consequences of the parents sin with the parents act of sin and its guilt. The parents guilt is not passed on...*' (P.7). '*If we share in sin and guilt we must participate in a personal act in order to gain the free gift of grace*' (P.10).

This is where a denial of Original Sin can lead to - '*another gospel*' (2Cor.11:4; Gal.1:6)! The above is Baptismal Regeneration or Baptism to take away sins - a works based heretical gospel. There can be no '*personal act*' in order to gain '*the free gift of grace*'! It is either of works or grace; it cannot be of both. Any '*act*' we do is an act of works. '***And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work***' (Rom.11:6).

The doctrine of Original Sin does not need a 're-think'. It is made clear in many scriptures:

'***Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me***' (Ps.51:5); '***The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies***' (Ps.58:3); '***...I...was called a transgressor from the womb***' (Is.48:8) '***Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned... death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression...Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation...***' (Rom.5:12-21); '***in Adam all die***' (1Cor.15:22).

Terry Arnold

Your Comments and Questions

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

John 6:44 - An 'Eisegesis'?

'The Father's drawing of John 6:44, is the Father's drawing of those that were in covenant with Him, as the faithful remnant of Israel, whom the Father was, upon that transitional period, drawing to His Son, viz. if you love the Father, you will love the Son, who bears His message. Conversely, if you hate the Son, then that serves as evidence that you hate the Father as well. Jesus said to the unbelieving Jews that if God was their father, as the Jews had claimed, then they would have loved the Son, but as it was, they did not'.

(K.H., Tas.)

Editor's reply: Why did Jesus state clearly; *NO MAN* can come to me except the Father draw him? *This is not a statement made to Israel alone* because the text states that these same people will be 'raised' in the 'last day'. The scriptures do not teach that this will be Jews only. There are other scriptures also concerning the 'calling' that add to this point.

And what 'transitional period'? This 'drawing' and 'raising up' of the same people cannot be confined to any 'transitional period' - if so that would draw a distinction between the method for salvation as differing between Jews and Gentiles!

The context is clearly referring to a general 'all' and 'no man'. Your teaching, if true, would require treating as irrelevant the doctrines of Grace and Salvation in other Gospels. And how are we to explain Paul's letters to the Romans and Ephesians, written to both Jews and Christians, in which he makes clear that election is necessary for salvation?

Why is this passage (Jn.6:44) so difficult for some? Why the need to say God is not saving 'all' that are 'drawn' here? Why the convoluted gymnastics imposed upon a text so plainly expressed? This is eisegesis, not exegesis

Quotable

'Ye ungodly sinners who have never had life in Christ, ye are alive this morning, by reprieve, but do you know that you are legally dead; that God considers you as such, that in the day when your father Adam touched the fruit, and when you yourselves did sin, God, the eternal judge, put on the black cap and condemned you? You talk mightily of your own standing, and goodness and morality - where is it? Scripture saith, ye are 'condemned already'. You are not to wait to be condemned at the judgement day - that will be the execution of the sentence - ye are 'condemned already'. In the moment ye sinned your names were all written in the black book of justice. Every one was then sentenced by God to death, unless he found a substitute, in the person of Christ for his sins'.

Charles Spurgeon (Sermon 'Free Will - a Slave'; Dec 2nd 1855)

Your Comments and Questions

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

JW Witnessing

Re: Letter concerning JW witnessing [*Diakrisis* Nov/Dec/2013, P.18].

Terry, I have attached some pages from the JW 'New World Translation' (NWT). A new version is to be given out in January. What I have attached shows how the JW's dodge your sound arguments given.

(S.Z., NSW)

Editor's comment: I know of no Greek scholar who will accept the NWT. It was compiled by men who (as proven) did not know Greek. In their NTW version a footnote for 'god' is mischievous. They state that '*the title Elohim is plural to denote excellence or majesty and not a multiple personality of a number of gods*'. I do not know a single Greek scholar that would entertain this idea. The singular could have been used *but it was not*.

In Genesis 1:2 the NWT has '*God's active force*' instead of '*spirit*' (Hebrew '*Ruach*') as in other versions. If one substitutes '*God's active force*' in many of the verses where '*ruach*' is used one will see how ludicrous the NWT becomes. To change the Hebrew word and translate it as three words is not the 'literal' translation the JW's claim?

The plain teaching of Scripture teaches that the Holy Spirit is a person by the use of numerous personal pronouns such as '*He*' (Jn.14:16; 16:13,14). In Jn.14:16 the word '*another comforter*' is '*allos paracletos*' meaning *another of the same kind* ('*allos*') - here referring to Jesus. We get the word 'alias' from this expression of '*allos*' - the same being, but different name. If the Holy Spirit were not a person and like Jesus, the word '*heteros*' would have been used ('*heteros paracletos*'), meaning another of a different kind. Persons refusing to take such passages as John 14 and 16 as stating the personage of the Holy Spirit, are openly denying the plain sense of Scripture.

The Holy Spirit also has a mind (Rom.8:27), a will (1Cor.12:11) and emotions (Rom.15:30; Eph.4:30; Is.63:10). The Holy Spirit also spoke directly (Acts 13:2; Heb.3:7-11; 10:15-17).

The Holy Spirit is also given divinity. In Acts 5:3,4 Peter equates the Holy Spirit with God. He says firstly '*You have lied to the Holy spirit*'; then he adds you have '*lied to God*'.

In Matt.28:19 the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit all have the same '*name*', which is singular, not plural, even though normally this would not be grammatically correct. But God chose to have this word as singular and referring to all three separate persons of the Godhead.

In the NWT there are also cases where the word '*Lord*' ('*kurios*') has been replaced with '*Jehovah*', even though '*Jehovah*' is not in any Greek.

Your Comments and Questions

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

We believe God has laid something/a vision on our hearts. Many people have support networks as do employees, employers, police, soldiers, etc. But there is no support network for Christians especially on the front line of the spiritual conflict by cults, religious groups like the neo Pentecostals, Charismatics, etc...

Editor's comment: I understand your desire to see people protected or supported in time of need. However, there are support networks already in Australia, (although few and far between). There are groups that work with the cults and people exiting them. Our ministry has worked much in that area in the past and still to some extent. We also are constantly advising, counselling people each week who have been affected by teachings in the Pentecostal/Charismatic systems. Most of this is done on the phone or by sending literature out. We attempt to point such people towards sound Bible teaching churches and with pastors/elders who will shepherd them.

Dear Terry, I am so thankful to God that he has raised you up, to earnestly contend for the faith, in these last days of so much apostasy....be assured of our love and prayers...

(N.H., NSW)

Terry, these CD sermon mail outs are a wonderful idea and tool to learn and understand the Bible and in context. I look forward to them. Thank you so much.

(J.G, Vict, Vict.)

Quotable

'It is a peculiar feature in our holy religion that it begins its work within and acts first upon the heart. Other religions, like that of the Pharisees, begin with outward forms and ceremonies, perhaps hoping to work inwardly from without, although the process never ends; for the outside of the cup and of the platter is made clean, but the inside still remains full of rottenness as before. No truth is more sure than this concerning all the sons of men: 'Ye must be born again'. There must be an entire and radical change of man's nature, or else where God is he can never come. The gospel does not flinch from this, but enforces the declaration. The Holy Spirit does not attempt to improve human nature to something better, but lays the axe at the root of the trees and declares we must become new creatures, and that by a supernatural work of the omnipotent God'.

(Charles Haddon Spurgeon: Sermon 'The Heart of Flesh', August 31, 1873)

Terry's Itinerary

Jan/Feb (every Sunday) 9.30am Hervey Bay Bible Church, Qld Ph.041 1489472

Website Comments

Re: Smith Wigglesworth article: <http://taministries.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Smith-Wigglesworth-The-Facts-v3.5.pdf>

Sir, In other words what you are telling me is that Smith Wigglesworth was a liar and if he was a liar, then he is in hell...I think ministries like yours which are pill popping run to the GP...you have become stagnant in your faith...Be very careful how you question the move of God and even the move of the Holy Spirit...Yes, I know the type of believer you are - faithless!!!!...Are you a Christian? Do you believe that you have the same authority as the early disciples? I do!

(G.S., Africa)

Editor's reply: We never said Wigglesworth was a '*liar*'. We said the stories about him are undocumented, grossly exaggerated and embellished by another false prophet (Lester Sumrall). Lester Sumrall wrote two books with two prophecies in them ('*I predict 1985*'; '*I predict 2000*'). He also was a notorious exaggerator and fraudster, being once exposed by '60 Minutes' for fraud with his 'Feed the Hungry Campaign'. This was the man who put forth most of the stories about Smith Wigglesworth!

We are not '*stagnant*', '*stationary*' or '*faithless*' in our faith here because *our faith is in the Lord Jesus Christ and His Gospel*. Our faith is in the One who died for our sins as a substitutionary sacrifice to satisfy the wrath of God upon our sins. He died, was buried, and rose again for our justification and imputed righteousness from God. We don't need signs and wonders and especially false legends of past people...The Bible in *every* place when referring to signs and wonders in the end times teaches that they are *false* or '*lying*' (Matt.24:24; 2Thess.2:9-12; Matt.12:39; Rev...).

...The Pentecostal system is full of such lies, exaggerations and false claims of signs and wonders. It has been exposed many times by both secular and Christian media. The modern healing, prosperity and the potential/success gospels within it are patently false gospels. They detract from the real gospel that we are sinners under deserved judgement and needing free grace.

You asked if I am a 'Christian'. Yes, because I have believed in the simple Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as above. His glory is my mission. The false healing gospel today detracts from His gospel of grace and dishonours my Lord! *Jesus did not die for my healing but for my sin!*

Please read the articles in the 'healing' section on the website: www.taministries.net.

Your Comments and Questions

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

Masters Course at Pacific Bible Institute 2014

The Masters course will again be conducted in Hervey Bay in August (11th-22nd) 2014. The students will come back to do another 2 subjects of the 4 year programme. There are some vacancies available for new students to apply.

This 4 year U.S. accredited Masters degree course involves two weeks lectures in Hervey Bay each August. Costs are administration and accommodation only. A free information pack can be sent on request.

By faith the college raises the funds to help lecturers travel costs and accommodation. Any donations towards these costs would be greatly appreciated. We are also collecting donations to help students in need.

Prayer and Praise Points

- Please pray for the Hervey Bay Bible Church (see article P.6) of which Terry is now pastoring by faith. Pray for the people to be settled and moving forward in 2014 in various church ministries, as the Spirit leads. Praise the Lord this church is growing. www.herveybiblechurch.org

- Praise the Lord we have received nearly 2/3 of the funding to buy video equipment to produce DVD's as an outreach for U-tube and to tape many sermons and seminars. (We need advice on what equipment to buy).

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