

Quotable

Some preachers remind me of the famous Chinese jugglers...One of these stood against a wall...the other threw knives at him. One knife would be driven into the board just above his head...another close by his ear...under his armpit...between his fingers...Wonderful art to be able to throw to a hair's breadth and never strike! How many among us have a marvelous skill in missing! 'Be not afraid' says the preacher, 'I am never personal. I never give home-thrusts'. Stand quite still, my friend! Open your arms! Spread out your fingers! Your minister has practised a very long while, and he knows how to avoid troubling you in the least with truth too severely personal. Brethren, cultivate that art if you desire to be damned, and wish your hearers also to be lost; but if you want to be the means of saving both yourselves and them that hear you, cry to your Lord for faithfulness, practicalness, real heart-moving power. Never play at preaching nor beat about the bush; get at it, and always mean business.

(Charles Spurgeon)

Prayer / Praise Points

- Praise the Lord the *Eternal Questions* tracts are being well used again with the new pocket size in use. Many unsaved people have recently received these booklets. Pray for salvations and understanding of the eternal issues presented.
- Pray for pastors, churches to inform, equip their people where necessary on the same sex marriage issue, if the Australian plebiscite takes place. Pray for protection for pastors who will stand on Biblical truths on these matters. Pray for an upcoming article on this issue in the next (Jan/Feb) newsletter.

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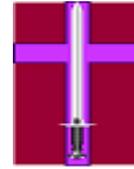
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'But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern [diakrisis] both good and evil', (Heb.5:14)

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

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

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

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New 'Eternal Questions' Tract

The '*Eternal Questions*' booklet has now been produced in a pocket size version (14.5cm by 10cm). The new size is already proving to be popular and affordable. The booklet has been widely used throughout Australia and overseas as a fruitful soul winning tool. It has been carefully and systematically designed to prepare the heart for a true understanding of the Gospel. Price .75c + postage

Guest Editorial

The Salvation of the Jews.....

Over the past few years Australia and New Zealand have been visited by various ministries who team up with local like-minded Christians to urge believers in both countries to lobby their governments to strengthen their ties with Israel and to cast their vote in international forums against any efforts to produce an Arab 'Palestinian State' in the holy land. They falsely claim to be apolitical.

These ministries, which shall remain nameless, hold to the eschatological view that the church will suffer through the Time of Jacob's Trouble, that Christ is returning to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and not the Mount of Olives, there is to be no battle of Armageddon and at least one teaches that Christians should observe certain aspects of Judaism.

They suggest that Christians 'wage war' in prayer against Israel's enemies and to 'bind with fetters of iron' the likes of Iran's Ayatollah Khamenei and other leaders of nations threatening to annihilate Israel.

Some even claim that because the ANZAC Light Horse Brigade liberated Beersheba in late 1917 (which culminated in the Balfour Declaration and Britain's promise of a Jewish homeland in Palestine), Australia and New Zealand are somehow favoured nations now in the mind of God. One even claims that God once offered a 'crown' to England and the USA but now, because of this event, He is offering it to Australia. Apparently, it's Australia's time to accept a challenge.

A flyer issued for such a visit to Australia reads; *'Last week we were blessed to have...come to Bendigo on his Australian tour, hastily organised by the Lord. He spoke about the realities of the 'peace process', international terrorism and urgency for Australia to act. At the meeting last week...spoke of a vision from the Lord whereby a 'crown' that had once been on England and then USA, was now being offered to Australia. The challenge is, will we take up the crown?'*

The message relates to a supposed vision about a divinely appointed role for Australia in encouraging Israel to step into her God-given heritage and destiny. The vision challenges Australia to take up this role, and foresees Australia being used as a great blessing to the nations of the world in the times ahead.

One leader teaches that the Great Tribulation occurred during the holocaust in the 1940's. Another that the biblical prophecies were all fulfilled in AD 70. Most refuse to evangelise the Jews and are content with simply befriending and assisting them.

Their argument is that the Jewish people will be turned to Christ at His return. This is true of a small remnant, but what of those Jews living today? Do they have a way of salvation other than grace through faith? Apparently so, by a recognition of God through their obedience to Torah (the Law of Moses).

This view reduces Jesus from a universal Saviour to one for the Gentiles only. These aberrant doctrines are thoroughly unbiblical. Christ Himself proclaimed

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Your Comments and Questions

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

Greetings Terry. Firstly I want to thank you for your ministry. Words cannot do justice to my appreciation of your gift of knowledge and wisdom that God has blessed you with. I have been sharing articles from 'Diakrisis' in printed form to people...as the Lord leads me to come into contact with.

I recently read out to some of our group complete articles from the most recent Diakrisis (Vol.3, No.52) specifically three articles on Pope Francis, one on homosexuality and one on the Methodist Conference and the last on Islamic 'Evangelism' as well as the comparison tables of what The Catholic Church Teaches vs. what the Bible Teaches and 'Unscriptural or Pagan Practices Introduced By The Roman Catholic Church'...People today must choose the truth of the Bible or to knowingly choose the deception of the Catholic Church. Some today are misleading to speak about the union of believers in relation to the Catholic Church. We must denounce this false teaching now before it leads others astray.

Another deception today I see is the disbelief on the subject of God's choosing of us in Christ before the foundation of the world and that our salvation did not begin with our choice to believe in Christ even though it is and was a necessary part of our salvation. There are some who do not believe that God chose those who are to be saved...

I currently get my 'Diakrisis' by mail and I would like to change this to getting it by e-mail...This may save some costs in your printing and mailing...

(K.N., NSW)

Editor's comments:

The notion that Roman Catholics are saved because of simplistic views such as they 'believe in Jesus', is a most severe deception. The question is *which Jesus and which gospel (2Cor.11:4)? I myself fully believed I was saved as a Roman Catholic because my religion which I believed was 'mother church' told me I was in the true religion which had the way of salvation through sacraments (even if I might in 'venial sins' spend some time in 'purgatory'?). I did 'believe in Jesus'. That Jesus was entirely different to the one I believe in now. I now know I most certainly was not regenerated - Born Again with a new nature, of which without one cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven (Jn.3). The gospel of Rome with its sacramental works for salvation, its infused righteousness, traditions that outright contradict the Bible - is diametrically opposed to the Gospel of faith without works, the imputed righteousness and the narrowness of 66 books.*

Churches once to evangelised Roman Catholics and considered it to be a false world religion. In the 21st century that seems to have been lost today with most churches?

Your Comments and Questions

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

Terry, can you point to any other resources dealing with pornography?

We have been wanting to help a couple... We have established practical helps and of course Scriptural advice, and much prayer... I have given him Todd Friels 'Slaying the Dragon' audio and John Owens book on 'Mortification of Sin'...

(Name withheld at editor's discretion)

Editor's reply: This is an increasing problem in church life...I bring scriptures to bear if I believe the person is a Christian (such a person should be convicted and repentant) and also insist upon measures to distance the person from it - practical things such as always being in view of other people while on the computer; passwords, lockouts, etc (a tech person can help); limited times on computer; a pro-active involvement from the partner...measures designed to distance (detox) the person...I also meet with the person on a regular basis to monitor things and continue counselling. The homework must be done. But attached are scriptures that can be used (<http://www.openbible.info/topics/pornography>).

Hi Terry, Dietrich Bonhoeffer - I did a search of this individual on all Diakrisis articles to date and noticed the positive aspects of his life: He stood up for his religious beliefs and died tragically at the hands of the Nazis just before Hitler suicided at war's end. However, is it true Bonhoeffer rejected the virgin birth, the physical resurrection and substitutionary atonement? Apparently he said - 'It is a cardinal error to regard Christianity as a religion of salvation'! A mixed bag indeed if true. A child of German Rationalism?... Blessings to you...

(A.G., NSW)

Editor's reply:

Bonhoeffer had many morally good points but his doctrine was woeful. He became entrenched with Karl Barth's (1886-1968) neo-orthodox views on scripture - against biblical inerrancy, full inspiration and believing the Bible has contradictions. His views on Baptism and salvation were also unorthodox. He was a universalist and did not believe the world was 'lost as if it were separated from Christ' (Bonhoeffer, Ethik, 53).

Dear Terry, Please be encouraged that all the articles are received with thankfulness and may the Lord Himself give you wisdom and understanding as you boldly proclaim the Gospel. Also, thank you for taking 2Tim.2:15 seriously.

(C.M. Qld)

that He was the only way to salvation and that no one could come to the Father but through Him.

Peter proclaimed the same truth to the Sanhedrin Council when he said, '*There is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved*' (Acts 4:12). He had already identified that name as '*Jesus Christ the Nazarene*' (vs.10).

Many within this movement have travelled to, or lived in, Israel and developed close Jewish friendships. They simply appear unable to bring themselves to believe that such sincere people as the orthodox Jews have no hope apart from Jesus.

The concept of a future period of overwhelming tribulation during which two-thirds of the Jewish people will perish is also anathema to those who are teaching this theology. They reject the concept completely even though it is emphasised repeatedly in the Hebrew scriptures.

This gross apostasy is spreading amongst the Evangelical and Pentecostal communities - and is flourishing among many who have devoted themselves to a rightful rediscovery of the Jewish roots of the church.

Jewish people desperately need Christ. It is a perverted love that says, 'I love the Jewish people too much to share Jesus with them because I don't want to offend them'. This reveals a cowardice toward evangelism - a fear of just how shamefully Christendom has historically treated the Jews, as many denominations do today.

It is one of the most convoluted forms of anti-Semitism because it is willing, in the name of love, to stand back and allow millions of Jews to perish when they should have been strongly advised; '*to look upon Him whom they have pierced*' and repent and be saved.

They allow their sentimentality to overrule scripture. They simply cannot believe that God will allow His Chosen People to experience another holocaust. Yet there can be no salvation apart from repentance, and the Bible says it will take a period of incredible tribulation to bring the Jewish people to the end of themselves and look to Christ for deliverance.

These ministry leaders need to learn of Paul that the Gospel itself was given by God first to the Jews. Speaking with great pathos, he writes: '*I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh*' (Rom.9:3).

Whilst we applaud the many social works these ministries do in supplying much needed assistance to those in Israel in need, we are also obliged to point out their most egregious errors - that they do not believe the Jews need to be evangelised and presented with the truth that Jesus Christ is their Messiah and Saviour, and that their eschatology is unbiblical and will ultimately weaken the faith of many.

Our counsel is for our readers to beware of these ministries, their leaders and their deceitful doctrines.

Mike Claydon

Pope Francis Says Islam No More Violent Than Catholicism?

Aboard the Pope's plane...the Pope said: 'I think it is not right to identify Islam with terrorism...'. Francis was responding to a question about the killing on July 26 of an 85-year-old Roman Catholic priest by knife-wielding Muslim attackers who burst into a church service in France, forced the priest to his knees and slit his throat... 'In nearly all religions there is always a small fundamentalist group'. He then added: 'We have them', referring to Roman Catholicism... 'I don't like to talk about Islamic violence because every day when I look at the papers I see violence here in Italy - someone killing his girlfriend, someone killing his mother-in-law. These are baptised Roman Catholics...If I speak of Islamic violence, I have to speak of Roman Catholic violence. Not all Muslims are violent'. He said there were various causes of terrorism including a lack of economic opportunities for young people in Europe was also to blame for terrorism. '...How many young people that we Europeans have left devoid of ideals, who do not have work. Then they turn to drugs and alcohol or enlist in ISIS...I know it is dangerous to say this but terrorism grows when there is no other option and when money is made and it, instead of the person, is put at the centre of the world economy. That is the first form of terrorism. That is a basic terrorism against all humanity. Let's talk about that'...Pope Francis said the killing of the priest and a string of other attacks were proof the 'world is at war' but that it was not caused by religion...

(Apostasy Alert 01 August 2016)

Editor's comment:

In part I would agree with the Pope in his mention of Roman 'terrorism' - IF he is talking about the martyrdom of protestants by Rome throughout history? We could start with the middle ages and then the Reformation in which 'heretics' were to be 'crushed like venomous snakes'. The Church formally approved of torture and 'heretics' were burned. The methods of torture included such things as racks to stretch people to dislocate bones and joints; the 'iron virgin' - a chamber arranged with knives that lacerated the victim when closed. These decrees were reinforced by many Popes. It is estimated that 20 million were killed during the 'Inquisition' period, many at the hands of the Jesuits. There were massacres and wars on huge scales where almost whole towns were slaughtered (10,000 Waldenses in the mountains of Piedmont; 20,000 defenceless men, women and children in the city of Bezieses and 75,000 Protestants during the week following the 'St. Bartholomew's Massacre'). Between 1540 and 1570 approximately 900,000 Protestants were killed.* *Roman Catholicism certainly rivals Islam in its 'terrorism' of Christians!*

But why is it that the world's leaders and the media separate the 'identity' between Islam and terrorists? Most of the terrorism today IS Islamic and it IS religious! When one views the footage and reads the accounts, the

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Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear Terry, I was surprised you used so much space in your magazine, to defend and justify Spurgeon's smoking habit, and to make it seem almost an admirable habit. Quote 'while I don't agree with smoking'. Do you not realise the danger and addictions associated with the 'weed' from India brought by Sir Walter Raleigh from America. The weed from India is actually Pot.

I know Spurgeon is your hero, but he was a man with the same mistakes as us common people. I have a granddaughter going through hell trying to give up the filthy deadly habit!

As for Gods will, I don't think a smoking role model is in God's will either...Something about polluting of the temple of the Holy Spirit...My father died from it at 48, and my father in law at 62 - he spent the last 10 years of his life gasping for breath...just puffing it in your mouth gives mouth cancer and a host of other things. My estimation of Spurgeon has just taken a dive. Not because he smoked but because he seemed arrogant when remonstrated with. 1 Cor 8:13. Well keep up the good work. God bless...

(Name withheld by request)

Editor's reply:

Arguably there was too much space for this article (the point of the exercise was perhaps lost until the last few paragraphs). But the article was first about legalism, not smoking. The point was also that if we are going to attack smoking we need to base it on scripture? The scripture used against smoking (we are 'the temple of the Holy Spirit' - 1Cor.6:19) has nothing to do with smoking - the context is fornication. Nothing taken through the mouth pollutes the 'temple' (Matt.15:18-20; Mk.7:15-23).

Yes, I do realise the 'danger of smoking' cigarettes. Hardly a year goes by when I don't help someone with an addiction to smoking.

Spurgeon is not my 'hero'. I also did not fully agree with Spurgeon and in the article agreed in at least one point with his critics when they stated it is 'a stumbling block to them that are weak' (1Cor.8:9).

The 'weed' was tobacco, hardly the 'Pot' of today as you have stated. As the article stated it did not have the chemicals you are referring to which kill people. Spurgeon stated the raw tobacco of the day helped his severe medical conditions.

But if I gave the impression I am justifying smoking, then, as Spurgeon stated, I wish not that to be. No one, including Spurgeon, is saying it is 'God's will' to smoke. Spurgeon may have appeared 'arrogant' to you in his replies but such words were directed at the legalism, not the defense of smoking.

You quote 1Cor.8:13 'Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world stand, lest I make my brother to offend'. That's exactly what Spurgeon also quoted!

Your Comments and Questions

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

Terry, please find enclosed clippings which are a sign of the times...
(D.S, Qld.)

Editor's Comment:

One clipping sent was an advert by a Queensland church for a 'Buddha and Jesus' night...*'where the two faiths meet'*. The church is a 'Liberal Catholic Church' - a break away from the Roman church - one that rejects the supremacy of the Pope but keeps most of the traditions and rituals. Their website states: *'The Liberal Catholic Church exists to forward Christ's work in the world. The name Liberal Catholic was chosen because the Church's outlook is liberal, in that acceptance of its teaching and doctrine is not obligatory...it allies itself with the historic Church as the source of its Holy Orders and of its sacramental tradition...forms of worship – stately ritual, deep mysticism...with the widest measure of intellectual liberty, and respect for the individual conscience...The Liberal Catholic world view emphasises the unity of all...moving forward together in a vast evolutionary scheme...human beings are, in essence, divine...'*

Would Christ really agree with Buddhism which teaches an eightfold works system of reaching an 'enlightenment'? Did not Jesus say *'I am the way, the truth and the life: No man comes unto the father but by me'* (Jn.14:6)? But it is not surprising that a 'liberal' church that is not based on the inspiration and inerrancy of scripture would say that their teachings are *'not obligatory'*, considering the *'intellectual liberty'* and allowance for *'individual conscience'*. No wonder they would say we are *'divine'* - the absolute truths of God's own word has been replaced with an *'evolutionary scheme'* of *'believe whatever you like'*?

Readers might say that this is a 'Catholic' and not a 'Protestant' church? But most Protestant churches similarly now also do not believe or practise 'Sola Scriptura'. Hence, new mystical forms of ecstatic worship exist with 'wide' ecumenical views on scripture with no absolutes on what is truth. Thus major Protestant denominations can and have advertised similar 'inter-faith' conferences. *Humans attempt to become the divine arbitrator of what is truth.* There is a judgement coming for this and one based on the very acceptance of the Word of God: *'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).

If you are a part of a church which is widening 'the faith once delivered', it is time to separate. The straight and narrow path has not developed enough traffic to need a four lane highway. *'...Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat...narrow is the way, which leads unto life, and few there be that find it'* (Matt.7:13,14)

terrorists yell religious slogans like '*Allahu Akbar*' (many of the media reports do not show this). Am I to believe this is not 'religious'? Do I see Buddhists, Christians or other faiths brutally hacking heads off bodies or shooting victims randomly?

The '*small fundamentalist groups*' the Pope is speaking of are *Islamic believers, quoting the Koran.* Can the Pope really equate every day domestic murders in society as '*Roman Catholic violence*' and on the same scale as Islamic 'terrorism'? Were the murders he speaks of done in the name of the Catholic religion? Of course not!

'Not all Muslims are violent' he says. Yet most if not all of the major terrorists today *are Muslims?*

Can we really blame terrorism on '*a lack of economic opportunity*' and this as a '*form of terrorism*'? Is making money really worse than multiple beheadings, crucifixions, rape and pillage? He says *'lets talk about that'*. Well, perhaps the Pope could start with the wealth of the Papacy and Roman Church?

Will the populace be numbed into believing this nonsense by the Pope? The mantra that terrorism is not caused by religion is one which must be kept up by religious leaders themselves and the media but one which blinds people to the coming of an antichrist. Meanwhile the terrorists continue to slaughter in the name of 'Allah'.

Yes, the Roman church in fact is well ahead in the martyrdom of Christians by history. The book of Revelation does speak of *'a great whore that sits upon many waters...arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones...mystery, babylon the Great, The Mother Of Harlots...drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus...'* (Rev.17:1-6)

* See the book '*To Catholics Whom I Love*' by the editor

Those Who Never Heard the Gospel Are Saved?



Megachurch Pastor Greg Laurie...at Harvest Church in California, November 1, 2015 assured believers that God will not send someone to Hell if they have never heard the Gospel...*'You're going to be held accountable for what you know, not what you don't know...the testimony of God is everywhere. It's in nature, it's all around us...Then there's the human conscience that tells us what right and wrong really are. God will judge you accordingly'*.

...The question of what happens to people who have never heard the Bible has prompted various responses from evangelical leaders. J.D. Greear, lead pastor of The Summit Church in North Carolina, said in 2014 he believes all people have heard about God. Quoting Romans 1:19...in two ways: creation and conscience...

(<http://www.christianpost.com/news/pastor-greg-laurie-answers-will-people-who-never-heard-the-gospel-go-to-hell-168178/>)

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Editor's Comment:

We dealt fully with this teaching in *Diakrisis* Sept/Oct, 2012 P.6. The teaching is perhaps logical and emotionally palatable, but it is *fallen* thinking and *not* scriptural. It is arguably true people will be held accountable for what they know of the Gospel and Christ *in degrees of judgement*, but they still cannot be saved without the Gospel and regeneration.

Romans Ch.1 does not save, it damns! The idea that '*the testimony of God is everywhere...It's in nature*' and '*all have been made aware of God*' (from Romans Ch.1) is referring to the *general revelation of God in creation*, but which leaves man as '*inexorable*' and *damns him, not saving him*. Romans chapter 1 says men and woman have '*held [back] the truth*' (vs.18); have become '*fools*' (vs.22); have '*changed the truth of God into a lie*' (vs.25); and have '*not retained God in their knowledge*' (vs.28). *This chapter does not affirm that man can be saved by any general revelation through nature, but rather it actually affirms that man is guilty and damned!* The passage ends '*Therefore you are inexcusable, O man...But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things*' (Rom.2:1,2).

And it gets worse by chapter 3 - no human is left '*innocent*' *whether they have had the opportunity to hear the gospel or not*: '*...There is none righteous, no, not one...*' *every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God*' (Rom.3:9-19). No one is '*innocent*'!

Millions of people have never heard the Gospel or of Jesus Christ. The Bible is objectively clear and blunt in that there is no other way to Heaven except through hearing and believing in Jesus Christ. '*He that believes on him is not condemned: but he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God*' (Jn.3:18); '*Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes unto the Father, but by me*' (Jn.14:6); '*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*' (Acts 4:12). That name is only Jesus Christ (vs.10).

No one deserves salvation. Every sinner is now guilty and freely sins from a *sin nature* that defies God. They are not forced to sin but *freely* are choosing according to their desires. *No one is sent to Hell for simply not hearing about Christ and the gospel. People are sent to Hell for their sins resident in their hearts.* Romans chapter 1 says people are condemned *on the basis of what they know, not what they don't know!*

The teaching that those who do not receive Christ as saviour can be saved, is a figment of human logic. The way to salvation has not changed. It is still a call to *believe* in Jesus as the Saviour and *repent* of our sins. It is still that Christ died for sinful man as a sacrifice that satisfies the wrath of God upon sin. It is still that Christ is the *only* way, the truth and life, the *only* door to Heaven. No one can enter Heaven unless they are Born Again and receive another righteousness, which is not their own (Phil.3:9; Rom.4; Matt.5:20). The general revelation of Romans ch. 1 does not save, it damns and leaves one without excuse that there is a creator God.

Hypocrisy Files

Most churches today have little or no Statements of Faith. This is done to minimise doctrine and attract a wider group of people. Other churches do have statements of beliefs but designed to be so general as to minimise 'doctrine'.

Charles Spurgeon in his day saw the beginnings of the secularisation of the churches in his area following earlier centuries of revivals. The period came to be known as the 'Downgrade'. Pastors were wanting to please the world. Before exiting his denomination, he began writing to the Baptist Union asking them to adopt more definitive views in their Statement of Faith.

Such a need for a 'creed' was not new. In history 'creeds' and statements of faith were developed to *defend the church* against attacks on its doctrines. Many early creeds were written to protect the church from a widening secularisation. Today such creeds have largely been declared worthless.

The *Church of Christ* affiliation is one group that claims not to be a 'denomination' or even to agree with the concept. Yet the *Churches of Christ* are a fully fledged denomination and claim all the rights of such. Also, *in decrying denominations, they simply started a new one*. They also have the slogan '*no creed but Christ*'. Their 'Restoration Movement' has the statement '*Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the scriptures are silent, we are silent*'. Yet is this not nullified when the *Churches of Christ* claim to have 'no doctrinal statement' on what the scriptures do say? Yet strangely they do have an 'Identity' statement. In this they present their philosophy of ministry and some beliefs. The latter section contains statements concerning 'faith', 'baptism', 'the Lords supper', 'church government' and 'unity'. Although they say they have '*no creed but Christ*' yet they do have some rather definitive views and statements on matters of faith. They have arguably stated their own 'creed'?

Many churches today could well accept a Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) into their memberships because their Statements of Faith concerning the scriptures do not spell out the inspiration of scripture in *only* 66 books (SDA believes their prophet Ellen G. White's writings are also inspired); and Hell is not spelled out as 'eternal' (SDA believe in annihilation, not an *eternal* Hell). I have personally witnessed two SDA minded people being put into the membership of a Baptist Union church because they agreed with the 'Statement of Faith' which was so general on the above doctrines that most Adventists could fully agree.

The modern trend is similar to the 'Downgrade' in Spurgeon's day in that the Statements of Faith are shallow and provide no defense against new ideas that would attack fundamental doctrines.

This author often hears of people asking the pastor of a church they might desire to attend as to where they stand on various beliefs. Often there is no definitive answer given on various doctrines or they appear to be happy to *accept any or all views*. Yet 'denominations' are supposed to have a set of beliefs or distinctives. Today that seems to have gone by the wayside? *Is this not hypocrisy?*

Terry Arnold

another christ and teachings that contradict Jesus own teachings? Is this not hypocrisy?

Conclusion

Mother Teresa spent her life helping the poor of Calcutta, living in poverty, giving herself to her religion, teaching compassion and a religious selflessness. These virtues may be admirable but are they enough to enter the Kingdom of Heaven? Certainly she admitted at times she was living in hypocrisy, uncertainty and with torturous thoughts.

There is an emptiness in religion, a deadness that cannot give life to the soul, being based on traditions made up by man which add to the word of God. Mother Teresa was part of a false religious system teaching 'another gospel' (2Cor.11:14; Gal.1:6) which leads millions to false hope. It is a system of sacramental and religious works - instead of faith alone in Christ alone in his work alone, and without our works to merit any salvation (Rom.4:4-6; Gal.2:16; Eph.2:8,9); it is a 'purgatory' to purge sins - instead of a faith in Christ purging our sins on the cross (Col.1:20; 2:14); it is a continuing sacrifice in the 'Mass' - instead of a finished sacrifice on the cross 2,000 years ago (Jn.19:30; Heb.9:28; 10:12,14). It does not matter how sincere a person is, they can be sincerely deceived by religion! Hell will be full of sincere and sincerely religious people.

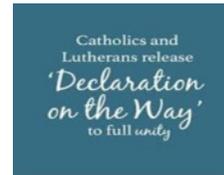
Without true faith it is impossible to please God (Heb.11:6). The Bible clearly states that we cannot be saved by works and that light cannot fellowship with darkness (2Cor.6:14). No matter how much we admire Mother Teresa's works and ethics, her beliefs were false and there is still only one way to Heaven. One must be Born Again (Jn.3:3) by faith in the sacrificed and risen Christ. The righteousness promised from that faith is not ours, but God's, and given by substitution in a finished sacrifice.

Let us not mix truth and error and blur the lines of the Gospel. 'Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!' (Is.5:20).

Terry Arnold

(1) *The Tidings*, Los Angeles, California, 20/6/86 (2) Speech, Oct. 84, Paul VI Vatican City (3) Mother Teresa - National Prayer Breakfast, Washington, USA, 1996 (4) SBS documentary interview 1997 (5) 'Evangelical Times' Aug. 1997 (6) 'Agnes Bojaxhiu', *Plain Truth*, May/June 96, P.5 (7) Autobiography: *Mother Teresa: Her people and Her Work* (8) *Simple Path*, P.31,59 (9) Desmond Doig, *Mother Teresa: Her people and Her Work* P.140-141 (10) *The Christian News* (11/11/85) (11) Kathryn Spink, *Mother Teresa: A Complete Authorized Biography*, P.155-156 (12) *Mother Teresa Touched other Faiths* Assoc. Press, Sept. 7, 1997 (13) *Mother Teresa, Words to Live By*, P.70 (14) *Apostasy Alert* 1 Dec.2002 (15) *Ibid* Sept.6 2016 (16) *Ibid*, Aug 25, 2007 (17) *Berean Call*, Oct.1996 (18) Hichins P.41 (19) *New Delhi*, OCT. 3, 2007 AsiaNews (20) 'The Catholic Encyclopedia' Vol.8 P.70 (21) 'Ask Billy Graham' by Bill Adler; and *New York Beacon* Sept.17, 1997

What Would Luther Think?



The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted overwhelmingly late last week to approve a declaration of unity with the Roman Catholic Church in an endeavour to 'enumerate the many points of agreement between Lutherans and Catholics'

- a move that some state is contrary to biblical Christianity.

The 'Declaration on the Way' was approved 931-9...Members stood and applauded...The declaration 'seeks to make more visible the unity we share by gathering together agreements reached on issues of church, Eucharist and ministry'...The document...is called 'on the way' because 'dialogue has not yet resolved all the church-dividing differences on these topics'. The publication outlines 32 'Statements of Agreement'...The declaration comes 500 years after Protestants separated from Roman Catholicism...

(Apostasy Alert, August 21, 2016)

Editor's comment:

What would Luther think? Surely he would say the same as he said when alive? The Lutheran church is fulfilling end time apostasy (2Thess.2:3). Finding 'points of agreement' is easy but dealing with the disagreements scripturally is another. The issues Luther addressed have not changed. The two gospels are opposed.

Same Sex Opposer a 'Piece of Filth'?

'A senior Canberra press gallery journalist this week took to Twitter to describe supporters of marriage as 'Neanderthals'. I have been called a 'creep' and a 'nauseating piece of filth' on Twitter by another senior journalist, who incidentally tweets this to 50,000 people. These are not [social media] trolls, they are journalists who support changing the definition of marriage. If I started calling same-sex marriage advocates these sorts of names on social media, I would be hounded from my job and rightly so.

But there are double standards in this debate. Those of us who wish to preserve marriage must not give in to the narrative that assumes our side is about hate. It is not. We must be free to make our case for marriage without being intimidated and bullied from the playing field'

(Lyle Shelton, Australian Christian Lobby; blog 24/8/2016)

Editor's comment: The 'senior journalist' here is Crikey.com politics editor Bernard Keane. But this vitriol is not uncommon by same-sex advocates. The hatred that will arise in this coming debate is not just against marriage advocates but ultimately against Christianity and God himself. Mans heart will be seen for what is truly in it against God.

Mother Teresa - The Truth

The late Mother Teresa has now been declared a 'saint' by the Pope.

In the past in brief mentions we have documented the teachings and sayings of Mother Teresa. On those occasions we have received strong objections and indignation from some readers. It seems that when someone claims to be a Christian, does good works and is so revered as Mother Teresa is, hearts are captured in endearment to such a person and they must be Christian?

This article explores the enigma of a woman who has captured the hearts of many religious people as well as many Christians. The 'sainthood' of Teresa declared by the Pope raises the matter of salvation, the gospel of works and even an issue of whether 'sincerity' can save a person, despite their teachings.

Mother Teresa is loved by the world, by many religions and their followers. There is no doubt she served humanity and was a doer of much humane works. She has a veritable army of workers that care for the destitute and the sick. Her stance against abortion is to be admired. However, is this enough to procure biblical salvation? And as a spiritual leader what did she actually believe and teach? What of her vision which started her ministry? What of the torturous mindgames that plagued her? Why was it that she refused to spend her great wealth on the poor?

What Did Teresa Believe and Teach?

Mother Teresa was an ardent Roman Catholic and a great admirer of the Pope. She stated '*The greatest gift God can give to a family is to have a son to be a priest at the altar, at whose absolution a sinner full of sin becomes a sinner without sin...Make your family one heart full of love, the heart of Jesus through Mary*'. (1) She said Priests are '*another Christ*': '*Without a priest, without Jesus going with them, our sisters couldn't go anywhere...These families can have peace and joy and holiness through their consecration to the sacred heart of Jesus...This is one of the reasons you [priests] are called 'another Christ*'. (2) One does not have to have much knowledge of the Bible to see that these statements outright contradict scriptures which warn of 'another Christ' and 'another Jesus' (Matt.24:23; Mk.13:21; 2Cor.11:4) and where only Christ is the mediator and intercessor for mankind (1Tim.2:5; Heb.12:24; Eph.2:18).

Perhaps the only point that she disagreed with the Pope is that she believed that women should be ordained to the priesthood.

Some of her statements made over many years also show a clear disregard for scripture. She stated: '*God loved the world so much that He gave His son to the Virgin Mary...*' (3) Compare this with John 3:16!: '*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*'. Would God approve of his word being changed in this fashion? Did God give his Son '*to the virgin Mary*' or to the world? Yet

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Another miracle attributed to Mother Teresa came after an Indian priest, Father V.M. Thomas, of Calcutta, who worked with Teresa for 10 years, claimed '*the intercession of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta*' brought a healing of his kidney stone. He claimed after a Mass and praying to Mother Teresa on the anniversary of her death, his kidney stone was healed the day before scheduled surgery. When the pre-surgical X-Ray was taken they could not locate the stone. (19)

The idea of praying to saints and contacting them in any way is directly opposed by Scripture. Isaiah 8:19-20 condemns this (see also Dt.18:10,11; Lev.20:6). Saul attempted to contact the dead (1Sam.28:11) against the Word of God (Lk.16:26). The Catholic Encyclopedia itself says: '*The chief objections raised against the intercession and invocation of the saints are that these doctrines are opposed to the faith and the trust which we should have in God alone and that they cannot be proved from scripture*'. (20)

The Bible says there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1Tim.2:5; Jn.16:23). Jesus is the only one who can accept prayer.

It should be remembered that Pharaoh's wise men successfully copied most of the miracles of Moses! (Ex.7:11,22, 8:7), and Saul used a witch to bring up a false vision and spirit of Samuel (1Sam.28). Many false prophesies are also a result of lies or from one's own heart (Jer.14:14, 23:16; Dt.18:21,22). We also need to be aware that demons can imitate angels (Gal.1:8; 2Cor.11:14). The Bible says the last days will bring 'lying' and false signs and wonders (Matt.24:24; 2Thess.2:9).

...And 'Sainthood'?

The idea of sainthood is a later tradition of the Roman church. But when the Bible speaks of 'saints' it refers to *all true Christians*, (in this life and the next). Paul's letters were addressed to the 'saints' which are at Ephesus (Eph.1:1); to all the 'saints' in Christ Jesus at Philippi (Phil.1:1), (see also Rom.1:7; 16:15; 1Cor.1:2; 2Cor.1:1). In scripture every Born Again Christian is a 'saint'.

Protestant Hypocrisy

Most of what Mother Teresa believed outright contradicted God's own revelation in the Bible. Today we usually say such a person is a false teacher. Yet because of the tireless works and religious humility of Mother Teresa, many have re-allocated her to Christian circles? But Mother Teresa of Calcutta was truly a false teacher, if the Bible is to be taken as the Word of God.

Many have separated from Roman Catholicism because of Biblical reasons, yet support Mother Teresa and her ministry as Christian. The Bible Society is a '*partner in Mother Teresa's work*' and has in the past appealed for funds for her cause. Billy Graham spoke glowingly of Mother Teresa and said: '*When she walked into the room to greet me, I felt that I was indeed, meeting a saint*'. (21) But how can we in any way support someone who has taught another gospel,

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In some of her letters she doubts the very existence of God and Heaven: *'Lord, my God, you have thrown [me] away as unwanted - unloved...I call, I cling, I want, and there is no one to answer, no, no one. Alone. Where is my faith? even deep down right in there is nothing. I have no faith. I dare not utter the words and thoughts that crowd in my heart...I am told God loves me, and yet the reality of the darkness and coldness and emptiness is so great that nothing touches my soul. Did I make a mistake in surrendering blindly to the Call of the Sacred Heart?'* Even her religious faith that many thought she had, was really not often in her heart. She once wrote: *'The smile...is a mask or a cloak that covers everything. I spoke as if my very heart was in love with God, a tender personal love. If you were there you would have said, 'What hypocrisy''*. (16)

The letters simply reveal a crisis of faith which, although a true Christian may suffer in trials, it should not be the experience year after year of a truly Born Again person indwelt with the Holy Spirit who promises assurance (Rom.8:16).

Her philosophy in Finances and Ministry

Mother Teresa had definitive views on money, suffering and the poor. One researcher wrote: *'She has bank accounts with tens of millions of dollars on deposit but she chooses not to use these funds to help the poor. Bear in kind that Mother Teresa's global income is more than enough to outfit several first-class clinics in Bengal. The decision not to do so...is...the promulgation of a cult based on death and suffering and subjection. Mother Teresa...herself, it should be noted, has checked into some of the finest and costliest clinics and hospitals in the West during her bouts with heart trouble and old age...'* (17)

The primitive hospital in Calcutta remained much the same in the many years Teresa was there. Yet she preferred California clinics when she got sick herself. Her Order of nuns always refused to publish any audit. The problem was not a lack of money, for the Foundation created by Mother Teresa raised hundreds of millions of dollars. Rather, Mother Teresa had a particular philosophy of suffering and death. She believed that suffering was 'a gift from God'. *'There is something beautiful in seeing the poor accept their lot, to suffer it like Christ's Passion. The world gains much from their suffering'*. (18)

The Miracles...

For 'sainthood' to be awarded to a person by the Catholic religion there needs to be miracles performed by that person in life or death. One miracle attributed to Mother Theresa was the healing of a woman, Monica Besra, who had been suffering from intense abdominal pain. The woman testified that she was cured after a medallion blessed by Mother Theresa was placed on her abdomen. Her doctors thought otherwise: the ovarian cyst and the tuberculosis from which she suffered were healed by the drugs they had given her. The Vatican, nevertheless, concluded that it was a miracle.

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Teresa stated: *'The heart of Jesus was formed in Mary...that it is why it was so humble...I've made a contract with God...every photo they take of me, one soul has to go from Purgatory'*. (4)

Teresa taught and was a signatory and supporter of the Pope's new 'Co-redemptrix' Doctrine - that Mary is a co-redeemer with Christ of men's souls. The Pope has openly taught this new doctrine as early as the last decade of the 20th Century. It added to an earlier Catholic doctrine of Mary as a co-mediator with Christ. *'Mary intensely and mysteriously unites her life with Christ's sorrowful mission: She was to become her son's faithful co-worker for the salvation of the human race'*. (5) However, this idea of Mary helping to redeem the soul is completely foreign to scripture. Our 'advocate with the father' is said to be only Jesus Christ (1Jn.2:1) and *'neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved'* (Acts 4:12). Our soul must 'wait only upon God' (Ps.62:5).

Teresa practised a secret baptism for the dying. She believed it a duty to baptise the dying, regardless of their religious beliefs. This belief of baptismal regeneration comes from Catholic teaching which sees baptism of infants and adults as putting people into the family of God. Susan Shields, a former member of the Missionaries of Charity, was quoted by the researcher Hitchins as saying: *'Sisters were to ask each person in danger of death if he wanted a 'ticket to heaven''*. An affirmative reply was to mean consent to baptism. *'The sister was then to pretend that she was just cooling the patient's head with a wet cloth, while in fact she was baptising him, saying quietly the necessary words. Secrecy was important so that it would not come to be known that Mother Teresa's sisters were baptising Hindus and Muslims'*.

Which Gospel?...the Ecumenical Teaching

When the sick are dying in the streets Mother Teresa *'asks the patient to say a prayer to their god, while she would say one to hers...'* (6). She said, with a twist of New Age teaching: *'If in coming face to face with God we accept Him in our lives, then we...become a better Hindu, a better Muslim, a better Catholic, a better whatever we are...what God is in your mind you must accept'*. (7) *'God is not separate from the Church as He is everywhere and in everything and we are all His children - Hindu, Muslim, or Christians'* (8) *'Every religion has got eternity...We live...so that they may go home according to what is written in the book, be it written according to Hindu, or Muslim, or Buddhist, or Catholic, or Protestant or any other belief'*. (9) In her fight against abortion she stated *'We are all children of God...When we destroy an unborn child, we destroy God'*. (10)

In 1978, Mother Teresa wrote a letter to Indian Prime Minister Morarji Desai. It included this reference to an interfaith deity: *'Are you not afraid of God? You call him Ishwar, some call him Allah, some simply God, but we all have to acknowledge that it is He who made us for greater things: to love and to be loved.'*

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Who are we to prevent our people from finding this God who has made them - who loves them - to whom they have to return?’ (11)

Another biographer, Naveen Chawla, once asked Teresa bluntly, ‘Do you convert?’ Teresa replied: ‘Of course I convert. I convert you to be a better Hindu or a better Muslim or a better Protestant’. (12) ‘We ask those who are about to die in the Home for the Dying if they want a blessing by which their sins will be forgiven and they will see God [Ishwar]. If they say yes, we give them the blessing. We help them all die in peace with God. And everybody knows that we give them a ticket for St. Peter’. (13)

However, the true Gospel clashes with this ecumenism. Are ‘Ishwar’ and ‘Allah’ really the same as the Biblical God? Are there really other ways to Heaven and God, including being a ‘better Hindu or a better Muslim or a better Protestant’. Rather, Jesus said: ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me’ (Jn.14:6). ‘I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved...’ (Jn.10:9-10).

Mother Teresa was a universalist, which teaching actually contradicts the core of Roman Catholic teaching (although the Roman church, being the chameleon it is, does more recently give a veiled interfaith message). But Jesus said our righteousness would have to exceed that of the highest religious leaders of the day (Matt.5:20). The only righteousness which a person must have to enter Heaven is a *perfect one*, one imputed to them by the work of Christ on the cross. ...Hardly an ecumenical message that one.

The Mandate for Ministry

Much of Mother Theresa’s ministry was originally based on a mystical experience. A ‘vision’ she had was revealed in a letter addressed to Archbishop Ferdinand Perier of Calcutta, through her spiritual director, Jesuit Father Celeste Van Exem. The letter, dated Dec. 3, 1947, reveals a vision of what eventually would be her future work. At that time, Teresa worked in Calcutta, India, as a religious of the Sisters of Loreto. During a prayer, Christ asked her to go out into the streets and proclaim him among the abandoned of India, especially girls. ‘How could I?’ she wrote. ‘I have been and am very happy as a Loreto nun. To leave that what I love and expose myself to new labors and suffering, which will be great, to the laughingstock of so many, especially religious, to cling and choose deliberately the hard things of an Indian life, to loneliness and ignominy, to uncertainty? And all because Jesus wants it, because something is calling me to leave all and gather the few to live His life, to do His work in India’. But Jesus constantly asked her (apparently in King James English): ‘Wilt thou refuse? When there was a question of Thy soul I did not think of Myself but gave Myself freely for thee on the Cross and now, what about thee? Wilt thou refuse? I want Indian nuns, victims of my love’. Teresa responded: ‘My own Jesus, what you ask is beyond me...I can hardly understand half of the things you want. I am unworthy. I am sinful. I am weak. Go, Jesus, and find a more worthy soul, a more generous

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one’. Christ apparently replied: ‘Are you afraid now to take one more step for Your Spouse, for Me, for souls?...Is your generosity grown cold? Am I a second to you? You did not die for souls. That is why you don’t care what happens to them. Your heart was never drowned in sorrow as was my Mother’s. We both gave our all for souls, and you? You are afraid that you will lose your vocation, you will become a secular, you will be wanting in perseverance...No - your vocation is to love and suffer and save souls and by taking the step you will fulfil My Heart’s desire for you. You will dress in simple Indian clothes or rather like My Mother dressed, simple and poor. Your present habit is holy because it is My symbol. Your sari will become holy because it will be My symbol’. (14)

How was Teresa sure this was the Lord Jesus? Her doctrine was already based on extra biblical and Roman traditions. But where does the Bible teach people to be ‘victims of God’s love’? Where does the Bible teach Mary ‘gave her all for souls’? Where does the Bible teach that our dress uniforms are ‘holy’ or ‘symbols’ for the Lord? The Roman Catholic thinking here is obvious. When God spoke in the Bible to humans, wherever did he ‘constantly ask’ someone to do his will? Rather the very words and voice of God or angels sent terrible fear into the hearts of those who were confronted. Never did God have to ‘constantly ask’.

Would not the Devil love to *add* to the words of the Bible with extra biblical visions and words? Would he not love to *add* works to the place of faith alone? Would he not love to *add* the role of Mary to the salvific work of the Trinity?

The Strange Torture of the Soul

Malcolm Moore, in the Rome Correspondent Telegraph (UK 24 August 2007) wrote of Theresa’s ‘*deep crisis of faith in God for the last 40 years of her life*’. This information was gleaned from Teresa’s letters, some which she asked in her last Will to be destroyed (which advise seems to have been ignored). The letters, which span most of Teresa’s life, showed she felt alone and in a state of spiritual pain from around 1949, roughly the time when she started taking care of the dying and poor in Calcutta. She wrote to the Rev. Michael Van Der Peet, a spiritual confidant, in September 1979 that ‘*Jesus has a very special love for you. As for me, the silence and emptiness is so great that I look and do not see, listen and do not hear. The tongue moves [in prayer] but does not speak*’. The letter was written just weeks before she received the Nobel Peace Prize for her charitable work.

More letters were published in a book ‘*Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light*’, and were edited by Rev. Brian Kolodiejchuk, a close friend. He wrote that during this long period, Mother Teresa did not feel God ‘*in her heart or in the Eucharist*’. However, he favoured her receiving ‘sainthood’ stating the letters would show that because she was able to continue her work during such torment this was a sign of her spiritual heroism. In 1962 she wrote: ‘*If I ever become a Saint...I will surely be one of ‘darkness’...How cold - how empty...how painful is my heart...Holy communion...Holy Mass...all the holy things of spiritual life...of the life of Christ in me...are all so empty...so cold...so unwanted*’. (15)

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