



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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Editor's Comment

It is a crime to be 'dogmatic' today. Perhaps I should not use the word 'dogmatic' as the word seems to be changing meaning. Some dictionaries have the meaning as '*inclined to lay down principles as undeniably true*'. But other dictionaries also give the meaning more as '*I am right and everyone else is wrong*'. The latter tends to put a proud and negative spin on the word.

So, shall I try 'user friendly' or more 'tolerant' language? In this newsletter we are on most topics 'sure' and 'decisive' about what we believe in doctrine.

I sometimes get reactions from people when I state decisively that the healing and prosperity doctrines taught today are 'another gospel', false and evil. Can we be lukewarm and indecisive in what we believe in this when any 'another gospel' is 'cursed' (Gal.1:8,9)? We cannot trifle and be tolerant when it affects the souls of men and women what they might hear. 'Another gospel' takes people to Hell. There is a saying we have in ministry 'know what hills to die on'. This is one 'hill' I wish more Bible teachers and pastors would be prepared to die on.

Many of our readers might agree with this, but what of other doctrines that may affect the understanding of the Gospel? In the doctrine of salvation we have raised the ire of many readers and been accused of being 'Calvinists' when we attribute the calling, choosing and justifying of man in salvation entirely to be God's work and nothing in and of ourselves; that election and predestination are on God's conditions alone 'before the foundation of the world'; that this initial salvation is not of both God and man. We are sure and decisive in this and willing to vigorously back it with scripture and with what almost all the historic reformers, evangelists and leaders taught. But today it's a crime to be so dogmatic.

I sometimes have raised eyebrows and been considered 'dogmatic' when I have stated that personally I would not worship in a church that had an eschatological position that did not have a literal approach to scripture. But when the passage makes sense why seek some other sense with allegorical and figurative interpretations? The early church fathers interpreted the scriptures literally. It was only toward the third century that allegorical and figurative interpretations entered. Worse, many mature Christians claim to be 'pan millennialists' ('it will all 'pan' out in the end'). Hardly a decisive and sure view?

Interestingly, we are seeing a growing movement of people tired of the politically correct, indecisive, tolerant waffling of many politicians. This is one of the reasons why U.S. President Donald Trump was elected, despite character flaws. He was decisive and sure. Similarly, preachers and pastors who will be decisive and strong will attract people who want to hear truth.

C.H. Spurgeon once said: '*A Magazine which is not outspoken, and is destitute of principle, is a literary nuisance*'. If something is true, it can stand being questioned, but if it is not true, then it needs to be questioned. Paul said: '*Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?*' (Gal.4:16). The problem lies in the heart of the modern Christian. *Most simply cannot stomach the idea of contending for doctrinal truth and being decisive.*

JC Ryle (1816-1900) brilliantly sums up: '*The times require distinct and*

decided views of Christian doctrine. I cannot withhold my conviction that the professing Church is as much damaged by laxity about matters of doctrine within, as it is by sceptics and unbelievers without. Myriads of professing Christians nowadays seem utterly unable to distinguish things that differ...they are incapable of discerning what is true and what is false, what is sound and what is unsound...The only positive thing about them is they dislike distinctiveness and think that all extreme and decided positive views are very naughty and very wrong!

These people live in a kind of mist or fog. They see nothing clearly, and do not know what they believe. They have not made up their minds about any great point in the Gospel, and seem content to be honorary members of all schools of thought. For their lives they could not tell you what they think is truth about Justification, or Regeneration, or Sanctification, or our Lord's Supper, or Baptism, or faith or conversion, or inspiration, or the future state. They are eaten up with a morbid dread of controversy...they live on undecided; and too often undecided they drift down to the grave, without comfort...and, I am afraid, also without hope. The explanation of this boneless, nerveless, jellyfish condition of soul is not difficult to find...They are content to shovel aside all disputed points as rubbish, and if you charge them with indecision, they will tell you: 'I do not pretend to understand controversy; I decline to examine controversial points. I dare say it is all the same in the long run'... Now I do beseech all to beware of this undecided state of mind in religion. This is a pestilence, which walketh in darkness, and a destruction that wasteth at noonday. It is a lazy, idle frame of soul, which, doubtless, saves man the trouble of thought and investigation but it is a frame of soul for which there is no warrant in the Bible. For your own soul's sake, dare to make up your mind what you believe, and dare to have positive, distinct views of truth and error. Never, never be afraid to hold decided doctrinal opinions; and let no fear of man and no morbid dread of being thought party-spirits, narrow, or controversial, make you rest contented with the bloodless, tasteless, colourless, lukewarm, undogmatic Christianity.

Mark what I say. If you want to do good in these times, you must throw aside indecision, and take up a distinct, sharply cut, doctrinal religion. If you believe little, those to whom you try to do good will believe nothing. The victories of Christianity, wherever they have been won, have been won on distinct doctrinal theology; by telling...of Christ's vicarious death and sacrifice, by showing them Christ's substitution on the cross, and His precious blood; by teaching them of justification by faith, and bidding them believe on a crucified Saviour; by preaching ruin by sin, redemption by Christ, regeneration by the Spirit; by lifting up the brazen serpent; by telling men to look and live - to believe, repent, and be converted. This is the only teaching which for centuries God has honoured with success, and is honouring at the present day both at home and abroad. It is doctrine - doctrine, clear ringing doctrine, which, like the ram's horns at Jericho, cast down the opposition of the devil and sin. Let us cling to decided doctrinal views, whatever some may please to say in these times, and we shall do well for ourselves, well for others, and well for Christ's cause in the world'.

Terry Arnold

Persecution and Martyrdom at An All Time High

Nigerian church leaders met with President Muhammadu Buhari [and] condemned the 'evil' massacre of Christians and falsehoods surrounding it...A report to Buhari on Nov. 6, described the killing of 646 Christians in Plateau state alone between March and October this year.... 'Pastors and members in their thousands have been killed...shot dead, slaughtered like animals or burned to death...Thousands of other Christians have been massacred...since the start of 2018... 'The narrative has been that these people are killed by unknown gunmen, herdsmen, or that there have been farmer-herders clashes...All these are deceptive narratives deliberately framed to conceal the truth' ...

In August Emeka Umeagbalasi, Board Chairman of the International Society for Civil Liberties & Rule of Law told The Christian Post that the government and news organizations are spreading such a false narrative...that all the evidence, including the great disproportion in the number of Christians killed and reports of churches being converted for Islamic purposes, show the thousands of deaths are not simply the result of farmer-Fulani herdsmen clashes. 'How many Muslim farmers are being killed by Fulani herdsmen? How many Muslim homes destroyed or burned? The answer is in the negative. It has nothing to do with herdsmen-farmer clashes. It is false'... 'We don't like to use the [term] 'Fulani herdsmen', we like to use 'Fulani jihadists', who are under the guise of herdsmen'.

Reports state that 38,000 Christians were forced to flee to camps...with 30 church buildings and 4,436 Christian homes destroyed...all in...half a year.

(Christian Post Dec/2018)

Shocking Survey Results

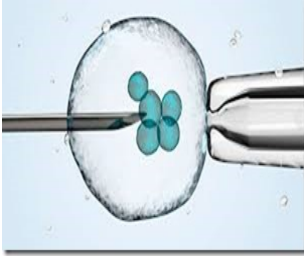
Ligonier Ministries and LifeWay Research published...beliefs held by American Christians and evangelicals...in interviews with 3,000 adult Christians...52% responded that most people are basically good, 51% believe God accepts the worship of all religions, 78% subscribe to the Arian Heresy that Jesus was the first and great being created by God the Father. [Yet] 'Overall, US adults appear to have a superficial attachment to well-known Christian beliefs...that Jesus died on the cross for sin and He rose from the dead'...[but] 59% stated that the Holy Spirit is a force, not a personal being...62% believe 'religious belief is a matter of personal opinion and not of objective truth' ...41% believe the Bible's condemnation of homosexuality does not apply today...'

(Apostasy Alert 7/12/2018)

Editor's Comment:

The Arian heresy was condemned at two early councils. The effects of a lack of Bible teaching is seen in these statistics and worsening each year. Postmodern subjective relativism is rampant and seen in a huge falling away.

Gene-edited Babies Born In China - Rewriting Blueprint Of Life



A Chinese researcher claims that he helped make the world's first genetically edited babies - twin girls born this month whose DNA he said he altered with a powerful new tool capable of rewriting the very blueprint of life. If true, it would be a profound leap of science and ethics.

A U.S. scientist said he took part in the work in China, but this kind of gene editing is banned in the United States because the DNA changes can pass to future generations and it risks harming other genes.

Many mainstream scientists think it's too unsafe to try, and some denounced the Chinese report as human experimentation.

The researcher, He Jiankui of Shenzhen, said he altered embryos for seven couples during fertility treatments, with one pregnancy resulting...He said his goal was not to cure or prevent an inherited disease, but to try to bestow a trait that few people naturally have - an ability to resist possible future infection with HIV, the AIDS virus. He said the parents involved declined to be identified or interviewed, and he would not say where they live or where the work was done...

(The Associated Press, 26 November 2018; cited in Apostasy Alert, Nov/2017)

The Testimony of Today's Christian Singers



Grammy-nominated Christian singer Lauren Daigle was the featured artist on 'The Domenick Nati Show' on iHeart radio...and said she couldn't answer whether homosexuality is a sin...Daigle recently appeared on secular entertainment shows like 'The Ellen DeGeneres Show'... 'I can't honestly answer on that...I have too many people that I love and they are homosexuals', Daigle told the celebrity publicist. 'I can't say one way or the other, I'm not God. When people ask questions like that, I just say, 'Read the Bible and find out for yourself. And when you find out let me know because I'm learning too', she added...Daigle, however, said her faith and mission in life has never been clearer'. [My music] is having crossover appeal, but it doesn't mean that I'm leaving one for the other...

Editor's comment:

Really? How often have we seen 'crossover' Christian singers go the way of the world and swim with the tide? And what Bible is Daigle reading? You do not have to read very far to see that God says the practise of Homosexuality is a sin and an abomination to God! Try reading Leviticus 18:22; Rom.1:26,27; 1Cor.6:9,10; 1Tim.1:9,10. Facing the secular media and celebrities is one thing, but facing God is to be feared.

Missionary Killed on North Sentinel Island

On Nov.17, 2018 the 26 year old adventurer and ‘missionary’ John Chau was killed by a hail of arrows on the isolated North Sentinel Island in the Bay of Bengal. His first attempt to meet with the tribe (Nov.15) saw him come under attack and an arrow hit his Bible. That night he wrote in his journal that he was ‘scared’. The second attempt was fatal. The following day the fisherman who had dropped him off on the island saw the tribesman dragging his body on the beach.

Others have tried to reach the North Sentinel tribe, even as far back as Marco Polo, who visited in 1296 and left the island describing the natives as ‘*brutish and savage*’. In 1880 a British ship captured an elderly couple and 4 children on the island who were too slow to escape into the jungle. They took them back to port but the adults soon died. The children were then returned to the island. After this the sentinels were noticeably hostile. More recently in 1981 a freighter was shipwrecked on the outlying coral reef and the crew were eventually rescued by helicopter after surviving several attacks of arrows and spears. In 2006 two fisherman were slaughtered when as they slept their boat drifted near the island. A helicopter which tried to retrieve the bodies aborted the attempt after coming under attack. Later an anthropologist who had made several unsuccessful attempts finally did make eye to eye contact with the tribe, bearing gifts. But on the next visit he was driven off the island, escaping with his life.

It is not the first time a missionary has been killed attempting to reach an unreached tribe. In the New Hebrides, two men, Williams and Harris, who were associated with the London Missionary Society, first brought the Gospel to the South Pacific islands. They landed on Erromanga on November 30, 1839 and were immediately clubbed to death and then cooked and eaten. In 1842 the same mission organisation sent out two more men, Turner and Nisbet, who landed on the island closest to Erromanga, the island of Tanna. Seven months later they barely escaped death by leaving in a boat during the night. Providentially a passing whaling vessel picked them up the next morning. It took many more attempts before the tribal people there were converted.

Another example of missionary death is the famous Jim Elliot. On Sunday, January 8, 1956, Jim Elliot and four friends were killed with spears by members of an isolated tribal group known as the ‘Aucas’ in Ecuador. Eventually that tribe was converted and even some of the martyrs wives went back to help the tribe.

There has been much controversy concerning the recent John Chau’s death on North Sentinel island. Some believe it was a foolish endeavour and poorly planned. Others believe he is a hero. Hindsight is almost too easily critical, but still it is a good teacher.

No doubt one must admire the zeal and desire to spread the Gospel to unreached people groups. It is part of the great commission to go and tell the good news of Christ and His salvation. The Pentecostal mission organisation Chau represented (‘*All Nations*’) stated that John ‘*took the voice of God seriously*’ and that he had the desire for many years to reach the people on this island. He had done some short term mission treks to various places. The mission centre claimed

he was *'well prepared'*.

The Indian government had a three mile exclusion zone and required approvals to visit 'forests, wildlife sanctuaries and tribal reserves'. It is hard to understand how John Chau did not know about these restrictions. There are three other requirements to visit the island. According to government sources *'You need to inform the local Foreigners Regional Registration Office, and also take approval from the Ministry of Tribal Affairs as well as the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. He (John Chau) had not done any of these things'*.

The question arises - was John Chau's story similar to previous martyrs such as Elliott? Was Chau well enough prepared? In the case of Jim Elliot he had undergone intensive linguistic training with the Wycliffe organisation, the language training centre at the time. Elliott had also been living with a neighbouring tribe in the forests of east Ecuador for more than 3 years. He learned Spanish and Kichwa so well he could preach in both languages without a translator. He was already growing a small church. Elliott had also had some contact from a distance with the Auca tribe with a loudspeaker and from a plane, offering gifts. They kept doing this until they felt there was a favourable response.

John Chau had no contact with the Sentinels until he landed on their beach. To the Sentinels he was an invader. Chau also had no language skills or any understanding of the tribe that killed him. When he landed on the beach he shouted *'I love you and Jesus loves you too'*.

Chau was trained at Oral Roberts University before being involved with the Pentecostal *'All Nations'* mission'. Oral Roberts was responsible for bringing in a new breed of charismaticism. He was essentially of the Word Faith doctrine and often associated with the 'prosperity' gospel and is seen to be the founder of the idea of 'seed faith' used by many televangelist today. In 1977, Roberts claimed to have had a vision from a 900-foot-tall Jesus who told him to build City of Faith Medical and Research Centre, and the hospital would be a success. This like many other prophecies and claims failed. In 1983 Roberts said Jesus had appeared to him in person and commissioned him to find a cure for cancer. In January 1987 Roberts announced to a television audience that unless he raised \$8 million by that March, God would 'call him home'. The March deadline came and went. Roberts also announced that God had raised the dead through his ministry. He was several times exposed for fraud by various Christian ministries and the secular media and was at least once brought to court. He was essentially a false prophet and much of his teachings survive today in his university.

What gospel would Chau have presented to the Sentinels? The question must be asked if Chau was disobeying the laws of the land. Did he have enough training in how to reach the Sentinels. Where was the backing of a local church? Was it wise to go alone? Was the sudden arriving on the beach the best method? Is there a comparison to the other missionaries who in previous centuries have died on similar ventures to remote tribes? What will happen to this tribe on North Sentinel Island now that the media has brought the world almost to their doorstep?

Terry Arnold

Healing and Down Syndrome

The Terms

Because of a lack of knowledge of what the Bible teaches, and in particular doctrine, many Christians are often confused about the doctrine of healing. Many do not understand that *miraculous healing* is very often different from the ‘*gifts of healing*’ and the claims thereof. At the outset this author would state that miraculous healing is sovereign and of God and thus scripturally could not be said to have ceased, just as any miracle of God is possible. But the twentieth Century has seen an epidemic in the teaching of, and the claims for, the *gifts of miraculous healing*. The Pentecostal/Charismatic movement claims the gifts of healing have returned or are for today. Yet the general teaching and historic witness of the early Church Fathers and down through the centuries has always been that the gifts of healing ceased after Jesus and His disciples ended their ministries.

Have the gifts of healing returned? Are there tests to see if the gifts of healing are current?

This debate rages back and forth - on one side people attempt to use scripture to state the sign gifts have ended; others cite experience and examples of modern healings. But one approach this author feels is largely forgotten in this debate is the very *purpose* of these gifts in the first place. When I have asked this question of Christians (even at Bible colleges) the question has often been met with silence.

The Purpose of the ‘Sign Gifts’

The gifts of healing, miracles, tongues, etc, are called ‘sign gifts’ because they, like a sign, point to something - a purpose. This purpose is unequivocally stated in scripture as being *the proof of the Messiahship of Christ*, the anointed one (the ‘christos’) sent by God. The Jews needed to know Jesus Christ was truly the Messiah as detailed in the Hebrew scriptures. The sign gifts proved and credentialed Jesus as the Messiah and his apostles as ordained by him (Lk.9:1; 2Cor.12:12 ‘*signs of an apostle*’) to perform these signs. ***And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God...*** (Jn.20:30,31); ***...Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you...*** (Acts 2:22).

When John the Baptist asked the disciples for *proof of the Messiahship of Christ*, Jesus said to His disciples: ***‘Go your way, and tell John what things you have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached’*** (Lk.7:21-22).

The passage above is one of the most telling scriptures in this debate! What is so special about *‘the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf*

hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached'? The actions are exactly the actions prophesied for the person of the Messiah in the Old Testament: '**...behold, your God will come...he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing...**' (Is.35:4-6). In the synagogue Jesus also quoted another verse from this same book for himself being the Messiah: '**And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind...**' (Lk.4:17-19). This was a quote from Isaiah 61:1,2 and it shocked and angered the Jews that Jesus was claiming this for himself *as the Messiah*.

The signs of the Messiah were shown in the sign gifts which he performed and which pointed clearly to the Messiahship.

If the sign gifts were to authenticate the Messiahship of Jesus then do we need these gifts today? Why did they historically cease after the first century and that fact testified to by the early church fathers? Why would they return in the twentieth Century with the Pentecostal movement? Do we need them for the same purpose, when we have the closed canon of scripture *with the full completed revelation of Jesus Christ as the Messiah*? Why is it that scripture attests to these signs being 'past'? '**Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds** (2Cor.12:12); '**How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?**' (Heb.2:3,4). The Greek here uses the *aorist indicative* - which means a *definite* time in the *past* rather than any continuity. Even in the epistles we see the sign gifts ceasing - Epaphroditus was '*sick nigh unto death*' (Phil.2:27); Trophimus was '*left at Miletum sick*' (2Tim.4:20); Timothy took medicine for his sickness (1Tim.5:23).

The Test for the Sign Gifts

There is a litmus test for the 'sign gifts' and in particular the 'gifts of healing'. Simply compare the claimed 'healings' of today with those of the time of Christ and the Apostles. In the Gospel of Matthew alone it is clear that Jesus healed '**all**' (Matt. 23:24; 8:16; 10:1,8; 12:15; 14:36; etc.); and '**every sickness**' that came to him were *completely* healed (12:13; 20:34;). Jesus healed '**all**' whether they had faith or not! (Lk.17:11-19; Matt.8:1,14; 12:10; 13:58). Added to this, many healings were to do with *organic diseases* which cannot be healed psychosomatically.

A *functional disease* is one in which an organ does not function properly. Functional diseases change the function of the tissue but not its structure and can be affected by the mind, hence 'healing' can be by psychosomatic influences.

An *organic disease* is one in which the organ is diseased, maimed or even defunct. Diabetes, Down Syndrome, heart attacks, some cancers, broken bones and congenital deformities are all included as organic diseases. A functional disease might be a sore arm; an organic disease might be a withered arm or no arm at all. Today's so called faith 'healings' are more to do with functional diseases. Even then only *some* are 'healed' and often 'partially' with the symptoms returning in a few days. These 'failures' are simply not *instant, complete* and 100% successful as in the true *gifts* of healing. No one has ever been raised from the dead (modern healers give funeral parlours and cemeteries a wide birth) or healed of incurable diseases such as AIDS or Down Syndrome!

We must be honest with ourselves and admit that no one today possesses the true gifts of healing as Jesus and the Apostles did!

The One Test to Challenge the 'Gifts of Healing'

Down Syndrome is a good test for those claiming to have the *gifts* of healing. It cannot be healed psychosomatically. It is a genetic disorder caused by the presence of all or part of a third copy of chromosome 21. Derived from this are physical growth delays, characteristic facial features, and an intellectual disability (often with an IQ of an 8-10 year old or less). Typical is a small chin, slanted eyes, flat nose, a single crease of the palm, a protruding tongue in a smaller mouth, a short neck, instability in some joints and stunted growth.

To cure this syndrome would require a re-creation and sorting of chromosomes apart from the symptoms above. Apart from a miracle of God there is no cure for this condition. Has any faith healer or any claiming the gifts of healing ever cured any of these people? The answer is a resounding 'no'! Such healers need to be challenged to do these healings if any are to claim that the gifts of healing are here today. Today we hear many stories of faith healings, which when checked forensically are found to be psychosomatic, partial healings, handed down exaggerated stories, misplaced diagnosis, and many actually are fraudulent and lies. The Pentecostal/Charismatic movement and the Internet are awash with such claims.

You don't see faith healers working with cases such as Down Syndrome or in hospitals, just as you don't see psychics winning the lottery or prophets predicting world events. *Such healers are not exhibiting the true gifts of healing.*

Yet amazingly there have been some rare and foolish claims of healing of Down Syndrome by Christians. Some of these are rather disputed claims of 'improvements' which again is not exhibiting the true gifts of healing. There have been some claims of prenatal babies being healed of Down Syndrome after prayer. One of these claims came from a large Pentecostal church in Seoul, South Korea which claimed 21 women with Down Syndrome babies in the womb were healed after prayer. (1) But when asked for results of tests, they were not forthcoming. Eventually only eight QUAD tests were revealed. This test tests four factors in the blood of the foetus to help make a decision about further genetic testing. *The test is not conclusive as to Down Syndrome.* The results in

the eight patients were: The first child's QUAD test result was 1:60 (one to sixty); the second child was 1:216; the third was 1:100; the fourth was 1:41; the fifth was 1:100; the sixth was 1:69; the seventh was 1:33; and the eighth child was 1:267. The problem with the particular test is that it is not failsafe nor as thorough as other tests such as even high resolution ultrasounds. And many of these tests can have 'false negatives.' The QUAD tests here actually showed that for the women the odds remained high that they would NOT have a child with Down Syndrome, rather than that they would! Yet the church claimed that God had answered prayers: *'God is almighty. He can change the abnormality of zillions of chromosomes in a moment...'* But clearly there was no evidence that these babies were miraculously 'healed' of Down Syndrome.

There have been several other foolhardy claims of the same healing of Down Syndrome. In 1990 the world famous Pentecostal leader, John Wimber, claimed to have prayed over more than 200 children with Down syndrome. On questioning he admitted to his disappointment that only one of the 200 had shown any sign of healing. But on further examination the truth was that this child still had symptoms of Down Syndrome. The claim was that the child had *'reached the lower end of the normal range'*.

Even if this was a true healing then the healing rate here was .5% - hardly anything like *the 100% success rate for the true gifts of healing* as in scripture. Further it was found that this child was not any more unusual for Down Syndrome children which can reach the lower end of the normal range of academic achievement - something also not hard to find in 200 cases. In fact this result is less than what can be achieved by health professionals!

One of the most dramatic accounts of a healing of Down Syndrome came from Benny Hinn, believed by many to be the greatest signs and wonders exponent of the last few decades. He claimed to heal a teenage girl from Pakistan called Sarah, with Down Syndrome. We were told she had been given six months to live by doctors, due to 'holes in her heart' and she needed a wheelchair and oxygen. Sarah had been at several Benny Hinn crusades and *not been healed*. But on this occasion Hinn walked her around the stage and she 'fell down in the spirit'. Benny proclaimed God was healing her heart condition. An investigator rang Sarah's family some weeks later and was told she was not using a wheelchair any more. But what we were not told was that the diagnosis of six months to live was given *three years before*. And *the Down Syndrome was not healed*. (2)

When investigating many claims of healing it will be found over and over that the person was either not healed fully, the person never had the claimed illness, exaggerations abound, or the story simply cannot be corroborated with documentation and the ones claiming the healings cannot provide evidence.

One author has boldly issued a challenge that exemplifies the farce of the claims that the gift of healings are in existence today: *'I put a challenge to all those who lay claim to a personal ongoing 'healing ministry' today: Don't just tarry in your tent meetings waiting for all those poor people to line up in front of you. Instead, go out into the casualty departments of your local hospitals on a Saturday night and bring instantaneous organic healing to the battered and*

broken victims of the brawls and accidents that present themselves here for treatment. Then nip up to the surgical wards and lay your hands on the amputees and hopeless cases, so that their truncated limbs and diseased entrails will be returned to them. When those places have been emptied, find your local 'institute for the blind' and bring some colour into their lives for the first time with your remarkable healing powers. Then buzz over to the offices of the 'spastic society' and get them to take you out to their many training centres, where you can restore those withered limbs on the spot...make that Down Syndrome melt away from those little faces...take a taxi across to the local mortuary and bring some of it's frigid occupants out with you for a breath of fresh air...While we're on the subject, isn't it about time you discarded those eye glasses?...Why wait? For those are the kinds of healings which the Lord Jesus and the Apostles carried out in the course of their ministry (Lk.22:50,51; Mk.3:1-5; Lk.8:43,44; Jn.9: 1-11; 11:43,44)...Do not make the false claim you are doing the works of Jesus...' (3)

The Root Issue

This author believes the signs and wonders movement and the many claims of the gifts of healing being used today is one of the greatest spiritual deceptions of the twentieth century. But the biggest concern this author has is that this healing epidemic and the false claims of healing *detracts from the true Gospel*. In much Pentecostal teaching this healing is taught as part of the atonement Jesus procured for us on the cross. Healing becomes an *addition* to the Gospel of Jesus dying *for our sins*.

The gospel of physical healing is a false gospel and offers false hope. It is an *addition* to the vital doctrine of the atonement. It *detracts* from faith alone and *adds* with sight and the sensations. It confuses, minimises and adds to the message of the Gospel of grace that comes from the work of Jesus on the cross *for our sins*.

One author says: '*If Christians believe the unsubstantiated claims of present day Charismatic leaders they will believe anything! If they believe the ludicrous and extravagant yarns of extrovert, spiritually deluded showmen, how will they stand against the lying wonders to be unleashed by the Devil during the final apostasy?*' (4)

Terry Arnold

(1) <http://www.downsyndromeprenataltesting.com/pastor-heals-down-syndrome-prenatally-with-prayer/>

(2) November 2013 '*My night with Benny Hinn*'
<https://www.premierchristianity.com/Past-Issues/2013/November-2013/My-night-with-Benny-Hinn>

(3) Alan Morrison, England 2001; *Diakrisis* Jan/Feb, 2001

(4) '*The Charismatic Phenomenon*' by Masters & Whitcomb, P.68

The Martyrdom of Wishart

George Wishart graduated at the University of Leuven, Belgium, in 1531. He translated into English the first Helvetic Confession of Faith in 1536.

At Montrose in Angus he taught New Testament Greek, until investigated for 'heresy' by the Bishop of Brechin in 1538. He fled to England, where a similar charge was brought against him at Bristol in 1539 by Thomas Cromwell. In 1542 he entered Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where he studied and taught.

His character was well spoken of in his country of Scotland and he was described as being a courteous and modest man being simply attired and with few possessions. He was renowned for giving away possessions not needed.

In 1543 he returned to Scotland and began itinerant preaching across the country. He regularly denounced the errors of the Papacy and abuses in Roman Catholic churches. His preaching helped to spread the teachings and writings of prominent Protestant leaders such as Calvin and Zwingli throughout Scotland. At Dundee Wishart preached a public exposition of Romans and taught on Grace alone and Faith alone, contrary to Roman teaching. He was interrupted by a Robert Milne who had been sent by Cardinal Beaton of St. Andrews. Milne insisted Wishart stop troubling the town with his Gospel. Wishart replied: *'I have offered you the Word of salvation. With the hazard of my life I have remained among you; now you yourselves refuse me; and I must leave my innocence to be declared by my God. If it be long prosperous with you, I am not led by the Spirit of truth; but if unlooked-for troubles come upon you, acknowledge the cause and turn to God, who is gracious and merciful. But if you turn not at the first warning, He will visit you with fire and sword'*.

After leaving town, four days later a terrible plague visited the town and many died. Wishart on hearing this, stated: *'They are now in troubles, and need comfort. Perhaps this hand of God will make them now to magnify and reverence the Word of God, which before they lightly esteemed'*. When he arrived back in the town he was received with joy by many and preached a sermon on the comfort of God's Word, the judgement on those who hold it in contempt and the happiness of the elect who hold it high. Wishart visited the sick while he was there before the plague began to ease. He then went to Montrose.

Cardinal Beaton then called a John Weighton to kill Wishart. With a hidden dagger Weighton approached Wishart after he had preached a sermon and was stepping down from the pulpit. Wishart sensed danger and said: *'My friend, what would you have?'* and clapped his hand upon the dagger and took it from him. The priest being terrified, fell to his knees, confessed his intention and craved mercy. The onlookers nearby wanted to seize the offender but Wishart prevented them stating *'Whatsoever hurts him shall hurt me; for he hath done me no mischief, but much good, by teaching more heedfulness for the time to come'*.

Cardinal Beaton then set a trap with 60 men outside the town when Wishart was to travel next. Wishart again sensed danger and returned to Montrose, stating: *'I will not go; I am forbidden of God; I am assured there is treason. Let some of you go to yonder place, and tell me what you find'*. Some of the men with

him continued, discovered the plot and reported to Wishart who stated: *'I know I shall end my life by that bloodthirsty man's hands, but it will not be in this manner'*. When it was safer Wishart left Montrose and went to Edinburgh.

In 1546 Wishart was finally captured at Ormiston by Lord Bothwell on the orders of Cardinal Beaton. At that time several men were named for 'heresy' and condemned to die. Some were charged for not respecting Roman Catholic images, others for refusing to pray to Mary. Many were put to death.

Wishart was taken to Edinburgh castle and a 'trial' was conducted. Wishart refused to accept the Roman Catholic Confession as a sacrament and upheld the 'priesthood of all believers'. Wishart also believed in the 'Doctrines of Grace' and denied 'free will'. He answered the charges and the questions with much knowledge and persuasion even surprising some who were present. They tried in vain to have him recant.

On the morning of his execution two priests from the Cardinal put on him a black linen coat and tied bags of gunpowder to parts of his body. He was taken to the stake where the executioner put a rope around his neck and a chain around his body. Wishart fell to his knees: *'O thou Savior of the world, have mercy upon me! Father of heaven, I commend my spirit into Thy holy hands'*. He prayed for his accusers *'I beseech thee, Father of heaven, forgive them that have, from ignorance or an evil mind, forged lies of me: I forgive them with all my heart'*.

He was then fastened to the stake and the faggots were lit which set fire to the powder tied about him. The nearby governor of the castle was singed with the flame and exhorted the martyr to ask the pardon of God for his offences. Wishart replied *'This flame occasions trouble to my body, indeed, but it hath in nowise broken my spirit. But he who now so proudly looks down upon me from yonder lofty place (looking to the Cardinal) shall, ere long, be ignominiously thrown down, as now he proudly lolls at his ease'*. (This prediction was soon after fulfilled).

The hangman sat down upon his knees and said, *'Sir, I pray you to forgive me, for I am not guilty of your death'*. Wishart answered *'Come hither to me'*. Wishart kissed his cheek and said: *'Lo, here is a token that I forgive thee. My heart, do thine office'*. Wishart was then put upon the gibbet and hanged.

Many bystanders pitied the sight and mourned as Wishart died and he went into the presence of God on March 1, 1546.

Soon after Cardinal David Beaton was slain within his own castle by the hands of over zealous men who sought revenge for Wishart's death. On his bed Beaton cried out *'Alas! alas! slay me not! I am a priest!'*. His body then lay seven months unburied.

Beaton had a mistress and fathered several children, the oldest who eventually was converted to the Protestant faith.

Several others after Wishart were martyred for their faith. The events of Wishart's death and others to follow would set in motion a backlash against the Roman religion and an ushering in of Reformation truths again.

Lest we forget.

Terry Arnold

Your Comments and Questions

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

The Holy Spirit and Differing Interpretations

Terry, would you agree that the Holy Spirit would never lead a true believer to go against the teaching of His Word, the Holy Scriptures? ...Various remarried people I know would say they have made very specific prayer to the Lord for His guidance and were convinced they were making the right decision. Others (myself) would make decisions contrary...If the Holy Spirit has indeed answered their prayers does that show that for over 50 years I have been 'cheating myself'?...If I am right in my strong convictions does that mean...[others] have gone against the leading of the Spirit in re-marrying?...Does the Holy Spirit not allow ME to remarry while He DOES allow these others to remarry? ...

(Name withheld at editor's discretion)

Editor's reply:

This is a good question - the differing views is the problem of man not God who does not allow for '*private interpretations*' (1Pet.1;20,21).

I assume you are not referring to re-marriage after the spouse's death (1Cor.7; Rom.7) but rather to re-marriage while the partner is still living. On the issue of re-marriage there are many Godly Bible teachers with opposing views on this subject.

There are *many human reasons* why people would get differing interpretations and claim those as from the Spirit or an 'answer to prayer'.

The following are the variants:

One may claim answered prayer, but how do we objectively know this?

Many may not know the scriptures well enough to make the decision that the Spirit would have them make. I have personally seen, after debating an issue and people forced to grapple with scripture objectively, they change their views (examples of this are found in our booklet '*Debates on the Doctrines of Grace*'). As a young Christian I too had a differing view on re-marriage to that which I hold now.

Some Christians do not take the word of God as inspired, inerrant and thus open the door to their own thinking. The Holy Spirit leads only from the truth of scriptures (Jn.17:17) which may or may not always guide the conscience. One may well be guided by their consciences but that conscience may not be developed to a point in agreeing with the Spirit. (The scriptures speak of some who have a 'weaker' conscience). I know of at least two people who once had consciences that re-marriage was allowed in scripture who after re-marriage changed their minds with further study.

Other reasons for differing interpretations are that some might be governed to some extent by emotional and fleshly circumstances that might sway a decision. The problem is we are made up of spirit *and flesh*. The war between the flesh and the spirit is evident (Rom.7:22-25).

Your Comments and Questions

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

Foolish Strawman Logic

Hi Terry! I was once an avid reader of Dave Hunt's and T.A. McMahon's 'Berean Call' newsletter - their articles, especially on Roman Catholicism and other cults were definitive. However, recently I read the latest issue and this (below). Surely they can't be serious? Where are the scriptures that could possibly confirm such a statement? I'd be very interested on your take on what they have written here? [Below]

(MBC, Vict.)

'God did not make us robots. In spite of the denial by Luther, Calvin, and many evangelical leaders today, God gave man a will to freely choose to love or to hate Him, to receive Christ as Saviour and Lord or to reject Him. God wants man to trust Him so fully and to love Him so deeply as to give Him the keys to this inner fortress of the heart, holding nothing back: "my son, give me thine heart" (Prov 23:26). (Berean Call)

Editor's Reply:

This is one ministry which in the past has refused to correct blatant misrepresentations and confusion on this subject (see *Diakrisis* May/June 2012; July/Aug 2016) as well as dishonestly altered quotes from Spurgeon cut and pasted to suit! (*Diakrisis* July/Aug 2012 'The Art of Misquoting - Part 1').

The mantra of 'God did not make us robots' is an old Arminian strawman. This argumentation does not stand up to John chapter 6 and many scriptures. It also can be refuted with reverse logic. Who would not want to have their wills changed to enter Heaven rather than Hell! Should I not be thankful for a grace that was given to me that was effectual?

Nowhere in the Bible after the Fall of man is this notion that 'God gave man a will to freely choose to love or to hate Him, to receive Christ as Savior and Lord or to reject Him'. And no scripture is given here for this. In the unsaved man there are not two free choices of *love or hate*, or to *receive or reject* salvation. The Bible is consistently clear that unsaved man does not seek or choose God unless the Holy Spirit first draws him (Eph.1:4,5; Jn.15:16; Rom.3:11; Lk.19:10; Rom.8:6,7; Rom.3:10-11; Jer.17:9; Is.64:6,7).

At no time when man is being 'drawn' and 'called' to salvation is his will violated. His will is not treated as a 'robot', but rather his heart is broken and willing to respond. The person who chooses Christ *freely* does so! *God does not violate the will of the unsaved but he rather 'frees' it!* The man drawn by God freely comes of his own will because that will has been changed from one that was a 'slave' to sin (Jn.8:34; Gal.4:7) to one that is now willing. At salvation, as God draws and calls, the person's will is changed to one that

reflects a heart that has been opened. Charles Spurgeon summarises: *'A man is not saved against his will, but he is made willing by the operation of the Holy Ghost. A mighty grace which he does not wish to resist enters into the man, disarms him, makes a new creature of him, and he is saved'*.

In Ezekiel 11:19 God says *'And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh'*.

The idea of man giving the 'keys' of his heart to God for salvation is entirely unbiblical if not blasphemous. A calling, drawing, quickening is taught and *always by God*, but an impotent saviour waiting for man to give him the 'keys' to his heart is preposterous! It attacks the very sovereignty of God in salvation.

Proverbs 23:26 is poorly used here. Most say this is Solomon speaking to his son or Solomon speaking for God about a believer. But it certainly cannot be used for unsaved man giving the 'keys' of his heart to God in salvation. Is there not a clear scripture that can be used rather than an obscure one from Proverbs? None of the commentaries I have use this scripture for God requesting man to hand over the 'keys' of his heart to be saved!

Your Comments and Questions

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

Political Campaigning?

Dear Terry...one Sunday I was sitting outside the...church with my dog who is popular with the people (I won't go in whilst they are members of the ministers fraternal) and a conversation arose about democracy...I replied that it was evil. I had a number a copies of a letter/information sheet I prepared. The subjects were democracy, the church's membership of the ministers fraternal, and words about Billy Graham. I handed a few out to people I knew and left some with the welcomer to hand to interested people. The minister showed up...and told me I was welcome to come into the church on condition I subject myself to the authority of the Eldership/Church. If not, I was not welcome, and would I leave immediately and not come back on Sundays...I stated I submitted to the authority of the Holy Bible...He then demanded I leave the church's property...or he would call the Police to remove me...

I include a copy of the sheet I handed out:

'To church members...in conversation outside the church, I made the comment that democracy was evil and of Satan...this...many Christians are unaware of...The last decade or two we for the first time in history have seen state sanctioned homosexuality/homosexual marriage...It came about by a majority of people exercising their democratic vote and politicians acting on that vote and making these ungodly acts lawful. Democracy delivered homosexual marriage.

The word of God is very clear on this...homosexual acts, homosexual marriage is an abomination before God...James 3:11, a spring of water cannot issue forth bitter water and sweet water. It is one or the other. Democracy is bitter water...

...On another subject...this church's long term membership of the minister's fraternal, I have for many years challenged ministers to cease ungodly association with this evil group. God's word Eph.5:11 (have nothing to do with the unfruitful work of darkness). The Apostasies, heresies, blasphemies of the Catholic church over centuries...It is...a doctrine of demons...the Pope is an apostle of Satan, and we are commanded by God not to associate with them...peace be with you.

PS. Billy Graham...has taught many heresies and numerous Godly men have tried to correct him but he has refused. He has led many people to their eternal death, taught a form of Universalism and a type of Ecumenism. He has done much damage to God's kingdom...James 3:11, a spring does not issue forth sweet water and bitter water. When is the church going to take a fearless stand in defence of God's word? (This letter edited for space)

Editor's Reply:

I do appreciate your zeal...but I personally would not be sitting outside a church making a nuisance of myself? There is little to no benefit in public protests like this. If this is not your church then leave it. 'Democracy' and politics is not the evil of the day; it's the Godless spirit alone behind the whole world system. People need the Gospel to be delivered from that. You were here dealing with professing Christians.

Handing out material on the premises - after having said you would not enter the church is not the way I would protest. The Bible tells us to live peaceably with all men wherever possible and to submit to authorities (Romans 13; 1Peter 2:13-17; Tit.2:7-10; 3:1,2). Our first priority is the Gospel to unsaved people.

My approach would be to talk to people one on one, especially to the pastor, but then if they wish not to listen, then leave them? I would also be in a sound church somewhere rather than protesting outside a sound one? I would not be disrupting a church in this way. (I confess I see this from a pastor's perspective. It is highly unruly to disrupt a church service or put on a public show. Consider also that the pastor is the one who will bear the responsibility for false teaching and the welfare of the people, not you).

I agree with you on many things you wrote about and I speak to many pastors about these issues also. Literature rather than public protests is a key here. Sorry to have to disagree but I see nowhere where we are to be involved in the politics of 'democracy' in this public way?

Personally, politics or moral campaigning is often a diversion from the Gospel and also from sound doctrine.

Again, I do appreciate your zeal. My prayer would be that the Lord channel our energies into the things that will bear fruit.

Your Comments and Questions

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

Greetings. The British Govt. has announced ALL schools MUST teach the LB Gender rubbish or be closed. The chief Rabbi reported to Barnabas Fund that the Orthodox Jews will not accept this and will have to leave Britain. It may go against the government as many Christian groups will threaten to do the same...

(R.L., Vict)

There is a Global phenomenon coming. John 11:25,26 'Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live...whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die...1Cor.15:51,52 '...I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

1Thess.4:14-18 '...if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him...by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words'.

(M.L. Brisbane)

Dear Terry, Thankyou for the latest newsletter (Nov/Dec 2018) - Wow - it pulls no punches. Together with two of my friends we read and re-read and said 'Yes'! - Lets tell the world! Sounds a little crazy but truth stands alone. I am now 83 years young and still have much to offer...Dear brother please delete me from the hardcopy as I can receive by e-mail...All blessings from above to you...

(B.B., NSW)

Terry, Just a little encouragement for you today. It was to me. Love in Christ Jesus.

Jeremiah 17:7,8 'Blessed is the man that trusts in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreads out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit' (C.L., Brisbane)

Your Comments and Questions

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

Speaker Available

Dear brother Terry,

It's a couple or so years since we last were in contact with each other but I appreciate receiving your regular newsletters.

My reason for writing is that if spared my wife and I will be spending a few days in Sydney in November 2019.

En route I am scheduled to speak in a church in Singapore and then to speak in Hobart, Tasmania. I have also put 'feelers' out to a couple of churches in Auckland.

I was wondering if you have any church contacts in Sydney that might be interested in hearing of my own apologetics ministry of 'Take Heed' Ministries – it would need to be a midweek meeting because of our expected travel schedule.

Sincere good wishes in Christ

Cecil Andrews ('Take Heed' Ministries' - Northern Ireland)

www.takeheed.info

Prayer/Praise Points

Please pray for the new pastoring elder who will soon be joining the eldership team at Hervey Bay Bible Church. Details will be posted on the church website.

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