

Terry, We would love for you to be able to preach at our little church here in the not too distant future. At the moment our Wednesday night bible studies are focused on a fantastic little book entitled 'Bring The Gospel Back!' We will continue to pray for you and the ministry. God bless you Terry and Beth.
(A.C., NSW)

Terry's Itinerary

Sept.18th (Sundays) Babinda Presbyterian 8.30am (Church st); Gordonvale Presbyterian 10.30am (Norman st) Ph.0409462111
Sept.25th Babinda Presbyterian 8.30am; Gordonvale Presbyterian 10.30am
Oct.2nd Babinda Presbyterian 8.30am; Gordonvale Presbyterian 10.30am
Oct.9th Hervey Bay Bible Church (Urangan Community Hall, Elizabeth st) Ph. 0411051118

Conference 2023 (Sydney)

Feb 25th (Saturday) St.Johns Park Baptist. 9.30am - 4.00pm (178 Humphries Rd, Ph.0417179610)

'Charismatic Confusion'

Topics: *'The History of the Pentecostal Movement'*; *'The Baptism With the Spirit'* / *The 'Filling'*; *'Tongues'*; *'Healing & the 'Gifts' ...and more.*

More details next newsletter

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

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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The Church of the World

When we speak of the 'church' today, it is arguably necessary to distinguish between that which is the true and that which is the counterfeit.

The 'church' of the world is that which we mostly see in the media of the world. It is usually portrayed as the friend of the world, having agendas equal to that which is driving the latest philosophy of the age. The professing Christians in this church are caught up in the sentimental whims of the day (Rom.12:2), ever changing with whatever seems right in their own eyes (Pr.30:12; Is.5:21; Jgs 17:6; 21:25). The same forces that drive society drive this church. Those forces often are manipulated by the marketplaces of entertainment and emotional appeals to a better world. This church has been seduced and well trained. It thinks it is rich and yet is blind and naked (Rev.3:17), its 'candlestick' likely long removed (Rev.2:5).

The Dilemma

How does any church keep pace with these ever changing forces of the age? To do so is to apostatise from positions once held. How can the church keep adapting to the changing standards of morality? To do so would mean to accept what was once evil but now is acceptable (such as homosexuality, abortion, fornication...?). How can the church ever compete with the entertainment standards of the world? To do so would mean to become increasingly proficient in the art of such. How will this church know what is right and wrong, truth from error, and when the world is truly anti Christ? What standard is there to guide but the world's own? Such a church is seduced into an ecumenical entity other than a 'church'.

The Church That Is Christ's

The church with Christ at its head will be a remnant (Rom.11:5; Rev.12:17), largely shunned by the media and found quietly swimming against the tides that come out of the marketplaces of the world. Its driving force is not the seductions of the world but that of searching the inspired infallible scriptures for a standard which gives glory to an immutable God (Mal.3:6), and His immutable Gospel (Ps.119:89; James 1:17). Rather than *pragmatic entertainment* it is more interested in *authentic worship* (Jn.4:24). Rather than please the crowds, the true church will challenge and call the crowds to *repent* and *believe*. The Gospel will be defended and protected from any historical and extra biblical additions. *The true Gospel will be central and back of any program.*

This church is today a universe away from what the world sees as 'church'. It is as if hidden, awaiting the One who has washed it, clothed it and set it apart, ready for the day when its members will be snatched away to His glory (Eph.5:25-27; 1Thess.4:17).

Terry Arnold

Dear sir, reading 'Diakrisis' July/Aug 2022 I was horrified to read the article 'Timeline to Apostasy - The Church of England'. The blasphemous statements - that 'Heaven is not a place for Christians only...I expect to see...atheists there'. But why would 'atheists' be in Heaven, when they don't believe in Heaven? Heaven is for the redeemed, those who believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord...Then it got worse 'Jesus might have been a homosexual'...This being about my loving Saviour brought me to tears!...I pray these people repent...It is sad to see many Christians falling away from God and his truth to secular ideas. Thank you too for your comments in the 'Editor's Comments'.

I have also finished reading your book 'Free Will or Free Agency', an excellent book. I have always believed that when Adam and Eve sinned 'free will' left us... Our 'free will' is in bondage to the evil one and we can only do evil until God comes into our lives and draws us to Himself. I was interested to read where 'free will' came from, it being a philosophical idea. This book is clear and easy to understand yet goes into a lot of depth and with historical evidence...showing those for 'free will' and those against it...You have stayed close to God's Word and what it says about man's will. I would recommend this book to anyone, it is well worth a read...Thank you...In Christ.

(R.W., NSW)

Dear Terry, 'Diakrisis' arriving in the mail is just as important as it was back in the 1990's, not just for me but for the dozen or so others who meet regularly here...I use 'Diakrisis' as a teaching tool...Can we have a copy of 'Free will or Free Agency'? Question - can we pray precatory prayers against our enemies...

(K.F., NSW)

Editor's reply:

Most encouraging to hear of your group and the newsletter being used.

I see no problems with entreating prayers against our 'enemies' if they are causing harm or damage to God's saints. However, I have found God often uses them to further test and sanctify us. At the same time we are told to love and do good to them (Matt.5:44, Lk 6:35). We could pray to bring confusion to our enemies and thwart their plans? But overall we should pray for their salvation and leave the outcome to God. God is sovereign and any vengeance is the Lord's (Nah.1:2; Rom.12:19).

Because God is sovereign and even uses evil to fulfil his plans, church life may well even bring enemies of the Gospel to us to test us... 'For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you' (1Cor.11:19).

Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear Terry thank you for continuing to send me the 'Diakrisis' in hardcopy...

So pleased you are aware of the sudden deaths in Europe due to the 'vaccinations' (falsely called). There is so much evidence now, so many websites, more people seeing an almost totally controlled media. I know people who have been and are being affected...This country has been brought to its knees. There is only one answer as we know...But people have been conned, lied to and filled with fear...How can judgement not come when we have the likes of abortion. Australia has the government it wanted...just obey the 'health experts'...who openly call for a new world order.

...The article 'Hillsong - a Train Wreck' was a well written piece, as was 'The New Missional Gospel of Helps'. The article 'He Makes a Willing Slave' was beautiful, I had tears down my face... Thankyou so much again, God bless.

(T.R., NSW)

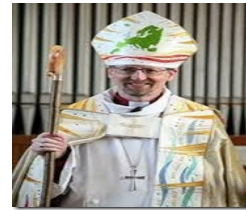
Editor's comment:

Recently I read an opinion piece from an 'anonymous vaccinated', who wrote: '*...The unvaccinated are the heroes of the last two years as they allowed us all to have a control group in the great experiment and highlight the shortcoming of the Covid vaccines. The unvaccinated...are the people we tried to mentally break, yet no one wants to talk about what we did to them and what they forced 'the science' to unveil...the waning immunity of the fully vaccinated had the same risk profile as others within society as the minority of the unvaccinated, yet we marked them for special persecution...we said they had not 'done the right thing for the greater good' by handing their bodies and medical autonomy over to the State. Many of the so-called health experts and political leaders in Australia admitted the goal was to make life almost unlivable for the unvaccinated,...we let ourselves be tricked into believing that going into another ineffective lockdown would be the fault of the unvaccinated and not the fault of the toxic policy of ineffective vaccines...Lambie, Carr, Chant, Andrews, McGowan, Gunner, and the other cast of hundreds in prominent roles need to be held to account for vilifying the unvaccinated in public and fueling angry social media mobs...So if mandates ever return for Covid or any other disease or virus, hopefully, more of us will be awake and see the rising authoritarianism that has no concern for our well-being and is more about power and control...*'

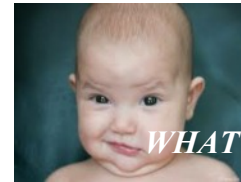
Certainly we are in confused and deceptive times. However, perhaps it best we not immerse ourselves too much in political events to the detriment of more important Bible reading and study. Keep tabs on events but keep it to a minimum? We need discernment in the way the world operates but more than ever need to be strengthened by the Word and prayer in these confused times.

Thanks for your strong teaching in your publication, 'Diakrisis'. Blessings.
(H.C. NSW)

What is a Woman?



The Church of England has refused to offer up a definition of a woman, arguing that recent developments required 'additional care' when attempting to define the word. 'There is no official definition, which reflects the fact that until fairly recently definitions of this kind were thought to be self-evident, as reflected in the marriage liturgy', Senior Bishop Right Reverend Robert Innes [pictured] said when asked to define the word (GB News). (Apostasy Alert 13/7)



Editor's Comments:

WHAT? Common sense in biology is being thrown out the door? We could here name the distinctive body parts of a woman that biologically differ from a man, but that seems to aggravate those who don't want common sense?

How far are religious leaders now from scripture? Yet Genesis and First Timothy should be enough to distinguish a 'woman' from a 'man'. God created the distinct order of 'man first, then woman' (1Tim.2:13; Gen.2:22,23); the woman being the 'weaker vessel' (1Pet.3:7). The woman was tempted first in sin (3:1-6), with judgement to both the man and woman, but separate to her 'husband' the woman would have pain in childbirth (Gen.3:15; 1Tim.2:15), something no man has ever experienced.

The drive for inclusivism, equality and redefining norms is arguably a humanistic sister of the modern and popular religious ecumenical movement.

Australia: Religion/Church Statistics Still Falling

No religion 38.4%
Catholic 20.0%; Anglican 9.8%; Uniting Church 2.6%; Eastern Orthodox 2.1%;
Presbyterian & Reformed 1.6%; Baptist 1.4%; Pentecostal 1.0%; Lutheran 0.6%;
Other Protestant 0.4%
Islam 3.2%; Hinduism 2.7%; Buddhism 2.4%; Sikhism 0.8%
(SBS Australian Census Explorer 2021)

True Happiness

'Christians might avoid much trouble if they would believe God is able to make them happy without anything else. God has been depriving me of one blessing after another; but as every one was removed, He has come in and filled up its place; and now, when I'm a cripple, and not able to move, I am happier than ever I was in my life before, or ever expect to be. If I had believed this twenty years ago, I might have been spared much anxiety'.

(From Dr Edward Payson as quoted in 'String of Pearls' (P.100; Ev. Press) by Richard Brooks)

Where Is The Healing?



Recently ‘pastor’ Beni Johnson, (the 67 year old wife of Bill Johnson, pastor of Bethel Church in the U.S.), died after years of battling breast cancer. In March 2018 she was diagnosed with cancer and had two lumps removed and had ‘*holistic treatments*’. Despite ‘claiming’ healing, the cancer spread.

Previously in April 2017, during a worship service, Beni’s daughter-in-law, Jenn, had *declared* a ‘*cancer free zone*’. Beni Johnson stated: ‘*...I close my eyes...And I was looking around Heaven...I noticed my brother-in-law Jim and my father-in-law Bill’s dad standing on the edge of Heaven and they are looking down...both died from cancer. I said, Holy Spirit, Jesus...Why are they standing and looking down, and then Jenn said ‘we declare healing over cancer”*’.

Concerning treatments, Beni stated ‘*I’ve asked why?...I have not focused on the Y as much as restoring my body. Many of the treatments...are fixing me on the cellular level, filling my cells and immune system with the strength it needs*’.

In ‘*Diakrisis*’ March/April 2020 we exposed Bill Johnson, his false teaching and a failed ‘raising from the dead’ of a two year old girl who had suddenly died. Johnson had the church pray for a ‘resurrection’ of her body. Days after the death, Johnson stated: ‘*Jesus commanded his followers to raise the dead...Her time here is not done...it is our time to...with confidence wield what King Jesus paid for. It’s time for her to come to life...We have a biblical precedent, Jesus raised the dead!...John 11:40...Matthew 10...He gives us the ability to carry out His mission...The reason Jesus raised the dead is because not everyone dies in God’s timing...He would interrupt that process that some would just call the sovereignty of God...He’d raise the little girl...[or] the adult person from the dead*’.

Assessment

We weep when we see such false hope and false teaching which has shipwrecked many! The testimonies from this Bethel church are numerous.

Jesus did these signs Himself and then gave authority *to whom He chose* (with ‘*signs of an Apostle*’ - 2Cor.12:12). Because Jesus raised the dead and healed incurable diseases, this does not give us ‘*a biblical precedent*’ to do the same. Where is Johnson’s logic in scripture? And what sheer arrogance in the sight of a sovereign God to say ‘*her time here is not done...its time for her to come to life...not everyone dies in God’s timing...*’ Since when do people not die in God’s timing? ‘*It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment*’ (Heb.9:17). Does God ‘*interrupt that process that some would just call the sovereignty of God*’? Such doctrine is woeful and arguably close to blasphemy.

In regard to the raising of the dead, the purpose of *Jesus resurrection was not to give us power to raise the dead*. The ‘*glory of God*’ in Jn.11:40 depicts *Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, not us doing this*. And Matthew 10:8 is referring to ‘*these twelve Jesus sent forth...*’ (vs.5) - whom He authenticated and ordained!

The question must be asked - why, despite all their ‘faith’, was this raising from the dead unsuccessful? And why not similarly raise Beni from the dead since they

The person sitting on this ‘*great white throne*’ is Jesus Christ, the same who sits upon a white cloud and rides a white horse (14:14; 19:11). Although both God and Jesus share the throne, all judgement has been delivered to Christ (Jn.5:22; Acts 10:42).

The figurative description (see similar in 12:6; 16:20) of ‘*the earth and the heaven fled away*’ shows the grandeur, the majesty and the fearsome solemnity of standing before a holy and righteous God in judgement. This judgement is pictured also in Daniel chapter 7 with the ‘*Ancient of Days*’ vividly described and ‘*the books opened*’ (vs.9-11).

The ‘*dead, small and great, stand before God*’ as well as the *dead in the sea*, alone as individuals with no barrister or defence or appeal in the sight of a God that has conquered all sin, all enemies and sees all.

‘*The books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life*’. The ‘*books*’ here appear to be that which contain the names of all living or dead (Dan.7:10) and mentioned in several places as containing a history of conscience and works (Ps.56:8; 139:16). The ‘*book of life*’ appears to contain the names of the elect who have been given eternal life (Rev.3:5; Phil.4:3; Dan.12:1) and synonymous with ‘*the Lambs book of life*’ (Rev.13:8; 21:27).

From these books ‘*the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books*’. This judgement will be ‘*according to works*’, some greater, some lesser (Lk.12:47,48), but all works which can never achieve salvation (Rom.4:1-6; Eph.2:8,9). Ultimately God shall judge by Jesus Christ according to the Gospel (Rom.2:16). Those who do not ‘*know Jesus Christ*’ and ‘*obey the Gospel...shall be punished with everlasting destruction...*’ (2Thess.1:8,9).

‘*Death and hell [Hades] were cast into the Lake of fire. This is the second death*’. ‘*Death*’, the ‘*last enemy*’ (1Cor.15:26) and ‘*Hell*’ (‘*Hades*’) are here personified and deliver up all. There has been a ‘*thousand years*’ reign of Christ, and Satan was bound between two resurrections. The unsaved here are judged in a ‘*second death*’, being the ‘*Lake of Fire*’. This is one of the most frightening judgements in scripture. The descriptions of this eternal fiery place are numerous and graphic. This ‘*Hell*’ (the ‘*Lake of Fire*’ is synonymous with the ‘*gehenna*’ Hell) is a place where the ‘*fire is never quenched*’ and ‘*the worm dies not*’ (Mk.9:43,45,47). On the day of judgement bodies of unbelievers are united with their souls and ‘*cast into*’ this place. Here there is punishment, not a place where sin is paid for; sin can only be paid for by Jesus Christ on the cross (Heb.9:26-28).

The Lake of Fire will exist to demonstrate God’s wrath and for the glory of God (Rom.9:22,23). Some say that because it is out of time or space that the ‘*fire*’ would not be literal, but nevertheless, it will be a ‘*fire*’ of sorts and that with *torment*. It is a place of separation from God with no respite. The lie of Satan ‘*you shall not surely die*’ will be forever judged and justice done.

The only way to escape this judgement is to be found in the ‘*book of life*’ of which God has promised to ‘*not blot out*’ (Rev.3:5) - when we receive the true Gospel, to believe and confess Jesus Christ as Lord of all, and that God has sent Christ to satisfy His justice with a finished sacrifice as a substitute for our sins.

Terry Arnold

appears to be a *region* of Gog. Ezekiel wrote about Gog as a person and Magog as the name of the land or the people of that land (Ezek.chs.38,39). The first century historian, Josephus, stated that Magog represented the Scythians, a race that spread over what is now southern Russia. Many modern commentators see Gog and Magog as a northern kingdom including Russia.

However, although some imagery may be borrowed from Ezekial, Ezekiel chapters 38,39 and Revelation 20:8 have completely different outcomes. This author tends to link the two names Gog and Magog by context with the plural 'nations' and the vastness of 'the four quarters of the earth' - to be a generalisation and a figure of speech for the many, at that time, rebellious nations of the earth. This is also in view of the expressions 'the number of whom is as the sand of the sea' (Gen.22:17; 32:12; 41:49; Josh.11:4; Jdg 7:12; 1Sam.13:5; 2Sam.17:11; 1Kngs 4:20,29; Ps.78:27; Is.10:22; Jer.33:22; Hos.1:10; Rom.9:27; Heb.11:12); and the 'breadth of the earth' (Job 38:18).

These nations will be '**gathered together**' for one last '**battle**' which will culminate in them '**compassing the camp of the saints, and the beloved city**'. The '**beloved city**' here is no doubt Jerusalem (Rev.3:12; Heb.12:22; Is.24:23; Mic.4:7; Zech.14:9-11). God sends '**fire...out of heaven**' which '**devours**' ('*katestheo*' - 'eats up') the rebels.

This final rebellion should not surprise the reader when one considers the Pharaoh of old who even after seeing the hand of God directly in signs and wonders, still persisted in a final act of rebellion. Added to this it must be remembered that those who go into the millennium will still possess sinful natures and are thus still capable of resistance against God.

Vs.10 'And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever'.

The Devil now joins the '*beast and the false prophet*' who have already been in the Lake of Fire for a *thousand years* (19:20). Arguably this time period adds to the evidence that this final Hell is a lasting eternal non extinguishable fire of sorts (for further proofs see '*Diakrisis*' Sept/Oct 2016, '*Hades, Sheol, Lake of Fire, the Abyss and 'Soul Sleep'*', P.7-12). Indeed, the text continues describing a state of being '**tormented day and night for ever and ever**'.

Vs.11-15 'And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire'.

had 'authority' to 'declare' such things? The reason why Jesus raised people from the dead or healed people was for a distinctive purpose which has been lost today in the signs and wonders movement. These signs were to *prove the Messiahship of Christ alone*. '*And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples...these are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ...*' (Jn.20:30,31); '*...Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs...*' (Acts 2:22). John the Baptist asked for *proof of Christ being the Messiah* and the reply was: '*in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, 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.7:18-22). This was *proof* of the same *prophecies* from Isaiah 35:5,6 and 61:1,2! Jesus gave the same power to his Apostles in '*signs of an Apostle...in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds*' (2Cor.12:12).

Johnson's belief is that '*God...already purchased their healing...Were the stripes He bore only for certain illnesses?...When He bore stripes in His body He made a payment for our miracle...You can't decide not to buy something after you've already bought it*'. Again, this logic is not in scripture, which *never says Jesus died for our bodily healing* (see our website www.taministries.net and in '*Articles*' see 'Healing' section, especially '*By His Stripes We Are Healed?*').

Johnson and those who 'claim' healings are *counterfeits of the real thing*. Bill Johnson has stated '*Don't pray; declare. This is a time, this is an open Heaven right here and we're calling down the healing power of Jesus over cancer*'.

Compare such claims of healing today with this from Matthew's Gospel alone: 1. Jesus and the apostles healed '*All*' & '*Every*' (Matt.4:23,24; 8:16; 9:35; 10:1; 12:15...). 2. The healings were *Instant* ('*immediately*' Matt.8:3; 20:34...). 3. The healings were *Complete* (Matt.12:13,15 - '*whole*'; 14:36 - '*perfectly whole*'; 15:28). 4. The healings were *At Will* (Matt.8:3...). 5. They healed incurable *Organic Diseases* (Matt.4:23,24; 9:35; 15:30...). Are AIDS and Down Syndrome healed today? The answer is NO.

The church is mocked by these false and failed signs and wonders; but worse, the *true Gospel is lost* in this strange fire of signs and 'zeal without knowledge'.

Lastly, what of *the hypocrisy*? Bill Johnson now says Beni is '*healthy and free*'! But that is what he and his Bethel church teaches for *this life*. Why is their theology not working for them? Both Johnsons wear glasses; Johnson's father, former pastor of Bethel, died in 2004 following church-wide prayer for his healing, and key elders have died similarly. Johnson's son on the senior leadership team, is 85-90% deaf in both ears. Where are the documented healings? This hypocrisy is not just with Bethel but with *all Pentecostals who claim healing in the same way*.

Many Christians excuse such leaders as just 'deceived', rather than *deceivers* who add to the scriptures and 'make merchandise of God's people' (2Pet.2:3)? Are they not preaching and teaching 'another jesus' and 'another gospel' (2Cor.11:4; Gal.1:6-9)?

Terry Arnold (Facts extracted from *Christian Post* and *Bethel* articles)

The Martyrdom of Ignatius of Antioch

Ignatius of Antioch was an early church Father, Bishop of Antioch. He wrote epistles on ecclesiology, the sacraments, the role of bishops and the deity of Christ. He was martyred while on his way to Rome. He stated: *'From Syria even unto Rome I fight with beasts, both by land and sea, both by night and day, being bound to ten leopards, I mean a band of soldiers...'* (1) Historians believe that while on route he was unusually allowed to meet with Christian congregations. He wrote six letters to churches and one to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna. The church historian, Eusebius, dates his martyrdom to about 108 AD. After death by being thrown to the lions, his remains were carried back to Antioch by his companions. (In 1637 Antioch was captured and the remains were sent back to Rome).

In the *'Martyrdom of Ignatius'* we read: *'Trajan pronounced sentence as follows: 'We command that Ignatius, who affirms that he carries about within him Him that was crucified, be bound by soldiers, and carried to the great [city] Rome, there to be devoured by the beasts, for the gratification of the people'. When the holy martyr heard this sentence, he cried out with joy, 'I thank thee, O Lord, that Thou hast vouchsafed to honour me with a perfect love towards Thee, and hast made me to be bound with iron chains, like Thy Apostle Paul.'. Having spoken thus, he then, with delight, clasped the chains about him; and when he had first prayed for the Church, and commended it with tears to the Lord, he was hurried away by the savage cruelty of the soldiers, like a distinguished ram the leader of a goodly flock, that he might be carried to Rome, there to furnish food to the bloodthirsty beasts...For only the harder portions of his holy remains were left, which were conveyed to Antioch and wrapped in linen, as an inestimable treasure left to the holy Church by the grace which was in the martyr'.*

In the third epistle by Ignatius he himself wrote: *'...Christianity is great when the world hateth it...I write to all the Churches, and declare to all men, that I willingly die for the sake of God, if so be that ye hinder me not. I entreat of you not to be [affected] towards me with a love which is unseasonable. Leave me to become [the prey of] the beasts, that by their means I may be accounted worthy of God. I am the wheat of God, and by the teeth of the beasts I shall be ground, that I may be found the pure bread of God. Provoke ye greatly the wild beasts, that they may be for me a grave, and may leave nothing of my body, in order that, when I have fallen asleep, I may not be a burden upon any one. Then shall I be in truth a disciple of Jesus Christ, when the world seeth not even my body...I rejoice in the beasts which are prepared for me, and I pray that they may in haste be found for me; and I will provoke them speedily to devour me, and not be as those which are afraid of some other men, and will not approach them: even should they not be willing to approach me, I will go with violence...fire, and the cross, and the beasts that are prepared, cutting off of the limbs, and scattering of the hones, and crushing of the whole body, harsh torments of the devil - let these come upon me, but only let me be accounted worthy of Jesus Christ'.*

(1) Ignatius to the Romans Chapter 5.

The former group (described in verse 4) is *'the first resurrection'* for those who are called *'blessed and holy'*. They shall serve as *'priests of God and of Christ'* (Rev.1:6 cp.22:3) and will be as *'kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth'* (5:10) for *'a thousand years'* (vs.6). This will initially be a time of righteousness, peace and joy (Is.12:3,4; 32:7; 61:3,7). (Note the phrase *'of God and of Christ'* shows the oneness and the deity of both beings).

The latter group will be judged and suffer the *'second death'* - the Lake of Fire (vs.14,15). Both resurrections here are bodily but separated by 1,000 years.

Vs.7-9 *'And when the thousand years are expired [finished], Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, [the] Gog and [the] Magog, to gather them together to [the] battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them'.*

There are commentators over the centuries who have refused to see any 'literal' interpretation here. An example of this follows: *'How can this bear any kind of literal interpretation? Satan is bound a thousand years, and the earth is in peace; righteousness flourishes, and Jesus Christ alone reigns. This state of things may continue for ever if the imprisonment of Satan be continued. Satan, however, is loosed at the end of the thousand years, and goes out and deceives the nations, and peace is banished from the face of the earth, and a most dreadful war takes place, etc., etc. These can be only symbolical representations, utterly incapable of the sense generally put upon them'* (Clark).

Yet 'sense' we must make of it! What is so nonsensical about the grammar of 'Satan', 'a thousand years', an earth of 'peace and righteousness' under the 'reign' of Christ? How is it that Satan cannot be literally 'loosed' to 'deceive the nations' in a final rebellion? The details of how this might occur we are not given, but that does not detract from the *literal sense* of a final rebellion of which the text clearly states. Satan is real, the reign of Christ is real, the battle is real, the 'beloved city' is mentioned in other places as real, and the 'fire from God' is real and used by God in numerous places in both the Old and New Testament. If all is to be symbolic or spiritualised then what of the inconsistency of other places where often the same expressions are taken as literal? Why discard the *literal sense* of the passage for a symbolism that relies more on the interpreter?

'When the thousand years are expired' [literally *'after the thousand years'*. See *'Diakrisis'* July/Aug Part 15, for apologetics for Millennialism] - shows a definite time period in which 'after' Satan will be released ('loosed') from 'his prison' ('phularke'), 'prison' here being by context the same as the 'pit' (vs.1-3).

Satan will then one last time *'go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, [the] Gog and [the] Magog'*.

The identities of the 'Gog' and the 'Magog' have been the subject of much discussion. Gog was a son of Japheth (Gen.10:2; 1Chr.1:5) and the name of a people descending from him or the country inhabited by that people and of which Gog was a king (Ezek.38:2; 39:1, 6). Magog is transliterated from the Hebrew and

The saints stand in awe and sing in worship to a majestic holy God, but a God of wrath who has warned of such judgements (Joel 2:28-32; Zech.14:1; Mal.4:1-5).

In **Part 11** (chapter 16 - *Diakrisis* November/December 2021) the seven angels, by the authority of God, pour out the final vial (bowl) judgements upon the earth. God dries up the Euphrates to bring his enemies to a final battle. The will of God upon the earth will be *'done'*. The unrepentant depravity of man is shown.

In **Part 12** (chapter 17 - *Diakrisis* January/February 2022) there is a parenthesis between chapter 16 and 18, pausing to look at what happens during the 7th vial (bowl) judgement. It is a description of the end time world wide false religion.

In **Part 13** (Chapter 18 - *Diakrisis* March/April 2022) is a further description of the 7th vial (bowl) judgement and the commercial aspect of a future city called Babylon which is destroyed. This description matches Old Testament prophecies, dual prophecies both for the Babylon of old and the one described in Revelation.

In **Part 14** (Chapter 19 - *Diakrisis* May/June 2022) is a most terrifying chapter with God judging the nations at the battle of Armageddon and avenging the righteous; the antichrist and false prophet are cast into the Lake of Fire, all necessary judgements with the triumphant return and reign of Christ. But it also includes the marriage supper of the Lamb and a crescendo of praise and worship in Heaven. This fearsome chapter should be a warning to the unrepentant. To the believer who has received Christ as Lord and Saviour, the admonition is to fear God and to worship Him in spirit and in truth!

In **Part 15** (Chapter 20:1-4 *Diakrisis* July/August 2022) we looked at the issue of the Millennium, whether a literal or figurative '1,000 years'. The issue is one of *hermeneutics* - how we *interpret* scripture. The *literal grammatical* method has many proofs and is arguably more logical and consistent with scripture.

There is much detail in this chapter which describes the binding of Satan, the millennial reign of Christ, a short final rebellion, and the final judgement of the lost and of Satan.

Part 16 Chapter 20:5-15

Vs.5,6 'But [and] the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: on such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years'.

'The rest of the dead lived not again' are by context shown to be not the saints and martyrs who are reigning with Christ (vs.4), but the damned who do **'not come to life until the thousand years is finished'**. There are two resurrections in view here - one, **'the resurrection of life'** and the **'resurrection of damnation'** (Jn.5:28,29), prior to the **'second death'** in eternal Hell.

When To Leave / When Not To Leave a Church

It has always been a paradox that I have a hatred for 'church hopping', so prevalent today, yet in many writings have urged people to leave false churches. I confess I may be biased in this article, having been an elder and pastoring for decades, with rather personal convictions which I would ask the reader to consider.

How To Find a Church

Before joining or leaving a church it must be stated how one should find a church. It may be that when first being drawn to seek, then being saved one joins a church or meets Christians to fellowship with, yet later when one moves from milk to the meat of the Word, one finds that their first church is simply not as Biblical as should be.

In whatever situation where one needs to find a church, there are suggested guidelines to be looked at. Too often this author hears from people who for various reasons have begun attending a new church and then within a short time realise it is far from what they could regularly attend. Some have seen the errors of a theological system, an ecumenical or Pentecostal/Charismatic church, or a legalistic or unhealthy church, and yet have begun attending another church with similar teaching and practice. Sadly, without first having examined the church more closely, they suffer more upset.

Put simply, it is imperative to examine any church before one attends! That at least means looking at the church's website for a 'Statement of Faith' as to what they believe, listening to a sermon or two, and discerning signs that may show what the doctrine is. This is not easy as most churches do not have a Statement of Faith, or it is a shallow one intending to be ecumenical and accepting of many differing views. In many cases it is necessary to dig deeper for information. It is recommended that one contacts the pastor and asks the questions that need to be answered. Look for honest answers, humility and discernment in doctrine.

When Not To Leave a Church

It is not time to leave a church when we have been offended or sinned against by someone, or someone else who has been offended and we take on board their offense. Scripture has a Godly way of dealing with that *within the fellowship* (Matt.18). Matthew 18 gives the steps to reconcile offenses, first with the person, then with witnesses, and finally with the church itself. Personally I have found that a solid dose of prayer often turns away the necessity to even begin Matthew 18. But to leave without completion of Matthew 18 is often a sign of immaturity which will probably show up at the next place at another time.

Paul never told the Corinthians to leave the church when there were sins in the fellowship. We are rather to *'restore'* any person *'in meekness'* (Gal.6:1,2). Personal conflicts are not good reasons to leave, since Scripture give clear methods of working such out (Matt.5:23,24).

A Fresh Look At Revelation - Part 16

A hard lesson I learned in church life and then shepherding was to know ‘*which hills to die on*’ and ‘*which fires to put out*’. Some offenses or controversies are not worth a protracted battle. Some things die out in a short time and are best left. From a pastor’s view serious ‘fires’ that would divide the body of the local church do require active attention and the sheep need protecting.

However, too often surface issues, social issues and church practices are fought over rather than addressing the core issues of scripture. Things that affect the Gospel and the all sufficiency of scripture are left while dying on a hill with opinions that will really not affect the soul of a person in eternity. Any striving of words to ‘*no profit*’ is to ‘*the subverting [ruin] of the hearers*’ (2Tim.2:14-16).

The reason a person leaves should be firstly *doctrinal*. Let any such division be a serious doctrine, not a non essential. Most church splits this author has seen have not been about doctrine, but selfish ambitions and preferences with little *regard for God’s sheep as a whole*. Many of these could be avoided if members would regard the differences between personal *preferences* and scriptural *commands*. We must exercise spiritual discernment and distinguish between the important (doctrines) and the less important (preferences). We must not major on ‘*doubtful disputations*’ (Rom.14). We are not free to impose our conscience as a law upon others in areas of Christian liberty.

Finally, *it is a good reason not to leave* if the Gospel is being preached as Christ’s free gift of grace with nothing of ourselves, not any works, not anything man can do except believe, trusting in God’s righteousness in Christ who died for our sins and rose for our justification (Jn.1:12,13; Eph.2:8,9; Rom.4).

When To Leave a Church

If the gospel preached is more about what man can do, then leave. If bodily healing, prosperity, one’s potential or any other psychology is added, then leave.

If a church is simply not accepting and preaching the scriptures as *inspired* and *all sufficient*, then leave. Man’s wisdom, psychology and stories may tickle ears but greatly dishonour the Lord (2Tim.4:3,4).

If a leadership has members who are clearly not qualified according to scripture (1Tim.3 & Tit.1), then leave. If any issue is with an elder then scripture has a definitive way to approach an elder (see 1Tim.5:19,20). However, qualified elders and leaders must be treated with respect and submission, not because of their persons but because of their giftings and the fact that they have been appointed by God Himself (Heb.13:7,17; 1Pet.5:5).

In all these instances, one should approach the pastoring elder to confirm if one has discerned any issue correctly. Many times this author has seen quick judgements and decisions made without understanding that the issue was already being dealt with, or other circumstances had not been taken into account.

How To Leave a Church

When one is considering leaving a church, firstly pray, then wait in prayer,

In **Part 1** (chapters 1-4 - *Diakrisis* July/August 2019) the intent was to show that the book of Revelation *is to be understood* at least as far as *what John saw and described*. *What is figurative and what is literal can be determined by the language and referencing to other scriptures* (‘scripture interprets scripture’).

The *timing and the order of events* in the first three chapters are presented as events in John’s day *with a divide in time and order at chapter 4* (see 1:19).

In **Part 2** (chapters 4,5 - *Diakrisis* September/October 2019) we continued to explore *what is ‘literal’ or ‘figurative’ and why*. This was done by searching the same *symbols, signs and wording* elsewhere.

In **Part 3** (chapters 6-8 - *Diakrisis* July/August 2020) we saw the first of three distinct judgements beginning with seven ‘*seals*’ (ch.6), all increasing in intensity.

In **Part 4** (chapters 8,9 - *Diakrisis* September/October 2020) we saw the second set of seven judgements begin the *Trumpet Judgements* and an increasing intensity in three last graphic ‘*woes*’. A perfect God has a perfect judgement!

In **Part 5** (chapters 9,10 - *Diakrisis* November/December 2020) - The sixth trumpet judgement brings a more severe judgement - *death*. Over half the earth’s population is destroyed in divine judgements! Those left alive are unrepentant.

In **Part 6** (chapter 11 - *Diakrisis* January/February 2021) - the ‘two witnesses’ preach and the antichrist arises amidst signs and wonders, the likes of which have never been seen before since the first coming of Christ.

In **Part 7** (Chapter 12 - *Diakrisis* March/April 2021) - Symbols, signs and figurative language refer to Israel and the great battle between God and evil. The war in Heaven becomes a war on earth against God’s elect nation and his saints.

In **Part 8** (Chapter 13 - *Diakrisis* May/June 2021) - The antichrist and the false prophet arise with their ‘mark of the beast’. They are given power by God to do great signs and wonders. Authority is given to the beast to slaughter the saints. There will be false worship of the beast. Prophecy will reach a climax...

In **Part 9** (Chapter 14 - *Diakrisis* July/August 2021) - Chapters 12-14 are an interlude before returning to the judgements. A literal 144,000 Jewish evangelists from the *tribes of Israel* (7:4-8) preach a final ‘*everlasting Gospel*’ to the whole world. Their redemption then comes with worship and singing a ‘*new song*’ (vs.8,9). Armageddon is foreshadowed with God’s fury to be finally poured out in full.

In **Part 10** (chapter 15 - *Diakrisis* September/October 2021) we see an introduction to the final horrific ‘*vial*’ (bowl) judgements. The angels stand ready.

lungs instantly and change numerous organs in the body to survive. At least two of the same fish (a male and female) would have to undergo the same miracles at precisely the same place and time for the fish to reproduce.

Theory: The evolution of the horse goes back as far as 65 million years.

Fact: This theory exists on paper only by arranging drawings of animals, including some that are now extinct, side-by-side.

‘Evolution’ is a *theory* that says there was an unfathomable random chance of life evolving from materials that were supposed to be always there. But who put the original materials there? How can *nothing working on nothing by nothing, through nothing, for nothing, create everything!*

The information in DNA the size of a pinhead would fill a stack of books 500 times the distance from the earth to moon. The molecules of DNA contain threads with codes with *exacting* reproducible information - even for such characteristics as hair shade and colour. The information is programmed with a *language* with *instructions for copying*.

The human brain *‘as far as we know, is the most complex and orderly arrangement of matter in the universe’* (Isaac Asimov, biochemist Smithsonian Institute Journal, 6/70).

Did all this come from the ‘slime’ or the ocean by ‘chance’? At the molecular level evolution is a nonsensical theory. At the logical level the probability is impossible! *‘The chance that higher life forms might have emerged in this way is comparable with the chance that a tornado sweeping through a junk yard might assemble a Boeing 747 from the materials therein’*. (Sir Fred Hoyle, Professor of Astronomy, Cambridge University).

The order and laws that have been set in nature and hold everything together show a creator’s mind rather than chaos. If the creation in Genesis is just a myth, as many believe, then how do we account for the Bible matching historical accounts of so many events that follow - with a flood and in medicine, geography, astronomy? And what of the prophecies that have told the future with 100% accuracy and continue to be fulfilled? Again, it shows a creator’s mind and a Word that could only have been written by the One who was there in creation - God Himself. Also true is His Gospel - that man has sinned, broken His laws and needs to be redeemed with a perfect sacrifice to enter His holy and perfect Heaven. God exists and His account of creation is true; so is Heaven, Hell and eternity. But first, let us believe God at His word beginning with His creation...

‘In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth’ (Genesis 1:1).

‘For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast’ (Psalm 33:9).

‘For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they [mankind] are without excuse’ (Romans 1:20).

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checking one’s own heart and asking for wisdom (James 1:5; Ps.139:23,24). Prayer can often take the offense away or change our own hearts. *‘The discretion of a man defers his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression’* (Pr.19:11). Any decision to leave should be slow rather than hasty. Don’t talk to others about it except perhaps to a trusted mature Christian and the pastoring elder. Much division is sown when people discuss their hurts or feelings and this is no less than sinful gossip.

When leaving a church make the move with as less conflict and upset as possible, considering the unity of the fellowship and the body which is Christ’s. Do everything possible to resolve any leftover conflicts, both in one’s own heart and also in the lives of others. Show patience, meekness and preference for others rather than self (2Tim.2:24,25; Phil.2:3). *‘Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath...’* (James 1:19). Much of this comes down to a love for one another and a willingness to preserve unity in the bond of peace (Eph.4:1-3) and to count others in the fellowship as more important than yourself (Phil.2:3).

It is imperative that before leaving one talks with the pastoring elder. This is something this author has found to be lacking on many occasions. Little consideration is given to pastoring elders who suffer disappointment and hurt when someone suddenly just goes missing, for it is they who *‘...watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief...’* (Heb.13:17).

Some excuses for leaving a church may be valid but the problem too often is *the way or how it is commonly addressed*. Too many people leave without saying anything or giving any opportunity to rectify the problem. This behaviour shows a lack of regard for the leadership and the local body of Christ as a whole as well as a lack of accountability and discipline. One should not quickly exit the local family of God, leaving them with the problem not addressed.

God’s View of His ‘Church’

How we stay in or leave a church will often depend on how we see the ‘church’, which is God’s ordained and divine institution. It is the place where Christ will discipline His saints (Matt.18), add souls to His church (Acts 2:47), and ordain leaders with gifts given by God (Acts 14:23; 20:17; 1Cor.12:28), and it is His means for the practice of preaching and studying His Word. In this local assembly we are to be committed to bearing one another’s burdens (Gal.6:2), to exhort one another (Heb.3:12-14), to assemble together (Acts 20:7; Heb.10:24,25) and to serve one another with whatever abilities we have (1Pet.4:10-11). The church is *‘the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth’* (1Tim.3:15) for the *glory of God* to be revealed (Eph.3:21; 5:27).

Do you have this high view of the church as God does? Christ loves His church; the church is His people, the called out sinners saved by grace alone.

(Some material extracted from a 2014 article by H.B. Charles)

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Overview of the Word ‘Gospel’

The Gospel is called:

‘**The Gospel of the kingdom**’ (Matt.4:23; 9:35; 24:14; Mk.1:14)

‘**The Gospel of the grace of God**’ (Acts 20:24)

‘**The everlasting Gospel**’ (Rev.14:6)

‘**The Gospel of God**’ (Rom.1:1; 15:16; 2Cor.11:7; 1Thess.2:2,8,9; 1Tim.1:11; 1Pet.4:17)

‘**The Gospel of his Son**’ and ‘**The Gospel of Jesus Christ**’ (Mk.1:1; Rom.1:8,16; 15:19,29; 1Cor.9:12,18; 2Cor.2:12; 4:4; 9:13; 10:14,16; Gal.1:7; Phil.1:27; 1Thess.3:2)

‘**The Gospel of peace**’ (Rom.10:15; Eph.6:15)

The Gospel is ‘**of the uncircumcision and the circumcision**’ (Gal.2:7)

The Gospel is ‘**hid to those who are lost**’ and ‘**who Satan has blinded their eyes**’ (2Cor.4:3,4)

The Gospel is about ‘**the cross of Christ**’ (1Cor.1:17) and His **death, burial and resurrection**, by *substitution* (‘**for our sin**’) (1Cor.15:2-4; 2Tim.2:8)

The Gospel brings the ‘**abolishment of death**’ and ‘**immortality**’ (2Tim.1:10)

The Gospel is ‘**the word of truth**’ (Eph.1:13; Col.1:5)

The Gospel is to be ‘**preached**’, ‘**published**’, ‘**spoken**’ and ‘**heard**’ (Matt.4:23; 9:35; 11:5; 26:13; Mk.1:14; 13:10; 14:9; 16:15; Lk.4:18; 7:22; 9:6; 20:1; Acts 8:25; 14:7,21; 15:7; 16:10; Rom.1:15; 10:15; 15:20; 1Cor.1:17; 9:14,16,18; 15:1; 2Cor.10:14; 11:7; Gal.1:11; 2:2; 4:13; Col.1:23; 1Thess.2:4,9; Heb.4:2; 1Pet.1:12,25; 4:6; Rev.14:6)

The Gospel is ‘**not to please men**’ (1Thess.2:4)

God uses ‘**afflictions**’ to ‘**further the Gospel**’ (Phil.1:12; 2Tim.1:8; Philem.1:13)

The Gospel is to be ‘**believed**’ with ‘**repentance**’ (Mk.1:15; Acts 15:7; Eph.1:13).

The Gospel is to be ‘**obeyed**’ (Rom.10:16; 2Thess.1:8; 1Pet.4:17)

The Gospel is ‘**the power of God to salvation to every one that believes**’ (Rom.1:16; Eph.1:13)

With the Gospel comes the ‘**sealing of the Holy Spirit**’ (Eph.1:13)

Our ‘**fellowship**’ is in the Gospel (Phil.1:5)

‘**The truth of the Gospel**’ continues to sanctify (Gal.2:5,14)

There is ‘**the hope of the gospel**’ (Col.1:23)

There are other false ‘**gospels**’ (2Cor.11:4; Gal.1:6,8; Gal.1:11)

We are to ‘**defend**’ and ‘**confirm**’ the Gospel (Phil.1:7,17).

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The Theory of Evolution

Primitive to Modern plants - link...Missing!

‘*Supposedly somewhere within the group called algae lay the sources of the higher plants, the vascular groups. Whatever these ancestors may have been, they seem to have been irrevocably lost in the vastness of time.*’

(Evolutionist, E. Olsen)

Amphibians to Reptiles - link...Missing!

‘*Unfortunately, not a single specimen of an appropriate reptilian ancestor is known prior to the appearance of true reptiles.*’ (Evolutionist, R.Carroll)

Single cells to Invertebrates - link...Missing!

‘*...Extensive searches by palaeontologists have failed to reveal the pre-Cambrian strata rich in fossils...which Darwin believed must somewhere exist.*’

(Evolutionist, R. Leakey)

Non-Flying mammals to Bats - link...Missing!

‘*Unfortunately no fossils have been found of animals ancestral to the bats.*’

(Evolutionist, R. Leakey)

Mammals to Reptiles - link...Missing!

‘*We have virtually nothing to help us link these creatures [Mammals] to any group of fossil reptiles.*’ (Evolutionist, David Attenborough)

Reptiles to Birds - link...Missing!

‘*The origin of birds is largely a matter of deduction. There is no fossil evidence of the stages through which the remarkable change from reptile to bird was achieved.*’ (Evolutionist, W. Stinton)

The Human Eye

‘*To suppose that the eye with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the correction of spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree.*’

(Charles Darwin, ‘*Origin of Species*’, Ch.6)

The Origin of Fishes

‘*The geological record has so far produced no evidence as to the origin of the fishes...*’. (J. Norman, assistant keeper, Dept. of Zoology, British Museum)

Theory: Land creatures evolved from sea inhabiting creatures.

Fact: All sea creatures die quickly out of water because they cannot breath air. None of the billions of fish caught each year have ever been observed to be evolving. To survive out of water, fish would need to develop perfectly completed