



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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Gospel Confusion Conference

God willing we will hold a conference on October 19th (Sat) in Sydney. The editor believes this will be the most important conference he would ever do!

Many vital aspects of the Gospel will be outlined, including exposure of the new modern gospels and why we are in danger of losing the true Gospel. See P.19 for details and more in the next edition of this newsletter.

Editor's Comment

What do we need to get into Heaven? What do we need to understand to be accepted into God's glory? What can we do that certifies us to enter Heaven?

What if one prays for hours each day? What if one has been baptised in a Bible teaching church? What if one is involved in evangelism and handing out tracts? What if one has degrees in Biblical studies and is accurate in doctrine? What if one has their theology in spiritual warfare and eschatology most biblical?...They know how to fight God's enemies, they know the correct view on the coming of the Lord, the rapture, tribulation and the millennium? What if one has cared for the poor all ones life, fed them, clothed them and even taught them about God?...

Do these things certify any to enter Heaven and face God in judgement? If so, then nearly every false religion, everyone in evangelical churches, the baptised, all the mother Theresa's of the world and the religious would be certified to enter Heaven. The problem is that to many such professors, even those who call him 'Lord, Lord', Jesus will say 'I never knew you' and He will send them to Hell (Matt.7:21-23)! We need a righteousness that exceeds all the knowledge, the strivings and works that men can attain to (Matt.5:20; Phil.3:9)!

What certificate of righteousness do we need to get into Heaven?

Today the Gospel has been widened so much to include cultural, social and political agendas. It has been widened to include what man can do. The latter is the beginning of a works gospel instead of a Gospel that requires faith *that God has to give* (Tit.3:5; 2Cor.11:15).

What do I need to be presented to God in a righteous state to enter a perfect sinless Heaven? What right attire do we need to attend the marriage supper of the lamb (Rev.19:7,8)? What is the 'certificate' acceptable to God to be accounted to stand in his Son's judgment and thus in the glory of the Father?

There is only one 'certificate' - a righteousness that is not of us sinful creatures, but one that is perfect and given by the One who sets the requirements for His kingdom. This righteousness is based on Christ, His life, His death, burial and resurrection. It is a perfect righteousness because of his sinless son's perfect sacrificial offering which propitiates, satisfies the Father's wrath on sin, and His anger upon the sinner (2Cor.5:21; Ps.7:11; 2Chron.6:36). This righteousness is miraculously imputed, credited, reckoned (Rom.4:3-9; Gal.3:6) to the 'ungodly' sinner below (Rom.4:5), when God begets them from above (Jn.3:3), and has made them willing by faith to believe in His son and what He has done for them.

This, His righteousness, is the core of the Gospel (Rom.1:17)! It is what must be sought by the sinner. It vanquishes all other religious righteousnesses (Is.64:6). It never solely is ours except it be God's (Phil.3:9). To that righteousness must the Gospel speak; in that righteousness we will find security; in that righteousness we must fight and live the sanctified life (Rom.6:13,18,19; Eph.4:24; 6:14; Phil.1:11; 1Tim.6:11,12; 2Tim.2:22); only in that righteousness will we stand in the judgement; and in that righteousness will we forever be in the presence of the righteous One (2Tim.4:8; 2Pet.3:13). It's a Gospel of the righteousness of One!

Terry Arnold

The Covid Lies We Were Told

In the early days of the Covid pandemic this ministry was criticised by some for presenting facts about the Covid narrative, the vaccination claims, and the mandates. We were told by some we were wrong in having ‘conspiracy’ theories, and that we were encouraging rejection of government laws.

We have always believed the Covid ‘pandemic’ was more a ‘plandemic’. Recent enquiries in several countries (and a muted one now in Australia) have revealed that the ‘conspiracies’ and facts presented by some at the time, and now by many more experts, are actually *proving to be true*.

Here are some of the falsities we were told:

False: *The vaccine would prevent people getting Covid; and (later) the vaccinated would not need to go to hospital.*

Truth: *Hospitals ended up with many vaccinated people with Covid.*

False: *The MRNA jabs are safe and effective; the MRNA does not enter the bloodstream or pass through the brain-blood barrier, and is not gene therapy.*

Truth: *From the beginning eminent doctors were refuting this and now it is more correctly labelled (by research and doctors) as ‘gene therapy’.*

False: *The vaccine would prevent transmission of Covid.*

Truth: In a recent European parliament inquiry into COVID, Janine Small, the President of International Developed Markets for Pfizer, revealed that the Pfizer vaccine injection was never tested to see if it would prevent transmission. Pfizer also knew about more than 1,000 deaths within 90 days of release of their product - information the FDA tried to block. The technology, not tested fully, was rolled out quickly so big pharma could get their injections to market in time. (Other drugs also could have been used but were shunned - the money was in the vaccine).

The truth is large numbers of the vaccinated got Covid, some more than once!

False: *The unvaccinated are a danger to the vaccinated.*

Truth: Debunked. This claim resulted in brutal criticisms and harsh treatment by government leaders and celebrities against those who refused vaccination.

False: *The enforced mandates save lives.*

Truth: The ‘take a job or lose your job’ laws resulted in dire consequences to the economy with thousands sacked from critical jobs and many still trying to get their jobs back. Most countries were driven by fear campaigns. Canada passed a law stating they would cancel bank accounts if people protested against the mandates. Churches and Bible colleges banned people who were not vaccinated. Klaus Schwab (*World Economic Forum*) in July 2022 stated ‘*no one is safe if not everyone is vaccinated*’. The mandates were proven to be a failure on several levels.

False: *Social distancing and lock downs save lives.*

Truth: *These laws did not stop the transmission* and were proven futile and damaging to societies. The loneliness, depression and suicide rates went through the roof...Education of children suffered. More deaths resulted when people were unable to access care for chronic diseases.

False: *Masks prevent infection.*

Truth: *Numerous studies showed this simply was ineffective.*

The data *during the 'pandemic'* (and put forward by this ministry) clearly showed COVID was *no more deadly than a severe flu* and well under any 'pandemic' level. That data includes data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics as well as Health department sources.

In 2019, the year before COVID, the seasonal flu killed 4,126. In 2020, 882 died from COVID and 2,287 from the flu. In 2021, 1,137 died from COVID and 2,073 from the flu. Deaths from the flu including COVID across the first two years of the so-called pandemic were right on the long-term average of 3,255. Where was the 'pandemic' with Covid?

The few million who sadly died in the Covid 'pandemic' did not compare with the Spanish flu (1918-19; *50-100 million people*); the Black Death (14th century, killed 30-60% of Europe's population; *40-70 million* died); and the AIDS virus (*35 million* died). Added to this, other diseases killing people such as heart diseases, cancer, suicides, outstripped Covid deaths by up to seven times ('*Diakrisis*' 2022, Jan/Feb). 99.9% of those infected with Covid had mild symptoms; 0.1% critical.

But the true narrative gets worse...medical practitioners were at one time de-registered for voicing concerns about the vaccine. Now the deaths associated with the vaccine are so much on the increase that even health practitioners and others are raising the alarm - their voices are yet to be heard loudly by the mainstream media. Deaths from cardiac events are up more than 10%, unexplained deaths up even more. Amongst the politicians, health authorities and the media there is a remnant of those raising the figures. Only 6 out of all the Australian politicians (about 220) are voicing their concerns for the facts to be taken seriously.

The Covid 'pandemic' was one of the greatest frauds inflicted upon humanity. Sadly many Christians bought the health and the media narrative. Arguably, the media's shareholders lined their pockets with tens of billions of dollars in windfall profits. The world now moves on towards the events of Revelation chapters 6-19. The evil in the fear campaigns and the controls arguably may have further prepared the way for a future antichrist to rule.

Terry Arnold

Megachurch Pastors Fall

Two Australian Pentecostal megachurch pastors have temporarily lost their ministry credentials following allegations that the pair engaged in an adulterous relationship. Corey Turner, global senior pastor of Neuma Church, confessed to having an affair with Stacey Hilliar, a female pastor within the same megachurch...Australian Christian Churches (formerly Assembly of God) President Wayne Alcorn...announced that Turner and Hilliar had lost their ministry credentials for a minimum of two years following an investigation and a personal confession from both parties...

(Christian Post, March 29, 2024)

Which ‘Grace’?

When speaking of the grace that saves a person from their sins, the process of how that grace is given and its efficacy (the power to produce a result), varies between theologies. All believe in a ‘Prevenient Grace’, a phrase used to explain grace given by God that *precedes the conversion* of a sinner having faith in Christ. This ‘Prevenient Grace’ enables them to come to Christ in faith.

The difference in the views mainly falls into two streams as to its efficacy - whether it is *resistible* or *effectual* to salvation (called by some ‘irresistible’). A grace that is resistible does not guarantee the sinner will be saved; if effectual, the sinner will be saved. The former is determined at least partly by man; the latter is effectually determined by God. One is synergistic (two parties); the other monergistic (one party).

The issue is thus - does man come to God for salvation with something of himself, his own will; or when God chooses and draws a man, does this cause him to effectually come and be raised up? One is said to be *resistible*, the other *effectual*.

Brief History

In the 4th century Pelagian Morgan (AD 354-420) developed the view that unsaved man had in and of himself capability with obedience and ‘free will’ to be saved. He put no difference between ‘free will’ possessed by Adam and Eve before the Fall, with their *enslaved wills* after the Fall. He denied original sin and any depravity or inability of man’s heart to achieve salvation.

Pelagius stated ‘*For his willing, therefore, and doing a good work, the praise belongs to man; or rather both to man, and to God who has bestowed on him the ‘capacity’ for his will and work, and who evermore by the help of His grace assists even this capacity*’. (1) The debate that ensued revolved around *sin, its effects from the Fall of Adam, and thus the ability or inability of man to affect his salvation*.

Augustine of Hippo (Nth Africa) was one of those who later refuted Pelagius works. (2) Augustine taught man’s nature is morally corrupted by sin in every part, complete freedom of the will was lost and man is rather a slave to sin, thus restricting a complete freedom to choose God’s righteousness and salvation in and of themselves. Augustine taught a preceding grace before man can be regenerated and choose Christ by faith. That work by God was *effectual*, in that if given prevenient grace, one would be saved and ‘raised up’.

By contrast, Pelagianism taught man has power within himself to will to choose or to reject Christ for salvation. Pelagius, and Coelestius after him, were condemned at the Cilician synod (AD 423), Antiochian (424) and the Councils of Ephesus (431) and Orange in 529. Yet Pelagianism spread to Palestine, Africa and Italy.

Continued next page >

(1) ‘*Treatise on the Grace of Christ, and Original Sin*’, Ch.5.

(2) Augustine in later life was arguably more hierarchal and less scriptural in other areas. The Roman church adopted many of his teachings, except his Doctrines of Grace. Rather they took a semi-Pelagian view.

Later a John Cassian with a 'semi Pelagian' view taught that not the whole person was affected by the fall and there remained a freedom in the soul; the person was not completely enslaved or 'dead' to being able to choose Christ; and God *assists* men with their wills to accept Christ as Saviour. Thus the salvation process is initially *synergistic* (man and God), not *monergistic* (God alone). This grace given could fail in attempting to save a person if the person rejected salvation.

This semi-Pelagian system was the father of a new Arminian system brought later by Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609). Arminius wrote: 'All unregenerate persons have the freedom of will, and a capability of resisting the Holy Spirit, of rejecting the proffered grace of God, of despising the counsel of God against themselves, of refusing to accept the gospel of grace, and of not opening to Him who knocks at the door of the heart...' (1)

Soon after Arminius died, his supporters (the 'Remonstrants'), began to disseminate his doctrines. In 1610 they drew up *five points* in opposition to the Doctrines of Grace which were already in several 'Confessions' of the day (the Belgium, Heidelberg, Church of England, etc). These five points broadly stated that God's election is based on God's foreknowledge and man's ability in free will and repentance; God's grace could be resisted totally; God might try to convert and fail; and there was possible loss of salvation after conversion.

This controversy led to the synod of Dort (1618-1619) which refuted all five points of this Arminianism. Later two major Confessions in more detail stated the same refutations in the 'Doctrines of Grace' - the Westminster Confession (1647) and the London Baptist Confession of (1689). Most early denominations were based on these Confessions.

The synod of Dort's five points of refutation years later were dubbed as 'Calvinism', because some quotes by Calvin were used, (yet Calvin had already been dead nearly 50 years before the Synod). The Synod of Dort rejected the teaching that the receiving of the grace of God was an act of man initially or that it was a synergistic work of man and God. The Synod repeated what was in many Confessions - that although man could resist the grace of God, nevertheless it was eventually 'effectual' - all those called, drawn would come and be raised up.

Thus there existed two streams of 'prevenient grace', one with an effectual call and drawing, the other with a resistible grace based partly on the will of man. Within the latter there arose three main descriptions.

Classical Arminian 'Prevenient Grace'

Classical Arminianism says that until the Gospel as the instrument by which God draws sinners to Himself is presented to a sinner, the sinner is in complete bondage to sin. The Holy Spirit works with the Gospel in teaching (John 6:45) and convicting (John 16:8), enabling the sinner to respond in saving faith to Christ. The Holy Spirit opens the heart (Acts 16:14) and mind (Luke 24:45) of the sinner, drawing the sinner to Christ (John 6:44, 12:32), and the sinner is then enabled to exercise his newly freed will in placing his faith in Christ for salvation.

(1) *'The Works of James Arminius'*, Vol.3. (Derby, Orton and Mulligan, 1853), 2: 497

This classical Arminian summary at first reads Biblical. However, what is often not stated is that the same position then also teaches that *the sinner may not actually comply and be saved. The decision is still left in the hands of the sinner.*

Particular Arminian ‘Prevenient Grace’

This position has degrees in the ‘drawing’ via prevenient grace, which again comes through the *instrument of the Gospel and an internal call* by God when the person hears the Gospel. God draws all men in a lesser sense and draws those who have the Gospel presented to them in a greater sense (‘Particular Prevenient Grace’). God has given all men a measure of depravity to be only a particular depravity and this by the atonement on the cross. Thus all people are not completely incapable of hearing and responding to the Gospel; rather, all people have *some ability* which the Gospel completely frees them to use in salvation. Again, *the decision is somewhat left in the hands of the sinner.*

Weslyan-Arminian ‘Prevenient Grace’

In this position, the atoning work of Christ has a universal prevenient grace that fully negates the depravity of man. Christ’s promises ‘all men’ to be drawn (John 12:32) and the ‘world’ is convicted (John 16:8). Prevenient Grace has been purchased by Christ’s work on the cross. This unlimited atonement they say is shown when Paul speaks of God giving those whom Christ died for ‘*all things*’ (Romans 8:32), thus there is a universal Prevenient Grace. However, this grace, although it counteracts our total deadness in sin, does not necessarily fully regenerate. Again, *much still depends on the sinner’s response to any such grace.*

What Do the Scriptures Teach?

What about the logic of these synergistic views? What is it about one person over another that they will be enabled or not enabled to freely choose salvation? The difference would be in the person and his *ability or non ability* to choose in and of himself. If that is the nature of free will, then it is like the roll of a dice as to whether the person makes the right decision. Prevenient grace supposedly neutralizes the will, making it unbiased toward good or evil. Then this restored ‘free will’ has a chance shot of making the right choice? But who in their free will would choose Hell over Heaven when God applies prevenient grace? Is God left waiting as only the possible author, not the finisher of any faith (Heb.12:2)?

All three positions and any offshoots of them ultimately show the Arminian position of a prevenient grace that convicts, calls, enables conversion, but *as possible only*, it being able to be accepted or resisted by man and his ‘free will’. Such a ‘Prevenient Grace’ and ‘Resistible Grace’ become synonyms.

All three positions above assume man is not completely morally depraved and ‘dead in sin’, is not a ‘slave of sin’, and that he has a power within himself to achieve by his ‘free will’, to decide for salvation. This ‘prevenient grace’ can fail.

How Morally Depraved and 'Dead' is Unsaved Man?

The scriptures teach that physical and *spiritual death* came to all from Adam (Rom.5:12-18; 1Cor.15:22). *'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?'* (Jer.17:9), and this even *'from the mothers womb'* (Ps.51:5). *'We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags'* (Is.66:6-8). *'There is none righteous, no, not one...none that understands...none that seeks after God. They are all...become unprofitable...none that does good, no, not one...'* (Rom.3:10-20).

How 'dead' are we that in the unsaved state we were *'by nature the children of wrath...dead in sins'* (Eph.2:2-5), our *'understanding was darkened'* and we were *'alienated from the life of God...because of the blindness of our hearts'* (Eph.4:18)? Added to this we had minds that Satan *'has blinded'* (2Cor.4:4); and so we must be *'made alive'* by God (Eph.2:5,8) and this *from above* (Jn.3:3,7) by the One who *'opens the heart'* (Acts 16:14). *'And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has he quickened [made alive] together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses'* (Col.2:13).

Unsaved man is a spiritual corpse with a radical moral depravity in the whole man!

What ability does unsaved man have of himself to choose Christ in salvation?

'The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be' (Rom.8:7,8); *'the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned'* (1Cor.2:14)? This is so because unsaved man is not 'free' but a 'slave' to sin (Jn.8:34; Rom.6:16-22) and 'by nature' a child 'of wrath' and 'disobedience' (Eph.2:2,3). One's will must be made willing!

Man does not just need a prevenient grace he can accept or reject by his own enslaved sinful will, but a prevenient grace that calls, draws and *regenerates, a grace that changes the will and raises the person up!*

Can man resist the prevenient grace of God? How effectual is it?

The answer is yes and no! Yes, all being 'dead in sin', 'blindness of heart', are already resisting! But when those who are drawn, grace is given so that any resistance is turned to a willingness. This person who *the Father gives to the Son will come and not be cast out* (Jn.6:37) and *they will be raised up* (vs.39,40). *'No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day'* (Jn.6:44).

Some pit John 12:32 against this John 6:44 above. In the former, Jesus said that when He is lifted from the earth, He will *'draw all men'* to Himself.

Firstly, the word 'men' is not in the original, so who is the 'all', since the scriptures (Jn.12:32 and 6:44) cannot contradict. The 'all' cannot be everyone in the world drawn to salvation otherwise all will be saved and *'raised up'* (Jn.6:44)!

Verse 46 of the same chapter 12 gives us a hint that this is referring to Jesus as a 'light unto the world' in what some call a 'general call'. Jesus will draw men from every 'kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation' (Rev.5:9).

However, John 6:44 rings loud and clear, and is hated by those who teach a resistible grace and thus God relies on man's free will. Hence many do gymnastics with this verse to make it not say what it says in plain language! Yet the verse summarised literally states that *not one has the power to come to Christ except on the condition that the Father has drawn that same person; then Christ promises to raise that same person up*. The verse is also backed by verses 37 and 39 which states the ones the Father gives *will come and not be cast out* (vs.37) and *none will fail and all will be raised* (vs.39)! Further, this work of God in verse 44 is repeated in verse 65: '*no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father*'.

Where is the resistance ending in a failure to be saved here because of mans ability in his will? Where is the possible failure of any prevenient grace here?

Conclusion

A prevenient grace that ultimately relies on man's ability gives man something he can 'boast' of (Eph.2:8,9)! To his credit he can respond when others would not? This view suspends the work God must do on man's will! It undermines many scriptures that describe grace as undeserved and 'of God', not of man (Jn.1:12,13; Eph.2:8,9). It rips apart the sovereign work of God in salvation according to Romans 8:28-30. It turns faith and repentance as God's work to be a work of man, when saving faith is a gift of God (Eph.2:8-10; Phil.1:29; 2Pet.1:1; 2Tim.2:24-26; Acts 5:31; 11:18)! Such forms of prevenient grace are a subtle form of pride which will not give all the glory to God for a grace that He gives which is *effectual*, life giving, and comes with *resurrection* power!

Charles Spurgeon in his autobiography testified '*I ascribe my change wholly to God*' and he preached likewise: '*Now the calling of the Holy Spirit is without any regard to any merit in us...I see nothing whatever that could have merited such grace...By nature men are said to be dead in sin. If the Holy Spirit quickens, it cannot be because of any power in the dead man, or any merit in them, for they are dead, corrupt and rotten in the grave of their sin. If then the Holy Spirit says, 'come forth and live'...it must be for some reason in His own mind, not in us. Therefore know ye this, that we all stand upon a level; we have none of anything that we can stand to recommend to God; and if the Spirit shall choose to operate in our hearts unto salvation, He must not be moved to do it by any good will, good desire, or good deed, that dwells in us by nature*' (Sermon 'Free Grace').

Jesus is not a god who fails in his calling and drawing with any prevenient grace. He is the '*the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God*' (Heb.12:2).

'*...He which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ*' (Phil.1:6)!

Terry Arnold

Why Are So Many Falling?

In recent years there has been a noticeable increase in the numbers of pastors and church leaders who have fallen in adultery, sexual sin, or sins which have disqualified them from ministry. Hardly a week has gone by and not a popular church leader fallen. The allegations, confessions, denials and double lives have shocked many. The damage done to Christians and to the testimony of the Christian church has been immense.

What are the common characteristics and causes of these leaders falling? Are there safeguards that can be put in place to have ministries *without reproach*? The solutions suggested in this article are not just for leaders but for every Christian who desires to fight sin and finish the race set before them! (1Cor.9:24; 1Tim.6:12)

The History

Many will say that this falling away of leaders has always occurred. But in recent years an increase has many asking the question - *why are so many falling?*

Back some decades a large number of TV preachers have fallen. Jimmy Swaggart (late 80's, 90's) was caught with prostitutes (twice) and was a consumer of porn and BDSM (sexual practices with bondage, discipline, dominance, submission). He often preached against sins even while he was still committing them, and cried repentance when caught. He continues this day with one of the largest TV channels in the Christian world.

In 2006 Ted Haggard was exposed for homosexual practise and a drug scandal, while yet preaching against immorality. In 2018 Bill Hybels, a popular author/pastor, resigned following multiple charges of sexual misconduct spanning decades. He denied all despite the evidence which continued to accumulate.

More recently, James MacDonald was ousted in 2019 as pastor of his 15,000 multi-campus church, accused of bullying and allegedly seeking to hire a hit man to commit murder. He is now charged with assault on a woman in a carpark.

For the last year there have been dozens more church leaders who have fallen. (Some are mentioned further in this article as we look at common causes)...

The Characteristics and Solutions

Most if not all of these leaders who have fallen show similar characteristics worthwhile considering for any who would desire to avoid the sins thereof.

The Fame

Many of those fallen were heroes seemingly adored by the masses. Such idolatry misses the fact that any gifting these leaders have is *given by God for His glory*, not for themselves. To laud their ministry is one thing, but to lift up the minister may not help the person striving for humility, nor is it good for the people partaking of his ministry. God warns us to beware when men speak well of us

(Lk.6:26), and any pride brings resistance from God and comes before a fall (Pr.16:18; 1Pet.5:5). With public ministry, any achievements and knowledge comes with the temptation of a pride which sits waiting at the door of the heart.

The heroes of the faith we read about in scripture (Heb.11) and in history (the Reformers, Puritans, missionaries, preachers...), they were *above reproach*, who are now passed into glory and have no more temptation from a sinful flesh. And many there be that we have never heard of who well *ran the race and fought the fight* (1Cor.9:24; 1Tim.6:12). *Their fame is now in glory.*

The Temptations and the Culture

There are three areas of temptation that all the pastors who have fallen would fall in at least one of these areas. *‘Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world’* (1Jn.2:15,16).

The love of the world includes the culture of the day which increasingly is immoral and anti the practise of holiness. John Mason, founder of the *God First, Life Second* movement, has stated: *‘When sound biblical theology is neglected for an American, spiritualised, cultural friendly replacement, exposure to that theology will naturally turn away a mind, heart and soul that has never submitted to that eternal truth. In other words, the falling away is the right response’.*

Such a love of the world and its culture have been seen in the market driven programmes of many churches. The aim is to satisfy the so called ‘seekers’ felt needs. The Gospel invariably gets lost or watered down.

The love of the world is manifested in one of three ways in any fallen leader. The *‘lust of the flesh’* is manifested in the areas of sex and addictions; the *‘lust of the eyes’* is manifested in material possessions and money; the *‘pride of life’* is expressed in power, control and even abusive behaviour.

Two of these temptations brought down the founder of the largest church in history - Yonngi Cho’s Korean Full Gospel Church. In 2014 Cho was imprisoned for embezzling 13 billion (\$12 million US) in church funds. He also was a false prophet with grandiose prophecies which did not come to pass (see *‘Diakrisis’* Nov/Dec 2021).

Accountability

Ravi Zacharias, world renowned apologist, shocked the Christian world just before, and then after his death (2020), when many women brought charges of sexual misconduct and abuse against him. *He strongly denied them all before his death.* However, multiple text messages and testimonies by numerous women, as well as massagers he employed, showed Zacharias had lied and had even threatened some if they were to expose him. His family seemed oblivious to his double life, but a closer look at his ministry showed a *lack of accountability* for Ravi personally and within his organisation. It also does not appear he was in

fellowship with or accountable to any local church. Many also (in hindsight) questioned his ministry citing *an intellectualism and a lack of clearly presenting the Gospel*.

Before Zacharias, Bill Gothard, a very popular leader within conservative groups, also suffered the same fate, accused of sexual harassment and molestation of young women. Again, there was *a lack of transparency and accountability*.

Accountability and transparency to others is pivotal for leaders. One obvious solution is to have a safeguard of a *plurality of elders* or a *leadership team* in which one is in regular fellowship with. Being able to say *'please pray for me in this area of my life...'* is a healthy weapon against the enemy. However, without a personal spiritual life, such accountability will only be a backdrop, but nevertheless it is a *layer of security* that helps in the battle against sin. The more public the leader becomes the more important accountability will be.

The Spiritual Life

The scriptures teach us to *kill sin before it gets us* (Rom.8:13; Col.3:5). We might think *'that will not happen to me'*. Yet the scriptures teach the *danger* of this thinking. One has a single contact with pornography and it becomes twice, three times...when does it become habitual? A fleeting attraction with another of the opposite sex, a meeting, counselling...many have fallen from such simple beginnings. Small compromises have in these fallen pastors led to huge ramifications for themselves, their families and congregations.

However, there is *power and method* to escape the temptations. *'Wherefore let him that think he stands take heed lest he fall. There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry'* (1Cor.10:12-14). We do not entertain or ponder sinful things, but *'flee'*. We are to be aware of the *danger*; yet remember the *power and method* of escape.

Yet a danger too in the above is also a *false humility*. C.H. Spurgeon once stated, *'We are never, never so much in danger of being proud as when we think we are humble'*. (Sermon 'Serving the Lord with all humility of mind', Acts 20:19).

But how do we avoid sin, kill sin, and walk in the Spirit? Two important things in any minister's life are the tools of his ministry - the *Word of God* and *prayer*. Arguably a lack of these will cause a leader to drift and even fall. The practise of *holiness* and *continuous repentance* by the Word of God and in prayer cannot be minimised, as it is surely a deterrent to getting too close to sin's grasp.

Marriage

A stable marriage relationship is a bulwark against falling into the sins of desires that have captured hundreds of pastors in the last few decades. Many simply have got too close in relationships to other women. Levels of accountability with rules such as not visiting women alone, are not just legalistic

rules. Too many have fallen in ‘counselling’ situations, when they become emotionally attracted to the other person. Adultery often begins with small steps of friendships, one on one meetings, steps that might seem harmless at first.

A transparent relationship in marriage with the ability to share weaknesses is vital. Setting aside husband and wife time is a must, even amidst a busy schedule.

The Doctrine

In isolating the characteristics of why so many are falling, few might look at doctrine. But what we believe and teach will be played out in practise. If the doctrines are unbiblical, if there are fleshly practises, worship that mimics the world, a lack of separation in the practise of holiness, then there is *no real power against sin*. The doctrine of sanctification is about spiritual *power against sin*.

With the above in mind, I will no doubt be criticised for what I am about to state here. If one looks at the doctrine of most of the recent church leaders who have fallen, many if not most, *are of the Charismatic/Pentecostal persuasion*.

This point above is not a new development. One only has to trace the leaders and founders in Pentecostal history to see *the same pattern of falling exists*. The very founder of the modern Pentecostal movement, Charles Parham, introduced new doctrines in 1901 not heard of in 1,900 years of Christianity. His doctrine of a Spirit baptism and tongues were decidedly new and unorthodox. He also denied the eternity of Hell; taught that ‘tongues’ was the sealing of the Bride of Christ; rejected the literal six day creation; believed Adam and Eve were not a part of this creation and that others existed outside the garden; he decried the use of medicine and doctors and had dangerous views on healing which culminated in the death of at least one young girl. Parham was well known for the sexual overtones in his sermons. Later he was charged with sodomy and considered even by his own movement to be a fallen prophet. His ministry ended in shame.

One of Parham’s students, William Seymour, in 1906 founded the first modern Pentecostal church at Azusa St, Los Angeles. The church ended in gross immorality, adultery and wild manifestations and was shut down after a few years. From Azusa St. the Pentecostal doctrines went out across America and worldwide (the *Assembly of God* was founded in 1912).

The Pentecostal movement was the first to introduce women pastors. But the fall rate continued. Maria Woodworth-Etter who after being dismissed from a church, joined the Pentecostal movement and helped to found the *Assemblies of God* before starting her own Lakeview church in 1918 in Indianapolis, Indiana. She practised trances and pioneered the manifestations often seen in today’s Pentecostalism, and then passed on the ‘mantle’ to Aimee-Semple Mcpherson.

Aimee-Semple Mcpherson faked her own kidnapping to have an adulterous affair. She had three husbands, the third left his wife and children to marry her. She had a nervous breakdown and her husband divorced her. In 1944 she died from an overdose of sleeping pills. She passed on the ‘mantle’ to Kathryn Kuhlman.

Kathryn Kuhlman (1907-1976) married a man who divorced his wife to marry her. Kuhlman then divorced him. Her healing ‘miracles’ were later shown to be

fraudulent. The current Benny Hinn (who has been exposed for false prophecies and fraudulent claims of healing), got his 'anointing' from Kuhlman.

So too the early Pentecostal leaders following Charles Parham show a sordid and sorry tale of falling from ministry. John Dowie (1847-1907) experienced a vision telling him to carry '*the leaves of healing from the tree of life to every nation*'. He built his own Zion City in Illinois and later declared he was the third and final manifestation of the prophet Elijah. On September 1904, in front of 8,000 followers he announced he was '*the first apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ...I now have the right to speak as the instructor of nations*'.

Exaggerated stories are the common thread of the history of Pentecostalism. John G. Lake's (1870-1935), influenced by Dowie, claimed his 'anointed' bubble gum would heal people when they chewed it. He was later exposed for his lies, exaggerated and fraudulent claims.

A.A. Allen (1911-1970) claimed to turn \$1 bills into \$20. He jumped bail after being arrested for drunk driving and was defrocked by the Assemblies of God (AOG). His leg lengthening claims were proven fraudulent. Bizarre stories abound - once a 400 pound lady came for prayer - Allen prayed for her...she fell out of the tent and 200 pounds supernaturally disappeared...when she stood up her undergarments fell off! *Allen died of liver poisoning due to acute alcoholism.*

Smith Wigglesworth (1859-1947) is famous among Pentecostals today. He prophesied a mighty restoration of the sign gifts of the spirit and revival *before the end of the twentieth Century*. Wigglesworth is associated with dozens of amazing stories of miracles, healings and raisings from the dead. *None are authentically documented* - the late Lester Sumner was responsible for many of the stories. *Not one account of the raisings from the dead was ever authentically documented for proof.* Sumner himself falsely prophesied that he would see the return of Jesus before the end of 1999 and that Jesus appeared to him and spoke this to him personally. When Sumner died he instantly became a false prophet! Sumner was also the subject of a national TV expose for fraud and misuse of funds to do with his '*Feed The Hungry*' operation.

William Branham is *said to have had the greatest ministry of signs and wonders of any Charismatic/ Pentecostal minister in history*. His ministry was copied by the likes of Benny Hinn. But a close worker of Branham, A.H. Pohl, testified that the healings and miracles were *all* false. Branham proclaimed himself the angel of Revelation 3:14 and 10:7 and forecast the return of Jesus in 1977. In 1965 Branham died after a car crash. Many expected him to rise from the dead.

Most, if not all of the forerunners of Pentecostalism had nervous breakdowns, went insane, became drunks, drug abusers, or taught the worst heretical teachings.

If the reader should wonder why I highlight these *pioneers* of Pentecostalism, then the question is - fast forward to the present day and what has changed?

Hillsong, the largest Pentecostal church in the world, has had numerous leaders who have fallen. This author remembers as a young Christian in Pentecostal circles, many youth leaders were falling. Many even then were questioning if there was a link to the teachings, its music, worship styles and lack of separation from the world.

Before the year 2000 music leader and songwriter Geoff Bullock fell in adultery (see ‘*Diakrisis*’ March/April 2004). In 2002 Pat Mesiti, national director of the *Australian Christian Churches* was sacked for sexual misconduct (‘*Diakrisis*’ May/June 2002). Leader Guglielmucci was also exposed for fabricating an extensive hoax about his ‘cancer’ being ‘healed’ (‘*Diakrisis*’ Nov/Dec 2008).

Recently the New York Hillsong leader Carl Lentz in 2022 was exposed for adultery and the lies he told to cover it up.

Reed Bogard resigned as lead pastor of Hillsong Dallas in January 2021, charged with drug use and the rape of a junior female staffer with whom he had an affair while serving at Hillsong NYC years earlier. The rape allegation occurred after a meeting at a bar between 2-3am...Many more Hillsong leaders could similarly be named.

Finally, Hillsong founder and CEO, Brian Houston, resigned in March 2022 charged with inappropriate conduct with two women and ‘moral transgressions’ including with alcohol, dating back 10 years. Yet Houston tweeted ‘*failure is never wasted if you are teachable, humble and transparent enough to grow and change*’.

One has to wonder that for all the ‘gifts’ and signs and wonders, these leaders are simply not being led by God, nor living godly lives, especially when they deny, lie, and then when finally exposed, minimise the sins. Could the issue be in the *doctrine of sanctification*, the lack of, and thus the lack of *power to fight sin*? Is God handing these leaders over to their own doctrines, their own devices?

But behind this too is the lip service paid to the all sufficiency of the written scriptures as inspired, infallible. How can they claim to hold to these and then prophesy extra biblical revelations?...

A most recent example of the flagrant use of this above hypocrisy is the increasingly modern view that ‘prophets’ do not have to be 100% accurate in their practise of prophesying from God. The most recent example of many is Mike Bickle who has been stood down from his *International House of Prayer* (IHOP). The IHOP was morphed out of the heretical ‘*latter rain*’ movement (1948) and the later *Kansas City prophets*. IHOP had over 2,000 workers and held conferences with up to 25,000 young people attending. Its leader, Mike Bickle, had many unorthodox teachings, but his entire ministry was built on *stories of miraculous prophetic words* from God. He claimed to have heard audible voices from God and was taken to heaven twice and chatted with Michael the archangel and Jesus.

Bickle has recently been suspended from ministry for allegations of abuse and sexual misconduct over many years. Yet for years, he preached against such immorality as well as false prophets! He at first denied the allegations but recently accepted some ‘failures’ in the past. But the evidence is continuing to increase, and now others with him in IHOP who previously denied any misconduct are one by one being exposed, though they lied on stage about their morality. The devastation to hundreds over the years within this ministry includes blackmail, legal threats, adultery and especially *prophetic deception by lying prophets*.

It seems to allude these ‘prophets’ that one false prophesy makes them a false prophet (Deut.18:20-22; Jer.29:8-9, etc.) Bickle has in fact made several false prophecies. His followers claim he has a ‘66% accuracy’. This shortfall of the true

prophets is apart from the warnings not to add to the revelation given by God through the prophets of old and last in Jesus Christ (Heb.1:1,2; Rev.22:18-19). Has God put a lying spirit in the mouths of these prophets? (1Kngs 22:23)

One of the all too often fruits of these fallen pastors is the *continuation of the sin while preaching* against such immorality, then *denials*, then the *minimising of the seriousness* of the sin, often with language that changes words like *adultery* to an '*immoral failure*' or an '*inappropriate relationship*'.

Corey Turner, pastor of a global Pentecostal megachurch, recently committed adultery with a female pastor and called it an '*morally inappropriate relationship*'. The understanding is too often '*we're all just sinners...no one is perfect*' - but this is little comfort when marriages and families on both sides are torn apart, let alone countless church members stumbled.

Conclusion

The recent history of pastors falling is alarming, but there are common sense safeguards available to thwart the trend. Temptations that come with *fame* and the darts of an immoral *culture* need a vibrant *spiritual life* of *Bible reading/study* and soaked in *prayer*. Measures of *accountability* in *marriage*, relationships, and with elders, will encourage the progress of practical holiness.

Doctrine will often determine how we live the sanctified life. Perhaps the Lord is *shaking* his church and *sifting* those who will follow men from those who will follow Christ and His Word. Truly, a higher view of sin and the Word of God is needed. The former is what the very fight of sanctification is about; the latter is the truth and the power that separates us from it's grasp.

Ultimately we all fall when '*we are drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death*' (James 1:14-15). We either feed sin or we kill it.

The Parable of the Sower (Matt.13:1-23; Lk.8:4-15) teaches that many who profess Christianity believe in vain (Jn.2:24; 1Cor.15:2,14,17; 2Cor.6:1) and will not stand (Lk.8:13; Heb.6:6). If these 'Christian' leaders who have fallen have been truly regenerated, they will return to the faith in repentance and humility. The true ones will in honesty of confession seek forgiveness without conditions attached. If apostates, then they are simply going back to what their earthly *nature* demands (2Pet.2:22).

The apostle Paul clearly states that church leadership is to be *above reproach* (1Tim.3; Tit.1). Those many pastors and leaders who have fallen in sin are disqualified from such offices by the qualifications laid out clearly by Paul in God's Word. They can be lovingly *restored to fellowship, but not to the office of ministry again.*

The falling of many leaders and the apostasy of the church should surely be a wake up call to the body of Christ.

'Take heed that no man deceive you' (Matt.24:4).

'Wherefore let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall' (1Cor.10:12).

Terry Arnold

The Danger of Doctrine

The word '*doctrine*' or '*teaching*' (from the root '*didasko*') is mentioned dozens of times in scripture. There is no doubt that the modern day church is desperately needing the teaching of '*doctrine*'. Most Christians are woefully ignorant of major doctrines such as Justification, Sanctification, Substitution, Imputation, Propitiation, etc - all words found or taught in scripture repeatedly. Many sermons today are big on life applications, illustrations and stories, but starved of doctrinal teaching.

However, there is an opposing danger that this author over the years has come to realise and be warned of. That danger is *the teaching of doctrine without application...theology without application to life*.

This application needs to be not just in churches but also in lecturing in colleges and seminaries, which many have become mere intellectual gymnasiums. The author was fortunate to have in many college years lecturers who were mostly pastors or ex pastors. Many of the doctrines taught were imparted with real life and church life experience, often forged in trials and testings.

The book of Romans is a good example of doctrines and then application. Chapters 1 and 2 are weighted with the doctrine of mans radical depravity and sin by the law of God, and leaving no one with any excuse but that all are guilty. Chapter 4 gives the solution to the problem with the doctrine of Justification. Chapter 5 gives the results in Christ Jesus. Chapter 6 onwards *applies the doctrines above in the sanctification to the soul and applies the work of the cross in life*. By chapter 12 we have more exhortation for *practical living*.

What benefits are there of doctrinal knowledge if not applied and worked out in real life? *Any doctrinal teaching must be with a view to knowing the person of Christ more and more*. Charles Spurgeon once stated: '*What is doctrine after all but the throne whereon Christ sits, and when the throne is vacant, what is the throne to us? Doctrines are the shovel and tongs of the altar, while Christ is the sacrifice smoking thereon. Doctrines are Christ's garments; verily they smell of myrr, and cassia, and aloes out of the ivory palaces, whereby they make us glad; but it is not the garments we care for as much as the person, the very person of our Lord Jesus Christ*'.

Terry Arnold

* C.H. Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, vol 8, P.339

Quotable

'Six feet of earth make all men equal. Death is the great leveller. The worm has no respect for knighthood or nobility. The mighty monarch and the slave, find common bed within the grave.'

(*'The Salt Cellars: Being a Collection of Proverbs, Together with Homely Notes Thereon'* by Charles Spurgeon)

Your Comments and Questions

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

Hi Terry...Matt.22 re the marriage feast...does the 'no wedding garment' mean 'not clothed with righteousness' ie., beloved of God, having lived righteously...

(K.F. Viet)

Editor's reply (excerpts):

Firstly, it is a parable and so one has to look at the audience and the references that would have been in mind, and the interpretation therefore possible. Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees...and condemning them. They had come in (as they thought) by the law...But in Matthew 5 Jesus said *our righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees.*

In the parable the 'clothes' were supplied by the king. We know this because all the other guests were clothed, and people off the streets wouldn't have all been able to be so easily clothed. This person was standing with others but unlike them he was not clothed properly. He had not come in via the right way.

The man obviously thinks he is a legitimate guest. The passage I see as very similar to Matthew 7:22,23 where people have a faith in vain.

Jewish listeners in Matthew 22 would have known Isaiah 61:10 and the understanding of 'robes of righteousness'. The righteousness implied by the clothes is imputed righteousness, but I don't discard that it also refers to a life of righteousness (in sanctification).

... 'Many are called but few are chosen' (Matt.22:14). There is a general call and an effectual call (Jn.6:37-44).

Hi Terry

Thank you kindly for the information you sent me re JW's. I will be giving a copy to my ill neighbour with a Bible. Praise God for the excellent teaching. Your sister in Christ,

(T.G. NSW)

Hi Terry...we watched your latest 'Diakrisis TV' ...it was spot on...Thanks and Blessings...

(M.L, Qld)

Editor: See TA Ministries website in 'Other Resources' and 'Diakrisis TV', then 'Misinterpreted Scriptures': <https://youtu.be/K4iftHW60s8>

**** Gospel Confusion Conference ****

Date: Saturday October 19th, 9.30am - 3.30pm

Venue: St. John's Park Baptist Church, 178 Humphries Rd, Sydney

Sessions: *What is/is not the Gospel; Methods; Which gospel?; Which grace?; ...*

Cost: Free. Lunch and tea/coffee provided

Interstate Itinerary

(More details to be updated next newsletter)

Qld

Aug 4th (Sun) 10am Ayr Presbyterian church 109 MacMillan St, Ayr

NSW

Aug 11th (Sun) 9:30am Sovereign Church, Port Macquarie, Heritage Christian School, 33 Mumford St. Ph.0423019348

Aug 14th (Wed) 6:30pm Home meeting at Sovereign Hills Ph.0423019348

Aug 18th (Sun) 10am Tumut Grace and Faith Fellowship, Franklin public School, Forrest st. Ph.0447722008

Victoria

Aug 21st (Wed) 7.30pm Numurkah Gospel, 60 Meiklejohn St. Ph.0407040820

Aug 25th (Sun) 10.30am Numurkah Gospel Fellowship (details as above)

Sept 1st (Sun) 10am & 1pm Mt. Cathedral Baptist Baptist, 37 Grant St Alexandra, Ph.0409382041

Sept 8th (Sun) 10am Hamilton Presbyterian 29 McIntyre St, Ph.0412327170

Sept 15th (Sun) 10am Kangaroo Flats Baptist, 32 Church St, Ph.0488100204

Sept 22nd 10am & 11am & 6pm (Sun) Open Doors Baptist (Melton) Botanica Springs Community Centre, 249 Clarkes Road Brookfield Ph.0432862979

NSW

Sept 25th (Wed) 5pm Eden Aboriginal Evangelical church Cnr Moorehead & Clare St. Ph.0401340393

Sept 28th (Sat) Eden Aboriginal Evangelical church, details as above

Sept 29th (Sun) 11am & 5pm, Aboriginal Evangelical church, Eden (details above)

Oct 6th (Sun) 10am Fellowship Baptist, 226 Nuwarra Rd, Moorebank Ph.0488555981

Oct 6th (Sun) 5pm Central Mountains Baptist, Sydney, Hazelbrook school hall 159 Great Western Highway Ph.0466590132

Oct 11th 7.30pm (Frid) Evangel church, cnr Neville & Clarke St, Bass Hill Ph.0409090568

Oct 13th 9.30am (Sun) Evangel church (details as above)

Oct 19th (Sat) St Johns Park Baptist, Sydney - Gospel Conference - see this page

Oct 20th 10.30am & 5pm (Sun) St Johns Park Baptist, 178 Humphries Rd, Ph.0417179610

Qld

Oct 27th (Sun) 9.30am Hervey Bay Bible Church (Urangan Community Hall, Elizabeth St. (entrance opposite Miller St) Ph. 0411051118

Oct 27th (Sun) 6pm Gin Gin Baptist, English St, Ph.0428385852

U-tube Clips Worth Looking At!

From time to time we will be posting links to short clips or articles. The links or articles will be on our website in the section 'Other Resources' and then 'new'. Then we will remind readers in the newsletter - as below:

Who was Saint Patrick?

<https://taministries.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/The-Legacy-of-St-Patrick.pdf>

What is the Best Analogy To Explain the Trinity?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D41u5tk8S5k>

A Palestinian Explains Hamas

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6of72XgiUg>

Quote Correction

In the last issue on P.20 we incorrectly printed 'infallible men' which should have been 'fallible men'. We reprint the quote here correctly:

There is faith in what the inspired infallible scriptures have said as 'prophecy' (2Pet.1:19-21); and there is faith in what men now say is prophecies from God. Will men place their faith in the prophecy of the infallible Scriptures or in prophecies of fallible men? The 'faith once delivered'(Jude 3) includes one, and condemns the other (Rev.22;18,19; Dt.4:2; 2Tim.2:2-4). (Editor)

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