



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)

PO Box 432, Babinda, Qld. Australia, 4861.
E-mail: taministries2@gmail.com Ph. 0411489472
Website: www.taministries.net

Newsletter of TA Ministries Vol.4, No.43 January / February 2025

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.

Contents

- P.2,3 Editor's Comment
- P.4 Pope Francis Calls Assassination 'Immoral' and 'Disproportionate'; Hal Lyndsey Passed Away
- P.5 Todd Bentley Hospitalised'; Liberty University 'Set Up' By Trans Employee
- P.6 Global Persecution of Christians '*Significantly Worse*'; Statistics - Australia; Covid 'Conspiracies' - More Truth
- P.7,8 Prophetic Madness with Trump and Assassination Attempt
- P.9 History of Israel Conflict Since 1948
- P.10,11 Steve Lawson - Fall From Ministry
- P.12-16 The Gospel - a *Proclamation* or an *Offer*?
- P.17-19 Your Comments/Questions
- P.20 New Books

Editor's Comment

What is 'misinformation'? What is 'disinformation'?

'Misinformation' is incorrect or misleading information. 'Disinformation' is similar, but which is purposely or deceptively propagated. 'Fact checking' is testing the truth of any information. These are all buzz words now in our culture.

In the Secular World

Apart from arguably the limiting of freedom of speech, all the three terms above are currently debated as to how relevant or useful they really are. The problem is that there is often no objective standard by which any of the terms can be effectively used or tested. For example, the subjectivity and debatable claims within science are ever changing. Hence the 'fact checking' simply falls to the ground when the science changes. Scientific data and claims are not absolute truth sources. Scientists themselves are divided and debate each other on the 'science' of many things. How often do you hear that something that was fully accepted as 'science' is now refuted by new science or research? When I was at high school I remember distinctly the fear mongering of a coming 'ice age' as certain because temperatures were 'cooling'. That is now replaced with 'global warming'.

Academics and experts now defy their own eyes and biology when they deny even the gender of a male or female. Science is thrown out the door and subjective human opinion matters. Is it any wonder many people today do not trust the 'experts' in many fields of so called 'science'?

It all comes back to the data whereby we are informed, data which changes from fashion to fashion yet somehow finds a research paper to agree with the fashion!

Indeed, fact checkers now need to be fact checked when their 'fact' checking is in error! Added to this, some fact checkers (noticeably from certain countries) have purposely and deceptively promoted disinformation as 'fact checking'! The best of 'fact checkers' have proven completely wrong. Fact checkers during Covid 19 should now have 'egg on their faces' considering investigations and commissions have proven them 100% wrong in where the virus came from and the claims of the vaccine (see '*The Covid Lies We Were Told*', *Diakrisis* May/June/2024). What was once said to be 'conspiracies' or 'misinformation' by 'fact checkers', is now truth and with increasing evidence. Fact checkers simply run with the data from the 'experts' or the 'science' at the time. Both sources are subjective and prone to changing.

In the Christian World

The way Christians think has always fascinated me. One person can read a scripture and think something that is very different to what another reads. One can think subjectively, the other objectively. To one there is absolute truth, the other there is no such absolute. Arguably this also might lead to a lot of so called 'misinformation' and 'disinformation' and a need for 'fact checking'? Just ask

some what they think of homosexuality and you will get opinions divided.

Today people will believe stories of people being raised from the dead, angel feathers and gold dust falling in churches (eg. Bethel church), limbs growing and like healings by faith healers, even though ‘facts’ (documentation, videos, etc) are non existent and when the exaggerations and lies are exposed.

Christians are too often as gullible and lack discernment as much as those in the world. This should not be, for Christians have an infallible revelation, a manual full of data from a fact checker who is omniscient. He knows every hair on our head and the words on our tongue and when a Sparrow falls to the ground (Matt.10:29,30; Ps.139:4). God warns us that signs and wonders in the end times would be ‘lying’ and false (Matt.24:24; 2Thess.2:9). He warns that people would come in place of Christ, false self anointed ones (*‘pseudóchristos’* Matt.24:24; Mk.13:22). We are ambassadors for the Gospel, not signs and wonders, healing and prosperity, fables and things that tickle ears (2Tim.4:3,4)!

The Christian world has also become a cesspit for ‘misinformation’ and a need for ‘fact checking’. Few ministries will do this as it is just not popular to expose, without being called out for ‘witch hunting’ or ‘pharisaism’.

Perhaps the Devil is just a hairs breadth away from possibly deceiving many more on a much wider scale. This author has often wondered how much more than what we already see, and how easy will be the deception of the *‘working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders’* and the frightening prospect *‘that God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness’* (2Thess.2:9-11).

A very current example of just how deceptive and widespread this could be is the current anti-Semitism that abounds in nearly every country, if not every country. Is this surely not a world wide demonic deception when we have not too distant history of the 2nd world war mass murder of 6 million Jews; when the land of Israel was historically and biblically the promised home of the Jewish people? Even many Christians today are light on support for this people under attack from all sides, and this considering God says we are grafted into the Jewish root and supported by this root (Rom.11:17,18), and that the Jewish capital is where God’s Messiah is coming back to!

We have a fact checker who is absolute, morally perfect, omniscient, Himself the creator of ‘fact’. We need His fact checking information, His data as perfect, inspired and inerrant. We need those facts in our minds so as to have His mind (1Cor.2:16) when we are assaulted with ‘misinformation’, ‘disinformation’ and fallible fact checkers. We need His indwelling Spirit to assimilate the Word He has left us so as to spiritually test and judge all things (1Cor.2:15). Only those who have received the Christ of God as their Saviour for their sins, as Master over their souls, will He put this His Spirit within them. That Spirit wrote the *‘more sure word of prophecy...the prophecy of the scriptures’* (2Pet.1:19,20). That Word ‘fact checks’ every other spirit in the world and in the church (1Jn.4:1)!

Terry Arnold

Pope Francis Calls Assassination ‘Immoral’ and ‘Disproportionate’

‘...When the Pope was asked about the assassination of Hezbollah head Hassan Nasrallah by the IDF...the pontiff said that the ‘defense must always be proportionate to the attack’. He described the killing of the terrorist leader as ‘immoral’ and ‘disproportionate’... ‘A country that does these things - and I’m talking about any country - in a superlative way, these are immoral actions. Even in war there is a morality to safeguard... War is immoral. But the rules of war give it some morality’. The Pope called the IDF air strikes a ‘terrible escalation’, describing air strikes targeting Hezbollah military sites as ‘unacceptable’.

In 2015...after the Vatican officially recognized the [Arab] Palestinian state, Palestinian President Abbas was granted an audience with the Pope...The Pope claimed Abbas was ‘an angel of peace’. Francis gave Abbas a special medallion, which he said represented the angel of peace ‘destroying the bad spirit of war’. (Excerpted from *Israel Report* Nov/2024)

Editor’s comments:

It seems the October 7th massacre of innocent Israelites civilians is forgotten, so is the nearly 10 thousand rockets fired into Israel civilian areas. Rarely do the media mention that the IDF repeatedly call on civilians to vacate areas about to be attacked, because the terrorists hide in buildings that house civilians. Many have lost the understanding that this is a *WAR* and a *war against terrorists*. War has casualties and is never glorious.

The Pope here expresses hypocritical pontifical gobbledygook. The Vatican’s own history of horrific brutality in wars and martyrdoms is legend.

Hal Lindsey Passed Away

Hal Lindsey, the pre-millennial end time Bible teacher has died at age 95. He was famous for his prophecy books in the 70’s ‘*The Late Great Planet Earth*’, ‘*The 1980’s Countdown to Armageddon*’, ‘*The Terminal Generation*’, etc. which galvanized many to study and be watching for the second coming of Christ.

Lindsey in the 70’s and 80’s made predictions of an imminent rebuilding of the temple. He calculated the rapture/tribulation would be 40 years (a ‘generation’) after Israel was made a nation in 1948. This date was later revised to a generation from 1967 and later a ‘generation’ being 60 or 80 years. He predicted Christ coming ‘*in the next few years, probably in your lifetime*’, and that the antichrist was alive on earth.

Editor:

This author cautions against such prophetic predictions and the misuse of geopolitical analysis to fit timelines. However, such prophecy teachers in the eighties were a personal impetus to the author and to many others to be saved, upon reading Revelation and seeing the coming of Christ.

Todd Bentley Hospitalised

Todd Bentley, the infamous *Fresh Fire* USA leader, faith healer and prophet is recovering from a coma caused by high blood pressure. Bentley claims he experienced a ‘*miraculous awakening*’ after he recovered from what he described as a ‘*10-hour coma*’. Bentley said the last thing he remembers before the medical emergency was opening a coke and getting ready to watch wrestling on pay-per-view. On Facebook he then made *an appeal for donations*.

Bentley was the main speaker in the U.S. 2008 ‘Lakeland revival’ in which there were multiple claims of miraculous healings, all exposed as fraudulent by the media. In the services he would kick and punch people in attempting to heal.

In 2012 he was refused entry into Australia to speak at Pentecostal churches, churches that knew of his fall from ministry (see ‘*Diakrisis*’ March/April 2012 for a list of these churches). He then begged for money to cover the failed trip, calling it a ‘*huge financial set back...Our immediate expenses just in airfare and travel was over \$10,000...The need is still \$20,000...consider sowing a seed into our ministry today!*’.

In 2015 he claimed three people raised from the dead, again exposed as lies. In 2020 he was disqualified from leadership for ‘*ungodly and immoral behaviour*, including predatory sexual activity and an adulterous affair. He then divorced and married the person in the affair. He was back in ministry within 12 months.

(Excerpted from *Christian Post*, Dec.02, 2024; Facebook; Twitter; and ‘*Diakrisis*’ March/April 2012)

Liberty University ‘Set Up’ By Trans Employee

The nation’s premier Christian university is being sued for remaining true to its doctrinal statement and Christian mission after terminating an individual from his position for intentionally setting up the university to advance his LGBT agenda.

...The case, Zinski v. Liberty University, is a setup by Jonathan Zinski and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) to push their LGBT agenda on Christian schools, churches, and organizations...

Four months before Zinski applied to work at Liberty University, he began taking female hormones. He knew the university’s doctrinal position and agreed to adhere to the doctrine and Christian mission. But as soon as his 90-day probation ended, Zinski revealed his secret to the university and then demanded Liberty University depart from its doctrine and mission...Zinski acknowledged all of this despite knowing that he was four months into executing his plan to act in opposition to Liberty University’s doctrinal statement and employment requirements by denying his biological sex...[He changed his name to ‘Ellenor’]. All of this was done to set Liberty up and attempt to make an example out of the university for standing its ground.

(Excerpted from *Christian Post*, Mat Staver, October 12, 2024)

Global Persecution of Christians ‘Significantly Worse’

Persecution of Christians worldwide has significantly worsened this last year...Aid to the Church in Need said Christians are under increased threat of violence, discrimination, abuses...Findings include a shift in the epicenter of Islamist violence from the Middle East to Africa...China, Eritrea, India, Iran are more repressive, targeting Christians as enemies...Christian children, especially girls, are living at increased risk of abduction, sexual violence, forced marriage and forced conversion. In some places, Christians are caught up in weaponization of legislation to criminalize acts disrespectful to the state religion.

...In Eritrea, around 400 have been imprisoned without trial; in Iran...from 59 in 2021 to 166 in 2023; in China...around 10,000. In India, there has been an increase in attacks, persecution against Christians rising from 599 in 2022 to 720 the following year. In Myanmar, the military has been accused of destroying over 200 places of worship, including 85 churches. In Iraq, the Christian population has dwindled from around a million 20 years ago to fewer than 200,000 today...

(Christianity Today, October 24, 2024)

Statistics For Australia

Recent data by the Statistica Research Department confirms previous figures showing a decline in Australians identifying with the Christian faith...The 2021 Australian Census showed...44%, saying they are Christian...8% less than five years earlier. More people do not identify with any religion at all - 10 million in 2010, a 2 million increase... ‘The younger age groups of people in Australia are more likely to have no religious affiliation or hold other spiritual or secular beliefs...This move away from religion is also highlighted by the rise in civil celebrant marriages instead of religious...’

(Christian Post, 24/10/2024)

Covid ‘Conspiracies’ - More Truth

The U.S. House of Representatives Committee enquiry into the Covid pandemic has now further shown that the ‘conspiracies’ attributed to Covid are proving to be truth. The U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) funded \$600,000 to the Chinese Wuhan lab where the virus was made. The research involved altering viruses to increase their transmissibility. Health authorities and scientists tried to cover up the leak evidence. Health authorities, including Fauci, a director, denied any lab leak and called it a ‘conspiracy’. The enquiry also showed school closures were ineffective and had a lasting psychological impact on a generation of children. Similarly, the lockdowns were ineffective and had social and mental consequences.

(Excerpted from Christian Post, 7/12)

Prophetic Madness With Trump and Assassination Attempt

Several months before a gunman attempted to assassinate former President Donald Trump...media personality Tucker Carlson and pastor 'prophet' Brandon Briggs, predicted that an attempt would be made on Trump's life.

...In March, Briggs, during an interview with Steve Cioccolanti & Discover Ministries, said God gave him specific chilling details about the assassination attempt on Trump's life as well as a dark time that would come with his presidency. 'I saw a red wave coming out of Michigan and then I saw Oklahoma, and there were embers of people and...they had torches all throughout Oklahoma. They were raising up these torches that looked like fire and bringing forth a new patriotism upon the nation...it just kept spreading like fire all throughout America...I saw Trump rising up, then I saw [an] attempt on his life, this bullet flew by his ear. And it came so close to his head that it busted his...eardrum' Briggs claimed.

Justin Peters [Justin Peters ministry] stated...If you're wanting to kill a presidential candidate...your only option is a gun...some distance away...the most obvious target is his head. That is the highest percentage of a kill shot...Briggs' claim is just an educated guess...His prophecy...is in fact a false prophecy, because Briggs said the bullet would 'come close to his head, close to his ear, so closer that it would burst his eardrum. That's not what happened' Peters stressed. 'The bullet didn't just zip past his head close, not making contact. It actually did make contact...It hit his ear...So, he got that wrong. And when he said it would burst his eardrum, well, that didn't happen either...If God were truly giving him a real prophetic vision, it would have been much more specific about the date and exactly what would happen'.

...Briggs noted in his vision, he saw Trump fall to his knees during the attack 'and he started worshipping the Lord. He got radically born again during this time frame. People say he's saved now, but he becomes really on fire for Jesus for what I saw coming' Briggs said.

Peters refutes Briggs claim that Trump was radically born again after he instinctively crouched down to evade the gunfire. 'He (Trump) didn't stand back up and start praising Jesus. Donald Trump is not a Christian' Peters maintained.

[Briggs] predicted Trump would go on to win the presidential election in November, but... 'I saw they had a great economic crash worse than the Great Depression and the Lord warned me about this. It would be a great dark time. But I saw paddles coming upon America's soil like a shocking of the soil and I saw Donald Trump praying in...the Oval Office and he was weeping before the Lord with his hands on his head'.

(Leo Blair, Christian Post, 19/7/2024)

Editor's Comment:

Like all of these false prophecies - they lack detail, get details wrong, or are extra biblical at best. Many people were already assuming that Trump was a target for an attack. These 'prophets' just add detail to what is common sense and call it a 'prophecy' from God. Trump has been the subject of numerous

false prophecies already, and those ‘prophets’ largely did not repent. Beginning with ‘prophet’ Danny Nalliah of ‘*Catch the Fire Ministries*’ of Australia (see *Diakrisis* Jan/Feb, 2017), there followed a series of false prophecies for Trump winning in 2020. Hundreds of high profile leaders went silent after falsely prophesying Trump would win (see *Diakrisis* March/April, 2021 for some of these names).

How many false prophesies make a false prophet? What was the punishment for false prophets in the Old Testament? How many false prophecies every day around the world will there be before believers involved in the practise of prophesying will assess why this is biblically false and dangerous (Dt.13:3,4; 18:22)? Why is the ‘*more sure word of prophecy...the prophecy of the scripture*’ not all sufficient (2Pet.1:19,20)? Why *add* to it and incur serious judgement (Deut.4:2; 12:32; Prov.30:6; Rev.22:18,19)? Hebrews chapter 1 clearly teaches God ‘*spoke in time PAST unto the fathers by the prophets, Has in these last days SPOKEN unto us by his Son...*’

The notion that Trump is now a born again Christian from the assassination attempt is fanciful and wishful thinking and based on nil evidence. This author has yet to see real evidence of a born again Trump. Although Trump has had a few committed Christians in his team and the agenda is quite favourable towards Christian principles and morals, we have yet to see real evidence or fruit of his own salvation?














































The Christian advisors Trump has largely surrounded himself with have been often false teachers and false prophets. ‘Minister’ Gloria Copeland who advised President Donald Trump’s campaign stated that Christian faith makes people immune from the flu. She denied the country was in the midst of a severe flu outbreak in a Facebook video that went viral because, ‘*Jesus himself is our flu shot. He redeemed us from the curse of the flu. We...don’t have a flu season and don’t receive it when someone threatens you with ‘everybody is getting the flu’. We’ve already had our shot: He bore our sicknesses and carried our diseases. That’s what we stand on. And by his stripes we are healed*’ (*Diakrisis* 2018 May/June).

Another advisor and influence to Trump is ‘Reverend’ Paula White, a Word of Faith/Prosperity heretic, an adulterer, three times married, and who also had a short ‘relationship’ with Benny Hinn (as admitted by Hinn). Paula is wealthy (yet bankrupt in 2014), attractive in the Hollywood mould and exposed by many as a charlatan for her prophecies, false healings and extravagant stage performances and manifestations. Her doctrine is a mixture of prosperity, Word of Faith teaching and with all the usual extra biblical visions and dreams, etc, (see *Diakrisis*, Jan/Feb, 2020).

Could Trump’s recent win turn the tables with a return to increased faith in America? One might hope so, but it must be kept in mind the church in America has been, even when Trump was president previously, in a rapid slide to apostasy, as are most churches in the west.

What we need is not just a Trump in the Whitehouse, but a *reformation*, an *Awakening*, to be ready for the last *trump of God* (1Cor.15:42; 1Thess.4:16)!

History of Conflict in the Land of Israel Since 1948

Year	Conflict Name	Who Started it?	Who Was Attacked?	Who Won?
1948	Arab-Israel War			
1948-1967	Fedayeen			
1967	Six Day War			
1967-1970	War of Attrition			
1973	Yom Kippur War			
1971-1982	Palestinian Insurgency in South Lebanon			
1985-2000	South Lebanon Conflict			
1987-1993	First Intifada			
2000-2005	Second Intifada			
2006	Lebanon War			
2008	Gaza War			
2012	Israeli Gaza Operation			
2014	Gaza War			
2021	Israel Palestine Crisis			
2023	Israel Hamas War			

For a list of middle east flags with countries named, see:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Arab_flags

Steve Lawson - Fall From Ministry

Editor:

We have not written on this subject considering we have not been able to receive much information on the fall of this popular preacher. The few reports on this affair show conflicting information. What is known and established is that Lawson was involved in an adulterous affair over many years. He has now been stood down from public ministry and any eldership/pastor positions

The following letter was posted on the Internet from Mark Spence (he is part of *Living Waters America*) which might sum up the situation thus far and with a Godly warning, teaching and encouragement.

An Open Letter To Dr. Steve Lawson

Dr. Lawson, as I write these words, my heart is grieved, but my hope is steadfast. The recent news of your disqualification from ministry has left me, and many others, shaken. I've thought back often to the moments I've sat under your teachings. These are moments where your passion for the Word of God moved me deeply. I still remember weeping as you shared on my podcast the beauty of expository preaching. Your devotion to rightly dividing the Word of Truth has always been a source of great encouragement to me. We've met several times and even corresponded through email, and every interaction has only deepened my respect for your ministry.

This makes the current situation all the more heartbreaking. The Scripture is clear: 'Be holy, for I am holy' (1 Peter 1:16). For those entrusted with the preaching of God's Word, the weight of that command cannot be overstated. And now, like King David, your actions have given the enemy reason to blaspheme (2 Samuel 12:14). Many Christian men, some of whom have been strengthened by your ministry, may now find themselves saying, 'If Dr. Lawson can't make it, what hope is there for me?'

But I want to remind you of the very message you have faithfully preached for decades. The Law of God reveals our sin. It shows us how utterly incapable we are of living up to His holy standards. But this same Law drives us to the cross, where the Gospel shines brightest. Jesus Christ has fulfilled the Law for us. 'For our sake, He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God' (2 Corinthians 5:21). Even now, that Gospel remains true.

You may be disqualified from formal ministry, but you are not disqualified from God's grace.

'Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more' (Romans 5:20). That grace is available to you now, but it calls for genuine, heartfelt repentance. 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble' (James 4:6). Though I know the weight of sin is something you feel deeply, I want to stand alongside you in pointing back to the cross. It's the very hope you've proclaimed so faithfully. This is a time to come before God in humility, acknowledging the gravity of your sin and seeking the only One who can heal and restore.

Continued next page >

I urge you to reflect on what you taught so many others: the truth of repentance and the transforming power of the Gospel. You have always emphasized the sovereignty of God, and now is the time to submit fully to that sovereignty in your life. As Charles Spurgeon once said, 'I have learned to kiss the wave that throws me against the Rock of Ages.' This is your wave, Dr. Lawson, and I pray you will cling to Christ, the Rock of Ages, in this season of brokenness.

I think, too, of the Puritan Thomas Watson, who wisely said, 'Till sin be bitter, Christ will not be sweet.' This is a bitter moment for you, but it can also be a time where the sweetness of Christ's grace is made even more real. His grace is deeper than your sin, and His mercy is more powerful than your failure. Psalm 51:17 tells us that 'the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.'

For those Christian men who are now discouraged, tempted to believe that if you couldn't stand, they have no hope, I say: Do not place your faith in men. Place your faith in Christ, who alone is faithful. Men will fail. I will fail. You have failed. But Christ never fails. 'Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful' (Hebrews 10:23). You still have an opportunity, even in this painful season, to point people back to the only One who never disappoints.

As Martin Luther wrote, 'I have held many things in my hands, and I have lost them all; but whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess.' This is a moment to place everything in God's hands - your ministry, your future, your reputation. Now is the time to do it anew, with deeper humility and repentance.

The world is watching, and your response to this fall can either point them toward Christ or turn them away. My prayer is that your repentance will be as public as your fall, showing the world that God's grace truly is greater than all our sin.

Dr. Lawson, I don't say this lightly, but I believe this moment is not the end for you. It is a turning point. John Owen once wrote, 'Be killing sin, or it will be killing you.' The battle against sin is lifelong, but the Gospel is still the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). This season of discipline, if born with repentance and humility, can be used by God for His glory and the good of others.

I leave you with this final thought from John Bunyan: 'No child of God sins to that degree as to make himself incapable of forgiveness.' God's grace is still available to you, and I pray you will embrace it, not to restore your platform, but to find restoration in Christ. Your influence may take on a different shape now, but the message you've preached all your life remains true: CHRIST IS ENOUGH!

Dr. Lawson, now is the time to live out the very truth you've so powerfully declared.

Fall at the feet of Christ in this dark hour and rise again, not to a stage, but to His grace.

Know that I am praying for you and your family, and my hope is that this season of brokenness will ultimately testify to the power of God's redeeming grace.

*In Christ's service,
Mark Spence*

The Gospel - a *Proclamation* or an *Offer*?

This author often comes across Gospel presentations and tracts that present the the Gospel of Christ's death for sinners in the form of an 'offer' to the hearer. The hearer is invited to 'take up the offer' of salvation in Jesus. With this often comes the hearers right to accept or reject the offer by their own free will.

Is the Gospel an *offer*, or is it a statement, a *proclamation*? Did Jesus, the apostles and any disciples 'offer' Gods plan of salvation to be decided upon by man's will? How was the Gospel given - as a *proclamation* or an *offer*? What does the Word 'offer' imply when preached with the Gospel today?

Some may think we quibble with semantics here with the two terms. But a look at what the scriptures teach about the Gospel and its delivery will show otherwise.

Definitions

An 'offer' has a literal meaning of 'presenting or proffering something for someone to accept or reject as desired'. Synonyms are 'suggest', 'recommend', 'propose' (Oxford). When we offer something to someone, it is clear we are suggesting they can choose or reject.

A 'proclamation' has a literal meaning of 'making a public or official announcement dealing with a matter of great importance'. Synonyms would be 'decree', 'announcement', 'declaration', 'statement' (Oxford).

Word Studies and Context

The word '*Gospel*' is '*euaggélion*' ('*eú*' - good / '*aggéllō*' - to proclaim). The Septuagint Old Testament has '*tidings*' (2Sam.18:22,25). The New Testament meaning is always 'glad tidings' and the proclamation of Christ and His salvation.

This word 'Gospel' is mentioned 95 times in the New Testament. It is described as '*the Gospel of the kingdom*'; '*the Gospel of Jesus Christ*', '*of Christ*', '*of His Son*', '*of God*'; '*of grace*'; '*of your salvation*'; '*of peace*'...

In almost all the accounts of the *delivery of the Gospel* it speaks of the Gospel being '*preached*' or '*published*', or with the occasional synonyms of '*declare*', '*communicate*'. It is never once used, described, or implied as an 'offer'. The idea of the Gospel being preached, proclaimed, is strongly evident throughout the Bible.

Because the word 'preach' is so strongly associated with the word 'Gospel' in scripture, it is important to understand what the word 'preach' means. 'Preach' is literally to 'proclaim', or 'herald' as used in times of old. The Gospel is to '*preach Christ*', to proclaim or announce Him, and then urge a response to '*repent*' and '*believe*', '*receive*', '*call upon his name*' (Mk.6:12; Acts 8:5; 9:20; 19:13; 1Cor.1:21,23; 15:11,12; 2Cor.1:19; 4:5; 11:4; Phil.1:15; 1 Tim. 3:16). The Hebrew equivalents (eg. '*Qara*') have the same meanings - to *proclaim*, *pronounce*, *preach*, cry out, call, summons. The Gospel is a *proclamation to be preached*, set forth as good news for sinners needing to escape the judgement of God, the penalty or the 'wages of sin' being eternal death to the soul.

Jonah was told to ‘go to Ninevah and *preach unto it the preaching that I bid you*’ (Jonah 3:2). The Messiah came to preach this Gospel to all when he quoted the Old Testament *‘The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound’* (Is.61:1; Lk.4:18).

From beginning to end Jesus *‘preached...Repent: for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand’* (Matt.4:17). He told his disciples to *‘preach’* the same (Matt.10:27,11:1; Mk.6:12; 16:15). Throughout the New Testament the apostles and disciples *‘preached the Gospel’* (Acts 14:7; 16:10; 17:3; Rom.1:15; 15:20; 1Cor.1:17). It was always a *‘word of faith’*, *‘Christ crucified’*, *‘the unsearchable riches of Christ’*, never an *‘offer’* (Rom.10:8; 1Cor.1:23; 9:14; Eph.3:8). Jesus as the Christ, with forgiveness of sins on the cross, is always *proclaimed* in the preaching of the Word (Acts 3:20; 8:5,35; 9:20; 13:38; 14:25; 15:36; Phil.1:18; Col.1:23).

The Gospel itself has no *‘offer’* in it whatsoever. It is a *‘declaration’* which is *‘preached’* of Christ the substitute for our sins through his death burial and resurrection (1Cor.15:1-4). It is only by *‘this word that the Gospel is preached’*, not by anything or any idea added to it (1Pet.1:25).

If the reader, upon examining even a few of the multitude of these scriptures which speak of a proclamation, if they still be unsure if this is mere semantics, then consider that the Gospel is one doctrine that cannot be trifled with. Any *‘other Gospel’* is cursed (Gal.1:8,9; 2Cor.11:4)! Surely that would include how the Gospel with its call to respond is presented. Where is any *‘offer’* found in any of this vast array of scriptures concerning how the Gospel is delivered or responded to? When Jesus proclaimed the Gospel and *‘preached unto the spirits in prison’*, and to those who are *‘dead’*, did He give them any *‘offer’* (1Pet.3:19; 1Pet.4:6)?

Underlying Falsities - Things Denied

Depravity

The view that the Gospel is an *‘offer’* is a subtle denial of the doctrine of the depravity or inability of unsaved man. The practice of giving the Gospel in the form of an offer for acceptance or rejection, clearly implies an ability by the unregenerate within themselves to accept or refuse the Gospel. However, not only is the unsaved man unable within himself to spiritually exercise faith and receive the Gospel, but any emphasis on an offer undermines the very necessity of God’s sovereign grace to begin any work of salvation. The scriptures repeatedly state all unsaved are in a state of depravity, being a *slave* to and *dead* in sins, by *nature* a child of wrath (Jn.8:34; Eph.2:2-5; Col.2:13), *unable* to obey the law of God (Rom.8:7,8; Jn.6:37-44,65), having *no understanding* of the things of the Spirit of God (1Cor.2:14), with eyes *blinded* and heart *wicked* to the core and *blinded* by Satan (2Cor.4:4; Jer.17:9; Eph.4:18), and with a righteousness as *‘filthy rags’* (Is.64:6-8)! Just as you cannot offer a corpse anything, so you cannot offer a man *‘dead in sins’* anything. By nature he is under wrath. There is nothing in the Gospel this natural man wants! Where is the ability to *accept* any offer unless God makes

something impossible to be possible, and this only by His Spirit alone (Lk.18:27)?

A further backdrop to this underlying falsity of man's ability to accept the gospel as an 'offer', is to answer the question - *who chose who?* From a human perspective we understand that we chose Christ at some point, and upon regeneration we do so every day. But the scriptures never state we chose Christ for salvation? Rather it is always the opposite: '*...He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world...according to the good pleasure of His will*' (Eph.1:4,5; see also Matt.20:16; 22:14; Mk.13:20; Acts 9:15; 22:14; Rom.16:13; Eph.1:4; 2Thess.2:13; 2Tim.2:4; Rev.17:14). Even when Christ's disciples followed him it was obvious He chose them first. And again, this was hardly any 'offer' when they '*immediately*' or '*straightway*' followed after him (Matt.4:20,22). Indeed Jesus clearly states who chose who when he stated '*You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you...*' (Jn.15:16). Where is there any 'offer' in what Christ does here?

Effectual Grace

With an 'offer' in the Gospel it is obviously implied that men may choose to resist it or refuse to accept it. At the outset this ignores the fact that *all are already rejecting Christ* in their hearts *by nature* (Jn.3:18; Eph.2:1-5; 4:18; 1Cor.2:14).

With the 'offer' of the Gospel, it is often stated or implied that '*Jesus is wanting to save you...He is knocking at the door of your heart waiting for you, pleading for you...He has done all that He can, but you must let Him in...*' This makes for an impotent god who offers something he may not be able to deliver, being blocked by man's will. This god is not the '*author and the finisher of our faith*', not the God who '*has begun a good work in you and will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ*' (Heb.12:2; Phil.1:6). Does God 'offer' a salvation He cannot deliver? This makes God a liar and the 'offer' null and void.

John chapter 6:37-44,65 refutes this outright! Nowhere in scripture is it taught that man can resist the effectual call and drawing of God by his own will.

The Perseverance of the Saints

If man can either accept or reject the Gospel as an 'offer', then why can he not reject it multiple times after he is saved? How many times could he lose his salvation? If man can reject God who wants to save him, then salvation is not '*by grace*' but on something '*of yourselves*' - which God rejects (Eph.2:8,9).

Objections

Some will set forth a few texts in an attempt to yet make the Gospel as an 'offer'. Mostly scriptures in the Old Testament are used to show that God 'pleads' with Israel: '*O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!*' (Dt.5:29); '*I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people...*' (Is.65:2; Rom.10:21); '*Say unto them, As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn you, turn you from your evil ways; for why will you die, O*

house of Israel?’ (Ezek.33:11); ‘Come now, and let us reason together...If you be willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land: But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it’ (Isa.1:18-20); ‘Look unto me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else’ (Is.45:22); ‘Seek you the Lord while he may be found, call you upon him while he is near’ (Is.55:6).

These above scriptures are to *Israelite believers* or *Israel* as a nation, not to unsaved Christians being made an offer of Christ for salvation. They are hardly ‘pleading’ and ‘offering’ Christ as salvation, as some try to argue.

In the New Testament the ‘offer’ argument becomes just as desperate. Matthew 11:28-30 is said to be an ‘offer’: ‘Come unto me, all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest...you shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light’.

Firstly, it is a call to ‘come’, not an offer, unless that is read into the text. The ‘come’ is a Greek imperative, a command, an exhortation, not an ‘offer’!

Secondly, *who* is being called here? - ‘you that labour and are heavy laden’. The Lord is addressing His sheep - those who are conscious of the need for the Lord and struggling with sin in their souls. This also matches John 7:37 ‘...if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink’ which was spoken of those who ‘believed’ and would have the Spirit giving ‘living waters’ (vs.28,39).

Thirdly, Jesus said ‘no man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him’ (Jn.6:44) which further interprets Matthew 11:28-30 and agrees with the depravity and inability in the sin nature of the unsaved person.

Some use Revelation 22:17 ‘And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely’.

Again, this has no ‘offer’ unless read into the text. The ‘come’ is again a Greek imperative to those who ‘hear’ and ‘thirst’. The unregenerate do not have this ability, being *enslaved, dead* in sins by *nature, unable* and with *no understanding to discern spiritual things, their eyes and heart blinded* (1Cor.2:14; Rom.8:7,8; Jer.17:9; Jn.6:37-44,65; 8:34; 2Cor.4:4; Eph.2:2-5; 4:18; Col.2:13).

Some use Matthew 23:37 (see also Luke 13:34): ‘O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the Prophets, and stone them which are sent unto you, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not!’. This is addressed to Jerusalem and certain Jews and was spoken in the middle of judgement on the Jewish leaders. Again, where is the ‘offer’ here with any Gospel? Rather, there is a *command* to turn from evil.

Some use Romans chapter 5:15-18 which mentions the ‘free gift’ and they link this with the Gospel being somehow an offer, because it is ‘free’. However, the words here ‘free gift’ is actually ‘*chárisma*’ - *grace given by God*. The context of ‘free’ has nothing to do with human merit or intervention, and is always used of gifts and graces *imparted by God*. It is the ‘*gift of righteousness*’ that comes with justification (vs.17,18), by ‘one righteousness act’ of Christ (vs.18b literal). The passage is devoid of any ‘offer’.

With all these attempts to make the Gospel an ‘offer’, it is obvious there is underlying an appeal to the will of man, his ‘free will’, his power of decision. But the Gospel is simply a declaration, a proclamation of *Christ* crucified for sin!

Conclusion

The Gospel is not something to be trifled with or corrupted in any way (2Cor.2:17). We dare not change it, add to it, soften it, or tune it to the will of men. Sadly we have done just that with new terminologies that replace *believe, repent, receive, call upon the name of the Lord*. These are commands, not ‘offers’.

The Jesus of the Bible does not offer His Gospel but proclaims it. He makes His people willing in the Day of His power! (Psalm 110:3). He draws His sheep given by the Father and He raises them up (Jn.6:37-44,65). What He begins He will finish (Phil 1:6).

The Gospel of who Christ is and what He has done for sinners is not an offer but a demonstration of the greatest love mankind has ever seen. The work of Christ if put like an offer makes it more of what man can *do* instead of what God has *done*. The scriptures present the Gospel as a proclamation of Christ with a call to believe, this to be preached whether by mouth or pen.

Lastly, this author would urge the reader to look at history where one will hardly find any sentiment of an ‘offer’ by the great evangelists of the Reformation, the Puritans who followed, and in the great Awakenings and historic revivals that have shaken nations.

Charles Spurgeon, one of the greatest and most successful of evangelists and preachers the world has seen, preached on this very topic: *‘The Gospel comes to men in the form of a command and that it has the force of a command!... ‘The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commands all men everywhere to repent’. So it is not optional to you whether you will accept the Gospel or not - it is not said to you, ‘You may, if you will, accept it, or you may, if you please, reject it’. You cannot reject it without incurring the guilt of disobedience to a Divine command!...And, further, the command to men to believe the Gospel has the death penalty attached to disobedience... ‘He that believes not is condemned already’...I must not alter the form of my Master’s message!...We do not want him [the hearer] to turn his eyes toward himself...this keeps him from fixing his eyes upon Christ, alone, where salvation is to be found. This, I think, is one reason why the Lord has put the Gospel message into the form of a command...The Gospel is not an offer from an equal to an equal...It is most fitting that the Gospel should not come like a common invitation, but that it should come with all the force at its back which a Divine command can have!...You cannot imagine that He has sent this Gospel into the world to be a football for you to play with...Do not, I pray you, make merry over the rejected Gospel, for its blood will be required at your hands! Avoid a sugared Gospel...Seek that Gospel which rips up, tears, cuts, wounds, hacks and even kills - for that is the Gospel that makes alive again!...’* (Jan. 14th, 1877, pm service, Rom.10:16).

Terry Arnold

Your Comments and Questions

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

Hi Terry, in a group I was in they would have a 'prayer cloth' sent from overseas and lay it upon a person for healing, using Acts 19:11,12 as a reference. Does this apply today?

(K.F., NSW)

Editor's Reply:

Acts 19:11,12: *'And God wrought [worked] special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them'*.

The context here itself answers much of this question. This event comes after the bestowal of the Holy Spirit by the apostles, here by Paul to a group in Ephesus who had never heard of the Holy Spirit (vs.1-6). The signs and wonders that followed were to *confirm the apostolic message* delivered, as is also the case in the other baptisms of the Spirit (Acts ch.2 to the Jews; ch.8 to the Samaritans; and ch.10 to the Gentiles).

The context also tells us that it was *'God working special miracles at the hands of Paul'*. These were *'special miracles'* (literally - 'not ordinary/common') done by God and given to, and peculiar to Paul. This also included deliverances from demons (vs.12). Also note (in the next verses) that others *tried to copy Paul* with disastrous results (vs.13-16)! It is obvious that God allowed such *'special miracles'* in this one instance to Paul for a purpose...

Signs and wonders in the first century were to *prove the Messiahship* of Christ (Jn.20:30,31; Lk.7:21,22; Acts 2:22) and then to *authenticate the apostles* (2Cor.12:12). Scripture and history attests to the cessation of apostles, them being the *foundation* of the church (Eph.2:20), *ordained* by Christ himself (Matt.10:1; Mk.3:14,15; Lk.6:13; 10:1,9), *eye witnesses* of His resurrection (Acts 1:22; 1Cor.9:1; 15:7,8) and having the similar *miraculous signs* as Jesus (2Cor.12:12; Matt.10:1,2; Acts 2:43; Heb.2:3,4).

If apostles have ended, then what of their *'signs of an apostle'* as in 2Cor.12:12? Today there are thousands of counterfeits who are not sent, and not doing anything like the miracles of Jesus or those *He ordained*. If people want to claim they have the same *'signs of an apostle'* today (2Cor.12:12), let them be tested and found wanting before a fearsome judgement to come!

God is a miracle working God, but these *'special miracles'* were a one off by the apostles. In my Pentecostal days, I saw some try to replicate this passage. Not once did I ever see *'diseases depart'* (vs.12) as in the Gospels and Acts - *'all'* and *'every'* disease - Matt.4:23,24; 8:16; 9:35; 10:1; 12:15...; *'immediately'* - Matt.8:3; 20:34...; healings *completely 'whole'* - Matt.12:13,15; 14:36; 15:28...

It is difficult for many to see that these *'signs of an apostle'* - *'were confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will'* (Heb.2:3,4; 2Cor.12:12). The tenses here are clearly *past*.

With 'prayer cloths' today also is the teaching that the power is in the cloth having some special 'anointing' that can be *transferred*. However, the word 'anointing' never means power. In the New testament the 'anointing' is a metonymy *for the Holy Spirit* (1Jn.2:27)! The new 20th century teaching of imparting the power of the Spirit in cloths or via people is sheer heresy to the *person* of the Spirit. The person of the Holy Spirit is already permanently *indwelling* Christians. He cannot be imparted from cloths or people as a power!

Finally, why have a 'prayer cloth' when we can simply pray to the Lord for healing? Why hanker after these spectacular signs and wonders and too often ignore the *greatest miracle of all* - the giving of Christ in the Gospel for the salvation of - the *miracle* of a person being *re-created* in regeneration!

This ministry will not be popular for calling out such claims as with prayer cloths. An example of this was in *Diakrisis* March /99 where we exposed and challenged a ministry (*Tribe of Judah* motorcycles) who were claiming amazing healings and with prayer cloths. We challenged them to produce evidence - one of '*a freshly broken leg being instantly healed*'. Their ministry instead just wanted to send us the pastor's 'testimony' and a free 'anointed prayer cloth'! When we persisted requesting evidence of the healing claims (and we cited a false prophecy by the same ministry), we received veiled threats and then we never heard from them again (see also May/99; March 2000).

I have answered this question in more detail than normal, partly because I was once somewhat deceived by such signs! Thus I plead with any still attracted to such, to separate from its hold. If any want to go beyond scripture and claim 'signs of an apostle' and with 'special' Pauline miracles with 'prayer cloths', then see the danger of taking the place of Christ or the apostles (Matt.24:24 - '*pseudo christos*' - false anointed ones). Hell will be full of those who practised or trusted in signs and wonders (Matt.24:23,24; 2Thess.2: 9-11). Saving grace does not come through signs and wonders, but with the Gospel of grace.

Dearest Terry and Beth,

Thank you for the recent Diakrisis (Nov-Dec 2024). I'm certain we don't tell you often enough how blessed we are by your love for our Lord, your faithfulness to His word, and your encouragement to us.

Terry, we praise God for your recovery. May you continue to bless others throughout 2025 with teaching and preaching.

We listened to a sermon on 3John in a series of 1,2&3 John by John MacArthur. Such rich truth...May you both be abundantly blessed by it. Col.3:15-17 'And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him'.

Have a blessed day in our Lord as we await. All our love and prayers.

(M.H. Qld)

Your Comments and Questions

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

Dear TA Ministries...Many thanks for your good 'Diakrisis' newsletter and your ministry and faithfulness in sending it to us and our organisation...Look forward to following you on your 'Diakrisis' website...

(G.T., NSW)

Hi Terry...Thanks for sending me 'Diakrisis' now for 25 years. I am still 'on track' thanks to you and another magazine...I often share your articles and paraphrase them...

(K.F., NSW)

2025 Itineraries

The editor Terry Arnold will be back ministering in this 2025 in Queensland and interstate. However, for this year at least, the travelling will be mostly by flying. Any churches wishing to be involved please contact Terry by e-mail or by phone.



Gospel Confusion Conference

Due to a health issue the editor was forced to postpone this conference last October. It is now to be re-scheduled - tentatively for May, God willing. More details next newsletter.

U tube Clips Worth Looking At!

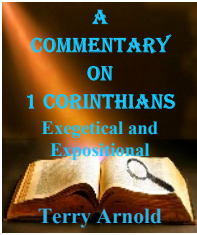
A sermon 'Soul Winning' (Acts 8:4-5). A solid primer to evangelism from scripture and in practise.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DgW8uYXsxAY&list=PLp88AentmvGO21jEoO7scSTVfM5VQcQuN&index=7>

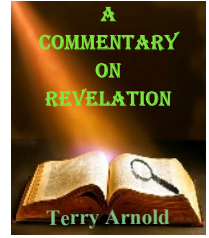
'The Todd White and Michael Brown interview' - A satirical look at a very popular faith healer and one who was supported by the likes of Dr Michael Brown. See first hand the lies and the trickery in healings. Warning: one may need some patience to bear with the 10 minutes of satire and repetition.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=186zj1dfS40>

**** New Books ****



The author has in recent years completed commentaries on *First Corinthians* and *Revelation*. We now have these books as PDF documents for a donation. (Hard copies are currently not available).



'A Commentary on First Corinthians - Exegetical and Expositional' (330 pages)
'A Commentary on Revelation - Exegetical and Expositional' (150 pages).

The First Corinthians commentary is exhaustive and includes chapter study questions. It is designed for the preacher and student, and contains detailed exegetical, expositional and pastoral notes.

The Revelation commentary likewise is expositional and adapted from the series published in *Diakrisis* between 2020 to 2023.

The following endorsements have been given for the books:

'With meticulous exegetical precision...the author carefully navigates through the entirety of 1 Corinthians providing a thorough verse-by-verse explanation...a highly recommended resource for readers seeking deep understanding and application of the text'. (Todd Stanton, Pastor-Teacher, Sydney)

'...Terry reveals the heart of the Apostle John's revelation...by 'leaving no stone unturned' approach to the interpretation and meaning...This work will encourage, excite, and motivate the reader to a greater appreciation of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ...I heartily recommend this commentary on Revelation' (Pastor Keith Henderson, Qld)

Subscription Form

I am interested in receiving the *free* bi-monthly TA Ministries newsletter '*Diakrisis*' by
 hardcopy by *e-mail* (tick boxes)

Send this form to:
TA Ministries
PO Box 432,
Babinda, Qld, 4861, Australia

Name-----Address-----

E-mail-----Phone-----

Signed-----Date-----

(Optional) I enclose \$----- as a donation for costs and postage.

For transfer deposits: National Bank, BSB 084 705 Account No. 02737 1856