

Editorials

1997 DESIGNATED AS INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PRAYER FOR JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

During the past several decades it seems that the commanding expressions of the Christian faith have been reduced to clichés. T-shirts, bumper stickers, pencils and other trinkets all are used to express the truisms of Christianity. Yet in spite of the trivialization this merchandising brings about, biblical truth does emerge. Consider, for example, the saying, "Prayer Changes Things." James 5:16 declares, "The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much."

In the past 20 years, God has raised up individuals and ministries who have invested time, effort and financial resources to reach Jehovah's Witnesses with the Gospel of Jesus Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Tracts, books and cassette tapes all have been produced in abundance. Support groups and conventions, geared specifically for ex-Jehovah's Witnesses (and soon-to-be ex-Jehovah's Witnesses), have been held repeatedly, not only in the United States but throughout the world. A nationwide endeavor of

non-threatening recorded telephone messages also has been implemented to heighten a Jehovah's Witness' awareness that life outside the Watchtower organization does exist. All of these have been used of our Lord, not just to lead a Jehovah's Witness from the grasp of a "false prophet," but to faith in Jesus Christ.

Perhaps, for many, the actions cited above have superseded what should have been the very foundation of our evangelism: prayer. While programs and techniques are used of God, they can become man-driven. Prayer, however, is God-activated. It has the power to unveil the Gospel to those who are perishing. It has the potential to give sight to the blinded minds of the unbelieving.

Therefore, several countercult and apologetic ministries have designated 1997 as an "International Year of Prayer on Behalf of Jehovah's Witnesses." The campaign, introduced at the annual *Witnesses Now for Jesus Convention* in Pennsylvania last October, was inaugurated by Dan Hall of Reveal Ministries and is co-sponsored by Witness Inc. and Personal Freedom Outreach.

The goal of this important prayer effort is to make Christians throughout the world not only

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with admirers kneeling before her wheelchair and getting letters from those who said they slept with her books beneath their pillows (Henry, pg. 164).

In the end, Smith did not believe her own perfectionistic ideas and was skeptical of everyone (Henry, pg. 165). She wondered about heaven and if she had everything wrong and had hindered multitudes of people and that perhaps some would “try to persuade Peter to shut the gate against me” (Henry, pg.

165).

While Marie Henry does her best to show Hannah Whitall Smith as a slightly scarred saint and spiritual hero, thorough research and honest reporting reveals more of a confused, unhappy heretic than hero, someone whose life demonstrates that more attention needs to be given to the Word of God than to emotions, mystical inner “revelations” and fad doctrines. Smith’s view of God and her outspoken

Universalism put her squarely in the heretical camp.

An examination of Smith and her book is not complete without asking if the goal of the Christian life is happiness or holiness. Our days might be bitter, but God’s love remains sweet. In the light of the admissions by the Apostle Paul of times that even he was temporarily “cast down” (2 Corinthians 7), we cannot expect to be happy constantly until we get to heaven. 

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aware of the lost spiritual condition of Jehovah’s Witnesses, but to call believers to unite in intercessory prayer for these lost souls throughout the year. Our prayer is that Jehovah’s Witnesses at every level will come to know the *real* Jesus Christ and trust Him for salvation (John 1:12-13; 3:14-18; 5:39-40).

Recently a woman from Michigan wrote to PFO and asked for a list of the members of the Governing Body of Jehovah’s Witnesses so that she could appeal before the throne of God specifically and individually by name for the salvation of these men. What an awesome God we commune with to think that we can plead His grace to transform the unregenerate minds and hearts of those in the top leadership position of this wicked organization. (Incidentally, the ten men who make up this board are: Carey Barber, John Barr, Lloyd Barry, President Milton Henschel, Ted Jaracz, Karl Klein, Gerrit Lösch, Albert Schroeder, Lyman Swingle and Dan Sydlik.)

In addition to praying for the Governing Body of the Watchtower Society, Christians are also encouraged to intercede on behalf of the workers at the various Bethel headquarters’ facilities; circuit, district and zone overseers; and elders, pioneers and missionaries. Just as important, we need to pray for the spiritual protection of the unsuspecting being proselytized into the Watchtower cult.

The words of John MacArthur certainly offer motivation and guidelines for the need of prayer.

He writes that,

“Prayer for the lost is ultimately directed at God as an act of worship, because the salvation of sinners causes them to give glory to Him. ... Praying for the lost should never be cold, detached, or impersonal, like a public defender assigned to represent a defendant. Understanding the depths of their misery and pain, and their coming doom, we must cry to God for the salvation of sinners” (*Alone With God*, pp. 135-136).

Charles Spurgeon once said,

“Before God does a great work, He calls His people to prayer.”

As prayer warriors on behalf of Jehovah’s Witnesses who need to be set free in Christ, let our voices be heard unto the Lord. God will honor the prayers of the saints for the lost. Our most effective evangelism begins with prayer. Our most powerful weapon is prayer. Consider where might your spiritual life be, had a concerned parent or friend not prayed for you to come to know the risen Savior? PFO, and the co-sponsoring ministries, call upon Christians around the world to commit as “prayer warriors” on behalf of Jehovah’s Witnesses and are asked to pray daily for all involved in the Watchtower.

For materials promoting this effort, including flyers, press releases and posters, write Dan Hall at Reveal Ministries, P.O. Box 52, Walnut Grove, CA 95690 or phone him at (916) 776-4705 or (916) 537-9058.

—MKG