



PERSONAL
FREEDOM
OUTREACH

VOL. 7, NO. 3

JULY-SEPTEMBER, 1987

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newsletter

SCIENTOLOGY:

Science or Science Fiction?

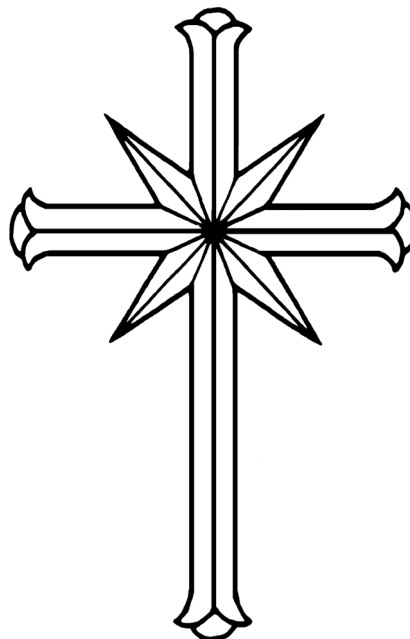
His books are everywhere! The 78 science fiction works of L. Ron Hubbard can be seen in almost every local bookstore. However, Hubbard, who died of a stroke in January 1986, is better known as the founder of a pseudoreligion called Scientology.

Scientology is a mixture of strange buzzwords, Utopian promises, Hindu mysticism, cultic claims and science fiction. Hubbard launched his religion in the 1950s by publishing the cult's bible, **Dianetics, The Modern Science of Mental Health**.

To understand Dianetics and Scientology, one must enter a world of weird words and unintelligible phrases. "Thetans" are "souls of humans." "OTs" are "operating thetans." When it comes to bizarre nomenclature, the ancient gnostics had nothing on Hubbard.

Hubbard teaches that man is basically good and that bad memories stored in his mind can be contacted and erased. This is done through a lengthy and expensive process called "auditing," in which a Scientology counselor interviews the initiate and measures emotional responses during the "audit" on what is called an "E-meter." This purported scientific instrument is said by some to be little more than tin cans and electrodes.

Hubbard said this process could free a person of false brain programming, called "engrams," and restore him to



Scientology Cross

by REV. G. RICHARD FISHER

perfect brain function, a state called being "clear." Scientologists say thousands of people have reached this state.

Scientology's cosmology is even more bizarre. According to an Associated Press story published in the Ashbury Park (N.J.) Press on Nov. 6, 1985, court documents revealed that the Church of Scientology secretly teaches that 75 million years ago, Earth was called Teegeeach and was

among 90 planets ruled by Xemu, who spread his evil by thermonuclear bombs. Is it any wonder Scientology members tried to suppress the documents' publication?

A follower of Scientology can make vast improvements (in his own judgment) and still not be "clear." In such a case, the advances and changes are called a "release." One exercise is an attempt to recall negative experiences in the womb.

In 1985, Hubbard developed states beyond "clear." Writers Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge comment on these changes:

"Cult advertisements and informal comments vary, but, in general, it is no longer boldly asserted that clears are geniuses or that they never get colds. Clear status has been mystified and subtly deflated. Even the most doctrinally learned Scientologists may be unsure exactly what palpable qualities a clear is supposed to manifest, other than confidence and loyalty to the cult. Therefore, new clears may not feel justified in criticizing the quality of the clear experience, but they still may want more than they have received. The original promise of clear, and much more, is offered by a still growing series of levels above clear, the operating thetan or 'OT' statuses (**The Future of**

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EDITORIALS

PTL: PEOPLE THAT LOSE

The press is having a field day with the PTL calamity. They are calling it “Pearlygate,” “Heaven’s Gate,” “Holy Wars.”

How did it happen? The PTL Club long ago lost its spiritual priorities and no one would speak up about it. It became a multimillion-dollar corporation involved in pursuits that had nothing to do with spreading the Gospel. The \$129 million in holdings included a 500-room hotel with 25 boutiques. There were plans to double the number of rooms at the Heritage Grand Hotel at a cost of \$29 million. Jim and Tammy Bakker themselves amassed \$700,000 worth of real estate and cars. The new PTL leadership recently showed journalists the Bakker’s suite at the hotel, which included a 500-square-foot closet. The story conjured up visions of reports on Imelda Marcos after she and her husband Ferdinand, the deposed president of the Philippines, fled that country last year. PTL could easily stand for “Pass the Loot.”

The Bakkers and the PTL board were a living example of confused priorities and of the tragedy of ignoring the Word of God. They even believed that sin could be covered by money.

Scripture warns us that some would “suppose that godliness is a means of gain” (I Tim. 6:5). The heady mixture of money, power, and sex has toppled many. Another warning ignored by the PTL leadership follows that verse; “But they that will be rich fall into a temptation and snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all (kinds of) evil: which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But the man of God flees these things” (I Tim. 6:9-11).

If someone at PTL had taken I Timothy 6 seriously, perhaps this disaster could have been averted.

What a tragedy to see headlines as “DRUGGED WINE DID THE TRICK, CLAIMS BIBLE BELLE” in the March 28 New York Post. Paul warned that we are not to give the enemy occasion to blaspheme. Now by implication every preacher is brought under ridicule and suspicion. This horrendous tragedy will have repercussions for years to come.

Those who run ministries supported by donations work in a precarious balance. Some never get all the money their ministries need. Some, like the Bakkers, get more than they can wisely use.

Do believers really need a multimillion-dollar hotel and theme park? Did Jesus? Did Paul? Again to that crucial chapter — I Timothy 6. “But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into this world, and it is

certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us therewith be content.”

May we all learn from the PTL debacle.

-GRF



MORE MONEY

Some humorist a number of years ago said the word “Mormon” must be derived from the words “more money.” There may be more truth than humor in that remark.

Shortly after **The Book of Mormon** went on sale in 1830, Martin Harris, the financial backer of the work, told a relative that a revelation from God set the sale price at \$1.75. That would have yielded nearly 200% profit on Martin Harris’ \$3,000 investment into the first printing of 5,000 books. Harris had guaranteed payment of this printing cost by mortgaging the 151-acre farm on which he lived.

However, the book did not sell at first. Near the end of March 1830, just as Harris was crossing the road with a bundle of Mormon books in his hands, Joseph Smith Jr. arrived from Pennsylvania. He was on his way to his father’s home in Manchester, N.Y., being driven there by Joseph Knight, Sr. in his wagon. Harris caught sight of them in the wagon as they were coming down the road. He rushed up to Joseph and implored him for a revelation, saying, “The books will not sell, for nobody wants them.” A subsequent purported revelation reduced the cost to a more reasonable \$1.25 a copy and the young prophet issued written direction not to sell the book for less than that amount. Unfortunately for Harris, this would reduce his profit to a mere 100% on his investment, should the book start to sell.

Undoubtedly, young Joseph expected to get a good share of the profits since he was, as the book itself announced, the “author and proprietor” of the work, and he and his family were constantly pressed by their creditors. It was probably Harris’ fear that the Smiths would claim most of the monetary rewards that resulted in Joseph’s father allaying his concerns by giving Harris a written agreement on Jan. 16, 1830, that he would receive enough of the profits from the first printing to pay the printing bill.

Consequently, when Harris moved from the area and left 300 copies of **The Book of Mormon** with Thomas Lakey, he instructed Lakey that he (Harris) was to receive \$1.00 of the sale price of every book sold. Furthermore, in a court trial in which Harris testified about the publishing of the book, he mentioned that he had sent 2,300 copies

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CHRISTIAN FILMMAKER, MORMONS GET COZY

The Genesis Project, best-known for its feature-length film **Jesus**, which was based on the Gospel of Luke, reportedly has sold reproduction and distribution rights of its biblical films to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Mormons apparently have edited the films to suit their own theology. For example, missing from the LDS version of the opening chapters of Genesis are the Genesis Project's renditions of the stories of Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel. The films are being promoted and shown in Mormon churches across the country and also available to church members in videocassette form.

Genesis Project representative John Heyman responded to a PFO query on the matter by saying that his organization sells its films to anyone regardless of religious affiliation. He went on to say that Mormons are by far the Genesis Project's largest purchasers with church members having acquired some 80,000 tapes. Heyman did not respond to the question of whether the Mormons are re-editing the film.

The LDS version carries a copyright by the Corporation of the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and sells the videocassettes for considerably less than the Genesis Project does for its version. Also stressed is that the films are the work of the Genesis Project, a non-denominational agency.

Heyman also chastised PFO's inquiry as to why the rights of the films would be sold to a cult such as the Mormons by stating that I must express my sorrow, therefore, that I perceive your letter as demonstrating a prejudice which I had very much hoped would not ever affect Bible teaching."

-MKG



SUPREME COURT WON'T HEAR SCIENTOLOGY CASE

The U.S. Supreme Court has let stand a ruling that would force the Church of Scientology of California to post a \$60 million bond — an amount the church said would bankrupt it — to appeal a judgment against it.

The ruling stems from charges brought against the church by Larry Wollersheim, a former Scientology member. He sued the church for fraud and infliction of emotional distress arising from its technique of "auditing."

The trial court dismissed the fraud charges, but awarded \$5 million in compensatory damages and \$25 million in punitive damages for the emotional-distress charges.

Under California law, the loser in a lawsuit must post twice the amount of the judgment or a surety bond of one-and-a-half times the amount.

The church argues it does not have the money, but attorneys for Wollersheim argued that the California church is part of the larger, national organization that does have the money.

-KAM



BOOK OF MORMON NOW IN ANIMATED FORM

The Living Scriptures, producer of dramatized audio tapes and other Mormon church-related visuals, has released the first ever films based on the Book of Mormon.

The production, **Animated Stories From The Book of Mormon**, consists of a series of six videocassettes. The premiere feature is "Nephi and the Brass Plates." Others, such as the "Journey to the Promised Land" and "Abinadi and King Noah," are to follow.

More than \$2 million was invested in the project. The producer and director of the films is a 14-year employee of Walt Disney Productions.

The Living Scriptures also is seeking to take strong action against those Mormons who will be less than honest. A \$2,500 reward is offered "to anyone who can give evidence to convict copyright violators of any of our video products."

-MKG



HUBBARD LEAVES BEHIND \$26 MILLION

Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard, who died in early 1986, left behind \$26 million in assets excluding trust funds, according to documents filed by the executor of his estate.

The assets included \$25 million in copyright and trademark materials and \$1,305,706 in oil, gas and business investments, said attorney Charles Ogle of Morro Bay, Calif.

The estate documents were prepared in Los Angeles by Norman F. Starkey, the executor of Hubbard's estate.

The copyright items were listed in a 4-inch-thick binder and included movies, books, poems, music choreography, office memos, photographs and the words Scientology and Dianetics. Ownership of all copyrighted items passed on to the Church of Scientology.

-KAM

more on



EISEGESIS and PLAGIARISM

A FURTHER CHALLENGE TO THE ORIGINALITY
OF THE WRITINGS OF VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE

by Jay Valusek and John Juedes

The Way International emphasizes the originality of its teachings and the integrity of its leaders and ministry. The group's founder, Victor Paul Wierwille, claimed that he was audibly told by God that He would be taught the Word because no one else on Earth knew long-forgotten biblical truths.

However, in recent years some researchers have raised evidence that Wierwille used and copied writings by other authors, presenting them to readers as though they were his own. For example, John Juedes published excerpts from the book, **The Gift of the Holy Spirit** by J.E. Stiles side-by-side with excerpts from Wierwille's **Receiving the Holy Spirit Today** (John P. Juedes, "Wierwille Borrows ... A Challenge to the Originality of His Teaching on 'Receiving the Holy Spirit,'" **Personal Freedom Outreach Newsletter**, January-March 1983, pgs. 1, 10-11.) It was apparent that Wierwille used portions of Stiles' 1948 book to produce his second edition in 1955. The plagiarized sections appear in the current edition, although the wording is slightly revised; they also may have appeared in the first edition in 1953.

When Wierwille published the third edition of the book in 1957, he added material from E.W. Bullinger's 1905 work, **The Giver and His Gifts**. Juedes published six pages of excerpts from the two books, showing that Wierwille imported Bullinger's content, structure, conclusions and even some wording into his own book (Douglas Morton and John Juedes, **The Integrity and Accuracy of The Way's Word**, **Personal Freedom Outreach**, 1980, pgs. 43-48.) Wierwille never placed quotation marks around the sections he copied (often virtually word for word), nor did he ever cite a source, or even suggest that he used sources. In fact, he states in the preface that he did not use sources other than the Bible.

Now more evidence of Wierwille's plagiarism has come to light. Wierwille in 1963 published a pamphlet called **How to Be a Christian**. This was reprinted as part of the book **The New Dynamic Church (NDC)** in 1971, and may have been published in a similar form as "The Joy of His Fellowship in **The Way Magazine** in 1957 and as a booklet in 1953. The same material was originally published by E.W. Kenyon as chapter 20 of his book **The Father and His Family (FHF)**. Again, Wierwille did not place the borrowed material in quotation marks, nor did he cite or suggest the existence of any source. Kenyon's book was published before his death in 1948, years

before Wierwille's writings appeared. Compare these excerpts from the two works:

Kenyon: "I suppose I have lost faith in myself. You see I have wanted to be a Christian, I have wanted to have God's help in this fight of life. I have gone to the altar again and again, and received nothing. I've sought and cried after God so many times and failed." (**FHF**, pg. 229)

Wierwille (The Searcher): "I suppose ... I have lost faith in myself. You see, I really wanted to be a Christian, to have God's help... help in life ... I went to the altar again and again and yet I received nothing. I have sought and cried after God so much and so many times that I feel that I am a complete failure." (**NDC**, pg. 1)

Kenyon: "Did you ever realize that salvation is a gift, that it is not necessary that you go any place to get it? You can find it anywhere. Did you ever realize that it is not what you do, but what He did for you that counts? All there is to receiving Eternal Life, becoming a child of God is to receive something instead of giving something. You have tried to get it by earning it." (**FHF**, pg. 229)

Wierwille: "Did you ever stop to think that salvation is a gift, that it is unnecessary for you to go anywhere to get it? You can find God anywhere ... Do you realize that to receive salvation is not dependent upon what you do but what He did for you? Do you realize that to be a child of God, to receive Eternal Life ... is to receive something instead of giving something? You have missed the joy of His fellowship because you have tried to earn or work for it." (**NDC**, pg. 1)

Four years after the pamphlet **How to Be a Christian** appeared, Wierwille published a book, **Are the Dead Alive Now? (ADAN)**. His book's content closely matches the contents of three books by E.W. Bullinger (who died in 1913): **How to Enjoy the Bible (HEB)**, **Selected Writings (SW)**, and **Figures of Speech Used in the Bible (FSUB)**. Again, Wierwille does not give any indication that he used these sources and the reader is led to believe that Wierwille's research is original. Compare the parallel passages here, taking note of similarity of content and wording. The passages are found in all editions of Wierwille's books — 1967, 1968 and

1971. The page numbers cited below are found in the 1971 printing.

Bullinger: “The solemn circumstances under which the words were uttered marked the wonderful faith of the dying malefactor...” (HEB, pg. 48)

Wierwille: “The circumstances under which the words were uttered indicate the wonderful believing of the dying malefactor.” (ADAN, pg. 80)

Bullinger: “The word ‘verily’ points us to the solemnity of the occasion, and to the importance of what is about to be said.” (HEB, pg. 48)

Wierwille: “The answer Jesus gave was also very important. The word ‘verily’ by Jesus points to the earnestness and gravity of the occasion.” (ADAN, pg. 80)

Wierwille published several books in 1971, though many or most of the chapters were simply reprints of previously published articles. One of these books, **The Bible Tells Me So (TBTMS)**, included a chapter called “The Counsel of the Lord.” The content and wording is very similar to an article by Bullinger called “The Knowledge of God,” which is available as part of the book **Selected Writings (SW)**. Wierwille did not place quotation marks around sections he used, nor does he cite or imply that he used any other person’s writings as his source. Since Bullinger died three years before Wierwille was born, it is apparent that Bullinger could not have drawn any ideas from Wierwille. Please compare the following passages from the two books:

Bullinger: “It is the very last thing that the natural man will admit. He thinks he can direct his own way.” (SW, pg. 60)

Wierwille: “It is the very last thing the natural man or the carnal Christian wants to admit, for each man thinks he is right in his own eyes and each man thinks he can direct his own way.” (TBTMS, pg. 50)

Bullinger: “So that, whether enemies abound, or days be dark, or Satan’s assaults be many, or doubts and fears increase even then we shall be, and must be, ‘more than conquerors’ through Him who loveth us. And the Lord the Spirit will ever direct our hearts into His love, and not into our infirmities; and we shall say... [Psalm 73:22-25 quoted].” (SW, pg. 63)

Wierwille: “So then whether enemies abound, Satan assaults, days be dark with doubts and fears increasing, even then we are ‘more than conquerors’ through Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. It is the Lord God who must direct our hearts unto His love to the end that we will make the same confession as recorded in Psalms [Psalm 73:22-25 quoted].” (TBTMS, pg. 54)

Just before Wierwille’s death in 1984, more evidence of plagiarism was found. At that time Wierwille wrote a regular column for **The Way Magazine** called “Our Times. The March/April 1984 installment titled

“Rediscovering Figures of Speech is essentially the same as part of Bullinger’s **Figures of Speech Used in The Bible (FSUB)**. Note these excerpts:

Bullinger: “The ancient Greeks reduced these new and peculiar forms to science, and gave names to more than two hundred of them.” (FSUB, pg. v)

Wierwille: “The ancient Greeks established these new laws and peculiar forms of their language and gave names to more than two hundred varieties of them.” (The Way Magazine, March/ April 1984, pg. 35)

Bullinger: “The natural man cannot understand the Word of God. It is foolishness unto him.” (FSUB, pg. vi)

Wierwille: “The natural man of only body and soul can never understand the Scriptures, for the Word of God is foolishness unto him.” (The Way Magazine, March/April 1984, pg. 35)

Four months later, Wierwille again used Bullinger’s material to produce his “Our Times column in the July/August issue of **The Way Magazine**. His article, “Search the Scriptures,” draws heavily from Bullinger’s **How to Enjoy the Bible (HEB)**. Wierwille again cites no source for his material. Compare these sections of the two writings:

Bullinger: “A Revelation in writing must necessarily be given in ‘words.’ The separate words, therefore, in which it is given must have the same importance and authority as the revelation as a whole.” (HEB, pg. 1)

Wierwille: “To have a revelation from God in writing, it is axiomatic and necessary that it be in words. The Scriptures being the Word of Truth necessitates individual words in the Word being true. If the lesser is not true, the greater, or whole cannot be true.” (The Way Magazine, July/August 1984, pg. 35)

Bullinger: “The Bible is its own best proof of its inspiration.” (HEB, pg. 1)

Wierwille: “The Bible is its own best proof of inspiration...” (The Way Magazine, July/August 1984, pg. 35)

What Is Plagiarism?

Webster’s Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary defines plagiarism as “to steal or pass off as one’s own (the ideas or words of another) ... To present as one’s own an idea or product derived from an existing source.”

It is clear that Wierwille did use existing sources, including at least six books from at least three authors, all of which were written before Wierwille published his writings. The excerpts above make it obvious that Wierwille did incorporate ideas and words of other men into his publications. Furthermore, since Wierwille never used quotation marks around these sections, never cited a source, never suggested in these publications that sources existed, and occasionally claimed that his

(continued on next page)

research was original and drawn exclusively from the Bible, it is clear that he did present others' ideas, words and products as his own. Wierwille stated publicly that he met J.E. Stiles and read books by Stiles, Bullinger and Kenyon before he wrote his own books. (See further, John Juedes and Douglas Morton, **From 'Vesper Chimes' to 'The Way International'**, CARIS, Milwaukee, 1983, pgs. 11-15.)

The Nature of Wierwille's Plagiarism

Wierwille clearly practiced plagiarism throughout his "ministry." Almost all of Wierwille's theology can be traced to authors such as Bullinger and George Lamsa, so one may say that whole ideas were plagiarized, even though exact plagiarism of wording may not always be found.

Wierwille's use of these sources is obvious. Although Wierwille slightly rewrote his sources as he copied them, the verbal similarity is unmistakable.

Most followers of The Way International have not seen evidence of this plagiarism. Many who have seen them have cut off all ties with the group, saddened at the deception and lack of integrity on the part of The Way International. Nolan K. Yogi, General Counsel for The Way International, responded to one letter of inquiry about plagiarism in this way:

"I have fully reviewed your letter of March 7, 1986, concerning alleged copyright violations. Please be in-

formed that I have compared your reference of Chapter 20 of E.W. Kenyon's **The Father And His Family** to Chapter 3 of the work, **The New Dynamic Church**, by Dr. Victor Paul Wierwille. While there are similarities in thought and ideas, there is no evidence of duplication or 'plagiarism,' and certainly there has been no violation of the U.S. Copyright Law as you suggest."

Mr. Yogi may or may not be accurate that U.S. copyright law was violated by Wierwille's use of Kenyon's chapter. But in either case, Wierwille did practice plagiarism — the use of another author's ideas or words — several times. This is an unethical practice even in non-Christian society, witness the hundreds of students who have forfeited academic degrees and journalists who have lost jobs for it. Even grade school teachers notice, and punish, plagiarism among their students.

Implications of Wierwille's Plagiarism

Plagiarism shows a lack of integrity. It is deception. Plagiarism is not original. The plagiarizer is reduced to being a copying machine.

Jesus Christ said: "By their fruits you will know them" (false prophets). One fruit is integrity. Wierwille's 30-year habit of plagiarism is strong evidence of a lack of integrity, a sign that he wandered from the narrow way and led people down a path that does not lead to God through Jesus Christ. *

SCIENTOLOGY

(from page 1)

Religion, pg. 274).

These writers estimate that it can cost more than \$15,000 to work one's way to the top. There are now close to 100 steps and 64 levels that take years to attain. Scientology issued a booklet in 1982 titled **From Clear to Eternity**, which lists steps and the false status they confer.

Those ready to go "clear" (called "Preclears") can cross the threshold at "advanced Orgs," training centers scattered all over the globe. The "orgs" can cost from \$1000 to \$4000 plus travel time and expenses.

Such extravagant claims make it easy to understand why lawsuits have been filed against the Church of Scientology by people who don't believe they have received their money's worth. The Oregon courts have ruled that Scientology's claims are not religious but magical (**The Future of Religion**, pg. 265).

There is no doctrine of God in

Scientology. The highest authority is not Christ or the Bible but Hubbard and his books. Hubbard's book, **Have You Lived Before This Life?** reveals that he embraced the Hindu teaching of reincarnation. (See **PFO Newsletter**, Vol. 4, No. 3, "Reincarnation: Is It Compatible With Christianity?" Also available in tract form.)

Scientology in effect deifies man and offers him a kind of "boot strap" salvation. One must pay and pull oneself up through Hubbard's steps to the goal of being "clear." First Timothy 6:20 reminds us to "keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."

A reading of Romans 3 gives a far different picture of man's lost spiritual state. Romans 3:9-10 says we are sinful and unrighteous. Romans 3:19 says that without Christ we are declared guilty.

Amazing as it may seem, Scientology is trying to gain acceptance among mainline Christian denominations. Even more amazing is that it

probably will succeed. It claims to offer "therapy" and has Sunday "services" in its "churches." Hubbard incorporated the organization as a church in 1955. Scientology's amalgamation of religion, crude psychoanalysis, positive thinking, humanism and indoctrination snags many people.

Yet, we shouldn't be surprised. The Apostle Paul anticipated groups such as Scientology even in his day when he wrote to Timothy: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine ... they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Timothy 4:3-4).

Editor's Note: Books that do a good job of debunking Scientology and Dianetics are: **Scientology, The New Religion** by George Malko; **The Future of Religion** by Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge; **Curious New Cults** by William J. Peterson; **Snapping** by Florence Conway and James Seigelman; and **The Scandal of Scientology** by Paulette Cooper. Together these look at the movement scripturally and sociologically. *

west. However, even if he cleared \$1.00 a copy on the whole 2,600 copies, he still would fall \$400 short of recovering his initial investment. Harris had good reason to want a written guarantee.

The Smiths, on the other hand, must have been hoping to make a substantial gain for themselves. David Marks, a young Free Will Baptist evangelist who visited the Whitmers on March 29, 1830, reported them as saying that, “the angel told Smith to sell the book at a price which was one dollar and eight cents per copy more than the cost, that they **‘might have the temporal profit, as well as the spiritual.’**”

In keeping with this purported angelic instruction to make money on the book, Smith sent some of his followers to Canada to sell the copyright to the Book of Mormon in that country. However, the representatives returned emptyhanded. When David Whitmer heard of this failure, he asked Smith about it. According to Whitmer, Smith replied: “Some revelations are of God, some revelations are of man and some revelations are of the devil.”

Since Whitmer was not a member of the group that went to Canada, and he recorded the incident many years later, some Mormon writers have been reluctant to give credence to the story. However, a letter from one of the party who was sent has been in the miscellaneous papers in the archives of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Independence, Mo., since some time in the 1930s.

The letter, written from Fishing River, Mo., on Feb. 2, 1848, by Hiram Page, was addressed to Smith’s apostate apostle William McLellin. This is much closer to the time of the trip than Whitmer’s account, and written by one who participated in that memorable journey. Unfortunately, about 1985 the letter was stolen from the archives by someone who even removed the index card from the card file so no one would call for the item.

Several Mormon scholars, however, had made copies of the text either in whole or in part, and the text is therefore recoverable. With our capitalization and punctuation added but the original spelling retained, the part of the letter dealing with the Canadian revelation reads:

“Joseph herd that there was a chance to sell a copyright in Canada for any useful book that was used in the states.”

“Joseph thought this would be a good oportunity to get a handsome sum of money, which was to be (after the expences were taken out) for the exclusive benefit of the Smith famaly, and was to be at the disposal of Joseph.”

“Accordingly, Olver Cowdery, Joseph Knight, Hiram Page and Joseah Stoel [Josiah Stowell] were chosen to do the business. We were living some 30 to 100 miles apart. The necessary preparation was made [by them] in a sly manner so as to keep Martin Harris from drawing a share of the money.”

“It was told me we were to go by revilation, but when we assembled at brother Smith s, there was no revilation for us to go. But we were all anxious to get a revilation to go, and when it came we were to go to Kingston where we were to sell, if they would not harden their hearts.”

“But when we got there, there was no purchaser, neither were they authorized at Kingston to buy rights for the provence, but little York was the place where such business had to be done.”

“We were to get \$8,000 dollars. We were treated with the best of respects by all we met with in Kingston.”

“By the above we may learn how a revilation may be receved and the person receving it not be benefited.”

The revelation had sent the four emissaries to the wrong location — to Kingston, over 160 miles from the proper place, little York (now Toronto).

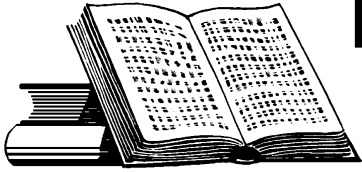
In the April 1987 issue of the **Ensign**, Dr. Richard L. Anderson quoted from this letter only the words that seemed to stress the conditional nature of the revelation — “if they would not harden their hearts.” Far from hardening their hearts, Page reported that they were treated with the best respect by all they met in Kingston. The failure of the revelation was not due to hardness of heart but because they were sent to the wrong city.

Anderson also failed to mention Hiram’s statement that Joseph’s “anxious desire for filthy lucre ... was an error in him.” Hiram noted that this lust for lucre had previously brought Smith into disfavor with God. The Canadian revelation, he said, ran counter to all the scriptures and against what Smith’s own revelations had taught.

The extent of Joseph’s passion for riches is evident from the fact that Joseph hoped to realize \$8,000 from the sale, to be used, once the actual expenses of the trip had been paid, exclusively by his family, and under his personal control. Harris was to be kept from sharing in any such profits. When one considers that in 1830 the average farm worker earned \$300 a year, Joseph stood to make what would have taken him 25 years of work on the farm to earn, had the sale been realized. It would have been like becoming a millionaire overnight.

While we cannot say what motives were in Smith’s mind in founding the Mormon religion, it would appear that attaining financial gain was among them. It may have been the pressure for “more money” that set the precedent in the church he founded, and resulted in it becoming the financial empire it is today.

Had Smith or Harris been able to live until the present day, they could have made a small fortune on just one copy of that first edition. Today a single copy of the 1830 printing sells for about \$5,000 — nearly twice what Martin had invested to print the entire 5,000 copies, and close to what Joseph had hoped to realize on the sale of the copyright in Canada. With 5,000 copies to sell at current prices, they could make “more money” than they had ever dreamed of.



BOOKS IN REVIEW

THE HEALTH AND WEALTH GOSPEL

by Bruce Barron

InterVarsity Press, 204 pages, \$6.95

In his book, **The Health and Wealth Gospel**, author Bruce Barron points out that the Word-Faith error, like most scriptural errors, is the illegitimate child of neglected truth. As Walter Martin points out, "the way some people pray, if God actually answered their prayers, they would fall over in a dead faint."

Barron makes a good account of Scriptures taken out of context, such as Proverbs 6:2 and Matthew 8:17, by teachers such as E.W. Kenyon, Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland. Barron mentions their moderating remarks which, unfortunately, are overpowered by their extreme teachings.

Barron's approach has a few significant weaknesses. In his effort to be fair, he sometimes is too gentle and overlooks some of the Word-Faith teaching's more serious errors. For example, he relegates the heretical teaching on the atonement made by Kenyon, Hagin and Copeland to a footnote. This teaching that Christ died spiritually, went to hell, and had to be born again comes from a misunderstanding of an ambiguous statement in the Apostles' Creed, namely, "He descended into hell" (Greek: hades).

Barron also glosses over these teachers' authority. The faith teachers claim great authority for their teachings, especially Kenneth Hagin, who claims to be a prophet who gets his teachings directly via visions from Jesus. This is a grave claim, according to Deut. 13:1-3; 18:20; Jer. 23:25-32 and other passages. If their statements are

true, then we neglect them to our own peril, and those who speak against them are speaking against God. If false, however, then they are false prophets and should be denounced as such.

Barron also doesn't tell much of the people who have unnecessarily suffered guilt and fear because of Word-Faith teaching.

At every turn, Barron appears to give a solid criticism of Word-Faith teaching, but then he takes it back. An excerpt from the book's closing paragraph is a good example:

"Yes, the faith message does incorporate some bad hermeneutics — but who is so perfect as to cast the first stone? Even some of its most vocal critics credit the faith movement with positive achievements. And the argument that groups like the faith movement can only get worse as they get older and larger is not true; in fact, there have been signs that it may be getting better... ."

InterVarsity Press could have given us a better book than this.

-MD



Editors Note: The above publication is available from PFO-Midwest. Please add \$.70 to the price listed above to cover postage. This book is also available to those who help financially support us this quarter. Please see the "We Need Your Help Desperately!!" flyer for details.

We are also happy to announce that the publication **The Born-Again Jesus of The Word-Faith Movement** by Judith A. Matta is now back in print. This updated and expanded second edition is \$5.95 plus \$.70 postage. Although not listed on the "We Need Your Help Desperately!!" flyer, it may be chosen as an alternate selection. Simply hand write the title on the flyer as your choice.



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