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The Quarterly

# JOURNAL

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PERSONAL FREEDOM OUTREACH



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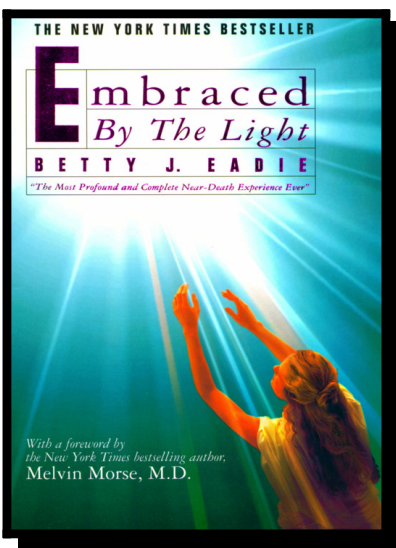
EDITOR: KEITH A. MORSE

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## Embraced By The Darkness

### Betty Eadie's Old Errors in New Age Dress

by G. Richard Fisher  
with M. Kurt Goedelman



"I understand that there is a vital, dynamic link between the spirit world and mortality, and that we need the spirits on the other side for our progression. I also saw that they are very happy to assist us in any way they can" (Betty Eadie in *Embraced By The Light*, pg. 48).

"For even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14).

Betty Eadie, a woman who claims to have died, gone to heaven and come back, has written a book purporting to give all kinds of information about "the other side" from Christ Himself received via an out-of-body experience. The book sits atop *The New York Times* best-seller list with more than a million copies sold, something Eadie attributes to the hope it brings people.

The Gallup Organization reports 8 million to 11 million people claim to have had a near-death or out-of-body experience. Trips to heaven seem to be in vogue these days and books and articles with astonishing claims seem to be a fad. (See further, "Survey of Alleged Trips to the Other Side, Heaven Can't Wait," by Bill Alnor, *Christian Research Jour-*

*nal*, Spring 1993.)

Acceptance of such stories within the church is a modern phenomenon. Throughout most of Church history such experiences were considered the domain of spiritists and occultists. Levitation and astral travel always have been categorized as "works of darkness" (see *Occult ABC*, by Kurt Koch, pp. 222-225).

This trend was kicked off and popularized in 1976 when *Guide-*

*posts Magazine* published an article on a purported trip to heaven by Betty Malz. Riding the wave of success of the magazine article, Malz's book, *My Glimpse of Eternity* (1977), made her a darling of the Charismatics and earned her a place in the *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*.

Many "tales from the other side" contradict one another. Cardiologist Maurice Rawlings reports:

"The typical description involves a beautiful light at the end of a very dark tunnel. Many Christians were convinced that the figure of light they encountered was Jesus because they saw Him on a cross, the exuberant experience forever changing their lives. Some others perceived a possible heaven conforming to their own particular faith. Remarkably, others saw the same tunnel and the apparent light turn into a horrible ring of fire, the light being inexplicably evil, convincing them that they had been to hell and back, an unheralded failure, the ultimate bane of existence. ... In both the United States and India, afterlife apparitions are commonly reported, but the experiences show many differences. The Americans, predomi-

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# Editorials

## BLACK BIBLE CHRONICLES

Rendering God's Word into English is a never-ending process. One of the more recent efforts is a version known as the **Black Bible Chronicles**. However, the language found in **Black Bible Chronicles** is a far cry from any other English translation.

Its developers say it aims to reach African-Americans who have difficulty understanding Scripture, even in modern English. Bringing God's Word to the lost is a noble cause, indeed. Reaching people with the Gospel is a divine command and one that Christians should follow zealously.

Bible professor Jack P. Lewis writes in defense of making the Bible plain to the common man: "It has been argued that we should not translate the Bible down to the people, but that we should educate the people up to the Bible. This logic, carried to its ultimate conclusion, would leave the Bible in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek and impose upon us the obligation of teaching all people those languages. Only those who learned the original languages could read the Bible. It would remain a closed book to all except the learned few" (**The English Bible From KJV to NIV**, pg. 9).

Updating terms in the Bible and replacing archaic language with up-to-date vocabulary has been done before. Moreover, the revisions do not merely cease at outdated vernacular, but include what some regard as replacing antiquated theology. There have been Bibles

written which obliterate any sexist reference. Terms such as "Father" have been replaced with "parent" to make the Bible more appealing to those of the feminist mindset.

This writer remembers, during the late '60s and early '70s frequently going to various coffee houses where God was spoken of as "Big Daddy," Jesus was "Bro," and the Holy Spirit was called "Spook." This nomenclature was not to be seen as offensive but as the natural evolution of language and expression. These were meant to be endearing terms, because the cold stuffy traditional, antiquated, and boring religious terms "weren't cutting it, baby."

So it is easy to understand the mission of the **Black Bible Chronicles**, when it "upgrades" familiar passages such as the account of Cain killing Abel, to "Cain wastes Abel." And, following close on the heels of this modification, is the serpent in Genesis 3 being referred to as "one bad dude."

Understandably, upgrading the biblical language always meets some hostility. The voices of tradition say that forcing modern street slang onto the pages of Scripture is slighting and demeaning to Holy Writ. "Leave it alone!" they say. Others, motivated by visions of street people being reached with the Gospel, justify the incorporation of modern street slang into familiar passages. The rationale behind publishing a Bible with slang expressions appears to be that this could be the only opportunity that some will ever have

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# News Updates

## CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS REAP BEQUEST AND LAWSUIT

Following a settlement that allowed the Christian Science Church to receive more than half of a \$100 million bequest, church leaders were slapped with a lawsuit alleging financial mismanagement.

A group of church members, calling themselves Members for the Manual, sued 14 current and former church directors and trustees, saying they have concealed the church's deteriorating financial condition and left it \$83 million in debt, according to the Jan. 2, 1994, edition of *The New York Times*.

The Christian Science Church was not named as a defendant in the suit, which was filed Dec. 30.

To receive the 53 percent share of the bequest, the Boston-based sect was required to publish a book likening Christian Science founder Mary Baker Eddy to Jesus Christ.

The arrangement divided the bequest among the Christian Science Church, Stanford University and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The church is to receive a 53 percent share, with the university and museum receiving 23.5 percent each.

For more than four decades the sect had refused to publish the work, **The Destiny of the Mother Church** by Bliss Knapp, as "authorized literature," contending that its thesis contradicted its teaching. The agreement says the book's third printing has been designated "authorized literature" of the church.

—MKG

## SCIENTOLOGY ASSETS REVEALED

The Church of Scientology has assets worth close to \$400 million, according to records submitted to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.

Among its holdings are two publishing houses, a cruise ship used as a "seagoing religious retreat," a 2,845-acre California ranch used as a school for the children of church staff members, and more than 45 buildings on 500 acres in Riverside County, California.

Scientology submitted its financial records and papers in its effort to obtain tax-exempt status from the U.S. Government. The reports were made public after the IRS granted the status to more than 20 Scientology

organizations late in 1993.

The Church of Scientology was founded in 1954 by L. Ron Hubbard, a science fiction writer. Hubbard, author of the book, **Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health**, died of a stroke in 1986.

—MKG

## POSITIVE THINKER NORMAN VINCENT PEALE DIES

The Rev. Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, the man responsible for integrating psychiatric principles into Christian belief, died Dec. 24, 1993. He was 95.

Peale was most noted for his book, **The Power of Positive Thinking**, which has sold nearly 20 million copies in 42 languages since its publication in 1952. Peale wrote more than 40 other books and was co-founder and co-editor of *Guideposts* magazine, along with his wife of 64 years, Ruth Stafford Peale.

Peale's message of "positive thinking" — the belief that faith, prayer and optimism can resolve even life's most difficult challenges — has been highly criticized for its dilution of Christian doctrine and promotion of self-reliance and materialistic rewards. (See further, *The Quarterly Journal*, Vol 12, No. 4.)

—MKG

## REVIVAL OF EVANGELICAL MINISTRIES TO NEW RELIGIONS UNDERTAKEN

Evangelical Ministries to New Religions (EMNR), a network of North American counter-cult ministries, is being revitalized after several years of inactivity. The EMNR coalition was conceived by Dr. Gordon Lewis of Denver Seminary as a result of several ad hoc committees that met during cult awareness conferences in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1982, a vote to authorize the actual organization of EMNR carried during a Santa Barbara convention. Two years later, Lewis filed the legal papers establishing the network of ministries. During the past few years, the federation had become dormant.

EMNR is not an alternative to counter-cult ministries, but will be an umbrella organization to broaden their scope. EMNR will promote a selection of approved books and tapes produced by cult and apologetic

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# Comic Book Hero to Convict

## THE INCREDIBLE SAGA OF JOHN TODD

by G. Richard Fisher

"The small but irreducible fraction of humanity that will believe anything, no matter how ridiculous, will continue to support the fakery and the fakers well into the future generations." — *James Randi*

"Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves." — *Jesus Christ*

Johnny Wayne Todd sits in prison in Columbia, S.C. He is prisoner 145461, confined to the Kirkland Correctional Institution since 1988, serving a 30-year sentence for a rape conviction.

In the 1970s, Todd swept through the Christian world with stories of having been a Grand Druid and high-ranking member of the Illuminati, privy to plans of an imminent world takeover. He claimed to be a personal friend of a Philip Rothschild of Britain (there is no Philip in the British Rothschild line). He called then-President Jimmy Carter the Antichrist and called Ayn Rand's novel, **Atlas Shrugged**, the Illuminati's secret takeover document.

Todd said that as one of the top occultists in the world, he had traveled the country mixing with powerful people. He cast himself at the center of a cosmic duel and as the key figure in the end-time countdown.

Some congregations heeded his message and began stockpiling food and thinking of going into hiding because they were convinced that the end was near (*Logos Journal*, March/April 1979, pp. 67-69). Many people still are wiping the egg off of their face from having believed

Todd's tales. Chick Publications still produces material based on his stories.

Now Todd claims that his fate is a result of a conspiracy of Christians and Christian institutions.

"Forget the past and you are doomed to repeat it," so the adage goes. Reviewing how gullible so many were may help us to be more discerning in the future.

### WHO IS JOHN TODD?

Darryl E. Hicks and David A. Lewis published a meticulously documented book in 1979 called **The Todd Phenomenon**. Hicks and Lewis documented a history of Todd's false conversions, multiple marriages, sexual perversion, misconduct, lies, slander, disregard for authority, major scrapes with the law and a pattern of running and hiding when the "jig was up."

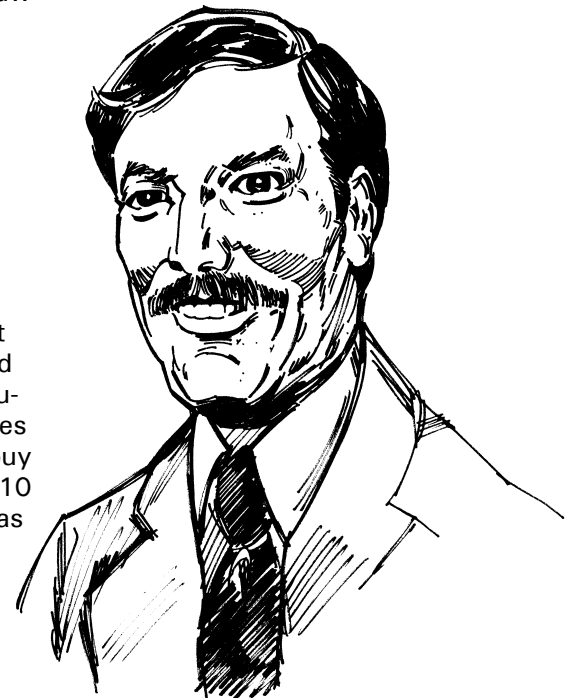
An example of his dire predictions:

"There's not one bar of gold in Fort Knox, by October of this year (1979), all money will be worthless, by October 15 all banks will be seized and nationalized. Soon afterward, President Carter will declare national law and suspend Congress. A national security card (complete with 3 sixes overlapping) will be issued to buy and sell. By December 1979, 10 million people will be out of work as the countdown to takeover takes over. All of this will be the result of the conglomerate strikes that will happen by April 1979. All of this will

lead to the complete destruction of cities as angry rioters loot and burn in search for food" (**The Todd Phenomenon**, pg. 136).

PFO has letters from Todd on file that say Charles Manson (whom Todd called a former friend) was going to lead a national riot of 200,000 prisoners and kill Christians in what Todd called "helter skelter." Jack Chick promoted this via the comic books *Angel of Light* and *Spellbound*.

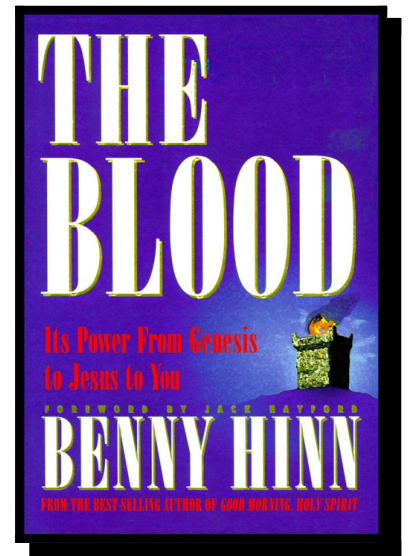
These comics are available today and Chick stands behind their message as a recent phone conversation with George Collins of Chick Publications revealed. Collins said that even if "Johnny has backslidden or fallen away, the message could not be discredited." Collins said Todd's claims have been corroborated. Yet,  
(continues on page 8)



# Christ's Blood Relic or Reality?

## Benny Hinn's New Book Revives a Medieval Fetish

by G. Richard Fisher



How should we view the blood of Christ and to what extent will saying the word "blood" help us as Christians? Have we missed something in not constantly calling out the word "blood"? Does the Bible offer us protection over our house and from demons when we say "blood"? Benny Hinn's new book entitled, **The Blood**, (i.e., the blood of Christ) is an enigma and somewhat contradictory.

A reading of Hinn's latest book shows that he has heeded the criticism of his earlier works. While the book's illustrations of the supernatural are as questionable and subjective as any in his previous works, its theological content, albeit borderline, gives an appearance of moving toward the mainstream of Christianity. If **The Blood** had been his first effort, it may well have passed without much note.

**The Blood** is the latest of many books that seeks to put a mystical aura around the blood of Christ. Its teachings are by no means new. Some of its ideas have been around for centuries.

Hinn was quoted in the November 1993 *Charisma* magazine as saying: "We have an invincible weapon in our warfare against the forces of evil: the blood of Jesus Christ. ... Satan and his demons are helpless

against the blood."

On pages 22-23 of **The Blood**, he writes, "The blood does not have magical power by itself. The power comes from the Lord Jesus Himself." And then on page 69, he writes, "there is no magic formula or phrase that activates the power of the blood."

Yet, the book's abundant illustrations and admonitions contradict his statements. On page 36, he writes, "...if demons know and fear the blood, how much more should believers know and reverence it." He further writes of delivering a woman from demonic bondage by saying, "I apply the blood of Jesus Christ" (pg. 57) and of delivering another demon-tormented man by calling out, "the blood of Jesus is against you" (pg. 73).

Other statements include: "Immediately I said, 'Lord, cover me with your blood'" (pg. 65); an instruction to ask God to "cover your family with the blood," for their protection (pg. 67); and the claim that Job applied the blood regularly (pg. 68). Hinn writes that he asks God to cover him with the blood every time he prays (pg. 71) and that he covers his children with the blood daily (pg. 72).

### ANSWERS FROM WHERE?

Hinn told *Charisma*, "the Lord is once again bringing the blood of Jesus Christ to the attention of the Church" (pg. 39). In **The Blood**, he writes: "When I asked the Holy Spirit to give me an understanding of the blood covenant, I had dozens of questions. But he gave me answers from the Word" (pg. 24-25).

Hinn's latest volume even claims to equal the Bible. During the close of his Feb. 7, 1994, Orlando Christian Center broadcast on the Trinity Broadcasting Network, an advertisement for the book asserted: "Inspired by the Holy Spirit and thoroughly researched, **The Blood**, will enlighten, instruct, and guide you into a deeper knowledge of your personal relationship with the Savior."

However, a study of this topic reveals that Hinn's answers came not from the Holy Spirit or God's Word, but largely from a Canadian Pentecostal preacher who was prominent two decades ago. It appears that what Hinn is calling attention to is an old error discarded during the Reformation: the blood/ritual, blood/relic teaching.

### HINN'S INFLUENCES

In an interview with Randy Frame

of *Christianity Today* magazine in September 1991, Hinn said, "My upbringing, of course, was Catholic in that I attended the Catholic school in Jaffa, Israel. And so my mentality basically is a Catholic mentality. When I was born again, I was Catholic in my ways. I was very Catholic in my ideas, in my behavior."

Herein lies the first clue to where Hinn got his teaching.

The doctrine of Christ's blood having a power all its own dates to the old superstitious relic system of the Medieval Roman Catholic Church. Philip Schaff writes that at the height of the relic frenzy in Europe, the Roman church was circulating a bowl of what purportedly was Christ's blood (**History of the Christian Church**, Vol. 5, pg. 847).

Roman doctrine revered Christ's blood beyond the realm of many modern imaginations. Louis Bourdaloue, the French Jesuit and mystic (1632-1704), suggested, "we ought to go to the foot of the cross and catch the blood as it flows" (**The World's Great Sermons**, pp. 198-199).

Benjamin B. Warfield, the former Princeton theologian, writes that the blood fetish became such a craze in the Middle Ages that so-called miraculous blood — purported to be the blood of numerous saints — was turning up in churches across Europe (**Counterfeit Miracles**, pp. 96-97).

The concept of the "blood" as having a power of its own was prevalent into the Reformation period. The **Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology** says: "Since the Council of Trent referred to the body and blood of Christ as *partes Christi Domini*, it was subsequently argued that the blood shed during the passion was united to the body at the Resurrection, save for a few particles which were now holy relics (i.e., the blood that adhered to the spear, the scourging pillar, etc.). Such blood, it is argued, is worthy of worship and the Roman Catholic Church has appointed feasts of wor-

ship" (pg. 460).

Some of this crept into the beliefs of the Moravians during the mid-1700s. Arnold Dallimore wrote: "The lack of biblical study and preaching was countered by the invention of elaborate forms and ritual. Most of the practices were without the least scriptural basis. They included the burning of incense, the marching around graves, the display of gaudy paintings and the use of grandiose music, and these procedures were usually marked by the same irreverence that characterized the honoring of the blood and wounds."

Count Zinzendorf pushed this to an irreverent extreme, stating, "I am a poor sinner washed in the blood of the slaughtered Lamb in which I live, and to swim and bathe in Jesus' blood is my element." The people spoke of themselves as, "little fish swimming in the bed of blood" (**George Whitefield**, Vol. 2, pp. 326-327).

The blood/magic idea filtered into the Charismatic/Pentecostal wing via metaphysician and Word-Faith exponent E.W. Kenyon (1867-1948). In his book, **New Creation Realities**, Kenyon wrote: "When Christ carried His blood into the Holy of Holies and the Supreme Court of the universe accepted it, Redemption was a completed thing" (pg. 44).

He goes on to write: "Perhaps no one sentence from the lips of the Master has been more misunderstood than the one that He uttered on the cross: 'It is finished.' Most of us have believed that He meant he had finished His redemptive work, but that is not true." Kenyon taught that the words "It is finished" only meant that Jesus had fulfilled the Abrahamic covenant.

On page 131, he wrote: "His substitutionary work that began when He was made sin on the cross was consummated when He carried His blood into the Heavenly Holy of Holies and it was accepted there for us."

Kenyon was, in effect, saying that

Jesus was limited to physical things. He could heal the sick, feed the multitudes, raise the dead and turn water into wine, but He could not re-create anyone. He could not give eternal life because it was not available until after He had put sin away, until He had satisfied the claims of justice, conquered Satan, arose from the dead and carried His blood into the heavenly Holy of Holies.

Trance-evangelist Maria Woodworth Etter, who preached just after the turn of the century, was said to wave her hands in sprinkling motions, "sprinkling the blood" on her followers. This usually brought pandemonium.

This idea of the independent power of literal blood may have been mainstreamed by Radio Bible Class' M.R. DeHaan in 1943, when he wrote, "Perhaps there is a golden chalice in heaven where every drop of the precious blood is still in existence, just as pure, just as potent, just as fresh as 2,000 years ago" (**Chemistry of the Blood**, pg. 28). Radio Bible Class now disavows the idea and no longer prints **Chemistry of the Blood** because of this and other items of medical misinformation it contains.

From the 1950s through the 1970s, H.A. Maxwell Whyte, a Canadian Pentecostal minister, promoted some unorthodox ideas on the blood. For example, he wrote: "Stretch your imagination for a moment. Wouldn't it be wonderful if Jesus' blood could be kept in the blood banks of our hospitals? Do you not see that everyone who could obtain a transfusion of Christ's blood would actually be receiving God's eternal life in pure blood?" (**The Power of the Blood**, pg. 18)

Whyte, like Kenyon, also taught that Christ's blood had to be carried to heaven (pg. 64). Further, according to Whyte, "speaking the blood" could keep the death angel away from cattle and dogs (pp. 39-40); that "applying the blood" could keep away germs (pg. 53); that "pleading the blood" could stop impending auto accidents (pg. 54); that "pleading the blood" over a paycheck

could result in a bonus; and that "pleading the blood" over a broken car would repair the engine (pg. 87).

### THE LINK IS CONFIRMED

Hinn says he attended Whyte's church and that Whyte was a mentor (*Charisma*, November 1993, pg. 39 and *The Blood*, pp. 21-22). Whyte's widow confirmed that Hinn attended her late husband's church as a teen and received his water baptism and spirit baptism under Whyte.

Hinn regurgitates Whyte's and Kenyon's teaching that Jesus had to carry His blood to heaven: "Remember that the Lord purchased man's redemption by His atoning death and resurrection, then ascended to His Father and there presented the blood, which was the evidence of redemption. ... When the Father accepted the blood, I believe Christ Jesus received from the Father the Gift of the Holy Spirit to pour out upon those who believed in Him (*The Blood*, pp. 82-83).

Colossians 2:14-15 shows us that Jesus secured redemption and spoiled principalities on the cross, not later.

One must be careful with interpretations. Take, for example, the imagery and poetry of hymns. There is "power in the blood," but it is the power of Jesus Christ and the power of His merits secured by His death and resurrection. On the other hand, there is no literal fountain into which people dive and swim in blood.

### HOLES IN THE BLOOD/MAGIC THEORY

The fundamental error in the blood/magic theory is the assumption that references in the Bible to blood only refer to a red fluid or at least only a red fluid when it refers to the blood of Jesus. This is a gross error that misses the oriental concept of blood or blood poured out as a reference to death. Millard Erickson rightly observes: "references to Christ's blood are not to His actual physical blood per sé but to His death as a sacrificial provision for our sins" (*Introduc-*

*ing Christian Doctrine*, pg. 250).

**The World's Bible Dictionary** says: "In the NT the expressions *blood of the cross*, *blood of Christ* and *death of Christ* are often used interchangeably. To have life through Christ's blood means to have life through His death. ... those who share in Christ's blood share in the benefits of His death" (pg. 53).

In what sense could Revelation 1:5 — "He washed us from our sins by His own blood" — be literal? No Christian ever was dipped, smeared or wiped with red fluid to obtain salvation. The verse is metaphorical and portrays spiritual reality of forgiveness and salvation.

Thayer points out the vast meaning of the word blood. He says it can refer to "blood simply and generally," or it can denote "generation and origin" as well. It also can mean "blood shed," "bloody death" and the "pledge of redemption" (*Thayer's Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*, pg. 15).

R.K. Harrison writes: "Because of the fundamental importance for individual existence, blood was frequently used for life itself. ... The OT indicates that the atonement for human sin was obtained by the death of an acceptable substitute, rather than by its life, and this emphasis, which is basic to the Old Covenant, is carried over into the NT with specific reference to the work of Jesus Christ in the New Covenant. ... The sacrificial blood is associated with the death of the Savior (Heb. 9:14) and the author of Hebrews makes it plain that the blood is associated with death rather than life (12:24). It seems evident, therefore, that sacrifices were efficacious through the death of the victim, and the blood indicates life given up in death" (*Zondervan Pictorial Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, "Blood").

J.C. Macaulay writes: "This has been a great offense to many, aggravated no doubt by the materialistic emphasis of some earnest but mistaken Christians. ... Is there any

charm or virtue in that red fluid which we call blood, that it can put away sin? No, the material substance itself is nothing, it is what the blood represents and symbolizes, death and life. ... Blood shed means life poured out. Sacrificial blood is life poured out, yielded up, for redemptive purposes" (*Expository Commentary on Hebrews*, pg. 129).

Leon Morris agrees: "Blood points not to life set free, but to life given up in death" (*Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, pg. 100).

James Atkinson affirms the same truth: "The word blood in the OT apart from the everyday physiological meaning, is generally associated with the idea of death, violent death in particular ... the phrase *the blood of Christ*, like the words *the cross*, is nothing but a pregnant phrase for the death of Christ in its salvation meaning" (*Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*, pg. 76). If we still have to have literal blood today then we would have to have a literal wooden cross. Remember that Paul said he would "glory in the cross" (Galatians 6:14).

We are said to be saved by, Christ's blood in Hebrews 9:12, by Christ's death in Hebrews 9:15, by the offering of Christ's body in Hebrews 10:10, by Christ's sacrifice in Hebrews 10:12, by Christ's offering in Hebrews 10:14, and by Christ's flesh in Hebrews 10:20. If one must ascribe such power to the blood, then one also must do so to the flesh and anything else mentioned in such fashion.

The term "Christ's blood," points not to itself but to the grand theme of Atonement. His blood is the ground of our Atonement. **The New Bible Dictionary** points out: "The sacrifices are still understood to be efficacious by virtue of the death of the victim. The blood of Christ accordingly is to be understood as the Atoning death of the Savior" (pg. 145).

**The Holman Bible Dictionary** agrees: "The term the blood of Christ designates in the NT the Atoning death of Christ" (pg. 201).

It is important to note that Paul does not mention "the blood" as part of the armor of God in Ephesians 6, while Hinn calls it "an invincible weapon in our warfare."

Those who opt for a crass literalism and want a literal relic, a fetish, a bowl of red fluid, may be closer to paganism than Christianity. They have a superstitious view of blood, they misunderstand biblical words and concepts and create a subtle diversion from the person of Jesus. They lead unsuspecting believers astray, making them think they need to rely on vain repetitions, such as "pleading the blood," to secure spiritual safety.

### BAD COMPANY

Blood/magic doctrine turns up among some suspicious doctrinal company. Trevor Ravenscroft took the idea a step further with his "spear of Longinus." Ravenscroft said that the spear which pierced the side of Jesus was so empowered by Christ's blood that when it ended up in Germany it was the reason for Hitler's power in Europe. This teaching originated from two mediumistic women who claimed to receive messages from the dead, (**Critique, A**

**Journal of Conspiracies and Metaphysics**, pg. 71).

In 1980, Ray Stedman's Discovery Foundation helped finance a book by Arthur Custance, titled **The Seed of the Woman**. Custance, who believes in soul sleep and annihilationism, teaches in this book that Jesus rose in a flesh-and-blood body and that He transported that mutilated, bruised, wounded body to heaven, leaving the blood there and assuming another body to come back and make post-Resurrection appearances (pp. 444-452).

### TROUBLE IN THE FOOTNOTES

There are two additional concerns. Hinn, or his ghost writers, use footnotes to appeal to some well-respected, mainstream authors. We should not suppose that writers such as R.A. Torrey, Billy Graham, A.W. Tozer, Andrew Murray and others would, for a minute, endorse the blood/magic or blood/relic ideas of Benny Hinn. The misquoting or misusing of authors is something one would expect from The Watchtower Society, not a minister of the Gospel.

On the other hand, some may see footnotes citing Maxwell Whyte, Derek Prince and David Alsobrook and assume that these authors are biblical and safe. Hinn's citations of these men, especially Whyte, may be, for some of his readership, a springboard to full-blown heresy.

While "the blood" is a term used in Scripture to denote the death and merits of Christ, Hinn's teachings on the subject must be rejected. Christians need to understand biblical terms both linguistically and contextually. Because of teachers such as Hinn, many sincere but misinformed Christians are trying to "plead the blood." While this may produce euphoric feelings and a sense of spiritual well-being, it lacks scriptural support.

It could be argued that the act of pleading is, at worst, a benign practice that hurts no one. However, it sets the pleader up for disappointment by creating false expectations. "Pleading the blood" is so much spiritual snake oil. To those contemplating accepting Hinn's writings and teachings, we can only again say, "Buyer beware!" ❖

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### JOHN TODD

(continued from page 4)

cities that were to have burned in 1979 stand today, Manson never led a prisoner revolt and Carter did not turn out to be the Antichrist.

Even the less-discerning Christians began to sense that Todd was out of control when he named the following as part of *The Big Conspiracy*: Jerry Falwell, John R. Rice, Bob Jones, Oral Roberts, David Wilkerson, C.S. Lewis, Kathryn Kuhlman and the Southern Baptists (**The Todd Phenomenon**, pp. 128-129). Those who began to doubt him were accused of being part of the conspiracy.

Todd's real sources for the conspiracy idea (in 1979) were discovered with the help of information from his ex-wife. Todd had virtually

memorized the ideas of Myron Fagin, which laid out a conspiracy/takeover scenario. With the help of his ex-wife Sharon's library research, along with Mike Warnke's book, **The Satan Seller**, and the writings of Willard Cantelon, Todd was able to construct a scenario casting himself as the key player (**The Todd Phenomenon**, pp. 56-67).

### MOVING ON

In early 1979, Todd moved to Florence, Mont., to await the takeover, according to his prayer letters. By mid-1979, he was issuing a newsletter from Seattle. He was starting to fudge on the details of his scenario and, curiously, was offering one-year subscriptions to his newsletter while claiming "The End" was only a few months away. A personal letter from Todd's "director," Julie

Keeler (dated Sept. 1, 1979), indicated that Todd was backing down on Jimmy Carter:

"When Mr. Todd was with the Grand Druid Council, Mr. Carter was then to be the Antichrist, but due to his health the plans may have to be changed or maybe he will be healed and also follow Bible Prophecy."

In one of his last "prayer letters" from Seattle, dated Sept. 18, 1979, he let his readers know that he desperately needed money and wrote that he had started a ministry to free people from demonic spirits. Shortly after, he dropped out of the public eye.

### THE MISSING YEARS

PFO interviewed the Rev. Billy Randall of Lexington, S.C., and David Banks, Todd's former brother-in-law

who lives in the Columbia, S.C. area. Both know Todd personally and had spent much time with him. They helped fill in details about Todd's life from 1980 to his rape trial in 1987-88.

In 1984, Todd served 60 days in jail and five years' probation in Louisville, Ky., for incest, according to the Jan. 23, 1988, *Star/Columbia News* of Columbia, S.C.

Todd became friends with David Banks and eventually left his third wife, Sheila. He moved to the Columbia, S.C. area, where he married Banks' sister Betsy. The marriage lasted a few years. Todd drifted from job to job. He grew interested in survivalism and self-published a book on food gathering, guns, and survival titled **How To Build An Ark**.

Todd eventually divorced Betsy. Her brother called Todd "a pathological liar, a leech, who has left a trail of broken relationships." He said Todd was "always looking for get-rich schemes and is a user."

Randall says he married another woman, whom he also divorced. In all, Todd went through five marriages and five divorces.

Todd also opened a karate school in Columbia. The school put him in touch with, among other things, many young women. In May 1987, he was charged with lewd acts on children and with first-degree criminal sexual conduct in the rape of a woman who was lured to his apartment (*The Star/Columbia News*, June 19, 1987).

The article reported that Todd was under a suicide watch in the mental hospital after trying to slash his wrists in his cell at the Richland County jail. The Jan. 23, 1988, edition of *The Star/Columbia News*, reported:

"Survivalist John Wayne Todd was sentenced today to 30 years in prison for raping a graduate student after he promised to hire her as an illustrator for his publishing company. A seven-woman, five-man jury deliberated one hour and 40 minutes before delivering a guilty verdict

against Todd, who witnesses said had been seeking female employees through the University of South Carolina Career Center when he was arrested in May. ... Todd gave the victim three white pills and raped her while holding a large knife used in jungle warfare, she testified."

Police also reported finding a large amount of pornography in Todd's apartment.

John Todd today disavows all Christianity. He has resorted to his lifelong pattern of taking no blame or responsibility but blaming his problems on what Christians have done to him. He says that his Christian conversion was a deception. He says that he has realigned with Wicca, a school of witchcraft and magic that he has dabbled in, and is a Wiccan spokesman in the prison.

His past and present statements about Wicca indicate that he is a dabbler in probably both Gardnerian and Dianic Wicca and is probably unaware of the nuances of that cult and that there are at least a dozen various splinters in this neo-paganistic system (see Gordon Melton, **Encyclopedia of American Religions**, Vol. 3, pp. 115-139).

By looking at his past statements, it is easy to see that he knows about as much about Wicca as he does of Christianity. Judging from Army psychiatric records that show an inability to differentiate reality from fantasy, his homicidal threats, his false suicide reports and severe personality disturbances (**The Todd Phenomenon**, pg. 55), one could conclude that Todd chooses a religious system to get attention from and control over people.

### MEETING WITH JOHN TODD IN PRISON

British researcher Roy Livesey interviewed Todd last June. The salient points and conclusions released to PFO verify a number of these conclusions. What follows is Livesey's narration of the meeting.

"Although a maximum security prison, by day he is not confined to

his cell. He described the manacles he has to wear on his wrists and legs when he leaves the prison compound. We were able to converse quite freely and without close supervision. There was nothing spoken in confidence but in any case we were well out of earshot of the supervisor.

"John said the 'real hard core' prisoners were graded 'CC.' He was in the medium-grade 'B.' He was little interested in why I had come to see him. Rather he was immediately talking about the conspiracy against John Todd. There was little need for questions to keep the meeting interesting and relevant during our two hours together. John Todd was occupied with the subject of John Todd. Just like Chick and *Alberto*, and indeed like many who expose conspiracy, in one way or another, Todd's fiction was blurring the real conspiracy, Satan's conspiracy, a conspiracy well evidenced in South Carolina.

"Apart from his friends in Wicca, everyone John Todd named, and every Christian, was against him. He was the victim of a conspiracy, and he identified four men of South Carolina — a senator, a university head, a Baptist pastor and a city politician. He was relaxed, smiling and agreeable to my taking careful notes. In fairness to all the people John mentioned, I must record that I believed hardly anything I was told. This is no place to record some of his more outrageous stories, and wisdom dictates that only the most outrageous and unbelievable historical fantasies are warranted as examples. In attacking Christians John's first story evidenced the new anti-Christian perspective from which he views things:

"John Wesley became a multimillionaire by circuit-riding witch-hunters ... John and Charles Wesley tortured men, women and children to death in England and Scotland."

"John Todd spoke to me as head of the Church of Wicca in the prison. He had succeeded in getting Wicca accepted there as a religion. He was the highest-ranking member in the

United States. He said his previous Christian life was a deception, and he told me of the higher standards known in Wicca:

“‘Raised up in Wicca, you **never** lie. Christians break their word. All I ever saw for 18 years was Christians breaking their word... I waited five years for Christians to help. I went back to Wicca. Wiccans see the Illuminati as Jews and Christians.’

“John told me in clear terms: ‘*I am not a Christian.*’

“In closing I asked John if he had any message he particularly wanted to convey to people outside. As ever, he was precise, confident, articulate and clear:

“‘If Christianity is true, prove it. Come to my aid. Show me this love. Explain to me why Christians like this pastor at ... and ... Bible College and ... University conspired to put me in here.’ (Names given by John Todd are omitted.)

“My impression was that John Todd was relating fantasies and lies, probably based upon real people known to him and upon real stories that he had read. It seems to me that the principal difference from the time

of his deception as a Christian is that his reading material was no longer Christian but about Wicca. And about the Law! He tells me he is the Secretary of the Law Library in prison with 3,500 books. In fact, the name of the Secretary has been given to me by a reliable source. The Law Library Secretary’s name is that of an inmate — but it is not John Todd.”

## IN CONCLUSION

With a legacy of erroneous conspiracy revelations, a series of failed marriages, his repudiation of the Christian life and now a conviction for rape with a 30-year jail sentence, Todd has indeed proven himself to be a pathetic exemplar for the Body of Christ. All of this resounds for the call of awareness within the Church. If we don’t act with discernment, history certainly will repeat itself.

The big lesson for Christians is that they must be more discerning and less accepting of itinerant prophets. Every message must be tested by Scripture. Paul’s strong warning in 2 Timothy 3:6-9 needs to be sounded loud and clear:

“For among them are those who

enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, always learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. And just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected as regards the faith. But they will not make further progress; for their folly will be obvious to all, as also that of those two came to be.”

Then verse 13: “But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.”

Investigative reporter Richard Breneman alerts us with these words: “The approach of a year ending with double zeros seems to inspire a certain nuttiness. Mesmerism and Masonry seized public attention at the dawn of the nineteenth century. Spiritism, Theosophy, and Christian Science flourished near the dawn of the twentieth century. The approach of a year ending with triple zeros promises an unprecedented array of inventive and imitative weirdness” (**Deadly Blessings, Faith Healing On Trial**, pg. 18). ❖

## EMBRACED

(continued from page 1)

nantly Christian, tend to see only the supernatural being and later may encounter family and friends who have died before. The people of India, predominantly Hindu, do not usually see family or people, but do see some of their many gods or religious figures” (**To Hell And Back**, pp. 10, 79).

However, there is a dark side to these experiences. Bill Alnor, director of Eastern Christian Outreach of Philadelphia, writes: “It is very possible that if anyone is meeting someone on the other side, it is the old Angel of Light, whom the Bible calls Lucifer” (*The Christian News*, Nov. 22, 1993, pg. 20).

Betty Malz’s book eventually was

debunked. Research into physician and hospital records that was reported by *Christian Week* of Canada, *Christianity Today* and Evangelical Press News Service refuted her story. Medical and hospital officials called her claims “almost a complete fabrication.”

However, time passes and people forget. And then along came Betty Eadie, whose book even found its way into Christian bookstores and attracted attention.

*Bookstore Journal*, which is usually loathe to give a negative report, sounds a warning: “CBA has received several calls from retailers asking about the book **Embraced By The Light** by Betty Eadie (Gold Leaf Press). ... *Bookstore Journal* editors obtained a review copy of the book and say that it’s not something most

Christian bookstores will want to stock. While there’s some truth in Eadie’s message, there’s enough unbiblical teaching to place it beyond the bounds of orthodox Christianity” (*Bookstore Journal*, November 1993, pg. 26).

The December *Bookstore Journal* followed up, saying on page 14: “After the article in the November *BJ* on **Embraced By The Light** author Betty Eadie, Christian retailer Daryl Westfall called to say that his research had determined that Eadie is a member of the Mormon Church. ... Westfall began investigating the book after the store received more than 80 requests for it. An information packet from the publishers led him to believe the author is Mormon and two local Mormon bookstores confirmed that. Eadie’s publisher,

Gold Leaf Press, also told *Bookstore Journal* that Eadie is Mormon."

## WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER BOOK

The seeking of hidden knowledge outside of Scripture is called divination. The Apostle Paul's view of heaven in 2 Corinthians 12 was summed up with a warning that these things are unlawful to utter. In Luke 16:27-31 the lost man was not allowed to return from the dead but advised that his relatives had Scripture as a source of knowledge on the afterlife.

If Christ had wanted to give us teaching on return trips, the Luke 16 story would have been the place to do it. Also take note that Scripture teaches there was a great impassible gulf between Paradise and the torment side in that other world and people could not flit back and forth. Lazarus did not give any information on his trip beyond. He never uttered a word about it.

We need to look at **Embraced By The Light** from three perspectives.

### EADIE'S PERSONAL TALE

Much of the early part of the book is biographical telling of Eadie's unhappy childhood. She mentions an out-of-body experience as a small child but lists no documentation. In fact her major OBE, which she says took place in 1973, is not buttressed by any doctors' testimonies or hospital reports, just her own claim that she died. One wonders why she waited almost 20 years to tell the world and one is struck by how much her story sounds like all the generic New Age literature. She does not name the hospital where she had this experience. She quotes no physicians or nurses first hand. No records are cited. Yet she claims to have been dead for four hours (pg. 125).

Eadie writes that she was the product of an unhappy marriage between a Scottish-Irish father and a Sioux Indian mother. She adds that as her parents' marriage crumbled,

she and her siblings were placed in a Catholic boarding school among sadistic nuns. She writes that later she was transferred to a Methodist school where she was not treated well. Eadie married at 15, divorced at 21 and shortly after remarried her current husband.

Seven pregnancies led to physical problems and a partial hysterectomy in November 1973. Eadie writes that she died while recuperating in the hospital. She writes that the nurse left the room after giving her medication. What follows is a tale about leaving her body and Jesus leading her about the universe, giving her insights that rival omniscience and which contradict many major doctrines of the Christian faith.

Eadie did not get her insights from the Scripture since Scripture does not teach what she does. Her insights are at best the product of hallucinations, drug interactions and an overblown imagination, at worst demonic deception and spiritism. The whole story also could be clever fiction.

**Embraced By The Light** is a hodgepodge of Eastern Mysticism, New Age Philosophy, Positive Confession, Baha'i, Roman Catholicism, spiritism and a smattering of out-of-context Bible references.

### EADIE'S PROBLEMATIC TEACHINGS

Eadie writes that when she was drawn out of her body (pg. 29) she met three spirit beings from her pre-Earth life whom she calls "ministering angels" (pg. 32) who communicated with her telepathically. She writes that she traveled through a darkness she calls "the valley of the shadow of death." In the blackness she sees animals and others being transported (pp. 37-39). Eventually she enters a tunnel and is "embraced by the Light," Jesus, whom she describes as "a God" (pg. 44), "a separate being from the Father" (pg. 47). With two sentences she denies the crucial doctrine of the Trinity and establishes herself as a polytheist. Nothing is said about

guilt, the need of forgiveness from Christ, or Salvation from sin through Christ and His Atonement.

Retired Lutheran pastor Otto Zeeb expressed similar concerns in the Dec. 13, 1993, edition of *The Christian News*:

"As I read the book I searched for references to Christ's sacrifice on Calvary; to Christ as evidence of God's love for the world; to Christ as our only Savior, Who died for all, and through Whom all who believe in Him will be saved. I found none of these in her book. And that from someone who supposedly just returned from a visit to Heaven? Her book holds a great appeal to those who have discarded the way of the Cross; who are too proud to admit their sinfulness; who refuse to trust in Christ as their only Savior — but who believe in their own self-worth and are looking for another way to heaven that is more to their liking" (pg. 12).

Eadie teaches Eastern mysticism, especially the principle of negative and positive energy and our need to attract and manipulate a positive energy field (pg. 58). In Hinduism, the energy centers are referred to as *chakras*, in China the energy is called *Chi*, in Taoism it is called *Yin* and *Yang*, (see **The Hidden Agenda**, by Dr. David Sneed, pp. 144-146).

Eadie also teaches positive confession and believes that we can create our own reality with our words (pg. 58). We can, with positive self-talk, create health (pp. 64-65).

Eadie believes that through positive imaging and imagination we can create more of our own reality. "He has invested us with god-like qualities," she writes, "such as the power of imagination and creation" (pg. 61). It appears that she thinks we are little creators.

Eadie has a novel view of creation. In our pre-Earth state we all assisted God in creation (pg. 47) and she was there to see it (pg. 48). To add to the myth of our greatness we can even keep ourselves healthy with positive thinking (pg. 63). "Sin is not

our true nature," she asserts (pp. 49-50). However, Ephesians 2 reminds us that "we were by nature children of wrath."

Eadie will not speak negatively about any religion (pg. 46). "All religions are necessary" and all are "stepping stones" to further knowledge (pg. 45).

Eadie writes that at one point in her experience, she was handed over by Jesus to two women. In a workroom of spiritual inventions that would become physical reality, she was given "every particle of knowledge" (pg. 76). She then was taken to a garden and given to know that every particle of the universe has intelligence and knowledge (pp. 78-79). She goes on to describe what almost sounds like an LSD experiment, "I felt the rose's presence around me as if I were actually inside and part of the flower. I experienced it as if I were the flower." And like Shirley MacLaine she cries out in monistic delight: "I felt God in the plant, in me, his love pouring into us. We are all one!"

As her story continues, the ministering angels show up along with a lot of other spirit beings. The spirit guides advise her about death and she learns that after death some may hang around Earth to protect relatives (pg. 84). Her Catholic background shows through as she is told that we can pray for the dead (pg. 84).

Universalism is taught (pp. 84-85) and we are told that even atheists will hang around in spirit on the Earth until they "accept the greater power" (pg. 84). That "everybody makes it in the end," the Omega Point in the philosophical jargon of New Age teachers. Everyone will reach Omega Point regardless of race, color, creed or lifestyle. "All men are equal," as far as the future glory. The Bible teaches that Jesus is the Alpha and Omega (Revelation 1:8). No one will reach the Omega Point without Him.

Who were these spirit guides that were teaching Eadie so much error? Who were these escorts who were

teaching her that "we are all God's children"? (pg. 88) Who told her that pre-existent spirits try to get two earth people together and that these pre-existent spirits act as Cupid so they will have a mother and father to bring them to birth on earth (pg. 92) or that pre-existent spirits can choose to be born disabled? (pg. 94)

Since we know that Jesus is the Truth and will not lead us into error and the Holy Spirit is not the author of confusion there are not many options for Eadie as to the origin of her book. Then, without using the word "reincarnation," the book teaches a kind of reincarnation in reverse. That is, that the bad people are here on Earth to help all the others get it right (pp. 98-99).

Some of the other ideas "discovered" by Eadie are that Eve did not fall into temptation but only made "a conscious decision to bring about conditions necessary for her progression" (pg. 109) and that Jesus told Eadie not to judge herself too harshly because her good deeds would overcome her bad ones (pp. 113-114).

Eadie then writes that she was told she would have to go back to fulfill a mission but much of the vast storehouse of knowledge would be forgotten. Jesus had to promise her and agree to her terms that He would bring her back home as soon as the mission was complete (pp. 118-119). Eadie says she cannot remember what the mission is. However Jesus told her the mission would be done in its time. She left the glory with a huge multitude of angels cheering her while she mused, "soaking in their love and celestial music — hardly believing that an insignificant soul like my own could be the center of so much adoration" (pp. 120-121).

### EADIE'S POST-OBE TRAUMAS

Eadie writes that as she crawled back into her body after being dead for four hours, she was visited by grotesque half-human, half-animal creatures (pg. 126). These demons were chased out by the return of Eadie's spirit guides, who promised

her that there would be an invisible dome around her to protect her the rest of her life (pg. 127).

Eadie writes that she kept having her spirit travel in and out of her body with doctors and nurses not knowing what was going on (pg. 129). She also reports seeing a little girl ballerina with a halo who was not seen by anyone else. This supernatural visitation becomes a prominent point later in the book.

She writes that after her experience, she felt a deep, pervasive and extended depression. Such depressions can be attributed to post-operative conditions, medication, hormones and even occultic involvement. Eadie does not say what kind of medication she was on during this operation. She writes that the depression was so severe that she became suicidal and agoraphobic, unable to go as far as her own mailbox (pg. 131). With great difficulty and pushing herself back into family activities she was able to return to life and living over a long haul.

She writes that she visited the physician five years later and told him of the complications in the hospital the night of her proclaimed OBE. By her account he stated that she had been left alone, died and then was revived by hospital staff not knowing how long she'd been dead (pg. 134). No documentation or hospital records are shown.

Her depression continued until the adoption of a Native American girl. Eadie is convinced she is the spirit child she saw as a ballerina in her hospital room. She continues to have "experiences," although she is "reluctant to share them" (pg. 146).

However, of major concern to those who wish to evaluate Eadie's story is not her reluctance to share other experiences, but rather her refusal to furnish names, places and dates of the one she reported. This observation was made during a recent installment of *The Oprah Winfrey Show*:

**Winfrey:** You know, of course,

there are a lot of skeptics to your story. You know that?

**Eadie:** Yes, there are some.

**Winfrey:** Yes. And many of the skeptics say that because you never have given us the name of the hospital or documented, you know, the hours that you were dead. And nobody else has been able to verify that, that you're lying, that this is all in your head.

**Eadie:** Um huh. Well—

**Winfrey:** It would be such a shame if you were scamming us all with this whole thing.

**Eadie:** [Laughs] Well, uh, I — I hate to disappoint the skeptics but what I'm saying is true. And — and I don't know, I feel like some part of me, I share so much of me.

**Winfrey:** Yeah, how could you prove it? How could you prove it?

**Eadie:** I don't — there's no way to prove this. And in the book I share so much of me. I — there — it's just like there's a limit, you know. And what do they want? Turn me inside out or look inside? I don't know that that would prove anything to the skeptics. (*The Oprah Winfrey Show*, Jan. 3, 1994).

The television news magazine, *American Journal*, fared no better in their request for information from Eadie. A segment of its Feb. 15, 1994 program featured a story on the best-selling author and emphasized her unwillingness to disclose even basic details:

"We wanted to talk to Betty's doctor about that night, but she refused to identify either him or the hospital. And when we requested access to her medical records, she had this response: 'I would never do that, nor would I be subject to hypnosis, nor would I be subject to a — what is it, a polygram? — whatever, polygraph test. And all of those have been suggested. The answer is simply, *No*.'" "

The news magazine then queried, "Why not? That would certainly give your story more credibility." To which Eadie replied, "Well, I don't

need credibility. I'm not trying to prove my experience, I'm sharing it."

Finally, the program noted, "Betty says right after her near-death experience, she told some close friends about it, but when we asked to speak with them, once again, she refused."

Names, places and dates are not

once and then comes judgment. We know as well that hallucinations can result as a side-effect of extended sleep loss, prescription drugs or drugs in combination. We know also that when people begin to intrude into the spiritual realm they can open themselves up to demonic deception. This is a real danger. Any of the above can be an explanation as to the origin of Eadie's experiences.

**"Well, I don't need credibility. I'm not trying to prove my experience, I'm sharing it."**  
—**Betty Eadie**

always amiable to those with incredible stories of the beyond. As mentioned above, speaker and best-selling author Betty Malz experienced how agonizing the disclosure of exact information can be. Malz had sold nearly 1 million copies of her sensational death, heavenly vision and return to life account before a Canadian-based newspaper investigated her tale.

With Eadie's reluctance to give readers detailed information, one can't help but wonder if her back-to-life story would not suffer a fate similar to Malz's if the facts were known.

Multitudes are being misled by her writings. If we believe Eadie, then there is no hell to shun, no reason to repent and accept Christ as Savior from guilt and sin. The fullness of God's character, especially His holiness and justice, are missed in this book. Unconditional and universal salvation is not taught in Scripture.

We know that people can *feel* they have left their bodies simply from medications or a near-death experience. We know that Hebrews 9:27 says it is appointed for man to die

Eadie's theology can be categorically rejected while not passing judgment on the origin of her OBE. She did not see Jesus and Jesus did not tell her the unbiblical things she claims He did. Her experiences clearly parallel occult phenomenon and could be that. An encounter with Christ would produce joy, not the deep depression Eadie reported after her experience.

Dr. Robert Morey's observations of OBE claims are fitting for this situation and very fitting as a conclusion:

"While each case must be weighed on its own merits, we submit that OBE's...can be fairly understood as either (1) drug experiences, (2) stress and pain responses, (3) hallucinations, (4) dreams, or (5) demonic deceptions. Given the fact that we only have what the patient feels happened, there is no scientific way to discern anything beyond the fact that some kind of psychological illusion took place" (**Death and the Afterlife**, pg. 264).

All in all, **Embraced By The Light**, does not embrace the light of the Gospel. The book needs to be addressed and others warned. ❖

of hearing the Gospel.

Street slang is transitory. What is "hip," "cool" and "heavy" today is gone tomorrow, shunned and discarded like a day-old newspaper. People actually date themselves by the slang that they use. Terms such as "groovy," "right on" and "far out," recall the '60s. Even the book's title is now "politically incorrect" and should be retitled *African-American Bible Chronicles* to be proper.

And there are also different levels of slang. The slang used in **Black Bible Chronicles** has been tremendously restrained and will not likely offend anyone. Therefore, are we really using that particular street slang that really relates? The question seems to be how far do we go with the incorporation of slang?

The slang used in the **Black Bible Chronicles** is lightweight verbiage compared to that employed by most street people this writer encounters. Many use slang that is far more abusive than is found in the **Black Bible Chronicles**. If one really desires to realize the ambition of creating a Bible which speaks in the language of the street, then the beauty of Scripture becomes obscene and vulgar in short order. Even if you wanted to forge ahead and do this, the major drawback would, again, be that slang is quickly dated.

More importantly, the presupposition appears to be that the Bible, in its present form, has failed to communicate the Gospel. Therefore, time-honored Scripture needs modification to stay relevant. This would seem to challenge the very words of Christ: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; *the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life*" (John 6:63, KJV).

Furthermore, inner-city missionaries are reluctant to utilize Bible translations and literature that incorporate the slang of the street for a variety of reasons. These include: 1) slang is passé and transitory, 2) after a time it is considered "corny," 3) it is extremely limited, 4) not everyone uses a particular slang, 5) too much slang is interpreted as crass and in some cases as mocking, and most importantly 6) it can result in a lack of respect for the Scriptures.

Slang is used in all cultures and people have used it in all areas to express themselves. Yet with this understanding we have not seen a rush to upgrade classical works of literature with slang expressions so that the street people will be more inclined to read Shakespeare. It is granted that some may be reached by this method. However, instead of accommodating the Scriptures to suit the man on the street, why not trust that the Holy Spirit can and will work through the traditional language of Scripture and reach the heart of a searching soul?

We must never trust to our human efforts the illuminating power which Christ imparts to all men unto an understanding of the Gospel. **Baker's Dictionary of Theology** states, "the concept of illumination is related to the work of the Holy Spirit making clear the truth of the written revelation" (pg. 277). While the unregenerate man does not experience "illumination" in the same degree as believers, Scripture is clear in conferring a general enlightening to all men (John 1:9, 2 Timothy 1:10).

Therefore, the problem does not appear to be a lack of understanding. The problem is people do understand it and reject it. If a person isn't going to relate to and accept the Gospel in a traditional rendering, it is doubtful that expressing it in street slang will entice a commitment.

—ELH

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## NEWS UPDATES

(continued from page 3)

ministries as a service to further their mission. A major ambition will be holding annual conferences on the cults and occult. In addition, the coalition will take stands on various crucial issues affecting the Church. A quarterly newsletter/update also is planned.

The Board of Directors for revived EMNR is composed of the following: Founder, Dr. Gordon Lewis (Denver Seminary); President, Dr. James Bjornstad (The King's College); Executive Director, William Alnor (Eastern Christian Outreach); Eric Pement (Cornerstone magazine); Elliot Miller (Christian Research Institute); Craig Branch (Watchman Fellowship); and G. Richard Fisher (Personal Freedom Outreach).

The alliance's first national conference in five years will be Sept. 22-24 at Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia. The theme of the convention is, "The Cults, the Occult and the Word-Faith Movement." CRI President Hank Hanegraaff is scheduled as the keynote speaker.

To receive a sample copy of EMNR's Quarterly Update newsletter or for more information, contact: Mr. William Alnor, Evangelical Ministries to New Religions, P.O. Box 20352, Philadelphia, PA 19137.

—MKG

## HAPPY MOON DAY?

A resolution to the U.S. House of Representatives seeks to designate July 28 as "Parents Day." However, the proposal is drawing fire from critics who charge that the proposed bill is linked to the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church.

According to a Religious News Service report, the

skeptics contend that "the resolution is being pushed by followers of Moon to gain legitimacy for their belief that Moon and his wife are the divine parents of humankind." Advocates of the proposition claim a more benign explanation saying, "all they want to do is honor parents with a national day of commemoration." The proposal was sponsored by Rep. Dan Burton (R-Ind.).

The Unification Church-linked *Washington Times* reported last summer that Burton has introduced the bill to highlight a Capitol Hill reception given in honor of Hak Ja Han Moon, wife of the ill-famed church leader. Joseph Conn, a spokesman for Americans United for Separation of Church and State, said, "We think it's particularly important for a church group not to seek this kind of endorsement in a secretive way, using language to disguise the fact that this is a Unification project, that it reflects Unification theology."

Backers of the bill assert those who oppose the "Parents Day" proposal on the basis of its association with Rev. Moon are "religious bigots too insecure in their own faith."

—MKG

## **PFO COMPILES HINN ARTICLES**

For nearly two years, PFO has been inundated with requests for copies of its articles on evangelist Benny Hinn. To meet the demand, PFO has compiled its six feature articles and editorials into one volume.

The 67-page booklet, **The Confusing World of Benny Hinn**, includes everything PFO has published on Hinn from July 1991 through December 1993.

It is available for \$4 postpaid from PFO-Saint Louis.

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## **BOOK REVIEWS**

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fall ... . Kuhlman admirers, accepting Kathryn's way of practicing the experience, are not ready to approve what they view as manipulative variations. ...copies appear noisy and out of control" (pp. 217, 220).

The book is not without bias. Warner tries to put the best face on Kuhlman's marriage to an already-married man — Burroughs Waltrip, who left his wife and children for Kuhlman — and her subsequent abandonment of and divorce from him so she could go into the "ministry."

Interesting as well are the details of Kuhlman's sad end and the court reports regarding the distribution of her \$732,000 estate.

Even though it is obvious that Warner is devoted to preserving a positive memory of Kuhlman, he does a fairly good job as a historian, although he loses his objectivity at times. The book is useful for its historical interest, not its theology.

—GRF

## ***Personal Freedom Outreach — Statement of Belief***

***I. The Bible as the divinely inspired, inerrant Word of God: It is in its entirety the sole authority for all matters of Christian belief and practice.***

***II. The one true God. In the one true God there exist three persons, being: The Father, The Son Jesus Christ, and The Holy Spirit.***

***III. Jesus Christ: His deity, humanity, virgin birth, sinlessness, death and bodily resurrection; who will personally and visibly return again to earth.***

***IV. The personality and deity of the Holy Spirit.***

***V. The existence and personality of Satan, his total opposition to God, and his power over the unregenerate.***

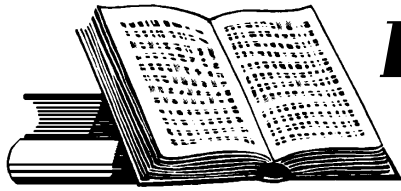
***VI. The complete and total depravity of all men which makes them hopelessly lost without the new birth obtainable through faith in Jesus Christ.***

***VII. The final estate of man: for the saved, everlasting life in the presence of God and for the unsaved, everlasting punishment because of their unbelief.***

***VIII. The Gospel by which we are saved being summed in the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

***IX. The Church being the Body of Christ, united in the Holy Spirit, consisting of those who have received Jesus Christ as Savior. A local church is an organized assembly of believers united for the purpose of carrying out the Great Commission of Christ.***

***X. The Great Commission of Christ being to preach the Gospel to all men, baptizing and disciplining those who have believed.***



# Books in Review

## THE QUEST FOR THE ORIGINAL TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

by Philip Wesley Comfort

Baker Book House, 200 pages, \$11.95

In a day when churches split over the exclusivity of the King James Version and Peter Ruckman's teachings on the *Textus Receptus*, this book is welcome.

Comfort's work is scholarly enough in its research and documentation to get a hearing at all levels, but written simply enough to be of benefit to all. Familiarity with the Greek alphabet will help readers in a few spots.

Comfort shows a large body of manuscripts dating from 85-200 A.D. that make it certain that earlier manuscripts are closer to the original autographs than the later Byzantine text type. He also argues convincingly that the early copyists were meticulous and accurate. On page 42, he states, "... there is evidence that, as early as 70, Christian scribes throughout the Greco-Roman world followed certain standard scriptural practices in producing copies of New Testament books."

In our attempt to recover the New Testament text, this book increases our confidence in the study of textual criticism and transmission.

The author shows that the concept of recovery of the ancient text is biblical and an act of divine sovereignty. Our understanding of early Church history and the transmission of Scripture is enhanced by Comfort's book.

—GRF

## HEALING IN THE NAME OF GOD

by Ted Schwarz

Zondervan Publishing House, 203 pages, \$9.99

This book neither promises a new theology of divine healing nor a guarantee of healing just from reading it. It simply offers scripturally balanced conclusions about "healing in the name of God," something sorely needed in the Church today.

Schwarz directly addresses the wave of miracle healing services that are in vogue today. On page 38 he writes: "What disturbs me about the professional healers and their healing services is that these healers are accountable to no one. Looking at it from that perspective, the pastor and elders of a person's local church seem to me to be a better place to look for a healing prayer. ... With the professional healer, however, you have no way of verifying the truth of his or her claims. The healer is an on-stage person, removed from the daily lives of the people who have come for healing. The healer is often slick, well-rehearsed, giving the impression that it's all a show."

Similar and other discerning observations frequent the publication. The chapter on "the fraudulent healer" is excellent. The author surveys healing, not only from the divine, but also from medical, psychological, cultic and superstitious traditions. This broad perspective brings with it a few snags as more could have been said about illness and demonic influence and the section on medieval and post-medieval healing is somewhat sluggish.

Despite these problems, *Healing in the Name of God*, is a welcome perspective to an area of Christianity so abused and corrupted in the Church.

—MKG

## KATHRYN KUHLMAN

### The Woman Behind the Miracles

by Wayne Warner

Vine Books, 283 pages, \$8.99

One would expect the director of the Assemblies of God Archives to write a favorable book on evangelist/healer Kathryn Kuhlman. Author Wayne Warner has done that, coming off as an admirer.

What still makes the book useful is its introduction and historical insights into the modern phenomenon of faith healers, along with the publication of heretofore secret information about Kuhlman.

Warner tells readers where Kuhlman really was born (her story differed) and her birth date, which she concealed as she claimed to be younger. Warner also discloses that she was a high school dropout and was dismissed from Bible college.

Warner writes frankly about the contrived atmosphere created at services conducted by Kuhlman copycats. On the modern practice of "slaying in the Spirit," he writes: "the idea of providing catchers further increases the thought that falling is supposed to happen. ... Later it became fashionable and spiritual to

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*Editor's Note:* The publications featured in our **Books in Review** section are available from Personal Freedom Outreach (P.O. Box 26062, Saint Louis, Missouri 63136). Please add \$1.50 to the price listed to cover postal costs. These publications are also available to those who help to financially support the work of PFO. Please see our funds appeal flyer for details.