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EDITOR: KEITH A. MORSE

Pressing Truth to the Extreme The Errors of Jessie Penn-Lewis

by G. Richard Fisher

Author Mary Garrard perceptively wrote, "All error is 'truth pressed to extremes.'"

Christians often sing: "Be like Jesus, this my song," but so often we want to imitate others. Copying other Christians flies in the face of what we know deep inside and what we know from the Scriptures.

No thinking Christian really believes that they have to have a conversion experience exactly like the Apostle Paul. No thinking Christian believes he has to be exiled to a barren rock island like the Apostle John. No balanced Christian accepts for a moment that he has to be put in a pit in the earth like Jeremiah. The ups and downs of Jacob's erratic life can't be duplicated by others. The emotional roller coaster of David in the Psalms may at times help us in our struggles but we cannot match David exactly, experience by experience, nor do we have to. No one is exactly like anyone else and *that* the Bible makes amply clear. Varied accounts of believers' lives are given to us by God in Scripture to show His diversity with us. The vast variety in life and nature tell us the same thing.



To make any other Christian's life the ideal model to copy and follow is definitely wrong. Unfortunately, this

does not stop many from rushing around to frenzied meetings to get a rubber stamp "anointing" someone claims to have. Jesus, in John 21:17-23, rebuked Peter for making these kinds of carnal comparisons and stressed our individuality and individual calling. Though we may learn from others, we are not to be clones (1 Corinthians 12:4-12). Christ is our ultimate model (1 Peter 2:21-25).

Even the subject of this article, Jessie Penn-Lewis said: "*The enemy pushes truth too far, so that it becomes error; and even what is true can absorb you too much, so that you become blind to all else.*"¹ Regrettably, in her search for "self abandonment," Penn-Lewis ignored her own advice.

SEND IN THE CLONES

To make anyone's Christian life a pattern for everyone else's is misleading and unhealthy. It is a sure way to
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Editorials

WHOM DO THEY THINK THEY ARE KIDDING?

There is a international anthem among an elite class of Charismatic celebrities today. It's a stern warning repeatedly directed at their critics with a residual effect upon their devotees. It's the frequent and methodical strategy that they recite against anyone who opposes their unscriptural doctrine and practice. It's a charge of "blasphemy of the Holy Spirit" and "touch not the Lord's anointed." The threats are sometimes delivered with trance-like (with a deep voice) intonations of various sicknesses, pox and plagues that will befall all the children of the detractors, "pharisees" and "heretic hunters."

These indictments, however, are a flagrant misuse of Scripture and a tactic to ward off substantiated biblical criticisms of their Scripture twistings and lack of integrity. It is a diversion to hold the scripturally illiterate at bay and keep their faithful from questioning their most outlandish conduct and off-the-wall teachings. It is, in no uncertain terms, a form of blatant manipulation and spiritual terrorism. And the intensity of their assaults only heightens when they see their dishonesty and deceitfulness about to be exposed. Spiritual dictators always resort to pummeling and manipulation.

But just who is blaspheming whom? And who is really touching God's anointed?

As has been carefully exegeted and shown in a previous PFO article: "the 'anointed' are the whole people of God! ... It is wrong to suggest that only a few select leaders are the anointed of God." (See further, "Touch Not the Lord's Anointed — Divine Command or Cop-out?", *The Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 3, pg. 4.)

Additionally, it should be noted, the Scriptures never give to any Christian unquestionable authority. No leader, in the Old or New Testaments or even today, is endowed with such an exclusive calling as to not be examined in their faith and practice or even chastised when found derelict. The command of "touching not the Lord's anointed" is clearly an injunction against soliciting or initiating physical harm against God's people. Context bears this out.

Consider, for example, the very persons — David and Saul — who are the chief participants involved in this "touch not" command (1 Samuel 24:6, 26:9). Both of these men, while kings, suffered rebuke in their lives. Saul by the reproof of both David (1 Samuel 24:10-15) and Samuel (1 Samuel 13:13-14), and David himself by the powerful admonition of Nathan the prophet (2 Samuel 12:7-12).

In the New Testament, we find Apollos ("a learned man with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures") being corrected and instructed by Priscilla and Aquila in Acts 18:26 and the Apostle Peter being confronted "to his face" by Paul in Galatians 2:11-21. These men did not act in defiance to these rebukes, but accepted them. They did

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News Updates

MEDJUGORJE ON THE MOVE

In the summer of 1981, six Croatian children said they had been receiving daily visitations from the Virgin Mary. In the nearly two decades since, more than 20 million people have made pilgrimages to a shrine in Medjugorje, a small town in Bosnia (the former country of Yugoslavia). From the United States alone, more than 150 Marian Groups have visited the site of the purported visions. The visionaries and their "Apparition Hill" have become a lucrative industry.

Now, for those in the United States seeking a message from the mother of Jesus through the Medjugorje visionaries, travel to the war-torn country is no longer a necessity. Ivan Dragicevic, one of the visionaries, is drawing thousands in meetings across this country. According to Jan. 17, 2000, *Newsweek* magazine, "Devotees come to watch him commune with Mary, then translate her messages to the crowd." Dragicevic, now 34, says the Virgin Mary usually appears to him at 6:40 p.m. — apparently regardless of the city in which he is conducting his intermediary rituals. From Boston to Dallas to Oakland, Calif., Dragicevic finds himself a celebrity in America and a man in demand, the magazine reported.

Dragicevic says Mary appears to him with "black hair, blue eyes, rosy cheeks, a white veil and a crown of stars." He also says he has seen heaven.

The Medjugorje visions have never been verified or sanctioned by the Catholic Church, either locally or universally. In 1987, the bishops of Yugoslavia stated that "one cannot affirm that supernatural apparitions are involved." Likewise, the Vatican offers no endorsement, saying it is continuing to investigate the reports.

—MKG

UFO SIGHTINGS INCREASE IN CHINA

China is a country where reports of the supernatural and unearthly are normally suppressed by the communist leadership. However, in the recent past few months, "China is buzzing with a rising number of UFO sightings," according to an Associated Press news story. In December, people from more than a dozen cities reported UFO sightings. In Pusalu, a poor farm community 30 miles from Beijing, villagers said they saw a person-size object, bathed in golden light and slowly moving skyward.

"Some of these sightings are real, some are fake and, with others, it's unclear," said Shen Shituan, the honorary director of the China UFO Research Association. Shituan is also president of Beijing Aerospace University and a rocket scientist. His UFO research association claims a membership of 50,000.

UFO watching, interest and research continues to grow in China. A bimonthly magazine about UFO sightings has a circulation of 400,000. While the state-run media service also has acknowledged UFO sightings, a representative for the Communist Party said, "Some say it was caused by an earthquake. Some say it was a UFO. Some say it was a ray of Buddha. I'm telling everyone to call it an auspicious sign."

Others offer added skepticism. Geremie Barne, a Chinese culture watcher from the Australia National University suggested, "All of that sort of millennial fear and trepidation fits in so nicely with Chinese cosmology — and also the Hollywood propaganda that everybody's been lapping up."

—MKG

HINN SAYS TBN WILL RAISE DEAD VIEWERS

Undaunted by the news media's debunking of his claim that a man was raised from the dead at one of his healing crusades, Benny Hinn presses on with divine revelations of worldwide resurrections.

"I'm telling you, I can feel the anointing talking here. People are going to be canceling funeral services and bringing their dead in their caskets, placing them — My God, I feel the anointing here — placing them before a television set, waiting for God's power to come through and touch them," Hinn told Paul and Jan Crouch and their Trinity Broadcasting Network viewing audience last fall. The program originally aired live Oct. 19, 1999. It has been replayed several times on TBN, including Jan. 7, 2000.

Of course, according to the controversial faith healer, the television sets will need be tuned to TBN. "You're going to have people raised from the dead watching this network. ... People around the world who will lose loved ones will say to undertakers, 'Not yet, I want to take my dead loved one and place him in front of that TV set for 24 hours,'" Hinn announced to the network's followers.

Hinn also alleged that God was showing him "rows of caskets lining up in front of this TV set." "I see them

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Mormon Games People Play

THE STRATEGIES AND DIVERSIONS OF LATTER-DAY SAINT APOLOGISTS

by Stephen F. Cannon

Anyone who allows a discussion with a member of the Latter-day Saint church to move beyond a doorstep dialogue will encounter a number of semantic strategies. For example, while doing research for my article "Deception: The Legacy of the Mormon Prophets,"¹ this writer also was carrying on correspondence with several LDS "apologists" on a variety of subjects relative to the truthfulness of the Mormon church and its claims. One particular exchange of letters lasted about a year.² And within the apologists' various rebuttals, I was adequately reminded of many classic examples of the contorted thinking and semantic gymnastics played in modern LDS apologetics.

THE "ANTI" LABEL

A frequent and fundamental campaign by Latter-day Saints is a disavowing of the facts presented by simply labeling the source as "anti-Mormon." Authors Bill McKeever and Eric Johnson define the expression as:

"A name usually attributed to 'Bible Christians' who try to evangelize Mormons. Oftentimes Mormons accuse such people of being motivated by hatred and bigotry."³

This writer has seen rank-and-file Mormons "tune out" valid historical information that put their church leaders in a negative light simply

because it came from an "anti-Mormon." I believe it is advantageous for Mormon scholars to put critics in as negative a light as possible so as to keep the maximum number of church members isolated from revealing facts. The first line of defense seems to be getting that "anti-Mormon" label painted on critics as quickly as possible.

Christians will do well to establish some ground rules in their "give and take," discussions with Mormons. They should readily take exception to the epithet of being an "anti-Mormon." Unfortunately, that word is thrown about with the intention of some to isolate critics of the LDS church. Even a basic understanding of the history of the LDS people reveals that the word "anti-Mormon" psychologically conjures up images of mobs, persecutors, and ultimately a murdered prophet.

Some Mormon apologists may object, claiming they are a people who are beyond such thinking and are not neurotic about persecution. However, the fact is that many LDS are still very sensitive to the persecution committed against their early church. This is especially true when those known as "anti-Mormons" publicly level criticism against their church.

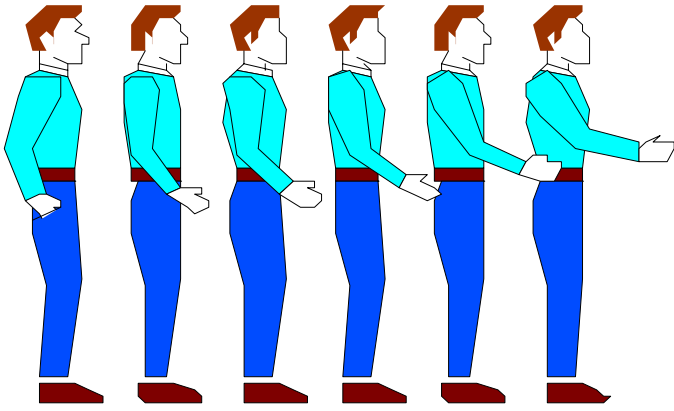
It is also helpful to know that Mormons are a group of people united around a belief system. There-

fore, to be "anti-Mormon" is to be against people. Christians who desire to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Mormons are never to come against people of any stripe. Yes, evangelical Christians do have strong disagreements with Mormonism, but the argument is with a belief system and not a people. The LDS people are no better or no worse than any other group of people. Any dispute is to be a disagreement with the "ism," not the "Mormon."

While we must be careful and resolute in communicating this vital fact, not all Mormons will be indulgent of the distinction. Consider, for example, comments from one of the letters from my Mormon apologist friend. Here I was informed, as to my differentiating between the people and their beliefs, that:

"To me this is hair splitting. Frankly I don't care whether you are against me as a person or not. *To me an anti-Mormon is one who may be against Mormons or Mormonism — it is of little consequence.* If I use the phrase 'anti-Mormon' and do not technically add the suffix 'ism' it does not mean I'm using the word the way you define it. *If you are against my faith to the degree that you attack it through writing or speech, I consider you an anti-Mormon. It is all the more true if you have a ministry, such as (name*

(continues on page 7)



The Way “Robot Corps”

by John P. Juedes

The Way Corps is the trained leadership of The Way International (TWI). In fact, President L. Craig Martindale noted that the Corps must meet higher standards of ability and training than even TWI headquarters staff. Corps members are graduates of a four-year training program, which includes a candidate year (in which they work with Corps grads), an apprentice year (which includes a term serving as Way Disciples) and two in-residence years (including teaching by top Way leadership).

However, there is irony in the fact that the Corps lead very little — mainly they follow the detailed, extensive rules and laws dictated to them by President Martindale. Leadership literally controls even the minute details of Corps members' personal lives and ministry. There is no room for personal decision-making or freedom and no allowance for differences of circumstance, people or region. Corps members are no longer leaders but rule-followers and rule-enforcers.

Martindale's letters and Way manuals prescribe and control every part of Corps members' lives, from the most important issues to insignificant matters.

PROGRAMMING THE CORPS

While TWI does not necessarily arrange marriages for Corps mem-

bers, it enforces the rule that Corps members must only marry other *active* Corps members. This policy forces them to look for spouses in a very small pool of candidates, since there are probably 10 or fewer singles of the opposite sex who graduate each year (and many grads from previous years are removed from active status). This rule likely results in many poor marriages (and divorces).

Martindale recently made a “sanctioned exception’ to the policy of active Way Corps grads marrying only active Way Corps grads” in the policy statement “Single Way Corps Graduate Women Marriage Parameters.” He allowed female Corps members to marry devout Advanced Class graduates who are willing to go through Corps training (this is because there are more female graduates than male, and there aren't enough Corps men to go around). Of course, this requires the women to go through Corps training a second time with their new husbands. Any Corps members who marry non-Corps members are removed from Active Corps members (some ex-members estimate that TWI lost 300-400 active Corps members when they first enforced this rule). When they are not active Corps members, responsibilities are reduced and they can't go to the

Corps meetings or receive Way correspondence to Corps members.

TWI also forbids many Corps members from having children, or prescribes when and how many children to have. The “Emergency Expense Cutting Measures” of March '98 to Sept. '99 emphasized that the “Pregnancy Policy” which began in 1996 was still in effect. The policy stated that wives under 35, couples who already have two or more children, Corps members in training, or Corps members in new assignments were forbidden from having children. In addition, any other pregnancies must be approved by their immediate overseers beforehand. Couples have been removed from the Corps for having forbidden pregnancies.

TWI forbids Corps members from having debt of any kind. Corps members may not get loans to purchase a house, car, or cover emergency expenses. A May 1994 letter from Martindale stated that at that time “...over 100 Corps members have been ‘busted back’ from their responsibilities, basically due to debt,” because, he said, “Debt is sin.”

To enforce this, Corps members must have their overseers approve their budget and actual family expenses (not just the ministry expenses, but their *personal* expenses). Since the Corps is paid by TWI headquarters,

no matter where they live or serve, TWI also controls Corps members' incomes. The "Emergency Expense Cutting Measures" also stated that for at least 18 months starting March 25, 1998, salaries for all staff would be reduced by 10%, leaving them less to live on. The Trustees also determine Corps members' job assignments, which commonly change every three to five years. Corps members are also required to have their weekly schedules approved by their overseers in advance. The rule "The Framework for Planning and Stewarding of Time for The Way Corps" prescribes that Corps members must fax a "proposed" schedule to their overseers by 5 p.m. each Friday and will receive a response by Monday morning. At the end of the week they submit "an 'actual' report of what they accomplished in that week, of both ministry and personal time." Note that leaders want accounting of *personal* time as well as ministry time.

Leadership also sets parameters for where Corps members may live. Usually this includes the requirement that they must live near their overseers, if at all possible.

Staff must also submit a "Headquarters Staff Vacation Contact Sheet" for approval three weeks before a vacation. This includes filling out a detailed "Vacation/Weekend Itinerary" which includes details about when, how, and with whom they are traveling, as well as accommodations and who they will visit.

Corps members also must follow "The Way Corps Dress Code" which details how they will dress at different occasions and times of day. It also notes that leadership may designate dress codes for specific occasions, which Corps members must obey.

Martindale also insists that Corps members not make teachings for fellowships on their own. Instead, they are to re-teach articles from *The Way Magazine* and teachings from the Sunday service at headquarters. The terms and words they use are tightly controlled. It is an absolute must to use current Way jargon, while use of older Wierwille-like terms are sure to

draw "reproof." Corps members must forward all donations ("abundant sharing") to headquarters, and may not retain any funds for local use. Leadership approves all ministry expenses.

Trustees also define how many new students must be recruited before Corps members can have a Way of Abundance and Power class. "The Way of the U.S.A. Class Information 1998-99" reduced the minimum to three new students in smaller branches of 15-30 disciples and five in larger branches. Classes must have at least 10 participants, including grads who attend additional times. Average class size is probably about five new students. It is likely the minimum number was reduced because recruitment had fallen off due to the decline in size of TWI.

Martindale used a March 1997 letter to the Corps members to command them not to receive gifts or honoraria, because these constitute bribery and greed. However, this rule seemed hypocritical because Way members were expected to send gifts to Martindale whenever they held The Way of Abundance and Power classes. The class coordinator's manual included section "H. Gifts Presented to Rev. Martindale from The Way of Abundance and Power Classes." The two-page section included seven points detailing how to collect money and what kinds of gifts to buy for him. It discouraged cash gifts because "there are legal limitations in the way they must be handled." It recommended books, sports-related merchandise, cuff links, ties and especially "gift certificates to selected stores, catalogs and restaurants." Section "H." was recently removed from the manual.

Gifts for "the man of God" and some lesser leaders was an entrenched practice in TWI (apparently founder Victor Paul Wierwille loved receiving gifts and accolades) but only recently has Martindale revoked the privilege. Martindale said: "I enjoy honorariums and special gifts. ... but I will certainly slam my privileges shut also if this is what it takes to ... straighten out some of your gnarled-up minds." Even though Martindale

lives a lifestyle much plusher than any Corps member, (his President's Home, once called "The Way Corps Chalet," and private office are said to be worth millions of dollars) he has reduced the small staff salaries and gifts and is said to still receive gifts privately on occasion.

The "Emergency Expense Cutting Measures" also prescribed the "New Pet Policy" which read: "Effective March 25, 1998, larger pets ('serious pets') such as cats, dogs, horses, reptiles, and some birds will not be allowed for full-time Staff. Smaller pets such as fish, hamsters, small turtles, etc. are still acceptable." It seems that the Trustees had reduced staff salaries so much that they decided staff couldn't afford to feed pets and didn't allow exceptions for those who had access to free pet food. Some staff report that Trustee Rosalie Rivenbark's two cats are apparently exempt from the no-pet policy.

Overseers wield two important weapons to achieve their goal of keeping Corps members in line: "confronting" and "mark and avoid." "Confronting," (also called "reprove" or "admonish") is when leaders criticize and accuse those beneath them of error, mistakes, not using current jargon, not obeying the many rules, etc. It may include yelling, berating, or not allowing the subjects (victims?) to leave the room until leaders feel that they will obey on even the smallest of matters. Ex-Way followers report that sessions can last hours.

Overseers also threaten to purge, mark and avoid those who disobey leadership. They "mark" (publicly label them as erring) and "avoid" all contacts and conversations with them. Such fallen leaders are labeled as "unsalted." They use "avoid" as a means to prevent current Corps members from talking with or reading the writings of ex-Way members, thereby controlling what Corps members read and hear.

Since Corps members are used to being scrutinized and criticized by overseers, they treat Way followers beneath them in the pecking order in the same way. This creates a manipu-

lative, controlling atmosphere at all levels of TWI. Since all decisions must be approved by overseers, TWI has become much like the communist USSR was: they assume that if something is not specifically allowed, then it must be forbidden. As a result, The Way "Robot Corps" lives and works in a lockstep, robotic fashion. While founder V.P. Wierwille established "The Way Tree" as a means to control everyone and everything related to TWI, even he probably never imagined how manipulative the tree would become.

This is much different from most pastors and leaders of Christian churches, who are free to direct their own ministry, decide how to best use their personal income and time, choose from many potential Christian life partners, and adjust their dress and ministry to fit local needs and circumstances.

WHAT DOES THE "ROBOT CORPS" SUGGEST ABOUT THE TRUSTEES?

The Trustees who make all decisions and are the only legal members

of TWI are L. Craig Martindale, Rosalie Rivenbark and John Reynolds. Since they make all policies, the way they treat the Corps members gives insights into the character and nature of the Trustees.


First, the rules imply that the Trustees do not trust the Corps members. The Trustees legislate, control, and approve every aspect of the Corps members' personal and work lives. Apparently, they think that the Corps members are completely unable to lead themselves or others. And if the Trustees, who know Corps grads well, don't trust the Corps members — then why should believers trust Corps grads who oversee them?

Second, the Trustees must provide poor leadership training if grads are unable to lead themselves or others, take initiative, evaluate their own work, design their own teachings and be self-starters.

Third, these policies suggest that the Trustees consider manipulating and micromanaging Corps members lives to be one of their main functions. They seem to guide the Corps mem-

bers by inspecting rather than by inspiring and setting an example.

One thing the Corps members policies do *not* mention is *freedom*. The New Testament, on the other hand, emphasizes freedom. Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31-32). Of course, TWI spends very little effort studying Jesus' teachings, since it ridicules them as being meant for people long dead rather than for themselves. Galatians 5:1 also warns us, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." These are passages for Corps members to reflect on as they seek approvals and fear reprovals.

Editor's Note: The Corps policies cited above and other letters from Way President Craig Martindale to the Corps can be viewed in their original form at The WayDale Document Archive web site. Additional information of The Way International may be found on Dr. Juedes' web site: www.empirenet.com/~messiah7. 

GAMES MORMON PEOPLE PLAY

(continued from page 4)

*omitted), that intentionally fights against it by publishing a web site for that purpose. The same may be said for those who publish anti-Mormon (ism) pamphlets, books, articles, or who attend LDS gatherings to picket, oppose, ridicule, attack, pass out their literature, and the like.*⁴

Thus, for this particular LDS, there appears to be no substantive difference between criticizing the doctrines of the church or attacking the Mormon people. If you do one, then you are guilty of the other. This, in his estimation, is especially true if you publish anything against his beliefs. If you do this, then you are "anti-Mormon."

Moreover, a quick way for LDS members to find themselves excom-

municated from their church is to "speak out" or "preach" anything the church authorities consider false doctrine. In a recent appearance on *Larry King Live*, Gordon B. Hinckley, the current "Prophet" of the LDS church, had this exchange with the popular talk show host:

King: "Are people ever thrown out of your church?"

Hinckley: "Yes."

King: "For?"

Hinckley: "Doing what they shouldn't do, preaching false doctrine, speaking out publicly. They can carry all the opinion they wish within their heads, so to speak, but if they begin to try to persuade others, then they may be called in to a disciplinary council. We don't excommunicate many, but we do some."⁵

WHO'S ATTACKING WHOM?

Closely related to the "anti-Mormon" labeling strategy is the question

from Latter-day Saints as to why Christians openly criticize and discredit their church. Observations again expressed during my conversation with the Mormon apologist bear this out:

"Mormons are not on a campaign to destroy any particular religion. Indeed, we are aware that the major religious leaders have been inspired by God to give various peoples a degree of light and truth, and we know their religions will not likely disappear regardless of how successful our missionary efforts are. Thus we say, we are positively preaching our message which of course includes statements such as that we have the fullness of the gospel and other religions do not. In that offer we invite people to keep the truth they have and accept the additional truth we offer. If we are rejected, we honor that decision."

True, the Mormons are not on a campaign to *destroy* any particular religion. The LDS church is on a campaign to *supplant all other religions!* Are converts really allowed to “keep the truth they have”? What if the convert has previously accepted Jesus Christ as who He said He was, accepted His sacrifice as propitiation for their sins and been baptized by immersion for remission of their sins at their present church? No honest Mormon could ever deny that this person would not be rebaptized if he joined the LDS church. The very definition of *truth* within the matrix of Mormonism runs counter to *truth* in the outside world. Outside of the milieu of LDS thought, truth is deduced by the laws of logic and evidence, while inside, truth is decreed by church leaders and confirmed by a subjective feeling known as “Testimony.”

My apologist’s comments become even more emphatic:

“Where is there an LDS Church operated, or even a private, web site which focuses on another specific religion and its errors, such as the Hutterites? Where can you point to a regular and ongoing publication of books by Mormons against the Methodists, for example? Can you lead me to a Mormon-produced video which attacks the Baptists for over an hour? Not to mention a healthy packet of supporting literature. Or how about a Mormon-produced video about Calvinists entitled ‘The God Breakers’ or something like that? Can you point to an LDS effort to expose, ridicule or mock the sacred practices, ordinances or rituals of say, the Druze or the Jews? Can you show a church-organized effort, led by general or local LDS leaders to picket, parade, carry placards, hand out literature, or debate with a group, such as the Church of Christ, at their conferences, meetings, and building dedications? Do you know of a time when LDS members or leaders went on a TV or radio talk show to argue

against the teachings of the Christian Scientists? Can you give evidence of a continuing effort in the LDS Church where stake presidents, bishops or branch presidents sponsor a Mormon expert to come to their meetings and warn of the evils of say Islam, for 45 minutes or an hour? Do you know of a ward or stake that approves of a Mormon Sunday School teacher taking the entire class time to attack the dress practices of the Amish, the marriage customs of the Moonies or the missionary tactics of the Jehovah’s Witnesses? Do you know of any Mormon book or pamphlet that has a title such as, *The Evils of The Evangelical United Brethren*, *The Greek Orthodox Menace*, or *The Counterfeit Gospel Of The Church of England*? Can you point to an article in a professional journal by a Mormon which criticizes say, the way the Spirit falls on the Pentecostals or the testimony meetings of the Quakers? Can you give me a bibliography of Mormon biographies seeking to dig up every conceivable piece of dirt on Martin Luther, John Calvin, any Pope you want, Alexander Campbell, Billy Sunday, Dwight Moody, Billy Graham, Mohammed, Buddha, Confucius, John Knox, Joseph Smith III, or any other religious leader for that matter?”

The dominant motive for researching and writing against LDS theology, by this writer, is to respond to the challenges of Joseph Smith and others from within the LDS environment. I have read those overflow of challenges and it is very easily understood what is or isn’t being said. The challenges go far beyond Joseph Smith and have been an integral part of LDS thought from the beginning. Clearly, historic biblical Christianity was here first. In the 1800s, Joseph Smith Jr. came along, said he heard from God that all extant churches were “wrong... their creeds an abomination, and ...those professors were all corrupt.”⁶ There was the challenge. There was the attack.

Once the challenge is issued you either accept it or you don’t. It then becomes an issue of whether or not Smith was telling the truth. If he was telling the truth, then he really is the Prophet of the restoration and everyone should be looking for the nearest LDS baptismal font. If there is credible evidence that he isn’t who he said he was, then we should be shouting it from the rooftops.

THE REAL MESSAGE OF MORMONISM

According to Mormon doctrine, the prime directive of God to Joseph Smith was not to join any Catholic or Protestant church — for they were all corrupt, apostate, and an abomination — but to restore the one true church.

It was this directive that caused Smith to establish his church in 1830.

It was this directive that caused God (if you believe *The Book of Mormon* is inspired) to reveal that there are only two churches — the church of the Devil and the church of the Lamb (1 Nephi 14:10).

It was this directive that caused LDS Apostle Orson Pratt to teach that marriages outside of the LDS church were illegal and the children of those marriages are illegitimate.⁷

It was this directive that caused LDS Apostle Charles W. Penrose to state in his *Rays of Living Light — Divine Authority* that Christian creeds are valueless⁸ and that Christendom has *no* inspired apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers and hence no authority.⁹

It was this directive that caused the LDS church to produce a tract in 1982 titled “Which Church Is Right?” and state on page 17 that other churches cannot save souls and that they have *no* divine authority.

It was this directive that prompted the LDS church to publish the words of Brigham Young University Professor Kent P. Jackson that Satan sits as head of Christian churches¹⁰ and Apostle Boyd K. Packer’s statement that baptism and other ordinances by other churches are not recognized.¹¹

And finally, it is this directive that causes LDS missionaries to go door-to-door by the multiplied thousands with the agenda to convince the householder that their church is right and *all* others wrong.

That directive was the original challenge of Joseph Smith to *all of Christianity*. It began the debate. That was the spiritual “shot heard round the world” and that trashing of all extant Christianity is the bedrock of the LDS church. The allegation that the LDS just propagates their belief positively and doesn’t run down other religions doesn’t hold up. Whenever an LDS missionary, member or apologist preaches the Mormon gospel — his entire thesis begins with the prime directive, it begins with an attack!

When the smoke clears and the dust settles, the fact is that when the LDS (or any other) church claims it has exclusive ownership of the truth it does not have to have the specificity mentioned above by my Mormon apologist friend. If one believes that “they were all wrong, their creeds were an abomination, those professors were all corrupt” then it is wasted effort to point out individual disagreements.

With the stroke of a pen, you just attack them *all* without degree or specificity as stated in *The Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, The Pearl of Great Price* and the other doctrinal and Mormon generated works mentioned.

Christian author and missionary to Mormons, Bill McKeever, also notes that “Until April 1990, the most blatant criticisms and mockeries against Christianity were found in their temple ceremony.” In the Mormons’ sacred and secret ritual, the beliefs of the Christian faith were ridiculed and Christian ministers were portrayed as unwitting pawns hired by Satan to preach false doctrine.¹²

McKeever also concludes that:

“It is not true that Mormonism does not attack Christianity. Its very tenets are an affront to Christianity as a whole, since they believe the work of Christ was not enough to save man.

The Mormon believes Christ died and rose again merely to pave the way for all men to be resurrected. Salvation, or exaltation, is solely dependent upon the works of men.”¹³

CLEARING THE AIR

For those who engage in a continuous dialogue with Mormons, it may soon be evident that with certain Latter-day Saints, especially those who actually hold — or merely perceive that they hold — positions of authority, an air of superiority will manifest itself. This “air” most often appears when a gentile¹⁴ in a debate makes an error.

This writer was reminded of this maneuver during a discussion of the integrity of the LDS church’s leadership with the Mormon apologist. During our interchanges, we debated several subjects related to the dishonesty of LDS leaders until I leveled the charge of dishonesty against Joseph Smith as it related to the doctrine of polygamy. I made the charge that Smith was publicly denying the practice while secretly practicing it. The Mormon apologist challenged me to present my best examples of Smith’s mendacity and he would dispel all doubts that Smith was dishonest. In mid-April of 1999 I posted my charges¹⁵ and waited to hear back.

As this tactic is presented, I do not make my observation as mere justification. For without excuse, in my haste to post my initial charges, I made a glaring historical blunder. It is an opportunity for others to learn from my mistake and be adequately aware of the necessity of accuracy, so as not to allow this superior air to occur. While my error was more than trivial, this necessity for accuracy extends to the smallest detail. The history and evolving theology of the Mormon church is a broad and vast expanse of which even the careful student may find himself in a seemingly endless maze. Nevertheless, the need for accuracy in handling sources is an absolute.

Unfortunately, I have witnessed meaningful dialogue cut off because

of mistakes in historical minutiae, and actual historical facts neutralized with such charges as: “It is obvious that ‘Mr. Anti’ can’t be trusted in his attack because of his inability to get the facts straight. He should spend more time polishing up his scholarship than trying to criticize our religion.”

While my Mormon apologist friend did not blatantly demonstrate this strategy in ways I have seen in past discussions, it was still apparent.

In addressing the dishonesty of Joseph Smith in the specific area of his embracing the doctrine of plural marriage, among several evidences, I stated that Smith knew about the doctrine of plural marriage as early as 1831 and yet it was denied in the 1833 *Book of Commandments*. However, the document to which I appealed, “Article on Marriage,” did not appear in the 1833 edition of *Book of Commandments*.

The Mormon apologist rightly (and historically) responded that:

“The ‘Article on Marriage’ was not among the documents published in that volume. In the summer of 1833 a mob destroyed the press in Independence, Missouri. By 1835 the Church purchased another press and the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants was published at Kirtland [Ohio]. It included the earlier material plus new revelations, the Article on Marriage, an article on Government, and the Lectures on Faith.”

I responded to his correction and admitted:

“You are absolutely correct in pointing out my error in chronology and authorship regarding the ‘Article On Marriage’ that appeared in D&C-1835 vs. the 1833 BOC. There is no other way to address the issue other than to say, ‘I blew it.’ There are reasons why I made the blunder, but there are no excuses, so I won’t offer any. You were right in your assessment, I was wrong in my

original conclusion. I made an assumption, and you know what happens when you assume (old cliché). I will strive mightily to slow down, so as to be more accurate. I do not want to minimize the importance of accuracy and proper handling of sources."

I went on to show that while I had made an historical blunder, it still did not change my thesis that Smith had lied about practicing polygamy while publicly condemning it, and presented other documentation to that effect.

Despite my admission, a draft of the "air of superiority" began to blow. He articulated to me in a subsequent letter:

"In the black and white world of the evangelical mind set, it is easy to accuse Joseph of dishonesty. But in the world of spiritual realities, it is possible that the Lord told Joseph something that he was to keep secret from the public for a time. ... Steve, I wonder if I might offer an observation or two without being overly offensive. In this reply I have once again detailed serious historical errors in your analysis. As you recall this has happened several times in our discussions during the past year. At this point, I think it is fair to say that you are not as familiar with LDS history as perhaps you first thought or wanted me to believe. Moreover, more than once your errors of historical fact have been the sandy foundation for dubious if not erroneous conclusions that support your anti-Mormon position. Most critics attack the historical foundations of the Church and the character of its founder. Repeatedly you have come up short on those two matters. May I respectfully suggest in light of these repeated and often elementary mistakes, that you jettison sweeping misguided beliefs, such as the one about Mormonism's deceitful ways, which you find so convenient in dismissing The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-

day Saints and go back and do a thorough re-reading of LDS history and scripture? I believe you have a basically honest heart, and if you will start again, without the anti-Mormon baggage, I'm confident you will discover that the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ as restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith is incomparable in providing insight, meaning and understanding of Christ and his mission. Furthermore you will find that Joseph Smith was, and I testify that he was, full of integrity."

Notwithstanding several citations from early LDS church leaders that demonstrated a pattern of "lying for the Lord" on various doctrinal issues (especially polygamy), the evidence raised all seemed to take a back seat because of "my error in chronology and authorship regarding the 'Article On Marriage.'"

In this effort to deprecate comes a glaring example of selective criterion on the Latter-day Saints' part. While my apologist friend had decried dishonesty on the part of some critics of his church (and rightly so), Mormons are reluctant to apply the same rigorous standard of honesty to their own leaders. Many times they will view any evidence of impropriety on their leaders' part through the lens of "testimony," to overthrow any possibility of institutionalized dishonesty.

As we consider the claims and statements of the past and present leadership of the LDS church, it must not be overlooked that it is one thing for an ordinary person like me to make a theological mistake, draw an erroneous conclusion, or stutter-step in doctrine. It is entirely different coming from one who has taken upon himself the mantle of authority as being a mouthpiece of God. It would be another situation entirely if I took upon myself a mantle of authority and made the claim that I am a literal mouthpiece of God, and when I speak on matters spiritual, it is the same as God speaking. Once in that position, the standard to which I should be held leaps off the known chart. This is

the standard to which all Latter-day prophets and apostles should be held, especially Joseph Smith.

PULLING THE PLUG

Often, the final and definitive course for Mormons in dialogue is merely to bail out of the discussion. After I posted a response to the Mormon apologist in late August of 1999, answering point one of his rebuttal, our communications began taking a strange turn. While I was researching and writing my rebuttal to the other four points of our argument, there were short messages sent to him that I was working on answers and would send them as soon as possible. I began to notice that his replies became testy.

A few weeks later, I sent a correspondence saying that I was revamping my rebuttal to point number one, and then proceeding to move to the other points. He responded that, "I look forward to it and trust the time will have allowed you to avoid the simple factual mistakes of past posts."

However, his anticipation was tempered with:

"I marvel that a man with apparent education and humanity harbors such prejudice and cannot avoid continual trite jibes on the subject of perceived Mormon deception, manipulation and conspiracy. I despair of disabusing you of such jingoism and truly wonder if this correspondence is worth pursuing. It certainly is wearisome. ... Especially from sideline critics for whom truth often seems to take second best to simply winning a verbal joust."

I responded that any continuation of correspondence was his decision, and if he chose to, we would end it. I don't know his motivation for doing so, but he chose to end the conversation, I honored his decision and our discussion ended.

My prayer is that those of you who have an opportunity to read some of this exchange will benefit in understanding a little more of the LDS

mind set, and in so doing, become more efficient ambassadors for Christ.

Endnotes:

1. "Deception: The Legacy of the Mormon Prophets," *The Quarterly Journal*, Oct.-Dec. 1999, pp. 4-12.
2. My correspondence with this particular Mormon apologist began in late 1998. He contacted me via e-mail because of some statements that I had made in my article on the book, *How Wide the Divide* (see, "Still Wide the Divide — A Critical Analysis of a Mormon and an Evangelical in Dialogue," *The Quarterly Journal*, Oct.-Dec. 1997, pp. 1, 12-18). Our debate continued until the fall of 1999 when he decided to end our communication.

3. Bill McKeever and Eric Johnson, *Questions to Ask Your Mormon Friend*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1994, pg. 145.
4. Because I do not have permission to use his name outside of our correspondence, I am keeping his identity confidential. Emphasis added.
5. *Larry King Live* broadcast, Sept. 8, 1998, video tape on file.
6. *Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith History 1:19.
7. *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 16, pp. 175-176.
8. Charles W. Penrose, *Rays of Living Light — Divine Authority*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, no date, pg. 2.
9. *Ibid.*, pg. 3.

10. Kent P. Jackson, "Early Signs of the Apostasy," *The Ensign* magazine, December 1984, pp. 8-9.
11. Boyd K. Packer, "The Only True Church," *The Ensign* magazine, November 1985, pg. 82.
12. Bill McKeever, *Answering Mormons' Questions*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1991, pp. 16-17.
13. *Ibid.*, pg. 17.
14. The designation "gentile" to a Mormon refers to any non-member of their church. See for example, Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Second Edition, 1966, pp. 310-311.
15. Most of my arguments may be read in "Deception: The Legacy of the Mormon Prophets" article, op. cit.

ERRORS OF JESSIE PENN-LEWIS

(continued from page 1)

cripple growth. Paul in 1 Corinthians 12 shows that the confusion in Corinth had its genesis in those who pressed for one gift for everyone and had a one-size-fits-all philosophy in regard to tongues. We are all unique individuals and all uniquely gifted. Body life in the Church like the human body consists of various unique parts. This is a basic and fundamental truth that was somehow misunderstood in the genre of Christianity prevalent at the mid-to-late 18th century. Many Christian leaders gave lip service to some differences but created a mold to enter "the higher life." These views still predominate today in some parts of the Church at large.

Almost every Christian in the time of Penn-Lewis (1861-1927), was expected to move into experiences that were variously called the "higher life," "holiness" and also called "entire sanctification" and "Keswick holiness."² This grew out of some extremes in the Wesleyan movement.

Not that those promoting it were always that holy, for the movement often produced pride, judgmentalism, elitism, obstinacy and division. Many of its leaders, before and after Penn-Lewis, were shamefully inconstant.³ Some strains of "the higher life movement" taught that the believer could get to a state where they would not

and could not ever sin again. There was a spectrum of contradictions and extremes.

Though Penn-Lewis asserted, "Let us not ask Him to put us all in one mold of experience," a few sentences later she reverses field and says, "There is no *gradual* deliverance from sin, no gradual process of death to sin or deliverance from the world, or the flesh."⁴ So every believer was to look for this instantaneous experience.

It was into this cultural religious milieu that Jessie Jones (who, at age 19, married William Penn-Lewis) was born on Feb. 28, 1861. Though born to a Calvinistic Methodist pastor father, she often is called a Welsh mystic because of her wide exposure to and connection with the Quakers in her formative years.

ERROR REPEATED AND MULTIPLIED

Penn-Lewis cannot be understood or analyzed without some grasp of the Christian subculture in which she swam. Though the experiences to be sought after conversion were sometimes referred to as "the baptism in the Spirit," it had nothing to do with Pentecostalism or tongues-speaking. Penn-Lewis saw most of that as "demonic," especially in her later years. That and other things led her to believe and teach that Satan had invaded the earth in a new, direct and intensive way, fulfilling parts of the

Book of Revelation. Her days, she truly believed, were the last days. Everyone's days were numbered.

This kind of intensive paranoia is not new in the history of the Church. As far back as the 12th century, Joachim of Fiore promoted end time scenarios as did the later misled Seventh-day Adventists of the 19th century.⁵

Time has shown that Penn-Lewis did not have the inside spiritual information on the future that she claimed to have but that it was a product of her overactive imagination and her times. We can be affected by society and not Scripture. She seriously misread her days.

The unfortunate thing is that her strange twist on Satan's domination of the Church led Penn-Lewis to teach that Christians could be inhabited by invading, indwelling demons — an error repeated by many today with Penn-Lewis as the source.⁶

Respected pastor and theologian Donald Grey Barnhouse commented strongly that demons cannot come into one who is born again since they have become the temple of the Holy Spirit:

"We put forth this statement categorically in spite of the works of the English group known as the Overcomers, whose bible is frequently Mrs. Penn-Lewis' book, *War on the*

Saints. We know of no more insalubrious idea than that which would turn Christians to introspection, looking for attacks of Satan within, or to a circumspection that would have Christians seeing defilements in shaking hands, or touching in any way a person who might be possessed by the devil."⁷

Regarding the times of Penn-Lewis, there was a rigid subjective master plan for the sanctification of all believers which had to be sought vigorously and entered into since there was little time left. Names associated with the so-called holiness movement or perfectionistic/victorious life movement were Charles Finney, Asa Mahan, Pearsall Smith (Hannah Whitall Smith's husband), and W. E. Boardman, though these did not have Penn-Lewis' spin on the lateness of the hour. These teachers moved from the historical Reformed and Puritan view of progressive sanctification as a life-long daily struggle to a subjective perfectionism.

Historically the Church had viewed our only perfection as being in our standing in Christ and our growth as believers as a daily ongoing struggle throughout life. The radical difference between standing and state must always be kept in view. The historical and Reformed view of sanctification is presented clearly and succinctly in Kris Lungaard's fine book, *The Enemy Within*.⁸

The "fullness" teachers, as they were called, saw two levels of Christians. There were Christians who were only saved and in their view powerless and those Christians who were both justified and *fully* sanctified. Some argued for the eradication of all sin while others opted for a state of not having any known sin — a kind of practical perfection. Penn-Lewis fell into the latter camp. Some also put forth a contradictory idea of somehow confessing unknown sin. Penn-Lewis went even a little further out (as this article will show) suggesting that demons could sin for us as believers.

BE LIKE JESUS OR BE JESUS?

Others in these times following the lead of some medieval mystics overpressed identification to Christ to bizarre extremes, teaching that even the self was exterminated. Penn-Lewis reported a rather strange "vision" in which she merged into Christ:

"I went to God about 4 p.m. and, as I knelt, I was suddenly within the veil. It seemed as if I and the Lord were one. He stood before the Father holding out His pierced hands, but it was I who stood there, too, in Him. He was saying 'Father I have died,' but I was saying it, too."⁹

Is there a subtle Arianism here as well?

For an in-depth treatment of the roots and fruits of perfectionism, see the classic work by B. B. Warfield, *Perfectionism*. It is massive, detailed and invaluable.

WHY?

Dr. Harry Ironside was part of the extreme wing of the perfection or holiness movement for many years and tells of the struggle and physical/mental breakdown of trying sincerely to attain to perfection in his partly autobiographical, *Holiness: The False and The True*. It is compelling reading from one who was on the inside of the movement and shows a sincere but misguided attempt to be absolutely perfect.

Dr. Jay Adams addresses the issue of why people adopt "second blessing" and similar beliefs when he writes, "It is the desire to find a satisfying way of life that transcends that of struggling every day with our sin in a sinful world."¹⁰

Adams, though discussing the "Biblical Sonship Course" by Jack and Rose Marie Miller, fleshes out how movements that are always seeking "something more" often see the struggles of the founder or teacher as the only model:

"...there is no place for anyone who doesn't fit. So the founders' experiences (together with a

lesser number of their disciples' experiences) are made the norm for everyone. ... The danger in making the peculiarities of a highly volatile couple of sinners the norm for others is that those who follow in their steps find it necessary to reproduce in their own lives the turmoil and tensions that the Millers experienced. Much (possibly most) of this effort to reproduce similar experiences is likely to lead to posturing and pretending."¹¹

In Edwin Orr's book, *The Flaming Tongue, The Impact of 20th Century Revivals*, Penn-Lewis is given only passing reference although she was part of the Welsh revival in 1905 and 1906. Unfortunately the revival was short-lived and came to a screeching halt with the emotional and physical breakdown of its prime mover, Evan Roberts. That was preceded by a storm of protest and criticism over the emotional excesses in the revival. Roberts convalesced at the home of Penn-Lewis for two years and served long after in her shadow. He never fully recovered a solo public ministry and at times became reclusive.¹²

Roberts further discredited himself with his so-called "burden message" in which he stated that the rapture was absolutely imminent in 1913. Given the outcome and fruit of this (Welsh) "revival," it seems it has been overplayed and over-hyped by well meaning historians and had no lasting value and very dubious fruit with continuing lasting damage.

HONEST ADMISSIONS

Penn-Lewis herself reported the cessation of the Welsh revival because Satan was working in it to draw off great numbers into "Theosophy ... Christian Science ... and Spiritism" and other "spiritualistic manifestations."¹³ Penn-Lewis believed that the revival stirred and angered Satan in a new way (unknown in all the history of the Church), unleashing his fury and special work against the Church especially through the newly born Pentecostal movement which, she believed, was one of Satan's tools.¹⁴ It is

hard to understand why some Charismatics own her and quote her.

Penn-Lewis traveled extensively as a spokeswoman for the YWCA. This gave her exposure and notice beyond what she ever imagined. She became a prolific writer. There are 23 books and 10 booklets of hers still available. These have made her larger than life.

INTO THE MAZE

Penn-Lewis' teachings are very complex and very complicated. For some they are a labyrinth that can be interpreted in various ways. They are definitely filled with confusion and contradiction. At times they are so subjective and wordy it is almost impossible to decipher what she wants to get across especially as she is telling the reader to incorporate her directions into their experience. Did she even know what she really meant?

Her system can be condensed in broad strokes as follows. There is a twofold work of the cross. The first part is salvation but it hardly does much to equip one for the Christian life. Penn-Lewis did not understand that sanctification flows out of salvation and out of our position in Christ in a progressive life-long difficult growth pattern. In talking of the "message of the cross" she most of the time meant the "higher life" not the Gospel, the new birth experience or evangelism. There was an urgency to get into the "higher life" since time was short and one might be derailed by invading indwelling demons.

Penn-Lewis believed that a Christian would be crippled, not progress and be mincemeat for demons unless they actually pressed into the second part of the twofold work (the first part being salvation). The actual fact was that Penn-Lewis used *her* emotional and spiritual experiences as the template for all Christians. Only as Christians entered this second definite phase could they be "overcomers." There was a salvation aspect of the cross and there was a "victory aspect."¹⁵ Most of her references to "the message of the cross" refer to finding this higher life.

Penn-Lewis, like others of her time, departed from a biblically based view of sanctification as a progressive struggle. Though Penn-Lewis may have taught that Christians ultimately had individual callings, *all* had to enter through the "higher life" experience to be equipped and get to their calling. There were battles with bodily ailments and demons along the way but only those in the "higher life" could hope to win.

GOING UP

To oversimplify for the sake of illustration, Penn-Lewis believed that once a person became a Christian, he or she could take an elevator immediately to the top floor as opposed to a lifelong climb up the stairs. In opposition to Penn-Lewis, the long slow climb proves to be the real biblical model as seen in Philippians 2:12-13, 3:12-14, 2 Timothy 4:7-8 and Hebrews 12, among others. The lives of the biblical characters show a long and diverse climb in Hebrews 11. Not everyone's mountain was the same nor was everyone at the same place on their mountain. Also everyone's mountain had a different contour and a different mileage chart.

In biblical terms, the start of the climb and the continuance is *only possible* because of regeneration, grace and the indwelling Holy Spirit. This is the historical, orthodox and biblical view. The guidebook for the climb is the Word of God and the renewed strength comes from the promises of God and all the means of grace (Bible study, prayer, fellowship, worship, and the ordinances of the Church).

Not that there were not struggles on the top floor for Penn-Lewis but the struggles were more with health, Satan and demons, not self or the flesh or even sin. However, the worst form of self can be the delusion that there is no self. One way or the other, for Penn-Lewis and others, the view was that you could rise above sinning and sinful behavior altogether. Perfection as a goal is one thing. Perfection as an absolute attainment in this life is another.

The prevailing view of the Bible is that sin has to be mortified (put to death) everyday by the believer (Romans 6). We must stay humble and dependent on God, realizing that even our best works have tainted motives at times. Denying sinful self *daily* is Christ's mandate to us.

INGRAINED INDWELLING SIN REMAINING NOT REIGNING

Once you have practiced any sin it is like learning to ride a bike — you can always do it. That is why vigilance is always required and is the constant concern for one's testimony and influence.

John Owen, chaplain to Oliver Cromwell and a Puritan author who substantially wrote on sin, sanctification and mortification, taught that sin pervades and pollutes the whole man and "is continually putting itself upon us, in inclinations, motions, or suggestions, to evil."¹⁶ Owen rightly believed that sin never leaves and we must properly distrust ourselves because of the power and presence of sin. He states: "To keep our souls in a constant state of mourning and self-abasement is the most necessary part of our wisdom."¹⁷

In the Introduction of the new release of Owen's work, *Sin and Temptation*, theologian J.I. Packer draws heavily from Owen's words and offers this:

"Sometimes a soul thinks or hopes that it may through grace be utterly freed from this troublesome inmate. Upon some sweet enjoyment of God, some full supply of grace, some return from wandering, some deep affliction, some thorough humiliation, the soul begins to hope that it shall now be freed from the law of sin. But after a while ... sin acts again, makes good its old station, and the fight has to be resumed. No one 'gets out of Romans 7' in this world."¹⁸

Packer further states:

"... a Puritan model of godliness will highlight for us aspects of

spiritual reality which the better-known models — patristic, medieval, sixteenth-century, eighteenth-century, twentieth-century, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Wesleyan, Lutheran, Reformed — do not focus so clearly; and there is no doubt that among all the Puritan models Owen's is the richest. If our concern is with practical Christian living today, a Puritan model of godliness will most quickly expose the reason why our current spirituality is shallow, namely the shallowness of our views of sin."¹⁹

Princeton theologian B. B. Warfield would agree and had as his main critique of perfectionism an "inadequate notion of sin." He believed that the illusion of perfection in humans could not be maintained if one had a profound sense of sin.²⁰

Packer further acknowledges that he taught consecration and faith techniques of the higher life movement but now sees them as "heap powerful magic" and concludes:

"I nowadays think that the way to deal with temptation is at once to say no, and with that to ask the Lord for strength to keep saying no and actually to mortify — that is, do to death, squelch, and enervate — the sinful urge."²¹

Jay Adams unpackages the word "sanctification" with the following:

"The word sanctification means 'the process of setting one apart more and more from sin to righteousness.' It is a process that takes place over a period of time and is, therefore, progressive in nature. It is not a one-time act whereby one meets the requirements of some formula and is immediately catapulted onto cloud nine where from then on he leads a higher sort of life. No, it is that difficult day-by-day struggle with sin that the Spirit enables the believer to carry on successfully. Sanctification is growth. Where there is life, there is growth. Where there is spiri-

tual life there is growth. Where there is spiritual growth and life it is because the Holy Spirit is producing it."²²

Herbert Lockyer concurs:

"Terms like *running, wrestling, fighting, striving, and warring* indicate that the race is by no means easy."²³

FIVE FATAL FLAWS

Penn-Lewis' flawed thinking, excesses and errors involve five subjects, which become the foundation of her theological system.

- She views her own writings as divinely inspired.
- She tilts toward rudimentary Word-Faith view.
- Her views of sanctification were really the views of her time and of her own spiritual struggles. She locked believers into what she had experienced.
- Her views of the inner nature of man led to introspection and confusion.
- She viewed the Great Tribulation period as beginning about 1906 with the great and intense outpouring of demons on the Church and into Christians.

Penn-Lewis laid the seedbed for "territorial demon" teaching, prayer walks, and the likes of Frank Peretti novels. She claimed to have unique insights into the unseen world, which grew out of her obsession with the tribulation and an almost dualistic view of spiritual warfare. Her superstitious slant on demons as being territorial and bewitching certain geographical areas are lifted out of the teachings of a 17th century writer, Dr. Goodwin.²⁴

Another confusing quirk of Penn-Lewis was to call sin and some emotional conditions "demons." She expressed her view this way:

"There is the drink wickedness: that is the spirit of drink. The tattling wickedness: that is the spirit of tattling. Perhaps you haven't understood the 'wickednesses that are spirits' when

these foes were attacking you and pushing you to do things that you did not want to do in your heart. ... Then, too, there are the private meetings of the Lord's children when they pass on from one to the other the spirit of depression, which they do not recognize and immediately refuse because they do not discern the working of the 'power of the air' at work around them! ... Evil things that come into your mind *are not yours* if you recognize their origin and refuse them."²⁵

Penn-Lewis was sick all of her life with recurring lung problems. She claimed to have been healed early on but she still had life-long bouts with hemoptysis (coughing up blood). Her weight varied between 80 to 90 pounds.

She claimed to have read the Bible at four years of age.²⁶ She heard for the first time in 1883 from Rev. Evan Hopkins "of victory over the bondage of besetting sins, through the Blood of Christ, of the joy of full surrender, and the possibilities of a Spirit-filled life."²⁷ Depending on how one interprets the Spirit-filled life and besetting sins, the above could be fine but Penn-Lewis pressed things out in an extremely different way.

Let's now consider her five fatal flaws.

DIRECTLY FROM GOD

Penn-Lewis viewed her writings as divinely inspired. In Garrard's *Memoir*, we find the words of Penn-Lewis and her evaluation of her own writings: "I am *not a literary woman*. I cannot write one sentence unless I receive it from God."²⁸ If this were true, her literary efforts would be equal to the Bible. She could only write what she received directly from God, she says.

There is no doubt that Penn-Lewis believed her pennings were divinely inspired and straight from God. She further asserted:

"God gave me 'the Word of the Cross' on March 28th, and from

that moment it seemed as if all hell was roused. His Hand was upon me, writing all He showed me, and I wrote in the teeth of it for a week."²⁹

If she wrote only what God showed her, there can be no errors or mistakes in her books, since God is perfect. It is odd that her main work, *War on the Saints*, has been edited, abridged with large parts expunged. Her publishers do not seem to take her thoughts too seriously or think they were inerrant. In reality, they are embarrassed by some of her extremes.

Her admirers also felt that her writings were directly from God. Garrard, personal secretary to Penn-Lewis, says of her book on Job: "'Job' was written under the hand of God with the same wonderful liberty and heavenly unveiling as the message on the Song of Songs."³⁰ This certainly goes further than illumination and application of the text that godly gifted writers experience.

Another strange quirk in regard to Penn-Lewis' books was the idea that in writing them, she actually shared in some real, direct and mystical way the sufferings and experiences of the Bible characters she was writing about. It went far beyond just trying to understand and sympathize. Garrard also expresses this view in regard to Penn-Lewis' writing on Job as she cites a review of the work:

"Mrs. Penn-Lewis ... proves herself not merely to have intellectually and intelligently comprehended the book, but to have entered spiritually and experimentally into its inmost thought, and to have in spirit passed through, in some degree, the sorrows of the patriarch."³¹

So it was suggested that Penn-Lewis actually experienced the sufferings of Job. Certainly a claim like this, if true, would put her a few notches above the average.

Penn-Lewis' bent toward mysticism and her assumed and claimed direct divine revelation really come out of the fact that she immersed herself in

the writing of 16th century mystic heretic Madame Guyon.³² Guyon was given to occultic experiences and strong delusions, yet Penn-Lewis says, 'I also owe a great deal to the books of Madame Guyon, and the way she shewed me the path to the life 'in God.'"³³ It appears that Penn-Lewis did not possess doctrinal discernment.

Biographer Brynmor Pierce Jones says as well that Penn-Lewis was influenced by the mystical treatises of Fenelon.³⁴ He also points out that Penn-Lewis reproduced and distributed Guyon's writings.³⁵

In fact, initially Penn-Lewis struggled against Guyon's teachings and wanted nothing to do with them. Against common sense and better judgment, she refused to listen to her own internal warnings. Having no formal theological training, Penn-Lewis was no match for the deceptions of Guyon. (Guyon herself in later years renounced her mysticism and heresy.) But of her struggle against her own inner warning system Penn-Lewis writes:

"At first I flung the book away and said, 'No, I will not go that path, I shall lose all my "glory" experience.' But the next day I picked it up again, and the Lord whispered so gently, 'If you want deep life and unbroken communion with God, *this is the way.*' I thought, Shall I? No! and again I put the book away. The third day I again picked it up: once more the Lord spoke, 'If you want fruit, this is the path. I will not take the conscious joy-life from you; you may keep it if you like, but it is either that *for yourself*, or this *and fruit* — Which will you have?'"³⁶

So we are to believe that Jesus debated and negotiated with Penn-Lewis over the acceptance of writings both mystical and heretical.

Penn-Lewis taught a strange kind of fusion that could occur between Christ and the believer that blurs the lines between the Creator and the creature. There is no doubt she got

this mystical confusion from Guyon. In her book, *The Warfare with Satan*, she proposes:

"This is the deliverance of Calvary which the adversary most fears for the redeemed one to know, for it draws the believer right out of his reach by merging him out of sight into the crucified Lord, making way for the Christ Himself to possess the earthen vessel and manifest His life and power."³⁷

Identification and union with Christ is never pressed this far in Scripture. There must always be a Creator/creature distinction. We cannot "merge" with Christ so that our bodies are taken over and entirely possessed by Him. Our union with Christ can never ever be understood this way or pressed to this extreme.

THE SEEDS OF WORD-FAITH

While Penn-Lewis predates the Word-Faith movement, she moves in that direction. This takes the form of positive speaking when she asserted:

"The words quoted, 'Have faith in God,' are really, as shown in the margin, '*Have the faith of God*' (Mark 11:22) ... The 'faith of God' is this, that when *He* speaks the word the thing is *done*. God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. The words you speak are of the greatest importance in the prayer life. In this spiritual sphere, what *you say* creates."³⁸

Does God need faith? The Scriptures nowhere affirm such a premise. God is self-sufficient and does not have to rely on anyone or anything. Faith always implies an object of trust. Penn-Lewis and her modern-day Word-Faith counterparts make faith a force that we can use to create and not a living trust in the Living God and His Word.

Can we create by speaking? Again there are no Scriptures that indicate this at all. Is Mark 11:22 telling us that God has faith? All of the major works by Greek grammarians tell us that God is the *object* of faith in Mark

11:22. As well, all the major versions correctly translate it "have faith in God." The Greek structure allows for no other rendering³⁹

BE LIKE ME

There is no question at all that Penn-Lewis parroted the views of her time in regard to sanctification and used her own experiences as the mold for all. She wrote of full surrender:

"...the 'all' of Calvary's triumph is given on the condition of the surrender of 'all' to Calvary's Victor. Because the 'all' the Lord gives is from heaven and the 'all' the soul resigns is of earth, 'Keep back part for self' is therefore the tempter's whisper, as he enlarges upon the terrible consequences of committing all to God. Something kept for self gives place to the devil and keeps the Redeemer from His throne in the heart, and the full control of His Kingdom in the redeemed one."⁴⁰

The "cross" to Penn-Lewis was a gate to lead to "the higher life" (through a crisis experience) and one could miss that:

"When the soul learns the meaning of the cross in deliverance from the bondage of sin, whether it be at the time of conversion as it was at Pentecost, or later in what has been described as a 'second blessing,' it then enters upon the first stage of the overcoming life and upon a path of victory it never knew before."⁴¹

So the message of the cross was not just to find Christ and eternal life but rather to just enter one stage allowing the possibility of a higher life and a "second blessing."

Penn-Lewis never saw or made a distinction between legitimate self (proper God-oriented self) and sinful self. She confuses her hearers by seeing all of "self" as sinful. The self as oriented to God is a proper thing. The self as oriented to sin is to be denied. There are not two selves but rather inclinations in all of us. There

are propensities to good and evil in our "selves."

At some points in her writings she seems to allow for some distinction as she states:

"It is true that while the 'flesh' is to be crucified in an ethical sense, we do 'walk in the flesh' in a physical and lawful sense."⁴²

Yet her distinction is muddled and unclear in other written statements: "...we renounce 'I myself' and thereby give way to Christ Himself to reign within."⁴³ At best, Penn-Lewis is imprecise, confusing and contradictory.

We must recognize that though sanctification and glorification are made possible through the cross (and grow out of initial salvation), they are not the same as the message of the cross which is salvation.

W.E. Vine points out "'the word of the cross,' R.V., stands for the Gospel."⁴⁴ In Galatians 6:14, Paul uses the word "cross" *metaphorically* to speak of his separation from the world and not a separation of himself from himself.

Note Penn-Lewis' words as she confuses sanctification with the "message of the cross":

"And again it was the Message of the Cross, showing the experimental aspect of the Holy Spirit's work in the believer, the putting away of all known sin, *deliverance through identification with Christ in His death*, and the definite reception of the Holy Ghost as a necessity for all in the service of God."⁴⁵

That her experiences were the pattern for what she called "the fullness" (shorthand for entire sanctification or the deeper work of the cross) and very subjective is obvious:

"It has been written from experience, and confirmed by numbers of letters in the writer's possession, as well as by the witness of God to many another soul. There is no desire to dogmatise or systematise, or to insist upon one

point more than another, only to show *in the main*, the *experimental* pathway."⁴⁶

Though she says she does not want to dogmatize or systematize, she does.

Penn-Lewis claims to have experienced three steps in the abolishment of her self life. The first she called the unveiling of the self life which was an experience of horror and self abasement. The "unveiling" was the step to once for all subjective crucifixion of the self. The second was an endowment of power and the third the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁷

It would be hoped that all of us as believers would have a continuous unveiling of our motives and desires and that repentance and horror toward sin would be life-long.

THE INNER MAN

Penn-Lewis' views on the inner nature of man were confusing, introspective and not really biblical. She dissected man's inner nature in ways the Bible never does.

She saw the "soul" as "flesh" and only the spirit as redeemable:

"...when Adam fell the spirit sank down into the vessel of the soul, and the soul down into the body — the 'flesh' — and he 'became flesh.' Instead of the spirit ruling the flesh, the flesh dominated the spirit."⁴⁸

To further add to the confusion she adds, "You can only tell what is of the soul and what is of the Spirit by experience."⁴⁹ This is nothing but hopeless naval gazing.

Penn-Lewis is extremely confusing and convoluted here. She throws words around willy-nilly and never defines them probably because she had no idea of precise biblical meanings and contextual variations.

Though Penn-Lewis claimed direct divine inspiration for her writings, she borrowed her concepts of soul, spirit and flesh from the Father of the South African Keswick movement, Andrew Murray and his book, *Spirit of Christ*.⁵⁰

Penn-Lewis used Colossians 2:9-11 to say that the spirit of man had to be cut away from the flesh and soul⁵¹ and referred to these insights as "Bible psychology."⁵² The verse in question clearly teaches that the new believer is cut away from the penalty of his sin and the guilt and condemnation of the law.⁵³

Penn-Lewis confuses the *works of the flesh* and the literal flesh or body and makes them one.⁵⁴ This just compounds error upon error. She even taught that there can be a deliverance from "desires of the flesh,"⁵⁵ making no distinction between legitimate desires and sinful ones as the Scripture does (1 Timothy 4:3-5).

The flesh (*sarx* in Greek) can mean the physical body in some contexts and in those cases do not necessarily mean evil. The body of Jesus is "*sarx*." Even though glorified, the resurrection body is still referred to as *sarx*, (spiritual body or glorified flesh). Where Paul uses the term "flesh" for the old nature (remaining corruption) or the body *as it is addicted to sin*, he there and only there connects the flesh to evil. Penn-Lewis was totally in the dark on these issues.

J.A. Schep discusses the use of the word flesh in the Old Testament after the Fall:

"Most occurrences of 'flesh' (Hebr. *basar*) in the Old Testament from Genesis 4 and onwards have an ethically neutral sense. ... the flesh and sexual life function as not evil in themselves and not as the source of sin, but as the *instruments* through which man's sinful and corrupt *heart* reveals its evil desires and purposes."⁵⁶

Penn-Lewis' ideas are rendered foolish by Psalm 63:1, "My *soul* thirsts for You; My *flesh* longs for You." Here the words are used for the whole man.

Penn-Lewis was sure that somehow the spirit and soul had to be in their own separate and tight compartments:

"If you know the life in the Spirit, when your spirit is truly freed from the soul-entanglements and joined to the Lord you

will understand how Jesus went to that tomb."⁵⁷

Apparently we cannot understand facts about Christ and deeper truths through just the Word of God and the illumination of the Holy Spirit but need something else. Unless we somehow disconnect and free our spirits from our evil soul, we can't understand the death of Christ. Salvation and the indwelling Spirit are not quite enough. Yet David said his soul thirsted for God (Psalm 63:1).

To show the absurdity of Penn-Lewis' view of the soul, we quote from three verses of Scripture:

"Come and hear all ye that fear God and I will declare what He has done for my soul" (Psalm 66:16).

"No man cared for my soul" (Psalm 142:4).

"We are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Hebrews 10:39).

Penn-Lewis believed that the message of the cross including some kind of radical separation of soul and spirit was needed to be mature and do "conflict in the heavenlies."⁵⁸ No doubt her followers were pushing themselves through impossible mental gymnastics and experiential hoops.

Making sharp distinctions between soul and spirit can lead away from a true biblical anthropology, as Jay Adams so clearly shows:

"...all that is said of the soul *and* the spirit is said of the heart. ... the word *soul* (in one way or another) always depicts the non-material aspect of human nature *in relationship to* (or in unity with) *the material*, so the word *spirit* always refers to the same non-material aspect *out of relationship to* (or disunited from) *the material*. Heart, on the other hand, refers to the non-material side of man *in contrast to* his material side (usually with an emphasis upon the visibility of the latter and the invisibility of the former). That, then, is how the three words differ and may be distinguished. That is why there are three (not

one or even two). Yet, all three refer to the same entity: the immaterial person."⁵⁹

One contemporary (1909) of Penn-Lewis observed that she had "an entire row of books on psychology" in her study room.⁶⁰ So it is more than likely that she drew some of her speculations on man from these since her mental creations do not match up with the Bible.

WAS IT REALLY LATER THAN THEY THOUGHT?

In 1927 (the year of her death), Penn-Lewis wrote:

"There is no doubt ... that we are increasingly moving on into the shadow, if not having a foretaste, of the great tribulation."⁶¹

However, she had been making these claims since 1906.⁶² Now almost a century beyond her first predictions, we know that she is neither a prophetess nor a good discerner and interpreter of Scripture.

It is amazing to this writer that she is extolled, applauded and accepted. Warren Wiersbe writes in an admiring way and quotes R.A. Torrey as saying that Penn-Lewis was "one of the most gifted speakers the world had known."⁶³ Pretty amazing words for a woman who was strongly criticized by some of the leading expositors of her day. It is unfortunate that Penn-Lewis' life has become more hagiography than history.

As early as 1911, under criticism for her teaching, she had withdrawn from the Keswick movement. A former colleague, Dr. Pierson, sounded an alarm saying that her language "sounded like the mystic cults."⁶⁴ This only increased her paranoia and sense of the lateness of the hour.

Her view of the tribulation as being imminent if not already on the Church also affected Penn-Lewis' view of Satan and demonology. As already indicated, she believed because of the lateness of the hour, demons had been poured out on the earth in a more intense, immediate, powerful and direct way. She was frantic in her warnings to Christians with regard to protecting themselves

from invading, indwelling demons. She believed that lack of prayer in the Church had caused hosts of demons to rush "in upon the church and the world."⁶⁵

Penn-Lewis had earlier taught "a warfare belonging to the Time of the End, and therefore practically unknown and unprepared-for in the literature of the Church."⁶⁶ So the Church had to now face something that even Jesus and the Apostles never had to deal with.

THE PARTY IS OVER

Collaborating with Evan Roberts, Penn-Lewis released her best-known book, *War on the Saints* (1912), which provoked a fire storm of criticism and division. Even Roberts eventually relented and asked Penn-Lewis to make revisions. She refused. Penn-Lewis had upset everyone.

The main critiques are spelled out by biographer Brynmor Pierce Jones:

"Firstly, the psychologists noted that the writers were blaming Satan and his demons for the kind of behavior that springs out of what they called the subconscious. Acute frustration and dark self-disgust, for example, are not to be attributed to an invasive force from outside but are natural parts of the human mechanism. Maybe Jessie and Evan forgot that Jesus had given His disciples a list of the horrid forces that came out of the heart of man."⁶⁷

Jones moves on:

"Secondly, the teachers of pastoral theology and counseling were horrified by the Jessie Penn-Lewis/Evan Roberts thesis that men and women born of the Spirit could be 'possessed' by the devil. Readers had not noticed Jessie's broad and too loose definition of the word 'possessed' as meaning, 'any hold which evil spirits have in or upon a person in any degree.' What Jessie and Evan meant to warn against should be called 'harassment' or 'oppression.'"⁶⁸

Jones next notes how obstinate Penn-Lewis became under criticism:

"Instead of backpedaling, however, Jessie stated dogmatically in *The Overcomer* that the more a man was in the Spirit, the more he needed to be guarded from the entrance of evil spirits. She even claimed, 'IF THEY GET INSIDE, THEY WILL MAKE HIM DO WHAT THEY WILL.' Large numbers of Christians, then as now, rejected this theory in its entirety. Demon possession is not an option for those who are born of the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood. That which the Spirit has sealed cannot be usurped, or 'hijacked,' in this way."⁶⁹

Some Pentecostal leaders became upset as they "were convinced that everything written about phenomena and about counterfeits was aimed at them."⁷⁰

Not to be left out, Calvinists also complained because they "would have nothing to do with [the] dispensations, raptures, the millennium, etc." in the Penn-Lewis and Robert's volume "they found a new cause for objecting to such teachings."⁷¹

Jones further notes:

"Both Jessie and Evan had been taught that the prayers of earnest saints could hasten divine events and that the hesitations of saints could hinder and delay them. So the Body of Christ — that is, the entire fellowship of believers — could now delay the dispensation's ending, the return, and millennial age. In reply to this, the critics would say, quite correctly, that prayer-petitions are cooperative acts and not manipulative acts, and that they cannot change God's timings."⁷²

Penn-Lewis took her demonology to incredible extremes even claiming to know exactly where demons could reside in the body of a Christian. This is purely gnostic: personal, subjective, secret, unmediated knowledge, at worst — and wild imagination, at best.

She proposed in *War on the Saints* that demons:

"... bury themselves in the very structure of the human frame,

some acting directly upon the organs or appetites of the body, others upon the mind or intellect, sensibilities, emotions and affections, and others more immediately upon the spirit. In the body they specially locate themselves in the spinal column, nervous system, and deepest nerve centres, through which they control the whole being; from the ganglionic nerve centre located in the bowels, the emotional sensibilities, and all organs affected by them, to the cerebral nerve centre in the head, the eyes, ears, neck, jaws, tongue, muscles of the face, and delicate nerve tissues of the brain. They may obtain access gradually and insidiously, as already shown, but there are instances where they make a sudden assault, so as to rush the victim into involuntary surrender."⁷³

From the perspective of Penn-Lewis, there was hardly a part of the body safe from pestiferous spirits. Likewise in her view, demons could jump into and/or onto almost any part of the body at any time and possess believers. No wonder most of the circulated editions of *War on the Saints* are abridged and cleaned up with the extreme nonsense edited out. The book belongs in the "scary science fiction" section of your local Barnes and Noble bookstore alongside the *X Files*.

Penn-Lewis put forth the impossible premise that demons could sin through the believer, causing the believer to be confused and think they were sinning when they were not. She called it counterfeit sin:

"Evil spirits can also counterfeit sin, by causing some apparent manifestation of the evil nature in the life, and matured believers should know whether such a manifestation really is *sin* from the old nature, or a manifestation from evil spirits. The purpose in the latter case is to get the believer to take what comes from them, as from himself, for whatever is *accepted* from evil spirits gives them entry and power.

When a believer knows the Cross and his position of death to sin, and in *will* and practice rejects unflinchingly all known sin, and a 'manifestation' of 'sin' takes place, he should at once take a position of neutrality to it, until he knows the source, for if he calls it sin from himself when it is not, he believes a lie as much as in any other way; and if he 'confesses' as a sin what did not come from himself, he brings the power of the enemy upon him, to drive him into the sin which he has 'confessed' as his own. Many believers are thus held down by supposed 'besetting sins' which they believe are theirs, and which no 'confessing to God' removes, but from which they would find liberty if they attributed them to their right cause. There is no danger of 'minimizing sin' in the recognition of these facts, because in either case, the believer desires to be rid of the sin or sins, or he would not trouble about them."⁷⁴

There is a multiplicity of errors here. The Bible does not take the position that besetting sins can be "supposed." Hebrews 12:1 tells us *we* are to deal with *our* besetting sins precisely because they are ours. As well, Scripture nowhere teaches the concept of "counterfeit sins."

This presents a dilemma for the believer. If he wrongly believes that the sin a demon committed (within him) is to be confessed as his own, he will bring even more of the "power of the enemy upon himself." This could drive sensitive untaught believers to distraction or despair.

So, Penn-Lewis claimed that some of our sins may not be our sins and we are not responsible and in worse shape if we confess them. They are, in fact, the sins of the demons. But how could one ever really know?

I MADE ME DO IT

It cannot be stated too strongly that *all personal sin is the person's sin* and must be confessed as such (James 1:14-16, 1 John 1:9). We alone are responsible for the sins we commit (Ezekiel 18). There is not one verse of

Scripture that would suggest that demons can do their sinning through the mind, will and body of a *believer*. This ascribes to demons far more power and ability than the Bible does.

OCCULTIC SUGGESTIONS

Penn-Lewis rightly condemned automatic writing as occultic and spiritistic. Within spiritism, people can become mediums and in trance-like states write down messages and revelations they believe are from the other side.

Having denounced this evil practice, Penn-Lewis then suggests that Christians can practice a form of automatic writing under divine guidance. She suggests that the Scriptures were written this way and in so doing is close to saying that our writings can be tantamount to Scripture.⁷⁵ The occultic *God Calling* ideas were not new to A. J. Russell.⁷⁶

To suggest that we could write anything even remotely close to Scripture, given directly by supernatural inspiration from the Holy Spirit, minimizes Sacred Writ and is a serious misunderstanding of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures (Jude 6 and Revelation 22:18-19).

There is nothing being penned today that even remotely resembles Scripture for many reasons. Gerhard Maier points out:

"Now, there can be no doubt that revelation understands itself as a *fundamentally closed entity*. When Joshua is commanded to proceed according to the Law 'in all things,' and is at the same time warned 'to turn neither to the right nor the left' of what the Law says (Jos 1:7f.), then it is clear that the Torah is complete and unalterable (cf. also Dt 4:2; Mal 3:22). It is just as clear that for the New Testament writers, the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament were a closed entity that could not be expanded or reduced at will (cf. Mt 5:17ff.; 22:40; Lk 24:44f.; Jn 5:39; 10:35; 2Ti 3:16). In 2 Peter 3:15f. Paul's epistles are likewise spoken of as an entity that is in principle complete. In 2 Thessalonians 2:2

Paul himself spoke out against the danger of letters circulating falsely under his name. Jesus' words, too, have a definite scope, according to 1 Corinthians 7:10ff. Finally, Hebrews 1:1f. states that God's revelation culminates definitively in the time of Jesus. What these and other observations amount to is this: biblical revelation arrives in its final form in the time of Jesus. It informs us that the history of revelation has now arrived at its goal. Its completion is found in the Messiah. That is, it clearly informs the church that further revelations are not to be expected, though that which was given earlier should remain in force."⁷⁷

IN CONCLUSION

Penn-Lewis' life is an example of the following dangers:

1. Exalting certain concepts in Scripture above all others and losing balance (as she does) in the areas of sanctification, demonology and prophecy.

2. Being thrust into the limelight as a teacher without training or background.

3. Taking too seriously one's own feelings, moods, impressions and experiences as a good guide or as a definition and model for all other believers. It has been said that experience can at times be a good handmaid but never a good guide. Penn-Lewis was locked into the loam of her religious culture and the extremes of the Keswick Movement.

4. Having a demonology of impression, feelings and experiences and not Scripture.

Though Penn-Lewis taught some truths, which may even be helpful to some, her writings are so overladen with error, human emotion and overwrought subjectivism, she is not a safe teacher to follow. Ideas in print may seem impressive but they must be filtered through the Word of God. We ought not to ever think that strange new doctrine and mystical theology is deep truth. Truth pressed to extremes leads to all kinds of error. This is never more evident than in the

life and teachings of Penn-Lewis. Believers should always be wary of following someone just because they have their ideas in print. God save us from truth pressed to extremes.

Penn-Lewis issued another warning that she herself never heeded:

‘But it is so ‘human’ to go to extremes! It is only as we know the danger, and rely upon God to guard us, that we can be kept spiritually sober, and balanced in truth. When we are conscious of the difficulties of it on account of our human limitations, we are less dogmatic in our statements to others about ourselves and our ‘views.’”⁷⁸

Would that Mrs. Penn-Lewis had taken her own advice.

Endnotes:

1. Jessie Penn-Lewis, *The Spiritual Warfare*. Fort Washington, Pa.: Christian Literature Crusade, 1998, pg. 44, italics in original.
2. This is not to be confused with America’s Keswick in Whiting, N.J. where a balanced view of working and growing faith is taught. See further, “What’s the Difference” by the Rev. William A. Raws, America’s Keswick, Whiting, N.J.
3. See for example this author’s article, “The Secret of a Christian Classic — The Unhappy Life of Hannah Whitall Smith,” *The Quarterly Journal*, Jan.-March 1997, pp. 1, 15-17.
4. Jessie Penn-Lewis, *The Centrality of the Cross*. Fort Washington, Pa.: Christian Literature Crusade, 1996, pg. 42, italics in original.
5. See further, Paul Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992, pp. 51-86. Also see the video, *Seventh-day Adventism: The Spirit Behind The Church*, Grace Upon Grace Productions, Phoenix, Ariz., 1998.
6. See for example this author’s articles, “Mark Bubeck and Spiritual Warfare — The Cloning of Jessie Penn-Lewis,” *The Quarterly Journal*, July-Sept. 1996, pp. 1, 14-18 and “Demons, Demons, Where Are the Demons? — The Unchanged and Unchanging Neil Anderson,” *The Quarterly Journal*, July-Sept. 1997, pp. 1, 14-17.
7. Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Invisible War*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1965, pg. 166.
8. Kris Lungaard, *The Enemy Within*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishers, 1998.
9. Brynmor Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis*. North Brunswick, N.J.: Bridge-Logos Publishers,

- 1997, pp. 88-89.
10. Jay E. Adams, *Biblical Sonship*. Woodruff, S.C.: Timeless Texts, 1999, pp. 10-11.
11. *Ibid.*, pg. 15.
12. See Edwin Orr, *The Flaming Tongue*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1973, pp. 1-28.
13. See Mary N. Garrard, *Jessie Penn-Lewis, A Memoir*. Ontario, Canada: Ontario Christian Books, 1989, pp. 229-230.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 227-229.
15. *Ibid.*, pg. 233.
16. John Owen, *Sin and Temptation*. Portland, Ore.: Multnomah Press, 1983, pg. xx.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*, pg. xxii.
19. *Ibid.*, pg. xxiv.
20. B.B. Warfield, *Perfectionism*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishers, 1967, pg. xi.
21. *Sin and Temptation*, op. cit., pg. xxviii.
22. Jay E. Adams, *Maintaining the Delicate Balance in Christian Living*. Woodruff, S.C.: Timeless Texts, 1998, pg. 22.
23. Herbert Lockyer, *Daily Promises*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984, entry for October 21, italics in original.
24. See further, Jessie Penn-Lewis, *Life in The Spirit*. Fort Washington, Pa.: Christian Literature Crusade, 1995, esp. pp. 25 and 29.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 15-16, 34-35, italics in original.
26. *Jessie Penn-Lewis, A Memoir*, op. cit., pg. 2.
27. *Ibid.*, pg. 8.
28. *Ibid.*, pg. 54, italics in original.
29. *Ibid.*, pg. 151.
30. *Ibid.*, pg. 190.
31. *Ibid.*
32. See further this author’s article, “The Mindless Mysticism of Madame Guyon,” *The Quarterly Journal*, Jan.-March 1997, pp. 4, 12-15.
33. *Jessie Penn-Lewis, A Memoir*, op. cit., pg. 34.
34. *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis*, op. cit., pg. 61.
35. *Ibid.*, pg. 230.
36. *Jessie Penn-Lewis, A Memoir*, op. cit., pg. 34, italics in original.
37. Jessie Penn-Lewis, *The Warfare with Satan*. Fort Washington, Pa.: Christian Literature Crusade, 1997, pg. 70.
38. *The Spiritual Warfare*, op. cit., pp. 56-57, italics in original.
39. See further, Hank Hanegraaff, *Christianity in Crisis*. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1993, pp. 89-91.
40. *The Warfare with Satan*, op. cit., pg. 57.
41. *Ibid.*, pg. 62.
42. Jessie Penn-Lewis, *The Centrality of the Cross*. Fort Washington, Pa.: Christian Literature Crusade, 1996, pg. 18.
43. Jessie Penn-Lewis, *The Cross of Calvary*. Fort Washington, Pa.: Christian Literature Crusade, 1996, page 162.
44. W. E. Vine, *The Expanded Vine’s*

- Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1984, pg. 249.
45. *Jessie Penn-Lewis, A Memoir*, op. cit., pg. 223, italics in original.
46. *Ibid.*, pg. 56, italics in original.
47. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-26.
48. Jessie Penn-Lewis, *Life in the Spirit*. Fort Washington, Pa.: Christian Literature Crusade, 1995, pg. 39.
49. *Ibid.*, pg. 54.
50. See *The Centrality of the Cross*, op. cit., pg. 61.
51. *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.
52. *Ibid.*, pg. 61.
53. See for example, notes on Colossians 2:11-17 from the *New Geneva Study Bible*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1996, pg. 1888.
54. *The Warfare with Satan*, op. cit., pg. 64-65.
55. *Ibid.*, pg. 67.
56. J.A. Schep, *The Nature of the Resurrection Body*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964, pp. 24 and 29, italics in original.
57. *Life in the Spirit*, op. cit., pg. 52.
58. *Jessie Penn-Lewis, A Memoir*, op. cit., pg. 275.
59. Jay Adams, *More Than Redemption*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1979, pp. 115-116, italics in original.
60. *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis*, op. cit., pg. 224.
61. *Jessie Penn-Lewis, A Memoir*, op. cit., pg. 296.
62. *Ibid.*, pg. 228.
63. Warren Wiersbe, “The Woman God Could Use,” *The Good News Broadcaster*, November 1983, pg. 28.
64. *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis*, op. cit., pg. 197.
65. *Jessie Penn-Lewis, A Memoir*, op. cit., pg. 262.
66. *Ibid.*, pg. 228.
67. *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis*, op. cit., pg. 205.
68. *Ibid.*
69. *Ibid.*, emphasis in original.
70. *Ibid.*
71. *Ibid.*, pp. 205-206.
72. *Ibid.*, pg. 206.
73. Jessie Penn-Lewis with Evan Roberts, *War on the Saints*. New York: Thomas E. Lowe, Ltd. Publishers, 1998, Unabridged Edition, pp. 162-163.
74. *Ibid.*, pp. 146-147, italics in original.
75. *Ibid.*, pp. 116-117.
76. See “God Calling... A Critical Look at a Christian Best-Seller,” *Personal Freedom Outreach Newsletter*, July-Sept. 1986, pp. 1-2, 6.
77. Gerhard Maier, *Biblical Hermeneutics*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1994, pp. 155-156, italics in original.
78. *The Centrality of the Cross*, op. cit., pg. 58.

not set themselves upon a pedestal of distinction so as not to be challenged or questioned. They did not curse those who corrected them or wish harm on their children. The clear injunction of the New Testament for leaders and teachers was demonstrably at work here: James 3:1 — a more strict judgment, not a circumventing of scriptural accountability as well as Galatians 6:1.

More alarming, however, is the fact that these self-appointed spiritual aristocrats and demagogues are guilty of violating the very command of God which they flagrantly accuse others of doing. In the course of many years of evaluation and criticism, PFO and the ministries with which it closely aligns, have never stooped to name-calling or inviting disease and devastation to come upon those against whom we disagree. Yet, consider just a brief sampling of what has proceeded out the “anointed” mouths of some of the more prominent superstars:

“I place a curse on every man and every woman that would stretch his hand against this anointing. I curse that man who dares to speak a word against this ministry” (Benny Hinn at his July 1999 Denver Miracle Crusade as shown on the *Praise the Lord* show, Sept. 10, 1999).

“I have been disturbed by a bunch of, oh I’m just going to say it, a bunch of crap. ... Go ahead and tape it, put it on your slime-ball radio broadcast. You’ll have to pray it through Pastor Phil, but this old German, I’d say sue the bastards” (Paul Crouch on the *Praise the Lord* show, October 1994, cited in *Christian Sentinel*, Spring 1995, pg. 9).

“[Our detractors] continue to oppose Jesus Himself. ... Soon the Lord may say, ... ‘I rebuke you for speaking falsely in My name. Repent while there is still time. My kindness toward you is running thin.’ Are you willing to wager your salvation on the fact that you are correct?” (Michael Brown in *Let No One Deceive You*, pp. 19-20).

“Be careful! Your little ones may suffer because of your stupidity. Now I’m pointing my finger today, with the mighty power of God on me, and I speak. ... And your children will suffer. If you care for your kids, stop attacking Benny Hinn” (Benny Hinn at the World Charismatic Conference, Aug. 7, 1992).

“Several people that I know had criticized and called that faith bunch out of Tulsa a cult. And some of ‘em are dead right today in an early grave because of it, and there’s more than one of them got cancer” (Kenneth Copeland, “Why All Are Not Healed,” tape #01-4001).

“I refuse to argue any longer with any of you out there. Don’t even call me if you want to argue doctrine, if you want to straighten somebody out over here. ... I think they [i.e., those he labels ‘heretic

hunters’] are damned and on their way to hell and I don’t think there is any redemption for them. I say, ‘To hell with you.’ I say, ‘Get out of God’s way, quit blocking God’s bridges or God is going to shoot you if I don’t’” (Paul Crouch on TBN’s “Praise-A-Thon,” April 2, 1991).

The type of judgment issued by these men is that which our Lord was truly addressing in Matthew 7:1. Never in any of its criticisms, has PFO been so bold to pass judgment on the salvation of these teachers, nor has it ever wished sickness, death and damnation on them (or their children). These teachers, who claim to be so greatly “anointed” of God and at a spiritual apex, demonstrate the absence of one of the most fundamental teachings of Christ and the inspired New Testament writers (Luke 6:27-28; Romans 12:14; James 3:9; 4:11-12; 1 John 2:9).

Christians are instructed to judge doctrine and actions, to test the spirits, and to expose the fruitless works (Matthew 7:15; Romans 16:17-18; 2 Corinthians 2:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 John 4:1; Ephesians 5:11). We are not, however, permitted to judge motives or salvation — those are judgments which belong solely to our Lord (1 Corinthians 4:5). We are never to crassly wish ill and evil on others.

Then too, there’s the question of “blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.” Once again, modern-day teachers have wrenched a passage from its proper context in an effort to sidestep accountability for their doctrine and conduct. They give new meaning to the title of “The Untouchables.”

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, as recorded in the Gospels (Matthew 12:31-32; Mark 3:28-30 and Luke 12:10), is an historical event which involved having a complete revelation of Jesus Christ and rejecting it by attributing His works to Satan. It has nothing whatsoever to do with religious superstars, latter-day revivalists and faith-healers. What sheer arrogance it is for these “untouchables” to suggest that a testing of their “signs and wonders” and their “revelation knowledge” is tantamount to the person, life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

The “unforgivable sin,” as it is also called, is one that has, no doubt, caused every sincere believer a moment of anxiety. As such, it is repeatedly and wrongly used to bludgeon away discernment and is worked to the advantage of these false teachers. Truly, as Christ said, “men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19).

Adam Clarke offers this sane and sound advice regarding blasphemy of the Holy Spirit:

“Many sincere people have been grievously troubled with apprehensions that they had committed the unpardonable sin; but let it be observed that no man who believes the divine mission of Jesus Christ ever can commit this sin” (*Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible*, pg. 794).

Y2K BUST

But then there's the question of Paul's admonition not to grieve the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). Does an examination of the teachings and conduct of the men who claim a celestial calling cause one to grieve the Holy Spirit? Paul did not equate such action by the Berean believers, but rather commended them for their diligence and faithfulness to the Word (Acts 17:11). He also instructs Christians that their ways are not to be "secret and shameful" (2 Corinthians 4:2). We can grieve the Spirit by engaging in any of the bad behaviors laid out in Ephesians 4. The setting of the verse makes it clear as to what Paul is warning about.

In reality, if the Holy Spirit is being grieved, it is not by modern-day Bereans, but by men and women like Benny Hinn and his wife, Suzanne, with their reckless and unrestrained speech under the guise of the Holy Spirit. Consider the following:

"Those who put us down are a bunch of morons. ... You know, I've looked for one verse in the Bible, I just can't seem to find it. One verse that says, 'If you don't like 'em, kill 'em.' I really wish I could find it. ... *Sometimes I wish God would give me a Holy Ghost machine gun — I blow your head off!*" (Benny Hinn on TBN's "Praise-A-Thon," April 1990, emphasis added).

"If your engine is not revving up, you know what you need? *You need a Holy Ghost enema right up your rear end.* ... Be God-pleasers, don't be people-pleasers. Because if you're a people-pleaser, you're a butt-kisser. If you're a people-pleaser, you're a butt-kisser. There's no other word for it" (Suzanne Hinn at the World Outreach Center, July 1997, emphasis added).

"The Lord also tells me to tell you in the mid-nineties, about '94 or '95, no later than that, God will destroy the homosexual community of America" (Benny Hinn at Orlando Christian Center, Dec. 31, 1989).

Holy Ghost machine guns? Holy Ghost enemas? False prophetic words of destruction? Can any rational-thinking person believe that God is behind such comments? Can any sane Christian maintain that God is honored by these remarks?

Now, more than ever, the Church needs be on guard against these preachers, with their electronic pulpits and worldwide crusades. They have jaded their followers to where anything is acceptable. Christians must not be terrorized by their idle and angry threats, nor intimidated by their fallacious use of Scripture. Obeying the frequent commands of Scripture, to watch for and defend against false teachers and their teachings, are the activities which bring spiritual growth, discernment and maturity, and honor our Lord and Savior.

—MKG

The paralyzing blizzard of Y2K problems predicted by some didn't amount to a snow flurry. Gary North, Hal Lindsey, Chuck Missler, Grant Jeffrey and other doom-sayers warned of bank collapses, utility failures, aircraft disasters and 1 billion people dead on account of computer failures.

The only catastrophe appears to have happened to the Y2K doom-sayers themselves. Their disaster-preparation products were up against a Jan. 1 deadline and despite all the pessimism the Y2K gurus could muster, sales did not come close to meeting expectations. Stockpiles of goods went unsold as consumers began to put more trust in the sound and reasoned responses of government and civil officials.

Perhaps these would-be Jeremiahs knew all along that their prediction of global crisis was purely oversell — or at least they were not confident enough to put their money where their mouth was. Last year, the Christian Jew Foundation issued what it called a "\$25,000 Y2K Challenge" to doom-sayers such as North and others. It was quite simple: If only half of what was predicted to occur would happen, the foundation would write a check to the favorite charity of any who would sign a contract accepting the challenge. If, on the other hand, Jan. 1 arrived with only minor or inconsequential snags and business proceeded as usual, the Y2K alarmist must write a check for \$25,000 to the Christian Jew Foundation for its ministry work. No one accepted the challenge.

Some of the doom-sayers had merely jumped from one bandwagon onto another, from Bible Codes to Y2K. No doubt they will now latch on to some new fad or conspiracy theory. Most of these men have offered no confessions, no apologies, no repentance, no acceptance of any responsibility for their erroneous forecasts. There has been one notable exception: Gary North.

Late last year, it appeared North had begun to hedge on his prediction. He informed the Y2K merchants who logged onto his web site that the rush to buy their goods would come in 2000, not in 1999. North wrote: "You figured people would finally wake up this year. So did I. We were wrong. The world would go into 2000 almost as unprepared as it was a year ago, or five. The world is oblivious." The windfall, according to North, for these entrepreneurs was yet to come. "Why do you want to sell it now, when nobody wants to buy it? Why do you ask for minimal mark-ups now when people will trade their heirlooms and appreciating currency for it next year. ... The bonanza lies ahead," North told readers.

Then on Jan. 10, 2000, North wrote:

"Clearly, as of this week, I was wrong in my predictions. ... I will now pay a price. I do apologize if I have embarrassed you or made your life worse. ... I believed that Y2K would create havoc. It still might, depending on how many bugs are still in the systems, but I will not here appeal to the 'still might'

argument. So, let me say without hesitation that my predictions did not come true. The events did not take place. ... So, at this point in the aftermath of the rollover, I look foolish. I was prepared for this. I thought it was better to risk my reputation or credibility in a life-saving effort than to tell people, 'yes, Y2K will cause problems,' and then refuse to define what degree of problems and what to prepare for."

Still, some may question the sincerity of North's wordy confession. Anybody who writes that much to apologize (over 4500 words) isn't really apologizing — especially when North, throughout, puts the blame onto others. As well, his confession falls short of Christian reconciliation in that he fails to ask forgiveness. His apology also concludes with an appeal for ministry donations to continue the work.

Moreover, his words of regret are posted, not on his ministry's web site (www.GaryNorth.com), but on the DiscoverTruth.com web site. (If it does appear on North's site, it is not readily available and is well hidden among a maze of documents.) North's ministry, on its web site, continues to publish and promote the same "doom and gloom reports" of Y2K devastation. As such, web surfers who log onto the site are completely unaware that any apology was issued.

—MKG

NEWS UPDATES

(continued from page 3)

bringing them closer to the TV set and as people are coming closer, I see loved ones picking up the hands of the dead and letting them touch the screen and people are getting raised as their hands are touching that screen," Hinn said. "The word will spread that if some dead person be put in front of this TV screen, they will be raised from the dead — and they will be by the thousands," Hinn promised the Crouches and the viewers of their *Praise the Lord* show.

Yet Hinn had much more to tell viewers of the world's largest network of religious stations. "TBN will no longer be just a television network, it will be an extension of heaven to earth. ... The Lord just said to me these words, ... 'TBN will not only be a Christian network, it will be an extension of heaven to the earth,'" he declared. Hinn went on to say, "So if you want to go to heaven, if you want to see heaven, if you want to taste heaven — turn on that channel because you will."

Once again Hinn's declarations put him more at home with the occult than a biblical setting. His concept that TBN is to become an open passage to a higher spiritual realm closely resembles an occult vortex known as a "Cone of Power," through which spiritual powers energize agents on earth.

Hinn also weakens his claim of divine revelation for the careful listener. "Now the Lord just told me — and I don't know whether this is true or not..." he said during the TBN broadcast.

—MKG

ENGLAND DENIES SCIENTOLOGY CHARITABLE STATUS

The foreign crusade of the Church of Scientology suffered yet another setback when it recently was "denied the tax benefits that go with gaining charitable status in England and Wales," according to a Religious News Service article. The December 9 ruling was one more defeat in Europe for the Los Angeles-based sect. Germany and several other European nations have opposed the church, claiming it is "more a business than a genuine religious movement," the report stated.

Similarly, the Charity Commission, which oversees and regulates charities in England and Wales, stated the controversial group did not meet the qualifications of a "public benefit" organization, which is a primary requirement in securing charitable status. However, the church was granted nonprofit tax status in Sweden.

The church responded to the Charity Commission's decision by saying they were "wrong on the law and wrong on the facts," according to the Associated Press. Scientology says it has 15,000 followers in England.

—MKG

BOOKS IN REVIEW

(continued from page 24)

- Balancing submission and authority,
- Balancing covering and counseling,
- Balancing sorrow and joy,
- Balancing the Law and the Gospel,
- Balancing the church and family, and much more.

Adams succeeds in his purpose: "It is my hope to observe the importance of proper balance in a number of specific areas, to point out some of the imbalances currently weakening the church, to describe the sorts of influences that tend to knock Christians off balance, and to suggest some of the ways in which to counter these. So far as I can tell, there has been a lack of interest in this subject that, consequently, has resulted in great confusion" (page viii).

This book is recommended, knowing it will help to keep you on track and balanced.

—GRF



Books in Review

THE MANY FACES OF BENNY HINN

by The Door Magazine

180-minute video tape, \$29.95

Did you ever wish you could collect and compile all the major news media's investigative exposés on the antics of Benny Hinn? Well, now you can. The televangelist watchdog group, The Trinity Foundation, has organized three solid hours of documented, hard-hitting reports on the escapades of the controversial faith healer. It's all you ever wanted to know about Hinn and more.

The montage begins with the 1993 *Inside Edition* investigation of the finances and healings of the evangelist. The *Inside Edition* footage, the first study of Hinn by the national news media, still ranks as one of the best — if not the best — of showing Hinn at his worst. It features Hinn and his entourage trying to bully their way past *Inside Edition's* news crew at the Philadelphia airport and how the Hinn ministry's irresponsible disregard for documented healings caused them to broadcast a "fake" healing. But the *Inside Edition* piece is just the tip of the iceberg.

From there the video moves on to Hinn's 1993 *700 Club* appearance with Pat Robertson where he laments his former ways and teachings. As the video progresses into more recent reports, much of what Hinn bemoaned to Robertson and his audience is still evident in Hinn's life and ministry.

The collection also contains reports that would otherwise be hard or impossible to find. These include Pam Zekman's 1993 three-part report (WBBM-ABC Chicago), the 1998 *60 Minutes* (Australia) segment, and Richard Ray's 1999 two-part report (KDFW-FOX Dallas-Fort Worth). Also included are local news items from various Orlando television stations that chronicle Hinn's problems at home. They reveal Hinn's misfortune when he hired a private investigator to look into his ministry's finances (and apparently found more than what Hinn bargained for) and the deaths of two of his key staff by heroin overdoses.

In all the reports, Hinn consistently groans with ignorance of the facts as to the out-of-control world he

has created around himself. The astute viewer of all this will ask, "How can someone who is so in tune with the Divine (i.e., receiving personal messages from Jesus), be so out of touch with his life and ministry?"

Interspersed throughout the reports is a selection of Hinn's most outrageous theological bloopers, including Adam was an astronaut, the Red Sea icecapades, the Holy Ghost machine gun and TBN to raise the dead. And, yes, no Benny Hinn video collection would be complete without his wife, Suzanne's "Holy Ghost enema" and "butt-kisser" statements. Those clips are there too.

The video not only will educate and entertain, but bring most viewers to heartbreak by the revelations of how this man's false and reckless teachings have devastated the lives of some followers.

—MKG

MAINTAINING THE DELICATE BALANCE IN CHRISTIAN LIVING

by Jay Adams

Timeless Texts, 115 pages, \$9.95

Cults and aberrational teachers constantly get people off balance, keep them off balance, and then thrive on this lack of balance in the lives of their devotees. Jay Adams rightly observes that "the history of the church could almost be written in terms of imbalance."

Maintaining the Delicate Balance in Christian Living is a helpful handbook showing that balanced thinking, balanced attitudes and balanced actions, which are Bible-based, are essential to Christian living and peace in the Christian life. Without these balances our life and nature is hopelessly "tilted toward sin."

Adams also reconciles some very difficult spots in Scripture. Some of the areas he covers and balances out are:

- Making balanced change,
- Making balanced judgments,
- Balancing predestination and responsibility,
- Balancing resistance and retreat,
- Balancing faith and works,

(continues on page 23)

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