

# The Quarterly Journal



THE NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION OF PERSONAL FREEDOM OUTREACH

VOL. 23, NO. 1

JANUARY-MARCH 2003

EDITOR: KEITH A. MORSE

## The Mountain Trek of Christian Living Avoiding Growth-Stunting Detours

by G. Richard Fisher

B. B. Warfield once observed, "It is mere superstition to imagine that only good books sell well."

Every road leads somewhere, even if it is to a dead end. In life it is not just where I have been, but where I am going, how I am going to get there, and what it will be like upon my arrival. Not any old road will do, and so the urgency and practicality of right views of sanctification.

The little-known book, *Preaching on the Life of Christ*, published in 1958, studied Jesus from the standpoint of the mountains in His ministry. From Bethlehem (built on the ridge of a mountain), author W.S. McBernie traces Christ's life to the Mount of Temptation and on to the Mount of Beatitudes. McBernie then goes from the Mount of Beatitudes to the Mount of Transfiguration; from there to the Mount of Olives and Mount Calvary. The book concludes at the Mount of Ascension. This is a great way to encapsulate the highlights of Christology. The mountain theme in Jesus' ministry is a fascinating paradigm for the Christian life.

Four years earlier, a missionary to Mexico, F.J. Huegal published his



*High Peaks in Redemption*. It was dedicated to "All Spiritual Mountain Climbers."<sup>1</sup>

Israel's covenant relationship to God began at a mountain and often Israel's great events and turning points took place on mountains, as in Deuteronomy 27-28 and 1 Kings 18. The Christian life could be viewed from the perspective of a mountain called "sanctification." Caleb's request was, "now therefore give me this mountain" (Joshua 14:12).

There are some religious groups that thrive on strange and unhealthy views of sanctification. The Bible presents the view that sanctification is an ongoing aspect of one's salvation received at conversion. It is an outworking of conversion just as human growth flows from human birth. It is not a separate and distinct work apart from salvation.

Sanctification is a progressive outworking of the grace that is in every believer, as we will see. It is a lifelong  
(continues on page 15)

### Inside this Issue:

REBECCA BROWN'S AXIS OF EVIL .....	PAGE 2
BUILDING A FOUNDATION ON SAND .....	PAGE 4
A JOURNEY INTO MYSTICLAND .....	PAGE 5

---

---

# Editorials

---

---

## REBECCA BROWN'S AXIS OF EVIL

President George W. Bush has his axis of evil: Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. Apparently, so does Dr. Rebecca Brown, the self-proclaimed occult expert. Brown, along with her husband, Daniel Yoder, state that Christianity is under attack and Satan is moving from many different directions.

Brown gained popularity in the late 1980s when Christian tract and comic book entrepreneur Jack Chick published her first two books. Yoder claims to be "powerfully anointed as a prophet, healer, and evangelist." Together they operate Harvest Warriors, a ministry based in Clinton, Ark.

For the most part, Christians should not be surprised at the makeup of Brown and Yoder's axis of evil. However, within their list of bad guys, which includes Islam, Freemasonry, and witchcraft, is Personal Freedom Outreach.

Brown and Yoder, in their April 2002 newsletter, wrote: "In talking with our own publisher, we were told that Christian publishers no longer want to print anything with personal testimonies, because these cannot be 'proved.' This is mostly because of an organization that is rapidly gaining power within the Christian community. It claims to be a Christian group; but by its actions, it clearly is not serving Jesus Christ. This group, which

calls itself the PFO, or Personal Freedom Outreach, publishes vicious lies and attacks against nearly every Christian out there who has a ministry of any sort. They declare that ALL testimonies are false. They maintain various web sites on the internet; and, unfortunately, just because they are on the internet, people are stupid enough to believe that anything they write is true."

They went on to write: "Christian publishers are terrified by this group! They are afraid to take a stand against them, and they no longer want to print books by anyone the PFO attacks. Many churches and groups will no longer allow anyone to speak in their churches this group attacks either." The pair asks, "How long are Christians going to tolerate such groups in their midst?" and then requests "Christians everywhere to pray mightily, asking our God to deal with these people and put them out of business."

Brown and Yoder provide their readers with a Who's Who of those being "attacked" by PFO: Benny Hinn; Bill Gothard; Tommy Tenney; T.D. Jakes; Mike Bickle and Kansas City Fellowship; Finis Dake (producer of the Dake Study Bible); Joyce Meyer; and *Charisma* magazine. Two conspicuous particulars of the list demonstrate just how far outside the realm of honesty and orthodoxy Brown and Yoder operate.

First, the pair failed to provide their readers with a fair and balanced register of groups critiqued by PFO. Brown and Yoder failed to include in their listing religious  
(continues on page 21)

### PERSONAL FREEDOM OUTREACH

P.O. Box 26062 • Saint Louis, Missouri 63136-0062 • (314) 921-9800

Visit PFO's Web Site at: <http://www.pfo.org>

#### BOARD of DIRECTORS:

James Bjornstad .....	Cedarville, OH	Stephen F. Cannon .....	Glendale, AZ
Joan C. Cetnar .....	Kunkletown, PA	Philip C. Cetnar .....	Bellefonte, PA
G. Richard Fisher .....	Bricktown, NJ	M. Kurt Goedelman .....	Saint Louis, MO
Robert L. Griffin .....	Florissant, MO	Keith A. Morse .....	Denver, CO
David M. Tyler .....	Granite City, IL		

#### BOARD of REFERENCE:

Dr. Jay E. Adams.....	Enoree, SC	Dr. Norman L. Geisler .....	Charlotte, NC
Dr. Edmond C. Gruss .....	Newhall, CA	Dr. John P. Juedes.....	Highland, CA

© 2003-PFO. All rights reserved. These articles may not be stored on BBS or Internet sites without permission. ISSN: 1083-6853. *The Quarterly Journal* is the newsletter publication of PFO. Published by Personal Freedom Outreach, P.O. Box 26062, Saint Louis, MO 63136. PFO's *Journal* files may also be obtained on floppy diskette for IBM-compatible computers from PFO.

---

---

# News Updates

---

---

## PFO CONTINUES TO GROW

Growth prompts the need for change. Personal Freedom Outreach was a counter-cult, apologetic ministry conceived in the mid-1970s, when several of the mainline cults were experiencing tremendous gain. It was also during a time when the Church was giving way to the advancing of aberrant theologies.

PFO saw its "infancy" in the late 1970s, its "childhood" in the 1980s, its "teen years" were in the 1990s, but now — for the 21st century — the ministry has grown to "adulthood" and with it, added responsibilities and demands.

During the past couple years, PFO has sought that each of its directors become more involved in their personal devotion and duty to help realize its goals. At a recent board meeting, it was determined that PFO would add two new members to its Board of Directors. Appointed to serve on PFO's board are Dr. Robert L. Griffin and Dr. David M. Tyler.

Robert Griffin has served as pastor of Parker Road Baptist Church in Florissant, Mo., since 1992. He earned his Doctor of Ministry from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in 1973. His ministry opportunities include preaching, teaching, writing, mission work, and Bible Camp direction throughout the world. Bob served as the Executive Director of the Bible Memory Association International from 1977-1989. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees for the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

David Tyler has pastored churches in Illinois and South Carolina. He holds a B.A. in Theology, a M.A. in Pastoral Ministry, and a Ph.D. in Biblical Counseling, all from Trinity Theological Seminary in Newburgh, Ind. Presently, David is a Regional Director for Church and Community Ministries for the Illinois Baptist State Association. He is a member of the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors and the Southern Baptist Association of Biblical Counselors. He co-edits, along with fellow PFO director Kurt Goedelman, SBABC's *Quarterly Newsletter*.

Both men have been active in and supportive of PFO prior to their appointment as directors, including participation in a teaching capacity at its *Saint Louis Conference on Biblical Discernment* held last April.

—MKG

## U.S. NEWS SPOTLIGHTS McPHERSON HOAX

What do Aimee Semple McPherson, Piltdown Man, and crop field circles have in common? They all earned recognition in a recent edition of *U.S. News & World Report* dedicated to "The Art of the Hoax" (Aug. 26-Sept. 2, 2002, special double issue). The magazine stated, "Our team of writers presents the best deceptions, scams, and gags, past and present."

McPherson weighed in as the magazine's Hoax #10, being "the evangelist [who] was tried for a tall tale." On May 18, 1926, at age 35, the celebrated female evangelist and founder of the International Church of the Four-square Gospel went swimming in the Pacific Ocean at Venice, Calif. When she did not return, her flock feared the worst. For weeks there was no sign of McPherson. Then, five weeks after vanishing without a trace, McPherson turned up in the Arizona desert. She claimed that she had been abducted by three people who held her prisoner. However, news reports disclosed quite a different scenario. Reporters stated McPherson "had joined the one-legged engineer from her radio station in a cycle of sin at a Carmel, Calif., 'love nest.'"

Despite the reports, McPherson insisted the abduction was legitimate and said it was "my story" and that she was "sticking to it" — a pronouncement later echoed by Mae West on the big screen and President Bill Clinton during the Monica Lewinsky episode. McPherson was charged with a felony, obstructing justice by falsely reporting a crime. Finally, litigation against McPherson was dropped as "the state's key witness altered an account once too often."

McPherson stuck to the story until her death in 1944.

—MKG

## WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE?

Less than a decade ago, *The Liberty Flame*, a periodical on religious liberties published by the Rev. Jerry Falwell, called into question the life, practice, and theology of popular television preacher John Hagee. The May 6, 1994, *Flame* displayed a bold, front page headline asking, "John Hagee: Heretic?" However, more recently, Falwell's view of the San Antonio-based minister has apparently

(continues on page 21)

# Building a Foundation on Sand:

## The Modern Day Apostles and Prophets Movement



by G. Richard Fisher

In certain “Christian” camps, becoming an “Apostle” or a “Prophet” is as easy as saying it is so. The Charismatic fringe is filled with self-proclaimed spokesmen for God who are building their kingdoms on a foundation of unbiblical claims.

Peter Masters and John Whitcomb lay bare the sinful and arrogant stance of such teachers:

“The attitude of people in the charismatic and similar movements today runs something like this: ‘This is unfair! I want to be a prophet. Why did God only teach through them? I have equal, if not greater faith. I want to be a channel of new revelation; I want to be a spokesman, a voice, a mouthpiece for God. I want divine words to come from my tongue.’”<sup>1</sup>

### THE PEOPLE CALLED PROPHETS

Anyone familiar with the Charismatic scene has heard the names: Benny Hinn, Kim Clement, Mike Bickle, Joyce Meyer, Juanita Bynum, Francis Frangipane, Bob Jones, Paul Cain, Peter Wagner, Rick Joyner, Cindy Jacobs, James Ryle, Jack Deere, and a host of lesser-known names. *Charisma* magazine advertised a World Congress in Guatemala for last October-November, calling it “A Prophetic Gathering!”<sup>2</sup>

Some of these “prophets” hold conferences to help others become

“prophets,” even though the Bible teaches that spiritual gifts are bestowed on individuals by the Holy Spirit, who gives them as He wills (1 Corinthians 12:11). Bill Randles reported on a “Seers Convocation” advertised in *Charisma* magazine as an:

“INTERNATIONAL SEERS  
CONVOCATION  
EAST MEETS WEST AND SUNRISE  
MEETS SUNSET  
PROPHET E. BERNARD JORDAN  
AND PROPHET VERNON ASHE  
COMING TOGETHER TO UNVEIL  
ANCIENT TRUTHS  
FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM  
TRUTHS THAT WILL HELP  
YOU UNLOCK YOUR PROPHETIC  
ABILITY...”<sup>3</sup>

Jack Deere tries to interpret the two witnesses of Revelation 11 as being fulfilled in the current Charismatic prophets:

“Revelation 11:3 you know those two powerful witnesses in Revelation? You know what — they are first and foremost? They are prophets.”<sup>4</sup>

Deere goes on to name Paul Cain and Bob Jones of Kansas City Fellowship fame as last-days prophets sent just before the return of Jesus Christ.<sup>5</sup>

### ROTTEN ROOTS

Such error prospers because of the shift over the past six decades in the basic view of the Christian life and

the program of God. This shift can be traced back to the 1940s and the Latter Rain Movement. The New Order of the Latter Rain originated in the late 1940s as a breakaway of Pentecostalism. Initially, it was condemned by the Assemblies of God and most mainstream Pentecostals. It was considered a lunatic fringe looking for immediate immortality and “heaven on earth.”

In 1976, Latter Rain advocate J. Preston Eby summed up what the movement’s teachers had been saying for three decades would happen at virtually any moment. Preston said there would be an imminent outpouring of the Spirit like never before “which shall finally bring the FULLNESS, a company of overcoming Sons of God who have come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ to actually dethrone Satan, casting him out of the heavenlies, and finally binding him in the earthlies, bringing the hope of deliverance and life to all the families of the earth. This ... great work of the Spirit shall usher a people into full redemption — free from the curse, sin, sickness, death and carnality.”<sup>6</sup> With a stroke of the pen and some outlandish claims, this movement substituted a class of supermen for Jesus.

In 1991, Jewel van der Merwe put out a strong warning regarding the extreme claims of the Latter Rain. She presented biblical evidence and made an appeal to close the doors of the

(continues on page 10)



# A JOURNEY INTO MYSTICLAND

## CHARISMATICS AND THEIR INSUFFICIENT WORD OF GOD

by M. Kurt Goedelman

If one had to determine a motto for leaders in the Charismatic movement, it would be "God told me." Of course, if their "God told me" claim is challenged or proved wanting, they fall back on the old chestnut, "Touch not the Lord's anointed."

The "God told me" motto is indeed dangerous and heretical. It opens both speaker and hearer to confusion, chaos, deception, disappointment, mysticism, subjectivism, and perhaps even demons.

Scripture is all-sufficient. Second Timothy 3:16-17 declares, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." It is complete, thoroughly equipping us for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). We need not look elsewhere.

Dr. Jay Adams, in his volume on the 119th Psalm, writes:

"Notice that the place to seek God is in the Bible. Counseless will find Him and His will for their lives nowhere else. Mystics think that they can have encounters with God apart from the Scriptures. They think that nothing need come between them and God (not even Christ nor the Bible). They therefore work up some sort of 'experience' they suppose to be the presence of

God in this manner and look down on the 'peons' who try to find God in the Scriptures."<sup>1</sup>

### UNDERMINING AND PUMMELING SCRIPTURE

Benny Hinn is unquestionably the most popular and controversial figure in Charismatic circles today. He openly admits a lack of formal Bible training, but makes up for this inadequacy by regularly appealing to other authorities to establish his unorthodoxy. These include "revelation knowledge," "words of knowledge," personal interaction with members of the Trinity, an insider's knowledge of the Bible, and spiritual intuition to reveal the deeper meanings of the biblical text.

Those familiar with Hinn will recall his infamous teaching on the triune nature of God. During a sermon, Hinn said he had received a divine revelation that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit each possessed their own body, soul, and spirit. He said that each member of the Godhead was and is a Trinity in and of Himself. "There are nine of them," he said of the persons in the Godhead, demonstrating that while he had his Christian doctrine all wrong, at least his arithmetic was correct.

While Hinn more recently has tried to distance himself from this bizarre teaching, consider the source he said it came from:

"And I want you all to listen carefully to what I'm going to say. ... And it's not a very easy thing to understand, but let's — let's pray that the Holy Ghost will help all of us. ... Man, I feel revelation knowledge already coming on me here. I want you to lift your hands. Something new is going to happen here today. I felt it just as I walked down here. Holy Spirit, take over in the name of Jesus."<sup>2</sup>

After he preached his heretical theology, he admonished his congregation with: "You say, 'Ahh, I never heard that.' Well, you think you're in this church to hear things you've heard for the last fifty years?"<sup>3</sup>

Hinn later tried to circumvent the heretical implications of his statements by calling the comments a big joke. He really didn't mean it or believe it, he said on several occasions. Yet, he called this teaching "revelation knowledge." Hinn put himself in a place far beyond the pastoral ministry of expounding on the Word into one of divine direction. Moreover, his alibis are as contradictory and confusing as his statement's original theological implications.

### MORE OF HINN'S EYESEGESIS

Hinn has made plenty of other spurious statements. He admits he was puzzled by Jesus' conduct with the blind man recorded in John 9. But,

according to Hinn, the Holy Spirit gave him “a marvelous answer” to solve the mystery. Hinn claims that the Holy Spirit told him that, “The reason Jesus put mud on a guy’s eyes was not because the man was blind. It’s because he had no eyes and He just gave him brand new ones.”<sup>4</sup>

The Bible, however, states that Jesus “put clay on [his] eyes” (John 9:6, 11, 15), that the man was born “blind,” not “without eyes” (vv. 2, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25), and that Jesus “opened,” not “created” his eyes (vv. 10, 14, 17, 21, 26, 30, 32). The Holy Spirit inspired the Gospel’s author, John, to record these facts. They are, therefore, incontrovertible. Yet, Hinn tells us that the same Holy Spirit inspired his interpretation, which contradicts Scripture.

### DEAD MEN WATCHING

One final example will demonstrate his continued trip into mysticism and imagination. It also will reveal the reality that Hinn’s “revelations” are no more than the product of his fertile mind. Hinn told a Trinity Broadcasting Network audience:

“But here’s first what I see for TBN. You’re going to have people raised from the dead watching this network. You’re going to have people raised from the dead watching TBN. Programs, just plain programs. Programs that haven’t done much when it comes to supernatural manifestations. Teaching programs. ... It’s going to be your average teaching program, your normal Christian program that’s blessing the Church. There’s going to be such power on these programs. People will be raised from the dead worldwide. I’m telling you, I see this in the Spirit. It’s going to be so awesome. Jesus, I give you praise for this. That people around the world, maybe not so much in America, 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. I’m telling you. People will be,

people — I’m telling you I 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. It’s going to happen time and time [again], so much it’s going to spread. You’re going to hear it from Kenya to Mexico to Europe to South America where people will be raised from the [dead]. So much so, that 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. You wait. Now the Lord just told me — and I don’t know whether this is true or not — as I’m saying this, the Lord said he gave you that word many, many years ago. ... I see — I see quite something amazing. I see rows of umm, cas—of caskets lining up in front of this TV set. And I see them bringing them closer to the TV set and as people are coming closer, I see — uh, actually — 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.”<sup>5</sup>

Hinn’s “revelation,” which he claimed came through his anointing, is probably nothing more than a fabrication, but it is certainly not divine revelation. His words, “Now the Lord just told me — *and I don’t know whether this is true or not...*” is certainly a fitting indication of its true source. And, needless to say, Charismatics and TBN viewers are still burying their dead.

### THE ORAL WORD

Long before Benny Hinn rose to prominence, faith healer and televangelist Oral Roberts was telling whoppers of his own. Probably the most notable one is his claim that God would take his life if he did not raise \$8 million to keep his university’s medical program afloat. He told his followers in January 1987:

“I’m talking about 1987. If we don’t turn it around by March, God’s going to call me home. Please help extend my life. Please help me open the nations. Please help me turn the medical school around. We’re well on our way. We lack four and a half million dollars between now and March. Help us. Help us. Help us. My mailing address is Oral Roberts, Tulsa, Oklahoma. ... Pray with us and as we pray with you. Father, I’ve delivered my soul today. I can do no more by myself than what I am doing. Please help me. Give me new partners. Cause my regular partners to pick up this burden. Extend my life. Let me live beyond March. Let me finish my work on earth. Give me twenty more years. Help us to double the number of medical missionaries in the world. Help us, Lord.”<sup>6</sup>

Well, Roberts got his \$8 million, the final part of which came from a dog-track owner in Florida. So the world is only left to wonder if God would have made good “His threat” against Roberts’ life. We do know that Roberts’ City of Faith medical complex, a three-tower structure consisting of a 60-story clinic, a 30-story hospital and a 20-story research tower, sat vacant for years before being sold to a group of investors for commercial development. Roberts’ vision of building the complex to bring healing to our generation didn’t come from God.

### “I DIDN’T KNOW THE FULL STORY”

Just a few months later, Roberts was at it again. He “divinely berated” the Assemblies of God leadership, the *Charlotte Observer* newspaper, and evangelist Jimmy Swaggart over the disclosure of his friend Jim Bakker’s sexual and financial indiscretions. Roberts told his nationwide audience:

“And the Word of the Lord in my mouth is to you, my brother, whom we all love, you’re sowing discord. And the Lord said, ‘Discord will come back to you.’ Flee my brother, repent, and ask God to cleanse you. For you’re a good man and we love you. And the

Word of the Lord is saying to those people in the headquarters of that denomination, where Jim out of graciousness turned in his ordination papers because they wanted him to, and you've not accepted it. You've said, 'No we're gonna strip him. We're gonna strip him. We're gonna crush him.' ... The Word of the Lord is coming to you from Oral Roberts' mouth today, if you strip Jim Bakker, you've touched God's anointed, you've harmed God's prophet. And the Word of the Lord says, 'Touch not my anointed, do no harm to my prophets.' ... I beg you, headquarters of a great denomination, one that we respect and love, desist, move back, and treat Jim Bakker as what he is, an anointed man, a prophet of God. And the hand of the Lord will not fall upon you. But the Lord will bless you. And to that great newspaper: You seem so immune to what our God can do. You've touched God's anointed and you've tried to harm God's prophet, Jim Bakker. You've come into an unholy alliance with these others in the name of religion and morality. You've set yourself up to be a standard of morality, when you're not and you know you're not. The Word of the Lord comes unto you from my mouth. And the Lord says that He'll create great dissension in your ranks. You'll have such dissension that it'll spread across the news media of America and you will not know what you're doing. There'll be much falling out and falling apart, anger among yourselves. And you'll wonder why this has happened."<sup>7</sup>

However, when the facts all confirmed the allegations and vindicated Swaggart, the Assemblies of God denomination, and the *Charlotte Observer*, Roberts admitted:

"Out of this experience I went on nationwide television and preached a message of forgiveness and that after a period of time, there should be restoration.

I also said some harsh words about a great church, the Assemblies of God, and a fellow brother, Jimmy Swaggart. At that time, I did not have all the information that they possessed and I did not perceive that they were ever going to forgive Jim Bakker in their hearts. I also did not understand their full procedure for withdrawing ordination papers and working to restore a minister. Also, at that time I didn't know the full story about the finances and other alleged irregularities."<sup>8</sup>

Roberts' confession is revealing indeed, for the apology invalidates the claim of divine origin he made for his original declaration. If Roberts genuinely had "the Word of the Lord" in his mouth, he would not have had to "possess all the information" and "know the full story." He also would have been able to "perceive" that forgiveness to Jim Bakker would be extended. Roberts, without question, is guilty of proclaiming his own ill-conceived conclusions and attributing them to God.

### OUT OF HIS MIND?

Undaunted, and despite having to disavow previous divine utterances, Roberts charged forward with more claims. He said that "the Lord manifested the gift of prophecy through me" when he presented to his followers "11 Major Prophecies for You in 1992." These oracles, Roberts said, "did not come out of my mind, but by the Holy Spirit revealing them to be in harmony with the inspired and infallible Word of God."<sup>9</sup> Roberts told his "partners" :

- "1992 will be the year when great numbers of people will hear the voice of God speaking to them."
- "1992 will be a pivotal year of end-time prophecy."
- "... the fact that revelation knowledge, balanced by the written Word of God, will be manifested in God's people to a much greater degree than in 1991."<sup>10</sup>

Also included were promises of "mass miracles," financial break-

throughs and an increase in angelic activity. All of the above are worn-out promises uttered repeatedly by Charismatic and Latter Rain exponents. Such predictions are the fuel that keep "partners" sowing their financial seeds into the pockets of unscrupulous preachers.

### HERETICAL REVELATIONS

Contemporary revelators will feign deference to the Bible by saying that their prophetic utterances are "balanced by the written Word." However, nothing could be further from the truth. Word-Faith advocate Kenneth Copeland bears this out. During his three-day "Dallas Victory Campaign," Copeland delivered the following prophecy:

"It's time for these things to happen, saith the Lord. It's time for spiritual activity to increase. Oh, yes, demonic activity will increase along at the same time. But don't let that disturb you. Don't be disturbed when people accuse you of thinking you're God. Don't be disturbed when people accuse you of a fanatical way of life. Don't be disturbed when people put you down and speak harshly and roughly of you. They spoke that way of Me, should they not speak that way of you? The more you get to be like Me, the more they're going to think that way of you. They crucified Me for claiming that I was God. But I didn't claim I was God; I just claimed I walked with Him and that He was in Me. Hallelujah. That's what you're doing."<sup>11</sup>

As criticism and denunciations from Evangelicals mounted against Copeland, he tried to quell the cries of heresy. He wrote in a subsequent issue of his magazine:

"The phrasing of the statement you referred to is very important. I didn't say Jesus *wasn't* God, I said He didn't *claim* to be God when He lived on the earth. Search the Gospels for yourself. If you do, you'll find what I say is true. During His earthly ministry, Jesus acknowledged that He was the Son of God, the Messiah.

He referred to God as His Father (which enraged the Pharisees), but He never made the assertion that He *was* the most High God. In fact, He told His disciples that the Father God was greater and mightier than He (John 14:28). Why *didn't* Jesus openly proclaim Himself as God during His 33 years on earth? For one simple reason. He hadn't come to earth as God. He'd come as man."<sup>12</sup>

Copeland's explanation only adds to the confusion and gets him further mired in heresy. First, he writes, "I didn't say..." The original pronouncement was supposed to have been a prophecy — *it was Jesus Christ speaking*. Copeland has tipped his hand here and revealed the true source of the revelation. Secondly, Jesus very clearly and emphatically stated He was God. At John 8:58, Jesus ascribes to Himself the absolute phrase used of God in Exodus 3:14. The Jewish leaders got it. Regrettably, Copeland does not.

Finally, Copeland employs Watchtower logic and Scripture-twisting when he appeals to John 14:28 as a basis for his theology. Even more disturbing, he adds words to the text. Copeland contends that Jesus stated the Father to be "greater *and mightier* than He." While Scripture does address the Father as positionally greater than the Son, it nowhere designates the Son as absent of deity while on earth, rather just the opposite (Matthew 1:23).

Moreover, true prophets of God never have to rescind their prophecies. Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Paul never backtracked or tried to explain away their pronouncements. It is ludicrous to even think that Paul, or any of the prophets or apostles, would have presented doctrine and teaching only to have to say, in effect, "Here's what I said, but this is what I meant."

### FROM BAD TO WORSE

Yet, Copeland's unbiblical delusion doesn't stop there. Copeland's hermeneutics are also shockingly flawed. For his devotees, he will give them unimaginable insight never previously available. Consider his revela-

tion of the "biggest failure in all the Bible":

"Study your Bible sometime and find out who the biggest failure in all the Bible was. You'd be shocked to find out who it is. It's God. What?! Yeah, God was the biggest failure in all the Bible. He just — He just wouldn't call it a failure. He just kept on. He didn't accept it. He lost His archangel, a third of the heavenly hosts, everything He created on earth up till that time, whatever it was. He lost all of this earth and the authority over it — completely, totally, just lost the whole thing. Lost man, lost his wife, and everything that was to be born of his flesh. I mean that's — that's close to bankrupt, man!"<sup>13</sup>

Scripture declares otherwise:

"I will proclaim the name of the LORD. Oh, praise the greatness of our God! He is the Rock, His works are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He" (Deuteronomy 32:3-4).

"Hear, O my people, and I will speak, O Israel, and I will testify against you: I am God, your God. I do not rebuke you for your sacrifices or your burnt offerings, which are ever before me. I have no need of a bull from your stall or of goats from your pens, for every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are mine. If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it" (Psalms 50:7-12).

God's Word couldn't be more clear. The works of the Lord are perfect, His ways are just, and the world — and all that is in it — is His. Copeland's teaching that God is the biggest failure in all the Bible, and that He lost the authority over the earth, is heretical and blasphemous.

### TOMMY AND HIS MOLDY PAGES

Other Charismatics have character-

ized the Bible as a "fellow witness," all the while denying that they are adding to it. Even more alarming is the way they exalt their "words" from God and their prophecies and revelations.

Another clear example of Charismatic disregard for Scripture is best-selling author and revival celebrity Tommy Tenney. Tenney has gained great prominence within the Charismatic world and has been promoted by the Trinity Broadcasting Network, *Charisma* magazine, and at the Pensacola Revival. He hails from a Oneness background and states in his best-selling book, *The God Chasers*:

"Truth is where God's *been*. Revelation is where God *is*. ... A true God chaser is not happy with just past truth; he must have *present* truth. God chasers don't want to just study from the moldy pages of what God has done; they're anxious to see what God is doing."<sup>14</sup>

### GOD AT A LOSS FOR WORDS?

And then there is Joyce Meyer, *Charisma* cover-girl and Charismatic prima donna. Meyer, like her Charismatic and Word-Faith colleagues, claims divine inspiration for her heretical theology. In a message where she fills in the blanks as to what happened to Jesus while He was in the grave, she advises her listeners:

"And you've got to really glean some things out of the Word of God to really get hold of what He did for you during those three days. What happened from Friday between 9:00 o'clock and noon to Sunday morning? Do you know something? A large majority of the Church really doesn't even know. Honestly and truly they really don't even know, what you're gonna know when this night's over. ... There is no way I could even hope to explain this to you. If God doesn't give you revelation on it, you won't understand a thing I'm saying. ... The Bible can't even find any way to explain this. Not really. That's why you've got to get it by revelation. There are no words to explain

what I'm telling you. I've got to just trust God that He's putting it into your spirit like He put it into mine."<sup>15</sup>

The teaching which "The Bible can't even find any way to explain" and which "you've got to get it by revelation" and which God must put "into your spirit" is, according to Meyer, the Word-Faith heresy of the spiritual death of Christ in hell. Here's the teaching in Meyer's own "revelatory" words:

"Jesus said, 'It is finished.' And He meant the Old Covenant. The job He had to do was just getting started. He really did the job the three days and nights that He was in hell. That's where the job was done. ... He was pronounced guilty on the cross but He paid the price in hell."<sup>16</sup>

Meyer's description takes her and her listeners further from Scripture:

"All the hosts of hell was upon Him. Up on Him. They got on Him. They got Him down in the floor and got on Him. And they were laughing and mocking. ... All right, now get a picture of this. If God ever paced in His whole life He was pacing during these two days. God just kind of showed it to me that way. Now, I don't know if He actually paced or not, but He showed it that way. You see the Father could see down there and see what was going on. He was watching what they were doing to His beloved Son. ... Sunday morning. Sunday morning, here comes the Son. Sunday morning. God gets Himself together. Ho, ho. Justice has been met. Somehow the things have been taken care of. And oh! God gets His voice together and He hollers out three words and they go roaring through the universe and entering the gates of hell. He said, 'It is enough! It is enough!'"<sup>17</sup>

Scripture never says God said, "It is enough! It is enough!" Likewise, Scripture never states Jesus "paid the price in hell." Meyer can only claim her "revelation knowledge" as a source for such information.

## TELLING IT LIKE IT'S NOT

In the first edition of her booklet, *The Most Important Decision You Will Ever Make*, Meyer further stresses the gravity of believing that Jesus suffered and paid for your sins in hell. She writes:

"There is no hope of anyone going to heaven unless they believe this truth I am presenting. You cannot go to heaven unless you believe with all your heart that Jesus took your place in hell."<sup>18</sup>

On the next page she says:

"Jesus went to hell for you. He died for you."<sup>19</sup>

Two pages earlier, she says:

"He was resurrected from the dead — **the first born-again man**."<sup>20</sup>

Yet, despite these repeated proclamations, Meyer denies ever having taught this doctrine. *Charisma's* cover story on her says:

"The criticisms are of the variety that have dogged other Word of Faith figures. Citing her booklet, *The Most Important Decision You Will Ever Make*, Hank Hanegraaff of the Christian Research Institute has taken her to task for the controversial teaching that Jesus was born again in hell, a doctrine she does not believe and has never taught, she says."<sup>21</sup>

How ironic for the *Charisma* piece to be titled, "The Preacher Who Tells It Like It Is," when Meyer lies to conceal teachings that now cause her embarrassment. If she has abandoned this belief, she is further embarrassed because she earlier claimed to have received this knowledge from God Himself.

Meyer's teaching is not new and does not have divine origins. It is the regurgitated teaching of E.W. Kenyon, Kenneth Copeland, and others within the Word-Faith camp. God sternly warns us:

"Therefore,' declares the LORD, 'I am against the prophets who steal from one another words supposedly from me.' ... 'Indeed,

I am against those who prophesy false dreams,' declares the LORD. 'They tell them and lead my people astray with their reckless lies, yet I did not send or appoint them. They do not benefit these people in the least,' declares the LORD" (Jeremiah 23:30, 32).

## GETTING ONTO BIBLICAL GROUND

Charismatics and Word-Faith adherents are far too quick to keep open the canon of Scripture and accept novel interpretations. As shown, once one has opened up at these crucial points, it is possible to go beyond the Word and become subject to all kinds of chaos and confusion. We must never lose sight of the fact that while biblical prophets all stood against heresy, modern-day "prophets" foster and promote heresy.

O. Palmer Robertson, in his book, *The Final Word*, gives sane advice:

"The church needs neither pseudo-prophetism nor pseudo-tongues. It needs no diversion from the plain declaration of the divine mystery that now is revealed in all its fullness. The one thing the church and the world needs today is the faithful proclamation of the Word of God once given. It needs no more."<sup>22</sup>

In his *Quarterly Journal* article on "Why People Are Deceived," G. Richard Fisher listed 12 "Whys of Gullibility." His concluding item aptly fits Charismatic and Word-Faith believers:

"... people have become ' cliché-bound.' They are gullible and become easily subservient if someone says, 'God told me,' or 'the Lord said,' or 'the Lord spoke to me,' or 'the Lord impressed upon me.' After all, who can argue with God? The Church finds itself drowning in a sea of subjectivism away from the safe moorings of the objective Word of God! 'I feel' and 'I sense' have come to replace, 'It is written.'"<sup>23</sup>

Today, most Christians are spiritually handicapped and find themselves

ensnared in all sorts of heresy because they do not know the difference between objective and subjective reasoning. Far too many Christians will scorn the written Word of God in favor of their feelings.

"God told me" is a dangerous motto and methodology. It opens you to confusion, mysticism, deception, heresy, and subjectivism.

A good homework assignment is to devote oneself, over the next month, to include in one's daily devotions a reading of the 119th Psalm. The Psalm is divided into twenty-two sections of eight verses. Take one section each day, read and meditate upon the verses. Nearly every verse of the psalm proclaims the importance of Scripture using one of eleven terms. Each day while contemplating the verses, try to grasp the meaning and strive to apply it. May you be like the psalmist who proclaimed: "See how I love your precepts; preserve my life, O LORD, according to your love" (v. 159).

One Christian author offered wise direction for understanding:

"Read and meditate on the holy Scriptures much in private, and then you will be the better able to understand what is preached on it in public, and to try that doctrine, whether it be of God. ... Live under the clearest, [most] distinct, convincing teaching that you possibly can procure. ... Ignorant teachers ... are unlike[ly] to make you men of understanding; as erroneous teachers are

unlike[ly] to make you orthodox and sound."<sup>24</sup>

Those words were penned over 325 years ago by Richard Baxter, a British pastor! They are relevant to us today as false teachers and false prophets proliferate among us.

As children in Sunday school, we were taught, "The Bible: nothing more, nothing less, nothing else." As adults we need to return to the profound substance of that simple statement. Curtis Crenshaw expounds on this maxim when he writes:

"If anything is contrary to Scripture, it is wrong. If anything is the same as Scripture, it is not needed. If anything goes beyond Scripture, it has no authority."<sup>25</sup>

We need not "God told me," for the Bible is complete; Scripture is sufficient.

#### Endnotes:

1. Jay E. Adams, *Counsel from Psalm 119*. Woodruff, S.C.: Timeless Texts, 1998, pg. 3, bold in original.
2. Benny Hinn, "A New Spirit," Orlando Christian Center broadcast, Trinity Broadcasting Network, Oct. 13, 1990, tape on file.
3. Ibid.
4. Benny Hinn, "Who Is This Jesus?" sermon from San Antonio Miracle Crusade, March 3-4, 1994, video tape on file.
5. Benny Hinn, *Praise the Lord* show, Trinity Broadcasting Network, Oct. 19, 1999, video tape on file.
6. Oral Roberts, *Expect a Miracle* broadcast, Jan. 4, 1987, tape on file.
7. Oral Roberts, *Richard Roberts Live* broadcast, exact date unknown, c. March 1987, tape on file.
8. Oral Roberts, "The media have had their say, NOW THE TRUTH..." *Abundant*

- Life*, September-October 1987, pg. 9.
9. Oral Roberts, *11 Major Prophecies For You in 1992*. Tulsa, Okla.: self-published, 1992, pp. iii-iv.
10. Ibid.
11. Kenneth Copeland, "Take Time to Pray," *Believer's Voice of Victory*, February 1987, pg. 9. This article is from Copeland's message given at the Dallas Victory Campaign, Oct. 30 - Nov. 1, 1986.
12. Kenneth Copeland, "Question & Answer," *Believer's Voice of Victory*, August 1988, pg. 8, italics in original.
13. Kenneth Copeland, *Believer's Voice of Victory* broadcast, Trinity Broadcasting Network, May 8, 1994, video tape on file.
14. Tommy Tenney, *The God Chasers*. Shippensburg, Pa.: Destiny Image Publishers, 1998, Introduction.
15. Joyce Meyer, *From the Cross to the Throne*, sermon from *Life in the Word Ministries*, exact date unknown, cassette on file.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Joyce Meyer, *The Most Important Decision You Will Ever Make*. Fenton, Mo.: Joyce Meyer Ministries, 1991, pg. 37.
19. Ibid., pg. 38, underlining in original.
20. Ibid., pg. 36, bold and underlining in original.
21. Ken Walker, "The Preacher Who Tells It Like It Is," *Charisma*, November 1998, pg. 55.
22. O. Palmer Robertson, *The Final Word*. Carlisle, Pa.: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1993, pg. 49.
23. G. Richard Fisher, "Can You Be Deceived?," *The Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 20, No. 3, pg. 18.
24. Richard Baxter, *Christian Directory*, cited in J.I. Packer, *Truth and Power*. Wheaton, Ill.: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1996, pg. 178, ellipsis and brackets in original.
25. Curtis I. Crenshaw, *Man as God, The Word of Faith Movement*. Memphis: Footstool Publications, 1994, pg. 222, italics in original.

---

## A FOUNDATION ON SAND

(continued from page 4)

Pentecostal world to these gross errors. Her book, *Joel's Army*, was a wake-up call, but few listened.

Though Latter Rain was seen as a fringe element in the 1940s, parts of its message crept into Charismatic churches. Modern prophets have exploited the framework of Latter Rain teachings to promote themselves and perpetuate their individual kingdoms

rather than the coming kingdom of Christ. They do not look for the return of Christ as much as a great, last-days revival upon the earth. They see themselves in the forefront of this revival. Earl Paulk has taught that the Church must make the earth God's footstool, a task Psalm 2 says is left to the Son of God.

Teachings such as this have become a lethal drug which the likes of the Trinity Broadcasting Network and *Charisma* magazine have injected into

the Charismatic and Pentecostal bodies. It is religious heroin that kills true understanding and right doctrine. The leaders of this movement not only promulgate false doctrine, but disdain orthodox Christian teaching. TBN President Paul Crouch himself has labeled tenets of the Christian faith as "doctrinal doo-doo."<sup>7</sup>

## KINGLESS KINGDOM

Another premise articulated by some in the movement is that Christ's

Kingdom on earth, which once was seen as a dramatic event occurring at the coming of Jesus the King, has either arrived and we haven't understood it or it is partially here and we should be reaping the benefit of healings, creative miracles, and a new world order. Exponents of this teaching say they know that there is some kind of spiritual or secret presence of Jesus just before His visible manifestation or Second Coming. It is a Kingdom without the physical presence of the King, but that does not matter because the new prophets are the administrators of this new order.

We must remember that when the apostles asked Jesus if He would right then and there restore the Kingdom, He did not dispute the idea of the Kingdom, but told them it was not for them to know the timing (Acts 1:7). The timing is up to the Father alone. The visible, physical return of Christ is linked to the establishment of that Kingdom (v. 11). One must not confuse the present, mediatorial Kingdom of Christ with the dramatic, earthly Messianic Kingdom of Christ.

Another extreme is expressed by Jim Rutz in his manuscript for a forthcoming book entitled, *The New Christianity*. The planned title for the book is a giveaway. Even if one doesn't directly question what happened to "the old Christianity," it implies that something is old, outdated, and obsolete. The Dedication page says: "To the millions of intercessors and church planters who are turning the world into a temple and covering the land with God's glory as the waters cover the sea."<sup>8</sup>

Rutz shortchanges his readers from the very beginning because Habakkuk 2:14, the verse he alludes to, says something else. Rutz slips in "a temple covering the land with God's glory," but Habakkuk says: "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." Universal knowledge of the glory of God is nowhere in sight right now. It will take Christ's triumphant return to bring it.

New-prophet teaching is postmillennialism pushed to an unbiblical

extreme. Classical postmillennialists held to a gradual spread of the Gospel and a Christianizing of the world as a preparation for Jesus' return to enact the resurrection and glorification of believers. Historical postmillennialists hoped through the Gospel to turn the world into a peaceful place, not a perfect place. They realized that only Jesus could do the latter.

A reading of the second and eleventh chapters of Isaiah reveals that Christ's Kingdom on earth will bring about dramatic changes. But this in no way resembles the localized, parochial anointing meetings of modern prophets and apostles. Hebrew scholars Johann Keil and Franz Delitzsch explain that such momentous changes and events could only be ushered in by Christ:

"The question how this can possibly take place in time, since it presupposes a complete subversion of the whole of the existing order of the earth's surface, is easily answered. ... There is a peace, not an armed peace, but a full, true, God-given and blessed peace. ...and that not by the so-called Christian powers, but by the power of God."<sup>9</sup>

Alva McClain, former president of Grace Theological Seminary, adequately shows that Christ's coming Kingdom is a complete package that envisions a total situation containing at least three essential elements:

"First, a *ruler* with adequate authority and power; second, a *realm* of subjects to be ruled; and third, the actual exercise of the function of *rulership*. ...there can be no kingdom in the total sense without the ruler, the realm, and the reigning function."<sup>10</sup>

In the new paradigm, human prophets are seen as the ones who usher in the glorified, perfect state. They, in fact, usurp the place of Christ.<sup>11</sup>

Consider further the words of Rutz that, "After 2,000 years of people praying *Thy kingdom come*, it has."<sup>12</sup> He then goes on to recount miracles

that are supposed to have taken place in various parts of the world. As impressive as he tries to make it sound, it is a far cry from "the earth filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea." Waters covering the sea speak of depth, expanse, abundance, universality, and permanence.

Not all modern prophets go as far as Rutz because they know that his extreme premise is shot with holes and will not stand the light of Scripture. It is obvious that the Kingdom of Christ has not come.

Some of the new prophets would rather try to make us believe we are almost there, or partially there, that we are right on the threshold or even have a foot in the door, if we will only believe to go further. If the new breakout or breakthrough has not already taken place, it is beginning and we should not miss it. The problem is that this claim has been made for about the last 60 years. Some will call it the "Latter Rain" and some will call it the "new thing."

A contextual review of James 5:7-11, in regard to the latter rain, clearly has no prophetic significance; it is simply a metaphor for patiently waiting. A study of Jeremiah 31:22, 31-34 shows that the "new thing" is the New Covenant. The "new thing" mentioned in Isaiah 43:19 in context is the final outworking and culmination of the New Covenant when the Lord will rule the earth, geography will be changed, and the curse lifted as even the animal kingdom will be subservient (v. 20).

## THE PERPETUATION OF MYTH

The program of the prophets, sometimes referred to as Charismatic Restorationism, Joel's Army, Kingdom Now, the New Breed, the rule of the Blues, Elijah Company, Manifested Sons of God, New Wave, Phineas Priesthood, the 144,000, or negatively as the Counterfeit Revival, is built on four unbiblical presumptions. The presumptions fail the test of Scripture, time, and common sense. We can capture the outline with the acronym FAIL:

F — The Failure of the Church at large. The new prophets are out to convince people that churches have failed. They denigrate preaching and teaching and push for manifestations, impartations, and anointings. Dramatic slayings in the Spirit are insisted upon. The old way of doing “church” is considered outdated. The old way is considered boring, dull, and devoid of real power.

The Bible in this scheme of things is an appendix that is often misused and misinterpreted by the prophets to back up questionable practices. In this view, even the first-century Church was somewhat of a failure and this new breed of prophets will teach the biblical prophets and apostles. Paul Cain was so bold as to say that “No prophet or apostle who ever lived equaled the power of these individuals in this great army of the Lord in these last days. No one ever had it, not even Elijah, or Peter, or Paul, or anyone else enjoyed the power that is going to rest upon this great army.”<sup>13</sup>

Jeremiah 23:16-32 says that there are prophets who run under their own steam (v. 21) and “speak a vision of their own heart” (v. 16). We are told by these men to believe that in a real sense the gates of hell have prevailed against the Church and the new way of “doing church” will replace the old Christianity. We are to believe that the only true Church is that headed up by these boastful prophets of the new order.

A — All Christians are totally lacking in their present experience. While there is a grain of truth in this (because we all are growing, learning, and progressing in sanctification), there is a fundamental flaw. We know from Scripture that our salvation is complete, that Christ is sufficient, and that the Holy Spirit in His administering of grace is adequate. God is not through with us and we await perfection in our glorified state (Romans 8:18-25). However, the new prophets’ message is not quite the same. They will try to convince us, not that we need to grow, but that we lack something that only they can supply. We must get on a hunt for more

God-satisfaction and power. That power is seen through wild manifestations.

They try to create a discontent that has us seeking after the mystical, the esoteric, the emotional, and the prophetic that may open us up to the world of the occult. At the very least, we will be swept along by altered states, hyper-suggestibility, manipulation, emotions, and the whims of the new prophets. It is a dangerous place that takes us into the realm of speculation and imagination. It causes people to be discontented with their church, their Bible, their Christian life, and the normal everyday means of sanctification and growth.

These kinds of discontented Christians begin to believe that God is only in the dramatic. It creates a frenzy that feeds on itself and opens one to even more delusion. Christians forget that the greatest manifestation of holiness and grace was first manifest in a smelly stable. For these believers, the Christian life has to become like Disney World, a Jesus party, or professional wrestling. People become insatiable for “new words” or “now words.”

When Christians imbibe the heady claims of the Latter Rain preachers, they confuse the changing conditions of life, the world, and their circumstances with changes in their relationship with God. No longer is Romans 8 a comfort, and no longer do they hear “nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ” (vv. 35 and 39).

The words of Charles Spurgeon are a great comfort:

“The Israelites in the wilderness were continually exposed to change. ... Yet they had an abiding home in their God, ... ‘Yet,’ says Moses, ‘though we are always changing, Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place throughout all generations.’ The Christian knows no change with regard to God. He may be rich to-day and poor to-morrow; he may be sickly to-day and well to-morrow; he may be in happiness to-day, to-morrow he may be distressed —

but there is no change with regard to his relationship to God. If He loved me yesterday, He loves me to-day. My unmoving mansion of rest is my blessed Lord. Let prospects be blighted; let hopes be blasted; let joy be withered; let mildews destroy everything; I have lost nothing of what I have in God. He is ‘my strong habitation whereunto I can continually resort.’ I am a pilgrim in the world, but at home in my God. In the earth I wander, but in God I dwell in a quiet habitation.”<sup>14</sup>

I — The Illusion that a new age of miracles is occurring or is about to occur. For years, Benny Hinn has resonated the claim of his late mentor, Kathryn Kuhlman, that a time will come when everyone attending a healing crusade will be healed. He even claimed, in writing, that he healed the patients of an entire hospital in Canada.<sup>15</sup> Investigation showed the claim to be false.<sup>16</sup>

He claimed to be speaking under the “anointing” when he told Paul and Jan Crouch, along with the TBN viewing audience, that “if some dead person be put in front of this TV screen [tuned to TBN], they will be raised from the dead — and they will be by the thousands.”<sup>17</sup> More recently, Hinn promoted a prophecy which made the claim that Jesus Christ would physically appear on the stage at one of his crusades.<sup>18</sup> Kansas City prophet Bob Jones boasted of hearing God audibly and claimed the new prophets were able to “begin to remit people’s sins” and even “remit that which sin has caused in their life, like herpes and AIDS.”<sup>19</sup>

Ruth Heflin, known for claims of supernatural gold dust appearing in her meetings, once said:

“I suddenly knew how easy it is to raise the dead and to heal all manner of sickness and disease. How easy it is in that realm of glory! How easy to see people leaping out of wheelchairs and off of stretchers! How easy to see blind eyes opened and deaf ears unstopped! In the glory realm nothing is impossible.”<sup>20</sup>

Heflin died of cancer after a mastectomy at age 60.

Devotees of Hinn, Jones, and the like are electrified by their brashness and never take them to task for the exaggerations, lies, and yarn-spinning. Bring on the clowns and bring on the myths in the circus of illusion that Carol Flake calls "Redemptorama."

So the faithful devotees are told repeatedly that "God is going to show up." People get agitated and lose control and it is called proof of the divine presence. The new prophets tell them that God has told them there will be an outbreak of creative miracles, cancers falling off, the dead raised, stadiums filled with thousands of worshipers, and television news anchormen screaming out in repentance. The followers dare not question or hold back these events by their unbelief. God is going to create a "landing zone" or "throne zone" in their midst. God is going to give all the wealth of the ungodly into their hands. In short, the Kingdom here and now.

Mike Bickle has proclaimed: "We'll have the power to raise people from the dead, that even death won't stand before the power of the Church. We'll see those four days Lazarus kind of deals."<sup>21</sup>

Paul, on the other hand, in Romans 8 writes of the future glory when bodies will be redeemed and glorified completely. It will take the return of Christ to accomplish it (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 1 Corinthians 15). First Thessalonians 5:23 makes it clear that the kind of ultimate perfection described by the new prophets can only occur at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Descriptions of the details of this golden age of miracles often differ among individual prophets. The pitch might be that to sow the seed of a large financial gift will ensure the success of God (and also the prophet). The river of revival is on its way and prophets can hear its roar — so they tell us. Only Christ can miraculously roll back the curse and usher in a worldwide Eden (Ezekiel 37:23-28).

**L — The Lie of Elitism.** The elitist message is that there is an echelon of prophets who hear directly from God. They are the conduits of miracles and revelations and essential to the success of God's program. This is a prominent mark of cults. The elitist message makes a mockery of the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer and creates new mediators and classes of Christians.

Paul dealt with what he called "super apostles" in Corinth. He refuted their arrogance and pride along with their lording it over the people. He branded them as false (2 Corinthians 11:1-14).

The new prophets sell books, but they do not sell reality. They may have roaring crowds, but they do not have the real goods. They have made their claims for over half a century, but they have not delivered. Their lies and delusions offer a chimera to untaught people. One by one, the new prophets fall ill and die. During the last two decades many of them have been exposed in horrible scandals. In the end, the Church has not failed — they have.

Erstwhile healer John G. Lake was featured in the March 2002 issue of *Charisma*. Lake was an early restorationist or a forerunner of the movement. In *Charisma's* papered-over version, Lake is said to have healed as many as 100,000 people. No documentation is provided and not a word is uttered in terms of "the rest of the story."

Lake went to Africa claiming that God would miraculously provide everything for him so he made no preparations. They had insufficient food and it is presumed that his wife died of malnutrition. Upon return to the United States, he started healing institutions. Eventually, Lake's health broke. He finally died of a stroke.<sup>22</sup>

### THE PROPHETS THAT ARE FALLIBLE

These new prophets also propagate a huge fiction that allows them to be wrong repeatedly in their religious guessing game. This fiction is the

teaching of the fallible prophet. It goes like this: Old Testament prophets had to be right 100% of the time or be stoned (Deuteronomy 18:20-22). If they were not right first time, every time, it was proof that they were false prophets. However, it is claimed, that the standard has changed in the New Testament. Yet, nothing in the Bible tells us that.

The recent invention of this new standard is a concession to the accumulating false prophecies of the new prophets. Wayne Grudem, Jack Deere, and others came up with the new paradigm: a fallible prophet, in spite of what the Church (as well as Judaism) has always held. The biblical standard said that to qualify as a prophet, one expounded under the influence of divine inspiration by Yahweh and therefore could not be wrong. Prophecy is the "communication of divine truths to men."<sup>23</sup> The term is used of "a person who speaks for God and interprets His will to man."<sup>24</sup> The prophet's messages were given directly by God and could have no error.

God has not changed and Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Malachi 3:6a, Hebrews 13:8). Because the apostles and prophets were the foundation of the Church (Ephesians 2:20, 3:5), it is not necessary to re-lay a foundation. Masters and Whitcomb drive home this point:

"You have not been specially chosen by God to be part of the foundation of His Church. The foundation is long since finished. You are now in the superstructure phase of church history. You can never have special revelatory privileges. It has nothing to do with whether God has the power to do it, or whether you have the faith to receive it. It is all to do with the fact that God has not planned that His Church should have 14, 15 or 20 different foundations, or 75 or 156 different apostles and prophets. There are no more apostles and prophets."<sup>25</sup>

Thus, we can conclude that prophecy was a gift given again in the New Testament, but only to the early

Church. It was a rare gift in the first century and able Bible expositors through Church history have concluded that prophets are not extant today. There is no evidence to disprove this conclusion.

To try to prop up the new fable, some turn to 1 Corinthians 14:29: "let the others judge." They say this means that the prophecies have to be evaluated by the body as to whether they are true or false. No one really does this because the prophecies always come as "words of knowledge" or with "God told me" attached. No one is allowed to judge them; attempts to judge are labeled "judgmental."

First Corinthians 14:29 cannot be interpreted to support a fallible prophet idea. It would be impossible to judge the prophecy true or false before its fulfillment, anyway. What Paul is teaching is that in the New Testament Church, they had to judge and discern *true prophets from false ones*.<sup>26</sup> That in itself suggests that followers had something to say.

#### THE POSTURE OF THE BELIEVER

In Acts 17:11, Paul commended the Bereans for searching the Scripture and judging his teachings by the Word of God. Paul commanded the Thessalonians to "Test all things, hold fast to that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Linguist Marvin Vincent links this with the admonition regarding discerning of spirits and says we must apply a test "to phenomena which claim to be supernatural."<sup>27</sup>

In 2 Timothy 3, Paul appealed to us to use Scripture as our route to maturity. There we will find all we need for "doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness" (v. 16). Nothing here would indicate the need of personally designed prophecies. He warned earlier in the chapter of those who lead others away from truth, people whom Vincent calls "itinerant religious quacks."<sup>28</sup>

The new prophets have obliterated distinctions between doctrines. Christians need desperately to get back to Scripture, rightly dividing the Word of truth, and understand what

Christ's coming Kingdom really is about. Books such as Alva McClain's *The Greatness of His Kingdom* and George Peters' *The Theocratic Kingdom* need to be revisited. Christians need to study the distinctions between the doctrines of salvation, sanctification, and glorification.

A number of years ago the news services reported a tragic story. On Valentine's Day, a man in Jacksonville, Fla., went to the downtown bank office where his wife worked. They had quarreled the night before and it appeared as if he was there to patch things up. He appeared to be in a good mood and offered her a white rose. She accepted it. When she took the rose, the man pulled a gun, shot her and killed her.

This is a picture of the approach of cults and false teachers. They lure people with the beauty and fragrance of appearing to care. They suggest that they can provide a way to really get more of God. They seduce and perpetuate the aura of an inside track to heaven. The unsuspecting Christian accepts the white rose plucked from the Scriptures, but the overture conceals the real motive.

What follows is manipulation, exploitation, and falsehood. It turns out that there is no "kingdom now" except the earthly kingdom financed for the new prophets. The money does not go to perpetuate the Gospel, but to perpetuate the status and the illusory message of "heaven on earth."

The Church needs to wake up, stand up, speak up, and not be cowed. Our great "Deliverer" will come out of "Zion" (Romans 11:26), not out of the new breed.

#### Endnotes:

1. Peter Masters and John C. Whitcomb, *The Charismatic Phenomenon*. London, England: The Wakeman Trust, 1988, pg. 45.
2. *Charisma* advertisement, March 2002, pg. 43.
3. William Randles, *Beware The New Prophets*. Marion, Iowa: self-published, 1999, pg. 6., upper case in original.
4. Cited by Jewel van der Merwe, *Joel's Army*. Holly, Mich: self-published, 1991, pg. 6.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.
6. Cited by R.M. Riss in Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee, editors, *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing, 1988, pg. 534, upper case and ellipsis in original.
7. Paul Crouch, *Praise the Lord* show ("Praise-A-Thon"), Trinity Broadcasting Network, April 2, 1991.
8. Jim Rutz, *The New Christianity*. Pre-published galleys, Dedication page.
9. Johann Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William Eerdmans Publishing, 1983, Vol. 7, pp. 113, 116.
10. Alva McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1968, pg. 17.
11. For an interesting and helpful overview of the history of views of the Second Coming, from Saint Augustine to Hal Lindsey, with a helpful chart, see *Christian History Magazine*, Issue 61, Volume 18, No. 1.
12. *The New Christianity*, op. cit., pg. 2, italics in original.
13. Cited by Hank Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1997, pg. 160.
14. Charles H. Spurgeon, *Morning By Morning*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2000, entry for February 27, pp. 52-53.
15. See Benny Hinn, *Welcome, Holy Spirit*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995, pp. 230-235.
16. See G. Richard Fisher and M. Kurt Goedelman, *The Confusing World of Benny Hinn*. Saint Louis: Personal Freedom Outreach, 2001, pp. 125-128.
17. Benny Hinn, *Praise the Lord* show, Trinity Broadcasting Network, Oct. 19, 1999, video tape on file.
18. Benny Hinn, *This Is Your Day*, March 29, 2000, video tape on file.
19. Cited in *Counterfeit Revival*, op. cit., pg. 160.
20. Ruth Ward Heflin, *Harvest Glory*. Hagerstown, Md.: McDougal Publishing, 1999, pg. 241.
21. Cited in *Joel's Army*, op. cit., pg. 29, italics in original.
22. See *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, op. cit., pg. 531.
23. Thomas R. Edgar, *Miraculous Gifts*. Neptune, N.J.: Loizeaux Brothers, 1983, pg. 71.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *The Charismatic Phenomenon*, op. cit., pg. 45.
26. See Thomas R. Edgar, *Satisfied by the Promise of the Spirit*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregal Publishing, 1996, pp. 80-81.
27. Marvin Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1946, Vol. 4, pg. 50.
28. *Ibid.*, pg. 313.

endeavor. Those who seek to go up like rockets often fall like rocks. Once one has righteousness imputed, practical righteousness can be lived out. Perfect righteousness cannot be obtained in this life.

Peter's second epistle calls on Christians to engage actively in growing. Peter does not say grow *into* grace, but rather "grow *in* the grace" (2 Peter 3:18). Enabled by God's grace, we put forth an active cooperation to advance our life of faith. Peter says, "add to your faith" (2 Peter 1:5) and Jude says, "Building yourself up on your most holy faith" (Jude 20). We can grow because we are commanded to, and the Holy Spirit empowers us. God calls us to live a life because He has given us a life to live. Paul urges in Philippians 1:27, "Let your conduct be worthy of the Gospel of Christ."

Views of sanctification that teach some kind of crisis experience or a shortcut to maturity are unhealthy because they do not agree with Scripture and they fly in the face of biblical teaching, common sense, logic, and human experience. These emotional highs and high-pressure pursuits leave people depressed and confused when things return to normal.

### THE WORST IS YET TO COME

Satan may want believers to think they will never be tempted, but Luke 4:13 reminds readers that even Jesus did not have that luxury: "Now when the devil had ended every temptation he departed from Him *until an opportune time.*" It is a matter of biblical record that Jesus' greatest trial came at the end of his ministry in Gethsemane and Calvary.

It makes a huge practical difference whether we see sanctification as a crisis experience or an ongoing experience. Crisis-experience teaching (not to be confused with numerous crises that come into each life) is a form of legalism which prescribes that each believer must experience the crisis that the leader or group dictates that he should have.

One analogy after another is given in the Bible comparing spiritual growth with natural growth. The figure of "babes" compared with grown-ups is used repeatedly, as in 1 Corinthians. Growing in grace is a common theme in the epistles. A baby is brought to life. A baby cannot become a grown-up simply by others wishing it or forcing them into adult clothing or adult activities. We are to beware of promoting a novice (1 Timothy 3:6).

There are some who speak of God "operating" on people or God performing "spiritual operations" to "fix" our deeper spiritual problems. This creates an expectancy of quick, complete spiritual fix. The Bible model is not surgery, but growth. Just as natural growth has stages, so does spiritual growth. Natural growth continues in many different ways even through adulthood. Natural growth is a process. It is true also that growth may accelerate or slow at different times, but that is part of the process.

Carol J. Ruvolo reminds us:

"Neither spiritual nor physical strength comes by sudden infusion. Both require patient development. ... Just as physical strength is built up and maintained when a personal trainer guides us through a program of good nutrition, strenuous exercise, and rejuvenating rest, spiritual strength is the product of God's Holy Spirit guiding us through a regimen of Bible intake, obedience to God, and regular prayer. ... Building spiritual strength is, without doubt, an arduous journey — one that will prove overwhelming if we fail to recall that we never travel alone."<sup>2</sup>

### IT JUST ISN'T WORKING!

History convincingly shows how unhealthy it is to seek shortcuts to sanctification. The constant depression of Hannah Whitall Smith, who urged a crisis experience to the higher life, is an example. She never found it.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Harry Ironside, who sought "entire sanctification," did not find

perfection, but ended up in a convalescent home with nervous exhaustion.<sup>4</sup>

A.B. Simpson, founder of the Christian Missionary Alliance denomination, sought through his entire life for an elusive baptism of entire sanctification and received only a nervous breakdown the year before his death. His constant search for "more" was a deluded dead end.<sup>5</sup>

In what was called the Cane Ridge Revival, the evidence of the "baptism" (a second work of grace or distinct crisis experience after conversion sometimes seen as a second conversion) was spasms, comas, "the jerks," and barking. Detractors called it "barking up a tree."<sup>6</sup>

Well-respected author, J.I. Packer, reports the bondage of his early days as a Christian attempting to "let go and let God" in an effort to bring him to entire sanctification or perfection in this life:

"...the higher Christian life as I was conceiving it is an unreality, a will-o'-the-wisp which no one has ever laid hold of at all, and that those who testify to their experience in these terms really, if unwittingly, distort what has happened to them."<sup>7</sup>

Packer lays bare his confusion and struggle:

"All I knew was that the expected experience was not coming, the technique was not working. And since according to the teaching everything depended on consecration being total, the fault must lie in me. So I must scrape my inside yet again to find whatever maggots of unconsecrated selfhood still lurked there. A few months of this left me, as can be imagined, fairly frantic."<sup>8</sup>

One of the contradictory notions of the kinds of groups mentioned by Packer is their idea that believers have to work harder at surrendering. If we think of that statement, we realize it is a self-defeating activity. Working at surrender or working to surrender is a contradiction.

In his classic tome, *Perfectionism*, B.B. Warfield traces the ups and downs of the so-called higher life/deeper life movement and the checkered careers of its leaders. They taught a second distinct work of grace for complete sanctification. By their lifestyles and admissions they never reached the goal of entire or complete sanctification. The movement that grew out of Wesleyanism is referred to as the Holiness Movement and is only a little more than 200 years old. History shows that it has not worked. The negative results and the constant changes in exactly what is to be sought and how, shows that the paradigm is seriously flawed.

Samuel G. Craig explained the Wesleyan roots of the higher life teaching:

“Perfectionism was first given standing in the Protestant churches through the teaching of John Wesley, although he himself never claimed perfection. ... This meant that there are two types of Christians: those who are only justified and those who are also sanctified. Other factors contributed to giving perfectionism its present vogue — factors which have worked throughout the centuries, such as Pelagianism and Mysticism. But Wesley’s influence is perhaps the dominant one among present day Evangelicals.”<sup>9</sup>

Historically, extremist sanctification groups fostered strangeness, instability, and heresy. Benjamin Hardin Irwin, founder of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church (c. 1900), began teaching three necessary baptisms as a route to perfect holiness. This was dubbed “the dynamite heresy” because of the chemical jargon Irwin used. Eventually Irwin added three more new baptisms making a total of six. Irwin then made it mandatory to adjust one’s diet to the Old Testament dietary laws. Then he forbade the wearing of ties.<sup>10</sup>

Unfortunately some of these ideas have been ignorantly promoted because of renderings from 1 John in the King James Version. The verses tell us

that “whoever abides in Him does not sin” (3:6, see also 3:4 and 3:9). John, however, is not contradicting his statement in 1:8, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.” In chapter 3, the underlying Greek text (Textus Receptus and Majority Text) is clear that John is talking about a continuing, unbroken slavery to sin. If one has unbroken habit patterns and continues in sinful practices, both they and others have reason to question the validity of their salvation. Grace must produce some changes in attitudes and behavior.

### TRAPPED IN THE BUILDING

Of course, the teachers of shortcuts to perfection or the higher life, which produces an elite class of supposedly more holy and more separated Christians, will argue that sanctification is an elevator ride and not a mountain climb. They will try to convince you that through some experience you can be delivered back to original righteousness. Not just imputed righteousness, but practical everyday perfection. Elitist groups are often more into appearances than substance or reality. The elevator beckons.

It is their elevator and they dictate which floors their followers must stop at. One floor may be demon deliverance. That floor is a maze with many rooms and many exorcists contradicting one another. It may have a room called “inner healing.” Another floor may be called “entire sanctification.” There are other floors designated as the higher life floor, the total surrender floor, the various spirit baptisms floor, and the anointing/impartation floor. The names may vary and there may even be one called the “deeper life” floor. But all the floors turn out to be empty and one begins to plead for another floor higher up. The elevator ride never ends and the payoff never happens.

Some people get stuck on a floor and never progress. They comfort themselves by imagining they have arrived at the top. Many get so disoriented they are happy to be taken to floors below just for a change. They become addicted to

riding the elevator and checking for floors that are more exciting. At this stage they become floor addicts and floor junkies. Their spiritual life has been “floored.”

### BE YE UNHOLY?

Often PFO is accused of not believing in certain things because it critiques and rejects certain extremes. PFO, however, totally and without hesitation, endorses biblically balanced books like *The Practice of Godliness* and *The Pursuit of Holiness*. The titles alone say it all.

The issue is not whether PFO believes in sanctification and holiness, but the proper route there. We must be sure we define and understand these subjects in a balanced and biblical way. We must also understand that sanctification has an impact on the rest of the believer’s life. Salvation is the arrival point for the beginning of a lifelong journey with Christ, with ups and downs, and with a Savior who never leaves or forsakes.

### PAUL — ELEVATOR MAN OR MOUNTAIN MAN?

To answer the question, “*How do I get there?*” we turn to the Apostle Paul and his letter to the church at Philippi. Frequently, an experienced tour guide in Israel will refer to the importance of location and time. Applying that to Paul’s epistle to the Philippians, we note that the book’s location is in a grouping of letters referred to as “prison epistles.” That location tells us that it was written from a Roman jail making it one of the last that Paul penned.

The location points to important issues of time. Paul was at the end of his career. He is now a senior citizen and has been on the road of the Christian life for many years. Out of his mature wisdom and divine inspiration, he tells us the secret of sanctification.

The Bible clearly recognizes three distinct aspects of our salvation. The first aspect is *positional sanctification*. The root meaning of sanctification is “to be set apart” or “separated.” The Greek noun is *hagiosmos*. In salvation

we are set apart as members of God's family. It is a position not earned, but given through our union with Christ. This, according to Hebrews 10:14, is once for all. Regeneration then saves us from the *penalty* of sin and we have a positional sanctification.

At the other end is a *perfect sanctification* that occurs at the Second Coming of Christ, according to 1 Thessalonians 5:23, when we are glorified and saved completely from the *presence* of sin. Then we will be sanctified body, soul, and spirit, as is clear from the verse.

Between those two "book ends" is what can be called *progressive sanctification*, that is, being set apart more and more to Christlikeness and godly living. In progressive sanctification we are being delivered from the *power* of sin. It is on that battlefield that the crucial question of *how* takes on such enormous significance. One can either get stalled in a deluded sense of subjective perfection or continue to grow in grace.

Putting together scriptural details we can arrive at a practical working definition of progressive sanctification that will reflect biblical truth and be workable in application.

Dr. Jay Adams, a former professor of Practical Theology and the father of the *nouthetic* counseling movement, weighs in and says that "Sanctification (personality change toward holiness) is the work of the Spirit through His Word."<sup>11</sup> Adams further establishes that "Change is of the essence to his sanctification. ... Sanctification requires the daily crucifixion of one's own desires."<sup>12</sup>

The commands (found in Ephesians 4:22-32) to put off evil behaviors and put on godly reactions and responses clearly support Adams' views of sanctification as continuing character, change, and growth, motivated and energized by the Holy Spirit and grace, in accordance with the Scriptures. Colossians 3 supports it overwhelmingly. It is *change* that *God wants*. Adams also says that "we are not merely human *beings* but also human *becomings*" and that "such change is difficult."<sup>13</sup>

Now back to Paul. He has planted churches, won souls, worked miracles, and even penned Scripture. Surely this man can now take his ease. He is in jail, sidelined with only his leisure. His life has been packed with great achievements. He deserves a rest.

Paul, however, does not tell the Philippians he is finished and they can now pick up where he left off but rather, "Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended (Greek: *katalambano* — attained or completely laid hold of); but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:12-14).

Paul says he is still progressing, still growing, still being sanctified, still moving upward and onward. The idea of pressing here is a picture of a man covering his face from wind and rain and straining with each step to move forward against the storm and make progress. Paul wanted to keep going and growing. He knew that his sanctification was progressive and would only be perfected in glorification by Christ.

Marvin Vincent writes that "reaching forth" in verse 14 is a metaphor "of the footrace."<sup>14</sup> Racers run for the goal and stay in until the race is finished. They do not pretend and try to convince the fans that they have arrived at the goal until they have gotten there.

Paul then continues in verse 15 to describe the mark of the mature man. He says the mature (Greek: *teleioi*) Christian will have the same mind as he himself does in wanting always to press forward.

As we look at sanctification, there are two major points that need stressing:

First, *the journey is a daily, progressive, lifelong struggle*. Philippians 2:12

reminds us to "work out your own salvation." We cannot work out what we don't have in us. Salvation is a prerequisite for this work. If we have salvation we can "work it out" through our life, our good deeds, and our testimony because God is working in us "both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (v. 13). God works in us so that we can work out the issues of our growth in cooperation with Him.

## TRUE OF FALSE?

In our honest moments we all have to admit that we have not loved perfectly or lived perfectly and always have a long way to go. But are we willing to "press on"? The issue is not perfection, but direction. Though sin may still be *resident*, we do not have to let it become *president*.

Some teachers will argue that we need their experience to do it well or do it better, but Christians already have what we need. Ephesians 1:3 tells us that God "has blessed us with *every* spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."

Ephesians 5:18 speaks to us of our need of the Spirit's filling. Kenneth Wuest properly translates Paul's command as "be *constantly* controlled by the Spirit."<sup>15</sup> This verse alone proves there is never an arrival point short of heaven. The Holy Spirit must fill each believer repeatedly. As someone has humorously observed, "We leak."

No believer prays as much as he should. We often let other things take our time and attention. God's mercies are new every morning because we need new starts and renewed determination every day.

F.J. Huegal wrote:

"There must be a constant returning to our Centre for an ever deeper appropriation of the spiritual forces generated on Calvary. Our growing in grace necessitates an ever repeated and ever deeper nailing of the 'self-life' to Christ's Cross (Gal. 5:24)."<sup>16</sup>

In his book, *Counterfeit Miracles*, B.B. Warfield wrote:

"We are no longer under the curse of sin. But we remain sinners. The struggle against indwelling sin, and therefore indwelling sin to struggle against, continues through life."<sup>17</sup>

In notes on counseling distributed by Dr. Dan Skogan we read about the false "Systems of change that ignore that the sanctification process requires a great expenditure of effort, expects (in place of effort) an infusion, 'zap', or some instantaneous magical change. This superstitious thinking will lead the believer to frustration and possibly to doubt the authenticity of biblical Christianity."<sup>18</sup>

### HERE'S HOW IT WORKS — OR DOESN'T

This writer came to Christ at age 21. The immediate challenge before me was to begin to live as a single young man in purity and godliness. I knew I had a lot to learn about the Bible and about my new station in life. I knew I had God's grace, God's Spirit to equip me, and God's Word to direct me. Knowing I was not a robot, I knew that God was asking me for a demonstration of my love to Him in my daily choices. I knew also that I was commanded to "exercise" myself "unto godliness" and flee "youthful lusts." Where I was selfish and anti-social, I had to begin to learn and practice loving others sincerely.

I began to get some of that down and then God changed the assignment. I returned to college to begin studies for ministry. Now a new area of sanctification opened up. The stewardship of time and life on a college campus left me wondering, "How do I do all this?" Doing my best in studies was a challenge. I began to realize that the terrain in life would constantly change and God would move me on to new areas and levels of sanctification and never let me think I had arrived in my spiritual growth.

The old jingle, "first comes love, then comes marriage, then along comes a baby carriage," may be passé to this generation and they may

reverse the order, but there was a day I said "I do" and a new theater of sanctification was given to me. Now there were two people capable of sinning and selfishness in the same household.

How does one now learn to be a godly husband? How does the Bible apply to all of that? I had to get busy with Bible studies in that area and read some helpful Christian books. I knew I had a lot to learn. I am still learning about marriage as we both change through life. Now I was juggling a marriage, a full-time job, and night school, wanting to handle them all as a Christian should.

I was hardly getting some of the basics of marriage under my belt and *we* got pregnant. My beautiful bride turned into a ball of mush with not just morning sickness, but all-day sickness — and for months! I felt like saying, "Please, Lord, slow down — I haven't even gotten the husband thing down yet and now I am going to be a father." At times, I was carnal and had to ask God's forgiveness when periods of self pity overtook me and I thought more of myself than I did of my wife. After all, we men need our meals on the table after working all day, as the litany goes. Upon reflection, I know it was much harder for my wife than for me, but as sinners we tend to see only our side of things. God kept reminding me that when I thought I was in the high school of sanctification, in some ways I was still in kindergarten and even preschool. I kept adding "balls" to my juggling routine and I wanted to be a Christian "juggler."

I struggled to learn the father things, first for God and then my son. The ride accelerated with the arrival of our second child — a daughter. I had just started to get somewhat consistent as a father to a boy, but now a girl? How do you do that? How does that all work? I had never done that before. I really believed that the two children would always get along. After all, they would be living in a Christian home; not realizing I would have to learn to be a Christian referee.

The struggles in sanctification show cracks in one's life when it comes to disciplining children consistently and especially if the husband and wife have differing views and philosophies on the topic of child rearing. But then a third child comes along and the fun is only just starting.

Added to that is the fact that I was by then in full time ministry with a church full of people expecting the PKs to be angelic and perfect at all times. They may have believed that a parsonage atmosphere sanctifies the children by osmosis. Just as Ezekiel's wheels, there are sanctification cycles within cycles.

Then comes the pious college and career guy who informs you that he has come into entire sanctification and a second work of grace and wants to share this new revelation with the whole church. Somehow I, as pastor, had missed it. You want to tell him to get a job and a wife because he has too much time on his hands, but you struggle to treat him with grace and teach him. By this time, I began to realize that only prayer and dependence on God will give one the wherewithal to deal with people "from other planets." Sanctification applies to all of that, too.

Then conflict arises in the church. People let others down. People sin grossly. Matthew 18 discipline cases are grueling and sometimes mind bending, bringing strain on a whole congregation. Progressing through the steps with grace puts a huge strain on the sanctification process. One might even find that what was thought to be the music department has now become the war department.

Just when the household appears to be under control, with family devotions every day, church services together, homework being completed, and consistent bedtimes, the thought occurs: "Wow, I have this sanctification pretty well in hand." Then it happens.

### THIS I NEVER EXPECTED

The teen years hit and the *Dirty Ds* appear: dating, driving, discipline, and a lot of "discussions." Discussion

may be an overstatement because some 13-year-olds only grunt as a major, with eye rolling as a minor. More and more the kids are teaching about limits, vulnerabilities, and the desperate need for daily grace. Spanking isn't even an option anymore; they're too big. The cry goes out: "I need thee every hour, most gracious Lord."

Then there is sanctification for college searches and prayer for college finances. As the old carnival barker used to say, "'Round and 'round it goes, and where it stops nobody knows.'" There must be grace sought for sanctification for the grueling, stressful, inevitable weddings.

Then comes the empty nest. Some agonize and grieve while others sing, "Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, I am free at last." No matter, the "best" is yet to come. There is sanctification to be a good Christian in-law, not an out-law. Then, as time rolls on, grandchildren come along and there is new territory to conquer as we struggle with how to be good grandparents. It goes on and on. Some have their hearts ripped out with children divorcing or going off the deep end as an adult.

Health breaks and one must revisit Job and 1 Peter to learn how to suffer well and not give in to bitterness, self pity, or depression. God opens a whole new world of sanctification called "growing old gracefully." I have not met many who mastered that course. Some old folk who tell me they are so close to God are the grumpiest people I know. They have learned their delusions well, but not biblical sanctification.

Then there are the schedule challenges of just keeping the doctors appointments straight and the struggles of how much medicine one needs and takes. There is the dilemma of allowing oneself to have bad days and still push on treating others well, even though not feeling well.

### ON AND ON

In and through it all is the need to deal with our attitudes and our thought life. That in itself is another

world of endeavor as we seek God's grace daily for a renewed mind. There will be repeated times when we will have to revert to 1 John 1:9 and Psalm 51 as we repent and confess our sins.

The following is so true.

*What a difference 40 years can make (from 1963-2003):*

- From long hair to longing for hair
- From Doublemint to liniment
- From Rolling Stones to kidney stones
- From trying to look like Elizabeth Taylor and Marlon Brando to trying *not* to look like Taylor and Brando

*What a difference 40 years can make.*

### WRINKLED BUT NOT RUINED

More and more, books like Jay Adams' *Wrinkled But Not Ruined* become a constant companion. One may continue to learn and apply sanctification to hospital stays. Failing eyesight may even dim one's vision of that blessed hope if self-absorption sets in.

Adams speaks of the devastation that shortcuts to sanctification bring, especially to the elderly:

"According to this quietistic doctrine, the 'cloud nine' experience may be attained by 'yielding,' or 'letting go and letting God,' or something equivalent. ... Those who hold to the instantaneous sanctification doctrine can only despair after a time. After all, in old age there are enough trials (physical and otherwise) to bring out the fact that there is much sin remaining in a believer, and that he has by no means achieved perfection — or even 'life on a higher plane' than other Christians. Only if he is blinded to reality, is extremely egotistical, or avoids introspection altogether could he ever conclude that he has reached 'cloud nine.' In addition, the realization that for years he has failed to reach the goal of entire sanctification, and now that his life is drawing to a close

he still has not 'yielded all,' can only bring about discouragement and confusion. If he doesn't conclude that he is yet unsaved, he is most likely to think that he must strive harder to strive less!"<sup>19</sup>

Then friends die and one must get grace to let go and live with loss. If a spouse dies, how does one plan a funeral to the glory of God? We find ourselves again and again in the school of grace at the feet of Christ pleading for help and renewed strength, reminding ourselves that He restores our souls. We find ourselves, as some in my church, searching the Bible for those unexplored and undiscovered passages on how much God loves the widow and becomes a husband to them. Does it ever end?

It is wonderful to know that God provides dying grace. We may not die with dignity, but we can die knowing He holds our hand. How much dying grace will we demonstrate? The sanctification process will be at work even on our deathbed, which will only be a platform to launch us into complete and perfect sanctification forever.

Through it all, what has really mattered is consistency in daily devotions, consistency in church, worship and fellowship, and the knowledge of not what we have accumulated, but what we have *been* as the legacy for our children.

Progressive sanctification goes on and on through all the seasons of life. It does end — but not here — not in this life. As has been stated, the sanctification process is a journey that is a lifelong, daily struggle. It is a mountain climb. On that mountain, Christ is always with us and we are never alone. God just keeps moving us up the mountain. Even if we get stuck at certain spots, He nudges us on. Our confidence and joy is that at the top of the mountain is heaven, heaven at last. So the end is really only the beginning. We are only on the mountain by the grace of God and it is God's mountain, therefore we rejoice.

This now brings us to our second major point of sanctification that

needs stressing: *Though the journey is a daily, progressive, lifelong struggle, we are assured that the journey has all the resources from God that we will ever need.*

The Apostle Paul has already spoken of these resources: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:2). He reminds us of the "inheritance" (Colossians 1:12). We have great resources.

In John 16:33, Jesus reminds us that, "In the world you will have tribulations; but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." Paul was reminded in the midst of his struggles with his "thorn in the flesh" that God's grace was sufficient (2 Corinthians 12:9). Isaiah reminds us that "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" (Isaiah 40:31). Yes, we have great resources from God.

Philippians 4:13 bolsters us and boosts us as we hear, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." What more can be said than, "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

Charles Spurgeon's powerful words are a great impetus for godly living and advancement in progressive sanctification:

"Not only has Christ travelled the road, but He has slain thine enemies. Dost thou dread sin? He has nailed it to His cross. Dost thou fear death? He has been the death of Death. Art thou afraid of hell? He has barred it against the advent of any of His children; they shall never see the gulf of perdition. Whatever foes may be before the Christian, they are all overcome. There are lions, but their teeth are broken; there are serpents, but their fangs are extracted; there are rivers, but they are bridged or fordable; there are flames, but we wear that matchless garment which renders them invulnerable to fire."<sup>20</sup>

Spurgeon continues:

"The sword that has been forged against us is already blunted; the instruments of war which the enemy is preparing have already lost their point. God has taken away in the person of Christ all the power that anything can have to hurt us. Well then, the army may safely march on, and you may go joyously along your journey, for all your enemies are conquered beforehand. What shall you do but march on to take the prey? They are beaten, they are vanquished; all you have to do is to divide the spoil. You shall, it is true, often engage in combat; but your fight shall be with a vanquished foe. His head is broken; he may attempt to injure you, but his strength shall not be sufficient for his malicious design."<sup>21</sup>

Annie Johnson Flint (1866-1932) was a lifelong sufferer of rheumatoid arthritis. In spite of that, she progressed because she understood her need of grace. She also understood the availability and unfailing nature of grace. She wrote the hymn, "He Giveth More Grace." In this beloved composition she described that true resources come from God:

"He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater; He sendeth more strength when the labors increase. To added affliction He addeth His mercy; to multiplied trials His multiplied peace. ... When we have exhausted our store of endurance, When our strength has failed ere the day is half done, when we reach the end of our hoarded resources, Our Father's full giving is only begun. His love has no limit; His grace has no measure. His power has no boundary known unto men. For out of His infinite riches in Jesus, He giveth and giveth and giveth again."<sup>22</sup>

#### Endnotes:

1. F.J. Huegal, *High Peaks in Redemption*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publish-

ing House, 1954, Dedication page.

2. Carol J. Ruvolo, *A Believer's Guide to Spiritual Fitness*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R Publishing, 2000, pp. 18-19.

3. See further, G. Richard Fisher, "The Secret of a Christian Classic — The Unhappy Life of Hannah Whitall Smith," *The Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 1. Also see, Marie Henry, *The Secret Life of Hannah Whitall Smith*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Chosen Books, 1984.

4. See further, Harry Ironside, *Holiness: The False and The True*. Neptune, N.J.: Loizeaux Brothers, 1912.

5. See further, Charles Neinkirchen, A.B. *Simpson and the Pentecostal Movement*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992, pp. 104-107.

6. Enos Dowling, *The Restoration Movement*. Cincinnati: Standard Publishing, 1964, pg. 28.

7. J.I. Packer, *Sin and Temptation: The Challenge to Personal Godliness*. Portland, Ore.: Mutinomah Press, 1983, pg. xxviii.

8. *Ibid.*

9. B.B. Warfield, *Perfectionism*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishers, 1967, Preface, pp. X-XI.

10. See Vinson Synan, *The Holiness Pentecostal Movement in the United States*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971, pp. 61-67.

11. Jay E. Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1973, pg. 19.

12. *Ibid.*, pg. 161.

13. *Ibid.*, italics in original.

14. Marvin Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1946, Vol. 3, pg. 450.

15. Kenneth Wuest, *The New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959, pg. 456, italic added.

16. *High Peaks in Redemption*, op. cit., pg. 119.

17. B.B. Warfield, *Counterfeit Miracles*. London, England: Banner of Truth Trust, 1972, pp. 176-177.

18. Dan Skogan, "Progressive Sanctification," Laurelton Park Baptist Church, Bricktown, N.J., July 29, 2002, seminar notes.

19. Jay E. Adams, *Wrinkled But Not Ruined*. Woodruff, S.C.: Timeless Texts, 1999, pp. 106-107.

20. Charles H. Spurgeon, *Morning By Morning*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2000, entry for August 24, pg. 220.

21. *Ibid.*

22. Annie Johnson Flint, "He Giveth More Grace," *The Celebration Hymnal*, Word Music, 1997, pg. 707.

organizations and/or popular phenomena such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Latter-day Saints (Mormons), Freemasons, Unitarian Universalists, Wiccans, Roman Catholicism, Harry Potter, astrology, and many other issues and concerns examined by PFO, which Brown and Yoder also "attack."

Second, if Brown and Yoder are aligning themselves with those named on their "PFO Attack List," then they are coming to the defense of the likes of Oneness Pentecostals, documented false prophets, legalists, and men and women who promulgate all sorts of aberrant and heretical theologies under the guise of "revelation knowledge." It is a dangerous undertaking by which Brown and Yoder only further establish how much they dishonor the Word of God.

Moreover, PFO does not "declare that ALL testimonies are false," as Brown and Yoder say. PFO has never stated anything that even remotely suggests such a position.

However, Brown and Yoder's April 2002 newsletter does prove why Christian publishers should guard against publishing dramatic testimonials: The couple persist in retelling stories that are wholly fabricated. An example is a purported testimony of a survivor of the World Trade Center attack of Sept. 11, 2001.

The newsletter says, "One sister worked on the 105th floor of one of the World Trade Center buildings. This was the floor the jet crashed into. When the jet hit, she was thrown out of her seat across the room behind a door. This saved her from being set on fire. When she collected her wits from the shock of being thrown, she realized that she was in the doorway to a stairwell. Jesus appeared to her and instructed her to follow Him out of the building. He led her all the way down 105 stories to safety. She got out of the building unhurt." If one considers the details from that day, a concise sampling alone renders the testimony published in the *Harvest Warriors Newsletter* as fiction.

The first of two hijacked Boeing 767 jets struck the North Tower between the 93rd and 98th floors, instantly killing scores of people on those floors and in the airplane. The impact of the aircraft — most notably its steel engines — damaged the inner support columns and three stairwells located in the building's core. The jet's fuel instantly ignited a fire which quickly consumed the stricken area. When the core of the North Tower was struck, its three emergency exits (or stairwells) were destroyed. The 950 people above the impact zone were trapped with no way out of the building. They were unable to get past the crash area because the sheetrock (or drywall) used to protect the stairwells had been demolished, leaving the stairwell exits in flames, and impassable.

Several minutes later, the second Boeing 767 jet hit the South Tower, crashing between the 78th and 84th floors. This time the aircraft pierced the building at an angle to the right and did not squarely hit the core as did the plane that struck the North Tower. Only two of the three stairwells were destroyed. Five hundred people were trapped above the impact zone, and only 18 were able to escape through the remaining stairwell exit.

Like their own personal testimonies, Brown and Yoder continue to feign preposterous tales that are far removed from reality or fact. Once again, even basic and fundamental details (such as what floor the aircraft crashed into) contradict the historical documented information.

The couple contends that PFO "practices just about every one" of the seven abominations to God listed in Proverbs 6:16-19. Perhaps Brown and Yoder should take a serious review of these abominations and see how many apply to their own lives and ministry.

Despite Brown and Yoder's deceitful campaign, the members of PFO stand by the organization's long and fruitful ministry of testing everything, holding on to the good. PFO will firmly hold to the Word of God over experience and persist in meticulously documenting what it writes and publishes. It also will continue to attend to those who are emotionally and spiritually damaged by the likes of self-assuming false teachers and false prophets such as Brown and Yoder.

— MKG

---

## NEWS UPDATES

(continued from page 3)

changed. Last spring, Falwell and Hagee headlined a religious meeting for the Horizon Foundation in Cape Girardeau, Mo. A few months later, Hagee was the evening keynote speaker for Falwell's "Old Fashioned Fourth of July" held at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va.

The 1994 *Flame* article described Hagee's immorality with a young woman in his congregation and subsequent divorce of his first wife, Martha. The newspaper also disclosed that Hagee resigned from his San Antonio church, immediately accepted another pastorate in the same city, and, just eight months after his divorce, married the woman with whom he had engaged in adultery. Hagee also was criticized in the article for holding a "dual-covenant" theology — the teaching that Jews do not have to accept Christ to be saved. Hagee, however, says he does not publicly teach such a doctrine.

Because Falwell's newspaper once had labeled Hagee a heretic, *The Washington Times* considered this recent alliance strange. The newspaper tried to contact both

men, asking for an explanation. Joanne Coffey, an assistant to Hagee, told the *Times* that Falwell's stern criticism of Hagee was "water under the bridge" for both men. "The beauty of being a Christian is you learn how to forgive and forget and carry forward," Coffey said.

Falwell did not immediately return a call to the Washington newspaper's inquiry.

—MKG

## PEARSON'S INCLUSIONISM PROMPTS HIS EXILE

As a rule, Pentecostals and Charismatics possess a high threshold of doctrinal tolerance. However, the transition into a gospel of inclusion by the Rev. Carlton D. Pearson has cost him congregation, colleagues, and a bid to become his city's mayor. The prominent Pentecostal bishop pastors the Higher Dimensions Family Church in Tulsa, Okla.

Pearson believes that man's salvation comes solely through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, he teaches that this salvation is imparted to man apart from repentance and faith in Christ. All sincere people, including Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and others who do not trust Christ as Savior, will be saved, Pearson maintains.

"All will be saved, with the exception of a few. ... Most people on planet Earth will go to heaven, because of Calvary, because of the unconditional love of God and the redemptive work of the cross, which is already accomplished," Pearson told the Associated Press. He further teaches that hell is for those few who "deny in their hearts that there is a creator" and "who have a disrespect for the deity." He also told *Charisma* magazine that "Scripture clearly shows that the 'vast multitudes' will be in Heaven." Pearson "claims that inclusionism was the predominant thought during the first 500 years of the Christian church, until Augustine introduced the concept of hell with fire and demons from Africa," the magazine's news service reported.

Pearson says his move into the arena of universalism started over 25 years ago after reading the works of E.W. Kenyon. Eight years ago, he returned to study the doctrine and four years ago he began to publicly teach it. He argues, "A careful study of what I have taught will reveal that it is entirely scriptural, logical and theologically sound." Apparently, his staff members and congregation disagreed. Congregation members left in masses and four assistant pastors started churches elsewhere.

In addition, Pearson has come under fire from his Pentecostal colleagues, including his "mentor," Oral Roberts. Pearson has resigned from the board of Oral Roberts University and Roberts has barred Pearson from holding his annual Azusa Conference at ORU. Yet, while Pearson's inclusionism may distance him from his former

allies, it is gaining him new friends. "The pastor said he is befriending Hindus, Muslims and those of other faiths who see a difference in him because of his loving acceptance. A Hindu now underwrites Pearson's radio program," *Charisma* reported.

Pearson also told the magazine, "My Hindu friend wasn't sure he wanted to become a Christian because he and his family had been Hindu for generations and he didn't want to believe that his father — a good, devoted Hindu — was in hell, ... I said: 'I think your father is in heaven; don't you think so? Your dad is as reconciled to God as I am, according to the Scriptures.'"

Pearson alleges that not all of his Pentecostal associates are expressing concern. Last March, according to *Charisma*, "Pearson noted that fellow black preachers, including Charles Blake, G.E. Patterson and T.D. Jakes, are familiar to some extent with inclusionism. These are my friends. ... They're not bothered by this." However, Patterson, Presiding Bishop, and Blake, First Assistant Presiding Bishop of the Church of God in Christ, have denounced Pearson's assertion. In a published statement, Patterson and Blake declared, "As leaders of our nation's largest Pentecostal body, we are appalled that Bishop Pearson would so casually and carelessly associate us with a body of teachings which neither we nor our denomination supports. We feel that Bishop Pearson was presumptuous and irresponsible in assuming that we were 'familiar to some extent' with, and that we are 'not bothered by,' his teachings."

In February 2002, Pearson lost a primary election and his bid to become the Republican candidate for Tulsa's mayor. He believed his defeat was, in part, as a result of local churches denouncing his doctrine of inclusionism.

—MKG

## WARNKE FIRES BACK

Christian entertainer Mike Warnke has returned to national attention with *Friendly Fire*, his first publication since being exposed as a fraud over a decade ago. Warnke, in his best-selling book, *The Satan Seller*, spun a chronicle of alleged satanic and occult involvement prior to his conversion to Christianity. In 1992, *Cornerstone* magazine published a meticulous report which demonstrated that Warnke's sensational testimony was a complete fabrication. The magazine later amplified its article into a formidable book called *Selling Satan*. During the years following the *Cornerstone* exposé, Warnke's Christian celebrity status diminished greatly.

Now Warnke's back. But apparently he's not suggesting that true confession is good for the soul. Neither is he prepared to admit that he invented a purely fictional account of his life and Christian conversion. Rather just the opposite. Warnke writes in his new book, "Were the media reports true? Was I a fake, a charlatan, a deceiver,

and a liar? No. I *never* lied about my testimony and I *never* ran a fake ministry."

Warnke's make-believe world continues to this day as he writes that "many people are still amazed when I share with them about my past involvement with satanism, the occult, and drugs." However, while he stands by his "original testimony as to former satanic involvement," he does own up to "some exaggerations and embellishments in [his] story that were due to old and perhaps faulty memories as well as deliberate attempts to 'protect the innocent.'"

Yet, Warnke digs in even deeper, showing no remorse. "I've got news for you. We don't owe anybody an explanation for who we are, where we go, what we do, or how we look. I don't owe you an explanation and you don't owe me an explanation. As believers the only thing we owe each other is our love," Warnke writes.

Although Warnke refuses to admit that he contrived and merchandised a fraudulent testimony, he does concede to faults that he suggests contributed to the demise of his ministry. Warnke says his "sense of ministry got lost in the swirl of professionalism" and he "became career oriented instead of calling motivated." However, his ministry was not through, "The Lord did not let me off the hook that easily," Warnke says.

Warnke's book is labeled as a "survival guide for believers battered by the religious among us." Throughout the volume, Warnke offers a parade of mysticism and subjectivism. For those, like Warnke, who may be

struggling with burn-out or disillusionment, he advises, "So, my counsel to you is *follow the peace*. That may sound ethereal or abstract, but it is the only reliable gauge I know." Warnke's comments show the dangerous terrain of one steeped in a subjective world. To disparage the objective written Word of God by stating that *peace* "is the only reliable gauge I know," is a dreadful confession. He further maintains that "We receive God's Word in two ways: through the Bible and through personal revelation."

It is alarming to realize that Warnke claims to offer "encouragement and hope" to battered souls through such mystical and unreliable means. Elsewhere in the book, Warnke serves up a helping of self-esteem. He quotes the prayer of a "14th-century Italian mystic" who exulted, "Dear Lord, it seems that you are so madly in love with your creatures that you could not live without us."

Throughout the book, Warnke apparently does not want his readers to forget that he was the "number-one Christian comedian in America." He repeatedly reminds his audience of his former "number-one" status in the entertainment field.

*Friendly Fire* is published by Treasure House, an imprint of Destiny Image Publishers, the firm known for its publication of advocates of modern day revival phenomenon, including John Kilpatrick, Stephen Hill, Randy Clark, and others.

—MKG

## PERSONAL FREEDOM OUTREACH — STATEMENT OF BELIEF

- I. THE BIBLE AS THE DIVINELY INSPIRED, INERRANT WORD OF GOD: IT IS IN ITS ENTIRETY THE SOLE AUTHORITY FOR ALL MATTERS OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF AND PRACTICE.
- II. THE ONE TRUE GOD. IN THE ONE TRUE GOD THERE EXIST THREE PERSONS, BEING: THE FATHER, THE SON JESUS CHRIST, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.
- III. JESUS CHRIST: HIS DEITY, HUMANITY, VIRGIN BIRTH, SINLESSNESS, DEATH AND BODILY RESURRECTION; WHO WILL PERSONALLY AND VISIBLY RETURN AGAIN TO EARTH.
- IV. THE PERSONALITY AND DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
- V. THE EXISTENCE AND PERSONALITY OF SATAN, HIS TOTAL OPPOSITION TO GOD, AND HIS POWER OVER THE UNREGENERATE.
- VI. THE COMPLETE AND TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF ALL MEN WHICH MAKES THEM HOPELESSLY LOST WITHOUT THE NEW BIRTH OBTAINABLE THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.
- VII. THE FINAL ESTATE OF MAN: FOR THE SAVED, EVERLASTING LIFE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD AND FOR THE UNSAVED, EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT BECAUSE OF THEIR UNBELIEF.
- VIII. THE GOSPEL BY WHICH WE ARE SAVED BEING SUMMED IN THE DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.
- IX. THE CHURCH BEING THE BODY OF CHRIST, UNITED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, CONSISTING OF THOSE WHO HAVE RECEIVED JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOR. A LOCAL CHURCH IS AN ORGANIZED ASSEMBLY OF BELIEVERS UNITED FOR THE PURPOSE OF CARRYING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST.
- X. THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST BEING TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO ALL MEN, BAPTIZING AND DISCIPLING THOSE WHO HAVE BELIEVED.



# Books in Review

## REASONING FROM THE SCRIPTURES WITH MUSLIMS

by Ron Rhodes

Harvest House, 342 pages, \$12.99

Ron Rhodes has added to his practical “reasoning” series. His newest is *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims*. The other four groups previously published in the series are Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, Catholics, and Masons.

There has been phenomenal growth in Islam around the world. Currently, it ranks behind only Christianity in the number of adherents.

Rhodes has done his homework to teach us to effectively witness to Muslims and to warn others of its false message. It is written in understandable terms to teach a topic with thought-provoking follow-up questions. Topics include the history of Muslims; their religion’s founder, Muhammad; their holy book, the *Quran*; their God, Allah; and the Muslim view of the afterlife. Also included is a comparison of Islamic and Christian doctrines. As one expects, this book is replete with Scripture references. Rhodes regularly reminds his readers to be loving, humble, sensitive, tactful, and cautious when sharing their faith with those of the Muslim religion.

Various indexes at the end of the book make for easy information retrieval. Indexes include subjects, Bible quotations, and Quranic quotations. Endnotes provide thorough documentation.

It is our Christian duty to be prepared to tell others about the true Gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:15). In view of our nation’s recent history of terrorist attacks, we are even more so reminded of this obligation to be ready to defend our faith to our Muslim friends and anyone who may ask. This work is an excellent resource to help us in that effort.

—AMG

## CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

by Norman L. Geisler

Prince Press, 393 pages, \$19.95

This work, first published in 1976 by Baker Book House, has received an encore printing thanks to Prince Press (an imprint of Hendrickson Publishers). Nearly three decades later, the volume’s contents are just as relevant as when it was first published. The current edition is a hardback binding, giving it the durability a work of this nature and caliber warrants.

Geisler’s treatise on apologetics is divided into three main and nearly equally sized divisions: methodology, theistic apologetics, and Christian apologetics. Each of these principal segments subdivide into the chapters offering a thorough and resolute argument for the Christian faith.

In the first part, Geisler examines such philosophical systems as agnosticism (no knowledge or skepticism of God), fideism (faith apart from reason), and pragmatism (faith based upon practical results). He wraps up this section presenting the basis for “formulating adequate tests for truth.” In part two, he surveys prominent theistic world views, including deism (a God who creates, but does not exercise control over His creation), pantheism (no separation between Creator and creation, God is the creation), and atheism (there is no God). In part three, Geisler argues for the distinctive and vital claims of the Christian faith, including the inspiration and authority of the Bible, the historical reliability of the New Testament, and the deity and authority of Jesus Christ.

The book’s only shortcoming is that the references for “select readings” for each of the chapters and the bibliography (found at the book’s end) all predate the original 1976 edition. It would have been beneficial to modernize these recommendations to current and available publications. While some of the older works cited make up the mainstay of the philosophical systems surveyed and are essential, other volumes designated for further reading may well be out-of-print and unattainable. Prince Press, as well, should have updated Geisler’s antiquated biography on the back cover of the book.

Despite these minor flaws, *Christian Apologetics* is a valuable resource, both for reading and reference.

—MKG

**Editor’s Note:** The publications featured in PFO’s *Books in Review* section are available from **Personal Freedom Outreach** (P.O. Box 26062, Saint Louis, Missouri 63136). Please add \$2.00 to the price listed for shipping and handling. Due to occasional price changes by the publishers, the retail amounts listed are subject to change without notice. These publications are also available to those who help to financially support the work of PFO. Please see our funds appeal flyer for details.