

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.