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SPOILED? WHO'S SPOILED? - PART 3 - By Buddy Smith

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"Lawless Lawmen"



"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

Colossians 2:8

The churches of the Lord Jesus Christ are being spoiled by Philosophy, by Vain Deceit, by the Tradition of Men, and by the Rudiments of the World.

Simply put, we are being ripped off.

When the apostle Paul knew that he would not be returning to Ephesus he called the elders to Miletus and offered a last word of counsel to them.

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased

Heads Up!

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not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.
" Acts 20:28-32

Three facts commend themselves to our attention in this text:

Grievous wolves attack churches, not sparing the flock. These are the men Jude warns us of. "Certain men are crept in unawares..." Wolves in sheep's clothing, coming in under pretence to devour the flock. False teachers bringing in their heresies, sowing lies about God.

Some leaders in churches arise to gather disciples to themselves and lead them astray. These are men who desire position and promotion and profit and pre-eminence, like Diotrephes. They gather their own disciples to form a clique in the church, and then a voting bloc that will promote their leader's agenda and doctrines. And before long there is a split in the church.

Missionaries and pastors are to teach the whole counsel of God to protect the church from those who spoil her. Paul demonstrated three sound approaches to shepherding God's flock. He taught them sound doctrine when he was with them. He wrote them and reminded them of the things they had learned. And he visited them and warned them against being spoiled by the Enemy of the churches.

A question - How is it that churches are ravaged by wolves, or by leaders drawing away disciples from the apostles' doctrine?

The witness of history is that it is by false teaching being permitted to enter. Once in a while a church is damaged or destroyed by persecution, by immorality, or by thievery, but not often. The great majority were spoiled by the weapons identified by the Holy Spirit in Col. 2:8, philosophy, vain deceit, traditions of men, and rudiments of the world.

In the last issue of Heads Up we considered the first weapon, **the philosophy of pragmatism**. Of all the philosophies used by the enemy during the past hundred years, pragmatism has been most successful at spoiling the churches. Pragmatism focuses on results, on size and on the numerical growth of a church or ministry, all the while robbing the churches of God's blessings. Someone summed up pragmatism in the words, "Big is good!" It is a philosophy that ignores the Bible facts that only 8 souls were saved on the ark, that Gideon defeated the Midianites with 300 dedicated men, not 32,000, that Jeremiah had only two friends who stood by him, Baruch and Ebed-Melech, that Jesus called the members of the first church "little flock" (not "megachurch"). For several thousand years the battle cry of God's people has been that of Jonathan, " **And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few.**" 1 Samuel 14:6

But Pragmatism changes all that!

God has never been greatly concerned about the size of the flock, but the quality!

PSALM 119:41- 56

⁴¹ VAU. *Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, even thy salvation, according to thy word.*

⁴² *So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.*

⁴³ *And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.*

⁴⁴ *So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.*

⁴⁵ *And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts.*

⁴⁶ *I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.*

⁴⁷ *And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.*

⁴⁸ *My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.*

⁴⁹ ZAIN. *Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.*

⁵⁰ *This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.*

⁵¹ *The proud have had me greatly in derision: yet have I not declined from thy law.*

⁵² *I remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself.*

⁵³ *Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.*

⁵⁴ *Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.*

⁵⁵ *I have remembered thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept thy law.*

⁵⁶ *This I had, because I kept thy precepts.*

Pragmatism, with all its desire to make a good showing in order to impress others, includes the fear of man. We pastors do not easily admit it, but we fear to see the numbers decline at church, and we tend to be puffed up when we see the numbers increase. Why? Because we think that we are successful or unsuccessful according to the size of the crowd (or the building, or the offering, or the response to the invitation, or our mailing list.) Somehow, we were not taught in Bible college that **SUCCESS IS SIMPLY DOING WHAT GOD COMMANDS, NO MATTER WHAT THE RESULTS!**

SUCCESS IS OBEDIENCE TO GOD!

There are many philosophies that spoil the churches. In addition to pragmatism there is **Intellectualism**.

SO WHAT IS INTELLECTUALISM?

- It is not "knowing how to read and write or graduating from a course of study."
- It is not "owning a library of books, or even writing books."
- It is not "being well read or keeping informed as to what is happening around us."
- It is not "a love of learning."

A man can do all of those and not be spoiled by Intellectualism. A man can even earn a degree or a bunch of them and not be spoiled by Intellectualism. Most of us know pastors who have doctor's degrees and never mention it.

BUT

- It is "the placing of excessive value on the intellect, or believing that the intellect is superior to the will."
- It is "the doctrine often called "rationalism", which is the view that knowledge largely or wholly is derived from reason or reasoning."
- It is often "the idea that virtue is a purely intellectual matter. If you know enough you will be of good character."
- Intellectuals often mistakenly suppose that men do wrong because they are not well enough educated, or that their intellect is not well enough trained.

THE ROOTS OF INTELLECTUALISM -

Many historians see the Greek philosophers as being the founders of Intellectualism. Socrates, who lived from 469–399 BC, taught that intellectualism is the view that "one will do what is right or best just as soon as one truly understands what is right or best"; that virtue is a purely intellectual matter. This became a key doctrine of Stoicism.

We who know Christ and read our Bibles see the beginnings of Intellectualism in the Garden. When the Serpent tempted Eve and "educated" her to believe that the Lie he told had equipped her to change her values and act independently of God, he brought into the world a proto-Intellectualism. Remember Socrates' statement, "one will do what is right or best just as soon as one truly understands what is right or best." ? The Lie told to Eve deceived her into believing that she (and Adam) would greatly benefit from eating the forbidden fruit. Knowledge (even knowledge of a lie) made it right, in Eve's thinking, to eat the fruit.

We also know from the Scriptures that the heart of man is irrevocably sinful. No amount of education can change the skin of the Ethiopian or a leopard's spots or the sinful heart of a man. Only God can change us through the new birth and give us a new heart.

THE PREVALENCE OF INTELLECTUALISM IN OUR SOCIETY

Secular education, at least since the time of John Dewey, has worked hammer and tong to indoctrinate society with the premise that all of mankind's problems will be solved if they are just educated to a high enough degree. We see this emphasis in every area of life now. Have drug dealers taken over your neighbourhood? Then you need to do a course. Are there stray dogs digging up your flower beds? Well, take them to obedience school (and you will be pleased to hear that there is an anger management course you can do while your pooch is doing his doggy manners course!) Ingrown toenails? There's a course for it. Education of the masses is big business nowadays. And we, the uninformed suppose that it is all in a good cause. Maybe some of it is. And of course, we rejoice over Christian education that is done from a biblical worldview. BUT SECULAR EDUCATION IS NOT, AND HAS ONLY MADE THE SITUATION WORSE! Secular education has another agenda. It is, if not atheistic, at least non-theistic. It does not believe that virtue, or moral excellence comes from God through salvation that is in Christ.

HOW DID INTELLECTUALISM EVER GET INTO OUR CHURCHES?

How did this deadening influence of Christless education ever get a foothold in Bible believing churches? Intellectualism began to creep into the churches through the Renaissance. We were taught in school what a blessing the Renaissance was when the Dark Ages, imposed on the world by Roman Catholicism, came to an end. All that is true, but what is not commonly known is how much of Greek philosophy was brought in with the Renaissance, including Socrates

and his philosophy of Intellectualism. If this is news to you, go and research the origins of German Rationalism. You will find that it arose from the Greek humanism that permeated most of the Renaissance's teachings and methods. The elevation of Intellectualism to the place it now holds began (for us, at least) in the Renaissance. And so over the next 500 years secular, godless, man-centred education came to have a stronger and stronger grip on the minds of men, Christians and non-Christians alike. We are now at the point in churches where John Bunyan and Charles Spurgeon and William Carey would be banned from our pulpits. Why? Because they had no formal education for the ministry. And remember, if you do not have the knowledge you do not have the virtue needed to be a pastor, or so Intellectualism teaches.

SO WHAT HAS INTELLECTUALISM BROUGHT INTO OUR CHURCHES? -

THERE ARE MOVEMENTS IT HAS BROUGHT IN -

It has brought in the accommodation of *evolutionary theories*. It is interesting that both Baylor and Wheaton colleges now have evolutionary professors. As they have drifted farther and farther away from the simplicity that is in Christ and from faith in the Holy Scriptures they have absorbed more and more of Darwin's theories.

Calvinism has gained a toehold in many churches since it began to be taught in Bible colleges all over the world. Bob Jones University now has a reputation of teaching the errors of Augustine, and it appears from personal observation that the rumours have a basis in fact. How prevalent is Calvinism? Of the 6 churches I have pastored 4 of them have been battered by TULIP (the five points of Calvinism.) Some of them have recovered, one was destroyed, and several damaged beyond recovery. How did it happen? Through Intellectualism. Young men in Bible colleges were exposed to sophisticated myths from Geneva. Their minds and hearts were soon overwhelmed by clever errors too complex to refute so they surrendered.

The *theories of Westcott and Hort* are generally accepted in churches everywhere now so that our people are taught that the KJV is no longer trustworthy. I was surprised to find that men I respected had no interest in knowing where WH learned their principles of modern textual criticism. When I told them that WH got all their theories from German Rationalists, they smilingly nodded and kept on following the crowd. After all, that's what Intellectualism had taught them in college. And you can't desert the big I, can you?

The *amillennial view of prophecy* is one of the offspring of Intellectualism. A simple faith approach to the

prophecies of Scripture would not do. The young pastor must learn to allegorise with the best. He must learn to mix the church with Israel. One of the saddest things we have seen is good sound pastors becoming discontented with the simplicity of the Bible and following reformed or Puritan writers all the way into amillennialism. Wally Jackel used to say, "A first generation amillennialist is a second generation modernist." Think about that for a week or two and you will see that the allegorical approach to prophecy will soon spread its tentacles and smother the simple gospel of Christ.

Intellectualism demands that every pastor be *a Hebrew and Greek expert*. As much as we appreciate those godly men who have a working knowledge of the original languages and use them in faith, not to attack the Bible, but to preach it believably with power, we find NO verse that command us to be Bible linguists. R. B. Thieme used to say that, if a man did not have degrees in Hebrew and Greek, he should not be in the ministry. How foolish! God has been using the simple, unadorned preaching of His Word for millennia before RBT came up with that foolishness.

THERE ARE CERTAIN UN-CHRISTIAN ATTITUDES IT HAS BROUGHT IN -

Pride - One of my dear brothers in the Lord was told by his very intellectual pastor that there were some things the brother would not be able to understand since he was just a Cessna pilot and the pastor was a Jumbo pilot. Framed degrees hanging in the pastor's study do not a wise man make, or even necessarily a scholarly man. The Cessna/Jumbo comparison is typical of the arrogance that grows from Intellectualism. It is like the rubber vine that smothers the grass and trees as it grows.

"My intellect was my greatest vanity." — Dan Simmons, *The Fall of Hyperion*

Intolerance - Peter and John would not be welcome at many pastor's fellowship meetings. You see, they were ignorant and unlearned men. Their grammar and syntax would be imperfect, and they carried no erudite sermon outlines on iPads to the synagogues where they preached Christ. The three piece suits were apparel they did not know, and they held no membership cards in the Fellowship.

Skepticism - The most common offspring of Intellectualism is the criticism of God's Word. To the intellectual the Bible is malleable, mutable, but not marvelous! There is an aloofness toward the Holy Scriptures among most of the highly trained reverends. I asked a Presbyterian minister once how his denomination ever went into modernism and skepticism, if they

believed Sola Scriptura, etc. His reply surprised me, "Too much education!" What he meant, he explained, was that their learning came not from the Bible, but from critics and modernists. They learned to doubt what they should have learned to believe.

Spiritual Blindness - George Orwell once commented, "There are some ideas so absurd that only an intellectual could believe them." Darwinism is an example. There are enough holes in Darwin's theories to fly an Airbus 380 through, but those who defend them are blind and cannot see them. You would be surprised how many intellectual pastors preach what Darwin or Marx or Hegel or Hume preached, and how few preach what Christ preached. Why? Because of their spiritual blindness.

"Absurdity is the ecstasy of intellectualism." — Criss Jami, *Salomé: In Every Inch In Every Mile*

WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT INTELLECTUALISM?

Isaiah 55:8-9 *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."*

Daniel 1:8 *"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself."*

Daniel 1:18-20 *"Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm."*

2 Corinthians 11:3-4 *"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye*

have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him."

1 Corinthians 2:1-2 *"And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."*

1 Corinthians 1:17-21 *"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."*

THE BLESSINGS OF SIMPLICITY -

Forty years ago, one of the new converts in our church came to me and said, "Pastor, I just read in the newspaper that a man crossed a dog with a cat and it had a baby, but he doesn't know what to call it, whether to call it a "cog" or a "dat." I said, "Rob, it is either a dog or a cat. You can't cross a dog with a cat. He's pulling the reporter's leg." He said, "Why do you say that?" "Because God created all creatures to bear offspring after their kind. Dogs have pups and cats have kittens. And they don't mix. You watch, tomorrow's paper will have a retraction of the story." He went away shaking his head. Sure enough, he was back the next day and he said, "You were right. It was a dog that looked a bit like a cat, and he was lying."

Intellectualism tends to be gullible, but faith in God's word is born with its eyes open.

Don't let Intellectualism rob you of a simple faith in the word of God.

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The following is the testimony of Merlyn Ralph written two months after the death of her son by lightning.

AN ACT OF GOD

February 8th dawned as a beautiful, sunny day of promise. I thought of David's words, *"This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it."*

And I was glad in it.

Breakfast over, I said goodbye to my husband, Ronnie and my two sons, Wayne 13 and Ryan 12, with a kiss and the words, "Have a lovely day". Little did I know that Ryan would never come home again, but rather that he had a date to keep with his Saviour. That afternoon I had a women's Bible study at a friend's house in Robertsham. We spoke about suffering.

One of the ladies, Jackie, told us how she had "discovered" [Philippians 1:29](#). *"For to you has been given the privilege not only of trusting Christ, but also of suffering for him."*

Jackie knows what it means to suffer – so does another of the group, Heather. Only a week before, Heather's son Sean, was shot in the head by a pellet gun. By God's grace alone the pellet entered between the eye and the bridge of the nose, missing the optic nerve by a fraction, and coming to rest just short of the brain. It is still there, but harmless. A miracle. Somehow each of the ladies at the Bible study was bearing a burden, except me. I mentioned this to them. Sure, I had little problems, but I had never really suffered.

As we prayed for each other and prepared to leave, the wind came up and there was a tremendous crack of lightning that started everyone. Had I ears to hear, perhaps I would have heard the voice of Jesus saying, "Ryan, come home". Perhaps I would have seen an angel flying swiftly to the cricket field at Forest Hill Primary School, swoop down and scoop my beautiful boy into his arms, turn and speed back through space, and present his bewildered charge to his Heavenly Father. But I knew nothing of this as I travelled home. No hint even as I passed an ambulance with its siren going. As I always do, I sent a quick prayer up for the patient, little knowing that it was carrying the body of my son.



4:30 PM ~ Home preparing dinner. Ron arrived home in a friend's car. "Something's up", I thought. When I said, "Hi love", he didn't answer. He

DEACON TRUE SEZ



It's amazing what a full dose of salvation will do for a man. I read t'other day about a young feller who went to the Sunday School superintendent and asked if he could teach a class. He'd only just gotten saved and wanted to go straight to work for the Lord. The superintendent told him they had an empty classroom, but no kids to fill it. The volunteer told him he'd go find some and he did. In fact, he found so many that he filled the classroom till it was the biggest class in the Sunday School. I reckon he'd already got hold of an important truth about being saved, and that is, "There are spectators and there are participants, and its only the participants that ever do anything for the Lord. The spectators just sit around and watch." Oh, that young man's name? D. L. Moody

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could not. How do you tell your wife that your child is dead? No hysterics. Tears flowed, but no hysterics. Then I said something which was strange to me. I kept on saying, "Praise God. Thank you, Jesus".

You see, in that instant I understood. So many things had happened in the previous weeks, but now the jigsaw fell into place. It was as though God Himself was in that room with us. He took a cloak and put it on me, and IT FITTED PERFECTLY. In the midst of my pain and shock, I knew it was right, perfectly, wonderfully right. So my spirit could rejoice and praise God.

Make no mistake; Christianity is not an anaesthetic. We felt the crushing grief and pain that is physical. For weeks my heart felt as though it was being torn in half. If I had not known Jesus as my personal Saviour I don't know how I could have gone through this. But he was alongside me all the time. He put His wonderful arms around me and wept with me. The pain is still there, but then so is Jesus.

I clearly recall what happened about two weeks before Ryan died. One morning I went into the boy's room and sat on one of the beds and chatted to them. Ryan told Wayne and me that he had dreamed of Jesus. This is what he told us: "Mom, I saw Jesus last night, twice. He was sitting at the end of my bed and He was calling me. I didn't hear him but He beckoned me. I sat up in my bed and looked at Jesus. He had short hair and His lips were moving. I fell asleep but woke up again and sat up. This time He was sitting by the dressing table. He spoke to me but I didn't hear the words though I knew He was calling me."

At the time I was not convinced that it was Jesus he had seen, although Ryan had no doubt that it was. I remembered the injunction in Scripture to "test the spirits, whether they are of God". I told Ryan that if it occurred again to ask this person in whose name he came.

About a week later Ryan came into the kitchen while I was cooking dinner and said, "I'm going home soon Mom". I asked, "What do you mean? To heaven?" "Yes", he said, and walked out.

A few days later, he closeted himself in the garage and made me a little wooden "surprise". He had been taught at school how to use a fretsaw and was very proud of his newly learned skill. He had shaped a piece of wood and sanded it. He was so happy as he told me to close my eyes and hold out my hands. As I looked at it I remembered his words, "I'm going home soon, mom", so I asked him to write something on it for me. He wrote: "To Mom – from Ryan. 30th January 1978"

I will always treasure this little piece of wood.

I find it so strange that I never really took Ryan seriously. I should have. There were so many pointers. God seemed to be telling me, preparing me in so many ways for what was to come. It was almost as if there was a count-down starting two weeks before his death. But even long before that God began to prepare me. T

Three years ago, Ryan got desperately ill while on holiday in the Eastern Transvaal. A few days before Christmas, he was admitted to the Sabie hospital. Ronnie had to take someone we had with us back to Johannesburg and I had to remain alone in Sabie with Ryan. It was a time of real testing for me. It seemed as though God wanted me alone. There was something He wanted sorted out, and that was my hold on my family. I loved them possessively and held onto them tightly.

I learned to a slight degree what Abraham must have felt when God told him to offer up Isaac, because that is what He did to me. There was a strong possibility that Ryan would die and I knew it. There in my hotel room, on my knees I surrendered Ryan to God to do with as He saw fit, even if it meant death. And while I was at it I let go of Ronnie and Wayne as well.

That was the most difficult thing I have ever done. But what a relief. They were now God's responsibility, not mine. He was to keep them, protect them and guide them. Now I could relax and enjoy my family without panicking every time they were out of my sight. Ryan recovered without the doctors ever finding out what was wrong with him. I know that he was healed by God because he had not yet completed his task here on earth.

Two months before Ryan's death, while at a Bible study, I had a very strong feeling that something was going to happen to me. I told the ladies and asked them to pray for protection for me, which they did. I drove home very carefully, thinking that it might be a car accident. Nothing happened and the feeling passed.

During the two weeks prior to Ryan's death I found myself getting very anxious every time he went out on his bike, and I would pray earnestly until he got back. Although I never consciously thought about Ryan's dream and what he said about going home, subconsciously I was troubled. Ronnie experienced the same feeling.

During this time my walk with the Lord deepened to an extent that I have not experienced before nor since. Again and again I was challenged on my commitment to Him, and my willingness to suffer for His sake. Time and time again my daily Bible reading would say things like

"Are you willing to be poured out like water for My sake" – "Are you willing to lose everything for Me?" and everyday I would say "Yes Lord, no matter what the cost". I know I could never have said and meant these words if it were not for the indwelling Holy Spirit and the communion I had with my Father at the time. The words weren't wrung from me, they poured forth from a heart filled with the love of Jesus, a love which He put there in the first place.

The day before Ryan's death I told Ronnie that I could not see how Ryan would cope at high school the next year. He just didn't seem to have the ability to grasp the work at school. I felt very discouraged as I looked into the years ahead because all I could see for him was frustration and hardship in a very demanding world. I felt so desperately sorry for him. Ron's words to me were prophetic. "Merlyn, don't worry, God has a plan for Ryan's life."

After dinner that night we had our usual time of Bible reading and prayer. Wayne chose Proverbs 27:1 which says "Don't boast about your plans for tomorrow, because you don't know what tomorrow will bring." To illustrate this reading I told the boys of a Christian child who was struck by lightning at Living Waters, a Christian camp, some years ago. Ryan asked if God had sent the lightning, and I replied that He had. I explained that Bible says that God directs the path of lightning. I know that God put these words in my mouth, for that is exactly how Ryan died the next day. He was struck while playing cricket.

An accident? Never! An act of God? Definitely!

Forest Hill Primary School is in a valley surrounded by buildings and tall trees, and yet the bolt struck Ryan. Why him? Why not any of the others? Because God wanted Ryan. It's as simple as that. There was a purpose and there continues to be one. I kept a record of all that God was doing through Ryan's death.

Between 8th February 1978 and March (one month later) sixty four people had committed their lives to Jesus. About fifty of these were pupils at Ryan's school, Regents Park Primary in Johannesburg, where Ronnie was vice principal. Ronnie came into a new experience of the Lord at this time and He gave him boldness to witness as he had not done before, and many were saved. All the Christian teachers at the school had a full time job counselling the children that came to them. Two teachers were saved as well.

It was a time of great blessing and we give all the glory to Him. Ryan and Wayne gave their hearts to the Lord when they were only about five years old. I praise God that as

little boys they knew and loved Jesus, talked about Him often, and trusted Him to hear their prayers.

We have experienced God's grace in an amazing way. For instance when Ryan was struck, Ronnie ran to where he was lying, gave him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and heart massage' but when he realised that Ryan was dead he committed him to God's keeping. He then left Ryan and went to assist the other teacher and children who had been stunned by the strike.

I am convinced that this act would have been impossible apart from God's strength. We are very grateful to God for sending one of the parents, Jimmy Day, to the school at the time to assist Ronnie. Jimmy later told us that he had had an irresistible urge to go and look for his son who was playing cricket in Ronnie's team, although he never knew where they were playing. Even as the Lord led him to the school, he kept telling himself that he was being stupid as it was beginning to rain and the boys were probably home already. But he kept going and arrived at the school just after the lightning had struck. His help was truly appreciated by Ronnie and the cricket boys, who were still shocked by what had happened.

Our pastor, Rev. Paul Jones was on the border as an army chaplain at this time. God opened doors wonderfully and within 24 hours there was Paul' on our doorstep. Were we glad to see him! He conducted Ryan's memorial service the following Saturday, a service in which we were able to rejoice and praise God. Paul challenged us all on our responsibility as parents regarding the spiritual welfare of our children. He said that if we failed to provide for them spiritually, we had failed as parents. Many parents went home that day with a lot to think about, and some witnessed to their children and led them to Christ.

Ronnie, Wayne and I are so grateful to the Lord for upholding us during those days. He pours his strength into us in a wonderful way. From what others have said I gather that they think we are refusing to weep. This just isn't so. God gives tears for a good reason and in private we shed many. There is healing in crying; as there is in talking about the dead and squarely facing the grief and loss. Love! We were overwhelmed by the abundance of love we received from all who knew us and many who didn't. We were deeply touched by the kindness of our church family who fed us, and cared for us. Some were offended by my testimony at the memorial service. If ever we wondered whether Christianity was all that the Bible says it is, now was the time to put it to the test. We proved without a shadow of a doubt that it is. Jesus comforted, loved, strengthened and sustained us, and we experienced Him in a wonderful way.

We have tried to be sensible in the handling of our grief. One has to "go with" grief; riding it like a skateboard. There are various stages to go through, and there aren't any shortcuts. We speak about Ryan, about the things he said and did, things for which we long with aching hearts to see and hear again. And if the tears come, and they surely do, so what?

As I was walking down the aisle at the supermarket recently, I reached out to take a box of Ryan's favourite cereal. I already had my hand on the box before I realised that Ryan wasn't there to eat it anymore. The tears streamed down my cheeks as I hurriedly moved on. It is not unusual for me when I am making tea to unthinkingly put a cup out for Ryan. Twelve years of habit has to be unlearned, and the emotional ties loosened.

I discovered that my love for Ryan didn't die when he did. I still love him and the love just keeps on coming even though he is not there to receive it. It's like a tap that's running but the bucket has been removed. I recognised the need to channel this love, but where to? Wayne's and Ronnie's quota increased dramatically and I had to be careful not to smother them. Another baby? Adopt a child? I spoke to the Lord about it and received an answer. I was to give Him my love; and my problem. He will sort it out.

I remember a day when I sat on my bed and cried and cried. I felt so desolate, so crushed by grief. I wanted to

roll up into a ball and die. Suddenly it seemed as though someone was standing beside me and saying; "Merlyn, look up and see Ryan in heaven".

I got the message. God had given me an imagination and He wanted me to use it. I put it to good use now, and instead of entertaining thoughts of self-pity I think of Ryan with Jesus – sitting on His lap and talking to Him. I know that apart from Christ, I am nothing. Thank you, Lord, for the wonderful thoughts we have of Ryan with You in heaven.

The missing and longing to see Ryan is something I find hard to cope with, but Jesus has taught me to live one moment at a time. People say how brave I am, I can't accept that. Jesus is my courage and strength. If He leaves me for one moment I'll collapse like a house of cards.

I love that song; "Because He lives; I can face tomorrow". More than ever we long for the coming of Jesus when He will fetch us, but until then we will go on in His strength; taking life moment by moment, sure in the knowledge of His perfect love.

Ronnie and Merlyn would love to share their faith in Jesus with you. P.O.Box 567, Henley-on-Klip, 1962, South Africa

Contributed by Wayne Ralph - waynelee@xtra.co.nz

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BLINDED MINDS -

(Surely the hardest thing for church attenders to do is to watch their spiritual leaders lead their churches into oblivion. Here are three examples, An Episcopalian archbishop twists Scripture, the Catholics work out a deal with the Buddhists, and an Emergent leader promotes gay "marriage." These are good reasons for people to leave their dead denominations and go looking for churches that still preach God's word. - Ed)

EPISCOPAL LEADER CLAIMS ST. PAUL OF TARSUS' CURING OF DEMON-POSSESSED GIRL WAS WRONG

By Michael Gryboski

Christian Post
May 23, 2013

Katharine Jefferts Schori; "by driving the demon out of her Paul was "depriving her of her gift of spiritual awareness."

The head of the Episcopal Church has garnered outrage from some in the Anglican Communion over her claim that St. Paul of Tarsus' curing of a demon-possessed slave girl as described in the Bible **was wrong**. In a sermon delivered before the Diocese of Venezuela on the island



nation of Curaçao, Presiding Bishop The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori said that **by driving the demon out of her** Paul was "**depriving her of her gift of spiritual awareness.**"

"Paul is annoyed, perhaps for being put in his place, and he responds by depriving her of her gift of spiritual awareness," said Jefferts Schori. "Paul can't abide something he won't see as beautiful or holy, so he tries to destroy it. It gets him thrown in prison. That's pretty much where he's put himself by his own refusal to recognise that she, too, **shares in God's nature**, just as much as he does – **maybe more so!**"

Jefferts Schori's message, **delivered last week**, has garnered many negative responses online, including an entry by George Conger on the website "Anglican Ink" and also in the comments section of the copy of the sermon on the Episcopal Digital Network.

"Paul cast a demon out of the slave girl, an agent of Satan, a force of darkness, and **didn't deprive her of some spiritual gift...this sermon is not a Christian sermon**," posted Fr. Will McQueen.

"It is terribly stunning to read that the Presiding Bishop elevates the sinful practice of necromancy to the Holy Spirit inspired territory of spiritual gifts. **This is eisegesis of a demonic sort**," posted Fr. Trent Overman.

"How can the Presiding Bishop miss the point that the woman was exploited- the slave woman was in physical, spiritual and relational bondage – she was being used for profit and her incessant shouting was disruptive and insincere," posted a user doting the name "BabyBlue."

Charlie Jackson, a poster who identified himself as "a pretty theologically liberal Episcopalian", nevertheless concluded that Jefferts Schori's interpretation of Acts 16 "is just too much."

Jeff Walton, Anglican program director at the *Institute on Religion & Democracy*, told us that the Presiding Bishop "has a long record of first establishing theopolitical positions and then **conforming scripture to align with her predetermined purpose.**" "Earlier this month at a church event focused on climate change, she outlined her view that those who disagree with her climate activism are denying the image of God in creation, much as the heresy of Arianism denied the unique divinity of Jesus Christ," said Walton.

"This habit of making political opponents into spiritual enemies is something that the religious right has been accused of -- yet Jefferts Schori, a figure on the left, is doing **exactly this.**"



FINAL DECLARATION FROM THE IV CHRISTIAN-BUDDHIST COLLOQUIUM

"Both Buddhist and Christian ethical teaching on respect for life is a search for common good based on loving kindness and compassion."

VATICAN CITY, May 21, 2013

Here is the text of the **Final Declaration** made during the **IV Buddhist-Christian Colloquium** held at the Pontifical Urbaniana University on May 6th, under the theme "**Inner Peace, Peace among Peoples.**"

The Holy See [the one harbouring an exorcist pope] made the text available yesterday afternoon.

1. The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue in collaboration with the *Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue* of the *Catholic Bishops' Conference of Italy* held **the fourth Buddhist-Christian Colloquium** at the *Pontifical Urbaniana University* on 6th of May 2013 under the theme "**Inner Peace, Peace among Peoples**".
2. The participants were of the view that the different papers presented, formal discussions, friendly dialogues during free times contributed to **deepen the mutual understanding of each other's traditions**, to know better the **convergence** and divergence and to be aware of the mutual responsibility to maintain or to restore peace.
3. The participants coming from Italy, Japan, the Republic of China (Taiwan), Vietnam, South Korea, Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and India noted that the religious landscape of the world today **is undergoing rapid changes**. In that context the **followers of different religious traditions** can contribute to friendship and **solidarity** among persons and peoples.

4. For Christians, sin in all its forms - selfishness and violence, greed and the inordinate desire for power and dominion, [as demonstrated by Roman Catholicism down the running centuries?] intolerance, hatred and unjust structure – ruptures the communion between God and us and among ourselves. The restoration of peace necessarily requires liberation from sin and its rejection. Jesus Christ restored the broken divine-human communion. Peace is therefore the state of those who live in harmony with God, with themselves, with others and with the whole of creation.
5. As regards Buddhists, Buddha Sakyamuni taught that ***the root of all evil is ignorance and false views based on greed or hatred*** and he discovered the ***Four Noble Truths*** as a path of liberation ***from suffering to Nirvana***. Accordingly the ethics and mental purity are but two aspects of the same path of practice: the stillness of meditation and working for the liberation of all beings from their suffering sustained by the third aspect of the path: wisdom. In fact, the real Buddhist compassion flows from the awareness of the substantial identity and ***unity of all beings***, a Wisdom that is ***deeply rooted in the contemplative practice***. [As now practiced amongst millions of Christians world-wide thanks to the teachings of the "Emergent Church"]
6. In both the Christian and Buddhist ***journeys***, therefore, inner freedom, purification of the heart, compassion and the gift of self are ***the essential conditions for the inner peace of the individual*** as well as for ***social peace***.
7. In spite of differences, both Buddhist and Christian ethical teaching on respect for life ***is a search for common good based on loving kindness and compassion***. The participants expressed that ***dialogue between Buddhists and Christians be strengthened to face new challenges*** such as threat to human life, poverty, hunger, endemic diseases, violence, war, etc., which belittle the sanctity of human life and ***poison peace in human society***.
8. The participants recognised that they have ***a special responsibility in addressing these issues***. The ***desire for co-operation for the well-being of humanity*** ought to spring from the ***depth of spiritual experiences***. ***Only inner peace can transform the human heart*** and make one see in his/her neighbour ***another brother and sister***. If we really want to ***build a world of peace***, it is ***vitaly important that we join forces*** to educate people, especially the young, to seek peace, to live in peace and to risk working for peace.
9. The colloquium concluded with the ***affirmation that it is love which brings or restores peace to human hearts*** and establishes it in our midst. The

participants also observed that the path of peace is difficult; it demands courage, patience, perseverance, determination and sacrifice. ***They consider dialogue a priority and a sign of hope. It must continue!***



FAMED PASTOR ROB BELL SAYS IT'S TIME THE CHURCH CAUGHT UP WITH THE "MODERN WORLD" IN ACCEPTING SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Drew Zahn

WorldNetDaily - 21 May 2013

Pastor Rob Bell; "It's time for the church to catch up with the "modern world" in accepting same-sex marriage"

A pastor whom Time magazine once dubbed among ***the 100 most influential people in the world*** said it's "(censored - Ed)" that his faith is brought into question now that he's ***publicly backed same-sex marriage***.

Best-selling author and teacher ***Rob Bell*** [pictured above] told a British radio host it's time the church caught up with the ***"modern world" in accepting same-sex marriage*** and that ***questioning the orthodoxy of those who do*** amounts to ***"the sort of (censored- Ed)" that really, really, really pushes people away" from Christianity***.

Bell has become a superstar of the emergent church movement, and his Mars Hill Bible Church in Grandville, Michigan., was once ***one of the fastest growing in the country, until*** his controversial book ***"Love Wins"*** created fall-out in the congregation and pushed him to move out of the pastorate ***toward a wider ministry***.

But Carl Gallups, pastor of ***Hickory Hammock Baptist Church*** in Milton, Florida., and author of the Amazon.com science and religion best-seller ***"The Magic Man in the Sky: Effectively Defending the Christian Faith,"*** warns that

on this issue, Bell has become **“nothing more than a wolf dressed in sheep’s clothing.”**

*“Rob Bell says that the real mission and glory of the church is to **ebb and flow with whatever culture it is in,**” Gallups said in a radio interview last week. “Well, that is the antithesis, that is the exact opposite of what the Scripture commands the church to do. The Scripture commands that we are the salt and the light, that the church is to change and affect the culture around it and to never never, never, never give in and compromise with the culture”.*

“[Bell’s] whole view of Scripture, his whole view of the role and mission of the church is perverted,” Gallups said, “and out of his mouth comes what’s in his heart.”

Carl Gallups; Bell has become “nothing more than a wolf dressed in sheep’s clothing.”

Bell had appeared on the U.K. faith debate program *“Unbelievable?”* hosted by Justin Brierley on *Premier Christian Radio* to discuss same-sex marriage.

“I think it’s time for the church to acknowledge that we have brothers and sisters who are gay and want to share their life with someone,” he told Brierley.

*“This is a part of life in the modern world and **that’s how it is.** And that **cultural consciousness has shifted,** and **this is how the world is** and that what’s happening for a lot of people, is that **they want nothing to do with God and Jesus because they can’t see beyond that particular issue.**”*

On the question of whether or not homosexuality, however, is a “sin,” Bell said, *“I’m not aware that Jesus mentions it. I think you have about five verses that can be read a number of different ways. And there is a large Christian tradition that sees this as there are Scriptures that speak to this, but I don’t think you make it an overwhelmingly (sic) case against it.”*

Gallups said. *“If this man knows the Scripture at all, then **he knows this is not correct.**”*

Contributed by Mike Claydon, from Apostasy Alert.

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2 TIMOTHY 3:13

“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.”

THE THERAPY FOR THE FUNNY BONE

Overheard on the ABC last week - "My lesdyxia worse getting is."

One of our friends, Ron, took his wife to a party several years ago. When they returned home, Denise went into the bathroom to wash off her makeup and screamed, "Ron! How could you let me go to the party looking like this?" He said, "What's the problem?" She said, "I only put my makeup on one side of my face. Half my eye shadow and mascara and eye liner and face powder is missing! When I was putting it on, you remember, the phone rang and I forgot to put the rest of my makeup on! You should have told me! Why didn't you say something?" Ron sheepishly replied, "I thought you did it on purpose. How was I to know?"

GOLFER AND CADDY JOKES -

Golfer: "I think I am going to drown myself in the lake."

Caddy: "Think you can keep your head down that long?"

Golfer: "I'd move heaven and earth to break 100 on this course."

Caddy: "Try heaven, you've already moved most of the earth."

Golfer: "Do you think that my game is improving?"

Caddy: "Yes sir, you miss the ball much closer now."

Golfer: "Do you think I can get there with a 5 iron?"

Caddy: "Eventually!"

Golfer: "You must be the worst caddy in the world."

Caddy: "I don't think so sir. That would be too much of a coincidence."

Golfer: "Please stop checking your watch all the time."

Caddy: "It's not a watch, it is a compass."

Golfer: "How do you like my game?"

Caddy: "Very good sir, but personally I prefer golf."

Golfer: "This is the worst course I've ever played on."

Caddy: "This isn't the golf course. We left that an hour ago."

Golfer: "That can't be my ball, it is too old."

Caddy: "It's been a long time since we teed off, sir."

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WHO DROPPED IN FROM AFRICA? -

(Australian history can only be documented for a little over 200 years, maybe at the most, 350. Before Captain Cook there were others who touched our island continent from time to time, but they left almost no trace of their visits. Now, there is some indication we may have had visitors as long as 1000 years in the past. Here is an article from the Sydney Morning Herald. - Ed.)



ANCIENT DISCOVERY SET TO REWRITE AUSTRALIAN HISTORY

Five copper coins and a nearly 70-year-old map with an “X” might lead to a discovery that could rewrite Australia’s history.

Australian scientist Ian McIntosh, currently Professor of Anthropology at Indiana University in the US, plans an expedition in July that has stirred up the archaeological community. The scientist wants to revisit the location where five coins were found in the Northern Territory in 1944 that have proven to be 1000 years old, opening up the possibility that seafarers from distant countries might have landed in Australia much earlier than what is currently believed.

Back in 1944 during World War II, after Japanese bombers had attacked Darwin two years earlier, the Wessel Islands - an uninhabited group of islands off Australia’s north coast - had become a strategic position to help protect the mainland.

Australian soldier Maurie Isenberg was stationed on one of the islands to man a radar station and spent his spare

time fishing on the idyllic beaches. While sitting in the sand with his fishing-rod, he discovered a handful of coins in the sand. He didn’t have a clue where they could come from but pocketed them anyway and later placed them in a tin. In 1979 he rediscovered his “treasure” and decided to send the coins to a museum to get them identified. The coins proved to be 1000 years old. Still not fully realising what treasure he held in his hands, he marked an old colleague’s map with an “X” to remember where he had found them. The discovery was apparently forgotten again until anthropologist McIntosh got the ball rolling a few months ago. The coins raise many important questions:

How did 1000-year-old coins end up on a remote beach on an island off the northern coast of Australia?

Did explorers from distant lands arrive on Australian shores way before the James Cook declared it “terra nullius” and claimed it for the British throne in 1770? We do know already that Captain Cook wasn’t the first white seafarer to step on Australia’s shores. In 1606 a Dutch explorer named Willem Janszoon reached the Cape York peninsula in Queensland, closely followed a few years later by another Dutch seafarer Dirk Hartog. And the Spaniard Luiz Vaez de Torres discovered the strait between Papua New Guinea and

Australia, which was later named Torres Strait in his honour. However, none of these explorers recognised that they had discovered the famed southern continent, the “terra australis incognita”, which was depicted as a counterweight to the known land masses of the northern hemisphere on many world maps of the day.

McIntosh and his team of Australian and American historians, archaeologists, geomorphologists and Aboriginal rangers say that the five coins date back to the 900s to 1300s. They are African coins from the former Kilwa sultanate, now a World Heritage ruin on an island off Tanzania. Kilwa once was a flourishing trade port with links to India in the 13th to 16th century. The trade with gold, silver, pearls, perfumes, Arabian stone ware, Persian ceramics and Chinese porcelain made the city one of the most influential towns in East Africa at the time. The copper coins were the first coins ever produced in sub-

Saharan Africa and according to McIntosh have only twice been found outside Africa: once in Oman and Isenberg's find in 1944. The old coins might not be of monetary value, but for archaeologists they are priceless, says McIntosh. Archaeologists have long suspected that there may have been early maritime trading routes that linked East Africa, Arabia, India and the Spice Islands even 1,000 years ago. Or the coins could've washed ashore after a shipwreck.

When Isenberg discovered the copper coins he also found four coins that originated from the Dutch East India Company - with one dating back to 1690 raising memories of those early Dutch seafarers that stepped on Australian shores well before Cook. McIntosh wants to answer some of these mysteries during his planned expedition to the

Wessel Islands in July. And it's not only about revisiting the beach that was marked with an "X" on Isenberg's map. He will also be looking for a secret cave Aboriginal legends talk about. This cave is supposed to be close to the beach where Isenberg once found the coins and is said to be filled with doubloons and weaponry of an ancient era. Should McIntosh and his team find what they are looking for, the find might not only be priceless treasure, but relics that could rewrite Australian history.

Read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/ancient-discovery-set-to-rewrite-australian-history-20130519-2juck.html#ixzz2TiaqrBxw>

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MAYBE I MISSED IT, BUT HAS ROME GONE EVANGELICAL? - PART 1 - By Buddy Smith



Every once in a while I hear or read an evangelical preacher or seminarian comments on how much Roman Catholicism has changed. Glowing reports are given of the "new openness" of the pope toward Protestants and how well Rome and Geneva are getting along. Evangelical authors question whether the Reformation was really necessary. Some even propose a merger with Rome again and boldly proclaim that Rome has more things in common with Protestantism than those things which separate them. A casual read of these articles would lead most observers to conclude that maybe the ecumenical movement, all the way up to and including re-unification with Roman Catholicism, would be a good thing.

If so many people are saying that Rome has become so evangelical, what is keeping us apart? Shouldn't we just go home to Rome?

No, we shouldn't.

In fact, no born again, blood bought, Bible believing Christian should have anything to do with Roman Catholicism.

Why not?

In the first place, because the Roman Catholic mass is still blasphemous the finished work of Christ on the cross.

In the Thirteenth Session of the Council of Trent, this decree was made, **"If any one denieth, that, in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist, are contained truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently the whole Christ; but saith that He is only therein as in a sign, or in figure, or virtue; let him be anathema."**

Occasionally we will meet someone who says, "Oh, but the Catholic Church has all changed. They may have believed that evangelicals were wrong when the Council of Trent met (in 25 sessions from 1545 to 1563) and placed a curse (anathema) on all who rejected the

blasphemy of the mass, but Catholics no longer believe that. They are now thoroughly evangelical and agree with us." Then, someone should tell us the date when Roman Catholicism was converted. When did the Pope repent of his worship of the wafer god? When did he openly and publicly refute this great error of salvation by the Mass? How is it that we never heard of it? Surely, if this is true that Rome has reversed its greatest heresy, there would have been worldwide rejoicing! Her idols would have come crashing down, and her monasteries emptied and her priests encouraged to marry, and the pope deposed!

Maybe I missed it. Or maybe it never happened.

Evangelist Mike Gendron, a converted Roman Catholic writes,

"Several years ago a Roman Catholic priest was invited to speak at the Sunday morning worship service for First Baptist Church of Plano. I attended the service out of curiosity. What on earth would a Catholic priest have to say to 1100 Southern Baptists? His message was an exhortation for Catholics and Protestants to come together in Christian unity. During the message he said, "Just as the Jews were surprised when God extended salvation to the Gentiles, we Catholics are now surprised he is extending salvation to you Protestants." After the message, most of the congregation got into a reception line to thank the priest for coming in a spirit of unity. I also joined the line to meet the priest and when I finally had the chance to address him, I asked: "How can the Roman Catholic Church encourage unity with Protestants when you condemn us with over 100 anathemas for not believing your dogmas?" As he observed all the people standing in line listening, he said: "All those anathemas are no longer in effect." I responded: "Oh really, when were they rescinded?" He replied: "After a period of time they just go away." This Catholic priest of 35 years either did not know his church's teachings on anathemas or he was deliberately attempting to deceive the unsuspecting.

Recently, as a guest on a radio program in Omaha, Nebraska, I was asked if the anathemas pronounced by the Councils of Trent and Vatican II are still in effect today. I explained that since "infallible" councils of Bishops pronounced the anathemas, they are immutable. However, a Catholic apologist challenged my statement by declaring the 1983 Code of Canon Law changed the decrees pronounced by the Council of Trent.

This prompted me to investigate the Vatican's official position on anathemas. According to the Roman Catholic Church, the eternal destinies of Catholics and former Catholics hang in the balance on this issue of anathemas. My research began in The Catholic Encyclopedia, which

gives full and authoritative information on Catholic doctrine. In the encyclopedia I found the differences between canons, dogmas and decrees. Canons are irreversible "short, dogmatic definitions with an anathema attached to them." Decrees are disciplinary regulations that can be changed and have no anathemas attached. (These are the decrees the Catholic Apologist had confused with anathemas that cannot change.)

Infallible dogmas are "the last word of supreme teaching authority; there must be no possibility of reopening the question in a spirit of doubt; [the dogma] must settle the matter for ever." How do we know an infallible dogma? Whenever "an anathema is attached to doctrinal teaching of a general council, it is a certain sign of an infallible definition."

Dogmas "will be for all time immutable truths" because they "have been defined and delivered to us by the Church" with "an infallible testimony." When a teaching doctrine is elevated to a dogma, Catholics "are bound to believe them in order to maintain the bond of faith."

Some Catholics do not believe the Eucharist becomes the physical presence of Jesus Christ through the "miracle" of transubstantiation. These Catholics may not be aware that the rejection of this dogma is unacceptable to their church. In fact, it puts them under condemnation. From the council of Trent, the "infallible" Bishops, speaking with one voice, gave us Canon I: "If any one denies, that, in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist, are contained truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently the whole Christ; but says that He is only there as in a sign, or in figure, or virtue; let him be anathema."

Whenever the pontiff pronounces an anathema, he uses a formula which ends with these words: "Wherefore in the name of God...in virtue of the power given us of binding and loosing in Heaven and on earth, we deprive (Name) of the Communion of the Body and Blood of Our Lord, we separate him from the society of all Christians, we exclude him from the bosom of our Holy Mother the Church in Heaven and on earth, we declare him excommunicated and anathematized and we judge him condemned to eternal fire with Satan and his angels and all the reprobate, so long as he will not burst the fetters of the demon, do penance and satisfy the Church; we deliver him to Satan to mortify his body, that his soul may be saved on the day of judgment."

Former Catholics who are now born-again Christians need not to worry! If God is for us, who is against us? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? Who is the one who

condemns? (Rom. 8:31-34). Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword [or the Roman Catholic Church]? (Rom. 8:35).

Clearly, we see three characteristics of anathemas. They are immutable, which means they can never be rescinded. They condemn former Catholics to the torments of everlasting hell unless they do penance and return home to Rome. They also condemn current Catholics who do not believe every dogma.

An example of an anathema imposed on Roman Catholics that many of them reject today is the one concerning indulgences. According to Vatican Council II, the Roman Catholic Church "condemns with anathema those who say that indulgences are useless or that the Church does not have the power to grant them" (Vol. 1, p. 71).

An indulgence defined by Rome is "a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian...gains under certain defined conditions" (Vol. 1, p. 75). They can always be applied to the dead by way of prayer, the Rosary or the sacrifice of the Mass. "The faithful who use with devotion an object of piety (crucifix, cross, rosary, scapular or medal) after it has been duly blessed by any priest, can gain a partial indulgence." (Vol. 1, p. 77).

Most Catholics who reject this ungodly dogma on indulgences ignore the fact that they stand condemned by their church. This has always puzzled me. Why would Catholics trust their church's teachings on salvation, while at the same time, ignore their teachings on condemnation?

All former Catholics, who have been justified by God through faith in the finished work of Christ, must use this information to educate others. We must contend for the faith by informing our pastors and evangelical leaders who are encouraging unity with Rome.



Whenever we are rebuked in our efforts to contend for the faith we must always remember the words of Paul, "be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

We must also proclaim the truth to Catholics who ignore or reject the anathemas imposed upon them. Only God has the power to save and condemn. We find only two anathemas in His Word. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema" (1 Cor. 16:22). Paul also wrote, "If we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!" (Gal. 1:8). Scripture is our most trustworthy source for knowing the truth on these critical issues!"

<http://proclaimingthegospel.org/equip/articles/91-does-the-vatican-still-condemn-christians>

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Sharpened Arrows

AS ARROWS ARE IN THE HAND OF A MIGHTY MAN,
SO ARE CHILDREN OF THE YOUTH.
Psalms 127:4

A publication of Golden West Independent Baptist Church Australia which aims to encourage and edify preachers children, youth & young adults to stand for Christ in the battle for the truth.

(Someone told me years ago that freedom of religion is a phenomenon that exists only as long as it takes for a people to move from one intolerant faith to another. I suspect that the same is true for a democracy, that it too exists only as long as it takes a nation to move from one form of tyranny to another. Which makes the United States government's push for all nations to become democracies all the more interesting. We can't help pondering where they want present day tyrannies to end up? Is it possible that all this is part of the mystery of iniquity that is already at work? And that the ultimate tyranny, the kingdom of the Beast (Rev. 13) is much nearer than we think? It has taken longer than they wished to move the nations from the monarchies and dictatorships of the past to the one world kingdom of the Beast, but these articles below seem to indicate that we are well on our way there. - Ed)



BIG GOVERNMENT HUNTS DOWN MRS. CATHERINE ENGELBRECHT

Andrew Bolt MAY 25 2013

Peggy Noonan on perhaps the worst case yet uncovered in the IRS scandal of Big Government punishing conservatives:

The most important IRS story came not from the hearings but from Mike Huckabee's program on Fox News Channel. He interviewed and told the story of Catherine Engelbrecht—a nice woman, a citizen, an American. She and her husband live in Richmond, Texas. They have a small manufacturing business. In the past few years she became interested in public policy and founded two groups, King Street Patriots, and True the Vote.

In July 2010 she sent applications to the IRS for tax-exempt status. What followed was not the harassment, intrusiveness and delay we're now used to hearing of. The US government came down on her with full force.

In December 2010 the FBI came to ask about a person who'd attended a King Street Patriots function. In January 2011 the FBI had more questions. The same month the IRS audited her business tax returns. In May 2011 the FBI called again for a general inquiry about King Street

Patriots. In June 2011 Engelbrecht's personal tax returns were audited and the FBI called again. In October 2011 a round of questions on True the Vote. In November 2011 another call from the FBI. The next month, more questions from the FBI. In February 2012 a third round of IRS questions on True the Vote. In February 2012 a first round of questions on King Street Patriots. The same month the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms did an unscheduled audit of her business. (It had a license to make firearms but didn't make them.) In July 2012 the Occupational Safety and Health Administration did an unscheduled audit. In November 2012 more IRS questions on True the Vote. In March 2013, more questions. In April 2013 a second ATF audit.

All this because she requested tax-exempt status for a local conservative group and for one that registers voters and tries to get dead people off the rolls. Her attorney, Cleta Mitchell, who provided the timeline above, told me: 'These people, they are just regular Americans. They try to get dead people off the voter rolls, you would think that they are serial killers.'

(Via Catallaxy Files.)

IRS RADICAL'S HISTORY OF TARGETING RELIGIOUS GROUPS EXPOSED

Mathew Staver, Founder and Chairman Liberty Counsel The lid has been pried off of the top of the growing IRS scandal and we expect major new information will soon come to light. What has already been learned is both chilling and deeply disturbing.

The Obama stonewall begins.

Lois Lerner was placed on paid administrative leave yesterday from her duties as the Director of Exempt Organizations of the IRS shortly after refusing to cooperate with Congress.

Lerner's division was responsible for, admittedly, targeting conservative political groups like Freedom Federation and the more than 30 organizations that comprise its membership, pro-Israel organizations, conservative Hispanic groups, and religious entities.

The IRS used intimidating application processes and excessive, unjust questioning to delay or deny targeted groups' applications for tax-exempt status prior to and during the 2012 election cycle. They also launched unwarranted audits of groups falling into those same categories.

LERNER'S HISTORY OF ABUSE OF POWER.



Ms. Lerner apparently has been carrying on a vendetta over a long period of time. While head of the Enforcement Office at the Federal Election Commission (FEC), she launched a lawsuit against the Christian Coalition (CC) in the 1990's for *allegedly conspiring with political candidates*.

I must interject here that the IRS' targeting of tea party groups, Constitution advocate groups, and conservative organizations during an election cycle couldn't have been anything other than politically motivated – including targeting those groups who would presumably oppose Barack Obama's reelection.

The FEC lawsuit, which is reportedly the largest ever litigated by the FEC, required the Coalition to produce over 100,000 pages of documents and respond to over-the-top discovery requests and invasive questioning, according to James Bopp, Jr., who represented the Coalition.

Here's what Jim Bopp said regarding Lerner's attack on Christian Coalition in a Weekly Standard interview:

"We felt we were being singled out, because when you handle a case with 81 depositions, you have a pretty good argument that you are getting special treatment!"

The FEC lost their lawsuit. The cost of that unfounded FEC lawsuit to taxpayers (remember, we pay all of their salaries) is estimated to have been in the tens of millions of dollars.

Lerner pleads the Fifth.

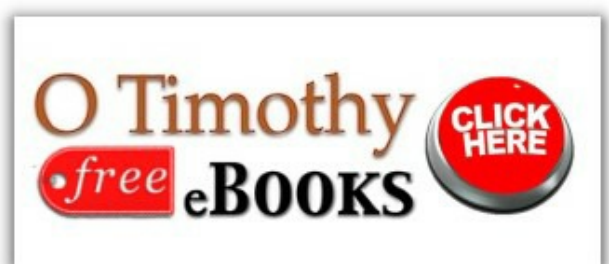
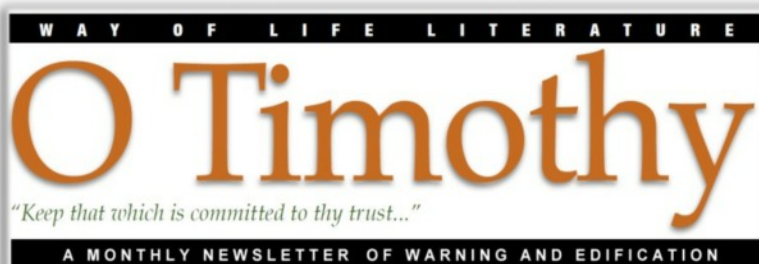
Ms. Lerner pronounced her innocence to the House Oversight Committee on Wednesday, then refused to answer any of the committee's questions while pleading the Fifth Amendment.

One of the tea party blogs put this headline on their article about Lerner's shameful deportment: "After trampling on the First, Lerner takes the Fifth."

The prevailing view now is that she waived her right to plead the Fifth Amendment when she declared her innocence in an extensive opening statement without answering a single question from the congressional committee that called for her testimony!

After the hearing, Ms. Lerner was allegedly asked to resign her IRS position but refused. Firing a federal worker is among the most difficult tasks in the American workplace.

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MAJESTIC MUSIC OR MUSICAL MESS?

Several months ago two of the men in a distant village put together a CD of preaching in the Sotho tongue comprised of several two to three minute clips. They had used their tithe from their little Baptist church to record the preaching in a rural recording studio, to buy blank CDs, and to have this technician duplicate the CDs for distribution to lost villagers. I knew they had done this, but I had not actually listened to it until I was at one of their houses about a month ago. In anticipation I couldn't wait to hear what they had done, for I had several thousand dollars back in the States to be used for outreach in missions. When they turned on the CD, I sensed that the preaching was Biblically based, but I was disheartened at the background music this lost music technician had used to "enhance" the CD giving it more of an "African flavor". At the time I waited to give my opinion not wanting to discourage their creative effort of outreach, even though I was sadly disappointed.

Bringing a copy home to our daughter Julianna (25), she loaded it onto a computer to see if we could lay some good music over the fleshly music, but it was impossible.

Then I had to make a decision.

Along with the message/music CD I had brought along ten of their blank CDs. Now, it would have been simple to just make some copies of the CD with the computer as it was and take them back to the guys, after all, the "music wasn't too bad" and "with the Africans it wasn't really an issue as they listen to worse music". It was "only ten CDs". My "musically conservative churches in the States would probably never find out," and if they did, "the cause of the Great Commission and getting souls saved was far more important than a music issue".

But I had no rest in my spirit (2Cor 2:13), and something told me not to start down a road of compromise in this area (Pro 16:25). My heart just would not let me justify copying even ten CDs let alone authorizing an expenditure of funds to help these guys by mass producing a CD that had good preaching and bad music.

So, I bit the bullet and went to give them the "no-go" message, simply explaining the Bible principle that when good and bad are mixed, the good becomes bad (**Haggai 2:11-13** *"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying, If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No. Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean."*).

When I got there and explained the problem, I was surprised to hear, "That's what we were thinking; that background beat just isn't right." With joy I suggested our son, Drew (16), try to make a piano instrumental CD of good Sotho hymns. To our knowledge none of these have ever been written on a music staff, but Drew has heard and sung them so often that he knows how the melody line runs. So he spent some time putting together a CD of Christ honoring music.

From my perspective, three major things happened in regards to music the same week.

First, a young relatively unknown lad in South Africa used his talents to honor the Savior with godly music for a lost world.

Second, a relatively popular adult president of a once sound "Bible college" in Northern Wisconsin (who claims to want to prepare a generation to reach the world

including Africans) called his praise and worship team to the platform during his re installation service and dishonored the Savior with flesh-appealing music from a lost world. Watching the You Tube clip one could notice the ragtag dress of the young people, the casual attire of the leadership, the cordless hand held mics of the worship leaders and the swaying of some in the crowd as the guitars and drum pumped out a rhythmic contemporary song.

Third, converted Africans and a simple lad have more discernment and desire to be holy than this president and his worship team? (If you want to shake your head in disgust just watch some of Northland International University's You Tube music clips. What they are presenting as culturally relevant and acceptable is exactly the opposite of what the Africans here turn from once they are born again.)

Talk about a stark contrast. For some reason the story of David and Goliath comes to mind. The little guy was on the right side, God's side, in the battle.

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NOTABLE QUOTES AND QUOTABLE NOTES -

- “Many of the emergent church guys today are Calvinists, but use Finney's methods!”
~ *Pastor Kevin Beier*
- “Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as ever you can.” ~ *John Wesley*
- When people start getting full of themselves, they need to remember that each step is but a step, and is not a new thing. ~ *Terry Gilsenan*
- Progressivism and revisionism are born and bred in the pride of life. ~ *Terry Gilsenan*

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THE PERILS OF THE PIANIST — *By Linda Cloud*

Linda Cloud writes the following testimony about her experiences playing the keyboard in village churches and house fellowships:

Nepali people love to sing; which is wonderful. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that a musical instrument be employed to keep somewhat of a steady direction towards the songwriter's intention of the song's melody. It generally boils down to this: No instrument, no discernible melody. Thus it has befallen me to play a portable keyboard in our village meetings. True, in pre-keyboard days in the villages, our young men did play the guitar in the services. But one must understand that having the guitar on board did little but encourage the boat to rock more. We are not talking about rock music here, but about adding to the already indistinguishable noise out there in the song service.

One time I noticed one of our guitar players practicing a certain song. When asked why he played the same chord nearly all the way through he replied that he didn't know the other chords, but thought his one chord sounded just fine. Another young man was practicing with me for a new song when I noticed he changed chords one



right after another, then didn't change for the rest of the song. When asked why, he said he thought he'd best get all the chords out of the way at once, then just settle on one chord. It was far easier that way and he could then concentrate on the words to the song.

Our song leader didn't help much either, as he'd tell the guitar player to wait until he started the song and then to come in with the guitar. This resulted in the song leader, and hence the audience, beginning in one key and the guitar player joining in in

another key. Since basically everyone was singing in different keys and even between keys anyway, I suppose it didn't make much difference.

I said all this to say that the addition of a keyboard has done wonders to the song services, but playing the keyboard in villages in Nepal has not been without its adventures. I shall take the liberty to enhance this with a few examples. One must understand, however, that I am not an accomplished pianist (keyboard player) and must rely on a songbook or digress into the category of unpleasant noise making.

In one village I was sitting on a porch playing the keyboard for an evangelistic meeting. Now this village had an over-abundant population of flies and it seemed many, if not most, of those flies deeply appreciated music, for they gathered for their own fellowship right on my hymnbook. In fact, they were so dense that I could not see the notes properly and made more than my usual amount of mistakes. No amount of swatting would persuade those flies that another spot might be more appropriate for their fellowship.

Another time, again while playing the keyboard, a wet, diapered bottom landed squarely on the keyboard. A village toddler had thought this looked like a good place to sit while watching the activities around him.

I cannot count the number of times I have been bitten by insects while I was playing the keyboard. Something about music and white skin combined must be terribly attractive to village insects. An accomplished pianist would be able to "spare" a hand for just a moment while dislodging pesky insects from one's neck or face. But as I need to give absolutely full attention to my playing, I cannot spare a hand to do battle with insects while I am engaged in playing the keyboard. Thus, I often come away from song services with red insect bites as adornments.

One time as I was playing, a chicken ran across my keyboard. I guess she was trying to figure out whether she had talent enough to land a job or not. (She didn't.)

In the villages, I sit on the floor with the keyboard, also on the floor, before me while playing. It is never comfortable but one has little choice in these matters and village situations are never known for comfort, anyway.

Have you ever tried jumping from a sitting position? For a "senior citizen" it has its challenges, but it is entirely possible, believe me! Once, just before I began to play, a mouse ran across my feet. The villagers nearly died laughing when I jumped a foot into the air from that encounter.

But I jumped a lot faster and further when I was playing and a snake fell down from the rafters above and landed right beside me. Song service or no song service, I felt liberty to take a break at that moment! We never use drums in our music services, but my heart was beating so fast and loud that time that I feared we would be accused of using drums!



Nepal has lots of spiders and they come in all sizes. It would have to be the very biggest that chose to crawl up on the keyboard one day while I was playing in our village church. Of course he came right towards my hands and of course I decided this was an inappropriate action on his behalf. While trying to continue playing with one hand, I tipped the keyboard up with the other to send the spider off in another direction. He was clever, though, and circled around the keyboard before appearing beside me again. Now, this was no little spider that one could blow away. This was a full 2 1/2 inch-across monster and I was not about to be introduced to him, no matter how insistent he might become. This time, however, I was saved by a Nepali woman sitting nearby who saw my dilemma, took up a songbook and scooted the spider towards the door.

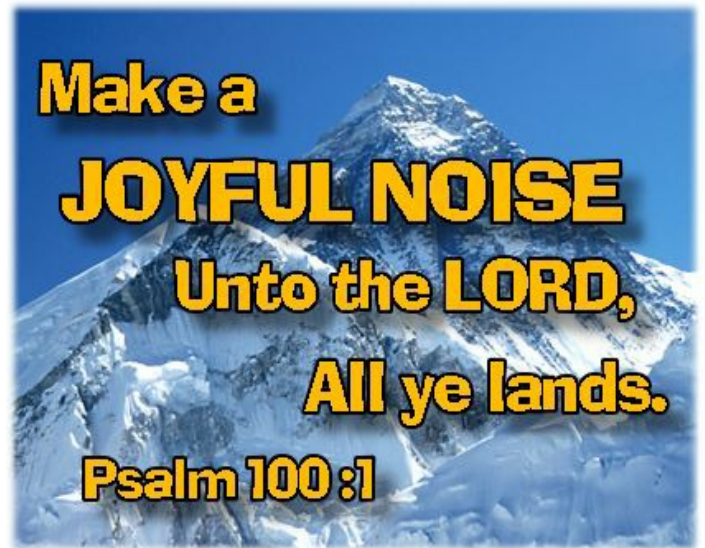
A few weeks ago, in a new village where we've been working for the past several months, I could see trouble coming as soon as mats were spread on the floor for us to sit on. The mat spread under the keyboard was old and tattered and, sure enough, full of "guests". I could feel those bed bugs biting and chewing on me throughout the song service and for days afterwards had the red spots to prove it.

Being the only white person present in the village has a certain attraction for the children. Toddlers tend to shy away from this strange white lady UNTIL the music begins. Then all of a sudden I become a "Jungle Jim" for them and often they will take advantage of this by climbing, or trying to, on my back, hiding under my jacket, and pulling on my hair. This is all good and fun for these village waifs and I suppose one should be thankful for having provided such great entertainment for their little lives.

We often hold services in villages without electricity and for such cases I carry a flashlight to illuminate the notes in the hymnbook that I might play at least a semblance of the correct melody as the service is conducted. Not only have I determined that insects like music, but it is well known that they like lights as well. Thus, I will be bent over my keyboard playing away as the village insects come in their battalions to attack me.....getting in my hair, ears, nose, and trying for my eyes.

All of this brings me, finally, to my point.....I hate "dull" and I am so thankful the Lord has me in a place serving Him where there is adventure. Praise Him!

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WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR? - By Kevin & Pat Milson, Malanda, Qld.

This week my wife and I were reading and came across the following article. It immediately set my mind to thinking of that verse, [Luke 10:29](#), "*But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?*"

A story is told that Queen Victoria of the UK was deeply moved during a church service. Afterward she asked her Chaplain, "Can one be absolutely sure in this life of eternal safety?" He did not have an answer. But an evangelist named John Townsend heard about the Queen's question, and after much prayer he sent her a note: "With trembling hands, but heartfelt love, and because I know that we can be absolutely sure now of our eternal life in the Home that Jesus went to prepare, may I ask your most Gracious Majesty, to read the following passages of scripture: John 3:16; Romans 10:9-10?" Two weeks later the evangelist received. This letter: ".....I have carefully and prayerfully read the portions of scripture referred to. I believe in the finished work of Christ for me, and trust by Gods grace to meet you in that Home of which He said, 'I go to prepare a place for you'.

Signed....Victoria Guelph.

Townsend was confident that in this life we can have assurance of Eternal safety (V9) and he had a concern for others as well. Consider what John 3:16 and Romans 10:9-10 mean to your Eternal destiny. Gods desire to give to you the confidence that our sin is forgiven and that after death you'll be with Him forever.

John 3:16 "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*"



Romans 10:9-10 "*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*"

This reading was a great blessing to my heart: To think that one day in heaven we will not only be with Jesus, but there will be others like queen Victoria. This is all possible because of the finished work on Calvary where Jesus took

my place and finished the work of salvation through shedding His precious blood.

One of Satan's mighty tools today is to get us uncertain of our assurance and if we are unsure we will live defeated. VICTORY IN JESUS WAS WON AT CALVARY. THE WORK OF OUR SALVATION WAS COMPLETE WHEN JESUS SAID, " IT IS FINISHED."

Who is your neighbour?

Consider what may have happened if John Townsend had not written to Queen Victoria.

He could have justified himself by saying, "I will never get to see her Majesty, I will never be able to tell her what I believe." But was that true? Was there no avenue that he could reach her? (We need to remember that those days a letter would have to go, "Camel Train" a term we use here in Australia to say , ("It's very slow,") Townsend could have well said, "She is not my neighbour."

But he wasn't looking for an excuse, he was looking for a way.

Who then is our neighbour? I believe that all of mankind, (the world) is our neighbour. Mark 16:15, And Jesus said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel.

Over the last decade God has given us many opportunities to contact people through our modern email system, but when Stuart Diver was trapped and later rescued from under a building at Thredbo in Australia's southern alps there was no other way or reach him but to write him a letter and give him the message of salvation. Some years later several men were killed in a mine tragedy in Tasmania but after days of drilling two were brought to the surface alive. Again God said , Write them a letter, tell them the gospel, tell them I have given another chance. Many will know about the Michelle

Corby drama and the twenty years prison sentence. Again God said, "She is your neighbour write her a letter in prison, tell her God loves her and will save her for all eternity if she will believe that He sent Jesus to die for her."

What am I trying to say? We don't have to be trained and profound preachers, evangelists etc. we just need to be able to write, able to speak. You say , "How do you know those letters ever got to the people?" We'll I don't, but God said to send them and by faith I believe He got them there. You might say, " How do you know they were ever saved?" Well I don't, but that's not my job, salvation is of the Lord. Just think if one day I am walking down the streets of heaven and one of these people walk up to me and tell me how they were saved, you'll hear me shouting "Glory" all over heaven.

All I need to know is "Who is my neighbour?"

I have found that my neighbour is the person who phones me up at the most inconvenient time and wants to sell me something. They are politely told, "I do not need your product but I have a question to ask you, Where will you spend eternity?" And with the same determination that they use to sell to me, tell them the simple gospel. (Not sell, but tell!) You might be surprised. I have had them hang up immediately, or say "I've never heard of that". One person gave me twenty minutes of her company time to share the gospel with her. Her response was, "Thank you this has been very timely I have needed this."

I don't think we have to ask the question, "Who is our neighbour?" Just have a burden to see souls saved. Our neighbours are everywhere.

HAVE YOU THE ASSURANCE OF YOUR SALVATION? YOU NEED IT TO TELL YOUR NEIGHBOUR.

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ASELGEIA – AN OLD WORD PRACTICED TODAY

Can a man be so mastered by his sin, that in the end, he loses all shame? We have watched a terrible transformation in this country over the last twenty-five years, of a very small, insignificant (as far as size) group of people. Vile sinners have changed the hearts and minds of many people and caused them to accept and further the terrible sin in which they are involved. The sin is primarily that of homosexuality, but it includes all kinds of immorality. At the very most, those who participate in such sin is only about 3% of the population, yet, their militancy has garnered the acceptance in many states of men marrying men and women marrying women. Is this something new? Of course not.

Such people are seen on numerous occasions in Scripture. Perhaps one of the best examples are the Sodomites who wanted to "know" the angels that came to rescue Lot and his family from the judgment by the Lord to the cities of the plain. We are told in Genesis 19:4, that the men of the city of Sodom literally encircled the house, young and old, seeking the angels for their vile perversion.

Over the years, we have seen and continue to see such utter shamelessness exhibited by the Sodomites not just in America, but around the world.

There is a word that describes these people in the New Testament. It has been described as the "ugliest" word in the different lists of sins we find in the pages of Scripture. This word is found nine times in the New Testament. One of those places is in 2 Peter 2:7: *"And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked."*

Note the word **FILTHY**. This is from the Greek word **ASELGEIA** (pronounced AS-ELG-I-A). Aselgeia is a compound word made up of the negative particle "a" and the word "selge." Thayer in his Greek Lexicon says that this is referring to the city of Selge, which was located in Pisidia (located in modern day Turkey). Thayer goes on to say that the citizens of Selge excelled in a strictness of morals. However, Trench (Synonyms of the New Testament) says that the inhabitants were infamous for their vices. It would stand to reason that Thayer is probably correct in his statement. The word is defined in some of the vilest of thoughts as being "unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, and insolence." One Greek word book states that the

LUKE 17:26-30

²⁶ And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

²⁷ They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

²⁸ Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

²⁹ But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

³⁰ Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

2 PETER 3:3-7

³ Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

⁴ And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

⁵ For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

⁶ Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

⁷ But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.



word is also used in the sensual sense of "voluptuousness" or "debauchery." "Man necessarily falls victim to this when cut off from God...it characterizes Sodom and Gomorrah and the pagan world generally, also heresy and apostasy." Thayer adds that this speaks of "indecent bodily movements" which speaks of a lack of shame. Trench gives further evidence of this idea of a lack of shame by stating, "aselgeia is best described as wanton, lawless insolence...Basil the Great defined it as a 'disposition of the soul not having or bearing any struggle with remorse.'" Lightfoot perhaps captures the full thrust of aselgeia. He states that a man may be unclean (akathartos) and hide his sin, "but the man who is aselges (the adjective) shocks public decency."

We have come to the place in our world of an absolute shamelessness of this wicked sin. Those who are given over to their sin, seek to shock the public decency with their acts of vile behavior. A few weeks ago, a basketball player decided that he would tell everyone that he was a sodomite. A few months ago, a promotional video featuring the Chicago Cubs baseball franchise was aired. Instead of promoting their team, they were literally promoting homosexuality under the guise of "acceptance." A once wholesome organization teaching life skills to boys the world over, the Boy Scouts of America, have voted to allow "gay" boys to join scouting. Lawsuits will soon be filed so as to also allow homosexual leaders. There are twelve states at the time of this writing

that allow homosexual marriage. Tel Aviv, Israel, has become one of the most homosexual friendly places in the world. In Arkansas, our own little town of Eureka Springs, has become a main gathering place for these who have no shame in their immorality.

In many places outside of this country, any condemnation of that sin is considered hate speech and is punishable by fines or imprisonment or both. How long will it be before such laws are enacted in the states? Probably not very long. We must stand for what God says, rather than for what men "feel" is right. God destroyed FIVE CITIES of the plain in the Old Testament (Genesis 19). Can He be far from certain judgment again? Aselgeia is an old word, with continued practice even today.

(I wonder how many of our readers are aware that just less than 24 hours before the terrible tornado struck Oklahoma City (May 20th), on Sunday afternoon, (May 19th) at 4 PM, there was a gay parade held in Oklahoma City? see this website:

<http://www.nowtheendbegins.com/blog/?p=14009>

Isn't it interesting that the major news channels and newspapers totally ignored (denied) any connection between these two events? - Ed)

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EDDY-TORIAL - LAWLESS LAWMEN - By Buddy Smith

I don't have much hair left on top of my head any more. No, it's not because hair and brains don't grow together. And it's not because I've got one face and am clearing ground for another. It's because there are more and more issues in this fallen world that puzzle me deeply, so deeply that I find myself scratching my head 24/7 (well, almost 24/7. Maybe 23/6 since I am running out of hair.). This head scratching problem has a name. It's called the Enigmatic Paradoxical Dilemma Follicle Loss Syndrome. I'm not the only one to suffer from it. Lots of old preachers have it. Especially the ones with OPS (Old Paths Syndrome).

One thing I wonder about especially. I wonder why Lawless Lawmen are so popular. You know, those Action Heroes we keep bumping into everywhere we go. No, no, not the ones your teens drool over at the movies. Not Iron Man and Captain America and Spider Man. Not the modern Nimrods, the "Mighty Hunters" that populate the imaginations of our church members. I am thinking of the real Lawless Lawmen.

So, if you are scratching your head, maybe I should explain what a Lawless Lawman is.



- He (or she) is someone who wants to be a leader, but refuses to be led.
- He (or she) expects to be IN authority, but never UNDER authority.
- He (or she) demands to be allowed to teach others without being teachable themselves.
- He (or she) lays down the law, but can't bring themselves to submit to God's commands.
- He (or she) seeks great honour, but despises those who actually deserve our respect.
- He (or she) expects to be supported, but does not contribute to the body of believers.
- He (or she) craves recognition, but never once acknowledges those whom God honours.
- He (or she) demands strict accountability from underlings, but totally refuses to be accountable to them.
- He (or she) reproves others, but refuses to hear reproofs.

You get the picture.

Lawless Lawmen are the new Renaissance Men (and Women) of this Lawless Age. Anomia is their watchword, the cry of the 21st century Zeitgeist. Hollywood, the greatest purveyor of lawlessness in our society, always wears two masks in all her deceptions and intrigues. One mask is that of the world that is. It depicts the culture that already exists. The other mask is that of the world that is to be, and depicts the culture the screenwriters, producers, directors, and actors want to build for the future. I keep thinking of what Lee Iacocca said when he temporarily revived the fortunes of Chrysler Corporation 20 years ago. He said, "We don't want to build the cars Americans want. We want to build the cars WE want them to want." And he did, for a while. That's what Hollywood does. It not only shows us how bad we already are, it makes us worse. It acts out who we already are and then portrays who they want us to be. Two masks. So we see them everywhere we look, the Lawless Lawmen (and Women). Rebellious men and women bossing us around. Those who break all the rules make all the rules. Lawless Lawmen.

IT IS TRUE IN BUSINESS. The Lawless Lawmen of Wall Street are the wealthy, arrogant, spoiled, megabucks, headline heroes that claim to keep the economy ticking along. But their lawlessness rivals the Mafia for skullduggery. If we say it is a dog-eat-dog world we insult canines. There is no trickery they will not practice if it improves the balance sheet. No country on earth can escape their predations. But God is keeping tabs on them, and He has something to say about their demise, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your

garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you." James 5:1-6

IT IS TRUE IN POLITICS. Our leaders, almost without exception, are immoral, unethical, hedonistic, dictatorial, and as arrogant as Herod and Jezebel combined. Even those few who claim to know Christ are compromised and crushed by the machinery of party politics. Look at Europe, look at the UK, or Africa, or America, or China, or Russia, or South America, or Australia. Tell us where we can find a nation that honours God, that obeys the laws it writes, that opposes the ungodliness of Sodom. We have seen in our lifetimes the morals of so called "Christian" nations plummet from the seventh commandment to the pit of Hell. In my childhood I knew one person who was homosexually inclined, and that was because his mother raised him as a little girl. Only one person! But now they are on every hand and they demand that we accept their perversion as normal. How sad that the Lawless Lawmen we voted into office are all wishbone and jawbone, and usually without any backbone!

IT IS OFTEN TRUE IN OUR CHURCHES. Pastors who once professed to believe in congregational church polity and the priesthood of the believer are now addicted to an Episcopalian model of church polity, that is, rule by pastor. Jack Hyles practiced it so openly that many of his admirers took it up. It involves a pastor becoming a Lawless Lawman, in that he demands total loyalty and accountability from his church members, but denies that he is accountable to his church. Allegiance to the Pastor is required, at all costs. He gathers around him a group of "mighty men" who will do what he asks, without question. We used to call them "yes men." We have, over the past fifty years, bred up a generation of Baptist Popes, each one pontificating over his own little Vatican, and often excommunicating any "protestant" who dares to question the infallibility of the Pontifex Maximus! Some of these popes even send out decrees and anathemas against their fellow popes. If it weren't so sad it would be humorous. The biblical concept of a pastor being a minister (read, servant) to his congregation is absent in many of our churches. One of our old friends told us of their new pastor who was asked if he would officiate at the funeral of a family member. The funeral was to be held in the pastor's church auditorium on a Saturday. He

told them that he would not be available, but one of his associates could fill in for him. They supposed he was away speaking in a distant town and would not be able to return for the funeral. So you can imagine their surprise when, after the funeral on their way home, they saw him coming out of the Tennis Club in town, shorts, runners, towel, racquet and all. Lawless Lawmen!

IT IS OFTEN TRUE IN OUR HOMES. Fathers make demands on their families that they themselves do not keep. We dads altogether too often track in the mud we then complain about. We object to the dishes in the sink that we put there. While we glut our bodies and minds in front of the television, we complain that nobody mowed the grass. We criticise our children for the time they spend on computer games and then watch Hollywood movies until midnight every night of the week. We tell them to read their Bibles while ours gathers dust. Lawless Lawmen.

DO YOU WANT TO MAKE THE LAWS AND ENFORCE THEM? THEN YOU DARE NOT BE A LAWLESS LAWMAN.

There is a verse that speaks to pastors, but ought to be read by every church member. In fact politicians and businessmen and fathers ought to read it, too. **James 3:1** says, "My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation." We will all be held accountable.

King Solomon told the judges of the land much the same thing when he commanded them, "... *Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with*

you in the judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts." **2 Chronicles 19:6-7**

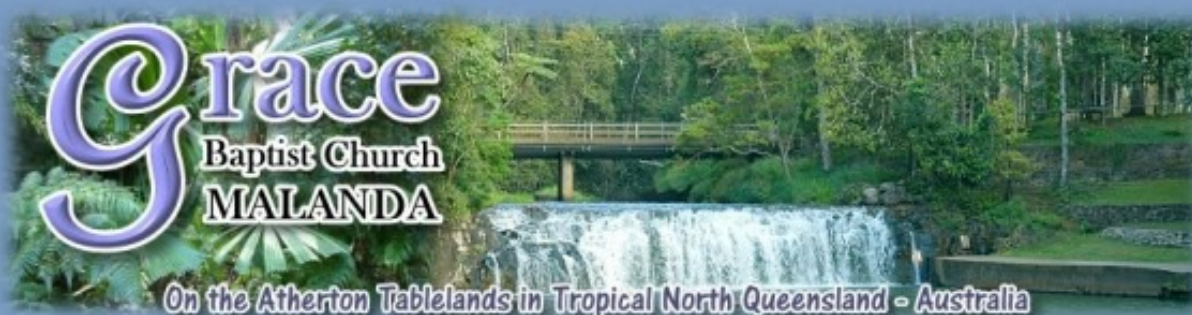
We who know Christ do not find a pattern for leadership in Marvel Comics or in the violent spy stories in the DVD's from the video shop. Lawless Lawmen are not our mentors. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "*And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.*" **John 8:29** and, "*I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*" **John 5:30.**

Why is this an important issue? Because the Ultimate Lawless Lawman is due to arrive any minute. He is called the Son of Perdition, the Man of Sin, the Little Horn, the Beast, and the Antichrist. What we are seeing all around us in the great multitudes of Lawless Lawmen (and women) is a dress rehearsal in history for the Most Lawless Lawman of all time to appear.

The next time you turn on the TV, have a long (cold, hard) look at the hero of the film. Whether it is a western, a sci-fi flick, or a romance, ask yourself the question, "Is he (or she) a Lawless Lawman?" And if the answer is yes, then ask yourself the question, "What am I doing watching this?"

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Welcome to the Website of Grace Baptist Church - Malanda, North Queensland, Australia



Grace Baptist Church MALANDA

On the Atherton Tablelands in Tropical North Queensland - Australia

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