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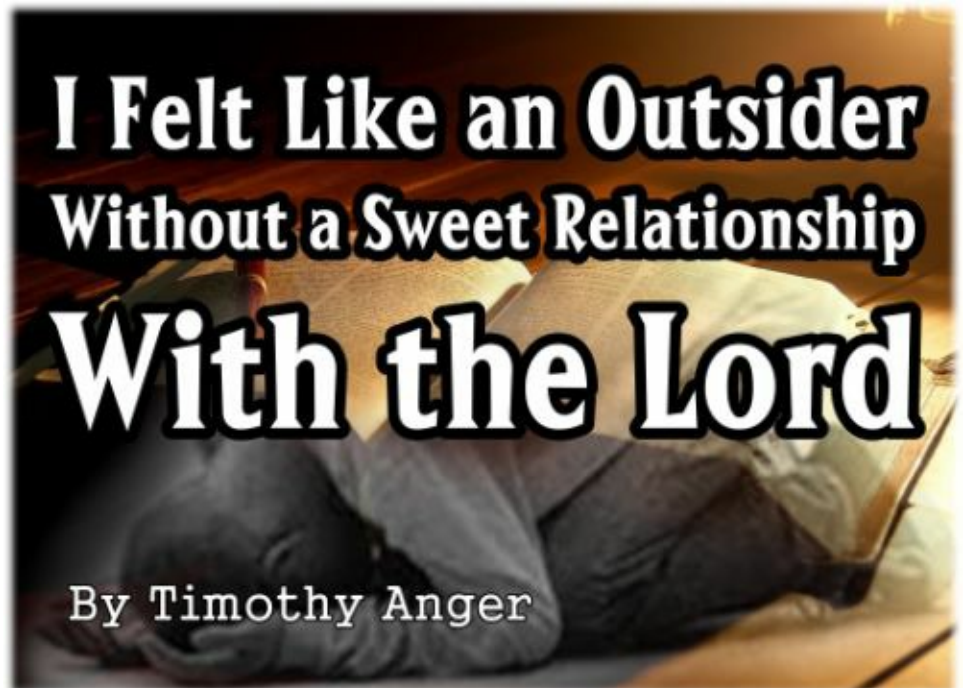
Heads Up!

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At a recent church program, I played the part of Nicodemus. As I examined his life in the Bible, in chapter 3 of the Gospel of John, I found that his life was very similar to my own.

Nicodemus was a religious leader, well-respected by his peers. I grew up in a Baptist preacher's home, was actively involved in my church as a teen and on into adulthood. I attended Bible college and became a teacher in a Christian school and even served for a time as youth pastor. Being on the church staff gave me a measure of respect by others.

Nicodemus was of the strictest sect of the Jews and was undoubtedly very sincere in his belief in God's written Word. Likewise, I was always convinced that the Bible was God's inspired Word, His revealed will for mankind. I read and studied it faithfully. I enjoyed hearing it preached and taught and adhered to the strictest interpretations of the Bible's doctrines.

But, Nicodemus observed something in the ministry of Jesus that unsettled him. Jesus spoke with a power and authority that was unusual. He performed miracles, healed the sick, and changed lives in a dramatic and undeniable way. Nicodemus must have wondered what he was missing in his own life that Jesus had in His. His curiosity caused him to seek after Jesus. He probably heard Jesus preach and teach on a number of occasions. But he wanted to talk to Him personally.

In my experience in various Baptist churches, I had seen the power of God at work in the lives of many people.

Lives were transformed in truly miraculous ways.

I observed answers to prayer in ways that testified to God's glory. Close friends talked often of their sweet personal relationship with the Lord, of answers to private prayer, and of lessons He was teaching them. I felt like an outsider, an observer. I began to wonder, "What was I missing that they had?" I reasoned that since I had prayed a "salvation" prayer as a young teen, then I must be "saved," so I must just be missing some special link to the deeper Christian life. (Note: salvation, saved and born again are Biblical terms referring to the forgiveness of sins by God and the rescue of a person from the power and penalty of that sin. This is God's requirement for everlasting life.)

But as I approached my 35th birthday, and my supposed 22nd "spiritual" birthday, I honestly admitted that if I had not found that missing ingredient in all these years, why would I find it now. But it was so real to others. I began to earnestly seek for God with all my heart. **I thirsted for a relationship with Him that I had not enjoyed all these years, but that I knew others were experiencing.**

Nicodemus came to Jesus under cover of darkness at night. Undoubtedly, he was fearful of what others would think. Pride is a big hurdle to the religious. I began thinking, reading, writing, and evaluating. But I did it secretly, not even telling my wife. I pulled back from my other pursuits and activities and spent time in the Bible, pleading with Him to reveal Himself to me.

When Nicodemus came to Jesus and began talking to Him, Jesus quickly got to the point of telling him that he was in darkness and spiritually dead. He needed to be born again, spiritually.

I admitted to God that my heart was deceitful, and I was unable to rightly discern my true spiritual condition. But He knew me inside out and could reveal it to me.

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins..." the Bible tells us in [Jeremiah, chapter 17, verses 9-10](#). The Bible also says, in [Psalms chapter 139, verses 23-24](#), *"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."*

When I came to Him honestly seeking a relationship with Him, He quickly revealed to me that I was a lost sinner. I was listening to a sermon about Judas Iscariot, the disciple who betrayed Jesus. Today, we view him as a thief and traitor, but in his day he was highly respected as

part of the inner circle of Jesus. He was a participant in the ministry of Christ, an observer of many miracles, and the recipient of the teaching of the Truth. But he was lost and damned to hell for his sin.

I identified myself with Judas. My heart was smitten and broken. I was stunned at the revelation. How could it be, that after all these years, I was lost? I thought I had done what was required for salvation. I had memorized the verses in the plan of salvation. I had followed the plan as best as I knew how.

But God had answered my prayer – He had shown me that I did not have a relationship with Him, because I needed to be born again.

Like Nicodemus, I was confused. "How can these things be?" And Jesus seemed to answer, "Are thou a religious teacher and knowest not these things?"

I longed for a life-changing work of God in my life. I wanted to know Him. I clung to the promise in [Jeremiah, chapter 29, verses 13-14](#), *"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you..."*

I knew that God would be found in His Word, so I began earnestly reading. He began by showing me His holiness and majesty, then my sinfulness, hypocrisy, and emptiness in comparison. Over the course of a week, I read many, many passages of scripture. God's Holy Spirit was teaching me and pointing me to see Jesus. I sensed that He was working in my heart, convicting and calling me to Himself.

The Bible verse that came to my mind was [Matthew, chapter 11, verse 28](#), *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*

Something seemed to be hindering me, however. I read in [Isaiah, chapter 59, verses 1-2](#), that *"the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."*

The next morning was a holiday. I didn't have to go to work. I got up early and finally told my wife of the struggle in my heart. Then I went to my office to spend more time alone with God.

Through His word, I sensed Him working in my heart and showing me what I needed to hear. He showed me the need to humble myself of my pride. I recognized my sin of unbelief as I read [Hebrews, chapter 3, verses 7-8](#), and [verse 12](#): *"Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your*

hearts...take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."

I pulled out a sermon tape that explained the need for both repentance and faith, and clearly laid out the requirements for Biblical salvation. After an intense week of the Holy Spirit teaching me through the Scriptures, it was all coming together. As the sermon came to an end, I had to turn the tape off and fall on my knees. He was calling me ... me... I wept. Through tears I cried, "I surrender all!"

At that moment a new birth took place!

I sensed a change immediately. I was aware of a desire to immerse myself in God's Word. Jesus was my Savior, and I yearned to know more about Him in a friendship, fellowship, relationship sort of way, not just a "head-knowledge" way.

I am still doing many of the things in the church and my personal life that I did before. They were good things. But now there is new motive and a growing relationship with my precious Lord.

How about you? **Is your religion or spiritual experience dry, empty, and lifeless?** More of a ritual than a relationship? Jesus lovingly invites us to turn from our self-righteousness and pride and to humbly acknowledge our great need of Him and His righteousness. When we are willing to make Him Lord of our life, and turn our life over to Him completely, then He, in mercy and grace, saves us.

***"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."** (Isaiah, chapter 55, verse 6-7).*

Timothy Anger ~

<http://www.lvbaptist.org/tanger/>

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THERAPY FOR THE FUNNY BONE -

Mother rat was leading her numerous offspring across a dark street at midnight when she spied a hungry looking tomcat under a streetlight looking their way. Immediately she told her babies to stop where they were and crouch down. She then drew a deep breath and barked like a dog, "Ruff, ruff, ruff, Grrrrrrrrrr!! The hair on the cat's back stood up and he leapt for an alley and disappeared. The baby rats all cried out in admiration, "Wow, Mom, that was so cool! You're the best mom in the world!"

She shushed them to silence and lectured them, "See, that's what I've been telling you, you never know when you will be glad you took the time to learn a foreign language!"



A retired doctor, a real old geezer, became very bored sitting around in a nursing home and decided to open his own medical clinic. He had quite a sense of humour so he put a sign up outside that said: "Dr. Geezer's clinic. Get your treatment for \$500, if you don't get better, I'll pay you back \$1,000."

Another doctor, new in town saw the sign and laughed to himself, "That old Geezer doesn't know beans about medicine, so I'll go to see him and take him the cleaners" So "Dr. Young" went to see Dr. Geezer. This is what transpired:

Dr. Young: "Dr. Geezer, I have lost all taste in my mouth. Can you please help me??"

Dr. Geezer: "Nurse, please bring medicine from box 22 and put 3 drops in Dr. Young's mouth."

Dr. Young: "Aaagh !! -- This is Gasoline!"

Dr. Geezer: "Congratulations! You've got your taste back. That will be \$500."

Dr. Young is very annoyed and goes back after a couple of days figuring to get his money back.

Dr. Young: "I have lost my memory, I cannot remember anything."

Dr. Geezer: "Nurse, please bring medicine from box 22 and put 3 drops in the patient's mouth."

Dr. Young: "Oh, no you don't, -- that is Gasoline!"

Dr. Geezer: "Congratulations! You've got your memory back. That will be \$500."

Dr. Young (after having lost \$1000) leaves angrily. After a week or so he comes back again.

Dr. Young: "My eyesight has become weak --- I can hardly see anything !!!!!

Dr. Geezer: "Well, I don't have any medicine for that so, "Here's your \$1000 back." (giving him a \$10 bill)

Dr. Young: "But this is only \$10!"

Dr. Geezer: "Congratulations! You got your vision back! That will be \$500."

Moral of story -- Just because you're "Young" doesn't mean that you can outsmart an "old Geezer."

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DEACON TRUE SEZ -

Our preacher sure is a sharp old coot. (Don't tell him I called him that.)

We've had one of them IKMTEB dudes coming along to meetings recently... (Waddya mean you don't know what them letters stand for? Ever'body knows that, well, if you're from around these parts, you'd know right off what they mean. Awright, It means "I Know More Than Encyclopedia Britannica." Yep, the look in your eye tells me you've come across IKMTEB's somewhere before.)

Anyway, there's one of 'em comin' to meetin's just now, been there for about six months or so. Oh, I reckon I know why he's been comin' along, but I ain't gonna tell you. What I wanted to say is that he thinks he knows everything, in the Bible and out of the Bible. When he first showed up he sported that Bible of his like he knew every page inside out, but I've noticed that he's not followin' it much now. He don't even bring it with him to church most times. He puts on airs like he knows everything better than the preacher does. The preacher's been watchin' him pretty close the past few Sundays, and last week, he got him a good one.

He's been askin' the men to read a verse or two out loud, in the middle of the sermon. About half way he called on young "Ikey" to read the next reference, and you shoulda seen him jump! He was all slouched back in his seat, cool as a bowl of Dream Whip, sittin' there holdin' that pretty little thing's hand, and all of a sudden he heard the preacher call his name, askin' him to read the next verses... Well, he couldn't refuse. It would make him look bad to the church folks, to the girl's folks, and especially to his adoring little sweetie pie. He jerked upright in his chair and made a grab for her Bible. He'd left his at home again. If that wasn't bad enough, her Bible was brand new and hadn't been broke in yet. The pages were all still stuck together, and the verse reference sounded like it was in the minor prophets somewhere.

So poor young "Ikey" sat there scratchin' away, his ears gettin' redder by the second, and everybody waitin' for Mr. Know-It-All to come out with it. We saw his sweetie lean over to him and whisper

something to him. He ignored her for thirty seconds or so...

And then the penny dropped. All of a sudden he realized his ignorance had been exposed. The preacher had asked him to read Zebadiah 14:37, and there was no such book in the Bible.

We were all a bit embarrassed that the preacher had trapped him and that he'd been exposed so publicly, but then he HAD been spruikin' how well he knew his Bible, and he was plumb full of himself (clean up to the roots of his hair), and he was a terrible show off. Anyway, the preacher smiled at him, and said to him ever so gently, "Son, I'd like to talk with you for a couple of minutes about that verse after the service, please."



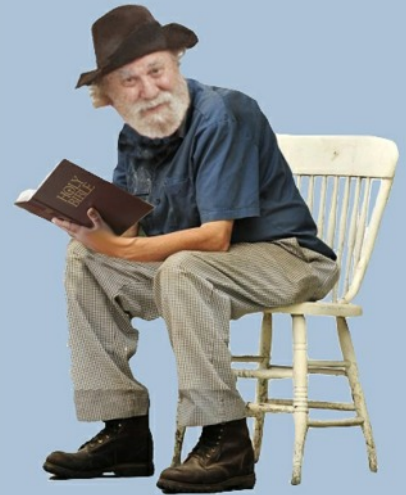
I'll give young "Ikey" this, he went off with the preacher to his study as meek as a lamb after the last prayer.

Me and Ma usually hang around, shuttin' off the lights and checkin' the windows and doors, and was just leavin' when "Ikey" came out of the study, shakin' the preacher's hand and smilin' sorta subdued like. He caught up with us in the parking lot and shook my hand, too, saying, "Deke, you know there's some verses that are in the Bible more than once?" I nodded my head and waited for him to finish. He said, "That Zebadiah verse is one of 'em. It reads the same as Proverbs 16:18."

When I told Ma what he said, she smiled and quoted it to me. "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."

Ikey might make it yet.

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On August 4, 2015, Pastor Buddy Smith of [Grace Baptist Church](#) in Malanda, Australia, distributed an email to most Independent Baptist Pastors throughout Australia, with a subject line which read, "Lighthouse Baptist Church - From Fundamental To Emerging?"

The subject of the email was in response to three articles published by Pastor Robert Bakss (hereafter RB), the Pastor of [Lighthouse Baptist Church](#) in Rockhampton, Australia, and published in the [Biblical Builder](#), an internationally distributed, bi-monthly magazine which is produced at Lighthouse Baptist Church, with RB as Editor In Chief.

In his email Pastor Smith claimed that *"there is a growing consensus and great concern among pastors, evangelists, and missionaries that Bro. Bakss is not only leading Lighthouse Baptist Church, but many other churches into the Emergent Church Movement. The recent Live Out Loud youth rally at Lighthouse Baptist Church with Eric Capaci as speaker, a skateboard ramp in the auditorium, rock musician Isaac McGovern performing, and youth from Lighthouse then attending the large Hillsong Conference in Sydney the week following are all indicators of the movement of LBC from fundamentalism to emergent."*

Pastor Smith was prompted to this course of action after he and other concerned IB Pastors and leaders had observed, over a period of time, how, through his ministry at Lighthouse, and his associations, RB was exhibiting classic and unmistakable signs of moving his church in the direction of the apostate and heretical Emergent Church Movement.

The gradual move from a traditional IB style of worship to that of CCM style music and songs, his attendance at Brian Houston's annual Hillsong Conference two years in succession, the incremental introduction of musical instruments more in keeping with the world's rock concerts than conservative church worship, his deliberate use of CCM entertainment and worldly celebrities as "bait" to attract people to his church, were just some of the significant signs that indicated a departure of Lighthouse Baptist Church from travelling on the narrow old biblical path and onto the wide new path that, today, is populated with a multitude of Emergent, Pentecostal and Charismatic enthusiasts, which includes Roman Catholics who are now accepted as genuine brothers and sisters in Christ.



In response to Pastor Smith's email, RB distributed a "Statement of Position" to defend his obvious departure from his once-held fundamentalist, IB understanding of the Scriptures. Having read the "Statement," and because of my own past involvement with Pentecostalism, and being familiar with the indisputable signs that indicate that one is heading in that direction, I would like to make a number of comments regarding some of the things RB has offered in his defence.

Before I begin though, let me just say that RB is free to take Lighthouse Baptist Church in any direction he and his congregation determine that God has called them to take it, but because he claims to be a fundamentalist IB Pastor of an influential IB church, and because the questionable things he has chosen to do are being promoted publicly and broadcast to the wider IB church community, both here in Australia and overseas, including into the local IB assembly of which I am a part, then he should expect to generate comment, either positive or negative, and also be willing to be scrutinised. To say that being contacted and questioned by concerned IB pastors is a violation of the "autonomy of *his* local church" is not valid. It is actually his questionable activities which are a threat to, and violating the "autonomy" of everyone else's "local church."

Someone is also bound to ask the age-old, out-of-context question, "In accordance with Matthew 18:15-17, have you been to see RB, or have you contacted him personally about the things you have written in this critique?" The answer is, "No! I have not, and neither do I intend to, and neither am I required to."

All that church leaders write in books, in articles for magazines, in commentaries on Internet blogs, etc., and what they say during live streamed broadcasts of their church services over the Internet or on television, etc.,

becomes part of the public domain and is subject to review, analysis, and critique of any kind, and by anyone. It is not a private matter, but a public one, and Church leaders are responsible for the teachings and activities that they promote publicly, and they are publicly accountable for whatever they promote.

No one is required to contact anyone personally, or in writing, to seek permission to critique anything that someone has distributed via a public forum.

The context of Matthew 18 is in regard to personal offence between two brothers, not about publicly circulated teachings and activities that could adversely affect the Lord's flock, or the reputation and integrity of the Lord's church.

Comment #1 – Oh Those Slanderos, Self Appointed Critics

In his opening statement RB makes the following comment, and then quotes Romans 3:8 as his justification for doing so. *"For over a year now I have remained silent and not engaged in any verbal, email, social media or internet warfare concerning the matters and issues whereof the ministry of Lighthouse Baptist Church and myself have been '...slanderosly reported...'"*

RB claims he and his church and ministry have been slandered, but that he has taken the moral high ground by not responding. The Webster's Dictionary defines "slander" as follows: *"To defame; to injure by maliciously uttering a false report; to tarnish or impair the reputation of one by false tales, maliciously told or propagated."*

During my years in Pentecostalism, I saw a similar tactic to this used on many occasions, by Pentecostal leaders who would appeal to God's fearful warning, "Touch not the Lord's anointed," in an attempt to avoid scrutiny or reproof, because of their dubious activities or false teachings. Pentecostal congregations have been conditioned, over many years, with the unbiblical belief that they are never to question God's "anointed" leaders – not for any reason, and with the threat of dire consequences, originating directly from the hand of God, if they are foolish enough to do so! By my own personal observation, I witnessed that this strategy worked wonders at producing fear in the biblically ignorant, and it allowed heresy and apostasy to flourish, unrestrained.

Writing as the General Superintendent of the Pentecostal AOG denomination in the 1997 edition of their flagship publication for church leaders, the *Australian Evangel* magazine, Brian Houston of Hillsong infamy wrote the following in response to numerous concerns that had been raised with himself, and the AOG Executive,

regarding the introduction of the blasphemous Toronto Blessing false revival into their churches.

"There is a need in the Church today for gifted followers. It involves taking risks and trusting leadership. Followers have to follow the lead. Further you have to be able to change direction, often quickly. As the leader turns a corner, you have to have the capacity to go with the flow, wherever it may take you. People are far too quick to turn away from those who have been their spiritual leaders. Followers shouldn't! We should honour and respect them. People who don't are insecure. Never think that it was a coincidence that God gave you the leader you have" (Brian Houston, Australian Evangel, October 1997).

Contrary to the idea of followers having "to have the capacity to go with the flow" and to turn corners "quickly" as the leader changes direction, the Bible tells us that we are to follow leaders only in so far as they follow Christ (1 Corinthians 11: 1) and that as followers we are to test all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21) which includes that which is taught, even by the trusted church leaders and teachers we might just happen to be following (Acts 17:11).

RB hasn't come out and blatantly said "Touch not the Lord's Anointed!" But he has said something similar, only in words that are less startling to a fundamentalist audience. He has attempted to shut down the escalating inquiry which was initiated when a number of concerned Christian brothers personally contacted him, appealing to his better sense of judgement, with regard to his questionable activities, by charging that they are slandering him.

However, these appeals to consider the consequences of his actions were not made with the intention of defaming, or tarnishing RB's reputation, or the reputation of his church, but, in accordance with 2 Timothy 2:25-26, they were made with the intention of helping him to acknowledge his error and recover himself out of a dangerous snare that everyone else could see, except himself, and those of his associates who have also fallen prey to the snare of Pentecostal pragmatism.

2 Timothy 2:25-26, instructs us, *"25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; 26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."*

It is an unfortunate thing though, that in the majority of cases when this instruction is scripturally applied, it is more often than not misinterpreted as a personal attack coming from enemies, and not as biblical counsel coming from Christian brothers who are concerned for the one

who has been ensnared, and for the consequences his ensnaring will have upon the wider IB community.

Comment #2 – Second & Third Hand Comments & Sound Bytes?

RB further states that *“It is not a new thing for self appointed critics to launch written and verbal assaults against people based on misguided and misinformed second and third hand comments and sound bytes.”*

I could be wrong, but I have yet to see any evidence that anyone has falsely accused RB of doing anything that can't be substantiated from his very own, widely publicized statements and activities, as have been witnessed over an extended period, broadcast on the Internet via social media, international Internet Blogs, and also via his own widely distributed publication, *The Biblical Builder*. As well as that, his writings are broadcast in magazines that are published by hugely influential overseas ministries who are sympathetic to his cause – ministries which could also be held partly responsible for emboldening him to take Lighthouse Baptist Church on the journey from Fundamentalism to Emerging.

The *“written and verbal assaults”* as RB describes them, were not *“launched”* based upon unsubstantiated second-hand gossip and rumours. No one has attempted to smear his reputation or damage his ministry by slanderously reporting lies about him or his church, but rather they have simply raised questions and offered scriptural advice about the information he himself has made publicly available. Obviously, RB and Lighthouse Baptist Church are proud of what they are doing at Rockhampton, and they want everyone to see just what it is that they are doing. Why is RB disturbed about receiving comments, unless of course, he believes that all comments should be positive and supportive, ignoring where his publicly promoted activities contradict the clear and simple meaning of Scripture?

However, going one step further than Brian Houston, who accused people who were resisting the heretical Toronto Blessing Revival as being insecure, RB has appealed to [Proverbs 10:18](#), implying that those who have queried his obvious retreat from fundamentalism, and his openly displayed association with Pentecostalism, are fools who are guilty of hatred, lying and slander. The accusation is that *“He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool.”*

Alarming, there is a growing crowd in the IB community today, both among the leadership and the laity, who, when an admired Pastor or teacher is questioned about his obvious compromise, that they adopt the same self-serving and protectionist strategies that I observed

among the Pentecostals in times past. These people become defensive and malign the one who raises the question, usually by attacking his motives, and his character and integrity. They despise biblical reproof when it is offered, either privately or publicly, and they characterize it as hidden hatred, as misinformed gossip, lying and slander, in the hope that the allegation being made about them will be dismissed by their supporters, despite the available evidence of its truth.

We can all quote Scriptures to defend our own position, but does the Scripture being quoted support the truth of the issue at hand? That's what really matters. Are all these people, who are concerned about the damaging consequences of RB's actions, for himself personally, and also for the wider IB community, really just fools who are lying and uttering slander, motivated by hidden hatred, as RB suggests by quoting Proverbs 10:18? Or should we look for some other agenda for the quoting of the Proverb?

Let me quote [Proverbs 15:31-32](#), however, and you be the judge of whether it is out of context for the issue at hand, or otherwise. *“The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise. He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.”*

Comment #3 – Associating With Hillsong And Its Affiliates

RB offers his reason for publishing his *“Statement of Position”* as follows: *“...in order to correct reports that Lighthouse Baptist Church and myself are affiliated with Hillsong and the apostasy of Rome, I have decided to publish this statement on our position.”*

We all know that words have meanings, and that some words can even be used so as to subtly cause the reader to think in a certain way, a way that will be beneficial to the person using it. Therefore, we need to carefully define certain words RB has used, so that we don't get misled into believing something that is untrue.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines the word *“affiliate”* as follows: *“To adopt or accept as a member, subordinate associate, or branch. A person, organization, or establishment associated with another as a subordinate, subsidiary, or member.”*

RB uses the word *“affiliated”* here to give weight to his defence that people have lied about him and slandered him. By saying that he and his church have been accused of being *affiliated* with Hillsong, he gives a stronger and more serious suggestion than the one he has really been accused of. Everyone knows that RB and his church are

not *affiliated* with Hillsong, therefore those who have raised any issues with him must be telling lies. But the question that is being asked is not about *affiliation*, but why he, and other members of his church *associated* with the heretical Hillsong Church, by attending their wildly Pentecostal Annual Conference, on repeat occasions.

No one that I know of has accused that RB has *affiliated* Lighthouse Baptist Church with Hillsong Church as a member, or a branch, under the Australian Christian Churches umbrella, as his terminology would subtly suggest. As well, no one that I know of has suggested that RB has *affiliated* Lighthouse with “*the apostasy of Rome*.”

However, because of the evidence from their own widely published accounts of their activities, the actual question that has had to be asked of RB is, why had he and other people from his church, and his friend Eric Capaci from the US, all “*associated*” themselves with the heretical Hillsong Church on repeated occasions, and had they ever considered the adverse consequences this would have for themselves, and for the wider IB community?

The Webster’s Dictionary defines the word “*associate*,” in the context that it had been used when querying RB, “*To unite in company; to keep company, implying intimacy; as, congenial minds are disposed to associate.*”

In 1 Corinthians 5:11, the Apostle Paul wrote “*But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.*”

Now, by quoting this Scripture, I’m not suggesting that RB is guilty of any one of those sins mentioned, but I am suggesting that this command about separation also applies to anyone who chooses to openly and self-assuredly company himself with the ministry of a man who calls himself a brother, and yet, who has demonstrated himself, for years, to be perhaps the leading voice in the world today spreading the heretical beliefs and practices of Pentecostalism, which includes using the world’s rock music, through which they are rapidly bringing about ecumenical unity with the Roman Catholic Church.

To join in company with someone and their ministry – to *associate* with them, however casually – indicates that you give credibility to that person and his ministry. By default, you endorse his teachings and his ministry by *associating* with him, without ever having to be *affiliated* with him.

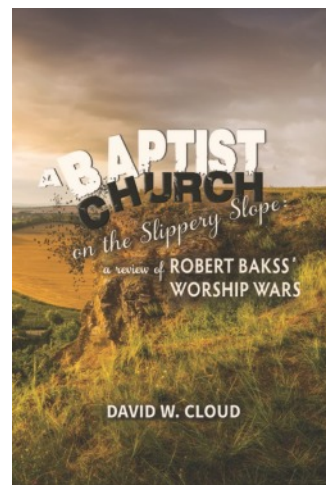
RB argues against this thoroughly scriptural understanding of the English language though. In the

closing comment in his “*Statement of Position*,” in another attempt to justify his repeat attendances at the Hillsong Annual Conferences, he states that “*I do not consider association is endorsement.*” Amazingly, despite his attempt to convince everyone that he had not associated with Hillsong, here he confesses that he did, but it doesn’t matter, because he doesn’t consider that the association he had with them was an endorsement of them.

But does God consider association to be endorsement? That’s the question we need to answer. And to arrive at the proper and scriptural answer, I will be commenting in more detail upon this statement in Part 2 of this critique, to be published in the next issue of Heads Up.

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A BAPTIST CHURCH ON THE SLIPPERY SLOPE



This is a review of *Worship Wars: What the Bible Says about Worship Music* (2015) by Robert Bakss, Pastor of Lighthouse Baptist Church, Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia. *Worship Wars* is a full-blown defense of Christian rock music and is an invitation to young people to experiment with the world’s music.

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DEATH IN THE POT

THE POISONOUS INGREDIENTS OF WORSHIP WARS



A listing compiled from the book, *Worship Wars*, which reveals those people and organizations who influenced Pastor Robert Bakss to arrive at what he believes is truth regarding the matter of appropriate music in the churches. Who is it that provided the ingredients that were added to the Worship Wars pot?

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Gold From Ophir

"Crossing Cultures"

By Jerry Wilhite - South Africa



Every foreign missionary crosses cultures. Simply speaking, culture is the way of living for a particular people group. It involves their mother language, types of food, marriage and funeral customs, civil government, transportation means, music, art, literature and the like. When a missionary ("evangelist" may be a better word biblically speaking) leaves his own culture and enters another, he is crossing cultures, as it were.

Every evangelist faces this to some degree or other--we certainly did when leaving our home country and taking up residency in Africa. No two countries are exactly equal with their customs, just as no two provinces or states are identical in tradition, routines, norms or expectations.

The differences are augmented though when changing locations half a world away. The questions that arise in every translocated individual is, "What should I change and how much do I, should I, need I change?"

Short term travellers probably have to change very little. In fact, if they do have to change, they realize the change is brief, perhaps somewhat different and exciting, and they can get back to their comfort zone in a few days, weeks or months. They really don't have to change, and their hosts probably don't expect them to change either. The hosts may even enjoy a change that the short term traveller brings to them. A long term resident into a different ethos, though, must more carefully weigh the questions because the effect on his people group, family, and even himself will obviously be more far reaching and long range.

Baptists purport to hold to several distinctives the first of which is, "The Bible is our only rule of faith and practice." This is not just a position fantasised by the Anabaptists of the early centuries; it is a Bible truth. *The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple (Psa 119:130). For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life (Pro 6:23). We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place... (2Pe 1:19).* Does the Word of God speak for or against this particular behaviour either in precept or in principle? Are there examples of

Bible characters who either have violated or obeyed a biblical rule and thus been harmed or blessed as a result?

[Romans 14:23](#) is another key scripture pertaining to this matter—*whatsoever is not of faith is sin*. If it's doubtful; don't do it. If it seems wrong, then it may be wrong. If it's questionable, then stay away from it. If you can't have a clear conscience about it, then avoid it like a plague. When in doubt; don't! It isn't worth risking your salvation testimony or embarrassing your Savior by getting involved in something of which you aren't certain. Think, "Might I disgrace God or one day have to apologize for this?"

Now there may be some elements of a culture one can adopt to some extent as long as a Bible precept or principle is not violated. For example, one could certainly eat the foods from another culture, but stop short of eating foods spoiled by uncooked blood, liquor, meats knowingly offered to idols or even foods infested with germs due to insanitary cooking practices. One could learn another's language without having to learn and use crude or vulgar words. One could adopt a particular style of dress as long as it is not immodest. The music may be all right to some extent. There is liberty in some areas—maybe many—but one must be careful not to adapt to cultures where the devil has held strongholds for many centuries (2Co 10:4). The desire and goal of a missionary is to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God (Ac 26:18). Being like someone to win them to the Savior may do just the opposite. The darkened soul may actually win you to him.

Just because one is a missionary in a foreign culture does not give him the right to live "any ole way he wants," after all, he is there to win souls regardless of the method. Pragmatism isn't God's way in any culture. Just because some thing or some method or some style seems to work doesn't make it right wherever one resides even if his motives are pure be it in the States or in a foreign land.

Our family is currently in the U.S. on furlough. Adapting to Africa may have been easier than re-adapting to America. Crossing cultures back into America has been more drastic than any furlough before. What we are seeing in

this Christian-based culture is demonically influenced cultures having imposed their living standard in seemingly unprecedented ways. People can be observed who at least look worse than those in Africa we have tried to evangelize. Where are the real heathens in heart and lifestyle? Disheartening it is to return to a Christian-based culture and yet see evidence all around from the influence of demonically influenced cultures. Body “art,” piercings, and rhythmic music abound. Men and women we have seen the Lord save in Africa could readily be sponsored to come to America and evangelize here. They could readily say, “We were saved out of the very things in which you take pleasure!”

We have not seen this wholesale in supporting churches. For the most part, we have been encouraged at some churches with several younger couples toting children who have not given up or given in to a cultural shift, and we praise the Lord for this! Yet, pastors tell us their town has one or more culturally acceptable (“worldly” is a more biblical term) churches to where people flock. Sad!

Crossing cultures? Going abroad? Don’t be surprised at the need to re-cross into a culture you once thought you knew.



NEW HYMNAL ANNOUNCED

(contributed by Jerry Wilhite)

Leaders of the American Evangelical Laodicean Church last week announced the publication of a new hymnal.

“This collection of hymns really captures the essence of our tradition,” said Presiding Bishop Luke W. Armm. “People in today’s society get uncomfortable with too much talk about commitment and dedication,” he continued, “they would rather have a religion they can turn on or off at will.”

Here is a listing of some of the selections found in this hymnal:

- “A Comfy Mattress is Our God”
- “I Surrender Some”
- “Blest be the Tie That Doesn’t Cramp My Style”
- “Just As I Am With Lots of Excuses”
- “My Hope is Built on Nothing Much”
- “O For a Couple of Tongues to Sing”
- “Onward Christian Reservists”
- “Self-Esteem to the World! The Lord is Come”
- “Spirit of God, Descend Upon Their Hearts”
- “Take My Life and Let Me Be”
- “There Shall be Sprinkles of Blessing”
- “When Peace Like a Trickle”
- “When the Saints Go Sneaking In”
- “Where He Leads Me, I will Consider Following”
- “Above Average is Thy Faithfulness”
- “Be Thou My Hobby”
- “I’m Fairly Certain That My Redeemer Lives”
- “Pillow of Ages, Fluffed for Me” and many more.

For Heaven’s evaluation of this new hymnal, see Revelation 3:14-22.

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POEMS THAT PREACH -

Life can never be dull again,
When once we've thrown
our windows open wide,
And seen the mighty world
that lies outside,
And whispered to ourselves
this wondrous thing,
"We're wanted for the business
of the King!"

~ Author unknown ~

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Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes -

- In the final analysis it will be seen that historians spent their lives describing the age long conflict between Old Babylon and New Jerusalem. ~ B. Ferraro
- If you would like to know what it's like to be in a minority group, do more work than is expected of you. ~ Don Boys
- No matter your lot in life, build something on it. ~ Don Boys
- If you are not aware of the danger all around you from the world and satanic influences, you are like a man walking waist-deep through a snake and alligator infested Everglades swamp. You are going to get bit. ~ Don Boys

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I received an email the other day from Bro. Les Searle, pastor of Southern Cross Baptist Church in Engadine, NSW. He forwarded a paragraph or two from a sermon he preached recently. It reminded me of another brother's comment that pastors who welcome Contemporary Christian (?) Music into their churches are actually embracing the mindset of the musicians who write and play this "music." Their mindset, universally, is that their music builds ecumenical bridges between churches, as well as between "christians" and a lost world. **Bridge building is what it is all about. This ecumenical agenda is their single minded focus. It is what makes Stuart Townend and Keith Getty's music so subtly dangerous! Ecumenical unity is the covert agenda of CCM!**

What we DON'T hear from any of the bridge building CCM musicians (or the pastors who promote their music) is that there are ravenous wolves and lions in the apostate "churches", in the heretical cults, and in the world. These very wolves and lions have desired for years and years an access to our lambs, so you can imagine their delight to see IB pastors building bridges through the music of the nightclub and the dance floor right to their doors. The naivete of undiscerning CCM loving pastors beggars belief! Do they not know how hungry the wolves are?

So I keep asking them, "Guess who's coming to dinner?" The answer? **"Ravening wolves like Brian Houston, Mark Driscoll, Joyce Meyer, Kenneth Copeland, Benny Hinn, Rodney Howard Brown, Rick Warren, Joel Osteen, and TD Jakes."**

Independent Baptist pastors like Eric Capaci, Josh Teis, Paul Chappell, and Robert Bakss are whistling up the wolves! One of the pastors we met years ago followed the CCM path to increase the size of his flock. Guess how large his church is now? It doesn't exist any more. Oh, and would you like to know what he does for a living now? He works as a bartender.

Someone needs to tell the bridge builders that, "Hard on the heels of these wolves comes the Devil himself, the roaring lion, devouring precious souls."

Is it any wonder the wolves and lions are becoming so obese? They are fattening themselves on our lambs, but who built the bridges that gave them access to our flocks? - Ed

EXCERPTS FROM A SERMON BY PASTOR LES SEARLE ON EPHESIANS CHAPTER 5

"Christians today do not want to hear the clear plain truth of God's word. They prefer to hear the "liberty" preachers - What they call the "Grace Walk". The things that were once a matter of holiness have now become "choices presuming upon the grace of God."

The evil one, Satan, has made huge inroads into the churches by promoting his music which is **contrary to the walk this passage exhorts. (Eph 5)**

There are deceivers such as Pastor Bakss of Lighthouse Baptist Church in Rockhampton, with his new book ***Worship Wars***, which we as a church and as individuals need to take a clear, bold stand against. He is a promoter of Hillsong, Rick Warren, and many other apostates.

He should have called the book **Music Woes**, for that is what he has brought upon himself and all those who support this confused, misleading teaching.

Isaiah 5:20, 21 *Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!*

Ezekiel 13:3 *Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!*

Jeremiah 23:1 *Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD.*

Matthew 18:7 *Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!*

The days are evil and they are right here in IB circles but these false teacher churches are false fundamental churches which don't have the internal fortitude to change their name to what they really are."

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(For all the Market Research that megachurches do, they never saw this coming - that a younger generation got tired of all this Wannabe coolness and was seeking Authenticity. -

I keep reading that churches will lose all their youth if they sing the old songs and preach old fashioned doctrinal, or expository sermons. I can testify to the contrary. At our church's attendance levels a couple of years ago, we counted 55 youth below the age of 20, and 22 adults above that age. At present, the ratio is, with some of our teens becoming twenties, and some younger families relocating, about 50 youth below the age of twenty, and 35 to 40 above that age. Every week several of our youth visit the nursing home, work in our youth groups, disciple younger children, play instruments in church services, teach Sunday School and sing specials. In our recent Sacred Concert we had 24 special items, with most of them involving our youth and "twenties". So when our critics say, "You'll lose your youth!", I say, "Rubbish!", and then I add, "It is more likely the CCM churches will lose theirs to the night clubs, the movie theatres, and the charis-megachurches that make more noise and put on a bigger show than the IB churches that are so infatuated with Hillsong.")

The Millennial generation is seeking something REAL. So the question is, is the church you attend the real deal or is it just putting on a religious "Performance"? Brian Edwards said it so well in his book Shall We Dance?, "Drama is all about pretence, not reality." This was A. W. Tozer's indictment of the churches of his day when they brought Hollywood in the door. His little book, The Menace of the Religious Movie, charged pastors with promoting pretence instead of reality.

When we go to church to watch a performance, whether it is drama, dance, drums, or a dunce in the pulpit, we need to remember that we are watching pretenders, not real Christians. I cannot for the life of me picture the Lord Jesus Christ or any of the apostles preaching a life changing gospel as a skit or a performance that had to be scripted, rehearsed, orchestrated, or depended on spotlights, amplifiers, and choreography. Is it any wonder that churches which embrace and employ the carnal methodology of a godless entertainment industry produce spectator Christians who are so used to

"watching instead of doing" that the church dies (or degenerates into a slightly religious nightclub) for lack of members who are activists, participants, and who will spend and be spent for Christ. Oh, the "Under 30's" may be sweet talked into building a skateboard ramp in the church auditorium or setting up the "stage" for the rock concert or disco, but it is driven by caffeine, adrenalin, testosterone (with a sugar hit and a can of Red Bull thrown in for fun), and never by the Spirit of God. But if a fiery missionary or an evangelist were to accidentally be allowed into the pulpit and preached with fire from Heaven, the silence would be deafening. Volunteers to spend their lives on a mission field? You've got to be kidding.

"Recent research from Barna Group and the Cornerstone Knowledge Network found that 67 percent of millennials prefer a "classic" church over a "trendy" one, and 77 percent would choose a "sanctuary" over an "auditorium." While we have yet to warm to the word "traditional" (only 40 percent favor it over "modern"), millennials exhibit an increasing aversion to exclusive, closed-minded religious communities masquerading as the hip new places in town. For a generation bombarded with advertising and sales pitches, and for whom the charge of "inauthentic" is as cutting an insult as any, church rebranding efforts can actually backfire, especially when young people sense that there are more emphasis on marketing Jesus than actually following Him. Millennials "are not disillusioned with tradition; they are frustrated with slick or shallow expressions of religion," argues David Kinnaman, who interviewed hundreds of them for Barna Group and compiled his research in "You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church . . . and Rethinking Faith."

[http://www.amazon.com/You-Lost-Me-Christians Rethinking/dp/0801013143](http://www.amazon.com/You-Lost-Me-Christians-Rethinking/dp/0801013143)

Want millennials back in the pews? Stop trying to make church 'cool.'

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/jesus-doesnt-tweet/2015/04/30/fb07ef1a-ed01-11e4-8666-a1d756d0218e_story.html

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The Challenge Of Heathendom In Australia

By W. Arnold Long



(Preached at Belgrave Heights Convention in the 1940's or 1950's - Ed)

Although nobody knows and nobody has ever known just how many aborigines there are in Australia, we may say that of the total number there are perhaps 15,000 who live outside of civilisation. They are not only uncivilised but they are in heathen darkness also.

Then there are some thousands who live a kind of halfway life, spending part of each year on the cattle-stations or other outposts of civilisation and part of the year in the bush.

The ancient customs and beliefs still constitute the spiritual order for most of these people. Witch doctors still flourish among them; bone-pointing and other such evils continue under the outer veneer of civilisation.

It seems a strange thing but nevertheless true, that after all these years of Christianity there is still in this land a heathendom as dark as that in any part of the world!

This fact is a challenge to the church of God in Australia, and, if it may be said without presumption, an indictment of it.

The task has been left to the few!

This also is an individual matter.

If you live in Australia, and if you are a member of the living church of God, you cannot escape some measure of responsibility for the evangelism of the original inhabitants of our land.

It is our privilege as well as our responsibility to gather in the sheaves that are within our coasts while there are some sheaves to be gathered in.

There is a further aspect of this matter concerning which I feel that I should sound a note of warning.

There is a tendency these days to put a halo around the "old customs" of heathendom, and at the same time to cast a shadow upon the Gospel of Christ.

We are faced with a battery of advice on all sides from people who tell us that we cannot use among primitive people the old apostolic methods of introducing and teaching Christianity.

We must be careful not to upset their own ideas; we must not offend them in any way; we must maintain a tolerant and compromising attitude to heathendom in general.

Apparently the Lord was not so particular in His dealings with the "powers of darkness." We read that on the cross, He "made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

But now all that has changed! The missionary must sit at the feet of the anthropologist and learn how to administer the Gospel in small doses of much diluted strength (or weakness) in case the medicine might be too strong for the patient. The mixture should also have incorporated into it as much as possible of the extract of heathendom.

Normally, of course, the issues would be clear cut. The missionary of the cross would go forward with the silver trumpet of the Gospel to sound forth the message of "deliverance to the captive and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."

But the man of science comes along, or "Mr. Worldly-Wiseman" who combines in his person all necessary elements of Christianity and science. With a patronising manner he accepts the missionary and says, ***"Not so fast! If you blow that trumpet too loudly you will cause a lot of confusion. The walls of the prison may begin to fall down and that would be a disaster. Besides that prison house which you are assailing is a most interesting edifice. Those gates of iron which you would burst asunder are of great historic value. Those fetters on the captives are genuine antiques. Their value is entirely dependent on the fact that they are still in use, and thus offer valuable material for study. Then the whole routine of the prison-house would be upset if some should leave the establishment suddenly. This order has been in vogue so long that it is entitled to respect and must be regarded as the natural way of life for the inmates. If you should lead them into liberty it would be too much***

of a shock. Their mental capacity would not stand it. If they should go forth into the light it might give them spiritual conjunctivitis. It might even have as drastic an effect as it had on Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus."

Once in the inland I told one such gentleman of a number of young dark men who had become bright Christians. He was alarmed and indignant and said, "You don't mean to tell me that these young men are Christians! It would take at least ten years of constant instruction-perhaps fifteen or twenty years before they would be ready to receive Christianity!"

We wondered whether at the end of this tremendous period of instruction any of these young men might still be called young men, that is of course, if there were any survivors, and if they had not been scattered about the country in the meantime. We wondered also how many decades would be required to make them established Christians.

The fact is that our self-appointed advisors know as little of the power of God as they do of the "depths of Satan." (Rev. 2:24). They do not realise that the ancient customs and beliefs of these people are simply a branch of the old tree that darkens so much of the world with its shadow, a darkness in which the "abominations of cruelty" flourish and which is in reality the shadow of death.

This heathendom in Australia has nothing in common with the Gospel, but has a great deal in common with heathendom in other lands and in other ages. For example the practice of cutting their bodies when death occurs was one of the customs of heathen nations, forbidden to the people of God in centuries past, *Leviticus 19:28. (Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD.)* The destruction of twins which is common in Africa occurs in parts of Australia to-day.

Heathendom, as distinguished from the individual characters in it, is a cruel, arrogant system, pervaded by the spirit which prevails among "the rulers of the darkness of this world," alienated from God and rebellious against Him. It is a cruel system. It has no regard for human rights. A lady who lived in a remote part of the continent, once told us that she could not get out of her ears the cries of the little girls being dragged away to be married to the old men.

We have felt it to be our responsibility to get those cries out of our ears, by doing all possible to have the girls set free. These little girls have no choice of their course in life. The old men keep them as slaves. An old man may

have many wives and may do as he pleases with them. When one becomes too old he casts her off and takes a younger woman in her place. The girls or women may be loaned by one man to another. They may be also passed on from one to another as gifts or items of exchange. We knew a fine young woman of about 18 years of age, an earnest Christian, who had been the wife of three different old men, handed from one to another.

Similarly the boys and young men have not the freedom which is the rightful inheritance of all human beings. This is the natural outcome of the determination of the older men to keep everything possible for themselves. To bring the boys completely under this domination they are put through the initiation ceremony, which varies among different tribes. This is frequently characterised by torture which has been responsible at times for the deaths of candidates for this admission to manhood. It has not been uncommon for some to run away in an attempt to avoid this, and some have been killed for doing so.

These things are the outcome of the "old customs" which so many people are professedly anxious to preserve!

Heathendom has no regard for human suffering.

Some years ago, in the south of the Northern Territory, a young girl ran away from her old "husband" for whom she had no affection. When she was caught and brought back again the old man smashed her leg with a nullah to prevent her escaping again. To make doubly sure, when she had practically recovered, he smashed the other leg. Just then a policeman in the district, a kind and humane officer, heard of the incident and arrested the old man, charging him with assault. A young woman whose legs were horribly burned, was once brought in to the Katherine Hospital. The doctor said that she must have been deliberately held in the fire to have been so dreadfully burnt. He did his best for her but in vain. She died, another of the countless victims of "old customs."

In the Tennant Creek district when we were working there, an old aboriginal attempted to recapture one of his young "wives" who had run away. He shattered a boomerang over her arm before we could intervene to prevent further bloodshed. These are far from being isolated instances. They are typical of that hopelessly unsatisfying system which is a "yoke that neither they nor their fathers were able to bear."

Furthermore heathendom has, in some ways,

No Regard For Life Itself. There are some different districts of the interior where for years past the girls have been more numerous than the boys. The reason is that

the boys in many cases have been killed at birth, to satisfy the desire of the older men to ensure, by a preponderance of girls over boys, the continuance of their own polygamy.

A young girl of 13 or 14 years of age was an expectant mother in a district in which we were at work some time ago. She was taken away by one of the men who already had two other wives. We sent for her and he said to the messenger, "You tell Mr. Long that I will chop her in pieces with a tomahawk and send the pieces up to the mission house." His brother had committed a murder of this kind far out in the bush, some time previously. A young girl declined to go into his camp at his order so he hacked her to pieces. This was one of the many undisclosed murders of the bush committed beyond the fringes of civilisation. The one who made the threat previously mentioned, soon afterward made a wide detour in secret, as he thought, placing this girl under the care of others at a place 20 miles from our centre. He reappeared as though nothing had happened and pretended to know nothing of the girl's whereabouts. He also disowned any connection with her. But in the meantime we had made our own arrangements. Two trackers arrived unexpectedly at the hiding place in the bush and returned with the girl they were seeking. With her they brought three other little girls who were similarly in bondage. On the way back the police Sergeant for the district saw them and heard their story. Being a good and kind man he was indignant at the sight of these little girl slaves. He agreed that we should keep them under our care. We placed them in a building nearby with two of the young women in charge. The number of such girls soon increased as one by one they were rescued and set free.

The marriage system which various people have worked out in elaborate tables in an impressive manner, is a very different thing in practice. For ourselves we feel that it cannot honestly be called a system at all. Its outcome is jealousy, bitterness, hatred, dissatisfaction, cruelty, fights and murders. Most of the people themselves are, at heart, weary of it and longing for deliverance.

"Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away," Hebrews 8:13. This old form of Satan's bondage thrives in an atmosphere of ignorance, delusion and fear.

For people held in such thralldom the Lord of glory came that He might *"deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage,"* Hebrews 2:15.

"Fear hath torment" and these people are tormented by fear in a thousand forms: fear of evil spirits, fear of enemies, fear of the darkness, fear of evil magic and bone-pointing, fear of death.

Heathendom is a system which is alienated from God; it is a midnight of spiritual darkness with which the light immediately conflicts.

In some districts the Christians have withdrawn from the corroborees and other such things which may be in some cases intrinsically harmless, but which, for them, constitute "the world" - which is stained with the blood of Christ, as much as its counterpart in civilisation is "the world" to us.

And lastly heathendom is not only alienated from God, it is Defiant Against Him.

In a district of the interior we were preparing once to move with the people to another place because of drought. Our water supply had dried up. We were praying earnestly for rain, and the native Christians were praying with us, eagerly expecting the answer to their prayers. On the morning of the day on which we were to go, the great black clouds rolled across the sky, hanging so low that heavy rain appeared inevitable. Many of the people were excited and I went over to where a ring of men-folk were sitting and said, "Well I believe there will be no need to move after all! We are going to get the rain." But there was a peculiar stiffening in the attitude of those men, and one of them announced that two of their rain-makers had brought the rain. I replied that they knew well enough that only God could make the world, the sun and the stars and the clouds. "H'm," came the defiant rejoinder, "God make the clouds, but blackfeller fetch 'em up!" To me this was a personal challenge, not only to the Lord, but to His representative on the spot. I told them that God had heard their words and would be angry and that if they still believed what they said, God would drive all the clouds away and there would be no rain at all. We made this known to the others and prepared to more. It seemed that nothing could stop the rain coming. Big drops had already begun to fall. But for three days the clouds rolled on and then cleared right away. At the centre to which we moved temporarily the tropical storms of the summer began to gather some months later. But every time their rain-makers "sang the clouds" those storms went away! No rain fell until they ceased!

There is only one way to meet the challenge of the "old customs" of heathendom, that is not in compromise, but in combat! May the Lord raise up some more to help us in the conflict with the powers of darkness and some to join us in it on the field and to say:

"If God's is the awful battle,/ Where the darkling legions ride,/ Then hasten to bridle and saddle!/ Lord let me fight at Thy side!"

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More and more I see professing Christians who are spiritual mavericks. They wander from church to church, they jump everybody's fences and graze in everybody's pastures, but they give no milk to anybody and they pull nobody's plow. They see no responsibility to contribute, to use their spiritual gifts for others, to serve, or to be accountable to the Lord or to their brethren.

They have no sense of community larger than their own family nor feel any need to be members of a church. Deep down inside, they are confident that the members of their family meet all their spiritual needs. The ministries God gives to local churches are unnecessary for these maverick Christians. They will never be loyal to an assembly of believers, but only to their family.

On the farm we once had a steer that wandered all over the country. We called him Houdini because he could "get

out of anything", pens, fences, even most stockyards. He was forever jumping the fence from one farm to the next. He ate the best grass out of the best paddocks on every farm. He came and went at his own pleasure, until one day the owner of our farm rounded up a dozen steers to send off to the meatworks, and waddya know, he gathered old Houdini in the muster before he realized what was happening.

The last we saw of Houdini, he was looking over the side of the truck on his way to the meatworks. His head was up and he was looking for a way out, but there was none left. There comes a time like that for all mavericks. One day the Lord will muster all the mavericks and their fence jumping days will be over.

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A. W. Tozer once made the following insightful statement, "When a diseased Christianity becomes evangelistic, it merely spreads the area of infection."

THE NEW-EVANGELICAL ORIGINS OF POSTMODERN CHURCHES -

New-evangelical thinking began as far back as the early 20th century, at a time when Bible Christians were opposing the heretical beliefs of liberal theologians. Their opposition to modernism founded a movement called "Fundamentalism." Godly men separated from modernist churches, seminaries, and denominations. Their battles against liberalism were long and fierce. Sadly, before long, there arose from within the ranks of Fundamentalism a cry for peace, expressing the desire for a peace treaty with the modernists. They loved peace more than truth.

By 1948, pastor Harold Ockenga led a sizeable group of evangelicals to "repudiate the doctrine of separation" and to found a "New Evangelical" movement, "evangelical in doctrine" and yet in dialogue with those who denied a literal six day creation, the fall of man, a literal Hell, the virgin birth of Christ, His substitutionary atonement for our sins, and His bodily resurrection from the dead. It was hoped that "new evangelicals" would, by their non-combativeness, win the modernists to Christ by not separating from them. Over the past sixty five years, New-evangelicalism has proved itself to be a diseased form of Christianity, spreading its infection all over the world.

THE POSTMODERN EMERGENT-CY IS THE LATEST STRAIN OF A DISEASED NEW-EVANGELICALISM -

Previous articles on the postmodern Emergent-cy describe the progression of New Evangelicalism from its beginnings to this, its latest manifestation, the Emergent Church Movement. What is not commonly known, even by pastors, is that the existentialist philosophy of Soren Kierkegaard is the taproot of the postmodern (Emergent) church movement. Or that business management expert Peter Drucker digested the teachings of Kierkegaard and

then spoon fed them to his "Druckerites", Rick Warren, Bill Hybels, and Bob Buford (for more on this, read the previous articles).

So, if Kierkegaard's teachings comprised the "taproot", if Drucker was the "stem", or "trunk" of the tree, and if Warren, Hybels, and Buford are the "branches", then what are the "firstfruits" of the postmodern Emergent-cy?

• The firstfruits are the New Men who have arisen/ are arising to lead the postmodern churches.

Men like Mark Driscoll, Brian McLaren, Rob Bell, Doug Pagitt, Ted Haggard, and Dallas Willard are last year's fruit and several of them have already shrivelled, or picked and discarded, and some have swapped trees, looking for higher branches. Every week there are newer men like Brian Houston, Joel Osteen, and Geronimo Aguilar, (who was just last week sentenced to several prison terms for sexual assaults of young women in his family and church.)

• The firstfruits are the New Movements arising, built upon New Motivations.

These religious movements feel no need to follow closely the teachings of Christ, though they do occasionally quote selected Bible verses to support the greedy, self-gratifying lifestyles of their leaders. God revealed to the apostle Paul the true motivation for every biblical movement ever to be found among His people, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." I Cor. 10:31 That is our motivation, but it is not the motivation of the Emergent Church Movement. Their motivation is described in 2 Peter 2:1 - 3 "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

Does that sound familiar, “Covetousness, feigned words, making merchandise of you.”? The arrogant manner, the mansions they own, the clothes they sport, and the wealth they flaunt all speak volumes. Their love for the limelight, ever exalting themselves, and seeking the praise of men.

It is a true maxim, that when men build empires, you need not look far before you find him who would be Emperor!

• **The firstfruits are the New Message we hear them preaching.**

It is here that the Emergent Church Movement has made its “paradigm shift,” a change from old paths to the present way of thinking about life. Peter Drucker often hinted that it was time for a new world religion, and that is what we see in postmodern churches. A religious movement with no absolutes, no life-changing message, the absence of repentance, a lack of clarity on the nature of true, saving faith, no concept of holiness or separation from sin. In place of the old gold of a “faith once delivered to the saints” we find “new dross at negotiable prices with mosh pit and big screen entertainment supplied.” Shifting values, a social gospel, and a love for the world.

Whereas New-evangelicalism made an attempt initially to retain a biblical message of salvation through repentance and faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, Jesus Christ (though repentance was soon jettisoned and faith redefined), the postmoderns, including Rick Warren and Bill Hybels, discovered that, not only could they adopt most of the world's methods, but they could now preach a social gospel that would never offend the sinner.

Surely, America has become one of the most corrupt nations in the world, politically, religiously, and commercially. Its culture stinks to high Heaven, but they applaud Rick Warren and call him "America's Pastor". That speaks volumes in itself.

A good example of the paradigm shift is Rick Warren's five point PEACE plan, which now reads, **"Promote reconciliation - Equip servant leaders - Assist the poor - Care for the sick - Educate the next generation."** This is the new version. Prior to 2007, the first point was **"Plant churches that promote reconciliation"**. A subtle change, from planting churches, which involved a message of salvation to convert sinners and do the work of discipling them into a functioning body of believers in Christ, but this was altered to “Promoting reconciliation.”

If you have heard Rick Warren speak, you know that he instructs his workers to go into a village, “find a man of peace”, and work with that man, Muslim, pagan, Catholic, atheist, LGBT, or communist.

Some discerning reader is going to say, “Wait, this is not a New Message! This is the same Old Social Gospel the modernists preached in the 19th and 20th centuries!!!”

Well, yes, but now the message includes the “promotion of reconciliation.” We could venture a few guesses as to who Rick Warren has in mind to make peace with, but whichever religions, races, or revolutionaries they are it will all add up to a New Ecumenical Unity.

The final article on the Postmodern Emergent-cy in the next issue of Heads Up! will address the New Music and the New Mystery.

Which Strategy Does the Emergent Church Movement Use to Attack Old Time Gospel Churches? Balak's or Balaam's ?

From Numbers 22 to 25 Israel was threatened with destruction through a devious and crafty enemy named Balak. He was the king of Moab, and he schemed to have God destroy His people. He knew of a false prophet named Balaam, who had the reputation of being a successful prophet. So he tried to bribe Balaam to curse Israel. God refused Balaam permission to speak against His people, so he returned home. Jude tells us he was rewarded by Balak, and Moses tells us that many Jews died. We wonder how it happened since God would not curse Israel, and yet they died.

And how did Balaam get a paycheck from Balak since he was not allowed to do as the king asked?

The solution is very simple. Balak had hoped for a frontal attack. His tactic was, “Persuade God to destroy His people!” But the frontal attack did not work. God is faithful and does not forsake His own. Balaam, in all his cunning and trickery suggested to Balak that he try a flanking attack, “Rather than asking God to act out of character by judging the apple of His eye, why not send your Moabite women to seduce the men of Israel? Then God would have no choice but to judge them.”

And the flanking attack succeeded to a point. Until Aaron's grandson Phineas took a javelin and slew a prince of Israel and his paramour.

Just So, The Emergent Church Movement Seeks to Destroy The Old Time Churches By Its Cunning Flanking Attacks, But It Will Fail As Balak Did.

We old fashioned Christians are not facing the onslaughts of Atheism, Islam, or Rome, as in days past. Those were frontal attacks. We are facing the devious flanking attacks of the Baalams of our day, the change agents that man the pulpits of postmodern churches. They are training up

seducers to allure the saints and are sending them into our churches. Many pastors and youth leaders are falling to their wiles.

They forgot one thing. They forgot to see what God said about it in the Bible. They would have seen that Balak went home in defeat, that Balaam died at the hand of Joshua's soldiers, ***Numbers 31:8 And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.*** And they forgot that their flanking maneuver only slew about one tenth of one percent of the people they had hoped to destroy.

Vance Havner said it so well when he said, "The church, the true church, always outlives her pallbearers."

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[From churchwatchcentral.com.](#)

People seem to think that Mesiti is not an active Hillsong or C3 pastor. However, Pastor Pat still does speak infrequently at Hillsong and C3 Church:

Pat Mesiti is a pastor of Hillsong and C3 church. For a long time he has been a close contact and friend of "Pastor" Brian Houston and "Pastor" Phil Pringle. Both Brian Houston and Phil Pringle stood by the unrepentant sinner Pat Mesiti when he was caught in adulterous affairs backs in the year 2000 and brazenly restored this fraudster back into church leadership in spite of his brazen prosperity heresy and his new career as a huckster.

Why would this behavior surprise anyone? Will it surprise Brian Houston considering that he recently used Pat Mesiti in a sermon as an example to his congregation to aspire too?

The Sydney Morning Herald writes,

Former Hillsong pastor Pat Mesiti faces domestic violence charges

A former Hillsong Church minister who became a motivational speaker faces domestic violence charges after he allegedly assaulted his wife in a "fit of rage" on New Year's Eve.

Police from The Hills Local Area Command in Sydney's north-west arrested Pat Mesiti at his home about 11pm on Thursday.

"The accused was heavily intoxicated and in a fit of rage over a family issue," Sergeant Michael Plass said.

Mr Mesiti was charged with assault occasioning actual bodily harm and common assault. Police have sought an apprehended violence order on behalf of his second wife, Andrea. Mr Mesiti has not yet been required to enter a plea to the assault charge and it is not known if he will oppose the AVO application.

Fifteen years ago, Mr Mesiti was one of Australia's most prominent evangelists. He had his own television show and had risen to become a national director of the Pentecostal church movement Australian Christian Churches.

But in 2001 the church leadership at Hillsong discovered he had been sleeping with prostitutes. He was stripped of his licence to minister. His first marriage fell apart.

"I was basically struggling with a sexual addiction," he told the Christian magazine *Sight* in 2006. Two years later he told the *New Zealand Herald* he had "lost everything" following the revelations.

"I was so depressed that I couldn't talk for two years. I struggled with my mental health."

Mr Mesiti went on to become a motivational speaker and self-described "prosperity activist" who now instils people with "millionaire mindsets".

"Not to brag, but I am a world-renowned prosperity and mindset coach with over 2 million of my books and products sold worldwide," he says on his website.

"I am a sought-after business consultant to Fortune 500 companies and franchises worldwide on leadership, team building, wealth creation and personal development."

His stated ambition is to create 10,000 millionaires within his lifetime and he has several speaking appearances slated for 2016.

Mr Mesiti could not be reached for comment on Saturday.

Granted bail, he will face Parramatta Local Court on January 12. The police application for an apprehended violence order will be heard on the same day. Assault occasioning actual bodily harm carries a maximum five-year prison sentence.

Source: By Patrick Begley, Former Hillsong pastor Pat Mesiti faces domestic violence charges, *Sydney Morning Herald*, <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/former-hillsong-pastor-pat-mesiti-faces-domestic-violence-charges-20160101-gly2ld.html#ixzz3w6PB9CU3>, Published 03/01/2015. (Accessed 03/01/2016.)

9 News writes,

Ex Hillsong minister 'hit wife in fit of rage'

A disgraced former minister of the Hillsong Church has been arrested after allegedly lashing out at his wife on New Year's Eve in what police described as a drunken "fit of rage". Pat Mesiti, who claimed to be a sex addict after he was booted out of the evangelical organisation for

sleeping with prostitutes, was taken into custody about 11pm on December 31 by police from the Hills LAC.

"The accused was heavily intoxicated and in a fit of rage over a family issue," Sergeant Michael Plass told the *Sydney Morning Herald*, revealing that Mesiti was charged with common assault and assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

The charges prompted police to seek an Apprehended Violence Order on Mesiti's second wife's behalf; he remarried following the disintegration of his first marriage following his ignominious exit from Hillsong in 2001.

Mesiti, a one-time TV preacher who now claims to be a "prosperity activist" (a motivational speaker) has been granted bail and is expected to front Parramatta Local Court on January 12.

Source: By ninemsn, Ex Hillsong minister 'hit wife in fit of rage', 9 News, <http://www.9news.com.au/national/2016/01/03/15/03/disgraced-hillsong-minister-allegedly-assaulted-wife-in-drunken-fit-of-rage>, Published 03/01/2016. (Accessed 03/01/2016.)

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SO WHAT DOES HILLSONG'S "SILENT NIGHT" TELL US? -

(Last month, Hillsong London pulled off the internet their shocking video of a 1920's cabaret-style, rendition of Silent Night. Thanks to Chris Rosebrough, a copy of the video is available at <http://www.piratechristian.com/>.

It is an excellent example of the plummeting morality of megachurches in general and Hillsong in particular. Chris Rosebrough gives more insights here <http://www.piratechristian.com/>.

He also provides links to an insightful open letter from JD Hall to Michael Brown, who had defended the Silent Night musical travesty. The letter can be read in its entirety here <http://pulpitandpen.org/>

Pastors who are following their chosen piper into the orbit of Hillsong ought to read these excerpts from JD Hall's open letter. - Ed.)

"When Pulpit & Pen and a few other polemicists and discernment sites broke the story of the gay choir leaders at Hillsong NYC, you wrote a scathing piece for

Charisma Mag, shaming those of us who released this information and accusing the entire affair of being nothing but “internet rumor” ([source link](#)).

Of course, it was not mere rumor. The homosexuals in question testified to their service at Hillsong NYC in a media interview ([source link](#)). Hillsong NYC pastor, Carl Lentz, was on the record in the press regarding homosexuals in the congregation ([source link](#)). The polemics and discernment community had made available to the public videos of Carl Lentz clearly capitulating on the topic of homosexuality ([source link](#)), which gave us every possible indication that the homosexual choir leaders were indeed embraced and utilized at Hillsong as though they were members of the Christian community.

And then, I saw your most recent article in Charisma Mag again defending your fellow charismatic, Brian Houston ([source link](#)). Hillsong put on a Christmas program, of which was a part that displayed a “sexy” cabaret-style song-number ([source link](#)). And although Hillsong quickly got rid of the video evidence, the photos alone were disturbing. In fact, they were beyond disturbing. They were carnal and wicked. And to make matters worse, it was done in Jesus’ name. There was, and is, no excuse for such a display of lasciviousness in any place or among any people masquerading as the people of God. And yet, you chose to make excuses for Hillsong and Brian Houston – who we have already (beyond a shadow of a doubt) demonstrated lied and had you take part in his lies.

Dr. Brown, do you really believe it is somehow an innocent methodological mistake to portray a

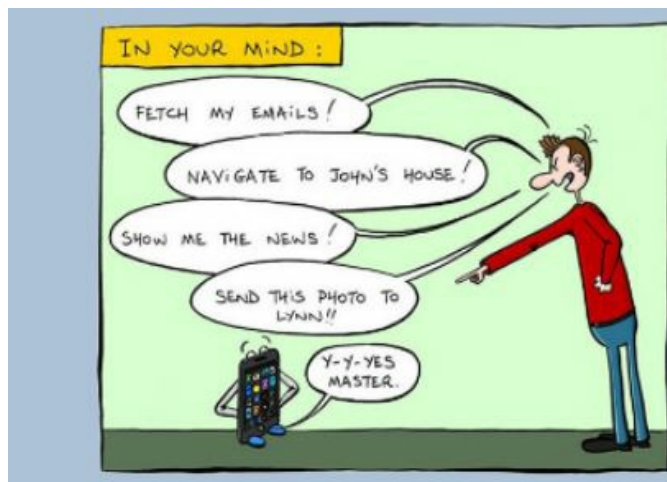
scantly clad, semi-nude woman, baring her midriff in a Marilyn Monroe dress and dancing on a platform in celebration of Christmas? Do you think such incitements to lust and unwholesomeness was really done to portray Herod’s filthy heart? Do you really think the idea to put semi-nude women on stage to dance and writhe their bodies was done for any other reason than to fulfill the basest desires of a congregation of mostly lost people?

Regardless of the hype of light shows and fog machines, Christmas cabarets and gay choirs, ecstatic utterances and supposedly fresh words from God, I can categorically say that God the Holy Spirit is not at work in charismatic evangelicalism. There is no corner of the Christian world that is so devoid, so empty, and so lacking in the spiritual gift of discernment as what we see in charismania, of which you are a part. If God the Holy Spirit were at work there, we would see charismatics, such as yourself, purge the rolls of the charismatic teaching roster like God purged Mt. Caramel.

You still owe it to the readers at Charisma Mag to retract your defense of Hillsong and apologize to the polemics community who were right, who you castigated as liars.

And, Dr. Brown, you owe it to yourself to ask why your theological camp is full of charlatans and crooks and why you feel the need to defend them.
Cordially,
JD Hall"

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THE WORDS GOD CHOSE TO USE KAVADH

By Pastor Tom Hill

One of the great words that is used in the Bible is the word GLORY. It is not uncommon to hear a person utter something along the line of, "glory to God," or "to God be the glory." We read of God's glory in the Scriptures often. If you were asked to define God's glory, what would you say?

The word glory is not used of the Lord until Exodus 16:7. In Exodus 33:18 Moses interceded for the nation of Israel after they made and worshipped the golden calf. He requested of the Lord in Exodus 33:18, "... I beseech Thee, shew me Thy glory." The Hebrew literally says that Moses asked the Lord to be CAUSED TO SHOW His GLORY.

There are at least 10 different Hebrew and Greek words that are translated into our English word GLORY. The word that occurs most frequently in the Old Testament is the word KAVADH. Sometimes it is spelled KAVODH. KAVADH means "that which is heavy or weighty." Occasionally KAVADH was used in a literal sense. For example it described the heavy weight of Eli by Samuel. Another time it was used to describe Absalom's hair when it was weighed each year.

KAVADH is also used in a figurative manner, as in the heaviness of sin as in a heavy yoke. In a more positive sense, KAVADH speaks of the weight of honour, as in someone being noteworthy or impressive. That is the idea that is what Moses wanted to see. (Ed. It is somewhat similar to the meaning of **2 Corinthians 4:17** For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;)

It refers to that which is having honor or glory about 180 times.

When the word is used in the New Testament, it is the word DOXA. DOXA means "opinion, what one thinks, the opinion others have." But as the Holy Spirit used the word, it came to carry the idea of "radiance, divine and heavenly radiance, the loftiness and majesty of God, the being of God." Further, it always implied honor. The Jewish people often thought of thunder clouds in light of applying the word GLORY to the Lord. When there was

lightning that either illuminated the cloud or came out from the cloud, it was glory associated with God.

GLORY, when used of God, spoke of His reputation and His power. GLORY was always thought of in relation to a visible divine radiance. It is that sometimes described as a bright flashing kind of light. That light did not have any other source. It emanates from God Himself.]

In our world, we are used to seeing a source of light. A torch has the light that come from the flame of fire. A lightbulb, a florescent tube or LED has a source of light from an electric current. The sun's light comes from a continual nuclear reaction and the combustion of gases that are contained in it. Stars give forth light in the same manner. Some heavenly bodies in the 2nd heaven reflect the light of another object, such as our moon reflecting the light of the sun. But God's light has no other source of radiance than God Himself. What did Jesus say in John about Himself and light? He said I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. That light, which speaks of His glory, lights all of heaven. There is NO darkness at all in that place. We read in the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ in 21:23, "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

Among men, that glory was seen in the pillar of cloud that was brightly shined at night as God led Israel out of Egypt. That glory was seen in the Holy of Holies when the cloud of glory shined at God's acceptance of the offering of the blood of the goat on Yom Kippur. Daniel saw the glory when he was given the vision of the Ancient of days. Isaiah saw that glory when he saw the Lord high and lifted up in a vision in the temple as attested by John in John 12:41.

In the Person of Jesus Christ, that glory was veiled behind human flesh. It was displayed one time at the Mount of Transfiguration to three of the disciples. Christ showed His glory to Paul on the road to Damascus. There it is described as a light brighter than the midday sun (Acts 26:13), and to John while he was a prisoner on the Isle of Patmos, when he saw the glorified Christ in all of His

glory. The angels from the throne of God shone with that glory at Jesus' birth and again at His resurrection.

Thus, GLORY speaks of the Lord's impressiveness and noteworthiness coupled with that blazing light. Moses' desire was to see with his eyes and perceive that glory. This is the glory that awaits God's children upon our entrance into heaven.

God told Moses that in his physical body that God would not allow him to see his glory for "no man can see Him and live", but that the Lord would allow Moses to see His "back parts." After putting Moses in a crevice in the rock, He would put His hand upon Moses, which was probably upon Moses' face. Then His glory, His sheer weight and reality of His very presence would pass by Moses. For a human, that is something hard to grasp. Moses was not allowed to see that purity and brightness with his eyes. So, what is it that God allowed Moses to see? In Exodus 33:23, we read, "And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see My back parts: but My face shall not be seen." The thought behind "back parts" speaks more of the afterglow or the results of God's glory. The brightness of His glory remained in that place. Evidently, that glory caused the face of Moses to shine. When we read Exodus 34 and 2 Corinthians 3, we read that Moses' face shined

with that glory, but when he spoke with the children of Israel, he veiled his face. Why? Because the glory was fading. Moses did not wear the veil so that the children could look upon him, but it was to hide the fact that it was fading.

As the Lord's true churches, our responsibility is to bring Him glory in all that we do - Ephesians 3:21 **"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."**

We cannot cause the world to see and understand the weight of and the impressiveness of Who God is by using worldly carnal means.

When the flesh is used in the work of the Lord's churches, the glory of God is diminished, and the focus is upon that particular work and most often, upon the person behind the work. Thus, the glory that is rightfully God's is stolen from him and given to a mere human.

Brethren, may we truly give Him the glory, for it is His alone - Isaiah 42:8 **"I am the LORD: that is My name: and My glory will I not give to another, neither My praise to graven images."**

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EDDY-TORIAL So what do we call it when the **BODY** of CHRIST becomes a **BUSINESS?** By Bro. Buddy Smith



(Reprinted and adapted From Eddy-Torial, April 16, 2011)

"The more things change, the more they stay the same." - Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr (24 November 1808 – 29 September 1890)

Five years ago Hughie Seaborn sent me the following article. It originally came from an Episcopalian priest named Sam Pascoe. He was sacked by his bishop for an "inappropriate relationship" with a female parishioner, and later reinstated by an Ugandan Anglican bishop.

The most interesting statement in Pascoe's quote below is not what he says, but what a young student asks.

"Christianity started in Palestine as a fellowship; it moved to Greece and became a philosophy; it moved to Italy and became an institution; it moved to Europe and became a culture; finally it came to America and became an enterprise." "Some of the students (he was teaching) were only 18 or 19 years old - and I wanted them to appreciate the importance of the last line, so I clarified it by adding, "An enterprise. That's a business." After a few moments the youngest student in the class, raised her hand. She asked such a simple question, "A business? But isn't it supposed to be a body?" I could not envision where this line of questioning was going, and the only response I could think of was, "Yes." She continued, "But when a body becomes a business, isn't that prostitution?"

It really is no surprise to us, then, to read the Scriptures in the Old and New Testaments that describe unfaithfulness to God as being spiritual adultery and whoredom. When a church becomes a business, it should be called prostitution, adultery, and whoredom.

Pragmatism, the engine of Big Business, has become the driving philosophy for churches around the world. Charles Finney (August 29, 1792 – August 16, 1875) was a major innovator, bringing into the churches the methods of pragmatism.

The “revival meetings” he held in the early 1800's were characterized by his introduction of methods never seen before in evangelistic work. He devised means by which he could get impressive “results” without needing to depend on the Spirit of God to work in the hearts of his hearers by the simple preaching of the Word of God. He afterward became the patron saint of every modern pragmatic preacher from Billy Graham to Jack Hyles (and all of Hyles' offspring!) Charles Finney is ultimately responsible for the modern day export of American Evangelical Pragmatism to the four corners of the earth.

Sadly, the farther we travel historically from the roots of Fundamentalism, the clearer we see that our roots are not altogether biblical. They never were. When evangelicals saw and realized the inroads of Modernism into their denominations and seminaries and determined to separate from them, they declared that they would henceforth call themselves Fundamentalists! Hear, hear! It was good and right that they separated from Modernism and modernists.

As you read the histories of Fundamentalism you hear no clarion voice raised to warn them of the presence of leaven, leaven that would eventually leaven the whole lump. No one said, “Hold on a minute. We are in danger of mixing in humanistic philosophy!” I wonder how it is that there was no clear eyed prophet to cry aloud and spare not, to remind them that there is a dangerous mixture of error with truth in every religious movement.

The strongest, most harmful element of humanistic philosophy that was accepted by the leaders in the founding of Fundamentalism was Pragmatism. If you research the term (pragmatism) you will find that in the 1920's, it was the “new kid on the block”, but only in name. The Big Is Good, Bigger Is Better, and Biggest Is Best approach to life has been with us for millennia, probably since Cain set up the first “we can live successfully and prosperously without God” society.

“Biblical” and “Pragmatic” are mutually exclusive terms. But that's what was stirred into the pot, right from the

first. And that's what we inherited. In my childhood I knew personally some of the earliest fundamental Baptist preachers. These old men were the founders of Fundamentalism in the 1920's. I knew their offspring and sat under their preaching. I heard J. Frank Norris preach once, when my parents were first saved, and looking back, I realize that there were two strands of thought at work in everything they did, Biblicism and Pragmatism.

Biblicism was from Heaven and Pragmatism was from man. The Biblical strand was blest of God, and the Pragmatism strand was winked at by God. Oh, I expect that He strove with the Pragmatists and worked to draw them more into biblicism and less into pragmatism. But Fundamentalism was never totally biblical.

Through the years (more than 65 of them since I first attended an independent Baptist church) it has become increasingly apparent that the Biblicism influence is diminishing, even dying out, and the Pragmatism influence is flourishing, increasing, growing, dominating, to the point that in many circles biblicism is almost entirely extinct.

You disagree? Think with me for a moment.

Among many IB pastors in Australia, the megachurch model is all the go.

What is it they like so much about the ubiquitous megachurches? (Why would any IB pastor choose to go repeatedly to a Hillsong Conference?)

** Well, it is not the gospel they hear preached. No, their “gospel” is so insipid it reminds us of the remedies of naturopathy which contain one microscopic drop of truth to 50 million litres of water.*

- *It's not their profound theology. There isn't any (unless they think that Benny Turkey preaching his “sermon” on the walls of ice that crushed the Egyptian army when they tried to follow the Israelites across the Red Sea is deep theology.)*
- *It's not the crowds of drug addicts and prostitutes being converted weekly. They don't exist either.*
- *It's not the uplifting hymns that glorify God and edify the saints. They were tossed out years ago, and replaced by the noise of CCM.*
- *It's not the self sacrificial lives of godly leaders. They were long ago displaced by trendy, cool dude millionaires that resemble Mafia gangleaders more than apostles.*
- *Is it maybe the soaring spires of cathedrals? Wrong again. Those were bulldozed to make room for designs that look like everything BUT a church.*

- *Well, maybe what draws them is the prayer life of the congregation. Uh, no. They closed down the prayer meeting for lack of attenders.*

** Could it be the wonderful missionaries they send out to give their lives winning primitive peoples to Christ? No, man, there's no internet, no FaceBook, and no Starbucks out there in the boonies, so nobody goes.*

Well, I give up. Tell me, what IS it that is so alluring about the megachurches? What is it that draws more and more pastors to the megachurches?

What was that you said? Size? Image? Media exposure? Offerings? FaceBook followers? The Hype of their Tripe?

Is that all?

If any pastor and his church set out to be Biblical in their message and methodology, then they will

discover that they have to separate from Pragmatism. The problem is that they will find Pragmatism is already deeply woven into the warp and woof of daily life. To correct it, to surgically remove it, becomes a vicious, endless warfare with many casualties, in the individual Christian's life, in his home, and in his church.

(Be ready, dear pastor, to have more enemies than you've ever had in your life. And more blessing, and more peace, and deeper fellowship with godly, biblical pastors than you ever thought possible.)

When the "body becomes a business" what should it be called? How is it that babes can perceive what the ancients cannot?

Bro. Buddy Smith.

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Youth Discipleship Meetings

Building a wall of spiritual protection



Who: Youth, Parents, Church Leaders and Teachers, Anyone Who is Concerned about Discipling Young People!

When: 5-7 July, 2016

Where: Southwest Sydney, Bethel Bible Baptist Church
3/13 Stennett Road (corner Moorlands Road)
Ingleburn NSW 2565

Dress: smart casual




Speaker: Brother David Cloud
Independent Baptist missionary in Nepal & author of numerous books on this subject.

Many Christian homes and churches are losing a frightful percentage of their young people to the world. The purpose of these meetings is to help youth become fruitful Christian adults. Brother Cloud has developed a practical and far-reaching youth discipleship course that deals with the parent's part, the church's part, and the youth's part in winning and discipling young people. The course covers salvation, child discipline, the Christian home environment that produces disciples, reaching the child's heart, Bible study techniques, how to protect young people from dangers associated with the Internet and smartphones, and many other things.

Afternoon sessions are being planned for both young men and young ladies.

[MENS' AFTERNOON SESSIONS PDF](#)
[LADIES' AFTERNOON SESSIONS PDF](#)

[VIEW CONFERENCE PDF](#)
[REGISTER NOW](#)



Sharpened Arrows

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

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On the Atherton Tablelands in Tropical North Queensland - Australia

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