



vs.  
**GOD'S WORD?**

*But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.  
For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things,  
having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.  
- 1 Timothy 4:7-8*

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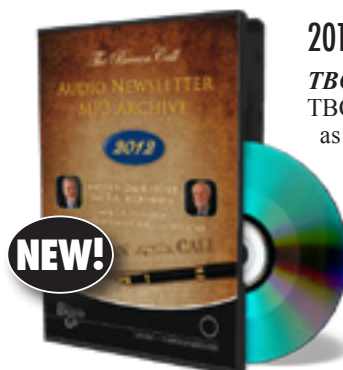
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Seven years after publication of the controversial ground-breaking bestseller *The Seduction of Christianity* in 1985, its authors, Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon, joined forces on another front. TBC was formed under the direction of Dave Hunt for the purpose of encouraging spiritual discernment among those who regarded themselves not just as “evangelicals” but as *biblical* Christians. The primary vehicle for this endeavor was through the publication of the newsletter *The Berean Call*. The ministry and newsletter name is taken from Acts 17:11, in which the writer of Acts commended those in the synagogue of the Greek city of *Berea* for being more fair minded than those in Thessalonica—because not only were they eager to receive the Word, but the *Bereans* also checked it against what the Apostle Paul taught them in order to see if his teaching was according to the Scriptures. Through the publishing and multimedia efforts of The Berean Call (TBC) believers are exhorted to get back into the Word of God instead of being “carried about by every wind of doctrine,” and are equipped with materials to help them walk in the truth. TBC’s stated mission is to:

**ALERT** believers in Christ to unbiblical teachings and practices impacting the church

**EXHORT** believers to give greater heed to biblical discernment and truth regarding teachings and practices being currently promoted in the church

**SUPPLY** believers with teaching, information, and materials that will encourage the love of God’s truth, and assist in the development of biblical discernment

**MOBILIZE** believers in Christ to action in obedience to the scriptural command to “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 3)

**IMPACT** the church of Jesus Christ with the necessity for trusting the Scriptures as the only rule for faith, practice, and a life pleasing to God

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# THE BEREAN CALL

*"[The Bereans] . . . searched the scriptures daily, [to see] whether those things were so."—Acts 17:11*

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## **The Best 2013 (and beyond) Resolution**

*T. A. McMahon*

Many of us start off the New Year with resolutions that we hope will improve our life in some way. Too often, however, our commitment to what we have resolved doesn't make it past March. That's an odd thing considering that we nearly always pick the resolution because we know it will be good for us in some way, whether it's losing weight, getting in shape, eating healthier, etc. So, what is our problem? It's usually a matter of discipline, or the lack thereof. Scripture recognizes that "the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41). The flesh may also have gotten us into the trouble that we are attempting to correct, and the correction could involve a major struggle because the troubling condition may have been habitual. The solution should be obvious: counter a bad habit by implementing a good habit—one that will eliminate the bad habit. Obvious? yes. Easy? no. Here again, the stumbling block is a lack of self-control. Although there are some people who are amazingly disciplined, most of us need help.

One necessary source of help is to recognize the discipline issue: we need to say yes to some things and no to others. In other words, we need to make the right choices. That may also seem too obvious, but "obvious" today is often clouded by excuses that have been conjured up by psychotherapeutic myths, like psychic determinism or so-called addictions. No, it all boils down to *choice*. We can choose to eat healthier or not, to exercise or not, to smoke or not, to drink or not, or to submit or not to submit to any other activity that may create health problems.

Another potential source of help is our motivation. What might motivate us to make the right choice? The world's answer is *self*. Although some have had limited success by "believing" in themselves, at least for a time, that ultimately leads to self-preoccupation and other forms of self-indulgence. The biblical way is to be motivated by a *love of others* rather than a *love of self*. If we desire to get healthier because we know that potential health risks can create all kinds of difficulties not only

for ourselves but also for our family members, our concern and love for them could be strong motivation for making the right choices healthwise.

Hopefully, most will find the simple truths presented above to be of value in addressing the physical issues that plague many of us. However, other than in principle, this article is far more concerned about the discipline that is related to the spiritual side of life rather than the physical; the former has both temporal and eternal consequences, whereas the latter is tied primarily to our brief time on this earth. The Apostle Paul writes that we are to exercise ourselves "rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise" is of some profit "but godliness is profitable unto *all things*, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Timothy 4:7-8).

BUT REFUSE PROFANE AND OLD WIVES' FABLES, AND EXERCISE THYSELF RATHER UNTO GODLINESS. FOR BODILY EXERCISE PROFITETH LITTLE: BUT GODLINESS IS PROFITABLE UNTO ALL THINGS, HAVING PROMISE OF THE LIFE THAT NOW IS, AND OF THAT WHICH IS TO COME.

— 1 Timothy 4:7-8

In some Bible versions the term "discipline" is used rather than "exercise." In other words, we need to *discipline* ourselves unto godliness. That is the best 2013 (and beyond) resolution we can possibly make. In fact, it is critical for spiritual fruitfulness and protection (and even for spiritual survival, in some cases) as the apostasy overtakes professing Christianity and even seduces true believers (Matthew 24:24) in these last days prior to the Lord's return for His bride, the church.

How do we "exercise," or "discipline," ourselves to godliness? The good news is that it is quite simple: we *read* the Word of God and *do* what it says. Better yet, God provides the grace to help us to do those very things. In Matthew 26:41, quoted in part above, Jesus exhorted His undisciplined disciples to "Watch and pray." They

failed at both. All activities of godliness must begin, continue, and conclude in prayer, not as some legalistic methodology but simply as a personal communication to the Lord, asking for His help. If prayer is missing, the result is a work of the flesh at best—and complete failure at worst. The prophet Zechariah's word of the Lord to Zerubbabel indicates the way that believers should approach every godly act: "This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6). Zerubbabel had the task of rebuilding the Temple during very difficult times, and the Lord communicated to him through Zechariah that he would be able to accomplish it through the power of the Holy Spirit. God is more than able to enable us in every task, even regarding our discipline in reading His Word.

If there is any one thing that could be identified as the grease that has caused the slipping of Christianity into the pit of the apostasy, it is *ignorance of the Word of God*. That is stunning because it is taking place at a time in which there are more Bibles and greater access to the Scriptures than anytime in history. Yet most Christians are functionally biblically illiterate—they know how to read, and they have Bibles, but they are not serious about reading them. Too many fall into the "spoon fed" category, relying on what they get secondhand from a church sermon or a radio or TV preacher rather than studying the Bible for themselves. When believers gather for "Bible study" in small home groups, they often study books by popular Christian authors, or they might study the pastor's latest sermon. That's not to say that there is no value in such activities, but for many believers it displaces the direct study of the Scriptures. In Revelation 21:4-5, the Apostle John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, gives insights into what believers will experience in the "holy city, new Jerusalem": "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." God's words are indeed "true and faithful." There is no guesswork involved, neither do

the Scriptures contain the speculations and opinions of mankind. Many Christians have picked up ideas about heaven, for example, from popular books and preachers—some of which seem to be, and may even be, correct, while others might be dead wrong. The dilemma for a believer who has lapsed into getting his biblical information secondhand is that he has put himself into a situation of not being able to discern *man's ideas* from *God's truth*.

How critical is such a condition? Twice in Proverbs we find this exhortation: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (14:12; 16:25). We can take a clue from Scripture that when the Holy Spirit repeats something in the Bible, we need to give it special attention. The repeated "ways of death" referred to isn't necessarily physical death. Death is *separation*. In physical death, the soul and spirit are separated from the body. Both proverbs may also be understood as teaching that those things that seem "right to a man" involve a separation from God's truth. That inevitably leads to what Jesus warned the disciples about concerning the apostasy in the end times: "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you" (Matthew 24:4). If believers are relying on someone else for what they believe rather than studying God's Word for themselves, their faith will be vicarious, that is, not their own. The consequence is that they will be ripe for being deceived and are being conditioned to follow men rather than what the Lord says in His Word. Furthermore, they cannot be Bereans.

It's interesting that when Jesus wanted to chide the Jewish religious leaders, He pointed to the faith of certain Gentiles (the Roman centurion [Matthew 8:5-10], the woman of Canaan [Matthew 15:22-28]) as having faith not found in Israel. On the other hand, in Acts 17:10-11, Luke commends the Jews in the synagogue of the Greek city of Berea to exhort Christians to emulate the *Jewish Bereans'* response to the teaching of the Apostle Paul: "And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." The reason why those who are being spoon fed the Bible by others cannot be Bereans should be obvious: they aren't reading the Bible for themselves, so they have no biblical basis for questioning what they are being taught. Moreover, that will be the case even

if a false teaching is rather blatant. They simply are incapable of discerning biblical truth from error.

Without a disciplined study of the Scriptures, there is nothing to prevent one's being seduced spiritually, and there is no protection for true believers from being seduced by the apostasy and even unwittingly contributing to the developing religion of the Antichrist.

The Apostle Paul issued this warning regarding a condition that we have seen manifested to such a degree in our day that it boggles the mind: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine..." (2 Timothy 4:3).

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FOR THE TIME WILL COME WHEN THEY WILL NOT ENDURE SOUND DOCTRINE; BUT AFTER THEIR OWN LUSTS SHALL THEY HEAP TO THEMSELVES TEACHERS, HAVING ITCHING EARS; AND THEY SHALL TURN AWAY THEIR EARS FROM THE TRUTH, AND SHALL BE TURNED UNTO FABLES. BUT WATCH THOU IN ALL THINGS, ENDURE AFFLICTIONS, DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST, MAKE FULL PROOF OF THY MINISTRY.

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— 2 Timothy 4:3-5

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Sound doctrine is simply God's instructions found in His Word. All of the concerns written above have contributed to what Paul prophesied, and the disregard for sound doctrine today pervades the entire church. How can Christians "endure sound doctrine" if they lack a disciplined, consistent, prayerful study of the Scriptures? How can those who do not read the Bible and therefore do not obey its instructions even have a clue as to what constitutes sound doctrine? They can't. The consequences are many, and they are all spiritually destructive. Ultimately, they cannot please the Lord. He asked, "And why call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" John adds, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments [i.e., doctrines]. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected" (Luke 6:46; 1 John 2:3-5). Dare we answer, "Sorry, Lord, I don't really know the things that You said, aside from what others have told me?"

All who have been born again, who have understood the gospel and put their faith in their Savior Jesus Christ who paid the full penalty for their sins, begin (or began) their new life in Christ as spiritual babies. They need spiritual nourishment in order to grow in the faith. The food they need is not that which is "processed" by man but rather "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). That growth also involves developing a personal, intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. Personal, intimate relationships are not vicarious; they do not require a third party to mediate or facilitate them. The relationship is strictly between Jesus and the believer, and it develops as the believer grows in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior through His Word. Jesus said, "If you *continue in my word*, then are ye my disciples indeed" (John 8:31). How can anyone grow in his relationship with Jesus if there is no communication, no getting to know Him firsthand? The Bible provides the direct communication on our Lord's part as well as the knowledge of Him. The Apostle Peter writes, "According as his divine power hath given unto us *all things* that pertain unto life and godliness, *through the knowledge of him* that hath called us to glory and virtue" (2 Peter 1:3).

Living one's life as a biblical Christian is not complex, nor is it so difficult that only someone with certain attributes, great intelligence, or other qualifications can abide in it. On the other hand, as noted, it does involve a *commitment* to the person of Jesus Christ. It involves a *willingness* to do that which pleases Him. Yes, we may say, our spirit is willing, but our discipline is lacking. Nevertheless, just as the father cried out for the healing of his child, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9:24), Jesus will also help us to overcome our lack of discipline, if we are indeed willing.

Therefore, as we resolve to spend time in the Scriptures daily in the year ahead, the strategy is quite simple: I recommend reading through the New Testament a couple of times and then begin reading through the Old Testament. The time and pace of one's reading each day can vary; it's the consistency that is most important. The goal is to make our daily reading a habit that compels us to keep it going. The objective is familiarity: the more we read, the more familiar we become with the Lord and what He wants us to know and do. The more we read, we find that Scripture interprets Scripture, and that increases our understanding of God's Word. Once again, there is no better resolution for the year ahead (and beyond!).

TBC



## Quotable .....

The law demands strength from one who has none, and curses him if he cannot display it. The gospel gives strength to one who has none, and blesses him in the exhibition of it.

— C. H. Mackintosh

## Q&A .....

**QUESTION: You believe that the “Woman” riding the beast in Revelation 17 is the Catholic Church. But what about all the other religions and sects in this world? Surely they are not going to all convert to Catholicism? Further, Revelation 18:24 tells us (speaking of the Great Harlot), that, “in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.” Are you saying Catholicism is responsible for “all that were slain upon the earth”?**

**RESPONSE:** As to the “woman” being the Catholic Church alone, it is certainly true that the endtime religious system will have representatives from every “faith.” The late John Paul II worked overtime bringing representatives of all the major religions together at his first “World Day of Peace.” It was October 27, 1986, in Assisi, Italy, when Pope John Paul II called together the world religions and leaders “to pray and work towards world peace.” His successor has kept up the pace. On October 27, 2011, Pope Benedict observed the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by having a “Day of Reflection and Prayer,” where he assembled the world religions and leaders in the same “holy place” of Assisi known to “Saint Francis and Saint Clare.”

The frequently uttered phrase of Catholic apologists is “home to Rome.” One group is named “the Coming Home network.” As we have pointed out, these organizations all talk about bringing people to Rome—but *never to Christ*.

This is important. For example, a Muslim would not willingly join an organization if the biblical Jesus were presented. A religious system may, however, contain elements that are attractive to many. Within Catholicism are the many alleged apparitions of Mary, including those at “Fatima.” John Paul II attributed his survival from the May 13, 1981, assassination attempt to the intervention of the Virgin of Fatima. The favorite daughter of Muhammad was named Fatima.

Interestingly enough, a palm-shaped amulet popular in Muslim North Africa is called “the hand of Fatima.” Depicting

the open right hand, the amulet is used as a sign of protection, providing protection against the “evil eye” (Bernasek, Lisa. *Artistry of the Everyday: Beauty and Craftsmanship in Berber Art*. Peabody Museum Press, 2008, p. 12). It was so named to commemorate Muhammad’s daughter Fatima Zahra. In the Ottoman Empire, some of those calling themselves Christians called it “the hand of Mary,” for the mother of Jesus.

The pope, being an enthusiastic promoter of Mary, has used this commonality to snare the interest of those within Islam, and there has been a response.

You imply that the Roman Catholic Church could not be the woman on the beast because of Revelation 18:23-24 saying: “in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.” If these verses were a literal accounting of *all the blood spilled* upon the earth, you would have a point. It is not, however, *all those slain* upon the earth, but *of those slain* upon the earth, specifically including “prophets” and “saints.” The “blood” of victims from all these peoples are found “in her.”

The Roman Catholic system has a presence in every nation upon the earth, and pioneer missionaries working in remote tribes must prepare for the inevitable arrival of Catholic missionaries seeking to assert Rome’s “authority.” Although the Roman system claims to be the authority of Christ upon the earth, it is promoting a “gospel” that keeps people from the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The anathemas of the Council of Trent (reaffirmed by Vatican II) are still in effect. They still warn: “anyone [who] says that the sinner is justified by faith alone...let him be anathema” (Canon 9).

**QUESTION [composite of several]: I keep reading reports about persecution of Christians in Indonesia and other places. I agree that it is horrible, but why do these people draw attention to themselves by insisting on meeting for church services? The body of Christ doesn’t need buildings or many people. One can worship and be alone with Christ in one’s heart. Christ didn’t require them to meet. They could alleviate some of the persecution by worshiping by themselves rather than gathering with others.**

**RESPONSE:** It is true that the body of Christ needs no buildings. It is also true that one can worship the Lord all by oneself. Yet the greatest growth in the church has come during times of persecution. The Bible indicates that this is only going to increase.

The Scriptures always emphasize the importance of the collective body in ministering, exhorting, rebuking, and building

up one another. The Holy Spirit inspired the author of the epistle to the Hebrews to write, “And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Hebrews 10:24-25).

So, contrary to your statement, Christ does indeed admonish the recipients of the letter to the Hebrews (10:24-25) to “assemble together.” Let us consider what these verses are saying. We are told to *not forsake* “the assembling of ourselves together” as “*the manner of some is*.” In other words, we’re not to be like those who *do* forsake that unity with other believers—for any reason. If the Lord inspired the writer to exhort believers to assemble together, “and *so much the more as ye see the day approaching*,” then we know that He is not giving instructions that cannot be obeyed, no matter how dark the times may be.

Some ministries estimate that millions of Christians in China meet “illegally in private homes, fields, and even caves,” risking their lives to worship God outside the government-controlled churches, “obey[ing] God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). It is instructive that the house church movement in China grows in spite of periodic increase in persecution. In fact, almost everywhere that there is persecution, Christianity seems to thrive, whether in Islamic countries, Africa, India, or many other places around the world. In Sudan, according to Voice of the Martyrs:

Deliberate attempts to eliminate a viable Christian presence are extreme and include bombing of Sunday church services; destruction of churches, hospitals, schools, mission bases and Christian villages; massacres and mutilation; and murder of pastors and leaders....Despite this, the number of Christians [grew] from 1.6 million in 1980 to 11 million in 2010. (<http://www.persecution.net/sudan.htm>)

The Apostle Peter addressed his first letter specifically to the persecuted church, exhorting them to *rejoice* in the midst of their trials (1 Pt 1:6-7). He encouraged believers to *show hospitality* to one another and *minister* to one another (1 Pt 4:8-10). They would need to gather together to do that. He admonished them to “think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you,...but *rejoice*, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings....If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, *happy* are ye...” (1 Pt 4:12-14). Great suffering, endured in the right spirit, can yield great joy, when one remembers to “[cast] all your care upon him; for he careth for you” (1 Pt 5:7).



# IN DEFENSE *of the* FAITH

BIBLICAL ANSWERS *to* CHALLENGING QUESTIONS

## Confronting Lenin's Dilemma

**QUESTION:** Obviously, the whole idea of faith in God was invented by religious leaders in order to deceive and enslave their followers. That's one thing all religions have in common: an elite class of clergy who get the people to believe in some mythical God and then pretend to be the go-betweens to this God to hold the people in their power—and charge them plenty for it!

**RESPONSE:** That was Lenin's theory. He was also a materialist. Nothing existed for Lenin except the physical world, and the only way to know about that world was to come in contact with it. In agreement with Freud, Lenin believed that man was a stimulus-response mechanism without spirit or soul, just a lump of protein molecules wired with nerves. Man's behavior was learned from experience and could therefore be reprogrammed through "behavior modification," a polite word for "brainwashing," which the Communists developed to a fine art—except that it only worked by destroying the person.

Of course, there was no room for God in such a theory, and that was precisely what created problems for Lenin when he dared to think about it. Man can only know about that which exists in the physical realm. Animals don't have gods, so why should man, in the evolutionary process, have ever developed such a fantasy?

Since man is a stimulus-response mechanism, according to this theory, he can only know of that which stimulates him. He touches something hot or cold and learns of "hot" and "cold." He touches something hard or he is hit by something hard and he learns about "hard." All he can know of anything is what he has experienced: the stimulus from the physical world and his instinctive response inherited through millions of years of evolution and then modified and reprogrammed by his own experience. Even science has no other source of knowledge.

Man can't even *think* or *fantasize* about something that doesn't exist in the physical world, according to this theory. Of course, with the help of a little alcohol, he can have visions of pink elephants, but pink exists and so do elephants. He could dream of "paradise" or "heaven," but it would always conform to his experience: the "happy hunting ground" of the American Indian or a land of luxury for Pharaohs, evidenced by the bows and arrows or robes and jewelry buried with the dead.

### What "Stimulus" Caused the Response, "God," in Human Minds?

The theory seemed consistent and could be demonstrated by challenging doubters to visualize a new prime color for the rainbow. No one could. Obviously, then, nothing exists but the material world, and no one can even conceive of anything that doesn't exist and that he hasn't experienced. There was only one flaw: Foolish people have this fantasy about God. Where did that come from?

Those despicable clergy must have invented "God" and have ever since been filling the minds of the common people with this delusion in order to keep them in bondage. Communism would set them free from this opiate of the people! Yes, but where did the clergy get this idea, if no one can think of anything that doesn't exist? What was the "stimulus" that caused this "God-response"? There's the rub. By Lenin's own theory, God had to exist or no one would have ever dreamed up the idea.

Isn't it interesting that in contrast to the philosophers who have been trying to develop proofs for the existence of God for centuries, the Bible doesn't waste its time in that manner? The Bible is the one Book where one would certainly expect to see many complex arguments presented for God's existence, yet not one is given!

Surely, that very fact says something important about the Bible and about God: *He has already made contact with every person in his or her conscience.* Everyone knows that God exists, and that includes you. So the Bible doesn't even argue about the issue, because the very fact that all of mankind has this concept says that He exists.

## TBC NewsWatch

### UN BIRTHS NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN STATE OF PALESTINE

**FRIENDS OF ISRAEL, 11/30/12, "UN BIRTHS NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN STATE OF PALESTINE" [EXCERPTS]:** The United Nations General Assembly on (November 29, 2012) voted overwhelmingly in favor of recognizing a new sovereign nation that has never before existed in the annals of history: Palestine.

The motion is largely symbolic, as General Assembly resolutions are not legally binding. However, that symbolism is enough to change the face of the Middle East conflict, and those involved knew full well what they were doing – trying to make the event resemble as closely as possible a similar vote 65 years ago that brought about the establishment of the State of Israel.

Most importantly in the short term is the fact that "Palestine" can now obtain membership in the International Criminal Court where it is certain to file regular lawsuits against Israel. The new status will also complicate Israel's ability to act against terrorism emanating from Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip.

Many in Palestinian areas said that political activists were the only ones who joined in celebrating after the UN vote last week, because the bulk of the public will not be happy until "Palestine" replaces Israel on the map.

"We don't want the '67 borders," a Palestinian university student told the *Times of Israel*. "We want all of Palestine."

Others said that as long as last week's UN move "annoyed the Jews, it was a positive step toward one day taking all of the land."

Despite all of this, Ron Prosor declared at the UN last week that "nothing can negate the Jewish people's 4,000-year-old bond with its ancestral and biblical homeland" ([israeltoday.co.il](http://israeltoday.co.il); [timesofisrael.com](http://timesofisrael.com)).

<http://www.foi.org/israel-in-the-news/news-archives/un-births-never-seen-state-palestine/>

**[TBC: The Arabs have never abandoned their goal of exterminating Israel, as the university student's remarks simply continue to illustrate. This UN move will never bring peace but only indicates the need for the return of the Prince of Peace.]**

### KATHIE LEE GIFFORD/AIMEE SEMPLE MCPHERSON

**HUFFINGTON POST, 10/19/12, "KATHIE LEE GIFFORD PREACHES ABOUT EVANGELIST AIMEE SEMPLE MCPHERSON IN BROADWAY MUSICAL" [EXCERPTS]:** [Kathie Lee Gifford is] putting

the finishing touches on the lyrics and book of a new Broadway musical [called *Scandalous*]. It's about the controversial 1920s-era Pentecostal evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson—a woman near and dear to Gifford's heart, even if most people haven't heard of her.

McPherson was a pioneer in radio evangelism who incorporated vaudeville elements in her sermons, once taking the stage dressed as a motorcycle officer. "Stop! You are breaking God's law!" she said.

Though considered the P.T. Barnum of the pulpit, she also fed millions during the Great Depression. Her followers remained loyal even after a mysterious five-week disappearance in 1926 and three failed marriages. She died of a drug overdose in 1944, with *Time* magazine naming her one of the most influential people of the 20th century.

When Gifford first heard stories about McPherson, her reaction was: No way. "I just remember thinking, 'Oh, please. Nobody lived a life like that,'" she says. "She broke every rule." Gifford ticks off a list of wild McPherson moments. She baptized a baby Marilyn Monroe. She gave John Wayne his first acting job. Anthony Quinn played sax in her orchestra. Charlie Chaplin helped design her sets.

Enter Carolee Carmello, a Tony Award-nominated actress who asked Gifford if she'd consider rewriting the part for only one actress. Gifford thought about it and agreed. The musical now takes place over a span of 20 years.

"Ever since I rewrote the show for one actress, in my mind there was only one actress who could do it and that was Carolee," says Gifford. Adds Carmello, who has stuck with the project for seven years: "It's our baby. We've been pregnant a long time with this child."

Carmello, who recently played Mother Superior in *Sister Act*, finds herself playing another person of faith, an odd twist for an actress who is an atheist. But McPherson intrigues Carmello.

"I admire people who feel passionately about anything—someone who devotes their life to painting or devotes their life to bowling, whatever it is," she says. "If you feel that strongly about something and you follow it to the 'n'th degree, that's brilliant because so many people in this world kind of wander around."

Though one of the lead producers of *Scandalous* is the Foursquare Foundation, which is affiliated with McPherson's church, Gifford insists the church has had no input in the story or music.

Indeed, the musical opens with McPherson on trial for perjury and doesn't

flinch at exposing her messier moments. Gifford says it's a musical about someone who was able to heal others while spiraling out of control.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/10/19/kathie-lee-gifford-aimee-semples-mcpherson-n\\_1986311.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/10/19/kathie-lee-gifford-aimee-semples-mcpherson-n_1986311.html)

**[TBC: When Hollywood or Broadway goes "spiritual," biblical truth gets bad reviews.]**

### ATHEISTS: DITCH 'SO HELP ME GOD' IN OATH

**CHRISTIAN POST, 11/14/12, "ATHEISTS ASK OBAMA TO DITCH 'SO HELP ME GOD' IN PRESIDENTIAL OATH" [EXCERPTS]:** President Barack Obama will be taking the oath of office for the second time on Jan. 21, 2013. And atheists want him to do so without mentioning "God" and without a Bible.

The Freedom From Religion Foundation sent Obama a letter following his re-election, asking him to reject the way "this country politicizes religion."

"When you stand to reaffirm your oath, do so using the language of the Founders. Eliminate the religious verbiage. While you're at it, why not place your hand on the Constitution instead of a bible?" FFRF attorney Andrew L. Seidel wrote in the letter.

The words "so help me God" are not included in the oath as prescribed by the Constitution, the organization argues. The Constitution also does not require the president to place his hand on a Bible when taking oath, FFRF adds.

FFRF argues that "so help me God" violates the Constitution as it alienates the nonreligious, which the organization believes is the future of America.

Since this is Obama's second term, FFRF says he is not "beholden to any future constituency."

"This term is a chance to do something that no president in recent memory has done: reach out to secular Americans. In the past, that might have been politically costly. But this recent election shows that it will be politically costly not to reach out to secular America," FFRF wrote. "We are the future. Use this second term to build a legacy by rejecting the way this country politicizes religion."

Atheist Michael Newdow tried to take the issue ("so help me God") to court but was refused a hearing by the U.S. Supreme Court last year.

[\(http://www.christianpost.com/news/atheists-ask-obama-to-ditch-so-help-me-god-bible-in-presidential-oath-84954/\)](http://www.christianpost.com/news/atheists-ask-obama-to-ditch-so-help-me-god-bible-in-presidential-oath-84954/)



## T. A.'s Speaking Schedule

Jan 17-19 Calvary Chapel Finger Lakes  
Farmington, NY  
(585) 398-3550

### T. A. McMahon and staff,

Thank you for the *The Berean Call*. My prayers are with Dave and his family and I thank him for all the years of his ministry and books. I enjoyed seeing and hearing you speak, T. A., at the Midwest Hebrew Ministries conference. I am sharing all the tapes with friends. May the Lord continue to bless your ministry. JT (MN)

### Dear Brothers,

I'm writing to ask to be put on your mailing list to receive your newsletter *The Berean Call*. A brother I know used to get it and he'd pass it to me when he was finished with it but he's gone home. It was a good thing I got the address out of one of the issues a while back just in case. Your newsletter was by far the most informative I have read and it helped me to be on the lookout regarding a lot of doctrinal teachings that many ministries bring into the prison system that are false and not biblical. Thank you for your time and effort. I do look forward to receiving my next *Berean Call* newsletter. May the Lord continue to bless you all's ministry. AS (TX, prisoner)

### Dear Dave,

I just wanted to say thank you so much for the incredible amount of time and effort you put into writing *What Love Is This?* and *TULIP and the Bible*. My family and I have been attending a Reformed church for about 18 years, and all this time I've been thinking, "I'll understand it all someday. I'm just too dense to understand Calvinist theology." I really thought it was a mental deficiency on my part, so I just kept my mouth shut...a lot. My husband is an elder, and we do youth group and teach Sunday school. I felt like when I didn't "get" something I was being patronized by those who understood it all, and I was just being too simplistic. I ordered *What Love Is This?* a year ago, had been working my way through it (it hasn't been easy!), and was delighted to see the *TULIP* book available! Through the study of both books, what you have done is point out to me that the emperor is not wearing any clothes! What an incredible relief it has been! So much of what seemed wrong to me, faith as a gift from God, man just being a puppet, and the whole "mystery"

thing—you have tackled and explained in ways that were crystal clear to me. I honestly can't thank you enough. I have been praying that my husband will see it too, but so far, not yet. I'm sure it hasn't been easy for you, opening up this can of worms, but we know God will give you the strength. I'll be praying for you, your family, and your Calvinist friends. AW (email)

### Dave,

This is actually a thank you to everyone at Berean. I am not certain of the years I have received your newsletter but just wanted to say how grateful I am to receive it. So many times it has blessed! I thank God for you with all my heart. NC (email)

### T. A.,

I just finished reading through the September 2012 *Berean Call* newsletter. Thank you for your faithfulness to God's Word. First of all, it's rare to see anyone anymore publishing anything using the KJV...thank you. Secondly, it's rare to hear anyone sharing the historical, devotional, and doctrinal applications of Revelation 2-3. No one seems to have ever heard how Revelation 2-3 lines up perfectly with the recorded events of history, and it used to be common knowledge 50-100 years ago. Thank you for touching on such great gems of truth in God's preserved word. As a 28-year-old Bible believer, I am very thankful for men like you who are not afraid to carry the truth forward in the face of adversity. I pray I will do the same for the duration of my life, if the Lord tarries. SW (email)

### Dear Ones in our Lord,

Please do not stop teaching Bible doctrine. The *Call* is extra special. There are so few teaching the Word correctly these days, your messages are right on the mark, and I look forward to them every month. May the Lord richly bless you and keep you. RJ (WA)

### Dear Tom,

I wanted to give you my support as you deal with criticism concerning your warnings on *The Harbinger*. You and Dave Hunt have been faithful and reliable in warning us "ignorant" believers as we are so easily misled by the subtle schemes of the enemy of our souls. I grieve over the division this book is causing with other wonderful ministries but I am hopeful that you can respond to them in love, gentleness, and patience. It took some time for many of us to see the dangers of Rick Warren's *Purpose Driven* (thanks to you and Dave, I finally saw them) and it may take time for the dangers of *The Harbinger* to be clearly

exposed. Thank you for your work and love for our Lord. PM (OK)

### TBC,

Our family so enjoyed the 2012 conference (our first) and we are praying for your 2013 gathering. We are pleased that you are focusing on training young adults....My kids loved Mark Cahill and Jobe Martin (and family).

Thanks for unflinchingly defending truth and making controversial stands—even when the (apostate) church slings the most mud. KT (ID)

### Dear Dave,

I just want to say thank you for the work you have done. I appreciate the messages. I...have come out of 3rd wave, word-faith, all the prophesy stuff. It has been a journey that has taken more than 10 years. I've lost all my friends and some family but have gained so much—more than words can tell. I give thanks to God and the many (like your ministry) for being there to guide through uncharted waters to help bring one home. JD (Canada)

### Dear Dave,

You are probably familiar with Dave Breese's great book *Seven Men Who Rule the World From the Grave*. Well, Calvin, Luther, and Augustine aren't in that book, but their influence is still huge in theology. Just finished your book *What Love Is This?* and was quite moved by the obvious labor and travail that had to go into its creation. I read it with a grim determination to get it finished. No offense to you but it must have been the hardest book to read I've ever picked up. I learned far more about this false teaching than I could imagine. I regret the time and energy Christians must expend refuting it. I'm also distressed at the momentum Calvinism is building in my Southern Baptist circles. Many thanks and God's blessings to you. PH (email)

### Dear Edwin Newby,

Thank you. Reading your *TBC Extra* article, "A Shocking Lack of Discernment..." [10/12], I was reminded of our Lord's own words to His disciples in Matthew 15:14, concerning the false teachings of the "religious" Pharisees: "Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

I, too, once blindly followed the false teachings of Herbert W. Armstrong, living in darkness and spiritual ignorance for 24 years as a member of the Worldwide Church of God. In 1996, I heard the glorious truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ preached for



the first time from the Scriptures (1 Cor 15:1-4; 2 Cor 4:3-6, etc.). It was solely by the grace of God [that], over time, the spiritual “scales” began falling, as it were, from my eyes (Acts 9:18; Eph 1:17:23, etc.), and I was saved. I now set myself to walk daily by precious faith alone in the Savior’s perfect and complete work at Calvary, and to grow and mature through the knowledge of God’s word applied in my life.

What a burden has been lifted, and what freedom and peace I now have in Christ (John 8:32, 14:27; Phil 4:7, etc.)! OF (CA)

#### **Dear Berean Call,**

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ! I love your *Berean Call* newsletter and find it very informative and helpful, as I am a Christian who has awakened to the truth that we are in a very real spiritual war! I look forward to many more issues of *The Berean Call* and thank you for all you do in serving our God! I thank you for the books that you sent, especially *East Wind*. That really touched my heart being in prison myself. ... Thank you for your time and effort. May Christ Jesus continue to bless and protect you all. MW (NC, prisoner)

#### **To the Editor,**

We started reading the book of Revelation this month with help from the MacDonald [*Believer’s Bible Commentary*]. When we received your [September ’12] paper, what should we find but some interesting information on Revelation in your “Jesus Gets Tough” article! We felt doubly blessed, and wanted to say thanks for all the research you do for your articles, and for your faithfulness in “rightly dividing the Word of Truth.” JL (TX)

#### **Berean Call,**

I am so disgusted with this type of Christianity. I have listened to Jonathan Cahn, and he is truly a man of God. God is using him today when unbelievers need to know why God is not blessing our country, i.e., storms on East Coast, another four years with a Muslim president, gay marriages, abortions, etc.

Back this servant of God! Even some senators are taking a look at his book knowing that he has a message for the USA. SD (WA)

#### **Dave & Ruth,**

Greetings to you and yours in [the name of] Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. I pray you all are well. I continue to receive your newsletter, *The Berean Call*, which is very helpful to us Christians in prison. You always update us on current events and even old religions given new names. Thank you both and everyone at the ministry for being

faithful to Jesus and His word and to give us the truth. DK (NY, prisoner)

#### **Dear Berean Call,**

Thank you for teaching us facts of how much Catholicism is in Calvinism. Keep up the thorough work. I love *Berean Call*. I have gotten to be so strong and not driven to and fro by so many things that are not quite right: the little boy in heaven book, *The Passion of the Christ*, *The Harbinger*, etc. I am so indebted to Dave Hunt and the ministry. At first, T. A., I’m sorry, but I could tell the difference between Dave’s articles and yours. But [lately] I can’t tell the difference...the two are merged into one! Thank you for carrying on for him. JC (LA)

#### **Dear Mr. McMahon,**

In September you spoke at the Midwest Hebrew Ministries conference....Thank you for your truth and for taking the time to bless those of us who were there. I picked up one of your newsletters because it had Part 1 of an article on *The Harbinger*. This has been such a controversial book among discernment ministries and within the Christian community. I used to follow [another ministry]; however, since *The Harbinger* came on the scene I have been disappointed and disenchanted with [their] stand. It has left me confused and frustrated....Since the conference I’ve printed several of [the articles] from your website and they have ministered to me deeply—almost like a soothing balm on an open wound.... BK (MN)

#### **Dear Dave and T. A.,**

I have been an avid reader of *The Berean Call* for ten years and am so thankful that you are not afraid to put in print your thoughts on so many questionable topics that seem to invade our Christian beliefs.

I have wondered for years [about] your feelings on the Masonic Lodge with all of the secret teachings that very, very few ministers dare to address.

Because of all of the good works they do such as operating the crippled children’s hospitals and the burn centers, I think probably most people feel that the Masonic Lodge is a good thing. But why is there so much secrecy about what actually goes on inside the lodge?

In your July 2012 issue I read for the first time any mention of freemasons.

Thank you for *The Berean Call* and the many different subjects you cover in each publication. DB (TX)

*[For more information on Freemasonry, please visit our website: [www.theberean.org/topic/freemasonry/](http://www.theberean.org/topic/freemasonry/)*

## **TBC Notes**

**PLEASE NOTE: Our 2013 conference date has been changed to August 23-24.**

### **Correspondence Update**

We receive many emails and letters from readers regarding our newsletter and/or the resource materials we offer. Some are to say thanks, some are questions, others are corrections, and a few are angry protests against whatever we write (no matter what we write). Responses to people who write to us could occupy a great deal of our time and adversely affect our stewardship, so we have developed an approach that we believe is helpful both for TBC and for those who communicate with us.

First of all, we do read every letter and email.

Secondly, we don’t reply to everyone who writes. If a question we receive and its response are something that would be good for more than just the questioner, we may respond to it in our Q&A column. If we feel that the question is something from which the writer would benefit from searching the Scriptures himself, we don’t want to be counterproductive to that exercise. After all, we are in the ministry of calling believers to be like the Bereans of Acts 17:10-11 by doing the searching themselves! We also have to make value judgments sometimes regarding readers who adamantly object to what we have written. First, we check to see if their complaint is justified, and if so we issue a correction in a subsequent newsletter. If, however, we determine that no retraction or correction is necessary, we then must decide whether or not the writer will receive an explanation from us. Based upon the tone and content of their correspondence, our decision to respond or not is usually very easily made.

Thirdly, many of the questions we receive are addressed to Dave Hunt. Since Dave is in a nursing home and unable to function in ministry, we can only point the questioner to Dave’s books and his archived materials found on our website. TBC’s Q&A column is written by our editors, with occasional “classic” responses taken from Dave’s writings.

T. A. McMAHON  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# IS THERE ANY HOPE FOR AMERICA?

—PART ONE—  
BY MARK DINSMORE

## *“God’s Not Finished with U.S. Yet”*

How many of us have heard this statement recently: “God isn’t yet finished with the United States of America”? How many of us have spoken it? Well, if you’re reading this and still breathing anywhere within the confines of the 50 states, that’s a pretty safe statement to make—for if God were truly “finished” with America, then none of us would be here.

Given the frequency and fervency with which this statement is often made, it seems apparent that it’s born out of deep-rooted conviction that holds broad appeal among Christians of all denominations whose love and commitment to political conservatism rank right up there with “God, apple pie, and baseball.” But what does this popular statement mean?

If I may take a swing at it, it seems that this statement is generally aimed at providing encouragement for quick relief from depression over election outcomes or other statistics that depict the erosion of long-held liberties and the onset of advanced societal decay. But is it biblical? And does it have any more lasting effect or theological depth than other popular Christian clichés? Indeed, the belief that “God’s not done with the US yet” is generally based on hope for national spiritual revival and a second “rebirth” of America.

Selling this hope also seems to be the stock and trade of politicians and Christian leaders alike who seek to rally their constituents and reassure their flocks of better days yet to come, usually based on misapplication of Scripture. Capitalizing on the fears of many who are anxious at the changes occurring in our nation—which threaten to irreversibly affect the quality of life for generations to come—a myriad of ministries compete for the pocketbooks of those who give as generously as possible in a last-ditch effort to “restore America.”

## *Pat Robertson’s (Misplaced) Hope for America*

Not surprisingly, one such proclamation is still being uttered post-election by the perennial prognosticator and purveyor of hope in Christian Patriotism—700 Club founder and one time presidential candidate, Pat Robertson. Robertson continues his tradition of raising “ministry” funds by selling hope to anxious viewers concerned over what’s happening in America.

Titled *God’s Plan for America: How to Prepare for the Days Ahead*, Pat Robertson’s newest DVD claims to reveal “the covenant God has with America and the steps necessary to see the blessings of heaven showered down on our nation.” The marketing copy declares that “there is still an opportunity to enter into a period of unprecedented growth and national blessing—if we will follow the plan God has for us.” But this DVD is “not for sale in stores.” It’s not even available for purchase on the CBN website, for any amount. No, in order to discover, understand, and implement this plan, prospective viewers must “become a CBN partner” for a minimum monthly donation of \$20 (\$240 per year)! Inspiring clips and compelling testimonies of those who endorsed the DVD will undoubtedly pay for this slick production thousands of times over—especially considering that many “club members” will remain on the roles long after the DVD is either collecting dust or used for target practice.

Before dismantling Robertson’s case for American exceptionalism, we must acknowledge that he is not alone in his belief, which is echoed, as we’ll address, by many other conservative evangelicals. But even without the benefit of hearing Pat’s entire message, the promotional clips give us sufficient insight to evaluate whether Robertson’s hope for America is biblical—or bogus. The first clip opens with Robertson reading from Isaiah 46:9-11, which he follows with this bold declaration, “Now I want to submit to you today

that God has a plan for the United States of America. To say that this land is not exceptional is to insult the word of God Almighty.”

By “exceptional” Robertson does not mean “better than average” but rather means “specially selected, prophetically promised, divinely ordained.” He also appears to justify this misplaced faith by finding America in this passage described as “a bird of prey” (an eagle). However, the context describes the then-future judgment of Israel “from the East,” and does not depict a nation from the west (most scholars agree that this prophecy was fulfilled by King Cyrus).

## *Dreams of American Grandeur*

In clip two, “A Covenant People,” Robertson declares, “America has risen to be the greatest nation on the face of the earth. It’s the richest nation, it’s the most powerful nation, of all the kingdoms and all the empires that have been in the history of mankind. Whether it’s the empire of Greece, or the empire of Rome, or the empire of Alexander, or the empire of the Persians, the Babylonians, or the whoever. They are dwarfed by the magnificence of the United States of America.”

Oh my! Is such aggrandizement of the US yet rational? Especially considering the country’s precipitous national debt, which is poised to enslave future generations? Yet most taxpayers remain unaware that the “Federal Reserve” (which is neither Federal nor has any reserve) is likewise indebted to foreign banks and multinational corporations, which, in turn, hold enormous equity in America’s vast natural resources. As but one example, Red China now owns more than \$1 trillion dollars of US debt (enough to collapse our economy overnight) ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_public\\_debt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_public_debt)) and has begun the purchase of US land for the construction of massive walled “free trade” cities from coast to coast (<http://www.idahostatesman.com/2010/12/31/1472023/chinese-company-eyes-boise.html>) with the aid and approval of corrupt politicians (<http://www.breitbart.com/Big-Government/2012/09/04/Harry-Reid-s-Son-Representing-Chinese-Solar-Panel-Plant-In-5-Billion-Nevada-Deal>). This is potentially the real *Red Dawn*, of which most citizens are completely oblivious. And yet, “Christian Patriots” believe that we’ll somehow be able to “take back” this land? And take over the government to boot? (Talk about “strong delusion”!)

It would take another article to document what appears to be a systematic coup underway in our nation—and yet, even as the heathen rage and “imagine a vain thing” (Ps 2:1-6) it is with full consent of our sovereign God, who “changelth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings” (Dn 2:21a). But in spite of what many consider to be “handwriting on the financial wall” for the US, Robertson brazenly asserts that America remains at the *pinnacle* of world power and prominence.

## *What Went “Wrong” in 2012?*

The impossibility of achieving “Christian Dominion” should be evident by the outcome of the 2012 elections, which not only highlighted increasing corruption in the entire candidate selection and election process but also an unprecedented degree of ignorance and apathy in both political parties. On the Democratic side, the number of activists and voters who don’t know (and don’t care) about the history of the communist cry, “Forward!” (Obama’s chosen campaign slogan) is astounding. On the Republican side, Romney’s campaign suffered from a split within conservative evangelicalism: Some, offended by his Mormon faith, forgot they weren’t appointing a pastor, but a president. (These voters also failed to consider the fact that many past “Christian” presidents have been so in name only; and that for those in office who embraced Freemasonry, the Lodge—not God—is the higher authority to which they had already sworn allegiance. This, too, is “Satanic.”) Intent on derailing a second term of



perceived Muslim-Marxist influence, many prominent evangelicals switched tracks, jumping on the bandwagon of the New Religious Right—even to the shocking extent of removing references to Mormonism as a cult (as did the Billy Graham Association website). But after the stage-managed media shutout of Ron Paul, not even the combined ecumenical might of conservatives could elect the RINO (Republican In Name Only) Romney. To top off this political circus, Bill Keller (tireless self-promoter of “Live Prayer” fame) even bragged that he got over 1 million evangelicals to write in the name of “Jesus” for President of the United States. What utter absurdity!

Add that to the gross manipulation of candidates by the media, forcing out any non-establishment candidate with truly Constitutional views, and mix it with a corrupted mail-in and electronic voting system that has vastly increased undetected tampering, and top it off with a massive influx of “undocumented citizens” whose votes are “pre-purchased” by the promises of progressive incumbents—and it should be abundantly clear that no uncompromising, Bible-believing Christian will ever win popular approval. Should American Christians be surprised? Should we react with patriotic indignation? Or should we remember the words of Scripture:

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. (Jn 15:18-19)

Yet, every four years, there a fresh fervor—even frenzy—among concerned Christians to “put the right man (or woman) in office.” But is our faith in ballots? or in the Bible? God’s Word states, “It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes” (Ps 118:8-9). Even if another “Ronald Reagan” could win the election, the victory would be symbolic, not substantive. As the media-driven antichrist culture shift overruns the moral and Constitutional restraints of former generations, American believers need to prepare their own hearts and minds—as well as those of their children and grandchildren—for this “new” reality, which, as long as the Lord tarries, threatens to darken our future with tangible consequences.

In spite of this, those who know and love God should not be anxious or fearful, recalling the words of Jesus: “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). This assurance is echoed in 1 John 4:4: “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

### ***Church Is “Clogged”—Someone Call Roto-Rooter!***

There is an even more critical issue facing the church than any presidential election, and that is this: The majority of professing Christians are either ill-equipped—or unwilling—to address the stench of corruption, immorality, and doctrinal deception in the church! How, then, could they *ever* hope to rise up and “restore” an entire nation? It is no wonder that the world views the church as hypocritical.

The fact is, biblical moralism can’t be legislated, at least for very long. It didn’t work during Prohibition—and it didn’t work for John Calvin in 16th century Geneva during his dictatorial reign as “Protestant Pope” (see *Calvin’s Tyrannical Kingdom*). Likewise, attempts at “Christianizing” the Netherlands at the turn of the 20th century by the Dutch Reformed statesman Abraham Kuyper (Prime Minister of the Netherlands from 1901-1905) seem to have produced a permanent boomerang effect: The “modern” city of Amsterdam makes America’s most immoral cities appear family-friendly.

Expanding on his Calvinistic worldview, Kuyper developed the Reformed doctrine of “Common Grace,” which in his view not only enables the ungodly to “develop the creation positively, that is, according to God’s standard and toward God the Creator,” but also

“permits Christians, indeed *calls* them, to join hearts and hands with the ungodly in this positive development of culture” (<http://www.mountainretreat.org/eschatology/worldview.html>).

In other words, Kuyper was an early proponent of perhaps the first ecumenical “moral majority” tasked with social and political activism to build a better world. Interestingly, it is Kuyper’s concept of “sphere sovereignty” that led to development of the heretical Latter Rain agenda for restoration of America through the “Seven Mountain Mandate”:

In 1975, Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade, and Loren Cunningham, founder of Youth With a Mission, had lunch together in Colorado. God simultaneously gave each of these change agents a message to give to the other.... Francis Schaeffer was given a similar message [that] if we are to impact any nation for Jesus Christ, then we would have to affect the seven *spheres*, or mountains of society that are the pillars of any society. These seven mountains are business, government, media, arts and entertainment, education, the family and religion.... God was telling these three...where the battlefield was [and] where culture would be won or lost. Their assignment was to raise up change agents to scale the mountains and to help a new generation...understand the larger story. (<http://www.reclaim7mountains.com/>)

This extra-biblical “revelation” was picked up and championed by motivational speakers like Os Hillman as well as the mystical leadership guru, Lance Wallnau (disciple of self-proclaimed “Super Apostle” C. Peter Wagner). But ironically, even Christians who recognize the doctrinal errors of the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) and who realize the futility of this unbiblical “mandate” still fall prey to the same delusion that we must somehow “reclaim” society. However, God has not called us to redeem the culture, but to redeem the *time*, “for the days are evil” (Eph 5:16).

### ***When All Else Fails, Read the Instructions!***

Considering the past, present, and future failure of each of these “restoration” movements—especially when a secular majority begins to overwhelm a moral minority—the church should recognize that it’s been on the wrong mission all along. “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” (Ps 11:3). Even John Adams, our second president, declared that “Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.” Christians should by now realize the futility of “bringing heaven to earth,” whether by false “revivals” or spreading “democracy.” True democracy (51 percent) is mob rule—and that clearly explains the spoiling of our republic through corruption, collusion, and what some foresee as a second American “revolution.”

Population statistics alone confirm that the demographic landscape—and political future—of America is being permanently altered, in terms of national “identity” and religious conviction. Historically, this is normal over time through legal immigration. But one would have to be blind not to see an agenda behind the “failure” to protect our nation’s borders since 9/11. The number of US troops entangled in foreign wars, serving at the pleasure of the military-industrial complex, has only increased since the so-called “war on terror.” Yet, the same powers—under both Democratic and Republican administrations—that have sworn to protect our nation from enemies “foreign and domestic” have been repeatedly caught *assisting* with the international flow of drugs, guns, and money at the expense of American lives, both enlisted and civilian, with apparent impunity.

Understandably, such blatant racketeering and disregard for the rule of law has left conservatives and Christians alike concerned for the future of their country. Many are asking: “Is there hope for America? What is a biblical response? Where is America in Bible prophecy? Can we claim the promises of God in 2 Chronicles 7:14?”

*We’ll address these issues and more next month, in Part Two.*

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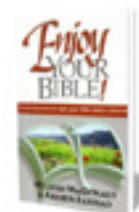
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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Mark speaks to thousands each year at churches, retreats, conferences, camps, etc., equipping and challenging the saved to go out and reach the lost. His true vocation is witnessing, whether at malls, music and art festivals, beaches, sporting events, bar sections of towns—wherever the lost can be found.



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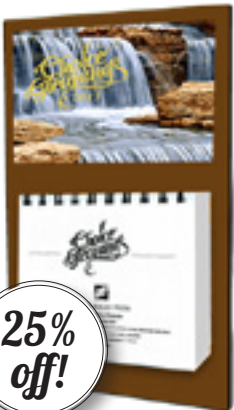


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