

“[The Bereans] . . . searched the scriptures daily,

[to see] whether those things were so.”
—Acts 17:11

Mysticism and the Coming World Religion—Part One

T. A. McMahon

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Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

—2 THESSALONIANS 2:3-4

And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

—REVELATION 13:3-4

And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

—REVELATION 13:8

ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES, in the last days prior to Christ’s return a religion will appear that will deceive virtually the entire world into following it. It will be led by the Antichrist (“the beast”), who will be worshiped as God.

Scripture also indicates, however, that the

bride of Christ will be removed from the earth in the Rapture (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18) before that religion is fulfilled. If true, then why would the knowledge of the coming world religion be of value for true believers in Christ?

There are a number of reasons. First of all, the biblically false content of the coming world religion doesn’t suddenly appear overnight. The seeds of it began in the Garden of Eden with Satan’s seduction of Eve (Genesis 3:1). His first words, “Yea, hath God said...?”, set forth his strategy of undermining God’s commands and instructions. That has continued right up to this present time and is increasing exponentially. Secondly, Satan’s offer of godhood to Eve has manifested itself throughout history. Most of the religions of the Far East teach that God *is* everything or *in* everything, making everything and everyone God or part of God. Many of the Caesars and other rulers imposed the worship of themselves as deities upon their people. Those forms of idolatry will culminate in the worship of self, the Antichrist, and Satan.

Thirdly, Jesus characterized the days prior to His return for His bride as a time of great deception. He told His disciples, “Take heed that no man *deceive* you” (Matthew 24:4—emphasis added). His warning included deceits such as false Christs, lying signs and wonders, and unbiblical doctrines and teachers. Some have wrongly concluded that Christ’s warning wasn’t for believers, asserting that verse 24 implies that it would be impossible to “deceive the very elect” (24:24). That can’t be the case because Jesus addressed this warning (v. 4) to His disciples—who were certainly His “elect.” Fourthly, the Word of God gives multiple instructions on how to protect ourselves from the lies of Satan that can adversely affect

our fruitfulness in the Lord.

These seductive and deceptive devices of God's chief adversary will increase prior to the Rapture, but God's Word gives us the prevention program against being seduced by Satan's lies: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

The Apostle Paul pointed to a time in the history of the church when a condition would be prevalent that would greatly undermine the faith of professing and true believers: "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" (2 Timothy 4:3—emphasis added). Sound doctrine—what is that? It's simply the teachings given to mankind by God through His prophets. It is God's written Word, His *objective* communication to humanity, containing information that comes directly from Him without the input of mankind. That's what makes it *sound* doctrine. God, being infinite, has communicated to finite man what He wants him to know and do. That's the only way finite humanity can truly know their infinite Creator and what He has in mind regarding them.

Undermining sound doctrine is Satan's primary goal in his attempt to shipwreck the faith and fruitfulness of believers. The strategy involves corrupting the Word of God by adding to it or subtracting from it. Thus the Scriptures are distorted through the input of fallen, finite man and the contributions of seducing spirits and doctrines of demons (1 Timothy 4:1). Such modifications demolish the objective truth of Scripture. The Bible no longer stands as God's Word when "adjustments" are made by other sources. This is taking place today in unprecedented fashion, especially through the introduction (or re-introduction) of mysticism.

The antithesis of the objective Word of God, mysticism is defined by *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary* as "the belief that direct knowledge of God, spiritual truth, or ultimate reality

can be attained through *subjective* experience such as intuition or insight," and adds that it is "vague *speculation*, a belief without *sound* basis (emphasis added)." Google gives this definition: "belief characterized by self-delusion or dreamy confusion of thought, especially when based on the assumption of occult qualities or mysterious agencies." A mystical worldview, which is intensifying in both the world and its religions, will be foundational to the coming one-world religion.

Among many reasons, the primary one is that mysticism has a universal appeal that will attract and unify all the religions of the world. Why? Because it avoids doctrine (rules, regulations, commandments, obligations, requirements, etc.). The doctrines of the Bible are given by God and are to be obeyed; not obeying them is rebellion, which is the state of the world as well as the state of many within the church. The religions of the world also have doctrines, albeit false ones, against which their followers often rebel. Doctrines divide because people don't particularly like rules that demand obedience. The stricter the rules, the less attractive the religion. That's a potential problem for the religion of the Antichrist because its goal is to attract other belief systems and draw all people into its spiritual web.

Mysticism avoids objective rules and requirements, whether biblical or not. It's a belief system without a sound (objective) basis that majors on subjective experience, insights, intuition, dreamy confusion of thought (e.g., altered states of consciousness), speculation, and mysterious agencies. So the arbiter of what is right and true is how one *feels*: "If it feels right, then it must be right, and therefore ultimately true."

In order for mysticism to become the foundational belief system of the one-world religion, it must include all the world religions. With rare exceptions, the religions of the Far East are fundamentally mystical, so little change is necessary for them. But what of the law-oriented religions of Roman Catholicism and Islam? Their combined numbers exceed two

billion followers, so they must be included in the religion of the Antichrist. Yet they are both legalistic—Catholicism with its canons and decrees, inquisitions, and obligations, and Islam with its Sharia laws. Obviously this must change in order for them to fit in with the necessary ecumenism of the one-world religion.

Such a change will likely be facilitated by the roots of mysticism that have been a part of both religions for centuries. In Roman Catholicism, for example, the influence of the Desert Fathers began in the third century, just before Constantine, and continued past the time of Augustine in the fourth and fifth centuries. These were hermits and mystics, living in seclusion, in caves, some of them attempting to imitate Jesus in His personal desert confrontation with the devil. Their fleshly attempts at overcoming Satan and his demons often led to madness. They lived in caves, isolated from the rest of civilization, which also led to altered states of consciousness. As we know today, that condition opens a person to communication with the spirit world, i.e., demons. An altered mental state often creates the illusion of oneness, or union, with God—the ultimate goal of mysticism.

This system of isolation was in place at the beginning of the development of the Roman Catholic Church. It was furthered through monasticism, in which monks and nuns withdrew from society by entering monasteries. The idea was to fully commit themselves to God by separating from the secular world. Some monastic orders took vows of silence. That left them vulnerable to the spirit realm. (Silence, by the way, is a huge feature of and heavily promoted by the contemplative movement today.)

In the sixteenth century, a Spaniard named Ignatius Loyola, who was the founder of the Jesuits, fostered mysticism through his Spiritual Exercises. They are enormously popular among Catholics and contemplative evangelicals today. One Jesuit source tells us: “Ignatius was convinced that God can speak to us as surely through our imagination as through our

thoughts and memories. In the Ignatian tradition, praying with the imagination is called contemplation” (Kevin O’Brien, *The Ignatian Adventure: Experiencing the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, p.141). “Praying with the imagination,” by the way, is another term for creative visualization, a powerful occult technique that ushers the visualizer into the spirit realm.

Contemplative techniques have divorced the practitioner from the objective Word of God, leading one into the subjective arena of the imagination and feelings. This is what people like Richard Foster (*Celebration of Discipline*) and Sarah Young (*Jesus Calling*) are promoting. The practical consequences of disregarding critical judgment are often disastrous. Yet that is and will be the outcome of a religious system that people will flock to in the Last Days.

Following the mystical practices of Ignatius Loyola in our day were Catholics Thomas Merton and Henri Nouwen. Both are deceased. Merton was a Trappist monk and priest; Nouwen was also a priest, and both were well-known mystics. They were paragons of the modern contemplative movement and greatly influenced leading evangelicals such as Richard Foster, Dallas Willard, Eugene Peterson, Beth Moore, Kay Warren, and others. Merton studied the Desert Fathers and the Christian mystics and recognized their connection with the meditative practices of Eastern mysticism in Zen Buddhism, Taoism, and Sufism, which he taught and practiced. Asked if he felt that “turning away from traditional Christianity toward the East” would cause “an eventual turning back to a different form of Christianity, one that might even be more genuine,” Merton replied, “Yes, I think so” (Merton, *Thomas Merton: Preview of the Asian Journey*, 53-54).

Henri Nouwen has become the favored mystic among evangelicals. One of his most popular books is *Behold the Beauty of the Lord: Praying with Icons*. It’s an instruction manual on how to use imagery as the window of heaven in order to enter into the deeper things of the soul. Nouwen espouses mysticism because he

sees it “as my call to help every person claim his or her own way to God.” That doesn’t seem to faze Rick Warren, who quotes him favorably in his best-selling *Purpose Driven Life*, or Kay Warren, who recommends Nouwen’s books, or Philip Yancy, who sings his praises in *Christianity Today*, or Chuck Swindoll, who is enamored with his contemplative teachings, or Tony Campolo, who calls the deceased Catholic priest “one of the great Christians of our time.”

Of late there is Pope Francis. Surging ahead at an ecumenical and mystical speed that thrills the world’s religions and has left traditional Catholicism in its wake, the pope and his ecumenism has many professing Christians flocking to Rome at his personal invitation: Kenneth Copeland, James Robison, Rick Warren, Geoff Tunnicliffe, John Arnott, and Joel Osteen, to name a few. After meeting with the pope, Osteen said, “*I like the fact that this pope is trying to make the church larger, not smaller. He’s not pushing people out but making the church more inclusive. That resonated with me.*” Luis Palau has been a long-time friend of the pope, and Timothy George wrote an article for *Christianity Today* titled “Our Francis, Too: Why we can enthusiastically join arms with the Catholic leader.”

The most influential evangelical pastor today, Rick Warren, refers to him as “our new pope.” Pope Francis is certainly the man for the renewal of mystical Roman Catholicism. He’s a Jesuit, fully rehearsed in the Spiritual Exercises. In his address before the US Congress recently, he praised mystic monk and priest Thomas Merton.

Many were appalled that one of the first overtures of the new head of the Roman Catholic Church in regard to winning and influencing evangelicals was to send a personal greeting to a conference led by Kenneth Copeland. Was the pope clueless about Copeland’s false

doctrines, his charismatic abuses, his prosperity distortions of Scripture, not to mention his con-man-like greed? I think not. Why? *Because it doesn’t really matter.* Doctrines, whether true or false, take a back seat—or no seat at all—in mysticism. Remember, as noted, *doctrines divide.* Therefore they need to be pushed aside in order to make room for what helps people to get along, what encourages relationship building, what *feels right.* That was the gist of the *Christianity Today* article, “What Evangelicals Like about Francis.” Never mind the theology of the pope. It’s how he makes everyone feel. More and more, it seems, this is what’s important to people.

Fewer and fewer evangelicals today seem to care that all the *feel good* stuff that Francis reflects personally won’t save him or anyone else. Neither will the gospel of his Church save anyone—whether it’s the new or the old Catholicism. The following quotes in the official Catholic catechism have been a mystery for quite a while. Many within and without the Church have been at a loss as to how to interpret them: “For the Son of God became man so that we might become God.... The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraph 460). What is now becoming apparent is the way those statements fit perfectly with the foundational objective of mysticism: union with God.

The seeds of mysticism have certainly found fertile soil within legalistic Roman Catholicism, but what of the even more oppressive Sharia law that is foundational to Islam? Are Muslims therefore impervious to mystical beliefs?

[TO BE CONTINUED]

TBC

QUOTABLE

“God has an eternal purpose for our lives now and in the life we enter after death. Our passion should be to know and to fulfill that purpose, beginning here on this earth. One day very soon we shall each stand before Him. What a tragedy to miss the very purpose for which we were created and redeemed! You may say, ‘Yes, I want to be used of God, but I don’t know what He wants me to do.’ Or, ‘I try to serve Him, try to witness for Him, and it all seems to come to nothing.’ Learn this: Before God can do much *through* you, He must do a great work *in* you. What counts most is not quantity but quality, not so much your outward effort but your motive within—the purity of your heart rather than your visible accomplishments or prominence with men.”

—DAVE HUNT

Q&A

QUESTION: In Zechariah 5:9, who are the two women with “wind in their wings,” and whose wings are like the wings of a stork? This is how much of the world, and especially Catholics, believe that angels look. But I have believed that all angels are male. Are there other mentions in the scriptures of these women with wings? Are they good or evil?

RESPONSE: In Zechariah 5 we first meet a “flying roll,” explained to be “the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth...” (5:1-3). It brings God’s judgment upon sinners (v. 4). Then we see an ephah (a basket of large measure) with a woman sitting in it, which is “wickedness” (vv. 5-8). Then the two women appear with wings and carry the ephah and its wicked occupant to the land of Shinar. This land is mentioned seven times in the Bible. It seems to be part or even all of Babylonia, the center of false religion and the home of spiritual wickedness.

The woman (wickedness) is the ephah,

establishing a house in Babylon, which could signify the revival of evil religion in relation to the woman on the beast in Revelation 17 whose name is MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT.... The two women seem to be in sympathy with her, if not co-workers for spiritual wickedness. The women are not angels, which the Bible refers to as “men” when they appear. That does not, however, mean that angels are male. God made humans “male and female” (Genesis 1:27) and He told them to “be fruitful, and multiply” (Genesis 1:28). The Bible never says that God made *angels* male and female, nor told them to multiply. In the Bible, angels never appear as women.

Some television programs offer angels represented as both men and women. Their message is anti-biblical and ecumenical. Any kind of “spirituality” and any “God” will do. Back in the day, *Time* pointed out that “these mighty messengers and fearless soldiers [one angel wiped out an army of 185,000 in 2 Kings 19:35] have become Kewpie-doll cherubs, all fluff and meringue, kind, nonjudgmental... available to everyone, much like aspirin.”

Back in 1989 Benny Hinn prophesied that it would become commonplace for angels appearing as young men to come knocking at Christians’ doors. On TBN, he once proclaimed that the activity of angels would accelerate among Christians, and that each Christian could have 6,000 angels at his disposal. Equally unbiblical was his claim over TBN that angels appeared in his bedroom every night during the entire year of 1974—for what purpose? Hinn didn’t say.

Word-faith teachers speak of learning to “command” one’s angels to bring wealth. The Bible warns against a fascination with angels (Colossians 2:18) and that still exists in one form or another today.

QUESTION: The Bible clearly says we are “the sons of God” (1 John 3:2) and Christ calls us “brethren” (Hebrews 2:11-12). That’s fantastic! I’ve heard it preached that we are sons of God just like Jesus was the Son of God, and

therefore as He said He could lay down His life and take it again, so can we. Christ must have surrendered Himself to the death of the cross long before He was crucified; and so must we deny ourselves and take up the cross and follow Him. Of course we fail, but wasn't it possible for Christ to have failed also? If not, then he couldn't have been truly tempted, or be an example for us. The Bible says, "He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). A major temptation I have faced has been to doubt that I am truly God's child. I've had to renew my faith through the Word again and again that I am indeed a child of God.

If Christ, as the Bible says, was tempted in every way we are, wouldn't that mean that He also had to keep renewing His faith that He truly was the Son of God? I'm not suggesting that He ever doubted it but wasn't it a walk of faith for Him so that He had to believe what the Bible said about who He was? I'm confused, and I really want to be led of the Spirit in this matter.

RESPONSE: It is commendable to desire to be "led of the Spirit" as to whether to go to a foreign field or to serve the Lord at home, what job to take, where to live, etc. But when it comes to the doctrine of Christ, we don't speculate and ask God to guide our *thoughts*—we go to His Word, trusting His Spirit to give us understanding. Not only the best but the *only* way to dispel your confusion is to see what the Bible says. Yes, of course there are difficult things to understand, and the Bible does say "great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh..." (1 Timothy 3:16). But He reveals His truth to us by His Spirit through His Word (1 Corinthians 2:10-13), not to mention that a little common sense is also essential!

Both the Bible and common sense tell us that while Jesus calls us "brethren," that does not mean we are *exactly* like Him. We are "of the

earth, earthy"; He is "the Lord from heaven" (1 Corinthians 15:47). We *become* sons of God—indeed, through Christ alone (John 1:12); He *is* the Son of God from all eternity, absolutely unique, God's "*only* begotten Son..." (John 1:14; 3:16; 8:58; etc.). We begin our existence as "flesh and blood" creatures of time (Hebrews 2:14), through sexual union of a man and woman and natural birth, whereas He exists "from everlasting" (Micah 5:2), was born into this world of "a virgin" (Isaiah 7:14), so that as a man "through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14). His mission on earth was "to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15), to "fulfill the law" (Matthew 5:17-18), and to fulfill "all things...written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms" (Luke 24:44) concerning Him.

QUESTION: You teach that upon death Christians go to be with Christ. And yet the Bible says they rise from their graves at Christ's return. How can they be in heaven and rise from their graves, too?

RESPONSE: Man is not just the body that dies and is laid in the grave awaiting the resurrection, but is made up of "spirit and soul and body" (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 4:12). We are told that upon death we are "absent from the body [this could only be the soul and spirit—if we are only a body, the body can't be absent from the body]...present with the Lord" (Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8) and that "them also [the souls and spirits of the redeemed] which sleep in Jesus [their bodies "sleeping" in death, waiting to be awakened at the resurrection] God will bring with him [at the Rapture]" (1 Thessalonians 4:14). At this time "the dead in Christ shall rise" (4:16) to be reunited with the souls and spirits which have been "absent" in heaven. The bodies, of course, will be transformed: "the dead shall be raised incorruptible...this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:52-53).

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LETTERS

Dear TBC,

I learned through the Gospel that repentance is a change of direction from rejecting Jesus Christ to humbly surrendering to Him and His ways. We are saved by grace through faith, not of works. Christ wants us to come to Him just the way we are, but not to stay that way. I always believed in God and the Trinity as a Catholic for almost 60 years. I never trusted Christ for my salvation until I heard the gospel and asked Jesus to reveal Himself to me, and He did in a mighty way—that instant my life changed forever, PTL. The Holy Spirit convicted me of my sins and still does, I am a new creature in Christ! That was 5 glorious years ago, I hate what I used to love and love what I used to hate, it’s only through Christ and Christ alone (Acts 4:12), being sealed by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13), nothing can separate me from Christ my savior (Romans 8:38-39), it is not about a religion but a relationship (Galatians 2:20-21). Thank you for your message, and prayers continue for salvation for all (Romans 1:16). PW (email)

Dear TBC,

Thank you for your continuing work. It was a real blessing to meet Dave Hunt in Meridian, Idaho before he passed away. I spent two years in the NAR from 2008 to 2010. It was not a fun experience. I really wanted to be a worship leader and the Lord providentially removed me from the NAR. Sadly, my former denomination is being affected and impacted by the NAR through its Trojan Horse: music. There is no discernment whatsoever and the pastors and worship leaders aren’t doing anything about it. Hence, the reason why I left.

I felt convicted by the Holy Spirit about the Charismatic Movement while watching the late Caryl Matrisciana’s wonderful documentary

series *Wide is the Gate*, especially Volume 3 which focuses entirely on the New Apostolic Reformation. I’m thankful I memorized this Bible verse as my life verse because it has served me well over the years. “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world, rather than on Christ” (Colossians 2:8 NIV). May the Lord continue to richly bless you and your marvelous work in defending the faith in earnest contention for the true saints of God. Please know that your hard work is not in vain. BW (email)

Dear TBC,

It is very difficult to not be influenced by gifted teachers, but God says, Psalm 118:8-9: “It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.”

It is so easy to be fooled, I have traveled many paths off the God-given one, I have read and been influenced by hundreds of books and in other ways, by great Christian teachers, and found myself in error. Fortunately going back to the Bible as a Berean got me back on track. I now always check with the Bible no matter how greatly I

respect a teacher. No one is inerrant but God. I still am influenced but almost immediately it’s corrected by reading and researching the Bible. Anon. (email)

NOTE:

Our purpose in this section is to simply show what kind of feedback we receive.

We may respond to some of them in private whether or not we agree with their views.

NEWSWATCH

PAUL EHRLICH AND GROUNDHOG DAY

INTELLECTUALTAKEOUT.ORG, 1/31/23, “WHAT PAUL EHRLICH AND GROUNDHOG DAY HAVE IN COMMON” [EXCERPTS]: Out he pops every Feb. 2 to the music, shouts, and fanfare...Punxsutawney Phil of Pennsylvania, the most celebrated

prognosticator of weather in the United States.

The various beloved groundhogs designated as Phil have only a so-so track record in their weather predictions, with a 39 percent accuracy rate. Still, Phil performs better than some of his human counterparts.

In 1968, Paul Ehrlich along with his wife, Anne, wrote *The Population Bomb*, in which they predicted that in the 1970s hundreds of millions of people on our overpopulated planet would die from starvation. That famine never took place, in part because of a green revolution in agriculture. Two years later, Ehrlich... prophesied that by 1980 the world's oceans would be dead. "Large areas of coastline," he said, "will have to be evacuated because of the stench of dead fish." Wrong again.

Despite these gutter balls...Ehrlich continues to deliver his doomsday warnings about overpopulation and climate change...for example, on 60 Minutes. Meanwhile, these Chicken Littles with their "sky is falling" message have propagandized generations of Americans. Millennials and the Gen Z crowd are more concerned about climate change than their predecessors.

(<http://bit.ly/3XL9Gzl>)

DUBIOUS VIEWS ON OCTOPUS EVOLUTION

ICR.ORG, 2/2/23, "DUBIOUS VIEWS ON OCTOPUS EVOLUTION" [EXCERPTS]: The octopus is one of the most amazing animals in God's creation. Now, "A new paper in *Genome Biology and Evolution* indicates that a type of octopus appears to have evolved independently *to develop something resembling a shell, despite having lost the genetic code that produced actual shells in its ancestors and relatives.*" (Emphasis added.)

A number of questions could be asked: How do evolutionists know this creature lost the genetic code that produced actual shells, or how can they say that it evolved independently?

Could it be that the octopus was designed to have this "shell-like egg case" in the beginning?

More importantly, did the octopus have evolutionary ancestors? "Cephalopods without shells or with internal shells (such as octopuses and squids) *apparently evolved* from some early straightshelled ancestor" (emphasis added). Do the zoologists really know the origin of the fascinating octopus?

Evolutionists maintain the egg case of the species of octopus called *Argonauta argo* is like the hard shell of the pearly nautilus (a cephalopod mollusc that appeared in the Cambrian from an unknown ancestor). Although the nautilus's shell and argonaut's egg case look alike, the similarity ends there. They "look dissimilar at the microscopic level," and they are formed differently...the fact that they look similar is just a coincidence.

Evolutionists say, "We anticipate that our findings will further the research of metazoan, mollusk, and cephalopod genome evolution, which has remained largely unexplored thus far." Creationists predict—on the basis of the creation model—that research into these fascinating genomes will not reveal the evolutionary origins of these groups.

(<http://bit.ly/3xBppGn>)

YES, "ZOMBIE STUDIES" IS A THING

THECOLLEGEFIX.COM, 2/1/23, "YES, 'ZOMBIE STUDIES' IS A THING" [EXCERPTS]: When Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis in June 2022 signed a new higher education reform law, he cited the need to ensure colleges and universities are worth the cost.

"I'm a big believer in higher education but I'm not a believer in plunging people \$150,000 into debt with a degree in 'zombie studies,'" he said at the time. "That is not a pathway to success."

News stories are selected for reader awareness and as an exercise in discerning the times from a biblical perspective.

Zombie studies, as it turns out, is not some tongue-in-cheek dig at higher education—it’s an actual topic scholars at some campuses take quite seriously and tackle for various pedagogical purposes.

Last fall, East Tennessee State University... approved a new course called “Surviving the Zombie Apocalypse.” The University of Southern California offered a similar seminar in 2021. “You must work out what you are

going to do to survive. The philosophical wisdom of the ages might help. Or it might not,” the syllabus stated.

While some find this topic of study “silly or inappropriate,” University of Tampa Professor Sarah Juliet Lauro argues “it’s a deeply important mythology....”

(<http://bit.ly/3EmN55p>)

TBC NOTES

Questions for Those Christians Enamored with *The Chosen*

- Is it right to make up stories about Jesus? Wouldn’t that be *another Jesus*? (2 Corinthians 11:4)
- Many who watched *The Chosen* noted that whenever they thought of Jesus, the image of the actor portraying Him came to mind continually. Is that how Jesus wants believers to know Him?
- The Word of God was given by the Holy Spirit to holy men of God to be written down by them (2 Peter 1:21). Can the same be said of the screenwriters who wrote words to be said by those pretending to be Jesus, or Matthew, or John, or Simon Peter, etc., etc.?
- How much “artistic license” is acceptable before *The Chosen* becomes an act of blasphemy?

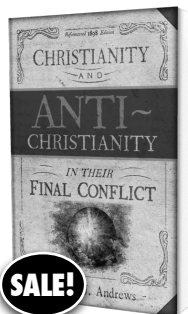
- If I accept the made-up characters presented in *The Chosen* as biblical, wouldn’t that make me more susceptible to accepting the made-up characters in, let’s say, the Book of Mormon?

Those are just a few questions that came to my mind regarding *The Chosen*. These kinds of questions will continue for the next two newsletters. My purpose is to get those being seduced by this series (produced by Mormons pretending to be biblical Christians) to really *think* about what they’re watching. Send me some questions you would ask those who are in fact controlling the program’s content and those who are enamored with it.

One final question for this installment: Does the screenwriter Dallas Jenkins realize he is a latter-day Joseph Smith? Jenkins made up *The Chosen* stories mostly out of his imagination (according to him). Out of Smith’s imagination came the Book of Mormon (according to Smith’s mother).

T. A. McMAHON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DISCERNMENT RESOURCES FOR ENCOURAGEMENT IN THESE LATTER-DAYS



Christianity and Anti-Christianity in Their Final Conflict

Andrews—“This book is a stunning work of interpreting biblical prophecies in the light of the times of Samuel J. Andrews, who lived during the late 1800s. It reads as though it were written today, with the only difference being that the issues addressed have increased exponentially, and the apostasy they have fed is now worldwide. On a personal note, this book is a greatly encouraging pre-confirmation of what I’ve had the privilege of presenting to the body of Christ in my 40-year association with Dave Hunt. I know that others who minister in regard to the value of biblical prophecy will concur. The very vigorous recommendation of James M. Gray, the third president of Moody Bible Institute is fitting: ‘Bear with me if I say, you must read this book.... The Christian leader who does not know these things is no leader, but the blind leading the blind.’ That is a strong exhortation with which I completely agree.” —T. A. McMahon. —The Berean Call, 345 pp.

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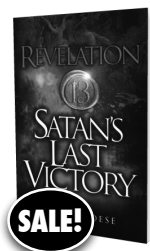


Anti-Christianity's Seduction of Christianity

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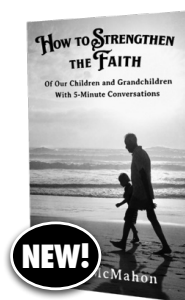
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