



# TOWARD *the Prize*

I PRESS TOWARD THE MARK FOR THE  
PRIZE OF THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD  
IN CHRIST JESUS. —PHILIPPIANS 3:14

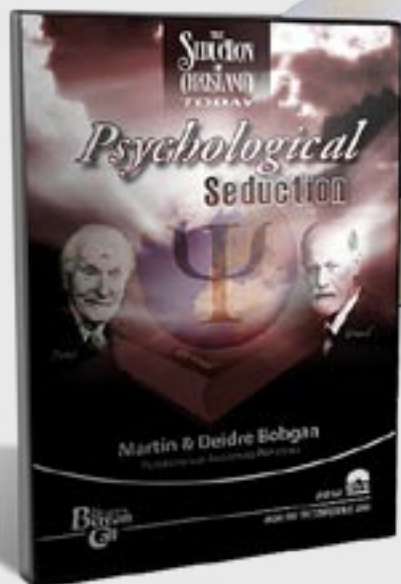
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OCTOBER 2007

*TOWARD THE PRIZE*

by *DAVE HUNT*

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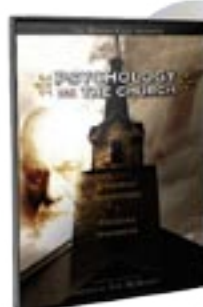
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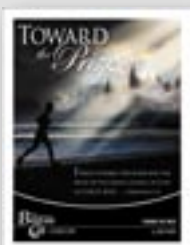
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**THE COVER ART:** “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible” (1 Cor 9:24-25). “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.” (Heb 12:1-2a). “And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away” (1 Peter 5:4).

# THE BEREAN CALL

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

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## ***Toward the Prize***

*Dave Hunt*

Paul was a man of fervent prayer, with a seemingly endless list of dear ones on his heart. To the believers in Rome, even before he had been there, Paul wrote, "without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers" (Rom 1:9). Likewise, to those at Ephesus whom he knew well, "I . . . cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers" (Eph 1:16). The number of believers he mentioned by name in his epistles and for whom he daily prayed supported his statement: "Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?" (2 Cor 11:28,29).

Of course, Paul's prayers expressed much that he desired God to provide for various believers. First and foremost in his heart, however, was one passion he had for all believers everywhere and in every time of history—and that would include us today. He expressed it in various ways in his epistles. Here it is in his prayer for the Ephesians:

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him [to] know what is the hope of his calling [and] the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead...." (Eph 1:17-20)

Paul wanted believers everywhere to know and understand God's ultimate eternal purpose for them. His prayer was not that this purpose would be accomplished one day in eternity. There was no question about that, nor could Paul's prayer play any part in its ultimate realization. God had already determined to accomplish this goal for every Christian without fail, and He would do it by the very power with which Christ was raised from the dead. That it will be realized for every true Christian is as certain as our salvation. What was it, then, for which Paul prayed? That we would here and now in this present life know and understand "the hope of his [God's] calling."

What is this hope? And if it unfailingly will be realized for eternity in glory, no matter what we may do or not do, why is it so important that we understand it ahead of

time? Herein lies one of the key elements in a victorious life of fruitfulness to the glory of God and fullness of Christ's joy and ours.

The Apostles understood this hope well. Paul declared that we "rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom 5:2). This passage and many others make it clear that "the glory of God" is not only something that will surround us in heaven but it will be revealed *in us*: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col 1:27). He calls it a "mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints" (1:26). The fact that this promised "glory" is future and as yet unseen is likewise clear: "What a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom 8:24,25).

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I AM CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST: NEVERTHELESS I LIVE; YET NOT I, BUT CHRIST LIVETH IN ME: AND THE LIFE WHICH I NOW LIVE IN THE FLESH I LIVE BY THE FAITH OF THE SON OF GOD, WHO LOVED ME, AND GAVE HIMSELF FOR ME.

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—GALATIANS 2:20

Paul referred to "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" as "that blessed hope" (Ti 2:13). How does that relate to "the hope of our calling?" Why would the hope of Christ's appearing at last to His own, in glory, be specially blessed?

We don't look to our own reasoning and speculation in seeking to understand the Christian's ultimate hope. We search the Scriptures, and the more deeply we understand, the more clearly we see that the Bible is indeed the Word of the true and living God, one integrated love letter to mankind from Genesis to Revelation.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth...." On the sixth day, "God created man in his own image" (Gn 1:1,27). That statement has nothing to do with man's physical body, male or female, for "God is a Spirit" (Jn 4:24). We can only conclude that man was made in the spiritual image of God to manifest to the universe the beauties of God's holy character: His selfless love, compassion, grace, gentleness, patience, holiness, and moral purity—as well as the power of choice. The latter, of course, was essential if man was to love God and his fellows—but that

power, necessarily, opened the door for man to choose for himself rather than for his Creator!

In Adam's irrational and unthinkable rebellion against the God to whom he owed his very existence, Self (the autonomous self as "god") had its awful birth and, in partnership with Satan, has been trying to take over mankind's destiny ever since. Battles rage within and without as each individual Self competes not only with God but with every other Self for supremacy: conflict between husbands and wives, children and their siblings, parents and children, in a cacophony of "I, My, Me, Mine."

The moment man rebelled, the Spirit of God departed from man's spirit, and the image of God in which man had been created was shattered. Self was left to the unhappy loneliness of its insane pride. Imagine worms boasting of their power and glory and one gets a picture of the pitiful creature called man, mired deeply in sin, parading his positive self-image and self-esteem before the throne of God!

Jesus declared that the only hope for any man was to "deny himself [that wicked Self born in Eden], and take up his [individual] cross, and follow me" (Mt 16:24-26; Mk 8:31-34; Lk 9:23). In defiance of our Lord's command, Christian psychology (which is trustingly looked to for guidance by almost the entire evangelical church) declares that man's great need is, instead, to nourish and cherish the Self. Rejecting Christ's command, the evangelical church now follows Christian psychologists, who have become the new infallible priesthood. They have brought into the evangelical church the foolish wisdom of the world (1 Cor 1:20) with the excuse that "all truth is God's truth." That mantra confuses mere facts of logic or science with "the truth" found only in "the word of truth" (Ps 119:43; 2 Cor 6:7; Eph 1:13; Col 1:5; 2 Tm 2:15; Ja 1:18), which alone "shall make you free" (Jn 8:32).

Rather than denying self, "Christian psychology," thinking it can improve God's infallible and all-sufficient Word with the theories of atheistic anti-Christians, coddles rebellious Self with the offer of "self-esteem, self-love, self-acceptance, self-image, self-improvement, self-assertion," and all the other selfisms, ad nauseam. Bruce Narramore admits that these theories are not found in "the word of truth," but Christian psychologists have borrowed them from Christ-defying humanists:

Under the influence of humanistic psychologists like Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, many of us Christians have begun to see our need for self-love and self-esteem. It is a good and necessary focus.<sup>1</sup>

James Dobson's ministry is built upon this same humanist foundation. We have quoted him saying that Christian psychology is a good career for any young Christian to aspire to, "provided their faith is strong enough to withstand the humanism to which they will be exposed." So the evangelical church, under the influence of Christian psychologists, has been reduced to reliance upon humanists for instruction in how to provide essential moral and spiritual counsel, which the Holy Spirit somehow failed to include in the Word of Truth, even though it claims to give us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Pt 1:3).

How can so many Christians turn from the clear teaching of Scripture to Satan's lies? There is widespread ignorance of God's Word in the evangelical church. Even worse is the eagerness to follow the world in contemptuous disregard of what the Bible unmistakably teaches. Much of the blame must be placed upon Christian psychologists, who have led the way in this rebellion. The effect is everywhere. Robert Schuller (who for years has had the largest TV audience each Sunday morning), in a book with an introduction by his mentor, arch heretic Norman Vincent Peale, boldly defies God:

Self-love is a crowning sense of self-worth. It is an ennobling emotion of self-respect... an abiding faith in yourself. It is sincere belief in yourself.

It comes through self-discovery, self-discipline, self-forgiveness and self-acceptance. It produces self-reliance, self-confidence and an inner security, calm as the night.<sup>2</sup>

Self has taken the place of God. Sadly, the specious belief that humanists can teach us how to counsel from the Bible through psychological techniques is widely accepted among evangelicals today. Church leaders are taking their flocks into one false teaching after another (from the avid pursuit of "signs and wonders" to numerical growth at the expense of sound doctrine). Many such errors have been exposed in these pages. Here again Self, inflated by Christian psychology, is the culprit. Jesus said, "If any man will [i.e., wills to] do his [the Father's] will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (Jn 7:17). Scripture will not be understood nor sound doctrine valued and defended as long as Self has not been denied in surrender to the will of God.

In our lives, we need God. We need the Holy Spirit. We need Christ as our very life itself, allowing Him to restore in and express through us the image of God in which we were created. We have forgotten heaven and become enamored of this world, living our lives as though the only plans God has for us pertain to earth. Yes, some of our works seem good and spiritual: preaching the gospel and giving out tracts, writing Christian books and making Christian films, building missionary organizations, larger churches, and Christian universities, doing charitable deeds—and on and on it goes, keeping us so busy serving the Lord that we can scarcely find time to love and worship Him.

Believing the lie that one can become so "heavenly minded" as to be of "no earthly good" (surely Christ was the most heavenly minded man who ever lived, yet He was also the most earthly good!), we have lost sight of "the hope of his calling." I do not minimize the lust, self-indulgence, entrapment in sin, failure to pray, neglect of Bible study, the forsaking of Christian fellowship, and the carnality that is rampant today among those who claim to be born-again evangelicals. These failings, however, are easily recognized by anyone who knows the Lord and has a modicum of conscience.

It is a deadly error, however, to imagine that victory over these sins comes through getting "busy for God." No matter in what we are falling "short of the glory of God," the problem is the same: we have lost sight of (or perhaps never understood) what Paul says is "the hope of our calling."

Perhaps no one served Christ as wholeheartedly as Paul. At the same time, no one loved Him more. Consider carefully Paul's explanation of the secret of his life: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:13,14). Paul then exhorts, "Be followers together of me..." (3:17). What is this prize that we should all be pressing toward, as Paul did?

Clearly, it is not an individual award given to a "winner" in competition for excelling others. The prize is "the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" itself that Paul desired for all Christians to understand and press toward. This "high calling" is why Christ died and rose again for us! Peter explains that "the God of all grace...has called us unto his eternal glory" (1 Pt 5:10). Falling short of that glory is the biblical definition of sin (Rom 3:23). The restoration of that glory is fully assured in eternity for every true disciple of Christ, yet we are to pursue it even now. Laying everything else aside for this goal was the secret of Paul's remarkable life!

Of Christ it is written, "Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb 12:2). That joy was twofold: knowing that He had faithfully accomplished what the Father had given Him to do; and "bringing many sons unto glory" (Heb 2:10) in His very image. The "hope of his calling" is the joy set before us: the joy of at last fully becoming all that the Father's heart of love desires for us so that Christ will "see of the travail of his soul [and] be satisfied" (Is 53:11).

The "hope of his calling" is beautifully expressed in this old hymn (excerpted here) written by John Nelson Darby, one of the founders in the early 1830s of the so-called "Plymouth Brethren":

And is it so? I shall be like thy Son? Is this the grace which He for me has won?

Father of Glory (thought beyond all thought), In glory to His own blest likeness brought!

O Jesus, Lord...myself the prize and travail of Thy soul! Yet it must be!

Thy love had not its rest were thy redeemed not with Thee, fully bless'd.

That love that gives not as the world but shares all it possesses with its loved co-heirs.

Nor I alone: Thy loved ones all, complete, in glory round Thee there with joy shall meet;

All...for Thy glory like Thee, Lord: object supreme of all, by all adored....

The heart is satisfied, can ask no more: all thought of self is now, forever, o'er.

Christ, its unmingled Object, fills the heart: in bless'd adoring love its end-less part.

Father of Glory, in Thy presence bright all this shall be unfolded in the light!"

The angel Gabriel told Daniel, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dn 12:3). John explained when and how this transformation would occur: "When he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jn 3:2).

Though that transformation will not be fully realized until we see Him face to face, yet even now, though "we see through a glass, darkly" (1 Cor 13:12), we are, as we keep our eyes upon Him, being "changed into the same image from glory to glory...as by the Spirit of the Lord." Let us lay all else aside to press on toward the prize "of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus!" **TBC**



## Quotable .....

More evil is done to the cause of Christianity by its adherents than its opponents, for the world often contrasts a Christian's profession with his practice. They argue rightly that if Christianity is what we claim it is, it ought to make a difference in the life.

*James Spink, cited in William MacDonald, The Forgotten Command: Be Holy*

The inconsistencies of Christian people, who while professing to believe their Bibles were yet content to live just as they would if there were no such Book, had been one of the strongest arguments of my skeptical companions.

*Hudson Taylor, cited in William MacDonald, The Forgotten Command: Be Holy*

If you have looked at your resolutions, endeavors, workings, duties, qualifications, etc., more than at the merits of Christ, it will cost you dearly....Christ alone can be the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27).

*Thomas Wilcox, 1621-1687*

## Q&A .....

**QUESTION:** In 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2, after describing the rapture (4:13-17) Paul refers to this event as the "day of the Lord." Acts 2:20-21, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 and 2 Peter 3:10 also show that the rapture and the day of the Lord are the same event. Matthew 24:15 and 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 appear to indicate that believers will still be here at the mid-point of the trib when Antichrist is revealed. Lastly, Matthew 24:29 and Acts 2:20-21 talk about the sun, moon, and stars at the time of the day of the Lord, and Revelation 6:12-13 uses the same language to describe the opening of the sixth seal. Then in Revelation 7:9 immediately following the opening of the sixth seal it makes reference to a great multitude in Heaven that no one could count. This leads me to believe that the rapture (day of the Lord) takes place after the abomination and at the opening of the sixth seal. Am I wrong?

**RESPONSE:** I don't find your conclusions in the verses you cite. First of all, an event (the Rapture) is not a day (the day of the Lord). The Rapture, coming when not expected (Mt 24:44; Mk 13:32-37; Lk 12:40) and "as a thief" (Rv 3:3, 16:15), marks the *beginning* of the day of the Lord, which also comes "as a thief in the night" (1 Thes 5:2). But the Rapture doesn't occur simultaneously with the destruction of the old universe and creation of the new,

which also happens in "the day of the Lord" (2 Pt 3:10). Far too much occurs during that day (the Rapture, millennial reign, destruction of old and creation of new universe, etc.) for it to be a 24-hour period.

Acts 2:20,21 refers to a particular "great and notable" part of the "day of the Lord....," *before* which, not *during* which, "the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon into blood" (2:20). A "falling away [apostasy]" must *precede* the day of the Lord (2 Thes 2:1-3); and 2 Peter 3:10 states that the old universe will be destroyed during the day of the Lord. None of these verses indicates that the Rapture and day of the Lord "are the same event."

Matthew 24:15-22 does not refer to Christians but to Jews, specifically those "which be in Judea" (Mt 24:16). Second Thessalonians 2:3 refers to the falling away that comes first [i.e., before the Antichrist is revealed in the day of the Lord]. This verse makes it clear that the falling away comes before the day of the Lord, and the revealing of the Antichrist *in that day*. The Rapture must occur, removing the church, and only "then shall that Wicked [i.e., Antichrist] be revealed...whose coming is after the working of Satan..." (2 Thes 2:8,9). The next few verses refer to those who will be deceived by Antichrist "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion...that they all might be damned..." (2:10-12). There is no hint that true Christians are even on earth. They all have been taken in the Rapture and Paul is referring to a world of unbelievers who have been left behind.

Matthew 24:29 (vv. 27-31) refers not to the Rapture when believers are caught up to meet Christ in the air, but to the Second Coming when His feet touch the Mount of Olives and angels gather back to Jerusalem from all over the world "his elect" [i.e., the 1/3 of the Jews who have survived the great tribulation and are left alive when Christ returns to take the throne of His father David—Ezk 39:28 and Zec 13:9]. This occurs at the end of the Great Tribulation and has nothing to do with the Rapture. By the way, when His feet touch the Mount of Olives, Christ brings "all the saints" (Zec 14:5) from heaven with Him—so the Rapture must have already occurred to take them up there. Of course this must be the case, because the Judgment Seat of Christ must have occurred in order for the bride to be "arrayed in fine linen, clean and white" to dress her for the wedding in heaven" (Rv 19:7,8). Only after these two events in heaven can the Second Coming take place (19:11-21).

Revelation 7:9 refers to the same group we saw under the altar at 6:9-11. They have

not been Raptured to heaven but are the souls of those martyred under Antichrist asking when they will be avenged. They are told that will not occur until the other martyrs have been killed. Then they will be resurrected together at the Second Coming (6:11; 20:4,5).

**QUESTION:** Regarding your article on replacement theology and Israel in the Q&A of June 2007, since our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and all His disciples kept the Jewish festivals ("With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" - Luke 22:15); Paul commands "keep the feast" (1 Corinthians 5:7-8); he hurried to Jerusalem to celebrate another Jewish holiday (Acts 20:16); he told the Colossians that the Jewish festivals were a shadow of the Messiah, good reason to celebrate them (Colossians 2:16-17); the Jewish festivals are "statutes forever" (Leviticus 23:14); and at the last supper Christ declared that He would someday drink the Passover Cup anew with His followers in His Father's Kingdom (Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25); and since neither God nor Jesus makes any distinction between Christian Jews or Gentiles regarding these festivals, could you please explain your statement: "...for a Gentile to keep those [Jewish] feasts today would be a fraud."

You state that Jewish feasts "are specifically for Jews to keep....," but I fail to find any Scripture that so states or even so implies. Do you mean that Jesus's statement at the Last Supper about drinking the cup anew with His followers in His Father's kingdom only applied to Jewish followers...? I still don't see where observing the Jewish holidays and feasts is prohibited in the Scriptures. Are you saying that it's ok for Jewish Christians to celebrate Jewish festivals, but not for Gentile Christians to do so? Please explain.

**RESPONSE:** You read your own ideas into Matthew 26:29 and Mark 14:25. Jesus did not say "Passover Cup" but "fruit of the vine" as also in Luke 22:18. Most of your misunderstanding comes from failing to recognize that the Last Supper was not the Jewish Passover but a new remembrance of Himself that Christ inaugurated for the church: it was not in memory of deliverance from Egypt but the deliverance "the Lamb of God" (Jn 1:29) who is "Christ our passover" (1 Cor 5:7) would effect on the Cross, the lamb foretold in Exodus 12:6 that the "whole assembly of the congregation of Israel [would] kill...in the evening." That is why He called it "*this* passover" (Lk 22:15)—to distinguish the Old Testament

picture from the New Testament reality.

When Paul said “let us keep the *feast*,” he was not referring to the Jewish Passover but to “*this* passover” involving “Christ our passover” in remembrance of Himself that Christ initiated at the Last Supper, which was not the Jewish Passover. That idea is a grave misunderstanding. We’ve been over this before in previous *TBCs*, but here it is again.

John 13:1 says the Last Supper was “before the feast of the Passover.” Had it been the Passover, no one would have thought that Judas went out to buy anything (13:29), for all stores would have been closed on the “high Sabbath” that began the seven-day feast with the Passover supper. Furthermore, the Last Supper couldn’t have been the Jewish Passover because the next morning the rabbis hadn’t yet eaten the Passover (Jn 18:28), and later, that “morning after,” it was still “the preparation of the passover” (19:14).

There was no Passover lamb at the Last Supper because the lambs were not slain until the following afternoon—when Christ was dying on the Cross, as it had to be in fulfillment of Scripture. Christ’s “this do in remembrance of me” (Lk 22:19; 1 Cor 11:25) was not a command for Christians to keep the Jewish Passover with a new meaning. Read Exodus 12 again. There is no way the Passover could be given a new meaning for Christians (Jews and Gentiles) while retaining its primary meaning for Jews—and why should it? Never was it said that the wine drunk at the Passover was a symbol of blood, either of the Passover lamb’s or of Christ’s. Christ inaugurated something entirely new, unrelated (except symbolically) to Israel’s deliverance from Egypt.

The gospel has nothing to do with keeping Jewish feasts. Though symbolic of much that pertains to the gospel, the feasts are part of the law of Moses, not to be observed by Christians (Acts 15:24-29). They provide pictures of Christ and the gospel but are primarily and eternally related to Israel, the Promised Land, and the coming Messianic kingdom—not to the church. Gentile believers on Christ have no reason to, as Paul put it, go back “to the weak and beggarly elements” (Gal 4:9) of the law.

The Passover was always a remembrance specifically for Jewish persons of the fact that God miraculously delivered their ancestors from Egypt. Those who keep it today (only Jews do, not Arabs or “Palestinians”) prove to the world their descent from those God delivered from Egypt and led into the Promised Land. That land belongs to Jews, not to those who fraudulently claim to be descended from the original “Palestinians” and accuse Jews of

occupying their land. It would destroy the proof and change the meaning for Gentiles to keep the Jewish Passover, which does not pertain to them at all!

**QUESTION: In the July 2007 Q&A, you stated: “Revelation 21 reveals the ‘new heaven and new earth’ after the final judgment of the wicked (Revelation 20:10-15).... Jews or Gentiles who believed on Christ, but not until they saw Him at the Second Coming, are not in the church but will dwell on earth eternally: in their natural bodies during the Millennium and in new bodies on the new earth with access to the new Jerusalem but not as its residents (Revelation 21:24). Jews saved at the Second Coming will eternally dwell in the promised land of Israel on the new earth (Genesis 17:8; 1 Chronicles 16:14-18; Ezekiel 32:21-28; 39:27-29; Zechariah 12:10). Jews or Gentiles who believed on Christ before His visible appearing (‘blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed’ - John 20:29) are the bride, the church. They inhabit the new Jerusalem, are always with Christ, and have full access through Him to the throne of God in heaven.”**

**Did you state in another article many years ago that believers during the new heaven and earth who are not part of the church will be able to have babies to fill the earth in obedience to Christ’s command to replenish the earth? This will either stop when earth is full or populations will be removed to other planets. I don’t find any reference of such a thing in the Bible. Further, why won’t believers, though not part of the church, have full access to the throne of God and what does full access mean? I thought access would be unlimited and that the throne of the Trinity would be among men, not in the current heaven any more.**

**RESPONSE:** No, I never stated that anyone would bear children in the new heaven and new earth. Believers have new bodies like angels and “neither marry, nor are given in marriage” (Mt 22:30; Mk 12:25; Lk 20:35). Nor will humans inhabit other planets, in spite of Billy Graham’s hoping to preach the gospel on other planets during the Millennium.

Revelation 21:24-27 tells us of the new Jerusalem in eternity: “The nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it...kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it....” These clearly come in and out of it as visitors, not as residents. The glory of God is manifested there, but the only mention of the throne of “God and of the Lamb” locates it in heaven, from whence the new Jerusalem descends to earth (Rv 21:2,5,10; 22:1,3).

## News Alert.....

[www.christiantoday.com/9/4/07/Excerpts/](http://www.christiantoday.com/9/4/07/Excerpts/): The Hindu Council UK (HCUK), the largest national network of Hindu organisations within the UK, is considering whether a ban on yoga classes at St James’ Church and the Silver Street Baptist Church in Taunton, Somerset, may breach the Equality Act 2006.

Lawyers for HCUK are exploring whether comments made by both The Reverend Tim Jones, Vicar of St James’ and The Reverend Simon Farrar of the Silver Street Baptist Church that yoga is a “sham,” a “false philosophy” and “unchristian” may indicate they have acted contrary to the ‘Religion and Belief’ section of the Act [and are] considering whether to ask the Commission for Equality and Human Rights to investigate whether the priests’ comments amount to “instructing or causing discrimination.”

HCUK General Secretary Anil Bhanot said: “These priests might appear to be advising Christians not to practice yoga because they believe it is based on a ‘sham’ and a ‘false philosophy’ but what in effect they mean is that Hinduism is a false religion.”

Rev. Farrar of Silver Street Baptist Church has previously said: “We are a Christian organisation....Clearly, yoga impinges on the spiritual life of people in a way which we as Christians don’t believe is the same as our ethos.”

The Rev. Tim Jones, vicar of St James’s, supported the decision, saying: “Any alternative philosophies or beliefs are offering a sham—and at St James’s Church we want people to have the real thing. Yoga has its roots in Hinduism, and attempts to use exercises and relaxation techniques to put a person into a calm frame of mind—in touch with some kind of impersonal spiritual reality.

“The philosophy of yoga cannot be separated from the practice of it, and any teacher of yoga, even to toddlers, must subscribe to the philosophy.

“Yoga may appear harmless or even beneficial, but it is encouraging people to think that there is a way to wholeness of body and mind through human techniques - whereas the only true way to wholeness is by faith in God through Jesus Christ.”

## Endnotes .....

1. Bruce Narramore, *You’re Someone Special* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 22.
2. Robert H. Schuller, *Self-Love, the Dynamic Force of Success: Learn to Love Yourself—the secret of happiness in life, in love, in everything you do* (New York: Hawthorn Books, W. Clement Stone, 1969), 32.

## Speaking Schedule

<b>Oct 17-22</b> (Dave)	<b>Brazil</b> <a href="http://www.chamada.com.br">www.chamada.com.br</a>
<b>Oct 20</b> (TA)	<b>Steeling the Mind Conf</b> Richland WA (800) 977-2177
<b>Nov 11-13</b> (Dave)	<b>Midnight Call Prophecy Conf</b> Myrtle Beach SC (800) 845-2420
<b>Jan 17-20</b> (Dave)	<b>Calvary Chapel Finger Lakes</b> Farmington NY (585) 398-3550
<b>Feb 3</b> (Dave)	<b>The Home Church</b> Lodi CA (209) 339-7333

## Letters .....

**Dear Mr. McMahon,**

Your comments in "When the Well Runs Dry" [TBC Notes, 8/07] brought back memories. Eighty-seven years ago, I was born on a farm in Central Nebraska. We had no electricity. Our water supply came from a well. Above it stood a windmill that was run by the wind. As the wheel on the windmill went round...the well brought water up through pipes from below. One summer when I was a child, the farmers became very much concerned about water, because the wind had not blown for several days. The cattle tanks were almost empty and the water in the cisterns was getting very low. Back then people prayed

and believed God more than they seem to do today. As we gathered together to pray, the Lord made the wind blow. As it blew, all the cattle tanks were filled and so were the cisterns. Then we thanked the Lord!...

You also called our attention to Job 3:25... "the thing which I...feared is come upon me...." Years ago when I became enamoured with my salary, the Lord called my attention to Matthew 6:24: "You cannot serve the Lord and mammon." I could not forget it! Finally I told the Lord that I would serve Him. Then fear overcame me...My fear concerned money for retirement. But our God is so gracious and kind! One day He led me to 2 Timothy 1:7....From that day on, when the fear came I asked the Lord to replace it with the spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind. And He did! In my retirement I have little money, but I always have enough! And I praise the Lord for the power, love and sound mind which is mine. VH (TX)

**Dear Dave,**

I refer to your Q & A in June 2007 concerning the unbiblical use and distinction of the term "Messianic" when applying it to any believer following the Messiah, irrespective of whether they are from Gentile or Jewish backgrounds. I am a believer in Jesus who was born a Jew. I totally agree with the comments you have made, and thank you for stating the truth on this subject, regardless of the consequences from the Jewish Roots

Movement or Messianic Judaism apologists, who will attack you for it.

Those who value such traditions usually defend their position based on three factors, which are witness, identity, and liberty. Scripture compels us to provoke the Jewish people to jealousy. In reality these movements provoke Jews to anger, scorn, and disgust! Most Jews are won to the Lord through Christian witness and not through Messianic Judaism. This fact is even acknowledged in Messianic Judaism's own statistics and surveys.

Regardless of our past—our present and our future is in Christ Jesus and in Him alone; not in the religious designation that God allowed us to be born into. There is no need or purpose for any separate identity once we are in Him. We are new creations in Christ, Jew and Gentile are now "one new man." Practicing man-made rabbinic traditions is a misrepresentation of our real freedom in the Messiah....In conclusion, man's view is totally irrelevant. It's only what God says that matters, and He says "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God." (Romans 2:28-29) DH (Australia)

**Correction:** Dan Kimball notified us that we mistakenly titled his book *The Emergent Church*. It's *The Emerging Church*.

## TBC Notes

### "Forbid them not to come unto Me"

For the first 30 years of my life I never read the Bible. I grew up Roman Catholic and was never encouraged to read it. But after I understood and accepted by faith alone the gospel of salvation—that Christ paid the full penalty for my sins on the cross—by my act of faith through grace I received the gift of eternal life. Now, day after day, I continually hunger for God's Word, His specific communication to me and to all of humanity.

The only time I get more excited about the Bible is when I hear Dave talk about it. He's been studying it on his knees for more than seven decades, and I can sense his joy every time he tells of what he has just learned from God's Word. That's just one of the tremendous qualities of the Bible: the better you know it, the more exciting it becomes.

Perhaps the most exciting subject of the Bible is prophecy. We know it is important because nearly a third of the Bible relates to prophecy. In it we can see God directly involved in human history, fulfilling what He said He would do, hundreds and even thousands of years after He had declared it

through His prophets.

Where are you and your children in all of this? Especially your children! I recently attended three prophecy conferences, two here in the U.S. and one in Hong Kong. The two here had very few people under age 30; in Hong Kong, the more than 600 young people were by far the majority. The latter were a note-taking, totally rapt audience as they listened to Dave Hunt through an interpreter (one session went for 2 hours and 48 minutes!).

I wondered why there was such a difference between these young people and the ones in the U.S. The answer should have been obvious. Those Chinese youth had been taught the Bible from a very young age. They had been nourished on the pure milk of the Word and were ready for, even excited about, the meat.

Most of our American evangelical youth get their so-called biblical content through entertainment, whether from talking vegetables and Christianized characters imitating Batman and Robin, or Luke Skywalker, or the latest Saturday TV power figure. That seems to be the spiritual "Ritalin" for *biblical* Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): Calm them down and keep their attention with *Veggie Tales* et al.

The result will be the need to keep on amusing them throughout their years because the junior high group has to be more thrilling than the elementary group, and the high school group has to be even more fun than the junior high, and don't worry about biblical accuracy and literacy as long as the attendance numbers are satisfactory. This, of course, leads to a generation of biblically illiterate, shallow "christians," ripe for every kind of false teacher and religious deceiver.

The antidote is simple (although not without discipline on everyone's part): parents need to *really* teach their children the Word of God, the Scriptures, with emphasis on the *words* when their children near reading age. This is the primary responsibility of *the home*, with the *support* of the church.

It is vitally important for our next generation that we "suffer little children to come unto [Jesus]" by giving them the Word. No matter how sincere, we must not "forbid them" (Luke 18:16) by turning them to amusement.

T.A. McMAHON  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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# How *The Apocalypse Code* Parses the "Generations"

## Hank Hanegraaff Delivers a Lesson in "Grammar Manipulation"

BIBLE PROPHECY can be a point of contention, something that is not relieved by touting one's faithfulness to "exegesis" while "superimposing" a theology onto Scripture. Unfortunately, Hank Hanegraaff's new book *The Apocalypse Code* is guilty of both and deserving of examination.

*The Apocalypse Code* is billed as "the code breaker for the Book of Revelation." Judging by the content, Hanegraaff's cryptography fails. In truth, he spends more time constructing his own system of interpretation and pillorying Tim LaHaye than looking at Scripture in context. Hanegraaff implies that LaHaye's interpretation of Scripture is equivalent to Bill Clinton's lying about sex,<sup>1</sup> hardly setting an example for "a clarion call for biblical fidelity."<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, he introduces something called "exegetical eschatology," complete with acronyms (L.I.G.H.T.S.). Evidence of his system's "biblical fidelity" comes up wanting. Consider his comments concerning the words of Jesus in Matthew 24.

According to Hanegraaff, when Jesus says "you," or "this generation," he always (without exception) means those hearing him. He overrides the explicit statements of Jesus with his theology as a willing accomplice.

In Matthew 24, the disciples ask Jesus a clear question: "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24:3). In his answer, Jesus precisely lists events that must occur prior to his "coming, and of the end of the world." These include false Christs (v. 5), wars and rumors of wars (v. 6), nation (ethnos) rising against nation (v. 7), and famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in diverse places (v. 7). These things are just "the beginning of sorrows" (v. 8). Here are a few others: Believers will be hated of all nations for the Lord's name's sake, the world will see the rise of many false prophets, the preaching of the gospel will act as a witness to all nations, and the "man of sin" (Daniel 9:27) will stand in the holy place. Jesus is speaking of things encompassing more than Israel in AD 70. No one can say that the suffering (although great) experienced at the hands of Emperor Titus was "great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21). There was no danger of all flesh being wiped out in AD 70, nor had the Jews suffered anything as devastating as the Holocaust. It just doesn't fit.

To "explain" Matthew 24:34, Hanegraaff trots out a homey (although entirely inappropriate) analogy: "Suppose I say to my children, 'I tell you the truth, this day will certainly not pass away until I have taken you all to Disney World.' Do you suppose they might scratch their heads and wonder whether I had a future generation of children in mind?"<sup>3</sup> However diligently his children might scratch their heads, his analogy bears no reasonable comparison to the passage. If Hanegraaff laid out specific criteria as (Jesus did) that must be met prior to the trip, his children might very well conclude that the trip would be delayed. That is, if they were paying attention to the words of their father.

In verse 34, Jesus states clearly that "this generation shall not pass, till *all these things* be fulfilled." *All these things* had not been fulfilled by AD 70's destruction of the temple. Clearly, his words are not limited to those disciples hearing him. Of necessity Hanegraaff must impose his own grammatical rules. As noted, he insists that

every occurrence of "this generation" means only the generation spoken to (Matthew 24:34, Mark 13:30, Luke 21:32). We have already discussed Matthew 24, but the passages in Mark 13 and Luke 21 parallel Matthew's account, clearly containing things unfulfilled by AD 70.

Sadly, to assist in twisting Scripture, Hanegraaff enlists the help of noted atheists such as Bertrand Russell, whom he introduces as the "world-class philosopher and leading intellectual."<sup>4</sup> Yet Psalm 14:1, calls the God-denying Russell "a fool." Hanegraaff's comments concerning Tim LaHaye are certainly not as kind as for Bertrand Russell: "LaHaye's rebuttal...is about as believable to a discerning skeptic as Clinton's quip, 'it depends on what the meaning of the word "is" is.'" <sup>5</sup> Hanegraaff cites Russell as an "authority" when the atheist's position is agreeable.

Russell's words are presented without challenge and Hanegraaff quotes a passage from *Why I Am Not a Christian*, containing this Christ-rejecter's interpretation of the words of our Lord. Russell charges that when Jesus said, "take no thought for the morrow, and things like that...it was very largely because He thought the Second Coming was going to be very soon."<sup>6</sup> What rubbish! He should know that, but he gives Russell a free ride. Expediency, like politics, creates strange bedfellows.

He goes on to quote Albert Schweitzer, "the great missionary physician and New Testament Scholar..."<sup>7</sup> He should also have written "liberal heretic." Nevertheless, Schweitzer is quoted because what he says supports the self-appointed "Bible Answer Man." Regarding the definition of "near," what did Jesus say? Prior to Matthew 24:34 is verse 33, stating, "When ye shall see *all these things*, know that it is near, even at the doors." Did "all these things" occur prior to AD 70? Certainly not!

Hanegraaff's attempt to establish a preferred meaning is similar to how Jehovah's Witnesses attack the deity of Christ. Their premise is that a word must always have the same meaning regardless of context. The JW's singled out the Hebrew word *lechem*, which is often (but not always) translated "bread." For consistency, they argued, should it not always mean just "bread?" In truth, "lechem" has been translated "bread," "meat," "meal," and, according to Jewish commentators, can also refer to any part of a sacrifice.

In conclusion, having neglected the context of Scripture, and by insisting upon artificially imposed definitions, Hanegraaff's chronology relies upon faulty reasoning, inadequate illustrations, and the opinions of those whose only qualifications are that they agree with him.

—Edwin Newby

### Footnotes:

1. Hank Hanegraaff, *The Apocalypse Code*, Thomas Nelson, 2007, 70.
2. Elliot Miller, "You're Writing a Book about What?," *Christian Research Journal*, 30:2, 3.
3. Hanegraaff, *Apocalypse*, 81.
4. *Ibid.*, 75.
5. Hank Hanegraaff, "Apocalypse When?," *Christian Research Journal*, 30:2, 15.
6. Hanegraaff, *Apocalypse*, 76.
7. *Ibid.*



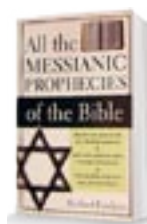
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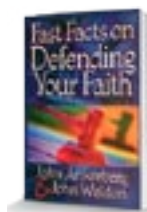


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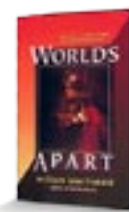
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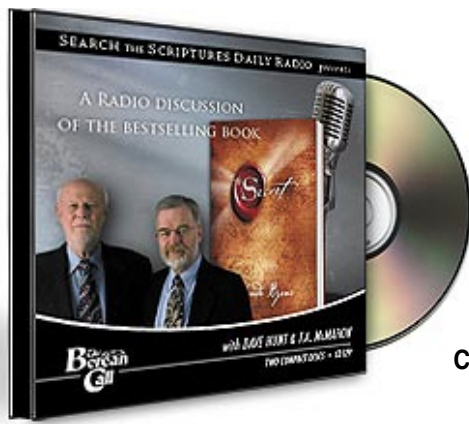
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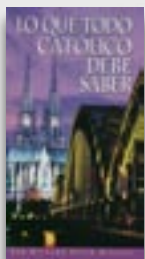
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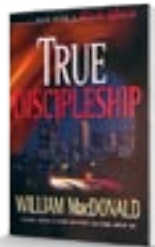


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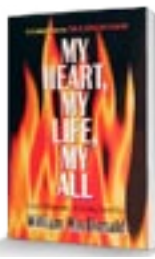


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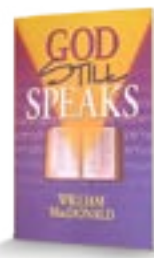


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