

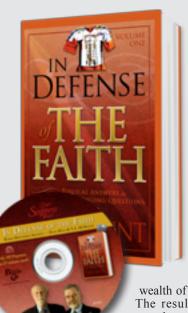
Berean

(all MAY 2009)

TRUE LOVE PART II: MORALS AND MEANING

by DAVE HUNT

NEW! IN DEFENSE OF THE FAITH 2ND EDITION — INCLUDES MP3 DISCUSSION



When confronted with uncomfortable questions from atheists and agnostics, cultists and pagans, or skeptics and mystics, do your once-firm convictions begin to crumble and compromise? Do you tend to take flight—or instead, are you able to stand firm and "earnestly contend for the faith"? (Jude 3)



FIND BIBLICAL RESPONSES TO SUCH QUESTIONS AS:

Is There a Difference Between Faith and Belief? • Is It Wrong to Want Evidence of God? • How Do We Deal with Doubts? • If We Can Prove God Exists, Why Faith? • Why Do Christians Accept Only One God? • Who Is the True God? • Can We Know God? • Are God and Nature the Same? • Is It Wrong to Ask God to Reveal Himself? • Is Jesus Half-God & Half-Man? • Is the Bible Reliable? • Is the Bible the Only Book of God? • Were Biblical Prophecies Written After the Events? • Shouldn't We Examine All Religions? • Can the Bible Be Verified? • How Do We Know Our Copies of the Bible Are Accurate? • Can You Make the Bible Say Anything You Want? • Is the Bible Infallible? • When Was Jesus Born? • Do the Gospels Disagree?

Hunt—With the keen eye of an experienced treasure hunter, the author helps readers probe and unearth the incredible

wealth of guidance found in God's Word. The resulting adventure will not only strengthen the faith of believers but equip them to live daily according to His revealed truth

in an increasingly hostile world. "God says it and I believe it." Issue settled, right? Or wrong? This common response may satisfy the faith of some who struggle with answering difficult questions—but such a reply does little to ward off assaults from skeptics, let alone "convince the gainsayers" by intelligently "giving a reason of the hope that is within you" (1 Peter 3:15). Sadly, most critics who wield tough questions with sarcasm do not expect an intelligent response; and tragically, many dismiss the truth when they do get one. However, what about those who legitimately question the Christian faith—including weak or battle-weary believers whose spiritual convictions may be hanging by a thread? This fascinating book can be a great help by itself, or used in conjunction with the audio series to assist listeners—sincere skeptics and believers alike—

with more than 40 years' experience in seeking (and finding) biblical answers to life's most challenging questions:

- Why does God allow suffering and evil in the world?
- What about all the "contradictions" in the Bible?
- Are some people predestined by God to go to hell?
- Why would a merciful God punish people who have never heard of Christ?
- How can one tell the difference between God's true light and Satan's seductive counterfeits?

BONUS MP3: Included in the book is a one-disc MP3 radio discussion of *In Defense of the Faith* from *Search the Scriptures Daily*. Recorded for radio broadcast, this archival series spans nearly 100 segments (about 23 minutes each) that comprise nearly 37 hours of fascinating discussion.

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NEW! CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH IN THE UNITED KINGDOM



The Berean Call—Earlier this year, T. A. McMahon and Roger Oakland traveled on a joint apologetics and discernment mission to the United Kingdom, where they participated in the annual "Truth 4 Youth" Conference in Devon. During the course of their stay, Tom and Roger were featured on World In Focus, a Christian television program broadcast live in the United Kingdom. The topic of the February 24 broadcast, as introduced by television host Doug Harris, was "Contending for the Faith" (Jude 3). The resulting program is a tangible blessing from their outreach across the Atlantic and an insightful and exciting ministry tool! This 90-minute DVD is a powerful apologetic for God's Word, containing a unique and special testimony of T. A. and his early ministry involvement with Dave Hunt and the birth of The Berean Call. Roger also encapsulates his testimony and expounds on the trials of contending for the faith among the professing evangelical church, explaining how we must continue to "prove all things, hold fast that which is good." Beginning

with Psalm 1, T. A. concisely and clearly illustrates how three things are required for a proper interpretation of Scripture: 1) context, 2) grammar, and 3) meaning of words. Contrasting 2 Peter 1:3 with Genesis 3:1, he discusses how God's Word must not only be regarded and revered as inerrant and authoritative, but also sufficient. Both Tom and Roger embark on a rare and powerful joint Q&A session (with live callers from the UK) regarding doctrinal and practical matters affecting believers in the increasingly Islamicized Europe. *Retail \$14.99*.

Roger



THE BEREAN EXECUTE CALL

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

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VOL. XXIV NO. 5 -

MAY 2009

True Love Part II: Morals and Meaning

Dave Hunt

The atheistic understanding of love, the highest human virtue, is badly skewed. Sam Harris, in his book *Letter to a Christian Nation*, says that the fact that "love is more conducive to happiness than hate" is the key to "the moral order of our world." So morality depends upon what makes one happy? Any child whose parents have disciplined him at all knows that isn't true. The saddest thing is that not only Harris but the multitudes who have read and turned this book into a bestseller really imagine they have escaped from God with nonsense that would be laughed out of any elementary ethics class.

In another burst of absolutely dazzling profundity, Harris adds, "While feeling love for others is surely one of the greatest sources of our own happiness, it entails a very deep concern for the happiness and suffering of those we love." "Feeling love"? What does that mean? With deep feelings of love, a young man says to the young woman beside him in his car, "I love you with all my heart!" What he really means, although neither of them understands it, is "I love me, and I want you!"

If this is what his "selfish genes" (as Richard Dawkins would say) and the molecules in his brain are causing him to think, who can blame him? Clearly, the logic of atheism, evolution, and natural selection will inevitably bring us to the day when no one can be blamed for anything. Blame will have lost all meaning. The physical construction of our bodies will have to bear the responsibility. The universal excuse (and it will have to be accepted by every court of law) will no longer be "The devil made me do it" but "My selfish genes made me do it!" Who believes in the devil anyway? But surely we all believe that genes are selfish, don't we? No, we do not. We still have enough common sense to reject this amorality that now governs our ethics and morals.

Harris criticizes the Bible for condoning slavery.⁴ He deliberately ignores the fact that in biblical days the only other alternative for those taken captive in war was death. Those hopelessly in debt didn't have the modern escape of bankruptcy; they had to sell themselves into slavery. Nor was

the solution so simple as to set a slave free. Where would the freed slave go? For many, this was the only means of sustenance.

Christ did not come to reform earthly society but to die for the sins of the world so that we can go to heaven when we die. The teachings of the Bible, however, caused both slave and master to act with respect and even love toward each other. And as society changed and other possibilities developed, Christians led the way in freeing slaves.

President Eisenhower said, "Our government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith—and I don't care what it is."5 Ike had the right to express his own opinions, but his position of leadership obligated him to make rational pronouncements—and that statement makes no sense. There are differences in religion so great that they contradict one another. Hinduism's belief in 330 million gods surely contradicts Islam's belief that Allah is the only god; and the Qur'an's teaching that Christ neither died on the cross nor resurrected⁶ certainly contradicts the very foundation of Christianity. Ike was accepted as a Christian by many evangelicals, and he attended church regularly (politically correct behavior for presidents). Clearly, however, what he really believed and publicly expressed contradicted Christ's declaration, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn 14:6).

Many who call themselves Christians implicitly accept the superiority of science over the Bible. Thus, whenever "science" disagrees with the Bible, as its presently accepted dogmas so clearly do with regard to the creation of the universe and life, "Christians" surrender their faith in Scripture, which is really a surrender of their faith in its Author. Or they attempt to twist what the Bible says in order to make it seem that it agrees with atheism's Big Bang and evolutionary account of man's descent from fish and reptiles and chimpanzees. In a sense they become partners with atheists, incredibly allowing them to dictate the terms of the discussion.

In his book, *Reason in the Balance*, Phillip Johnson argues that only creation by God can account for man's moral conscience. Nature has no morals. Man's sense of ethics and morals cannot contribute to survival but would work against it. If evolution is true, we ought to shut down

all hospitals, cease all medications, and let the weak die to strengthen the race. Kindness and compassion cannot be reconciled with survival of the fittest. Man, however, is compelled by conscience and compassion to sacrifice for others—proof that he is made in the image of a *God of mercy and love* (Dt 4:31; Neh 9:17; Ps 103:8; 117:2; Heb 8:12).

If the "Big Bang" theory is correct, then the sentence I'm typing now came from, and is a product of, this giant explosion. Every thought and theory (including the greatest scientific discoveries and the worst political blunders), every ambition and emotion, including love-all resulted from the Big Bang. From what other source could they have come? This is the absurdity that we must embrace with this theory that removes all meaning from life. Whatever anyone believes, decides, says, or does is simply the result of the chance antecedent motions of the atoms in their brains, which all began with a gigantic explosion that has been pushing matter away from its epicenter ever since.

But human existence involves morals, ethics, ambition, purpose, meaning, hope, love and hate, jealousy, self-sacrifice, pride and humility, frustration and patience, anger, a sense of right and wrong, justice and injustice, compassion, forgiveness, ad infinitum. How could such qualities of human existence have attached themselves to exploding matter? The Big Bang offers no explanation for these human qualities, which have no relationship to energy and matter. Rather, it denies their significance. All human experience, having resulted from a giant explosion, would be totally meaningless. Anyone who imagined otherwise would be the victim of a cruel hoax. And finally—so what?

Ah, but evolution took this exploding matter and turned it into what we are today. Really? *Time* magazine's cover story the first week in October 2006 claimed that there really isn't a chasm between man and animals but only "tiny differences, sprinkled throughout the genome." So we don't really experience love and joy, fulfillment, a deep concern about injustices in the world, but our "selfish" genes cause us to have these feelings? Is it our genes, too, that cause us to reject this statement that reduces humans to programmed robots? The summary of the article, posted on CNN.com, explained:

As scientists keep reminding us, evolution is a random process in which haphazard genetic changes interact with random environmental conditions to produce an organism somehow fitter than its fellows. After 3.5 billion years of such randomness, a creature emerged that could ponder its own origins—and revel in a Mozart adagio.7

So there you have it: we are what we are as a result of "3.5 billion years" of purposeless "randomness." Where is moral responsibility? How can any criminal be held accountable for what his genes have caused him to do?

Then why have an education? What are governments and elections about? Why do we care about anything? Why is it that this "randomness" coming out of a giant explosion eons ago produced such different results in different people, including firm convictions that cause arguments, anger, and even wars?

There wouldn't be one in a million people who experience the reality of life and love who would not be insulted to be told that their deepest convictions and greatest joys and fears were merely phantoms of their genes. Yet they will embrace such theories when pronounced in the name of science without realizing that this is where they lead. Those who promote this theory have no explanation for the unanswerable questions it logically raises. And what about logic and convictions? Could they, as well, be the result of a giant explosion and in the end are but delusions created by our "selfish genes"?

In contrast to atheistic attempts to explain moral behavior without God, the Bible tells us that these personal and moral qualities demonstrate the fact that we were created "in the image of God" (Gn 1:26-27). We were designed to reflect His attributes, but not as robots. Man was given the power of choice, which he used to rebel against his Creator, seeking independence from Him as a little god in charge of his own destiny. Our present world of disease and suffering of all kinds is not the world God made. It is the world we have made in our proud rebellion against Him.

The Bible shows us where we are wrong, and what we ought to do about it. Everything it says rings true to our consciences. Evolution has nothing that even comes close to this logical explanation of human existence and behavior, both good and evil. The Bible explains how God came as a man through a virgin birth to die for the sins of all mankind so that He could justly forgive those who would repent of their rebellion and accept the payment for sins that Christ accomplished in order to bring us back

into a right relationship with Himself. It all makes sense—certainly much better sense than imagining that we are the chance offspring of a huge explosion.

Furthermore, the Bible proves itself to be God's Word through hundreds of fulfilled prophecies—proof that is unique to the Bible and totally missing from the Qur'an, Hindu Vedas, and all other religious scriptures. These are not cheap psychic predictions but history-making, worldshaking events, foretold in plain language centuries and, in many cases, thousands of years before their fulfillment. These are inarguable, precise fulfillments in every detail, which the world has witnessed as part of its history.

Why not believe the Bible, when its statements are supported not only by prophecy but by mountains of evidence? Many of the greatest scientists of all time who discovered the principles foundational to today's science were firm believers not in a Big Bang but that God created the universe. Faith in God and His Word, the Bible, was the foundation of their lives. The same is true of many of today's space scientists and astronauts. Werner von Braun, founding director and for many years head of NASA's space flight center, was always eager to testify:

Manned space flight...has opened...a tiny door for viewing the awesome reaches of space. An outlook through this peephole at the vast mysteries of the universe should only confirm our belief in the certainty of its Creator. I [cannot] understand a scientist who does not acknowledge the presence of a superior rationality behind the existence of the universe.8

Atheistic evolution has many close allies in the environmental (sometimes known as the "Green") movement. In 1993, Mikhail Gorbachev, former Soviet leader, founded (and remains its president today) the Green Cross International, headquartered in the Hague, to build upon the work started by the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro,

Green Cross? The biblical Cross was stained with the blood of Christ when He died for the sins of the world, including those who mocked and crucified Him. The "Greening of the Cross" (see TBC 7/97) is a growing movement worldwide. Gorbachev says that the main purpose of the Green Cross is "to bring nations together...to stimulate the new environmental consciousness...returning Man to a sense of being a part of Nature."

The idea that man must be persuaded to act as though he were "part of Nature" is in itself an admission that he is not. Nature's creatures need no such coaching. This return to nature, however, is a powerful factor in encouraging the immorality of today's world.

There is no "right" or "wrong" in nature. Clearly, it is not "wrong" for a volcano to spew forth lava and poisonous gases. Whatever Nature and her offspring do is simply "natural." If man is a product of nature through evolution, then whatever he does must likewise be natural. No one complains about the destruction wrought upon the environment by parasites or creatures that destroy entire forests; or hurricanes and tornadoes and floods that wreak terrible destruction. These occurrences are all "natural," and no complaint can be made against anything Nature does. But if man is the product of evolution, then he, too, is a child of Nature, and whatever he does should be as "natural" as the actions of any creatures in his evolutionary ancestry or of his present evolutionary "relatives" all around him today, most of whom would poison or devour him.

And what about the great concern among environmentalists over the possible extinction of so-called "endangered species"? Once again man reveals that he is not a product of natural forces. Endangered species? Isn't that how evolution works? Hasn't evolution been doing away with species through natural selection and survival of the fittest for millions of years? Why should man, if he is simply a product of evolution (and one that has only lately arrived on the scene), be working against evolution while claiming to believe in it and to be its offspring?

One cannot logically believe both in evolution and the environmental movement. Evolutionists should neither be concerned for "endangered species" nor for the ecological well-being of this planet. If man, as a result of the evolution of his brain and nervous system, succeeds in destroying the earth in a nuclear holocaust or ecological collapse, that must be accepted as a natural act in the evolving universe.

The mere fact that man can reason about ecology and the survival of species is proof enough that he is not the product of such forces, but, having the power to interfere with them, must have a higher origin. Man was created in the image of God. Only an intelligent Creator could have brought mankind's reasoning powers and moral and ethical concerns into existence. Consequently, the solution to the problem of evil on this earth is not in hugging trees and getting in touch with nature. *True love?* In the bloody Cross, as declared in the Bible, God is saying to all mankind, "I love you." Accepting His love is man's only hope. "We love him, because he first loved us" (1 Jn 4:19). TBC

Quotable.....

To love God with all our heart we must first of all will to do so. We should repent our lack of love and determine from this moment on to make God the object of our devotion. We shall soon find to our great delight that our feelings are beginning to move in the direction of the "willed tendency of the heart." Our emotions will become disciplined and directed. We shall begin to taste the "piercing sweetness" of the love of Christ. The whole life, like a delicate instrument, will be tuned to sing the praises of Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. But first of all we must will, for the will is master of the heart.

A. W. Tozer, Man: The Dwelling Place of God

Q&A.....

QUESTION: I just wanted to know if you have ever read L. A. Marzulli's *Politics, Prophecy, and the Supernatural* and if Dave or T. A. concurs with the writer's thoughts about the Nephilim [of Genesis 6] being of Satanic origin.

RESPONSE: There are a number of things in the Bible that aren't stated plainly and are open to reasoning from various facts found in relevant Scripture verses. The "sons of God" in Genesis 6 is one topic about which a great deal has been written, much of it relying on speculation. The premise of such speculation is that the sons of God were angelic beings who procreated with human females, from which a race of giants sprang. To derive such a conclusion from Jude 6 is not warranted: "Kept not their first estate" more likely refers to their rebellion against God and following Satan.

The volumes written about pre-Adamic races, angelic overlords, and giants begotten by angels make fascinating reading but ought to be regarded as fictionalized interpretations, since their factual basis is questionable at best.

The Bible does not tell us that angels procreate, nor does it specifically tell us whether or not begetting offspring is possible for them. In Matthew 22:30 we *are* told specifically that angels do not marry. Moreover, the fact that angels are spirit beings would seem to eliminate the possibility of their having sexual relations with human beings.

We realize that there are some doctrines that must be derived from a number of verses, so we're not against the inductive or deductive approach. (Take the Trinity, as just one example. The supporting verses that teach the Trinity are not speculative in nature.) In addition, when we rely on speculation to fill in areas not clearly addressed by Scripture, of necessity we create a situation generating even more questions. For example, Jesus states that "a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Lk 24:39). Since angels (good and bad) are spirit beings, they would have had to obtain bodies capable of reproduction. Being created beings, however, angels are incapable of the creative act necessary to produce such bodies. We know that they may on occasion appear in bodily form (2 Cor 11:14, Gal 1:8), but this is a long way from a physical habitation among men. Did God enter the process by making it possible for them to assume living, breathing, and sexually functioning bodies? Hardly! It is easy to see how more questions are raised than satisfactory answers given, when one begins to speculate.

Since the evidence for such an occurrence is so scanty and open to interpretation, there is no basis for assuming a dogmatic position. Sadly, some have been so taken up with the "sons of God" or other speculative issues that their effectiveness for the kingdom is compromised. May God grant us the wisdom to know when and where to stand and what is necessary in order that we might therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Rom 14:19).

QUESTION: I wonder if I really have to honor my father and my mother. My father [sexually abused] my brother and myself when we were very young and through middle school. My mother knew about this (she even saw this happening). [She] neither said nor did anything to try to stop it. Do I really have to honor my parents if they did such things to my brother and me? And, where was God when all this was happening? Why didn't He keep it from happening? I've tried to forgive my parents for their sin, but it is extremely difficult.

RESPONSE: In Ephesians 6:1-3 we read, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

We are to "obey" our parents "in the Lord." Not everyone may have godly parents who are "in the Lord." This directly implies that we are not obligated to obey ungodly commands or submit to the evil they propose. The Lord's commandments have the precedence in our lives. Neither does it mean that we have any contact with them, particularly if they pose a danger.

"Honor," however, is something else.

To "honor," in your circumstance, may simply mean not speaking evil of them and continuing to pray for their repentance and salvation. Further, the Scriptures tell us to forget "those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before" (Phil 3:13). Even secular commentators note that it is not healthy to dwell upon the past. The Lord has given us lives that may be lived in accordance with His will and plans. We serve the Lord in hope, not in bondage to the past.

You ask "Where was God when all this was happening?" He was where He always is. We can either blame God for failing to act as a policeman in a world that has rejected Him, or recognize that the sin of man for a time holds sway upon the earth. That knowledge alone may not be comforting, but we need to remember that in the synagogue in Nazareth, Jesus proclaimed, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Lk 4:18). To heal the brokenhearted means that there will be brokenhearted people. To bring deliverance means there *must* be captives. The recovery of the sight of the blind means that there *must* be blind people. And to set at liberty those that are bruised means there first must be those that have been bruised by the cruelty and injustice of the world.

To apprehend these promises, however, means to forsake the past, which cannot be changed, and look to the Lord who can bless and guide one's life ahead. The Scriptures are filled with examples of how the Lord will comfort those who come to Him. We also have available the testimonies of those who underwent horrendous experiences (Corrie Ten Boom, Richard Wurmbrand, and others), who testified of the healing and restoring power of the Lord.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren" (2 Cor 11:25-26). We might very well ask "where was God during those times?" That wasn't the response of Paul, who wrote further, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble,

by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (2 Cor 1:3-4).

Paul spoke of being able to comfort others because of having experienced the comfort of God. May the Lord encourage us, as we have opportunity, to minister "by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

QUESTION: My question is in regards to after the Rapture. Will people still get saved? Who are they? The people who have heard the message before the Rapture but did not accept it—will they be able to get saved? I heard that after the Rapture people cannot be saved, because we are saved by faith, and after seeing the Rapture, it is no longer faith.

RESPONSE: No scripture teaches the impossibility of salvation after the Rapture. We know that Revelation 7:13-14 speaks of the martyrs who will be killed during the Tribulation: "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Since the church is removed at the Rapture, these martyrs have to come from somewhere.

Further, there are scriptures indicating that Jews saved during the Tribulation period will enter the Millennium (Zec 13:9). Further, Zechariah 14 indicates that there will be a remnant of "all the nations" also entering the Millennium.

QUESTION: I am studying Isaiah and was wondering about Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." I have understood this prophecy to apply directly to Ahaz. Therefore, this had to come true in the time of Ahaz. (I also understand that this is referring to the Messiah.) How would Ahaz know who this virgin was?

RESPONSE: We always need to keep a close eye on context. The context of Isaiah 7:14 includes the historical narrative of Ahaz, the king of Judah who was faced with an invasion from both Syria and the northern kingdom of Israel. Isaiah prophesied under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to King Ahaz. In verses 10-11, the Lord inspired Isaiah to tell Ahaz, "Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above." What a tremendous opportunity!

Ahaz, the grandson of Uzziah, was twenty when he came to the throne of Judah. Of his reign, the writer of Scripture recorded that he "did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD his God..." (2 Kings 16:2).

To the Lord's gracious invitation, King

Ahaz replies, "I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord." This almost sounds like a humble response until one reads Isaiah's (still under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) rejoinder: "And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?" This clearly indicates that Ahaz's motives for refusal were not right. As a consequence, the Lord went beyond the immediate need of deliverance for Judah and its king. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

The Lord is giving a prophecy so farreaching that it offers a deliverance to the entire world. In context, the time frame of this promise goes beyond the time of Ahaz. We know this because Isaiah 7:16 notes, "For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings."

Before the child born of a virgin shall grow to maturity ("know to refuse the evil, and choose the good"), the threatening nations shall have their kings removed. This would come about through the conquest and domination by another power. This prophecy could not possibly have been limited to the reign of Ahaz. Further, we have the testimony of Matthew that (speaking of Mary's miraculous conception), "all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet..." (Mt 1:22).

There are a number of other Scriptures that go beyond their immediate time frame. Hosea 11:1 states, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." Clearly there is the historical record of Israel's slavery in and deliverance from Egypt. That would be an immediate application. Yet, the apostle Matthew, writing of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus, said that they would be "...there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son" (Mt 2:15). Bible doubters and skeptics have sought to discredit Matthew's application of this prophecy, as (to their preconceived ideas) Hosea 11:1 is speaking of Israel in Egypt only. Yet, we see that is not true.

Consequently, we cannot say that what Isaiah was speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit was limited to Ahaz alone. We have noted Isaiah 7:16, which in context furnishes details for a fulfillment that simply did not happen in the time of Ahaz.

News Alert

Southern Voice, 3/6/09: In 2006, [D.E. Paulk became the senior pastor at Chapel Hill Harvester Church, located in South Decatur. Built by his father, Don Paulk, and his uncle, Bishop Earl Paulk, the 4,000-member church was one of the largest independent, racially diverse churches in the nation.

Soon after [taking] over as senior pastor, [D.E.] faced what he now collectively calls "the scandal." A number of women came forward alleging Earl Paulk used his influence as bishop to coerce them into sexual relationships....Earl Paulk was forced to undergo a paternity test to see if he had fathered several children in the church.

The paternity test revealed that Earl Paulk, the man D.E. Paulk grew up believing was his uncle, was actually his biological father....[A]s these scandals rocked the church...D.E. Paulk found the strength to say what was in his heart: "They stayed through the adultery allegations, the racketeering charges...the majority of the people stayed," he adds. "It wasn't really until I started teaching gay inclusion and other religious thought [that people began to leave]."

Under fire from his congregation...and marred by his family's legacy, Paulk considered leaving...."We had nothing left, we had no reputation, and that's maybe the best thing that ever happened to us because it freed us from all the fear."

Paulk began to...move toward what he calls "radical inclusion" and away from Christianity. He also began work on his new book. I Don't Know...The Way of Knowing [which] outlines his beliefs, a multi-national mixture of Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism and other religious thought....He refers to God as "The Christ" who takes many forms, including Jesus. "I think the goal of the book is to get people to admit that they don't know as much as they might think they know," he says.

[TBC: The goal of religion today seems to be "ignorance is bliss!" On the other hand, Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."]

Endnotes ······

- 1. Sam Harris, Letter to a Christian Nation (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2006), 24.
- 3. Richard Dawkins, The Selfish Gene (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).
- 4. Harris, Letter, 14-19.
- 5. Cited in Peter Berger, Facing Up to Modernity: Excursions in Society, Politics, and Religion (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 155.
- 6. Surah 4:156-59.
- 7. http://www.cnn.com/2006/TECH/science/10/01/ coverstory.tm/index.html?section=cnn topstories.
- 8. Ouoted in Henry M. Morris. Men of Science—Men of God (El Cajon, CA: Master Books, 1988), 85.

Speaking Schedule

May 1-2 (TA)

Saskatoon Bible Conference Saskatoon, SK

(306) 531-4733

(541) 383-5097

May 17 (TA) Calvary Chapel Bend Bend, OR

Letters

TBC,

I could not agree more with writer Mark Dinsmore's article [4/09 TBC Extra-"Would Paul Answer the Call to Christian Patriotism?"]. If blame is to be laid at anyone's feet, it must start at our feet for failing to OBEY our Lord's command to share Christ with the lost. We disobey in this command....Perhaps if we had obeyed Him in this, America would be having a massive revival....We need to redeem the time....Woe unto us for being so disobedient and not loving our neighbors as we love ourselves. The atheist [magicians], Penn & Teller, have it pegged, "How much do you have to hate someone to not tell them about Christ and hell? Or maybe the problem is you really don't believe either." OUCH! GC (email)

Dear Dave Hunt & Staff,

I have just finished reading *The Pilgrim Church*—what an awesome and sobering book. It is amazing how throughout history the Lord has always preserved a remnant who are true to the Word, no matter what upheavals and changes in society raged around them. Thank you for making this important book available, and God bless you as you continue to carry on the work of edifying the remnant in the perilous times in which we live! MC (NH)

Dear Dave and Tom.

I have been listening to the Berean Call podcasts for some years now, and I want to thank you for the wonderful truths you have brought to my attention. You helped me during a time when I struggled with a brother [who] teaches that the church is going to go thru the great tribulation. Your podcast series teaches the biblical truth to the contrary, that "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." I listen to the podcasts on my way to and from work because I have a long commute. What a blessing you have been to me. TB (email)

Dear Berean Call,

I've been on this prison unit for over 12 years and I've seen countless ministries that seek to "enlighten" people, but yours

is the only one I've seen that doesn't skirt cultural issues or false doctrines. You take on every issue in light of Scripture, which is the only way to discern the truth from a lie. Many here are deceived who call themselves believers. I make others aware of your ministry...who have a heart for the truth—that's why you've seen quite a few requests for your magazine from this unit over the last two years. Keep up the good work in standing up for the gospel! MW (TX, prisoner)

TBC,

Judgment Day is 1,000 years from now. The Catholic Church is not the woman riding the beast. Mary is not Ishtar or the Queen of Heaven. The final battle is not Allah against God. Everyone dies at Armageddon. Wake up, guys. HR (email)

Dear Dave Hunt and Staff,

Thanks for your faithfulness to God and to us, your readers. We are farm people, growing poultry for a major company in our area. We have had a trying year with injuries and so forth. Our growing time has been reduced, which reduces our pay. But when we look at the state of our nation and the liberal way that most people live, we are so thankful for our peace through Christ. Thanks again for all you do. EW (MS)

Dave.

I have been reading your book Psychology and the Church and am more convinced than ever of your correctness in this matter. I have been to counselors re marriage breakdown, and they could not help me. They made me look at myself, and not to the Lord for answers. It was only through losing myself in the Bible and listening to sermons (at the time they were on forgiveness! What a coincidence!) that I came to the conclusion that it was my walk with God that counted, and I left all up to Him. He has restored my marriage....There are still things to work through, but I praise God and not worldly "Christian" counselors for this. Thank you for your diligence in informing us of these matters, and helping us to see that we can rely on God alone for everything! DO (Australia)

TBC,

In this month's *TBC*, an article called "Would Paul Answer the Call to Christian Patriotism?" by Mark Dinsmore was added. Thank you for this. As a Canadian Christian, I had a hard time understanding the excessive clinging to of your nation's constitution and your "God given rights." Canadians love observing Americans; Most of our Canadian news is realistically American news, and most of our television

programs are actually American programs. Most Christian material in Canada is in fact American....We get a lot of your nation's Christian Patriotism on our tables. When you mention Christianity to unsaved Canadians they instantly think "American politics." I fully agree with the article by Mr. Mark Dinsmore in every point. One of my most beloved brothers in Christ is in prison because he would rather stick to his constitutional rights than give to Caesar what is Caesar's and endure rough times for the Gospel's sake. God has given us his words in the Bible, and though the constitution of America is based on the bible, Americans need to keep in mind it is NOT the bible. I pray Mr. Dinsmore's article goes deep and wide across your great nation. LH (Canada)

TBC Notes

Tozer on Tozer

"Some of my friends goodhumoredly—and some a little bit severely—have called me a 'mystic.' Well I'd like to say this about any mysticism I may suppose to have. If an archangel from heaven were to come, and were to start giving me, telling me, teaching me, and giving me instruction, I'd ask him for the text. I'd say, 'Where's it say that in the Bible? I want to know.'

"And I would insist that it was according to the scriptures, because I do not believe in any extra-scriptural teachings, nor any anti-scriptural teachings, or any sub-scriptural teachings. I think we ought to put the emphasis where God puts it, and continue to put it there, and to expound the scriptures, and stay by the scriptures.

"I wouldn't—no matter if I saw a light above the light of the sun, I'd keep my mouth shut about it 'til I'd checked with Daniel and Revelation and the rest of the scriptures to see if it had any basis in truth. And if it didn't, I'd think I'd just eaten something I shouldn't, and I wouldn't say anything about it. Because I don't believe in anything that is unscriptural or that is anti-scripture."

A. W. Tozer

To that, we can only add: Amen!

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
T.A. McMahon

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THAT NONE SHOULD PERISH

THY DOES IT SEEM THAT THERE IS SUCH A LACK of interest among most non-Christian young people today when they hear about godly belief and living? I believe it has much to do with the absence of strong Christian testimony, evidenced by holiness, among believers. This affects the communities around us in a major way. Christians are not "salting" society with the moral standard that keeps the human conscience alive. There is also a lack of passionate evangelistic outreach by many Christians who seem to be taken up more with their own pursuits than with the needs of a lost and sinful world headed for hell.

Another reason for the lack of godliness that affects our generation is the fact that, as the Bible has declared for thousands of years, "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19). Satan is the god of this world, that is, the world system—how the world operates in its natural course—and he captures the hearts of the youth. Our children, born into sin, are spiritually estranged from the womb: "They go astray as soon as they [are] born, speaking lies" (Psalm 58:3).

Psalm 11:3 declares: "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Satan is always at work, trying to destroy the moral principles upon which our nation was largely founded and stirring up many to put away this great heritage—and no wonder, because these principles did help to hold back the tide of evil. God is no longer welcome, and the government, schools, and society at large have become secularized, so now there is a real foothold for the enemy to further his evil work. Attitudes about ungodly behavior held by previous generations are now considered to be out of date and restrictive to our natural appetites (Psalm 2:1-3). Morality has become one big gray area, where every man decides what is right for himself, and the heart of man grows increasingly hardened to the truth because there is less and less light.

Our generation has sunk to a deplorable state, mocking God and His Word and separated from the holy statutes of a holy God. The youth of our day have been raised up in a nation that has cast God behind its back and that even praises what is an abomination to the Lord.

Many young people, even from Christian families, are foul mouthed, and their thoughts are carried away by evil, their actions proving the same. Is it because the parents who oversee these children actually promote a lifestyle of selfish indulgence, rather than showing by their own lives and words the absolutes that God set forth to restrain the corrupt nature of humanity? The youths, having received such an upbringing, are simply following the natural course. It is much like what Jesus declared to the Scribes and Pharisees of that day: "For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Matthew 23:15).

So what can we do about it? How can we reach this generation? It is of great importance that we seek the Lord for wisdom in the matter of reaching young people: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally" (James 1:5).

In studying the Scriptures, seeking the Lord, and reading the biographies of missionaries and preachers who were effective in their ministries, I have found a few points that have been helpful

to keep in mind in my own evangelism efforts among young people and others.

The first essential is consistent prayer, as we beseech God to do a work in someone's heart. We know that although He doesn't force His way into people's hearts, God does hear our prayers and can incline the hearts of those for whom we pray to seek Him.

Second, I don't believe that our youth are so far from the soulsearching work of the Holy Spirit that even the most rebellious (however hardened and far from God-1 Timothy 1:15) cannot be touched by His convicting power to realize their own lost condition, the fact that they need a Savior, and that it is Christ alone who can save them (for "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" -Romans 5:20).

Third, I believe that God will not let up on His prodding the heart of the unbelievers for whom we pray regarding their sinful condition and their need of the Savior until their last breath ("The Lord is...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"-2 Peter 3:9).

Fourth, I believe that God will give us (or someone else) an opportunity, after having prayed (regardless of how impossible it may seem, or how long it may take for this to come about), to lovingly minister to that individual the Word of life ("The goodness of God leadeth man to repentance"-Romans 2:4). No matter the outward response, I believe they will eventually sense the need to hear and will ultimately feel the conviction of His Word. They will still, however, have the choice to reject or to receive His saving work in their soul. Rejecting it, they will walk on in their sins, having an even harder heart than before; receiving Him will prove their love for Him, and they will become His child.

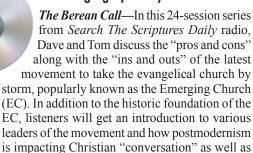
Fifth, and last, the one to whom you are ministering likely does not grasp the spiritual battle that is taking place at the very moment that the things of God are brought before him and is not prepared for the Holy Spirit's powerful conviction in his heart ("For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world"-Ephesians 6:12). How many times have we heard of men who were rebelliously walking in darkness, engaging in multiple sins, hating the light—then they heard the gospel preached, and, after a seemingly short season, came to the Savior and were wondrously born again into the family of God!

Faith is vital when it comes to ministering to the lost souls of men. We need to have faith in the work of God by the Holy Spirit and the work that He wants to do through us on behalf of the lost. God wants them saved, has all the power to save them, and has many servants to be used in leading them unto Him, but they must ultimately make their own choice.

Above all, love is most important, for love hopes and believes all things. Love believes in the God of the impossible, that He can do what we think can't be done. Love hopes that *anyone* can be saved, thereby making us willing to go the extra mile toward that end. We can rejoice in our hearts when we look out at a lost and sinful world, knowing that the God of heaven and earth is able and willing to reach down and save every one of them, regardless of their condition. Let us be there to give the needed help. "He that winneth souls is wise" (Proverbs 11:30).

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MAY 2009

THE WISDOM OF THE AGES — DAVE HUNT • CHUCK SMITH • HENRY MORRIS



Dave Hunt

Christian apologist, speaker, radio commentator and author. He has been in full-time ministry since 1973. Internationally known, his books have been translated into at least 50 languages.



Chuck Smith

Smith is the senior pastor of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, where his emphasis is on the teaching of the Word of God. His simple, yet sound, biblical approach has drawn 25,000 people weekly.



Dr. Henry Morris

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