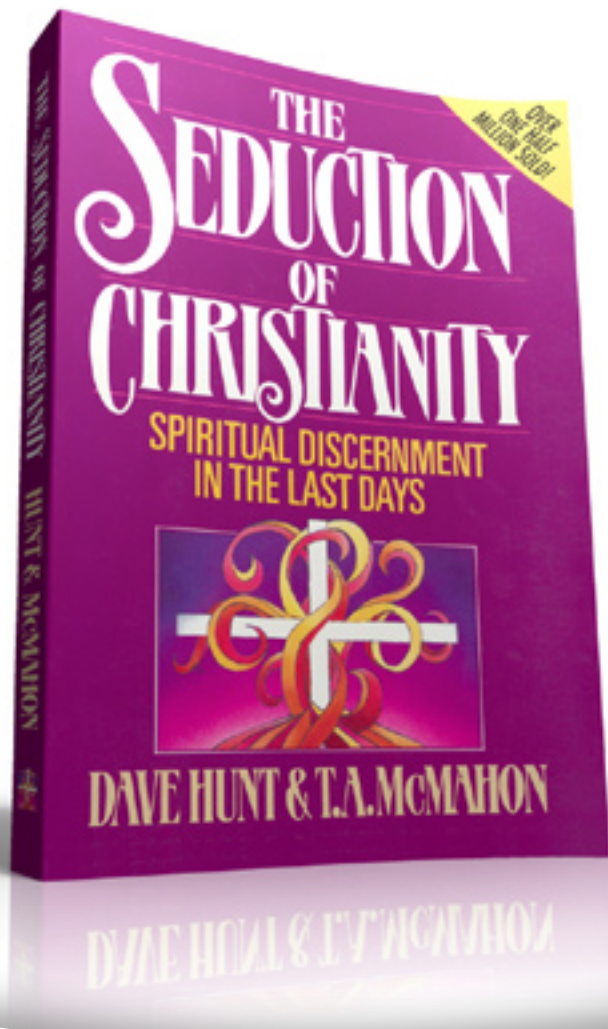


# SEDUCTION

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NOVEMBER 2009

**THE FIRST AND FINAL LIE: SELF-DEIFICATION**

*by T.A. McMAHON*

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# THE BEREAN CALL

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

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— VOL. XXIV NO. 11 —

NOVEMBER 2009

## **The First and Final Lie: Self-deification**

T. A. McMahon

*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.*

—Isaiah 14:12-14

*And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die....*

—Genesis 3:4

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

—2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

*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 should believe [the] lie.*

—2 Thessalonians 2:10-11

Incredibly, the first sin of those whom God created took place in a perfectly holy environment: heaven. That would seem to be incomprehensible, given what Scripture tells us about heaven, the dwelling place of God. Just as astonishing, Adam and Eve, who were also in a perfect environment and had yet to know sin, were seduced by the same sin as Lucifer ("light bearer"), later called Satan ("adversary") and "that old serpent" (Revelation 12:9; 20:2).

Scripture doesn't tell us specifically what was in the hearts and minds of Lucifer and Adam that prompted them to sin; regarding Eve, however, we get a little more insight. She "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise" (Genesis 3:6). One thing, however, becomes obvious concerning all three of these created beings: they chose *self* over God. That is the bottom line of all sin.

Again, it all began in Heaven with Lucifer. His "I will's" are all about self—from self-improvement to self-esteem to self-exaltation to self-deification. That progression inevitably leads to two other selfisms: self-delusion and self-destruction. Satan, being completely self-deceived, and perhaps looking for more support to prove his "I will be like the most High" thesis, brought his lie to earth, where he seduced Eve with the offer that she also could be "as gods."

Godhood as a goal for humanity is the Adversary's religion, and it will culminate with a man who is possessed by Satan himself. As we see in 2 Thessalonians 2:4, the Antichrist "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." This may be the only way the Devil can achieve his ultimate objective of having the whole world worship him. The very thought that he could entice the Lord, his Creator, to "fall down and worship" him (Matthew 4:9) demonstrates not only his egotistic ambition but also just how self-absorbed and self-deceived he is. This is a major trait of humanity as well.

Scripture indicates that following Adam and Eve's sin, their first response to God was to defend themselves. After their futile attempt to hide from God, each one shifted the blame: Adam accused Eve, and Eve blamed the Serpent for their disobedience. As a consequence, a self-serving bias (the tragic result of their sin) had impregnated the hearts of humanity. As we can see from its beginning to our present day, this bias has moved through the entire human race like an unstoppable plague.

Self rules in the heart of every person, even at times among new creatures in Christ. Satan has not missed any opportunity to entice the world into seeking his delusionary prize of godhood. The idea that man could become a god, or part of God, or that he is a god but doesn't yet realize his divinity, may seem farfetched to some people, but that's because they are simply unaware of how prevalent this belief is. Furthermore, from a biblical perspective, the criterion for being a god is rather simple. Everyone who has not submitted to Jesus Christ and has not been reconciled to God through faith in Christ's finished sacrifice as payment for his sins qualifies as a god—that is, an autonomous, or self-governing, being who has *elevated self over his Creator*. As Dave Hunt has noted,

"The basic cause of the many problems in the world today is not that man fails to recognize his godhood but rather that there are about seven billion gods on this planet, each one doing his or her own thing."

Satan has long sold godhood, in some form, as religion, or as some facet of a particular religion. Nearly one billion Hindus believe they are gods—and so is everyone else—because, in their view, *everything* is God. Their godhood is achieved, or realized, through yoga and self-realization in the attempt to reach the ultimate spiritual state: *union* with Brahman (God). Five-hundred million Buddhists reject a transcendent Creator God but seek the equivalent of godhood (known as Buddhahood), which is attained as enlightenment, or perfect wisdom, by following the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. Tibetan Buddhism is promoted throughout the Western world by the Dalai Lama, who has inducted hundreds of thousands (including thousands in U.S. cities) into the Kalachakra Tantra Initiation. Kalachakra is both a Tantric deity and a meditation practice. The former is a manifestation of Buddha, who is called upon to lead the initiate into becoming a *bodhisattva*, or enlightened god, a status claimed by the Dalai Lama himself.

Eastern Mysticism, with its goal of godhood, has come to the West like a tsunami, depositing its blasphemous debris throughout Christendom. Yoga (yoking oneself with Brahman), which decades ago became a staple offering at YMCAs (Young Men's Christian Association), is now offered and practiced in numerous Christian churches, including many that profess to be evangelical. Hindu gurus, such as Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, Swami Muktananda, and Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, helped spawn the New Age Movement, a homogenized hodgepodge of Eastern mystical beliefs and practices refashioned in order to make them readily acceptable to the culture of the West. Muktananda speaks for all gurus and New Age advocates alike: "Honor your self, worship your self, meditate on your self, God dwells within you as you."

The late Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, guru to the Beatles, revised his Spiritual (read "Hinduism") Regeneration Movement into the more acceptable, incredibly profitable, and allegedly scientific technique of Transcendental Meditation. TMers have all but taken over the town of Fairfield, Iowa, site of the Maharishi University. The school claims



to have transformed the community through the Maharishi Effect, a TM-Sidhis program begun in the early 1980s, claiming to reduce crime by the positive effect of collective meditation. Statistics for Fairfield/Jefferson County during the decade of the nineties, however, belie the claim, showing a constant increase in crime ([http://www.behind-the-tm-facade.org/maharishi\\_effect-mdefect-fairfield.htm](http://www.behind-the-tm-facade.org/maharishi_effect-mdefect-fairfield.htm)).

The lie of godhood is always followed by the deceit of the so-called god-men. Rajneesh was deported back to India after his chief disciples were arrested in Oregon on attempted murder charges. Maharishi took in hundreds of thousands of dollars selling the fraudulent ability to levitate through TM. Muktananda, the guru to many Hollywood celebrities in the 1980s, though preaching celibacy, was accused by top leaders in his cult of a history of seducing young women. Ironically, his successor is a woman, Gurumayi Chidvilasananda. Gurumayi, who teaches the mantra, "Om Namah Shivaya" ("I honor the divinity that resides within me") is guru to Elizabeth Gilbert, author of the best-selling, *Eat, Pray, Love*. The Oprah Winfrey-endorsed book documents Gilbert's time at Gurumayi's ashram in India and is now being made into a theatrical film produced by Brad Pitt and starring Julia Roberts.

Deifying self is hardly exclusive to Eastern religions. Where the heaven of mysticism is found, it inevitably spreads to some form of union with God, meaning *becoming* God. Consider Mormonism, Islam, and Roman Catholicism, for example. All three are quite legalistic while at the same time very experiential. Mormon males are taught that they can become gods through closely following LDS teachings: "As man is, God once was; as God is, man may become." Most Mormons claim that the veracity of the doctrine of godhood (and for women, a goddesshood of eternal pregnancies) is affirmed through prayer, followed by a "burning in the bosom" sensation from "God." In contrast to its Sharia legal system, Islam's mysticism is found in Sufism, where devotees whirl themselves into altered states of consciousness in order to reach union with Allah.

The ancient Roman Catholic mystics known as the Desert Fathers (who have become spiritual icons for the "evangelical" Emerging Church Movement) developed beliefs and practices little different from the yogis, gurus, and priests of Hinduism and Buddhism. That's one reason why modern Catholic mystics such as Trappist monk Thomas Merton and priests Henri Nouwen and Thomas Keating have such large followings among the Church's priests and nuns (as well as among many evangelicals). One need not go to their writings to find

the Church of Rome's position regarding godhood. It's spelled out quite clearly in paragraph 460 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

For the Son of God became man so that we might become God. The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods.

Godhood as a doctrine plays a large part in the methodology of the Word/Faith, Positive Confession teachings. Kenneth Copeland's version of "the lie" was similar to what most of his fellow Prosperity teachers were promoting:

And you impart humanity into a child that's born of you....Because you are a human, you have imparted the nature of humanity into that child.

God is God. He is a Spirit....And He imparted in you when you were born again. Peter said it just as plain, he said, "We are partakers of the Divine Nature." That Nature is alive—eternal in absolute perfection, and that was imparted into you by God just the same as you imparted into your child the nature of humanity.

That child wasn't born a whale. It was born a human....Well, now, you don't *have* a human, do you? No, you *are* one. You don't *have* a God in you. You *are* one.

Another leader of the Word/Faith Movement declares the practical necessity of godhood: "Until we comprehend that we are little gods and we begin to act like little gods, we cannot manifest the Kingdom of God." The modern roots of this heresy can be traced back to the religious science cults such as Christian Science and Unity School of Christianity, which gleaned many of their basic beliefs from Hinduism (see *The Seduction of Christianity: Spiritual Discernment in the Last Days* by Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon for details, promoters, and many other connections related to this article).

Fulfilled biblical prophecy is irrefutable proof that God's Word is exactly that, and we can easily recognize what He said would come to pass when it does. The Lord will have raptured us out of this world before the Antichrist declares himself to be God, so we won't be around for that event. However, there is a verse related to self-deification that has so much evidence, no reasonable person can deny its present-day fulfillment. In 2 Timothy 3:1-2 the Apostle Paul writes, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves...." Although humans have been enamored with themselves since the Garden of Eden, there is no generation in history that has been so preoccupied with self, even to the point of making self the key to solving all of mankind's problems. Here is a litany of

popular selfist concepts and activities: self-esteem, self-image, self-confidence, self-acceptance, self-forgiveness, self-assertion, self-improvement, positive self-regard, positive self-talk, positive affirmation, positive mental attitude, positive thinking, possibility thinking, human potential, etc., etc. The prerequisite for all of these is *self-love*, the cornerstone of humanistic psychology and, consequently, because of the overwhelming influence of so-called Christian psychology, a false but popular doctrine among evangelicals.

The connection between psychology and Eastern mysticism, with their necessary emphasis on self, is clear, as American philosopher and historian Jacob Needleman observes:

A large and growing number of psychotherapists are now convinced that the Eastern religions offer an understanding of the mind far more complete than anything yet envisaged by Western science. At the same time, the leaders of the new religions themselves—the numerous gurus and spiritual teachers now in the West—are reformulating and adapting the traditional systems according to the language and atmosphere of modern psychology.

With all these disparate movements, it is no wonder that thousands of troubled men and women throughout America no longer know whether they need psychological or spiritual help. The line is blurred that divides the therapist from the spiritual guide (Martin & Deidre Bobgan, *Psychoheresy*, EastGate Pub., 1987, 22-23).

The Antichrist, empowered with lying signs and wonders and seeking worship, will be the ultimate therapist and spiritual guide. Although claiming to be God, he will offer the potential of godhood, including the demonically enabled powers he exhibits, to all those who will follow him in deifying self. The lie from the beginning is the lie at the end.

The heaven of *the lie* seems to have worked its way through the entire world, including much of the church, which has looked more to the world than to the Word. What is God's response? He will send strong delusion upon those who have not a love for the truth, that they should believe the lie (2 Thessalonians 2:10-11). Yet the Lord has not left believers without a defense against being seduced by the lie. To the Father, Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). His exhortation in John 8:31-32, if obeyed, will free us from the stronghold of self: "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."

TBC

## Quotable .....

If these pages fall into the hands of any anxious, troubled soul, desirous of finding the way of peace and earnestly seeking to be right with God, let me urge such a one to give up all struggling. Just believe God. Tell Him you are the sinner for whom the Saviour died, and trust in Christ alone for salvation. His own word is clear and simple: "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death into life" (John 5:24).

*H. A. Ironside, Unless You Repent*

## Q&A .....

**QUESTION:** Someone sent me a copy of a book by Chuck and Nancy Missler titled *Kingdom, Power, and Glory: The Overcomer's Handbook*, and I found it rather troubling. I have a lot of respect for Chuck and his ministry, but this really threw me. Have you had an opportunity to review the book? I'd like to get another opinion to help me decide whether or not I'm understanding what the book is saying.

**RESPONSE:** We, too, have great respect for Chuck and consider him a good friend. Nevertheless, the book he co-authored with his wife, Nancy, has, in our view, serious doctrinal errors. The main thesis they present is that born-again believers fall into two categories: "overcomers" and "carnal Christians." When both stand before Jesus at His judgment seat for rewards, those saved carnal Christians (whose lives have produced few, if any, good works) will be relegated to a place of outer darkness during the Millennium when overcoming Christians will rule and reign with Christ.

The Misslers claim support for their view by interpreting verses in Matthew 24 as applying to true believers though they be carnal Christians. Those verses declare that the lord of "that evil servant... shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (vv. 48-51). The authors interpret as metaphors the language describing the punishments listed by Jesus, thereby softening the consequences. Even so, one is still left with a purgatory-like condition for believers. How does a believer know he or she will not be cast into outer darkness, "in the darkened courtyard outside the light of the Holy Place" (Missler, p. 198), where "there is going to be much 'weeping and gnashing of teeth'"? The Misslers tell us "it is impossible for us to know who is carnal and who is spiritual. Only God knows the truth. We

are not to judge! That's God's business at the Bema Seat."

In truth, all of the verses that refer to "outer darkness" and "weeping and gnashing of teeth" are directed by Jesus at Jews who have, or will have, rejected Him, their Messiah. Applying any of the consequences to believers does serious harm to the gospel. At the very least, it implies punishment of sin for the believer, which he must suffer and somehow expiate during his time in outer darkness. Exactly how that's to be accomplished we're not told. At worst, like the purgatory of Roman Catholicism, the carnal Christian must pay for something that the blood of Christ did not cover.

In addition to the implications regarding the gospel, it grieves me deeply that the Misslers' book may spread anxiety and fear among evangelicals, much like I had as a Roman Catholic. I knew I had punishments awaiting me, even if I made it to purgatory. Being delivered from that fear when I put my faith in the One who paid the full penalty for my sins, my heart joyfully rested in His words: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:1-2). There are many, many other verses that clearly show that Jesus will never separate Himself nor cast the believer away from Himself. We have His blessed assurance.

A number of brothers and I have discussed our concerns personally with Chuck about *Kingdom, Power, and Glory* through conference calls and emails. To date, Chuck's position is: "Nan and I believe it to be the most important work of our lifetime."

**QUESTION:** I've been astonished at how some are predicting 2012 as the end of this era. These lies are permeating the hearts of all kinds of people, Christians and non-Christians. Could you please respond regarding 2012 as the end of the world?

**RESPONSE:** The date 2012 is most commonly a reference to the "end" of the Mayan Long Count Calendar. This date has been picked up by a number of individuals. Others attest that ancient Romans believed 2012 would be a historic year. The Ancient Chinese I Ching predicted the apocalypse in 2012. Sixteenth-century English prophetess Mother Shipton is said to have prophesied that history would end in 2012!

Jack Van Impe, who claims to be the "Walking Bible," advertised on his website: "Do these prophecies from all over the world correspond with the truth of God's Word? Could various cultural and secular sources be right about earth's final day?... In their exciting video teaching, Drs. Jack

and Rexella Van Impe demonstrate the very real possibility that 2012 could be a year of culmination—could December 21st 2012 be history's final day?" (Van Impe, *December 21st 2012: History's Final Day?*, online resources).

We have no doubt that in the Last Days' coming together of religious believers, this teaching may be one common item of "agreement." The famous Mayan Long Count calendar begins on August 11, 3114 BC (Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*, 2005, p. 167). The Mayan Long Count calendar, upon which this prediction is based, is reset to day 0 every 1,872,000 days (counting from 3114 BC), a period known as The Great Circle (Diamond, *Collapse*, p. 167). Depending on how one calculates it, the next reset date is December 21, 2012. Yet, the Maya have several calendars. The "Tzolk'in" calendar ran for 260 days and the "Haab'" was a solar year of 365 days. Both the Tzolk'in and the Haab' were combined to form the "Calendar Round," lasting 52 Haab's (every 52 years, or what was thought to be a human lifetime). In addition, the Long Count calendar (beginning in 3114 BC contains roughly 394-year periods known as "Baktuns." Thirteen was a significant, sacred number for the Maya, and the 13th Baktun ends around Dec. 21, 2012 (Mark Stevenson, "2012 isn't the end of the world, Mayans insist," AP, Oct 11, 2009).

With all of these ending cycles, this of course means that there have already been several "resets" of time, and, to all appearances, the universe continues to exist. More important, "of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Mt 24:36).

There are other admonitions in Scripture: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Lk 21:28). This is sufficient. We can see the conditions of the world indicating that the time of the end is drawing near, but we are not given a specific date.

The Lord Jesus said in the last chapter of Revelation, "behold, I come quickly..." (Rv 22:12). He said this with the full knowledge that from the perspective of humanity, it sure seems like a long time. Peter, however, reminds us that from the Lord's perspective, it is but a few days (2 Pt 3:8-12).

**QUESTION:** You have promoted books by A.W. Tozer, yet Tozer constantly quoted from Catholic mystics, and some have said that he even practiced "Lectio Divina." In view of your warnings regarding the Contemplative Movement, how could you offer his books, knowing of his practices?

**RESPONSE:** Tozer did not practice *Lectio Divina*, a method that many mystics and



occultists have used to supposedly experience God. The exercise involves reading a Bible verse or phrase, often repeating it many times like a mantra, for the purpose of stimulating insights that transcend what might be gained from the normal reading and understanding of the Scriptures. Rather than understanding a passage based on the *objective* meaning of the words, the grammar of the verses, and the context, the words become devices for receiving personal, *subjective* revelation from God. Anyone who is familiar with the writings of Tozer knows that such a technique is completely foreign to what he taught throughout his lifetime. Nevertheless, that hasn't stopped some people from referring to him in order to support their promotion of mystical methods and teachings. John Armstrong, for example (who is general editor of *Roman Catholicism: Evangelical Protestants Analyze What Unites and Divides Us*, Moody Press, 1994), has stated that Tozer "listened to God and practiced lectio divina in his reading habits." The "Emerging Thought" blog, among other Emergent writers, has commented, "I am going to go through the book by Brother Lawrence called *Practice of the Presence of God: The Best Rule of Holy Life*. I already had someone on the leadership team comment (jokingly) about me teaching RCC stuff. Yet, I see that John Wesley and A. W. Tozer both recommended him."

To quote someone does not necessarily include recommending him. Yet, we would take issue with Tozer regarding some of the people he quotes. In chapter 3 of *The Pursuit of God*, "Removing the Veil," Tozer quotes Chinese sage, Lao-tze: "That is the first step, and as...Lao-tze has said, 'The journey of a thousand miles begins with a first step.'" Quoting this one point, which is hardly profound, is not "endorsing" Lao-Tze. One might wonder, however, where Tozer stood when one considers the Roman Catholics (Augustine, Nicholas of Cusa, Thomas à Kempis, Francis of Assisi, von Hugel, Bernard of Clairvaux, the poet William Blake, and hymn writer Frederick Faber, a convert to Catholicism) that he has quoted or referred to in his books. That's rather puzzling, since the gospel that Tozer preached and wrote about so well couldn't be more contrary to the gospel and dogmas of Catholicism, beliefs strictly held by those mentioned and most of whom were canonized as saints by the Church of Rome. TBC does not condone Tozer when he quotes those with whom we have serious theological disagreement (and with whom, we are sure, he would also disagree). Moreover, instances of such quotes are so few in his many, many volumes that it's clear they were in no way significant to his teaching.

Tozer himself recognized the confusion he generated by quoting those noted for their Roman Catholic mysticism. He wrote in his own defense, "Some of my friends good-humoredly—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...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...I don't believe in anything that is unscriptural or that is anti-scripture" (A.W. Tozer, "What Difference Does the Holy Spirit Make?")

Even so, some object that quoting Tozer to prove he wasn't a mystic ignored his advice to "get still to wait on God" with the "Bible outspread." To say that Tozer practiced lectio divina because of this statement is to be driven more by surmise than substance. The full paragraph reads: "It is important that we get still to wait on God. And it is best that we get alone, preferably with our Bible outspread before us. Then if we will, we may draw near to God and begin to hear Him speak to us in our hearts. I think for the average person the progression will be something like this: First a sound as of a Presence walking in the garden. Then a voice, more intelligible, but still far from clear. Then the happy moment when the Spirit begins to illuminate the Scriptures, and that which had been only a sound, or at best a voice, now becomes an intelligible word, warm and intimate and clear as the word of a dear friend. Then will come life and light, and best of all, ability to see and rest in and embrace Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and All."

There is a vast difference between Tozer's teaching and lectio divina. The Lord tells us to "be still" at times. To "be still" is not to empty our minds, as in lectio divina. Reading Scripture without distraction, we trust the Lord to bring illumination, or "understanding." Though Tozer speaks of a "sound as of a Presence walking in the garden," he means that the Holy Spirit begins to bring understanding (1 Cor 2:11). "Then a voice," denotes better understanding of a formerly opaque Scripture. Tozer speaks of "an intelligible word" consistently throughout his writing.

His focus remains "the Word." "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein" (Jos 1:8).

The Scriptures warn us to fully discern the truth of a matter. Discernment is more than suspicion. We are cautioned in the scriptures against "evil surmising" (1 Tm 6:4), which today might be called "evil suspicion." To establish Tozer as a "Catholic mystic" cannot be done objectively, without exaggeration, and with only selective use of evidence.

## News Alert.....

**OneNewsNow, 5/14/2009 [EXCERPTS]:** The attempt to prove that homosexuality is determined biologically has been dealt a knockout punch. An American Psychological Association publication includes an admission that there's no homosexual "gene"—meaning it's not likely that homosexuals are born that way.

For decades, the APA has not considered homosexuality a psychological disorder [it did prior to 1973], while other professionals in the field consider it to be a "gender-identity" problem. The new statement...appears in... "Answers to Your Questions for a Better Understanding of Sexual Orientation & Homosexuality," and states the following:

There is no consensus among scientists about the exact reasons that an individual develops a heterosexual, bisexual, gay or lesbian orientation. Although much research has examined the possible genetic, hormonal, developmental, social, and cultural influences on sexual orientation, no findings have emerged that permit scientists to conclude that sexual orientation is determined by any particular factor or factors. Many think that nature and nurture both play complex roles....

That contrasts with the APA's statement in 1998: "There is considerable recent evidence to suggest that biology, including genetic or inborn hormonal factors, plays a significant role in a person's sexuality."

Matt Barber with Liberty Counsel wonders if the organization will admit that homosexuals who want to change can change.

"It's irrefutable from a medical standpoint that people can leave the homosexual lifestyle," he argues. "Homosexuality is defined by behavior. Untold thousands of people have found freedom from that lifestyle through either reparative therapy or through—frankly, most effectively—a relationship with Jesus Christ."

Peter LaBarbera (Americans for Truth About Homosexuality), agrees. "Many men and women have come out of homosexuality, mostly through a relationship with Jesus Christ. The fact that these professional organizations will not study that, will not acknowledge that, shows how 'in the tank' they are for the homosexual movement."

## Speaking Schedule

**Jan 21-22** **Calvary Chapel of the Finger Lakes**  
(Dave/TA) Farmington, NY  
(585) 398-3550

**Jan 31-Feb 5** **Jonquiere Christian Assembly**  
(TA) Jonquiere, QB  
(418) 542-5075

**Jul 9-11** **TBC Conference**  
Bend, OR  
(800) 937-6638

## Letters .....

### Dear Dave and Tom,

Thank you for your excellent book, *Psychology and the Church*. Having... friends who are training to be counsellors I have been aware of the obvious conflict with the Scriptures and trying to point this out to them. Your book has really helped to clarify things for me. I pray you will live to be as old as Methuselah, as it will be a sad day for the church when you are no longer here to contend for the faith (not for you, of course). [Your book] is a real treasure for which I am really grateful, knowing that it could open [people's] eyes to the terrible deception of psychology in the church. JB (United Kingdom)

### Dear Mr. Hunt,

What a colossal legacy—I know possibly not in terms of dollars or popularity, but in terms of exposing falsehoods and enunciating truth.... I'm sure your ministry has been given many labels, some not complimentary, but I see it as a discernment-based, fundamental (and I use that term in the most positive sense) ministry. This is very significant to me because, from my limited experience, they seem to be disappearing from the face of the planet. I know I have been responded to quite negatively...for even suggesting that the rise of Islam is related to end times prophecy. Forget criticizing the Catholic Church. Ah well, these are all discernment issues.... I hope...that your opportunities for ministry expand, even at this late stage. "For the coming of the LORD draweth nigh." JC (TN)

### Dear Sirs,

I just picked up your book *The Seduction of Christianity*. I...can see how much the New Age religion has made highways into the church since you gave the warning call back in 1985. With New Age based on evolution, as are all false religions, and noting the deceiving of Eve and the world, nothing much has changed since the Garden. But it does seem like more and more Christians are

being deceived like Eve, or with their eyes wide open like Adam. HN (email)

### Dear Tom,

I was doubly glad to get your August newsletter. Satan has been hard at work over the centuries to destroy the Bible, and your article, "Refashioning God" was needed to keep Christians up to date. Wouldn't you know that the day after receiving the *BC*, I was faced with responding to Christians and non-Christians who were enthralled by *The Shack*....Thanks for making that info available. JD (OR)

### Dear Ones,

For the last several months I have been involved with political activism. Though I agreed with Mark Dinsmore's wonderful articles on Christian Patriotism, I was completely convinced that [by] keeping my involvement "within" my legal rights to bring redress with government, I was okay. Well, I may not have been involved in anarchy, nor would I have joined in such behavior, but I was trying to stand in two worlds, focused on heaven and earth...and guess which focus was winning? A few days ago...I was face to face with despair, and sinking fast....I began to long for my Heavenly Father's arms to grab me up as though I, at 58, were but a little girl. In His mercy, the *TBC* newsletter arrived yesterday, and through it, as He has done so many times before, the Lord corrected and comforted me so sweetly. Then when I turned to the letter you printed by John Newton, God held me close and wicked my pain away—precious to remind me of which place I am truly a citizen, and Who it is that rules. Praise be to God for His wonderful love! Then this morning He brought someone into my life to minister to, and as I shared about how blessed I've been by *TBC* over the last 25 years, I mentioned Dave's timeless book, *The Seduction of Christianity*....Thank you so much for your faithfulness to listen to the Lord as He leads you on what to print each month! T.A., kudos on your fine response regarding *The Shack*. SJ (email)

### Dear Dave and Friends,

I am a captive saint in prison....By chance or by divine providence I was introduced to The Berean Call ministry. Having been in prison since 1984, I am out of touch with current trends and spiritual state of the church out in the world. But your ministry is a Godsend. I don't have any source of income to support your ministry but I can hold you up in prayer. Could you please place me on your mailing list...? I would be thankful to partake of the fruit of your labors of speaking the truth in love and being watchmen to the body of Christ. DF (prisoner, NV)

### Dave,

I've been a supporter of The Berean Call for a long time. I enjoy the newsletter. Didn't know you updated your website. I really liked the article on the social gospel. You really nailed it as [the] basis for the emergent church. I will continue to use this site in my biblical studies. JW (email)

### Dear TBC,

My family and friends have been reading *TBC* for many years and I'm so thankful to the Lord that I also can read and learn from them. A special thanks to Ruth Hunt for her article "The Suitable Helper." As a young Christian woman, it can be so incredibly discouraging talking about marriage, even with other Christian women. There is so much bitterness and attitude, or even carelessness, associated with marriage in many people's hearts. I read "The Suitable Helper" with such joy and relief—finally, a woman sharing godly wisdom and encouraging us to truly be helpers to our men, not hindrances. Thank you, Ruth! JQ (MA)

## TBC Notes

### Keep the Light On!

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 11:105).

I've been asked, in view of what many of our readers have recognized and experienced as an unprecedented and pervasive seduction and deception in Christendom, how I handle apostasy and what I recommend to deal with it. Beyond my grieving over what I see many of my brothers and sisters in Christ being caught up in and subjected to (to which I'm also vulnerable), the prevention for being overcome by such darkness (as well as deliverance from it) is simply staying in the light of God's Word.

Satan's grand scheme is to abolish the Scriptures. A believer's antidote is to continue in, comprehend, and contend for what God has revealed in His Word. That may be obvious to many, but if it's just an observation without application, it's a prelude to the light being extinguished.

T. A. McMAHON  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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# AN OFFICIAL WORLD RELIGION?

—Excerpted from the 1985 bestselling *The Seduction of Christianity* by Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon

*Twenty-five years ago, Dave Hunt and T.A. McMahon's groundbreaking exposé, The Seduction of Christianity, shook the sleeping church and blazed a prophetic trail for those seeking biblical discernment in the Last Days. Today, although the names and faces have changed, identical deceptions have spawned a host of spiritual offspring whose "new" doctrines of demons now permeate the pews, virtually unchallenged.*

MANY PEOPLE THINK OF PROPHECY as an intriguing subject that involves the latest rumors concerning an alleged Trilateralist plot, the newest developments in the Middle East, or recent maneuvers by the Soviets and Arabs in their continuing campaign against Israel. Interesting as that may be, there is something far more important. Whether one has a year's supply of food in case of famine or a suitable shelter for surviving a nuclear attack may be important, but it affects one's temporal condition only. However, to be deluded into believing "the lie" that we are warned will seduce the entire world into accepting the Antichrist will affect one's eternal destiny (2 Thes 2:11-12).

We have been in the midst of a cult/occult explosion for the last 25 [now 50] years—an explosion that began with the drug movement and turned into a mystical trip mainly oriented to Hindu/Buddhist practices. The counterculture that began as a largely political movement protesting the Vietnam war and evils of a materialistic society became a *spiritual* movement through the influence of drugs and Eastern mysticism. The failure of materialistic science to answer ultimate questions (but instead bringing us to the brink of a nuclear holocaust and ecological collapse) has caused modern man to turn to the realm of the spirit for the answers he seeks....

It is no longer a question of *whether* but *when* humanity will be united both economically and politically under a one-world government. Lists of the many top leaders and organizations working *openly* toward this goal can be obtained by anyone who is interested. Books on the subject are legion, from James P. Warburg's *The West in Crisis* ("We are living in a perilous period of transition from the era of the fully sovereign nation-state to the era of world government") to *Between Two Ages*, by Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Zbigniew Brzezinski, in which he openly advocates a one world government as a necessity. The United States has officially made statements favorable of a new world order, such as the following addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations: "[It] would be very hard to imagine that the American people would not respond very positively to an agreed and safeguarded program to substitute an international rule of law and order...."

It would be fruitless to speculate further about global conspiracy theories involving the Trilateralists, Masons, Illuminati, or New Age networks. These organizations are only pawns in the real game....Far more important than knowing the individuals and groups involved is understanding the common lie that deceives them all. The mastermind behind the scenes is Satan himself, and the world takeover is his move. Even so, that can only come when God allows it....

In language that cannot be misinterpreted, the Bible foretells that Antichrist will declare himself to be God and that the whole world—Marxists, Maoists, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, atheists, professing Christians, everyone—will believe this astonishing claim and worship him....The logical secret to Antichrist's mysterious power over humanity lies in the astonishing fact that...the new world religion will be thought of as [not only spiritual but] *scientific*. This new religious science will promise to lead humanity into the experience of its own divinity, that each of us is "God." This basic lie of the Serpent in the Garden of Eden will seem to be validated by godlike psychic powers the Antichrist will manifest and the whole world will pursue. It will be a religion of self-love and self-worship, centered in

man himself and oriented to man's personal success rather than to the glory of the true God.

Raised a fundamentalist and now one of the most influential New Age leaders, David Spangler lays it all out, including cosmic evolution of the self to godhood and the key role played by Lucifer (Satan):

When man entered upon the pathway of self, he entered into a great creative adventure...of learning the meaning of divinity by accepting to himself the responsibility of a microcosmic world unto whom he is god....There he can say, 'I have fully and absolutely accepted the responsibility of who and what I am'....The being that helps man to reach this point is Lucifer...the angel of man's evolution...the spirit of light in the microcosmic world.

That this message of self-deification is gaining credibility and acceptability at an accelerating rate around the world is another convincing sign that the coming of Christ must be drawing near.... That the *world* would follow such teachings comes as no surprise. But there is cause for alarm when we realize how [completely] this movement has penetrated the evangelical church and is subtly seducing overwhelming numbers of *Christians*....

This seems impossible to believe, because most people think of Satan-worshippers as weird fanatics performing bizarre rituals under a full moon at midnight in a cemetery. On the contrary, this will all be very scientific and respectable. Few if any will be aware they are worshipping Satan. And those who are, like David Spangler, will call him Lucifer, [an "angel of light"] who is allegedly "an agent of God's love acting through evolution." Spangler is not alone in honoring Lucifer; and such ideas repeated often enough exert a subtle influence even upon Christians. This is especially true of children and teenagers. Christians had better awaken to what is happening to their children.

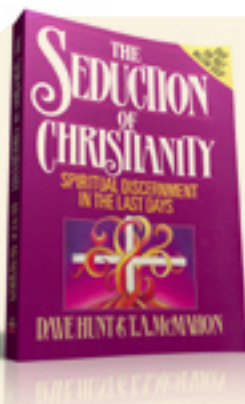
Take the recently popular movie *2010*, for example. In the film, a new sun suddenly appeared in the sky and brought peace to earth just as the Americans and Soviets were about to engage in nuclear war. What the film did not explain, Arthur C. Clarke did in his book: the sun was named Lucifer, no doubt in honor of the power that brought [the story] into existence. Spangler further explains the relationship of Antichrist to Lucifer and why Lucifer will be worshiped:

Christ is the same force as Lucifer....Lucifer prepares man for the experience of Christhood...[he is] the great initiator....Lucifer works within each of us to bring us to wholeness, and as we move into a new age...each of us in some way is brought to that point which I term the Luciferic initiation...that many people now, and in the days ahead, will be facing, for it is an initiation into the New Age.

This would have seemed impossible even 50 years ago, but today it is right in line with growing trends. An incredible worldwide delusion is gathering momentum. So compelling will be the seduction that Jesus warned "even the elect" would be deceived "if it were possible." Such language ought to put every Christian on his guard....Though it may seem "negative," we dare not ignore the solemn fact that the Bible warns of a coming apostasy—not as a possibility, but as a certainty. In fact, we are told quite clearly that many in the church *will* be seduced before the second coming of Christ takes place.

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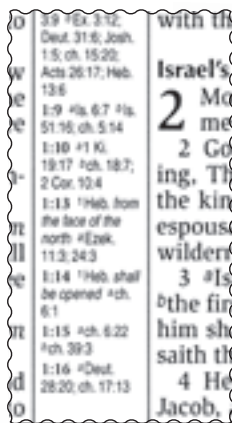
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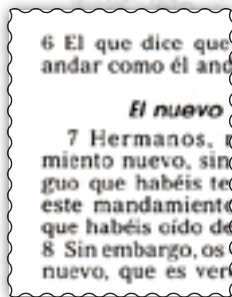


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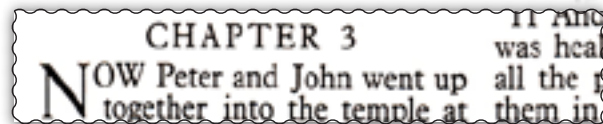


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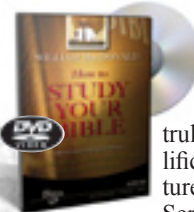


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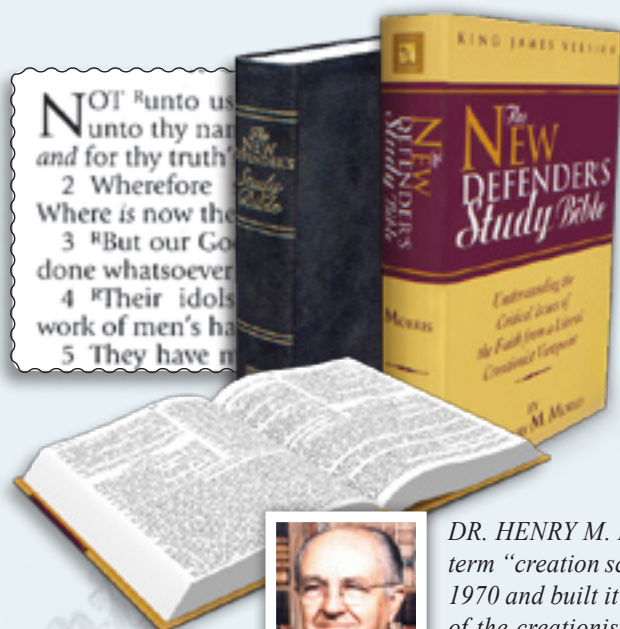
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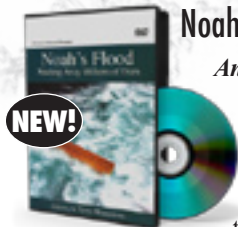
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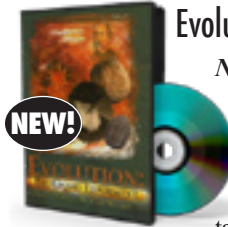


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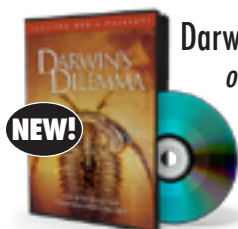


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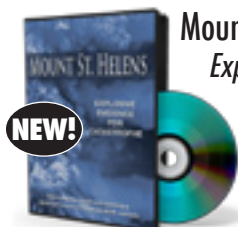


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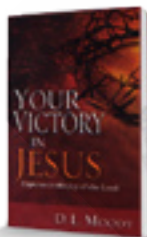


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