

INSIDE: CALVINISM'S SURPRISING CATHOLIC CONNECTION — SEE PAGE 10

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Geneva's Experiment in "Christian" Dominionism



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Call

JULY 2012

ROMAN CATHOLICS: THE NEIGHBORHOOD MISSION FIELD

by T. A. McMAHON

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

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

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

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

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

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THE BEREAN CALL

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

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Roman Catholics: The Neighborhood Mission Field

T. A. McMahon

Thirty-five years ago I was delivered from the bondage of Roman Catholicism. That may sound somewhat unkind to many evangelicals today, but it is nevertheless true, as all former Catholics who have been saved by faith alone in Christ alone will attest. Why would we claim that we were set free from bondage? Isn't that an insult directed at a long-established professing Christian Church that has more than a billion followers? Or is it a reality for all of them? Those who grew up Catholic, as I did for thirty-some years, know what it's like to have experienced spiritual bondage. But the fact of that bondage is demonstrated simply by contrasting the gospel of Roman Catholicism and its salvation process with the biblical gospel.

Rome's gospel is a process of attaining *salvation by works*. It begins with the Sacrament of Baptism, which starts a person (the overwhelming majority are infants) on a course to heaven. Throughout the process, the individual must stay the Church's course by *remaining in the state of sanctifying grace*. Catholicism offers a multitude of Sacraments, sacramentals, and works that it claims will enable a person to do just that. At death, a Catholic *must be in* the state of sanctifying grace in order to enter Purgatory, an alleged place of purifying fires where the last vestiges of sin are said to be removed before one can enter heaven.

Here is my personal story—echoing that of a billion souls, many of whom are your neighbors, work associates, school friends, and acquaintances (every one in four people in the U.S. is Roman Catholic). As an infant, I was brought to the priest, and in the presence of godparents received the Sacrament of Baptism, which brought me into the Church and started me on my way to heaven. Baptism cleansed me of original sin and infused me with sanctifying grace. Although we didn't use the phrase "born again" when I was growing up, more and more Catholics today refer to their baptism that way. (Clearly, that is not what the Scriptures teach about being "born again.")

Hypothetically, if my godparent had slipped on the holy water, dropping me

right after my baptism and causing my death, I would have gone straight to heaven. No Purgatory—just right straight into the presence of God. This is explained by the Church's teaching that only the sinless can enter heaven. An infant is stained only by original sin, which is removed at baptism. Thus Purgatory is not necessary for a baptized baby who dies in infancy.

There does come a time, however, when a child adds his own sins to his soul. When I reached that point and committed what the Church considered a mortal sin, the process of working my way to heaven stopped. A mortal sin short-circuits the process by condemning me to hell. When a child reaches the age at which the Catholic Church considers him or her capable of committing mortal sins, two Sacraments are made available: Penance and the Eucharist.

The Sacrament of Penance enabled me to confess my sins to a priest, who alone can absolve Catholics of their mortal sins. I made my First Confession at age 7, which was followed by my First Holy Communion. When partaking of communion, also known as the Eucharist, I was told that I was eating the "body and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ, under the appearance of bread and wine." That ritual infused sanctifying grace into me and restored the process of my working my way to heaven.

It's at this point in a Catholic child's life that Purgatory comes into the picture. Although the priest absolved my sins (both the deadly sins, known as mortal, and the lesser sins, which are known as venial) at confession, they still needed to be expiated, or atoned for. That is accomplished by doing "acts of penance." The Catholic teaching is that all sins must be paid for through purifying punishments. Vatican II explains:

Sins must be expiated. This may be done on this earth through the sorrows, miseries and trials of this life and, above all, through death. Otherwise the expiation must be made in the next life through fire and torments or purifying punishments....[In] purgatory the souls of those... "who had not made satisfaction with adequate penance for their sins and omissions" are cleansed after death with punishments designed to purge away their debt. (V2IDchp1:2, 3)

Where does Jesus fit in regarding the expiation of sins? The Roman Catholic Church views Christ's atonement as *helpful* but not completely sufficient in and of itself.

Other "help" is needed:

[W]e are able through Jesus Christ to make satisfaction to God the Father not only by punishments voluntarily undertaken by ourselves to atone for sins or by those imposed by the judgment of the priest according to the measure of our offense, but also...by the temporal afflictions imposed by God [on the sinner].... (CoT14Schp9)

Canonized Catholic saints also contribute to expiating sins of others:

They [i.e., the saints] have carried their crosses to make expiation for their own sins and the sins of others. They were convinced that they could help their brothers to obtain salvation from God who is the Father of mercies....Indeed, the prayers and good works of holy people were regarded as of such great value that it could be asserted that the penitent was washed, cleansed and redeemed with the help of the entire Christian people.... (V2IDchp2:5, 3:6)

Here is a historical overview of all of this, again from Vatican II:

From the most ancient times in the Church good works were also offered to God for the salvation of sinners, particularly the works [i.e., sufferings and miseries] which human weakness finds hard. (V2IDchp3:6)

I would go to confession on Saturday so that I could receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist at Mass on Sunday. My life as a Catholic was a continuous cycle of ascending toward heaven and plummeting toward hell. To sustain the upward process, I would add whatever good works and sacramentals I could in order to stay in the state of sanctifying grace: rosaries, novenas, stations of the cross, Eucharistic holy hours, blessed medals, scapulars, indulgences, personal sufferings, appeals to Mary, prayers to the saints for help, etc., etc. The best I could hope for was that I would die while in the state of grace, while on the ascent, working my way up the ladder. I knew I'd have to face a time of suffering in Purgatory, but eventually I'd get into heaven, or so I hoped.

How it would turn out for me I couldn't know; nor could anyone assure me. To tell me that I could know for certain that I was going to get to heaven was itself a ticket to hell. That's a mortal sin, sometimes referred to as the *sin of presumption*. Not even the pope knows—and he is called the Vicar of Christ, literally one who stands in the place of Christ on this earth! Nor *can* he know. The best a Catholic can do is to increase

his odds by doing all that the Church tells him to do.

One thing that needs to be understood is that obedience to the Church is critical for a Catholic to get to heaven. Now, some readers may be thinking about Catholics they know who don't agree with everything the Church teaches. Such people are sometimes referred to as "cafeteria Catholics"—picking and choosing what they want to obey. They may say they don't believe in certain dogmas of the Church, but that doesn't change the Church teaching—or their obligation or the consequences of disobedience—that is, if the Church teaching is true.

Most Catholics say they don't believe in obtaining indulgences (the remission of the temporal punishment due to sin)—they believe that their use was done away with 500 years ago. Not so. The latest Catholic Catechism supports Vatican II's declaration that the Church "teaches and *commands* that the usage of indulgences—a usage most beneficial to Christians and approved by the authority of the Sacred Councils—should be kept in the Church; and it *condemns* with *anathema* those who say that indulgences are useless or that the church does not have the power to grant them." (V2IDchp4:8)

Anathema, by the way, means excommunication. In other words, those who do not believe what the Church teaches on this are condemned to hell.

What most Catholics don't realize is that they must believe *all* that the pope and the Magisterium—that is, the infallible teaching office of the Church—declare as teachers of the faith.

The Christian [read Roman Catholic] faithful...are bound by Christian obedience to follow what the sacred pastors...declare as teachers of the faith or determine as leaders of the Church. (Code of Canon Law - Canon 212-1)

This loyal submission of the will and intellect must be given, in a special way, to the authentic teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff, even when he does not speak *ex cathedra* in such wise, indeed, that his supreme teaching authority be acknowledged with respect, and that one sincerely adhere to decisions made by him.... (Vatican II Lumen Gentium 25)

[The Bishops when] assembled in an ecumenical council, they are, for the universal Church, teachers of and judges in matters of faith and morals, whose decisions must be adhered to with the loyal and obedient assent of faith....[When] the Roman Pontiff, or the body of bishops together with him, define a doctrine, they make the definition in conformity with revelation itself, to which all are bound to adhere and to which they are obliged to submit.... (Vatican II Lumen Gentium 25C2)

Refusal to submit is a mortal sin.

Hopefully, you have been comparing the Catholic teachings I've been presenting here with what you believe as a biblical Christian. If you have been, you're probably aware that much of this relates to salvation. Now let's look at very specific official teachings of the Church of Rome as they relate to salvation in contrast to the biblical gospel.

The gospel according to God's Word is that we are saved by grace through faith, that salvation is not of works but it's a gift of God, as Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us. We are justified, that is, reconciled to God, by faith alone. Jesus said, "...he that believeth on me *hath* (present tense) everlasting life (John 6:47). Jesus alone is our Savior. There is no other Savior (Isaiah 45:21). Nor is there any one who can contribute to his or her own salvation. "*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.*" (Acts 4:12) This is the testimony of the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation.

If you interact with believers who are former Catholics, you will very likely hear, "I never heard the gospel as a Catholic." As a matter of fact, there was a time after getting saved that I thought, *Catholics never hear the gospel because the Church doesn't really understand the biblical gospel. It's lost in all the added rituals and liturgy.* But what I found surprised me. The Roman Catholic Magisterium, the teaching authority of the Church, clearly understands and articulates the gospel better than many evangelicals today—although it *condemns* it.

According to the infallible Council of Trent—6th Session, Canon 9:

If anyone says that...the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to obtain the grace of justification..., let him be anathema.

6th Session, Canon 12:

If anyone shall say that...justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in the divine mercy which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is this confidence alone by which we are justified: let him be anathema.

6th Session, Canon 30:

If anyone says that...after the reception of the grace of justification the guilt is so remitted and the debt of eternal punishment so blotted out to every repentant sinner, that no debt of temporal punishment remains to be discharged either in this world or in purgatory before the gates of heaven can be opened, let him be anathema.

Here is one more from the Council of Trent....7th Session, Canon 4:

If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law [canons and decrees of the

Church] are not necessary for salvation but...without them...men obtain from God through faith alone the grace of justification...let him be anathema.

That is exactly the message the Catholic Church has been promoting since the mid-1500s. The Council of Trent was a direct response to the Reformation. There has been no substantial change in Catholic dogma since that time, nor could there be, given the Church's belief in its own infallibility. To change an infallible teaching decreed by an infallible council or pope means to reject the doctrine of infallibility, which in turn would undermine the entire Roman Catholic hierarchy system.

From the time I was born again (thirty-five years ago) until today, I have observed a grievous change in attitude among evangelicals regarding Roman Catholics. Conditioned throughout those years by such things as the Billy Graham Crusades, Promise Keepers, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in The Third Millennium," contemplative spirituality, The Catholic Charismatic Renewal, *The Passion of the Christ*, and the Emerging Church Movement, among many other influences (see TBC archives), few believers recognize the eternal consequences of the false gospel that Catholics believe. Thankfully, that wasn't the thinking of those who witnessed to me three decades ago; they were keenly aware that I faced separation from God forever.

Tragically, fewer and fewer American believers understand that they are in the middle of a mission field right where they live. Much of that ignorance can be attributed to the popular and therefore highly influential evangelical leaders of our day (try to name more than a couple of well-known leaders who speak out against the false gospel of Rome). But here we have exposed something that raises a question that may be at the heart of the problem: "Why are so many of those who claim to be *biblical* Christians following leaders who are not following the *Word of God*?" An individual's ignorance of the Scriptures is basic to the problem, as is an unwillingness to obey what God's Word says.

"But Catholics love Jesus just as we do" is the refrain that is common today among most evangelicals. It should be absolutely clear from the official documents quoted above that the Roman Catholic Church has a gospel that rejects Christ's full payment for the sins of mankind and replaces it with a process of "works salvation." Tragically, a belief in the Jesus of Roman Catholicism will save no one. This fact needs to weigh upon the heart of every believer who interacts with Catholic friends, neighbors, co-workers, and relatives. **TBC**

Quotable

The essence of Christianity is that we give the Son of God a chance to live and move and have His being in us, and the meaning of all spiritual growth is that He has an increasing opportunity to manifest Himself in our mortal flesh.

—Oswald Chambers

Q&A

QUESTION: John Piper, in a discussion on creation, tries to draw a distinction between the creation of man, which was recent, and the universe, which could be much older. He comments, “So that [view] has the advantage of saying that the earth is billions of years old if it wants to be—whatever science says it is, it is—but man is young, and he was good and he sinned. He was a real historical person, because Romans 5 says so, and so does the rest of the Bible.” What do you think?

RESPONSE: You’re asking for our opinion as to whether the days listed in Genesis 1 were literal days or long periods of time. We believe that the Scriptures are unambiguous in their meaning that these are 24-hour days.

We think that Piper’s statement is a compromise that seeks to find a nonexistent middle ground to “balance” all the views that Christians may hold. He lays stress upon the (brief) time that “man” has existed. Yet the Lord distinctly told Moses, “For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day...” (Ex 20:11).

This seems to be critical, for Jesus said in John 5:46, “For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.” What did Moses say? Moses wrote that the “heavens and the earth” (and man) were created *in six days*. God directly confirmed this in Exodus and again in John. Was the Creator confused? Certainly not!

QUESTION: You have attacked the teachings of Calvin and Augustine. We’ll see which lasts the longest and stands the test of time—the writings of Augustine and Calvin and their contribution to orthodox theology or those of the writers and staff of TBC. Sorry, but history shows that in the world of art, music, literature, and theology God has given some to be head and shoulders above the rest of us. If I was sick I would seek the best, most brilliant surgeons possible. When studying Scripture I will continue to trust and rely on the great theologians, flawed as they may be.

RESPONSE: It is good counsel to “seek the best, most brilliant surgeons possible.” However, regarding spiritual matters, the intent to lean upon “the experts” clearly avoids the scriptural admonition to “prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thes 5:21). Who are the experts when it comes to the Scriptures? Should we not test them? We are all flawed. More important, do Augustine and Calvin consistently and accurately “rightly divide the word of truth” (2 Tm 2:15)? We have simply pointed out some of their obvious contradictions and errors.

The Lord notes on a number of occasions that “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD” (Jer 17:5). Are we to place people upon pedestals? Even the Old Testament priests were told to not “go up by steps unto my altar, lest thy nakedness be discovered.” We are living in a time when socially, politically, and most important, spiritually, men are turning from their responsibilities and surrendering their thinking to “the experts.” The failure of this approach is becoming only too obvious.

If people regard us as the “answer men,” then we have failed in the task the Lord has given us. We seek to point individuals back to the *Scriptures*, following the example of the Bereans (Acts 17:11). What you advocate is contrary to the Lord’s admonition and is detrimental to the health of the Body. Those who accept the pronouncements of “big names” such as Calvin or Augustine without “searching the Scriptures daily” are insubordinate to the commands of the Lord.

When Christ rebuked individuals, it wasn’t because they failed to listen to Gamaliel or other prominent teachers. He went to the heart of the matter. The Scriptures were sufficient for the Lord Jesus Christ when He confronted the two disciples who were on the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-27). He told them, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets [not the commentators] have spoken.” And, “...beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (v. 27).

Again, we have not advocated our “TBC opinion” as the standard, and any accusations to the contrary are unsupported and very selective generalizations. What about Calvin and his abuses in Geneva? What about the anti-Semitism/Replacement Theology generated by the teachings of Augustine? It is more than the fact that these men were flawed. As we acknowledged, we all are. The problem is that what they taught is at times greatly in conflict with what the Scriptures say. The Great Physician is the “best, most brilliant surgeon possible.”

It is He who warned against the traditions of men. Now, let’s be obedient to the commands of Christ and although we may find the comments of “great theologians” helpful at times, like all commentaries, the *inspiration* ceases when we move from the biblical text to the comments of men. We would greatly encourage a prayerful and scriptural reexamination of the position that you have advocated.

As another writer notes, “The reformers had proclaimed the priesthood of all believers, but the Anabaptists, their contemporaries, were not impressed with what they found in the reformers’ churches. The monopoly of the Catholic priest seemed to have been replaced by the monopoly of the reformed preacher. Experts were still disempowering the congregation and hindering it from becoming mature” (Stuart Williams, “Interactive Preaching,” 3/3/08, The Anabaptist Network).

QUESTION: It seems like more and more churches and commentators use Philippians 2:7 to support the “Doctrine of Kenosis,” the idea that Christ “emptied Himself” of His divine abilities and became just a man. This doctrine appears to violate 1,600 years of Biblical Christianity. Am I mistaken?

RESPONSE: The problem is that people are taking the biblical account far past what it is meant to say. It is true that Jesus humbled Himself, or literally “emptied himself” (“But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men”—Phil 2:7).

That doesn’t mean that He “couldn’t” act as God, for He was and *is* God. It means that during His earthly sojourn He “wouldn’t” act contrary to humanity but relied fully upon His Father. John 5:30 tells us, “I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.” His “emptying himself” was a determined, voluntary submission, not a “divestment” in that He temporarily ceased to be God.

So many teachers, as you point out, are using the humanity of Christ (and He was fully human, and also fully God) to postulate the idea that in our humanity we can be “godlike.” That is the heretical teaching of the word faith/Latter Rain/etc. movements and is simply unbiblical. It produces teachers such as Kenneth Copeland, who tell us that we are “little gods.”

Once again, “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory” (1 Tm 3:16).



DOES TBC FOLLOW MATTHEW 18?

QUESTION: *Does TBC follow “Matthew 18” and first go to the authors and/or leaders it critiques in newsletters and books?*

RESPONSE: Matthew 18:15-17 has to do with *private* (not public) sin committed by one brother or sister in the Body against another. “Moreover, if thy brother shall *trespass against thee...*” (KJV). All translations agree that the subject is *sin* or *trespass*, not false teaching. Although a few do not specifically state in verse 15 that this is a trespass by one Christian against another, the context makes this clear in *all* translations. Look for example at verse 21, where Peter, in response to what the Lord has said, asks Him, “Lord, how often shall my brother *sin against me* and I forgive him?” (KJV); “how often shall my brother sin against me” (RSV); “how many times can my brother *wrong me*” (Phillips); “how often shall my brother *sin against me*” (NAS), etc.

The entire context has to do strictly with a personal problem between two Christians, where one has wronged the other, and is therefore to be kept private unless it can’t be resolved in that manner. In contrast, many other scriptures make it very clear that sin which is known publicly is an offense to the entire Body and must be dealt with *publicly*: “Them that sin rebuke before all that others also may fear” (1 Tm 5:20, KJV). This is both for the benefit of the body of Christ and also to let the world know that the church doesn’t tolerate sin. False doctrine is not the subject of Matthew 18, but something else entirely, and does not come under the instructions Christ gives in that passage. It is impossible for erroneous teaching that is presented publicly ever to be considered a *private trespass* of one person against another, which must therefore be dealt with privately between the two.

False doctrine is *never* a private matter and is *always* to be dealt with publicly. Much of the New Testament was written to publicly correct false teaching. Even the beloved Apostle John named Diotrephes in 3 John and promised that when he came to that church he would publicly correct the Offender in person. Paul withstood Peter to the face publicly for his false interpretation of the law that caused Him not to associate with Gentile believers (Gal 2:11-14). In a day of mass media, particularly when denied access to Christian TV networks, the only method of public correction of false teaching is to write books [and blogs] to call the attention of the Body to errors that affect the whole Body.

In keeping with many other scriptures that could be cited, 1 Corinthians 14:29 clearly states, “Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.” Clearly the issue is not whether an individual listener is offended by what one of the preachers has said, even if one could stretch that to be a “sin” against his brother. It would be entirely inappropriate for a listener to take aside the prophet he felt had spoken falsely and have a private discussion with him, and only if he refused to hear, then tell it to the church. The issue is the doctrinal purity of the Body, which must be guarded at all cost. And what has been publicly stated must be discussed publicly. It may well be that the prophet spoke truly and the offended listener was wrong.

So when he speaks out against what the prophet has said, he himself will be corrected by others. It is this kind of open discussion among believers that the Bible teaches, and that is the only protection against error being introduced and allowed to corrupt the church. Never is it suggested that no one must disagree with what is being taught because to do so would cause “division.” On the contrary, we are told that we *must* correct error in teaching and do so *publicly*.

Furthermore, what has been said in books and on TV etc. is part of the public domain, subject to review, analysis, critique of any kind. Anyone who makes public declarations

intended to influence large audiences through books, radio, TV etc. ought to know that he is responsible for what he says, and will be held accountable. No one has ever asked me for permission or even discussed with me critiquing any of my many books, and some reviews have been very unfavorable. That is expected.

It is not necessary to talk with a writer or speaker in order to be accurate and fair. It is a rather weak excuse to say that some writer/leader really didn’t mean what he said. Then he should have said what he meant. Unfortunately, there are thousands and, in the case of some, millions who have read and/or heard and taken it at face value, as any reasonable person would. Words have meaning and it is assumed that the normal meaning applies. Even if one of these teachers has changed his beliefs, we must still deal with what has been published for the sake of those who have been affected by it. If a person has changed his beliefs, then he ought to publish just as widely in tape and book form a renunciation of any false or misleading teaching he has given in the past rather than make a private explanation to me.

“FURTHERMORE, *what has been said in books and on TV etc. is part of the public domain, subject to review, analysis, critique of any kind. Anyone who makes public declarations intended to influence large audiences through books, radio, TV etc. ought to know that he is responsible for what he says, and will be held accountable. No one has ever asked me for permission or even discussed with me critiquing any of my many books, and some reviews have been very unfavorable. That is expected.*” — Dave Hunt

— DAVE HUNT (TBC’S VERY FIRST Q&A, FEBRUARY, 1986)

TBC NewsWatch

ABORTED FETUSES—IN FOOD?

ABCNEWS, [HTTP://ABCNEWS.GO.COM/BLOGS/HEALTH/2012/01/26/BILL-WOULD-BAN-ABORTED-FETUSES-IN-FOOD/](http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/health/2012/01/26/bill-would-ban-aborted-fetuses-in-food/), 1/26/2012: BILL WOULD BAN ABORTED FETUSES IN FOOD— An Oklahoma bill that would ban the sale of food containing aborted human fetuses has some people wondering: What food currently contains aborted human fetuses?

The bill introduced Jan. 18 by State Sen. Ralph Shortey, prohibits the manufacture or sale of “food or any other product intended for human consumption which contains aborted human fetuses in the ingredients or which used aborted human fetuses in the research or development of any of the ingredients.” Shortey declined to give specific examples, but said some food manufacturers used stem cells in the research and development process.

“There is a potential that there are companies that are using aborted human babies in their research and development of basically enhancing flavor for artificial flavors....What I am saying is that if it does happen, then we are not going to allow it to manufacture here.”

Shortey may be acting on claims that the San Diego-based company Semonyx used proteins derived from human embryonic kidney cells to test artificial sweeteners, NPR reported. The cell line, known as HEK 293, was created from a human embryo in 1970 and has become a staple in biochemistry labs around the world.

5 REASONS WHY NOT ALL YOUNG ADULTS LEAVE

CROSSWALK.COM, JOE MCKEEVER, 4/24/12: FIVE REASONS WHY NOT ALL YOUNG ADULTS LEAVE THE CHURCH—Recently, 20-year-old Bailey, a student at a local college, heard her professor of comparative religion tell the class, “The Christian faith uses terms like sanctification, justification, and propitiation. But church members have no idea what these terms mean.”

Bailey raised her hand and said, “Professor, they do in my church.”

A few days later, this same professor, who seems to be making a career of misrepresenting believers, told the class, “There are 66 books in the Christian Bible. But only the professionals can name them all.”

Bailey said, “Sir, in my church, even the children can name the books of the Bible.” Bailey demonstrates why not everyone raised in the church strays or drops out altogether when they reach young adulthood.

A stat often quoted from Lifeway Research—the study was done in 2007, so it’s slightly dated—says 2/3 of all young adults raised in the church will stop attending services between the ages of 18 and 22. Most will never return.

In the study, asked about their withdrawal, dropouts said they were too busy, churches too irrelevant, Christians too judgmental, leaders too hypocritical, and denominations too political.

I suspect the dropouts omitted one huge factor for their non-attendance in church: the heart is a rebel. The temptation to renege on life’s commitments—even those we feel strongest about—is continually present, not always complicated, and ever a concern for even the most faithful of believers.

From all I know and have observed, here [are five reasons] why they stayed:

1) A genuine, personal relationship with *Jesus Christ*. Now, those with a personal relationship with a particular church or youth group or student minister cannot be counted on to stay.

2) A solid foundation. Young adults like Bailey who grow up with strong roots in the doctrines of the Bible cannot be easily pulled off course by errant professors or pleasure-seeking friends.

This “solid foundation” is no mystery and does not have to be complicated. It’s simply the result of discipling young believers, teaching them, in the words of our Lord, “to observe all the things that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20).

3) The security of supporting friends. No group on the planet is as vulnerable to peer influence as young people. While this is generally viewed as a negative, it can be made to work for us. Young people reach their friends for Christ. (In contrast, churches with no youth at all find it nearly impossible to begin a ministry to them.)

4) Great role models. Once or twice during those college years, when professors or my reading material caused me to question my Christian faith, the Scriptures, and even the existence of God, nothing pulled me back from the brink like looking around at the sharp men and women in my church who were devoutly following Jesus Christ. Before I learned how to study the evidence for the faith myself, these were my proofs that God is real and Christ is alive and the gospel is true.

In fact, as I compared the Christian men and women I knew with the typical miserable atheistic philosophy major or the professor who prided himself on his agnosticism, there was no question which I would prefer to model my life after.

5) No viable alternative. Young adults are not stupid. They can see the church

has problems. However, as they think the matter through, they frequently come to the same conclusion as the Apostle Peter. When our Lord noticed the crowd leaving because they’d found His teachings difficult, Jesus said to the disciples, “Well, how about you? Will you go away too?”

Simon Peter said, “Lord, where would we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:66-68).

That one fact, more than anything else, may account for believers through the ages hanging tough with the Lord’s church when times were hard, temptations strong, questions proliferated, and the enemy was active.

ALLAH WILL ‘BRING DOWN’ AMERICA’S SKYSCRAPERS

THE BLAZE ONLINE, 5/29/12: HALLOWELL, FARRAKHAN: ALLAH WILL BRING DOWN AMERICA’S SKYSCRAPERS [EXCERPTS]—The Minister Louis Farrakhan [the Nation of Islam leader]...in his Sunday address in San Diego, slammed Israel, lamented Mexico’s loss of land at the hands of American “trickery” and derided President Barack Obama for his endorsement of same-sex marriage....During the last 10 minutes, the fiery Farrakhan erupted with fervency, applauding the violence of sharia law and giving some cryptic warnings to America regarding Iranian intervention....

“So, America I close. I tell you, you’re on your way to war and if you declare war on Iran at the behest of Israel and you bomb Iran and some of you are saying we should invoke Hiroshima again on Iran, meaning drop an atomic bomb on Muslims...” he continued. “So I’m warning you, America, if you bomb Iran...the God that I represent is going to take out some of your cities with earthquakes,” he proclaimed....

“I’m sorry to have to tell you, but I’m saying this to our president and the warmongers. We can’t stop you from bombing Iran if that’s what you want to do, but as you destroy the lives of innocent people like you did in Baghdad on the basis of a lie—then what are you doing for the American people? You’re sentencing them in the weight of justice to the same death you have dealt to other people in other nations.

“I am warning you:...He will take down cities and when I look at the skyscrapers in some of these major metropolis....He’s going to show you his power...one calamity after another until you submit, America, and know that judgement [*sic*] is here. You can escape it but you gotta do right by this people. And if you don’t do right by them, you can’t do right by the people outside of America, if you won’t do right for those who have...built your country.”

T. A.'s Speaking Schedule

Jul 28-29	Calvary Chapel Kalamazoo Kalamazoo, MI (269) 388-5127
Aug 10-11	TBC Conference Bend, OR (800) 937-6638
Aug 17	Saltburn Evangelical Church Saltburn-by-Sea, North Yorkshire 01287 624 221
Aug 18-19	Reddish Christian Fellowship Reddish, Stockport 0161 432 7155
Aug 22	Stroud Green Christian Fellowship Barrow-on-Trent 01494 764 913
Aug 24	PWMI Newport South Wales Newport 01495 772 323
Aug 25-28	Truth 4 Youth Manaton, Devon 01929 472 484
Aug 29	Southampton Calvary Chapel Vermont Close, Southampton 01494 764 913
Aug 30	Bere Regis Evangelical Church Bere Regis, Dorset 01929 472 484
Aug 31	Hephzibah in Marlow Marlow, Bucks 01494 764 913
Sep 1-2	Newent Christian Fellowship Newent, Gloucestershire 07715 364 475
Sep 2 (p.m.)	Bridge Lane Christian Fellowship London 020 89223979
Sep 15	Midwest Hebrew Min. Conference Arden Hills, MN (763) 427-7162
Oct 13	Calvary Chapel Pasadena Pasadena, CA (626) 584-9992

Letters

TBC,

This ministry has blessed my walk with the Lord. I was first introduced to Dave over 15 years ago. I recently sought out his ministry to help me understand the wide-sweeping and destructive trends in the church today. Like so many I'm heart-broken over the condition of the church, but understand that it must happen according to scripture. I was delighted to find [Dave's ministry] still teaching the truth of God's

word and to hear the testimony of T. A. I fear that many of my family entered eternity with more faith in the Catholic Church than Christ. The state of Louisiana is a stronghold for the Catholic Church and I was born and raised [there]. I love that this ministry is very different from so many radio and TV ministries today....Thanks so much for inspiring this younger believer to search the scriptures daily. If we never meet on this earth, I'll see you in heaven. DA (email)

Dear Berean Call Staff:

I am a prisoner and have been receiving your newsletter for some time now. I wanted to assure you all that I have utilized your publication quite successfully within these oppressive walls to effectively evangelize among my fellow brothers in chains. Your newsletter gets passed along the blocks and never fails to promote rich and deep spiritual conversation among many of my fellow prisoners. I cannot count the times I have seen the guys open up their dusty Bibles to review and test the intriguing topics discussed within the *Berean Call* newsletter. Of course I also find myself in deep study of God's Word each and every month as I review your blessed publication from cover to cover.... RS (PA, prisoner)

Sir,

Just a note to say thank you so much for *The Berean Call*. It's the one piece of mail that I look forward to receiving. Its Bible message is just what we all need....I use your material to teach my adult Sunday class and they love it. LH (PA)

Dear Dave and Tom,

Just wanted to drop you a note to thank you for your faithful dedication to our Lord and His word! The Lord has blessed us so much in the past few years. After we retired...my husband found a book he had been given twenty years earlier but [had] never read. We [were] Christians during these years but had walked away from the churches after being drawn into a cult in one of the biggest churches here in [our city] by one of the pastors. We were...astonished by this experience [when] after this cult was made known to the main pastor, the whole matter was swept under the rug....

Anyway, back to the book set aside for so many years. It was *The Seduction of Christianity* and how it opened our eyes to the direction the Lord has for us now in our retirement years....

Once [my husband] finished [reading] *Seduction* he went on to read many more books by both of you, as well as others from TBC. We spend hours in the Word and watching the collection of DVDs we also have.

Over the years, as we have spoken up about error and false teaching in the church, we have been called judgmental, unloving, holier than thou, etc., and this silenced us for awhile, but no longer! ED (CA)

Hi Dave,

I thank Jesus Christ for His will in your vessel to bring us prophecies and truth through the Berean movement. I heard about you from friends at my church and I have been greatly encouraged after hearing you on YouTube and DVDs. I just want you to know your work is greatly received by many people I know in Sydney, Australia. Keep up the good fight and I know I will meet you in Jesus' Great Kingdom. NR (Australia)

Dear Dave and T. A.,

Regarding the subject of dowsing [2/12 Q&A], there is nothing mysterious or spiritual about it. It is the minerals in the water that cause the reaction to the dowsing rod. This can be proved because if water has the minerals removed the same reaction is not caused.

Years ago I worked in an engineering office and when I asked about the subject, the chief engineer came out of his office with a huge file to show me and told me that the government spent a great deal of money researching the subject because they got so many inquiries from the public.

I wondered about it for years, then, a few years ago, I discussed the subject with a civil engineer from my church who [dowsed] for our church well and he explained that he learned this from his experience.

Since I have learned so much from Dave and T. A. over the years, I just thought you might like to know. MW (NY)

To those of the Berean Call,

I'm writing to express a comment regarding the April 2012 issue of *The Berean Call* newsletter.

It saddened me that not one word was mentioned in your newsletter regarding the respectful remembrance of the Season of Easter. And our Lord's enormous Sacrifice and Suffering upon the Cross on our behalf. And His Glorious Resurrection from the grave.

The most significant Event in human history is the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. And I believe it is a great sin of omission on our part for those of us who owe our eternal life to the Lord, as a result of His enormous Sacrifice, to then fail to respectfully share this Amazing Truth with the world. Especially during this time of the year when the focus of Easter should

be prominent on the heart of every believer.

Sometimes as Christians we can become so focused on the work we are doing for the Lord, that we lose sight of the Great Finished Work that the Lord has already done for us.

And I believe we have a great responsibility in sharing the Truth of our Glorious Redemption by our Glorious Redeemer, by all means which have been entrusted to our care. And especially during this time of the year.

And it is to this end that I have written. In order to express this heartfelt comment: that I believe you were remiss in failing to focus on the Glorious Truths of Easter. And I pray that this comment will be received in the spirit in which it is intended. A spirit of Love, Honor, Respect, Reverence, Gratitude, Appreciation and humility before the Lord. For His Glorious Act of Redemption. PS (CA)

Berean Call,

You recently published a letter from a [reader] who was upset that TBC would condemn an entire field of study (psychology). I suggest that he consider that this entire field of study rejects the concept of sin. It would follow that if no psychological theory of human behavior includes even the concept of sin, none of them could hope to explain human behavior. Since this entire field of study has totally rejected the very core reason for most problems, it would be safe to assume that no remedy or therapy derived from such flawed theories could be relied upon for anything other than coincidental efficacy. TF (SD)

Dear Friends,

I have a couple of things to thank you for:

1. The three DVD's arrived today and my wife and I listened to the first one, *Seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils*. I am so glad to hear what you had to say, Dave. Somewhere back around 1993 we read a couple of your books and were very interested in your ministry, but someone came along and criticized you in a way we cannot remember; what we do remember is we stopped listening to you and reading your books.

2. I personally want to apologize to you for this thoughtless behavior on my/our part. In this DVD you landed right smack dab in the middle of all sorts of alarms I have been sensing for decades; I just didn't have anyone to confirm what the sirens and red flags actually were. Now you have put a face on what I have sensed.

I can hardly wait to listen to your DVD on your book we read - *Global Peace and the Rise of Antichrist*....I just wanted to

thank you so much for your work....May the Lord continue to bless your ministry and please know we are praying for you all. A&MB (email)

TBC,

I just wanted to send a note of praise for your timely, informative and insightful book *What Love Is This?* It expresses and illustrates clearly what is obviously clear to anyone who has not assumed the burden of an advanced degree in theology; to wit, the fact that God can see the future and the choices a person will make does not obviate his/her free will to make those choices. I believe that the danger in much of academia is that one's pride can become inflated with the belief that the academic has the towering intellect to enable him to understand, if not be capable of, everything God can do. If the academic cannot see the future (be outside of time) then God should be denied that ability also. Also, the belief that allowing men free will somehow lessens God's sovereignty, when a God who cannot risk man's free will is a weak God indeed. RC (CA)

Mr. McMahon,

I've read your critical review of *The Harbinger* by Jonathan Cahn and the *Isaiah 9:10* DVD. My question to you sir, did you even read the book? Or watch the DVD? I think not. You should apologize to Mr. Cahn for your hostile, antichrist-like review. My suggestion is next time read the book or watch the DVD BEFORE writing a scathing review.... I found your review to be quite disturbing...almost surreal. You need to apologize to Mr. Cahn...publicly. HV (PA)

TBC,

Please thank Mr. Hunt for me. I have been reading his books since 1985-6 and they have helped me immensely to realize I am not alone and not crazy and I am listening to the Holy Spirit.

I finally found a church after searching in the Illinois area for 25 years. Found a Pastor who has not compromised the Word of God for money. And he was under my nose all this time. We must travel to attend His services but it is so worth it.... Anyway this was the best way I could think of to let Mr. Hunt and all of you know that the Lord is using you mightily to wake up the Church. The True Church! I am a former Catholic and was the first to come out in generations, in my family. I am one of fifteen children and so far I have seen six of my seven sisters born again. And two of my seven brothers have passed on due to homosexuality and drugs. My youngest brother did pray before he died that the Lord would save him so I

am hoping that I will see him again. My other brother I do not know but He heard the truth. My other brothers are unsaved. So prayers for all of us who are fighting the good fight! TM (email)

Dear BC,

Have you lost your mind?

You seem determined to destroy the credibility of your ministry over *The Harbinger* book. I no longer respect anything you have to say about even the most apostate ministry.

Using your logic, I would have to conclude that the Left Behind series was a satanic lie. You are like a dog that barks at his own shadow. Maybe the fact that the book is on the New York best sellers list and you are green with envy has something to do with it. CG (email)

TBC Notes

Picking Our Issues

We receive numerous requests to address a variety of things that are adversely influencing the church today. Obviously, as apostasy increases at a seemingly explosive rate, we have neither enough time nor staff nor media space to keep up with the requests, or even with the issues that we recognize ourselves. Therefore, we rely mainly on two criteria: 1) We select beliefs, practices, movements, or agendas that seem to be undermining the faith of *large numbers* of Christians, and 2) we consider lesser-known books or teachers whose erroneous doctrinal content become opportunities for instruction in biblical discernment.

We try to cover as much as we can in order to help inform the body of Christ regarding problematic issues. However, our primary objective is to encourage our readers to exercise their own biblical discernment just as the Bereans of Acts 17:11 did. To that end, all of us need to be continually in prayer, disciplined in reading the Scriptures, and willing to do what God's Word says.

T. A. McMAHON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Calvinism's Surprising CATHOLIC CONNECTION

An excerpt from:

CALVIN'S TYRANNICAL KINGDOM*

—by Dave Hunt

THERE IS NO QUESTION that Calvin imposed upon the Bible certain erroneous interpretations from his Roman Catholic background. Many leading Calvinists agree that the writings of Augustine were the actual source of most of what is known as Calvinism today. Calvinists David Steele and Curtis Thomas point out that “The basic doctrines of the Calvinistic position had been vigorously defended by Augustine against Pelagius during the fifth century....”

John Piper acknowledges that Augustine was the major influence upon both Calvin and Luther, who continued to revere him and his doctrines even after they broke away from Roman Catholicism.

C. H. Spurgeon admitted that “perhaps Calvin himself derived it [Calvinism] mainly from the writings of Augustine.”... Calvin himself said:

Augustine is so wholly with me, that if I wished to write a confession of my faith, I could do so with all fulness and satisfaction to myself out of his writings.

AUGUSTINE AND THE USE OF FORCE

The fourth century Donatists believed that the church should be a pure communion of true believers who demonstrated the truth of the gospel in their lives. They abhorred the apostasy that had come into the church when Constantine wedded Christianity to paganism in order to unify the empire....To the Donatists, the church was a “small body of saved surrounded by the unregenerate mass.” This is, of course, the biblical view. Augustine, on the other hand, saw the church of his day as a mixture of believers and unbelievers, in which purity and evil should be allowed to exist side by side for the sake of unity. He used the power of the state to compel church attendance (as Calvin also would 1,200 years later): “Whoever was not found within the Church was not asked the reason, but was to be corrected and converted....” Calvin followed his mentor Augustine in enforcing church attendance and participation in the sacraments by threats (and worse) against the citizens of Geneva. Augustine “identified the Donatists as heretics...who could be subjected to imperial legislation [and force] in exactly the same way as other criminals and misbelievers, including poisoners and pagans.”

Though he preferred persuasion if possible, Augustine supported military force against those who were rebaptized as believers after conversion to Christ and for other alleged heretics. In his controversy with the Donatists, using a distorted and un-Christian interpretation of Luke 14:23, Augustine declared:

Why therefore should not the Church use force in compelling her lost sons to return?... The Lord Himself said, “Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in....” Wherefore is the power which the Church has received... through the religious character and faith of kings...the instrument by which those who are found in the highways and hedges—that is, in heresies and schisms—are compelled to come in, and let them not find fault with being compelled.

Sadly, Calvin put into effect in Geneva the very principles of punishment, coercion, and death that Augustine advocated and that

the Roman Catholic Church followed consistently for centuries.... And he justified himself by Augustine’s erroneous interpretation of Luke 14:23. How could any who today hail Calvin as a great exegete accept such abuse of this passage?...

AUGUSTINE’S DOMINANT INFLUENCE

There is no question as to the important role Augustine played in molding Calvin’s thinking, theology, and actions. This is particularly true concerning the key foundations of Calvinism....Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion* make repeated favorable references to Augustine, frequently citing his writings as authoritative and using the expression, “Confirmed by the authority of Augustine.” Calvin often credits Augustine with having formulated key concepts, which he then expounds in his *Institutes*. The following are but a very small sampling of such references:

- “We have come into the way of faith,” says Augustine: “Let us constantly adhere to it....”
- I say with Augustine, that the Lord has created those who, as he certainly foreknew, were to go to destruction, and he did so because he so willed.
- If your mind is troubled, decline not to embrace the counsel of Augustine....
- I will not hesitate, therefore, simply to confess with Augustine that...those things will certainly happen which he [God] has foreseen [and] that the destruction [of the non-elect] consequent upon predestination is also most just.
- This is a faithful saying from Augustine; but because his words will perhaps have more authority than mine, let us adduce the following passage from his treatise....

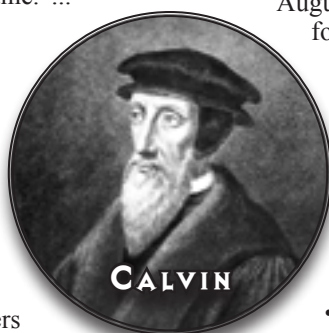
We could multiply many times over the above examples of Augustine’s influence upon Calvin from the scores of times Calvin quotes extensively from Augustine’s writings....

Augustinian teachings that Calvin presented in his *Institutes* included the sovereignty that made God the cause of all (including sin), the predestination of some to salvation and of others to damnation, election and reprobation, faith as an irresistible gift from God—in fact, the key concepts at the heart of Calvinism.

We search in vain for evidence that Calvin ever disapproved of any of Augustine’s heresies. Calvinist Richard A. Muller admits, “John Calvin was part of a long line of thinkers who based their doctrine of predestination on the Augustinian interpretation of St. Paul.” In each expanded edition of his *Institutes*, Calvin quotes and relies upon Augustine more than ever.

IS CALVINISM REALLY A PROTESTANT BELIEF?

That many prominent evangelicals today are still under the spell of Augustine is evident—and astonishing, considering his numerous heresies. Norm Geisler has said, “St. Augustine was one of the greatest Christian thinkers of all time.” Yet Augustine said, “I should not believe the gospel unless I were moved to do so by the authority of the [Catholic] Church.” That statement was quoted with great satisfaction by Pope John Paul II in his 1986 celebration of the 1600th anniversary of Augustine’s conversion. The pope went on to say:



Augustine's legacy...is the theological methods to which he remained absolutely faithful...full adherence to the authority of the faith...revealed through Scripture, Tradition and the Church.... I express once again my fervent desire...that the authoritative teaching of such a great doctor and pastor may flourish ever more happily in the Church....

In my debate with him [see resource pages], James White claims that "Calvin refuted this very passage in *Institutes*, and any fair reading of Augustine's own writings disproves this misrepresentation by Hunt." In fact, Calvin acknowledged the authenticity of the statement and attempted to defend it as legitimate reasoning for those who had not the assurance of faith by the Holy Spirit.... B.B. Warfield adds, "Augustine determined for all time the doctrine of grace." Yet [Augustine] believed that grace came through the Roman Catholic sacraments. That Calvinists shower such praise upon Augustine makes it easier to comprehend why they heap the same praise on Calvin.

DRAWING FROM A POLLUTED STREAM

Sir Robert Anderson reminds us that "the Roman [Catholic] Church was molded by Augustine into the form it has ever since maintained. Of all the errors that later centuries developed in the teachings of the church, scarcely one cannot be found in embryo in his writings."

...Augustine was one of the first to place the authority of tradition on a level with the Bible and to incorporate much philosophy, especially Platonism, into his theology. Exposing the folly of those who praise Augustine, Laurence M. Vance writes:

He believed in apostolic succession from Peter as one of the marks of the true church, taught that Mary was sinless and promoted her worship. He was the first who defined the so-called sacraments as a visible sign of invisible grace.... The memorial of the Lord's supper became that of the spiritual presence of Christ's body and blood. To Augustine the only true church was the Catholic Church. Writing against the Donatists, he asserted: "The Catholic Church alone is the body of Christ.... Outside this body the Holy Spirit giveth life to no one...[and] he is not a partaker of divine love who is the enemy of unity. Therefore they have not the Holy Ghost who are outside the Church.

And this is the man whom Geisler calls "one of the greatest Christian thinkers of all time." On the contrary, Calvin drew from a badly polluted stream when he embraced the teachings of Augustine! How could one dip into such contaminating heresy without becoming confused and infected? Yet this bewildering muddle of speculation and formative Roman Catholicism is acknowledged to be the source of Calvinism—and is praised by leading evangelicals.

AN AMAZING CONTRADICTION

Calvin called himself "an Augustinian theologian." Of Augustine he said, "whom we quote frequently, as being the best and most faithful witness of all antiquity." Calvinists themselves insist upon the connection between Calvin and Augustine. Alister E. McGrath writes, "Above all, Calvin regarded his thought as a faithful exposition of the leading ideas of Augustine of Hippo." Francois Wendel concedes, "Upon points of doctrine he borrows from St. Augustine with both hands."

...Calvin's admiration of Augustine and his embracing of much

of his teaching is only one of several major contradictions in his life.... The situation is contradictory on the Roman Catholic side as well. Their dogmas reject some of the most important doctrines held by the most famous of their saints—the very Augustinian doctrines that Calvin embraced.

Here we confront a strange anomaly. Warfield declares that "it is Augustine who gave us the Reformation"—yet at the same time, he also acknowledges that Augustine was "in a true sense the founder of Roman Catholicism" and "the creator of the Holy Roman Empire."

...Calvin apparently failed to recognize that Augustine never understood salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Philip F. Congdon writes, "Another curious parallel is evident between Classical Calvinist theology and Roman Catholic theology. The two share an inclusion of works in the gospel message, and an impossibility of assurance of salvation.... Both hold to the primacy of God's grace; both include the necessity of our works." Augustine's...Romanist view of faith in Christ being supplemented by good works and the sacraments were not lost

on Luther, who wrote: "In the beginning, I devoured Augustine, but when...I knew what justification by faith really was, then it was out with him."

Yet leading Calvinists suggest that I side with Roman Catholicism by rejecting Calvinism, even though it comes largely from the ultimate Roman Catholic, Augustine.

On the contrary, the Reformers and their creeds are infected with ideas that came from... Augustine. Furthermore, a rejection of Election, Predestination, and the Preservation of the Saints as defined by Calvinists is hardly embracing "the heart of Rome's 'gospel.'" The real heart of Rome's gospel is good works and sacraments. Certainly Calvin's retention of sacramentalism, baptismal regeneration for infants, and honoring the Roman Catholic priesthood as valid is a more serious embrace of Catholicism's false gospel....

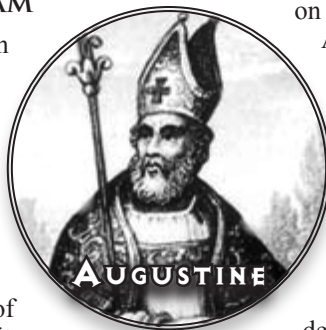
THE NECESSITY TO CLARIFY CONFUSION

Calvinism is experiencing resurgence today. Yet there is widespread ignorance of what both Augustine and Calvin really taught and practiced.... Spurgeon declared: "Augustine obtained his views, without doubt, through the Spirit of God, from the diligent study of the writings of Paul, and Paul received them of the Holy Ghost, from Jesus Christ."

Would he have considered that Augustine's teaching of salvation by the Roman Catholic Church, through its sacraments alone, beginning with regeneration by infant baptism; the use of force even to the death against "heretics"; acceptance of the Apocrypha; allegorical interpretation of creation and the prophecies concerning Israel; a rejection of the literal reign of Christ on David's throne; and so much other false doctrine, had also all been received from the Holy Spirit? How could Augustine—and Calvin, who embraced and passed on many of his major errors—be so wrong on so much and yet be biblically sound as regards predestination, election, sovereignty, etc.? Is there not ample cause to examine carefully these foundational teachings of Calvinism?

One can only respond in the affirmative.

NOW IN PRINT! See page 14 to order Dave's new paperback, Calvin's Tyrannical Kingdom. Also, "connected" readers can now access **expanded content online! To read the entire chapter (excerpted above) for free, go to: www.thebereanall.org/dave-hunt-classic*



THE HARBINGER REVEALING—OR CONCEALING—AMERICA'S "ANCIENT MYSTERY"? (PART 1)

SETTING ASIDE the “ancient mystery” of the nine harbingers (depicted as pictographic clay seals in Jonathan Cahn’s fictional story), there is another “secret” message that flows in the subtext of Cahn’s *New York Times* bestseller, *The Harbinger* (TH). Evaluating this hidden stream requires some historic “archaeology” but will reveal that Cahn’s nine harbingers are built not on Scripture but on sinking sand.

Cahn’s fictional Prophet recounts the “consecration” of America by George Washington (GW) in a manner which stirs reverential awe among many Christian Patriots. But early in the book, Cahn acknowledges that “those who laid America’s foundations” came “*long before* the Founding Fathers” (p.19). This can only refer to the Pilgrims and Puritans. However, the central premise of TH—that the attack and subsequent destruction of the Twin Towers on 9/11 at “Ground Zero” was prophetic—is based on Cahn’s repeated assertion that divine judgment *must strike* “the nation’s most sacred ground, the ground of its consecration” (p.198). Cahn’s fictional Prophet reiterates this as a *de facto* spiritual law: “This, Nouriel, is a critical principle. Take note of it” (p.198).

Given this declaration, the terrorists of 9/11—guided by this “ancient mystery”—should have targeted a site commemorating the first Pilgrim landing and “consecration to God” under the Mayflower Compact in Plymouth, MA. After all, the language of this historic document is *far more* “sacred” and intrinsically Christian than either the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution. But instead, Cahn maintains that the “grounds of consecration” are adjacent to “Ground Zero” in New York. According to TH, therefore, the fate of the Twin Towers (and the free-fall collapse of 47-story Building 7, which Cahn neglects to mention) was mysteriously sealed on April 20, 1789—212 years prior to 9/11 (pp.199-205). The entire foundation of Cahn’s nine harbingers, therefore, is built on the presumed spiritual significance and efficacy of our first president’s inauguration on that historic day (pp.207,208,210,211,212).

(It would seem significant to note, however, that these *three* demolished towers were *not public* buildings; they were *not federal*; they were *not religious*. They were, in fact, *private* office complexes. Why would God appoint, or allow, these structures to be targeted as a *direct sign* of some “ancient mystery” that allegedly “holds the secret of America’s future”? This unsupportable claim is, quite simply, preposterous!)

Throughout TH, Cahn insists that the mere *utterance* of Isaiah 9:10 by an elected official—either “unwittingly” (pp.63,105) or “unknowingly” (pp.111, 117)—in conjunction with 9/11, constitutes the echoing of an ancient vow (pp. 93,117)—which TH asserts are *binding* words of cosmological consequence for the entire United States. As “proof” that the ungodly can (and do) prophesy over a nation in accordance with God’s Word, Cahn gives the example of Caiaphas in John 11:49-53. However, he stretches this principle *beyond* Israel, and *beyond* the office of High Priest, to include any ceremonial words spoken by a common U.S. *politician* that might happen to include Scripture. (pp.118-19) If that is the case, then how many *thousands* of times have elected officials misappropriated Scripture in the past? And what forces and curses have been “unwittingly” and “unknowingly” unleashed upon our land by their rash words and vows? Words do have meaning. But TH clearly advances the occult Word-Faith doctrine that words have intrinsic *power* and spiritual effect, “whether we know it or not.” As Dave Hunt and TBC have long exposed, this is *witchcraft*!

Readers who are drawn into this mystical mindset of TH are quickly mesmerized by Cahn’s droning repetition of words like “ancient...mystery...vow...sacred...ground...secret...key” and other terms synonymous with neo-gnostic religion. Indeed, such concepts are the very *essence* of Masonic pomp and circumstance, as well as an *integral* part of the occultic “strategic spiritual warfare” practices of the NAR/Latter Rain movement. (This correlation simply proves that professing Christians are susceptible to the same ancient deceptions, resulting in aberrant and unbiblical practices, that are manifested in every era; see Ecc 1:9).

Given this fact, it is nonetheless cause for dismay—and shock, to many—to discover that contrary to the romantic view most of us grew up

with, the United States was “consecrated” and “dedicated” not to the God of Scripture but to the god of Freemasonry.

The reader should understand that we are not defaming George Washington or calling his personal salvation into question through “guilt by association.” No one can ultimately determine the condition of our first president’s heart during the period of his admirable and sacrificial service to our country. However, we can most certainly ascertain whether GW’s willing participation in Ancient York Rite Freemasonry was in accordance with Scripture—and whether the Lodge’s direct oversight of the very act of “consecrating” the United States was a pleasing aroma to God—or whether it was an abomination of “strange fire.” (Even today, many patriots and professing Christians continue to be deceived by and through their “innocent” or “ignorant” membership in Freemasonry.)

But curiously, for an author who has taken great pains to present the appearance of a factual, historical account that claims precision in the smallest detail (pp. 3,94,106,216, etc.); Cahn fails to mention anywhere in TH that our first president was himself a *Freemason*, sworn into office with his hand upon a *Masonic Bible*, with the oath given by the “*Most Worshipful Grand Master*” of New York Freemasonry, Robert Livingston (first Chancellor of New York City) <http://www.stjohns1.org/portal/gwib>.

Compounding this mysterious “oversight,” Cahn deflects attempts at discernment, and redirects inquiry into GW’s Masonic connections: “I would suggest something else: That this rather serves to illustrate the broad-brush attacks of judgment which has [*sic*] become typical of many ‘discernment ministries’” <http://thethings2come.org/?p=506>.

“Whatever Washington’s other involvements may or may not have been,” Cahn parries, “what does that have to do with the fact that he was part of a prayer gathering for America’s future held within a church...? And how would that in any way nullify [*The Harbinger*]?” (Ibid.)

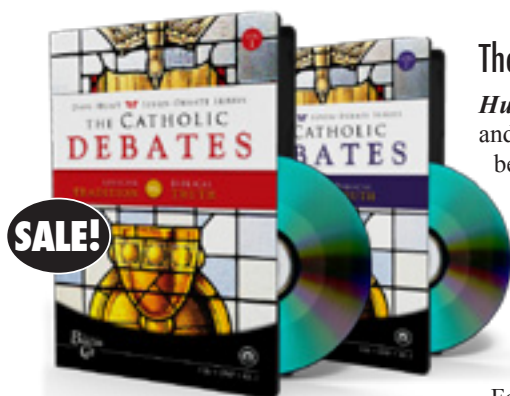
Seriously? Cahn discounts the political importance and *spiritual significance* of our first president’s affiliation with, and participation in, a neo-gnostic mystery school? A demonstrably pagan, universalist cult which has permeated the United States government from Day One and has been *intimately* involved in its political and spiritual direction (and deception) ever since? To date, 1/3 of all Presidents, and 1/3 of all Supreme Court Justices are known Freemasons. (Can you imagine the outrage if this percentage had been Mormons instead of “Christians”?) In fact, this antichrist cult (which encompasses all faiths who believe in a Supreme Deity) has not only monopolized the halls of power in government but also in banking, business, and religious/philanthropic institutions. So, to answer Cahn’s question, the fact of Freemasonry’s undergirding and overarching influence in our nation’s founding and “dedication” means *everything*.

As in the time of George Washington, Freemasons of *all faiths* still assemble in virtually every city and town in America. Like Glenn Beck and David Barton, they deem each other “brothers” and participate in “prayer gatherings within churches” (Cahn’s sole criteria for judging GW). Should it not concern readers of TH that the god of Masonry invoked at GW’s inauguration is *not* the God of Scripture? Or that its ancient, secret, binding vows *supersede* every other oath of office and trump biblical authority? Should it not disturb “discerners” that Masonry is quite literally a cornerstone of Mystery Babylon, whose doctrines of demons pave the way for a New Spiritual Order—one in which *professing Christians*, having their “eyes opened,” become “wise,” and bow to an Impostor (Mt 7:21-23, Jn 5:43)?

Therefore, *regardless* of whether or not George Washington realized the occult symbolism of “ancient secrets” in The Craft in which he participated, *The Harbinger* is hung by its *own* tongue when it declares the *efficacy* of ancient mysteries and spoken “vows.” Because if America’s consecration was performed by Masons to the Supreme Being they call “Providence,” the “Almighty,” the “Great Architect of the Universe,” then our Lord does indeed have great cause to judge the United States. Not because our nation has *abandoned* the Masonic precepts conferred to and imparted by George Washington 223 years ago at “Ground Zero,” but because it has almost universally *embraced* them. —Mark Dinsmore

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