

After my departing shall
**GRIEVOUS
WOLVES**

*enter in among you,
not sparing the flock*

— ACTS 20:29



The
Berean
Call

OCTOBER 2013

THE CRITICAL VALUE OF THE BIBLE — PART TWO

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

MOBILIZE believers in Christ to action in obedience to the scriptural command to “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 3)

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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The Critical Value of the Bible

Part Two

T. A. McMahon

The entire Bible is prophecy, with God both *telling forth* and *foretelling*. God's *telling forth* through His prophets includes all that He wants mankind to know and do, including His attributes, His commandments, His instructions, His corrections, His blessings, and so forth.

Beyond the aspect of proving that God exists and that His Word is His direct communication to mankind (as we noted last month), *foretelling* is a way that God informs and in some cases warns His people of things to come. Two examples among hundreds that could be given from the Old Testament are in Genesis 15, in which God tells an aging Abraham that he will have a son and that his descendants (some 400 years later) will take the land that God promised to him, and Jeremiah 25, which contains God's prophecy of the Babylonian captivity of the Israelites that would last 70 years.

The New Testament contains hundreds more prophecies, many of which have come to pass, with some yet to be fulfilled. They all underscore the critical value of the Bible for the upcoming generation. How so? Well, it's pretty simple.

If a believer reads the Bible consistently and diligently (meaning seriously, and not in a "here a verse there a verse, whenever the mood strikes" manner) and is not being spoonfed but is feeding himself on the Word of truth, he will be acutely aware of prophetic events when they take place in his lifetime or as they begin to make their appearance. Without such an awareness, a believer becomes vulnerable to seduction by unbiblical movements, teachings, practices, and agendas that may appear to be good but are, as we are told in Proverbs 14:12, "...a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Death in Scripture doesn't always mean physical death, but it does always involve separation. In physical death, the soul and spirit are separated from the body. In the proverb just quoted, it means a separation from the truth.

As a consequence, deception runs rampant because without the knowledge

of what the Bible clearly says, a believer won't recognize the unbiblical agendas mankind is promoting. For example, the world is into different forms of preserving and restoring the planet, from warnings of so-called global warming to the promotion of population control to worries regarding a dwindling food and potable water supply. These issues are high on the world's agendas because the earth's survival is their only hope. That's all that the world has with regard to the future.

TAKE HEED THEREFORE UNTO
YOURSELVES, AND TO ALL THE FLOCK,
OVER THE WHICH THE HOLY GHOST
HATH MADE YOU OVERSEERS, TO FEED
THE CHURCH OF GOD, WHICH HE HATH
PURCHASED WITH HIS OWN BLOOD.

FOR I KNOW THIS, THAT AFTER MY
DEPARTING SHALL GRIEVOUS WOLVES
ENTER IN AMONG YOU, NOT SPARING
THE FLOCK.

— Acts 20:28-29

Biblical Christians should also have concerns about the stewardship of the land that God has blessed us with, but within the context of what the Bible teaches will take place. Then why do most professing Christians support or conform to various restoration agendas that are at odds with what the Bible teaches?

For example, amillennialists, those Christians who reject the literal thousand-year reign of Christ on this planet, see the earth and the Kingdom in the process of being restored before Christ physically returns. The claim is that Satan has been bound and that things are getting better and better. Amillennialism is the most common eschatological belief among professing Christians. It is the doctrinal view of Roman Catholics, Greek & Russian Orthodox, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Episcopalians, Church of Christ, some Independent Baptists, and most Calvinists (with some notable exceptions).

Kingdom/dominionists, most of whom are charismatics and Pentecostals, believe

that Christ cannot return until His Kingdom is restored through an army of new apostles and prophets. They declare that those positions are being filled by the young people of the upcoming generation.

Then there are those Christians who are into other forms of restorationism such as Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan, the social gospel of World Vision, and the Religious Left's socialism (aka Progressive Christianity). The goal is to solve the world's problems of poverty, social injustice, environmental abuse, and political corruption through religious ecumenism and political activism. As the church seeks to correct the so-called social injustice in the world, there has been an increase in the support of "Christian Palestinianism" by young people. Some very influential evangelical leaders are accusing Israel of being an illegitimate government in the land that belongs to the Palestinians. This is the slippery slope that fosters anti-Semitism. In the words of arch heretic, former Archbishop Desmond Tutu, "We want to see an end of the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the oppression of its people."

The Scriptures are completely barren of support for any of those agendas. What all of these movements have in common is a shared view of the Bible in one or more of the following ways: 1) ignorance of its teaching, or 2) distortion of the Word to accommodate their agendas, and/or 3) rejection of its teachings as God's words. If a believer is unaware of the eschatology of the Bible (the teachings of the end times, which are hardly complex or esoteric), he or she could find themselves in the position of actually contributing to a program or agenda that is contrary to what the Bible says will take place.

For example, the biblical timetable tells us that the next kingdom on earth will not be the Kingdom of *Christ* but the kingdom of the *Antichrist*, which will last for seven years. So, am I implying that some Christians, including true believers, may be supporting the development of the religion and kingdom of the Antichrist? No, I'm not *implying* such a thing; I'm saying it straight out—because that scenario is already taking place. And the fundamental reason that such Christians have been seduced into working for the Adversary is because they don't know what the Bible says because they are not reading the Bible. Or they are *not believing*

what they are reading and consequently they are *not doing* what it says.

In our August newsletter, the feature article is a reprint from Dave Hunt's book *Countdown to the Second Coming*. In it, Dave points out some characteristics of the Antichrist that most people don't realize. The Antichrist won't first appear as, in Dave's words, "a sinister man who exudes evil from every pore." He will be Satan's human masterpiece transformed into an angel of light and a minister of righteousness, the ultimate false Christ. The Scriptures teach that true believers will be raptured before the Antichrist is revealed—so, no worries, right? Wrong. The preparation of the religion and the kingdom of the Antichrist, which precedes his being revealed, has been in the works since Satan's deception and seduction of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. And it is increasing in our day at an exponential rate. This is what Jesus indicated would take place when His disciples asked Him about the last days just prior to His coming. He characterized those days with this warning: "*Take heed that no man deceive you*" (Matthew 24:4). In verse 24 He adds, "*For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*"

Jesus' words in Luke 18:8 give us further confirmation that the apostasy will be in full bloom at His coming: "*Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*" The Apostle Paul gives us a major reason why the apostasy will develop at an astonishing rate: "*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables*" (2 Timothy 4:3-4). They (meaning some and possibly most Christians) will not endure sound doctrine, that is, the teachings of Scripture. That being the case, they are going to buy into whatever feels right to their flesh. They've obviously drifted away from God's Word (Hebrews 2:1), often a consequence when one's manner of living conflicts with the Bible's admonitions. In any case, they have rejected the truth, or they may never have known it in the first place.

Paul's words of warning to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:27-31) couldn't be more applicable for a time such as ours when biblical discernment is more necessary than ever. Let's consider these verses line by line and pray that the Holy Spirit will help us to take them to heart and show each of us how we can apply them.

27: *For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*

All the counsel of God is found from Genesis through Revelation. If we're not familiar with it, it won't help us.

28: *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

We may not be overseers of a fellowship, but we might be dads, granddads, moms, grandmas, big brothers, big sisters, aunts, uncles, those who have some responsibility or at least the opportunity of spiritually feeding their own flock.

29: *For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.*

The gravity of Paul's concern here is underscored by his choice of words, inspired by the Holy Spirit: "grievous wolves...not sparing the flock."

30: *Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.*

A mob of highly visible leaders who call themselves evangelicals but who are "speaking perverse things" (unbiblical teachings and practices) are working overtime to draw away disciples after themselves. Many of those who are being seduced are our brothers and sisters in Christ, young and old alike.

31: *Therefore watch, and remember; that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.*

I used to think, Paul...what's your problem? You don't have to deal with TBN...Charisma Magazine and Publishing...The New Apostolic Reformation...Christianity Today (or more often, AntiChristianity Today)...so-called Christian Psychology...Replacement Theology...Charisma...Hyper-Calvinism...The Emerging Church...Latter Rain/Manifest Sons of God...Joel's Army...The Contemplative Movement...The Message "Bible"...The Purpose-Driven Marketing Movement...The Christian Right...The Christian Left (Progressive Christianity, as mentioned)...and on and on and on.... Then it dawned on me what I had missed. It's not primarily what Paul had to deal with, but it's his heart in this for his brothers and sisters in Christ. It's his love for his fellow believers who could be seduced and have their faith shipwrecked and their fruitfulness devastated. That should cause all of us to search our own hearts as the apostasy ensnares believers, particularly those in our upcoming generation. I hope and pray that we will search our hearts regarding Paul's tearful plea.

I also covet your prayers for the spiritual success of the Bible Survival Series. Obviously, the spiritual outcome for the

upcoming generation does not depend upon it. But that's not our deal—it's God's. We are simply planters and waterers. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 3:7, "*So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.*"

The things that are taking place in the world and in the church do seem, at times, to be overwhelming. That's because they are overwhelming and the situation is getting worse. But again, that's God's problem, not ours. He can handle it. We can't. He could turn it all around. We can't. Although I don't see any indication from Scripture that this is part of His plan before Christ returns, He nevertheless has given us work to do, which I believe is essentially a *rescue operation*. We're to go about informing people of God's truth wherever and whenever He provides the opportunities. It will not be by our own might or power but by His Spirit. Whether young adults or anyone else, we are only going to reach those who are willing to receive the truth. That may mean one or a few at a time, whether it's believing the gospel for salvation or saving a person from a false teaching that destroys his or her fruitfulness.

Knowing and doing what the Bible says is at the heart of its critical value. Yes, true faith is drying up all over the world, just as Jesus declared would take place prior to His return. On the other hand, the psalmist, in Psalm 1 gives us the prevention program that will keep us spiritually hydrated:

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water; that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

The Bible's encouragement in this psalm or anywhere else throughout God's Word is not altered by what the world or the Adversary is foisting upon believers. It is only conditional upon a believer's obedience to diligently and faithfully read and do what the Scriptures instruct. And when that has been done, "...he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season."

TBC

Quotable

How voluntary was the death of our Lord Jesus! Five times we read that He “gave Himself.” He gave Himself for our sins (Galatians 1:4). He gave Himself a ransom for all (2 Timothy 2:6). He loved the church and gave Himself for it (Ephesians 5:25). How blessed it is to know that He gave Himself for us (Titus 2:14). But what a personal privilege to be able to say that He loved me and gave Himself for me (Galatians 2:20).

—Jim Flanigan,
Choice Gleanings 2011

Q&A

QUESTION: My question regards the “home church.” I have a friend who is involved in one. I attend an Independent Fundamental Baptist church. My friend used different passages out of the Bible to show me what he would consider “faults” in our church, such as having a pastor, tithing, being too formal, having a building, having a name, etc. We both believe the same way about doctrines such as salvation, baptism, KJV Bible, being independent fellowships, etc. Is it sinful for me to stay at my church?

RESPONSE: The book of Acts is valuable for showing how the early church began to function, and Paul’s epistles instruct us further. First Timothy 3 and Titus 1 contain the qualifications for leadership. Ephesians 4 speaks of the various ministries that operate in the church, as do 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12.

In Ephesians 4, the ministry of “pastor” is listed. Ephesians 4:13 tells us that these ministers will be in operation “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” The Scriptures also speak of “elders” in authority in the church (Acts 20:17-32; 1 Tm 3; Ti 1:5-9; etc.). Nevertheless, the ministry of “pastor” remains (Eph 4:13).

No Scriptures forbid a group of believers from purchasing a building. In a time of inflation and economic uncertainty, it would seem to be good stewardship to do so in order to control costs. Regarding scriptural settings, Paul spoke of Priscilla and Aquila and wrote in Romans 16:5 to “greet the church that is in their house.” (See also Col 4:15; Phil 2)

In Acts 19:8-9, Paul was ministering in a synagogue. When dissension arose between the disciples and the Jews who didn’t believe, “he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.” A large group of some 3,000

disciples in Jerusalem (Acts 2:41) met together in a public space, which was the outer court of the temple (Acts 2:46) and in smaller groups in homes (for example, in Acts 12:12, the house of Mary, the mother of Mark).

Consequently, whether the members of the Body of Christ meet in a home, a rented building, or in a purchased building, the purpose of meeting together is for edification of believers.

The church is made of many members whom He has gifted for service (1 Cor 12:4-14). When our times here are finished, the church will be made up of people from every nation, kindred, people, and tongue. The church was God’s intent from the beginning but was kept a hidden mystery (Eph 3:1-6).

There is no order of service given in Scripture, though the early church “continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). That certainly should give us more than a hint of what is important in the estimation of the Lord.

The Bible is a book of instruction. The correct belief in and practice of it is contingent on one’s knowing the full counsel of Scripture. Regarding your concern of whether it is sinful to stay at your church, that’s a matter of your own searching the Scriptures related to what’s being taught and whether the Lord would have you stay. We are told that “the just shall live by faith,” which is belief in “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). Although no church is perfect, a believer nevertheless has to decide whether or not he can abide in a fellowship by faith. “... whatever is not of faith is sin” (Rom 14:23).

QUESTION: I knew it wouldn’t be long, once Dave was gone, that Berean Call would start sinking fast! Berean Call has joined up with Satan’s great favorites—Rick Warren, Dr. Dobson, and Billy Graham, along with other professing Christians. Before leaving Berean Call, I want to know how your predictable apostasy and blindness began. “OnePlace.com” is a one-religion stop for all.

RESPONSE: Oneplace.com is a clearinghouse for religious broadcasters, and we began posting there many years before the Lord took Dave home—and with his knowledge. We recognize that our presence on the Internet places us in proximity with untold numbers of false prophets, but before we are accused of “predictable apostasy and blindness,” it needs to be determined if TBC’s message has changed. Has it really conformed to match the others?

Paul went up to Mars Hill, which was a gathering place for Epicureans, Stoics, and other occult and humanist philosophers. It

might be considered the OnePlace.com of its day. People “which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing” (Acts 17:21).

Yes, the Rick Warrens, Dr. Dobsons, etc., of that day were all there, and they said of Paul, “What will this babbler say?...He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods...” (v. 18). Paul’s message was very different, and, as a result of his going there, “some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter” (v. 32).

The question is, was Paul compromised because he went to Mars Hill? We won’t know until we join Dave in heaven what seeds were planted by Paul as he presented the distinct message of the gospel, and we won’t know who came to salvation through Paul’s ministry on Mars Hill. We do know that we have received many emails from folks who found us at the “one-religion stop for all.” They were encouraged by our consistent, biblical message.

And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him. And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. (Mk 2:15-17)

The message of Jesus never changed to avoid offending sinners, and had He not been dining with these folks, some would not have had the opportunity to hear His message.

Guilt by association “asserts that qualities of one thing are inherently qualities of another, merely by an irrelevant association.” Some of the printing we do is with a firm that has printed Rick Warren’s material as well. Does our message parallel Warren’s because we happen to use the same printer? We have also received criticism because we have a website on the Internet, which is clearly a corrupt medium. We appreciate those who are concerned for the integrity of our message, but we hope that they actually monitor what is taught or written.

John 17:14-15 tells us, “I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” Christians are “in the world,” but they are “not of the world.” May the Lord give us wisdom to understand this and use our liberty to preach an unchanged Gospel where any opportunity may be presented.



IN DEFENSE *of the* FAITH

BIBLICAL ANSWERS *to* CHALLENGING QUESTIONS

“Nothing Exists Except God”?

QUESTION: I saw an interview with Sir John Marks Templeton in Robert Schuller’s *Possibilities* magazine. He is the man who awards the annual Templeton Prize for promoting an appreciation of the benefits of all the world’s religions. I was shocked to read in the interview that Templeton believes that “nothing exists except God.” I’m confused. I thought this was pantheism, yet there it was promoted in the magazine of a man who is looked up to as an evangelical leader. How can this be?

RESPONSE: It *is* pantheism. It is also a basic tenet of cults such as Science of Mind, Religious Science, and Christian Science. What they teach is basically the same as Peale’s positive thinking and Schuller’s possibility thinking, which explains why the latter would promote it in his magazine. Here is how “nothing exists except God” works in the mind science and positive/possibility thinking arena: God is good and God is all. Therefore, all is good. Thus, anything that isn’t good—sin, sickness, suffering, death, etc.—is not real but is a delusion of one’s negative thinking. The way to be delivered from these negative delusions is to become a positive or a possibility thinker.

The Bible, however, teaches that sin, suffering, sickness, and death are real indeed. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezekiel 18:4) is the pronouncement of God’s just judgment and certainly treats both sin and death as real. Jesus healed the sick and raised the dead. He didn’t teach them to deny the reality of these things through positive thinking or possibility thinking. Such concepts are completely alien to the Bible.

Our deliverance from sin and death comes not by denying the reality of these evils through the power of the mind, but by faith in Christ, who suffered the agony of the Cross and paid the penalty that His own justice had pronounced upon sin. He died for our sins and “was raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:25). If sin and death don’t exist, then the death of Christ for our sins and His resurrection are merely allegories and not real events—contrary to the historical facts.

If “nothing exists except God,” then the universe is God, and we ourselves are all part of God and thus divine and perfect beings. Indeed, if “nothing exists except God,” then Satan, who is certainly presented in the Bible as real, is God. One could not imagine a greater delusion.

The God of the Bible is separate and distinct from His creation, which He made out of nothing. That creation is running down like a clock because it is separated from Him by the rebellion of His creatures (Satan and his minions joined by mankind), a rebellion that caused God to pronounce His judgment upon this entire creation. If God were the universe, then He too would be running down like a clock. That is *not* the God of the Bible!

— *An excerpt from* IN DEFENSE OF THE FAITH
(pp. 54-56) *by* DAVE HUNT

TBC NewsWatch

PRESBYTERIANS' DROPPING OF HYMN STIRS DEBATE

USA Today, 8/5/13, "Presbyterians' decision to drop hymn stirs debate" [Excerpts]: Fans of a beloved Christian hymn won't get any satisfaction in a new church hymnal.

The committee putting together a new Presbyterian Church (USA) hymnal dropped the popular modern hymn "In Christ Alone" because the song's authors refused to change a phrase about the wrath of God.

The original lyrics say that "on that cross, as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied." The Presbyterian Committee on Congregational Song wanted to substitute the words, "the love of God was magnified." The song's authors, Stuart Townend and Nashville resident Keith Getty, objected. So the committee voted to drop the song.

Debate over "In Christ Alone" is a mix of church politics, the touchy subject of updating hymn lyrics, and rival views of what Jesus' death on the cross meant.

The Rev. Chris Joiner of First Presbyterian Church in Franklin agrees with that move. He said some of his church members are fans of the song and will be disappointed that it was dropped.

But the words of the song don't work, he said. "That lyric comes close to saying that God killed Jesus," he said. "The cross is not an instrument of God's wrath."

But the Rev. Scott Sauls, pastor of Christ Presbyterian Church in Nashville, disagrees. He said the word "satisfied" means that Jesus paid the whole price for sins.

(<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/08/05/presbyterians-decision-to-drop-hymn-stirs-debate/2618833>)

"GLOBAL DEMOCRACY" BILL

Christian Post, 7/25/13, "Liberal California senator tries again with 'Global Democracy' bill" [Excerpts]: Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-California) has reintroduced the Global Democracy Promotion Act, which failed when it was introduced in 2011. It would bring to a halt executive orders such as the Mexico City Policy which forbids use of federal tax dollars for organizations that provide or promote abortion.

Attorney Steven H. Aden of Alliance Defending Freedom [says] the proposal

goes even further. "Liberals in Congress have proposed a bill to export the ultraliberal, so-called constitutional law coming from the Supreme Court on matters like same-sex marriage and abortion on demand."

Passage would mean the unfettered ability of the Obama Administration to pressure foreign countries to adopt its liberal social agenda. Meanwhile, some nations at the United Nations have objected that the US seems more concerned about promoting abortion and homosexuality internationally than solving the world's real problems.

(<http://onenewsnow.com/politics-govt/2013/07/25/liberal-california-senator-tries-again-with-global-democracy-bill>)

AFRICAN ANGLICANS TO TAKE STOCK

ReligionNewsService.com, 8/27/13, "10 years after Gene Robinson, African Anglicans to take stock" [Excerpts]: Concerned that the crisis in the worldwide Anglican Communion is deepening, conservative Anglican primates in Africa are organizing a second conference to discuss ways of returning the church to what they describe as biblical faithfulness.

The primates held the first conference in Jerusalem in 2008, five years after openly gay New Hampshire Bishop Gene Robinson was consecrated in the Episcopal Church. The action threw the communion into disarray.

Now, the archbishop of Nigeria and archbishops in East Africa have organized the second Global Anglican Future Conference at which they hope to accelerate the process that began in Jerusalem. The so-called GAFCON II meeting will take place Oct. 21-26 in Nairobi.... "We have succeeded in consolidation," said Ugandan Anglican Archbishop Stanley Ntagali.

"Anglican churches have been planted in North America. The clergy trust one another to preach according to the Bible," he said. "But the crisis in the communion continues to deepen as more (homosexual) consecrations occur."

In addition to the consecration of gay bishops, the African primates are concerned with the growing acceptance of same-sex unions in the West. They say attempts to discipline the Episcopal Church were not successful, and, as a result, a "spiritual cancer" has spread to other provinces, including the Anglican Church of Canada, the Church of England,

the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Church in Wales, and the Anglican Church of Southern Africa.

"We need to see the overthrow by some churches of the creation order of female and male as just one symptom of the disease," wrote Kenyan Anglican Archbishop Eliud Wabukala, chairman of the GAFCON primates' council in a letter to the conference dated Thursday (Aug. 22). "The cause is spiritual."

The primates remain optimistic that Archbishop Justin Welby, the new global leader of the Anglican Communion, may prevent a split since he is on record as being opposed to gay consecrations.

(<http://www.religionnews.com/2013/08/27/anglican-primates-in-africa-organize-second-global-meeting>)

HOMESCHOOLING MORE POPULAR IN CHINA

WallStreet Journal, 7/25/13, "Homeschooling Becomes More Popular in China" [Excerpts]: According to a recent survey of 18,000 parents in mainland China who have expressed interest in homeschooling their children, some 2,000 of them have already started to give lessons at home.

China's exam-oriented education system is notoriously stressful for students and families alike. Over half (54%) of [homeschoolers] do so because they object to the teaching philosophy of traditional schools.

Still another 6% of parents, including a number of Christians, said they chose homeschooling for religious reasons, according to the survey.

Meanwhile, a mounting number of student abuse cases in China have lately been exposed, drawing outrage from the public and helping further spur the push for alternatives to traditional schools, people in the industry say. "I think kids are hurt mentally and physically at traditional kindergartens in China," said Zhang Qiaofeng, citing the well-publicized cases of ear-pulling and other kinds of corporal punishment that recently caused controversy after being exposed in the Chinese press.

The survey said that 41% of homeschooling parents said they would continue to educate their kids at home after middle school.

(blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2013/08/27/homeschooling-becomes-more-popular-in-china)

T. A.'s Speaking Schedule

Jan 23-25 **Biblical Counseling, Psychology
& the Church Conference**
Boise, ID
(208) 703-8688

STS 24/7 Broadcast Schedule

Oct 4 & 11 **Randall Price**
Archaeology

Oct 18 & 25 **Sarah Leslie**
False Teaching

Listen to Search the Scriptures 24/7 at:
www.thebereanall.org/radio
(Schedule is subject to change.)

Letters

To Everyone at The Berean Call,

The work you all do is so valuable and so needed. People will believe anything nowadays—it's downright scary. So many lies and myths out there and so few Bereans Come soon, Lord Jesus! I hope you are holding up in Christ—in His protection and with His blessings during these last days. KT (FL)

Dear Mr. McMahon,

Many, many thanks to you and praise the Lord for your article "The Bible According to Hollywood" (July '13). I wanted to write and lift you up as you and the staff war against everything imaginable in this dark hour. You have the mind of the Lord on the matter. Few evangelicals would hazard the reproach you have for the sake of the truth about Hollywood distortion and corruption of the Word of God.

Voices like yours are as needed today as they are rare. A. W. Tozer wrote against the religious movie in his day to the embarrassment of church goers of his generation.

Keep up the good work. You have been called to walk in the old paths wherein is the good way (Jeremiah 6). No cracks on that path! DC (AR)

Berean Call,

Sometime ago I wrote to say that I thought that your concerns regarding Chuck Missler's theology were unwarranted.

Well, in the meantime I read the book, *The Kingdom, Power & Glory*, and now must apologise for my original remarks. The book is confusing, to say the least, and a real cause for concern for those who are already struggling with the social gospel,

and/or the Catholic works-oriented way to salvation that seems to be gaining ground in the evangelical church.

I also recently went through a Missler DVD Bible study and noticed the high praise given several times by Chuck to the Mel Gibson film *The Passion of the Christ*, without explaining all the many unscriptural and very Catholic parts of the movie.

Now I see that Chuck is a speaker at a conference where a segment is devoted to the Shroud of Turin along with the Nephilim theories. So my question would be—is this a cause for concern when a learned teacher of Chuck's renown heads down a path that is seemingly not in accord with the Word of God?

Thank you for your ministry in these days in which we live. AB (Australia)

Dear Tom,

Your "Bible Survival" videos are an excellent use of your talents and resources. Keep it up and may our God bless the Word as it goes forth! WB (AK)

Dear T. A. McMahon and TBC staff,

I was sorry to hear of Dave Hunt's passing away. Whenever a Christian dies it is hard on those left behind, but the one who has died is with their Lord and Savior.... Dave was a wonderful Christian man!

When my father died in 1999, I became my mother's caregiver. Dave sent me over \$100 worth of books to read, he said they were free! Wonderful books! [Dave] had a big heart. I'll never forget him....

I love your discerning of trends today. It's Bible-based, scriptural, simple truth. I listen to your radio broadcast [and] I pray for that, too. MB (NY)

Hello,

Perhaps I represent so very many people who have not spoken up. I have been deeply encouraged by the ministry of The Berean Call...please know how thankful I am for all you do for getting the Truth out there.

I was saved out of sin and Catholicism over 30 years ago as a young gal in a very Catholic area in Iowa. My high school had over 900 people in it and 11 of us regularly gathered together for prayer. We could not think of another possible born-again Christian in our school.

As I matured in my faith in the Lord, I was amazed at how often people would vehemently defend the idea that "Catholics" are saved. (I believe it is possible there may be some saved people sitting in a Catholic Church, but you have to decide if you are really Catholic...or believing the biblical gospel message.) As I set myself apart from those who would so defend the Catholics, I became more and more isolated.

Later, I began speaking up about the emergent church, oftentimes being the only one who would take a public stance against it.... God pushed me into becoming more vocal. I was timid and lacked a good support system to encourage me onward, but the Lord remained so very faithful. He was, and is, my support system! Others have been there for just the right times as well. I have a deep, deep thankfulness for Dave Hunt (and all of you) for being so bold, and for sharing all you have learned with us. It was so helpful for me at different times to have your materials via books or the Internet or newsletters come into my life once again to uplift me in those times of isolation. KD (email)

Errata

In our September 2013 Q&A addressing the KJV we referred to Matthew Tyndale when, of course, we meant William Tyndale! We apologize for the error.

TBC Notes

That's a Wrap!...With Some Follow Up

Lots of time, effort, and prayer went into TBC's 2013 Conference, and if things could have gone better, I don't know how. About 700 folks came from all over the world, even outnumbering the locals. The speakers, the fellowship, and a slightly new format really made the distance traveled worth it. For those who couldn't attend, our first attempt at live-streaming went amazingly well and was greatly appreciated. Thank you, Jesus!

Our follow-up is to pray without ceasing that the seeds planted in the hearts of the attendees and those who watched on the Internet, as well as those who will later see the DVDs, will find fertile soil and bear much fruit.

Also, we covet your prayers for Paul Wilkinson, who, following his return to England, was hit by two cars as he was riding his bicycle. The accident was quite serious and will involve multiple surgeries and physical therapy. Pray for his recovery process, that it might be a witness of God's loving kindness and tender mercies.

T. A. McMAHON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A CHRISTIAN **NON-NEGOTIABLE:** BELIEF

Lewis Carroll's White Queen once said, "Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast!" Is it time for us to believe some impossible things?...There is a missions movement that seeks to make people "Christians" by eliminating many of the things that Christians *must* believe to call themselves by that name. In missiological circles, it is called the "insider movement."

...Like many fads...this may simply fade away when it is no longer new....However, its advocates—and many of its detractors—call it the most important issue in the church today: "I believe the debate about Insider Movements...is a debate about the gospel—as potentially earth-shaking as the Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, and Anabaptist reform movements of the 16th century" (Kevin Higgins, *Devoted*). Advocates contend that what is at stake is "the integrity of the gospel itself" (Rebecca Lewis, *Integrity*).

What exactly is the "insider movement" (IM)? ...As defined by one of its advocates, "'Insider movements' consist of believers remaining in and transforming their own pre-existing family networks, minimally disrupting their own pre-existing families and communities" (Lewis, *Promoting*)....This means that they speak positively of Messianic Muslims, Hindu Christ-Followers, Buddhist believers in Christ. The insider movement among Muslims...encourages "converts" to remain in the mosque, call themselves Muslims, make the *hajj* and, in many cases, continue to hold Mohammed as a prophet and the Koran as a book of spiritual import. Often, Muslim converts to Christ...are encouraged to return to [the mosque] in order to win others. Some promoters...encourage missionaries to publicly convert to Islam, a false religion, in order to witness in that community!...IM promoters would bristle at the term "false religion," insisting that...the "religion revealed by all the prophets (e.g., Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus, and Muhammad) was originally the same... 'True Islam' is what real Christians believe" (Bernard Dutch, *Should Muslims Become "Christians"?* IJFM 17:1 [2000]: 17).

These "Jesus-Muslims" are often not baptized in order to avoid the reproach that it brings. Some do not meet in a local congregation of believers or even in a home study. IM groups have made new translations of the Bible, eliminating terms unacceptable to Muslims—Son of God, Son of man, God the Father....How has what may tacitly be called "syncretism" found its way into the heart of evangelical mission organizations? By the road of "contextualization."

We should not expect converts from Islam to adopt western cultural practices. No convert to Christ should be required to dress in a western fashion or make his Christianity look like that in the US. Converts may...continue taking their shoes off when they enter a place where they study the Bible. They may pray kneeling with forehead to the ground. These things are purely superficial, not forbidden in Scripture, and principally cultural in character...If done...without compulsion or attribution of Scriptural authority, they are not improper, since the Scripture gives no inspired posture for prayer and the [only] New Testament admonition [is that] clothing be modest.

However, when...converts are encouraged to continue in religious *practices* of their past, identifying [with] it, and attributing final spiritual authority to a prophet, leader, or founder of some religious movement or to his writings, the line has been crossed from contextualization to syncretism, and the message is no longer that of biblical Christianity....

Conversion to Christianity requires *repentance* and *faith* (Acts 20:21). Repentance includes turning to God from idols and false religions and false prophets (1 Thes 1:9). Faith means believing certain things about Christ, His Work, and His Word. Apart from that sense of repentance and apart from that meaning of faith, there is reason to question whether there has been true conversion.

Among those certain things that *must* be believed is the Sonship of Christ. Philip preached Christ to the Ethiopian eunuch and clearly emphasized this essential truth. When the eunuch asked to be baptized,

Philip replied, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:37). It was on his confession of Jesus as the *Son of God* that Philip baptized this new believer. If IM hides or covers the Sonship of Christ, they are presenting less than the gospel.

Another [concern regarding one's] salvation is the denial of the Trinity. Although I cannot say that fully *understanding* the Trinity is a requirement of salvation, I can say that *denial* of the Trinity should cause us to question if conversion has taken place. To deny the Trinity...requires that we ignore...Scripture [and] also brings into question...the true Sonship of Christ, His humanity, and His Lordship. Many IM promoters call the Trinity the fruit of an unhealthy mix between Jewish Messianic and Greek philosophy....

Romans 10:9 tells us that another essential truth is the Lordship of Christ. If Jesus is the Lord, then another is not. God has declared that He will not share His glory with another (Is 42:8), and Jesus spoke of the impossibility of serving two masters (Mt 6:24). You cannot serve both Jesus and Mohammed, nor call both Buddha and Jesus "Lord." To recognize Mohammed as a prophet is to lower Jesus.... All true prophets point to *Christ* as supreme.

A non-negotiable truth that undergirds all of these and is undergirded by the very nature of God is the *authority of the written Word*, the Bible. No other "scripture" can be held as equal or comparable to the Bible....IM missionaries [attempt] to find ways to endorse the Koran as a book of God and in so doing make the Bible less than it is. IM also [makes] culture the interpreter and determiner of biblical instruction. Old and New Testament declarations are lightly dismissed as "cultural" and therefore non-binding. Biblical authority becomes relativized and examined by the final authority of "Will that work here?" As Christians we believe, as David Garner expressed it, "The divine canon transcends and trumps any cultural canon" (*High Stakes: Insider Movement Hermeneutics and the Gospel*).

...Though some scholarly attempts have been made to defend IM practice, the bottom line seems to be, "It works." This reasoning is suspect for two reasons:

- 1) The fact that a method produces decisions or numbers is no measure that it is working. God saves men despite us, not because of us, and some may be saved in spite of the paucity of accurate information. The measure of truth, in the end, is not its popularity (Lk 16:15).
- 2) There is reason to question the results IMers tout. They are unverifiable, since the...claims ("hundreds of thousands of Muslims falling in love with Jesus," "6,000 new churches planted among Muslims,"...) are without reference to location, for reasons of security. When a location may be given, the very nature of the movement precludes confirmation. Are we to go to mosques to ask how many believe in Jesus? Where examination has been possible, these claims have often been shown to be greatly exaggerated.

...The most vocal opponents of IM are Christian converts from Islam. Those who have suffered for the name of Christ are grieved with this new and muddled gospel....They point to the strange new translations of the Bible, noting that the Muslim accusation that the Bible has been altered now appears true! They observe that IM is paternalistic, with westerners pushing nationals aside, saying, "You don't know how to reach your culture. We have a better idea!"

Oh, for the simplicity of the gospel, the simplicity of preaching, the simplicity of Christ!

I would urge all of you who support or stand with missionaries to inquire if that missionary endorses or embraces the "insider movement." Make certain they are preaching—and you're supporting—an unadulterated, uncompromising, biblical message.

— BY STEVE MONTGOMERY

WHO ARE THE ELECT AND WHY?

EXCERPTS FROM *What Love Is This?* BY DAVE HUNT

THE BIBLE USES the term “elect” in a variety of ways: for Israel, Christ, a lady, a church, and angels. Never, however, is this word used to indicate that there is a select group who alone have been predestined to be saved. *Never....*

Calvinists often cite 2 Thessalonians 2:13 as proof of their position: “God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” Being “chosen to salvation,” however, does not mean that one has been predestined for heaven. Numerous scriptures force us to conclude that *all* of mankind has been “chosen to salvation” by the God who would “have all men to be saved...” (1 Tm 2:4), who is “the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe” (4:10), and whose Son “gave himself a ransom for all” (2:6).

If all have been chosen to salvation, why are all not saved? Christ said to His disciples, “Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas...that should betray him...” (Jn 6:70-71). Judas was one of those chosen to be a disciple, but through his own choice he did not fulfill that calling and is now in hell.

God said to Israel, “The LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself...” (Dt 7:6). That “choosing” did not automatically assure that all Israel would live the part. Unfortunately, Israel as a whole did not fulfill that calling but went into sin, and God had to cast her out of the land.

From these and other scriptures, it is clear that being “chosen” to salvation does not bring salvation: one must still believe the gospel in order to be saved. That fact is further made clear by the rest of the verse: “through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” Although “chosen to salvation,” the means of salvation is not the choosing by God but the individual’s “belief of the truth.”

Calvinism defines the elect as that select group whom, alone, God has from eternity past appointed to salvation. All others are predestined by God to eternal damnation. The gospel can be preached day and night to the latter, yet to no avail, because they are totally incapable of believing it. God...gives the faith to believe to the elect alone, though He could do so for all. Yet *never* is this repugnant doctrine taught in Scripture!

“Moderate” Calvinists would [call this] hyper-Calvinism.... They would say that God merely left the non-elect to the just consequences of their sin. Whether He left to their doom those whom He *could have rescued*, or predestined them to that fate—what is the difference? The so-called “hyper-Calvinist” simply admits the truth about Calvinism.

What “moderates” try to distance themselves from as “hyper” was taught by Calvin and has been part of mainstream Calvinism from the beginning. The Westminster Confession of Faith states, “By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His own glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.” Yet having taught this belief, Calvin admitted:

...many...deem it most incongruous that of the great body of mankind some should be predestinated to salvation and others to destruction. The decree, I admit, is dreadful; and yet it is impossible to deny that God foreknew what the end of man was to be before he made him, and foreknew, because he had so ordained by his decree.

Calvin is forced to maintain what he admits is a “dreadful” decree. Why? Not by Scripture but by his unbiblical insistence that God can only foreknow what He decrees. [Then it follows that] He must have decreed everything that would ever happen—from Adam’s fall to the final doom of billions. Thank God that the Bible says the opposite: that “God so loved the *world*, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (Jn 3:16). Both “world” and “whosoever” must be changed to “elect” for Calvinism to be sustained.

Calvinism’s “elect,” without any faith, understanding, or choice on their part, are elected to salvation simply because, in the mystery of His sovereign will, God decided, for no reason at all, to save them and *only* them. The Calvinist objects when we say, “for no reason at all.” It is claimed that God needs no reason, that it simply pleased Him so to do, or that the reason is hidden in the mystery of His will. Even God, however, must have a reason for saving some and damning others. Otherwise He would be acting unreasonably and thus contrary to His Being. In fact, election/predestination is always said in the Bible to result from God’s foreknowledge. Those *whom He foreknew would believe* were predestined to special blessings, which He decided would accompany salvation from sin’s penalty (1 Cor 2:9).

God continually offers to reason with man about this matter: “Come now, and let us reason together” (Is 1:18). He reasons with Israel, sends His prophets to warn His chosen people, and explains repeatedly why, though reluctantly, He punishes them: their wickedness (Dt 28:20); for forsaking His covenant (Dt 29:25); for forsaking His law (Jer 9:13), etc. God explains that He gave His Son to die for the sins of the world because of His great love for all mankind: “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (Jn 3:17); “And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world” (1 Jn 4:14).

Yet God never declares in Scripture a reason for saving a select group and damning all others. Surely such an important doctrine would be clearly explained, in defense of God’s character, yet it isn’t even mentioned.

There is no escaping the haunting question: Why did Calvin’s God choose to save so few when He could have saved all? Without apology, James White informs us, “It is ‘according to the kind intention of His will.’” So it is God’s *kindness* that causes Him to save so few and to damn so many! We are aghast and offended on behalf of our God.

Biblically, there is no question that God has the right to save whom He will and no one could complain. We are all deserving of the eternal punishment required by God’s holiness against sin. But we are repeatedly told that God *is love* and that He is merciful to *all*, exactly what we would expect of Him in view of His command to us to love our neighbors as ourselves and to do good to all. We surely would not expect the “Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort” (2 Cor 1:3) to withhold mercy from *any* who so desperately need it—much less that He would take pleasure in doing so. Calvin hides behind Augustine’s authority to justify this contradiction, but the effort falls short. For example:

Now...he [God] arranges all things by his sovereign counsel, in such a way that individuals are born, who are doomed from the

womb to certain death, and are to glorify him by their destruction.... If your mind is troubled, decline not to embrace the counsel of Augustine....

[W]e say, that God in mercy succours some. Let him (they say) succour all. We object, that it is right for him to show by punishing that he is a just judge....

I will not hesitate...to confess with Augustine that the will of God is necessity...[and] that the destruction consequent upon predestination is also most just.... The first man fell because the Lord deemed it meet that he should...because he saw that his own glory would thereby be displayed....

God does not resort to judgment in order to demonstrate that He *is* a just judge. He is perfectly just, and His judgment falls upon those who deserve it and who reject His pardon through Christ—not upon a vast multitude whom He predestines to eternal torment because it pleases and glorifies Him! That belief of Calvin and Augustine libels the God of the Bible....

Surely, as Wesley argues, to punish for failure to do what it is impossible to do, or for having done what one could only do, is the opposite of justice. If that were not bad enough, the idea that God would predestine man to sin so that He would have someone to judge is abhorrent even to the ungodly. It is offensive to the conscience that God has given to all mankind.

Scripture tells us the opposite—that God commands all men to repent, pleads with mankind to do so, is ready to pardon, and promises salvation to all who believe on Christ. The following passages, in which God pleads with mankind to accept the salvation He offers in Christ, are only a few among many similar scriptures that refute Calvinism's Unconditional Election: Isaiah 55:7; Jeremiah 29:13; Matthew 7:24; Matthew 11:28; John 7:37; Revelation 22:17.

Each of the above very clearly includes two facts that refute Unconditional Election:

- 1) The command and invitation are given to all, not just to a select group. The words “wicked” and “unrighteous” and “who-soever” and “all” clearly mean what they say and cannot be turned into “elect.”
- 2) There are conditions that must be met. There is both a command and an invitation to meet certain requirements: to “for-sake” one’s sin, to seek God with the whole heart, to “hear and do” what Christ commands, to “come” to Him, and to “take and drink” the water of life that Christ gives.

Not once in the nearly 1,300 pages of his *Institutes* does Calvin expound upon God’s love for mankind or attempt to explain how God, who *is* love, could take pleasure in damning billions whom He could save if He so desired.... Biblically, God’s sovereignty is exercised only in perfect unity with His total character. His sovereignty is enforced in harmony with His love, grace, mercy, kindness, justice, and truth—but Calvin has almost nothing to say about these attributes, because they cannot be reconciled with his theory.

It is only reasonable to ask why God, who *is* love, lacks the love and compassion to save all whom He could save, and instead predestines billions to eternal torment. Calvin repeatedly hides his lack of an answer behind the word “mystery.” But pleading “mystery” cannot cover up the horror of this doctrine. Yet that is the best Calvin can do, along with repeatedly appealing to Augustine’s authority. Pleading “mystery” and exalting ignorance is contrary to God’s Word, which tells us that we must “be ready always to give

an answer to every man that asketh you a *reason*...” (1 Pt 3:15). Yet Calvin said it was wrong to seek a reason.

The only Greek word translated “mystery” is *musterion*. It is *never* used as Calvin used it to denote a secret not to be revealed. Rather, it *always* refers to knowledge that is being revealed. For example: “I would not...that ye should be ignorant of this mystery...” (Rom 11:25); “I shew you a mystery...” (1 Cor 15:51); “made known unto me the mystery...” (Eph 3:3); “Even the mystery which hath been hid...but now is made manifest...” (Col 1:26); “I will tell thee the mystery...” (Rv 17:7), etc. The word is *never* used as Calvin uses it in relation to salvation, predestination, or sovereignty, and certainly not concerning some being saved and others damned.

Calvinism’s perversion of sovereignty demands that whether one goes to heaven or hell depends solely upon God’s will and decree; a man’s receiving or rejecting Christ is not by his free choice but is irresistibly imposed upon him by God. As a result, the atheist feels justified in rejecting a God who, contrary to basic human compassion, predestines multitudes to eternal torment whom He could just as well have predestined to eternal joy in His presence.

Why wouldn’t the God who *is* love exercise the absolute control that Calvinism attributes to Him over every thought, word, and deed to eliminate sin, disease, suffering, and death and to bring all mankind into heaven? This contradiction of the basic standards that God has put in every human conscience raises an obvious question—and it is a question in response to which Calvinists themselves cannot agree upon an answer.

Some, like John Calvin, unashamedly say that God doesn’t want everyone saved—indeed, that it is his “good pleasure” to damn so many. Others, realizing the revulsion that idea creates in anyone with a normal sense of mercy and kindness, call this “hyper-Calvinism” and attempt to find other explanations for God’s alleged failure to irresistibly elect everyone. The necessity to overcome non-Calvinists’ objections to God’s apparent callousness (in predestining multitudes to eternal torment before they were even born) has been the mother of invention to a number of attempted rationalizations....

In fact, Calvinism itself creates this “difficulty”! The dilemma dissolves and the unanswerable question is answered by one simple admission: God in His sovereignty has given man the genuine power of choice. Thus God’s sincere and loving desire for all mankind to be saved is not contradicted by His justice but is rejected by the free will of many. No one is *predestined* either to eternal bliss in God’s presence or to eternal torment in separation from Him. Eternal destiny depends upon one’s acceptance or rejection of Christ through the gospel.

To reiterate, not only is predestination/election never said to be unto salvation, but Paul carefully separates predestination from salvation whether in its call, its justification, or its glorification: “whom he did predestinate, them he *also* [*kai*] called...them he *also* [*kai*] justified...them he *also* [*kai*] glorified” (Romans 8:30). The Greek *kai* shows that a distinction is being made: predestination is not the same as calling, justification, or glorification. Hobbs comments, “Predestination...simply means that God has predetermined that those who respond affirmatively to His call...will be justified...and furthermore will be glorified. All of this is ‘according to His purpose’....” The plain meaning of the text is clear.

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Philistine

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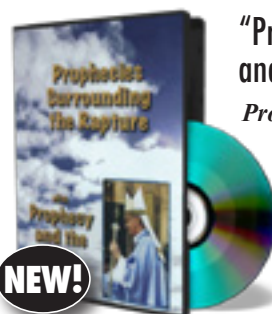
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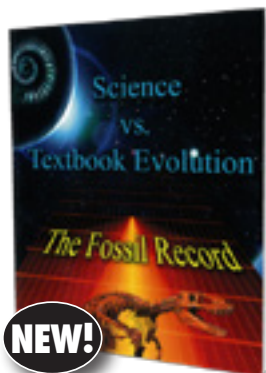
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