

“[The Bereans] . . . searched the scriptures daily,

[to see] whether those things were so.” —Acts 17:11

Can't Find a Church?

T. A. McMahon

“Dear Brothers and Sisters at The Berean Call, I'm at wit's end. We recently moved to a new community, and we can't find a church that is teaching God's Word without adding to it or subtracting from it. Do you know of any good churches in our area?”

THIS IS THE most common request we receive here at TBC, and it has been for more than two decades. Sadly, we've been reluctant to recommend any specific churches, and it's not because there aren't any good Bible-teaching churches around. It's because doctrinally we don't know where they stand today! We've seen even good churches change overnight. The hope of this article is to give those who are presently seeking fellowship with believers who love God's Word and who want to grow in “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3) some suggestions that we believe will be helpful in their circumstance.

Before I begin with some *suggestions* regarding what to do when looking for a church, let's start with the qualities of a church worth seeking—in general. The most important attribute is a church's view of the Bible. Do the leaders believe that the Scriptures are God's inerrant communication to mankind, which were received and written down by God's chosen prophets? Do they believe that all the words of the Bible are inspired of God with nothing added to them by the Scriptures' original transcribers? “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe” (1 Thessalonians 2:13). Any deviation from the belief in the inerrancy of God's Word, no matter how small, is akin to a puncture in a life raft. At some point, sooner or later, the raft will deflate, ceasing to preserve life.

A fellowship that teaches the Scriptures expositively, i.e., verse by verse, offers a more effective situation for learning God's Word than a church that features only topical preaching. Certainly both approaches can be abused, but topical preaching has many inherent problems that are difficult to avoid. Too often, topical preaching substitutes what God has said with man's thoughts no matter how sincere the intention. How does that happen? 1) Rarely is the correct context of the verses explained; 2) The preacher has leeway to avoid difficult and even controversial words or passages by skipping over them; 3) Due to the first two points above, it's more difficult for the listener to follow the message in a biblically discerning way as a Berean (Acts 17:10-11), and 4) It can readily take the listener away from what should be the main focus of any sermon, which is, “What is God Himself telling us directly through His Word?”

Bible study programs are important. Sometimes, when I've inquired among some as to whether or not they were involved in a Bible study at their church, the enthusiastic response is “yes!”

When I ask what book they're studying, an all-too-common response is that they are using the latest book by a popular Christian author. To call that a “Bible study” is more than a misnomer, no matter how edifying the book might seem. We need to make sure that the Bible is what's actually being studied. Does a prospective church have a youth program that has the teaching of God's Word as its primary objective? Entertainment used in youth groups has ruled for decades, all but eliminating true discipleship of young people. Paul's words to Timothy should show us what's valuable as a church's youth-oriented objective: “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15).

The vital qualities of worship and the importance of serious collective prayer should also be a consideration in joining a fellowship. Outreach is another significant characteristic to be weighed when selecting a church, whether that means supporting missionaries abroad or believers within the community, and sharing the witness and love of Christ in serving.

Some, especially those who've been actively seeking to find a “good church,” may be thinking at this point, “Great! Point me to the church with the qualities you mentioned, and I'll be there next Sunday!” I have little doubt that there are churches that even exceed the few things that I've outlined, but I also know that most don't measure up. When Jesus addressed the seven churches in the first three chapters of Revelation, only two of the seven were commended without reservation. The rest had issues that needed to be corrected, and if they didn't comply, Jesus said, “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent” (Revelation 2:5). The “candlestick” is the church that is to represent the light of God's Word, and that light is getting dimmer. On the other hand, there are many churches today that are at least maintaining a flicker of God's light. But what good is that?

Someone might respond, “I'm not interested in attending a church where God's light only flickers!” That would be my first inclination as well. But then, as the old saying goes, “If wishes were horses, beggars would ride.” In other words, all the wishing in the world won't turn the majority of churches into what has been described above. The reality of the situation for many church-seeking believers today is that they have only “flickering churches” available to them.

Let me define what I would refer to as a flickering church. It's one that has overloaded its fellowship with the debris of man's programs and practices, but beneath that spiritually adulterated and doctrinally confused pile there's a spark of the light of Christ (the biblical Jesus) and the true gospel. As a veteran camper, one thing I know is that a spark found buried in the ashes of a recently used fire pit can sometimes be fanned into a flame.

With that in mind, here are my further *suggestions* when the churches in one's community reflect little or almost none of the criteria mentioned at the beginning of this article. When the only

reasonably close churches seem repugnant to one's biblical sensibilities, sometimes the reaction is, "No way, Tom! I'm not setting foot in any of those churches. I'll just stay at home, read my Bible, and listen to you on your TBC broadcasts."

Okay, I just threw that last comment in to underscore what a bad option that is. Reading the Bible is okay, but not doing what it says is completely counterproductive. The Bible tells us, "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Why would I encourage someone to set foot in a church that has multiple issues that are of man's making and his delusions, some of which are deceptions and seductions of the Adversary, and, all things considered, have led to much unfruitfulness as a body? I can hear someone saying, "Dave Hunt would be rolling over in his grave if he could read this!" I think not. Hear me out as I give some reasons why I know Dave would support what I'm saying.

In my forty years of observing Christendom, I have witnessed the activities of the church at large (including both nominal and true believers) devolve into what is essentially a consumer operation. Whether through the covetousness that pervades the hearts of individuals, or methods like the church-growth movement (spawned by a worldly marketing scheme), church seekers have been making decisions based primarily upon a "feed me" mentality. Yes, believers need to be fed, especially the Word (Luke 4:4). But a believer's approach to church life that's primarily a one-way "serve me" process loses sight of the necessity of one's own service to the body and is missing what the Christian life is all about, not to mention the loss of the fruit and blessings that are won by selfless ministry. It doesn't take a terribly deep personal evaluation for any of us to recognize our own self-serving culpability. If in doubt, check your "complaint gage" and service record concerning your involvement in your present fellowship.

What I'm getting at here—what is really necessary—is having a heart to serve. It shouldn't require a huge transformation for any honest person who claims to be a biblical Christian but fails to support the service ministries in one's church. If this isn't happening in your life, you need to get back in line with what a Christian's life in Christ is all about. Apply that to the person quoted at the top of this article who doesn't have a church and is crying out for help to find a good one.

Now, let's consider a scenario that's more difficult and distressing and is becoming more and more common for believers. They have no church and no fellowship, period. Why? Because they disagree with all the churches they've visited.

If a church *holds to the biblical gospel and the biblical Jesus*, even if they are buried beneath a heap of worldly teachings and programs, my recommendation is to attend that fellowship. What? Wouldn't such a church lead a believer into teachings and programs that aren't biblically sound? It could, but those who are struggling to find a good church very likely have enough biblical discernment to recognize what doesn't match up with sound doctrine. It's also very likely that they could be a blessing to such a church if they were to attend with a servant's heart. I know of a very discerning person who, when questioned as to why he decided to attend a church that offered programs that weren't supported by Scripture, replied, "I was thinking that I might be able to help the church biblically."

I also know a young couple who are making a wonderful contribution to a church that probably wouldn't allow *me* to teach, given the number of programs they endorse about which I've written unfavorably. Yet this couple's ministry to young adults (involving a Bible study and personal discipleship) in the church has been praised by the leadership. They established right up front

with the leaders that when they serve within the body, the Word of God would be their guide and authority. Their heart's desire is to encourage young adult believers (their own peers) to learn and to apply the Scriptures in their own lives. They don't address the programs in the church in which they're not in agreement, unless asked. When that happens, their response is, "We just want to go by what the Bible says and to teach what it teaches"—and they've yet to receive a complaint. They don't want to compromise their beliefs or be regarded as divisive. Others like them have this in common: they simply want to *serve* the body of Christ in any capacity they can, and wherever they can. They believe that the Holy Spirit will help them to *strengthen* their brothers and sisters in Christ no matter how much a church has been weakened by unbiblical programs and practices.

There's another situation regarding seeking a church, or rather *not* seeking, that we hear about more and more these days. The claim is that the seekers can't find like-minded believers in a community, so the individual or family makes the choice to isolate themselves due to their circumstance. They end up with no church, no fellowship with other believers, no one outside themselves to serve, or with whom to pray. They've shut themselves off from the diverse gifting of fellow believers for the edifying and building up of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-27, 14:2-5, 12, 26; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:10). They rely mostly on preachers who teach over radio, TV, or other communication devices for biblical instruction. For these, servanthood and fellowship are among the most important components that are lost.

For believers in that detached condition, I have a few questions and thoughts. Is it possible for the Lord to help you to find other believers? My guess is that, among all the people attending churches in a community, there must be a *potential* believer, or perhaps even a true believer, or two or three. Maybe they're not mature in the faith but are genuinely seeking to know God in truth. Churches, therefore, would seem to offer the best opportunity for meeting other believers in Christ. Finding another believer could lead to fellowship that begins by simply praying for one another. Or it could lead to helping one another out by meeting a need. Eventually, it might even open the door for a Bible study. I believe that Jesus will help those who are actively seeking fellowship to find fellowship—by His grace. Fellowship doesn't involve merely the comfort of being with like-minded believers, but it is the setting to best carry out the Lord's instructions for living out the Christian life.

The last scenario is the most extreme, yet some believers are in this situation today. It may be that, should the Lord not return soon for His bride, true believers won't have the option of assembling together in churches. Nevertheless, they won't stop gathering together privately. Why? That's the exhortation and the instruction for believers that is given continually throughout the New Testament. Believers desperately need fellowship, especially as the days grow darker the nearer we get to Jesus' return for His bride, His body. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (1 Corinthians 12:27). One among a host of instances of instruction related to the necessary interaction of the saints is 1 Thessalonians 5:11-14: "Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men." All those things are best—and perhaps only—accomplished as we assemble ourselves together with brothers and sisters in obedience to our Lord and Savior. That's what Christ commands for our good, and for His good pleasure.

TBC

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Submit your own questions to: PO Box 7019 • Bend, OR 97708

or e-mail: editorial@thebereancall.org

QUESTION: You once made a misleading statement that needs to be corrected. You said, “In spite of Pentecostal and charismatic claims that no Christian need ever be sick....” I am an Assemblies of God pastor. Neither my denomination nor I believe that.

RESPONSE: Certainly I didn’t mean that all Pentecostals and charismatics believe that “no Christian need ever be sick,” nor do I think most people took it that way. However, it would have been clearer had I said, “In spite of the claims by some Pentecostals and charismatics....” I recognize that there are many such as yourself who do not hold that extreme position. There is, however, some confusion. The Assemblies of God “Position Paper on Divine Healing” doesn’t say that one can always claim a healing and admits that not everyone is healed, but it does say, “Healing is in the atonement.” Yes, healing is ours by faith in the same way as forgiveness of sins. Unfortunately, the Position Paper puts its major emphasis upon the parallels between healing from sickness and from sin in a way that could leave some readers with the wrong impression.

I have encountered many within the AOG who teach that one can always claim a healing from anything. This impression is certainly given in the way many pastors command the sick to be healed in the name of Jesus. Is it not destructive to a young person’s faith to hear the pastor week after week, in the name of Jesus, command the sickness to depart and note that it very rarely does? I agree with your denomination’s official position. Unfortunately, something else is often practiced and believed by many within its ranks.

QUESTION: Contrary to what you’ve said, “By His stripes ye were healed” does refer to physical healing. Matthew 8:16-17 quotes Isaiah 53:4 and does indeed show that it is physical. I pray our LORD will show you this truth. God warns of a form of godliness, denying its power.

RESPONSE: I believe in miracles and have seen God do many. God still heals in answer to prayer. I have been instantly healed myself and have seen others, for whom I prayed, instantly healed.

The Bible, however, does not promise anyone physical healing from sickness in this life “by His stripes” in the same way that it promises spiritual healing from sin. I can assure anyone who will believe the gospel that he or she will be instantly saved from the eternal penalty of sin and receive eternal life as a free gift of God’s grace. I cannot give anyone the same assurance of being perpetually healed from physical ailments. Can you?

If we have physical healing through the cross of Christ in the same way we have spiritual healing, then Christians ought to live much longer than non-Christians and there ought to be at least some Christians who have lived 100, 200, 300 or more years. But this is not the case. Our souls and spirits have been redeemed and as proof we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14), but we together with “the whole creation groan and travail...[until the redemption of our body (Romans 8:18-25)].

You correctly say that Matthew 8:16-17, when it speaks of the healings by Jesus before He went to the cross, quotes Isaiah 53:4 (“he that hath borne our griefs [sicknesses] and carried our sorrows [pains]”). It does not quote Isaiah 53:5 (“by his stripes we are healed”). That verse, which deals with sin (wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities”), is quoted in 1 Peter 2: 24 (bare our sins...by whose stripes ye were healed”). Isaiah 53:4 was fulfilled by Christ’s healing ministry: Isaiah 53:5 was fulfilled at the Cross.

As for “denying the power thereof,” Paul reminds us that the gospel “is the power of God unto salvation” (Romans 1:16). I do not deny the power of God in any way today. I simply oppose those who profess the “power of the Spirit,” claim healings that don’t occur, and destroy the faith of many with unbiblical promises of healing, which bring guilt when not realized.

QUESTION (FOR DAVE HUNT, FROM THE ARCHIVES): I appreciate much of your work, but I think you’re too critical and too dogmatic. You would do well to temper your teaching with the admission that you aren’t infallible and that all you can offer is your own opinion.

RESPONSE: If I have ever given the idea that I imagine myself to be infallible, then I apologize for such folly. The very name, The Berean Call, was chosen to emphasize the fact that no pastor, preacher, evangelist, or biblical scholar is infallible and that all teachings must be tested against the Word of God. This ministry is no exception. We are not infallible and urge readers to test our teachings as well. Every Christian must make up his or her own mind based upon Scripture and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Christians may not always all agree on every point. The expression of varying and prayerful convictions is helpful to the body of Christ. In viewing the growing apostasy in the church and in answering questions addressed to us, we can only present the facts and the truths of Scripture as we understand them. Those with differing views may do likewise, being careful to cite specific factual or doctrinal errors. Scripture enjoins us to receive valid correction from one another gratefully.

QUESTION: I don’t see how anyone can spend his time reading and screening all the books that Christians may read. I don’t know how far one is obligated to explain what the Word means to those who are in error. In my own experience, nothing anyone could tell me would have made any difference until God himself opened my heart. How do you handle all of this?

RESPONSE: We don’t spend all or even a large percentage of our time trying to screen everything being printed, or to track down every heresy in the church. Our work would be impossible were it not for the many “Bereans” around the world who act as our eyes and ears and pass along their concerns and useful information.

As for one’s obligation to point out error and to persuade others of the truth, most of the New Testament and much of the Old (certainly the major and minor prophets and the epistles) was written for that very purpose. Paul corrected Peter publicly, named those who were leading others astray, and continually combated error in his epistles. We must do the same if we are to obey God’s Word and “earnestly contend for the faith once [for all] delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). Paul said that the Bible was given for “doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16), and he exhorted Timothy to “reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine” (4:2).

Christ himself set the example we must follow. He was gentle with those who had been deceived, but He sternly rebuked the rabbis who had perverted God’s Word by false teaching, and He did so publicly. As for the unsaved, Paul disputed daily in the synagogues and in the marketplace (Acts 17:17), doing all he could to “persuade men” (2 Corinthians 5:11). Yes, only the Holy Spirit can convict and convert the soul, but He is pleased to use us as His instruments. What a responsibility and privilege we have!

LETTERS

To connect with TBC, write: PO Box 7019 • Bend, OR 97708
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Dear Berean Staff,

I'm reading *Peace, Prosperity, and the Coming Holocaust*, and the further I get into it, the more shocked I am. I've been a Christian since 1976, and for a small church in the Northeast, there was quite a bit of end times teaching—lots of new things to learn. With Calvinism [more recently], it took *What Love Is This?* to repair the damage and upheaval spiritually caused by [another's] enthusiasm pressing it upon me. So, now again I am "free indeed." A question I want to ask is, why when I go to church, do I not hear any of what I am now reading? Thanks for the truth. I'm very grateful. CW (NE)

Dear TBC,

My gratitude to you for sharing the Word and the Good News. I have been getting your newsletter for many years and have enjoyed the ministry and the writings of both Dave and Tom and, through your kindness, have had the opportunity of learning much about the Way, the Truth, and the Life. I am a prisoner, but I had a spiritual awakening, and so now I'm a follower of Christ Jesus....I'm learning how to be a Berean. DM (prisoner, IL)

Dear Friends at The Berean Call

Manmade systems may change but God changes not. Just as I write, the news mentioned a great storm battering the Caribbean. We are blessed to have a shelter in the time of storm. What's taking place in the world today is like the small cloud rising out of the sea. Soon the heavens will be black as God brings His eternal

plan to a conclusion. The Publican's prayer is still valid: "God be merciful to me a sinner." Thank you for your newsletter [which is] greatly appreciated. SM (N Ireland)

Dear TBC,

This website [www.thebereancall.org] has opened my eyes to so much. I recently started looking at the doctrine of the Nicolaitans and Balaam as mentioned in Revelation 2. I did a Google search and came across this site. Thank God, for you keep the faith. May God bless you. VN (email)

Dear Berean Call,

Every now and then I get the opportunity to witness to some misled person [in this case] someone who's following yoga and the Kabbalah, and she says she almost became a Roman Catholic. After our talk I wound up thanking God for TBC, because without your ministry (which I believe is Holy Spirit led) I would not have been prepared to answer her about either the Roman Catholic Church or Yoga. Please pray with me for this individual, that the Lord would draw her back to the light. I don't know how she got sidetracked, but then again, I know of the Tempter. JM (PA)

Dear Mr. McMahon,

Your ministry has been a real blessing to me. I've watched many of the videos by Dave Hunt and was especially intrigued by *A Woman Rides the Beast*. I also listen to your radio program every week. I had been going to morally bankrupt churches like Presbyterian USA and the Episcopal Church in order to give my testimony to some people who might be living that lifestyle in the hope that they might open their hearts to the Lord.

I'm having a very difficult time finding and staying in a church. I've seen the most unbelievable things in these places such as sermons on "Forrest Gump" and even a pastor quoting "Lord of the Rings" during the service. I've been in Baptist churches where they are teaching Lent, and the pastor said he wanted to be our "father" in the faith. These things seemed strange to me. JB (email)

Dear Berean Call,

The Berean call has helped me so much in directing me to all-important correct doctrine. I've come out of the word of faith movement and it's so liberating to finally have the Truth of scripture explained. Recovering nicely. GN (email)

QUOTABLE.....

Have you ever done something that you regretted? Something that hurt yourself or grieved God's Spirit, and you experienced a loss of a sense of peace? Obedience and adherence to the Word will take care of that! But even more than that, do we see and live as if God's Word is more to be desired than gold and sweeter than honey? Listen to me: part of the heritage of knowing the Lord is joy of heart, even when you're being persecuted without cause, overlooked, belittled for belief, and even when you can't ever seem to get ahead, and trials seem to be without end. What's our heritage? It's a heart that rejoices all day because of the righteous judgments of God! One day, you'll walk on streets of gold. One day, you'll never be sick again or be treated unfairly. It only gets better! Knowing what's coming will affect how we handle what is now. The more we live by the Word, the more time we'll spend rejoicing, because, friends, there is great peace in not stumbling.

—BARRY STAGNER

TBC NOTES

"They Were Sad, You See"

I thoroughly enjoyed my time teaching second and third graders as a Sunday-school teacher. It was a challenge and experience that I would recommend for everyone who loves the Word of God and desires to teach it. My youngest son, when given the opportunity to teach that age group, asked me what I thought of his prospects. My immediate response was, "If you can teach that age group God's truth, you can teach anyone!" The challenge is to communicate the essentials of the faith—the gospel—in an uncomplicated way.

Jesus chided His disciples for hindering the children from coming to Him, and Paul noted that Timothy was taught the Scriptures as a child. That tells me that the children understood what was taught, which was able to make them "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15).

As Resurrection Sunday approaches, it's always been my hope that those who attend church (on that rare occasion, for many) will not only hear the gospel but have it *explained to them simply*, so they can understand. I can't help but smile remembering how all my Sunday-school kids would yell out the answer as to why the Sadducees were sad. "They were sad, you see" because they didn't believe in the resurrection of the dead and the hope of heaven. My kids understood.

T. A. McMAHON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

NEWSWATCH

News stories are selected for reader awareness and as an exercise
in discerning the times from a biblical perspective.

HILLSONG, ALPHA, AND CATHOLIC MASSES

EMERGENTWATCH.COM, 2/15/18, "HILLSONG SPONSORING CONTEMPLATIVE ALPHA – ALLOWS CATHOLIC MASS AT CONFERENCE" [EXCERPTS]: In what appears to be one of the latest atrocities in the ecumenical war against God's church, Hillsong churches are partnering with Alpha—a contemplative program that originated in the Anglican Holy Trinity Brompton—the church that was the European home of the "Holy Laughter" heresies.

The mega-ecumenical Alpha Conference 2018 in the U.S. was just held at Hillsong Phoenix on Feb. 8-9, and featured popular Catholic artist Matt Maher, the Hillsong Phoenix worship team, Eleanor Mumford of the Vinyard Int'l Executive, Catholic Bishop Eduardo Nevares, and former Willow Creek executive Craig Springer.

Photos of the event show Catholic clergy in full regalia holding up the Eucharist wafer and doing mass on the stage at Hillsong Phoenix. Anyone familiar with Alpha's links to contemplative mysticism knows this certainly is not a good thing. As a quick perusal of the Hillsong TV Channel will show – Hillsong is far from being orthodox, and is firmly in the "Word-Faith" / "Kingdom Now" camp.

(<https://goo.gl/yFWj8p>)

"SELFISH GENE" MISLEADS EVOLUTIONISTS

ICR.ORG, 3/12/18, "SELFISH GENE" METAPHOR MISLEADS EVOLUTIONISTS" [EXCERPTS]: A recent opinion piece posted on the Chemistry World website [by editorial board member Philip Ball] notes that Richard Dawkins' 1976 book *The Selfish Gene* deeply motivated a generation of biologists.... The book's persuasion notwithstanding, the article notes ongoing challenges to the validity of Dawkins' "selfish gene metaphor." It also highlights other inconsistencies in evolutionary theory.

As Philip Ball at Chemistry World opines, Dawkins asserts that the reason organisms have parts appearing like they were designed for a purpose, and why they are driven to do what they do, is because they are "survival machines" whose purpose is to act solely as a vehicle to perpetuate their "selfish," self-replicating genes. Ball astutely points out the scientific error of Dawkins' claim, "I will go

out on a limb and say that I don't believe anyone has ever observed a gene, as a discrete and autonomous unit, make an exact copy of itself.... It is not clear that a gene can be considered, from a chemical point of view, a replicator...[thus] once you accept that genes are not autonomous replicating...you lose any plausible sense of selfishness, even metaphorically.

(<https://goo.gl/ennqgS>)

DEATH TO "FILTHY, DEMONIC" CHRISTIANS

FRONTPAGEMAG.COM, 2/1/18, "DEATH TO 'FILTHY, DEMONIC' CHRISTIANS" [EXCERPTS]: Pakistan: Sharoon, a Christian boy who achieved academic excellence despite years of entrenched discrimination and bullying—and whose poverty-stricken parents had worked hard to put him in MC Model Boys Government High School—was beaten to death by Muslim pupils.

According to one report: "His academic prowess...only added to the disdain for him felt by other pupils." Another report says "there were repeated attempts to convert him to Islam. Sharoon however, never quit his faith to the chagrin of the Muslim children around him, exacerbating his pariah status." Then, on his fourth day at the prestigious Model school—Muslim students attacked him in the classroom (the teacher supposedly did not notice as he was reading his paper). "The violence," continues the report, "was of such sickening ferocity that poor Sharoon died where he was in the classroom." A cacophony of insults accompanied the beating; he was called a "filthy Christian" and a "demon."

Germany: A group of Muslims attacked a 23-year-old Muslim convert to Christianity. He was assaulted because "his attackers saw his Christian cross and were angry he had converted from Islam, says the report. "They asked him why he had changed his religion," before "one of the attackers tore the chain off him and threw it to the ground." The report continues: The unidentified man then punched the Afghan in the face several times. The second attacker then held the Christian by the arms as the first man took out a blade and cut him twice on the upper body with it.... The attack happened less than a mile away from the most notorious radical Islamist mosque in Berlin, the Al-Nur Mosque.

(<https://goo.gl/SaiAGQ>)

THE BEREAN CALL

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Smith—There are many New Age implications—both direct and indirect—in Sarah Young's best selling book *Jesus Calling*. In this booklet, the author, former New Ager Warren Smith, presents ten examples of those New Age implications. Lighthouse Trails, 19 pp.

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Kneas/Lanagan—The worship of pagan goddesses is most obvious with Wiccans. However, it is also common in universities and nursing schools. It is promoted by the media and is a component of New Age feminism. What's more, it has infiltrated mainline denominational churches and its influence can be felt throughout our society. Lighthouse Trails, 15 pp.

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Smith—Lighthouse Trails 100th booklet is about emerging-church leader Leonard Sweet. Many of you may not know who he is or know very little about him, but his influence in the church has been significant. This book outlines several of Leonard Sweet's dangerous teachings. Lighthouse Trails, 19 pp.

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Smith—For nearly thirty years, Oprah has enthusiastically and consistently communicated her New Age beliefs through countless New Age authors. Thanks to Oprah's high visibility and continued popularity, "the great heretical idea" that "God" and "Christ" are within everyone has been "widely communicated" and is fast becoming our "new consensus" and "what everyone knows." Lighthouse Trails, 19 pp.

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**Oprah Winfrey's New Age "Christianity" - Neale Donald Walsch, "God," and Hitler - Part 2**

Smith—Several months after the tragic events of 9/11, Oprah Winfrey did a special program on the ten most "memorable thinkers" she had ever met. One of those thinkers was controversial New Age channeler Neale Donald Walsch, who teaches—among other things—that we are all "God" and that "Hitler went to heaven." Oprah's high praise of Walsch provides important insight into the strong New Age beliefs she attempts to pass off as being "Christian." Lighthouse Trails, 19 pp.

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Kerugma Productions—In his own thorough, convincing style, Dave Hunt points out that deception in the church is nothing less than doctrines of devils. He explains the lies that have entered the Protestant evangelical church of our day, namely the denial of the deity of Christ, denial that forgiveness comes through the blood of Jesus, inner healing, the Alpha Course, etc. We should avoid being sidetracked by lying spirits. 1 DVD, 80 min.

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