

A MAGAZINE OF EVANGELICAL CONVICTION?

AntiChristianityToday

magazine

"CHRISTIAN" MEDIA REMAKING GOD IN THE IMAGE OF MAN

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

—ROMANS 1:21-23

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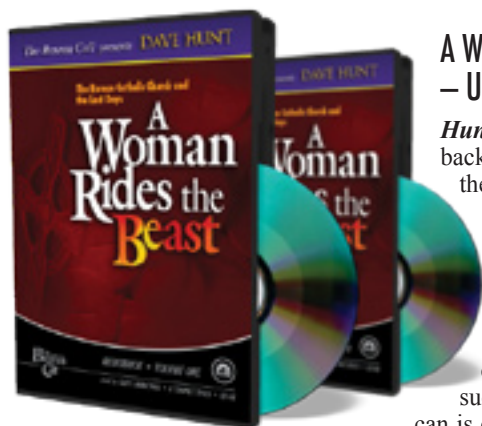
AUGUST 2010

CHRISTIANITY TODAY'S ANTI-CHRISTIANITY TODAY

by T. A. MCMAHON

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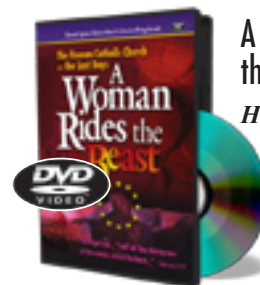
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McMahon—T. A. McMahon participated in a religion forum at the University of Oregon that featured views of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. Although the non-debate format required that the speakers could only address and answer questions regarding their own beliefs, the content is quite informative, even rather startling. Viewers will be better informed on worldviews that oppose biblical Christianity, and, we pray, inspired and equipped to proclaim the Gospel. T. A. presents his perspective as a biblical Christian; Rabbi Jonathan Seidel speaks from the viewpoint of liberal Judaism; and Hamad Alshammari, U of O Muslim Student Association president, offers his view of Islam. A question and answer session follows the brief presentation by the speakers.

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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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Christianity Today's Anti-Christianity Today

T. A. McMahon

According to the online encyclopedia wikipedia.org, "*Christianity Today* [CT] is an Evangelical Christian periodical based in Carol Stream, IL. It is the flagship publication of its parent company Christianity Today International, claiming readership of 290,000. The founder, Billy Graham, stated that he wanted to 'plant the evangelical flag in the middle-of-the-road, taking the conservative theological position but a definite liberal approach to social problems.'

"Today it, and its 13 sister publications, reach well over 2 million readers in its traditional paperbound form, and more than 10 million pageviews per month in their Internet form."

It was right after I became a born-again Christian more than thirty years ago that I encountered my first copy of *Christianity Today*. Having grown up Roman Catholic, my appetite for anything evangelical was ravenous. Yet even in those early years of my faith, there were things that I read in that magazine that troubled me. I recognized, in Mr. Graham's own words, "a definite liberal approach to social problems" in the promotion of "Christian" psychological counseling (see *TBC*, July 1999).

Of even more concern, however, were articles that clearly favored Roman Catholicism. This was disconcerting for one who had recently been delivered from the bondage of the false gospel of Rome. I remembered also reading an old quote from Billy Graham, which he had spoken nearly a decade before he started *CT*. He declared that "The three gravest menaces faced by orthodox Christianity are Communism, Roman Catholicism, and Mohammedanism" (*Plains Baptist Challenger*, March 1984). Incredibly, years later, among *CT*'s contributing editors and writers were Roman Catholics, including Catholic priest Richard John Neuhaus. It was Neuhaus, along with *CT* editors Chuck Colson, J. I. Packer, Timothy George, Thomas Oden, Richard Mouw, and Mark Noll, among others, who formed, were promoters of, and/or were signers of "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium." Their news release proclaimed: "[L]eading Catholics and evangelicals are asking their flocks for a remarkable leap of faith: to finally accept each other as Christians....[E]vangelicals

including Pat Robertson and Charles Colson joined with conservative Roman Catholic leaders today in upholding the ties of faith that bind [them]....They urged Catholics and evangelicals...to stop aggressive proselytization of each other's flocks."

The Catholic bias of *CT* is reflected in the *modus operandi* of Graham's crusades: they were, and continue to be, publicized and subsidized by each Catholic diocese where they take place. Additionally, the crusades continue to be outfitted with Catholic counselors who guide those Catholics that "come forward" to return to their local Catholic churches.

The list of Catholic luminaries celebrated by *CT* includes popes Benedict XVI and John Paul II (Graham told Larry King that he and the pope "agree on almost everything"), Mother Teresa, Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, Buddhist/Catholic monk Thomas Merton, and mystic Catholic priest Henry Nouwen. Catholic mysticism is further promoted by *CT* contributing editor Richard Foster, who is the godfather of the modern contemplative/mystical (read "Eastern") movement within evangelical Christianity.

It seems that no voice that advances apostasy has been omitted from *CT*'s list of contributing editors or writers: Ron Sider, President Obama's leftist theologian; Notre Dame professor Mark Noll; Eugene Peterson (who wrote his own bible called *The Message*); Eastern Orthodox followers Frederica Mathewes-Green and Bradley Nassif; former executive editor Terry Muck (who writes of his love for the Buddha); Leith Anderson (who promotes the experiential over the propositional, i.e., that emergent experience trumps doctrine); and psychology and Bible integrationist Eric L. Johnson, to name but a few.

All of this leads us to *Christianity Today*'s senior managing editor, Mark Galli, and his article of July 15, 2010, titled "Divine Drama Queen," which is his characterization of the God of the Bible. We've reprinted here extensive excerpts of *CT*'s God-demeaning/man-exalting article (albeit reluctantly, due to its wicked content) as further evidence of this "evangelical" magazine's continuing slither into the last days' apostasy. What Galli has written is *CT*'s latest installment of corrupting the faith, generated from decades of undermining the Word of God and distorting the God of the Bible. Editor Galli makes this so obvious that what he writes needs few comments on my part. Nevertheless, his

writing is in italics, and my words appear in brackets and regular type:

I like a tranquil, even-keeled, self-controlled God. A God who doesn't fly off the handle at the least provocation. A God who lives one step above the fray. A God who has that British stiff upper lip even when disaster is looming.

When I read my Bible, though, I keep running into a different God, and I'm not pleased. This God says he "hates" sin. Well, he usually yells it. Read the prophets. It's just one harangue after another, all in loud decibels. And when the shouting is over, then comes the pouting.

Take his conversation with Hosea....He orders Hosea to take a prostitute for a wife; she becomes a symbol of Israel's unfaithfulness to God. This is no down-on-her-luck-but-with-a-heart-of-gold prostitute like those so often portrayed in movies. This is some sleazy woman who, even when given a chance at a decent life, keeps "whoring."

God then tells Hosea to have children with this woman. When the children are born, he tells Hosea to call the first Jezreel, explaining, "I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel." The second, God calls No Mercy, because "I will no more have mercy on the house of Israel, to forgive them at all." The third he calls Not My People, "for you are not my people, and I am not your God" (Hosea 1:1-9).

This God is like the volatile Italian woman who, upon discovering her husband's unfaithfulness, yells and throws dishes, refuses to sleep in the same bed, and doesn't speak to him for 40 days and 40 nights.

[I refrained from drawing conclusions up to this point on my first reading of this article because I suspected that Galli would indicate his own misunderstanding of God. I guessed wrong. This is the kind of blasphemy that one would expect from militant atheists and humanists, such as Richard Dawkins, or foul-mouthed, Christ-mocking comedians like Bill Maher. It is total blasphemy—a mischaracterization of God as well as a denigration of His perfectly holy character.]

We may think this a crude depiction, except that Jesus—God with us—seems to suffer the same emotional imbalance. He rants about Pharisees and Scribes—or "snakes" and "hypocrites," as he calls them. So upset is he over sacrilege in the Temple, he overturns tables and drives

people out with a whip. And then we find him lamenting, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! See, your house is left to you desolate!" (Matthew 23:37-38). This God knows nothing about being a non-anxious presence. This is a very anxious God, indeed.

[It's difficult to restrain anger here. The Creator of the universe, the sacrificial Lamb of God, who paid the full penalty for our sins, and His Father, who sent Him to the Cross for our sake—they suffer from "emotional imbalance"?! They—whose Word tells us to be anxious for nothing—they are anxious?]

I'd rather have a God who takes sin in stride. Why can't he relax and recognize that to err is human. I mean, you don't find us flawed humans freaking out about one another's sins. You don't see us wrathful, indignant, and pouting. Why can't God almighty just chill out and realize we're just human?

[Has the reader been manipulated by Galli into fleshing out his own similar thoughts about God? Will he now set the record straight?]

It's that little phrase, "we're just human," that may be the rub with God. Sin seems to be a big deal to God because apparently we're a big deal to him. That little phrase, "we're just human," signals that we may not be as big a deal to ourselves....[God] believes that to be human is to be destined for glory. As Peter put it, he has "called us to his own glory and excellence," that we "may become partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:3-4).

[So much for repenting of the character assassination of God the Father and God the Son. Instead, Galli panders to mankind's self-image, dangling before us the "glory" of humanity. He then leads the reader to the next step, self-deification—the same lie that Satan offered to Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:5).]

That's right: he [God] thinks "just humans" can become nothing less than gods. Not in the sense of beings who should be worshipped, but beings who have become, in the fullest sense, bearers of the image and likeness of their Creator....He created beings with deep awareness of themselves and their Creator, who could envision the absolute heights they could scale and the perfect love they could enjoy, and who knew they could have all this forever and ever....

[Nowhere in Scripture do you find the word "god" (with a lowercase "g") ever used to denote a righteous person or entity.]

...And yet God gambled. He has thrown everything into this grand enterprise. He made the creation of these beings not a matter of course or compromise, but a matter of life or death. Everything was on the line with this roll of the dice. To win meant for these creatures a bliss that only God knows. To lose meant death and eternal destruction. There was no holding back. God was going to make human glory a winner-take-all proposition, even if it killed him.

[God gambled? Does he mean that God doesn't know how things will turn out? This is the heresy of Open Theism, which denies God's omniscience—denies that He is the God of prophecy as He proclaimed in Isaiah 46:9-10: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done...."]

So when things start going south, we find him throwing dishes and slamming doors.... God rants at us as an Olympian curses himself for losing concentration during a crucial part of the race. Or as a novelist chastises herself for lazy writing. For the righteous perfectionist (versus the neurotic perfectionist), every detail matters. God wants nothing less than perfection, because he knows that perfection is the only way for us to become what he created us to become: godlike.

[Galli must be having flashbacks to his college Greek mythology classes. At least I hope that's his excuse. Of course, he could plead insanity. How much more irrational could one be than to posit a "righteous perfectionist" who throws dishes, slams doors, rants, and curses himself. Again, this is unashamed blasphemy. It is anti-Christianity from *Christianity Today*.]

When the stakes are so high, of course, the consequence of failure, even in the smallest detail, spells disaster. It's like a space shuttle—one of the most sophisticated and marvelous of machines—crashing to earth because of a faulty oil ring. When God sees the space shuttle hurtling toward its destruction, he weeps, he rants, he pulls his hair out. And something inside him dies. Our God cares about us frail, fickle, weak human beings because he knows something we often forget: we're not "just human." He'll go to any length to get us to grasp and live into our glory, even if it kills him.

[Our glory? What about the glory of God that Galli has dragged through the gutter of his paganized imagination?]

This is why the Bible traffics in such dramatic language. There is nothing cautious, careful, or reasonable about the human enterprise. It's about being lost or saved.

Living in darkness or in light. Knowing despair or being filled with hope. Death or life. The Bible is not interested in a religion that merely improves the human condition, or makes life manageable. It's not about success or happiness or helping us all get along. These are paltry aspirations. No, what God wants is to raise the dead and make gods out of sinners.

[No! Once again, that was Satan's goal.]

So what we have, for better or worse, is a melodramatic God. He yells and throws dishes, and walks off in a huff, slamming the door behind him—and then he turns around and gives his life for us. In a foreshadowing of Jesus, he says to Israel through Hosea: "How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel?...for I am God and not a man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath" (Hosea 11:8-9). He's anything but calm and collected, reassuring and reasonable. He's as mercurial as gods go.

[God is] like the crazy uncle in the family. At some point, you have to let your friends know about him, but you'd just as soon avoid having to introduce him.

I much prefer reasonable religion with reasonable expectations, and a God who doesn't get bent out of shape every time his people trip up. But then again, I don't love as God loves. Not God. Not others. Not myself.

[So, are we to suppose that Galli was just trying to get our attention with his blasphemies for effect? Did we misunderstand his "literary cleverness"? No. What he paraded before us was a mockery of God akin to what Jesus suffered from those who gathered to watch Him being crucified and to what every God-hating humanist has since voiced.]

The road to hell is paved with reasonable religion with a non-anxious god. Most days, I'm pretty happy driving down that road. But I keep running into this Crazy Fellow along the way. At every stop light, he jumps up and down to get my attention. He pounds on my window asking me where the heck I think I'm going. He stands on the front bumper, shouting at me to turn around. When all else fails, he throws himself in front of the car. He's such a drama queen.

[Galli is "pretty happy" driving down the road to hell? God is a Crazy Fellow? God is a Drama Queen? I have two suggestions: 1) Send your reaction to Galli's article to the founder and honorary chairman of CT, Billy Graham (see p. 6), noting what seems to be the ultimate degeneration of what he started, and 2) Pray for Mark Galli, that he will repent. "[Regarding the wicked] there is no fear of God before his eyes" (Ps 36:1).

TBC

Quotable

One day at a time, with its failures and fears,
With its hurts and mistakes, with its weakness
and tears,
With its portion of pain and its burden of care;
One day at a time we must meet and must bear.

One day at a time to be patient and strong;
To be calm under trial and sweet under wrong;
Then its toiling shall pass and its sorrow
shall cease;
It shall darken and die, and the night shall
bring peace.

One day at a time—but the day is so long,
And the heart is not brave, and the soul is
not strong,
O Thou pitying Christ, be Thou near all the
way;
Give courage and patience and strength for
the day.

Swift cometh His answer, so clear and
so sweet;
“Yea, I will be with thee, thy troubles to meet;
I will not forget thee, nor fail thee, nor grieve;
I will not forsake thee; I never will leave.”

Not yesterday’s load we are called on to bear,
Nor the morrow’s uncertain and shadowy care,
Why should we look forward or back
with dismay?

Our needs, as our mercies, are but for the day.

One day at a time, and the day is His day;
He hath numbered its hours, though they haste
or delay.

His grace is sufficient; we walk not alone;
As the day, so the strength that He giveth
His own.

—Annie Johnson Flint

Q&A

QUESTION: I’ve come across something that’s been called the “Sacred Name Movement,” and I’m curious if any of you have heard of it. They disparage Jesus’ name as a pagan conglomeration of Zeus and a Greek healing goddess named Ieso and say that salvation is only achieved by calling upon the (varying) properly pronounced name of God, the Tetragrammaton, YHWH (or YHVH). They deny the Trinity and claim that the name of the Messiah also had to be YHWH or some variation. They seem to treat Hebrew as the original perfect language and also seem to deny the validity of the Greek NT and choose to believe that it was first written in Hebrew or Aramaic. I’d appreciate your thoughts or observations on this.

RESPONSE: We haven’t yet particularly addressed groups in the Sacred Name Movement such as the Assembly of Yahweh. To know that “Yahweh” (the closest to the four letters YHWH) is correct, and

that Jesus could and can correctly be called Yahshua—or, even more correctly, Yahwehshua, or “God” (Yah) “the Savior” (Shua)—is wonderful, but we do not recommend fellowshiping with any group that establishes this as their basis for separating from other believers. Their apparent intent is to help Christians better understand the Scriptures through Hebrew eyes and culture.

If any group, however, places extreme emphasis upon these aspects, it can be quite easy to begin to have a cultic mindset; i.e., that they are the only ones who have the truth and everyone else is anathema. From there, it’s only a short distance to legalism and presenting error that often goes undetected by followers. The Jews regarded the name of God as so holy that they would not dare even to write or pronounce it, instead using *Adonai* or *Elohim*. To make this a main teaching, or to say that it is “suppressed” information (as some groups do), can easily lead the unsuspecting to feel unsafe with any version of the Bible, any teacher of the Scriptures, or any group other than the one promoting this teaching.

Legalism is discussed in the article “Jews, Gentiles, and the Church” (see September 1989 TBC). We’ve been freed from the law (of sin and death) and from the penalty that we would otherwise have to pay if we were under the law. But we are to *abide in Christ*, who came to fulfill the law and in whom we’re enabled to live lives in obedience to His will and in accordance with His purpose. Galatians 3 explains this. We are now under the “law” of love (Jn 14:15).

Do we not think that when we refer to our Lord as “Jesus” that God knows exactly whom we mean—and men as well? Further, this “understanding” didn’t compel the writers of the New Testament to adhere to the sole use of “Yahweh” and “Yahshua.” On the contrary, *Kurios* (Iēsous), is used by Paul when quoting Psalm 117:1. Instead of “O Praise the LORD (Yahweh), all ye nations...”, the apostle Paul writes, “Praise the Lord (Kurios), all ye Gentiles...” (Rom 15:11). That is one reason why some in the “Sacred Name Movement” deny the validity of the Greek text of the New Testament. The Scriptures do not support their preconceived ideas.

Nevertheless, in the Old Testament, the inspired Jewish writers of Scripture used “Elohim,” as in Psalm 59 (see vv. 1,5,9,10,13,17). David does record “Yahweh” in verses 3 and 8, but why not in the others, if the premise of these folks is correct? It isn’t.

The idea that “Jesus” (Iesous) is derived from “a pagan conglomeration of Zeus and a Greek healing goddess named ‘Ieso’” is unsupportable. The name “Iesous” is found

in the Greek Septuagint. Regarding the derivation or origin of the name, it is easy to find the following: “Jesus, (je’zus) [Latin from Gr. Iesous, which is for Heb. Jeshua, a late form of Jehoshua or Joshua...]” (John D. Davis, *The Westminster Dictionary of the Bible*, Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1944).

In Scripture, the term *elohim* is used as a generic term for “god” as when speaking of the Philistine god Dagon (“elohim”—1 Sm 5:7); Chemosh, the god (“elohim”) of Ammon and Moab (Jdgs 11:24; 1 Kgs 11:33); Ashtarte (or Ashtoreth), the Sidonian goddess (1 Kgs 11:33); and Milcom, another god of the Ammonites (1 Kgs 11:33). For that matter, in Exodus 7:1 we read, “And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god [elohim] to Pharaoh....” Yet, no one paying attention to context and usage imagines that “Elohim” in Genesis 1:26 refers to anyone other than the Almighty God.

QUESTION: Could you please explain to me whether the soul and spirit are the same. If they are, why does the Word make a distinction between the two?

RESPONSE: First Thessalonians 5:23 clearly states, “I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless....” How might one differentiate between the soul and spirit?

Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the Word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the “dividing asunder of soul and spirit.” There is a distinction between soul and spirit and it takes an extremely sharp (i.e., supernatural) instrument to discern it. Consequently, any attempt at human definition must fall short. The soul is said to include the mind, the will, and the emotions. Jesus, in His humanity, said that His soul was “exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death...” (Mt 26:38. See also Job 10:1, Ps 119:28, Zec 11:8, etc.).

Some might point out that Jesus was also troubled in His *spirit*: “When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me” (Jn 13:21). It is clear that the spirit addresses issues beyond the mind, the will, and the emotions.

When He was dying on the Cross, Jesus committed his “spirit” into His Father’s hands (Lk 23:46). As for the human spirit, we know that at death it returns to the Lord who gave it (Eccl 12:7, 2 Cor 5:8, Phil 1:23). Prior to the resurrection, it is “souls” that stand before God. “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God” (Rv 20:4). Although Scripture gives us no exact definitions of soul and spirit, from the verses quoted and

many others, we are assured that they are different parts of the makeup of humans.

QUESTION: If the thoughts, desires and feelings come from the soul and spirit, and the brain is just the mechanism to express and exercise those issues then what is the spiritual condition of a person that suffers from dementia? If his brain is not working right anymore what is going on with his spirit? My grandmother was a devoted fruitful Christian, and then at age 79 she developed some kind of brain deterioration that had the same as Alzheimer's symptoms.

RESPONSE: The brain is a physical organ of the body. Therefore, it is clear that any deterioration of that organ may severely restrict what the spirit is inputting. Sir John Eccles received his Nobel Prize for research on the brain. He describes the brain as: "A machine that a ghost can operate." To "operate" a "machine" clearly shows a distinction between the "brain" and the human soul and spirit (the mind), or what Eccles calls the "ghost." The mind of the individual operates the "machine" (the human brain), which subsequently causes the human body to function as needed (<http://www.thebereanall.org/node/7230>).

Thus, if there is a damaged "machine" (i.e., the brain), it is not the spiritual condition of an individual that is in question. The person inside can no longer "get out." A radio that has a damaged speaker or a short in the volume control can certainly not deliver a broadcast of the most carefully enunciated words. It is impaired. If Eccles's hypothesis is correct, a brain dysfunction would adversely affect a spirit's ability to effectively utilize the brain. That circumstance, however, cannot tell us anything about the condition of one's spirit.

[Taken from TBC Q&A July 1986]:

QUESTION: When the Scriptures talk about "self," what do they mean?

RESPONSE: The Bible doesn't give a definition for self [but] it tells us some things about self. Look at Luke 9:23, where Jesus says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me." Self, independent of God, must be denied. That includes my will and everything that I am. Jesus said that I must even hate my life—I must lose my life in order to gain it. If I cling to my life I'll lose it, but if I give it up I'll find a new life. We were made "in the image of God" (Gn 1:27). We're like a mirror. It has one purpose: to reflect a reality other than its own. What would you think of a mirror that tried to develop a "good self-image"?

We are to reflect the image of Jesus as the Holy Spirit empowers us. Matthew 16:24-26 says the same thing.

Jeremiah 10:23 is a powerful scripture that every Christian should memorize: "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." We are made in the image of God. That means we are not self-contained, and it's the power and the life of God that is to be lived through us. And when we try to be self-contained entities we are in rebellion to God's design for us.

Even the personalities within the Trinity do not operate independently. Jesus said in John 5:30 that as a man on this earth "I can of mine own self do nothing." John 16:13 says that even the Holy Spirit "shall not speak of himself [i.e., independently of the other members of the Trinity]; but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak...." If He will not act independently, then how can we possibly act independently of Him?

So, this "self," which He wants us to deny, attempts to act independently of God.

News Alert.....

Wild at Heart Required Reading?

[In the June 28, 2010, *Time Magazine online*, the article "Mexico's Meth Warriors" detailed the violent acts of La Familia Michoacana whose "...grisly calling card is the severed head of an enemy. There have been at least 20 decapitations this year in their stronghold of Apatzingán, a colonial city of 100,000 inhabitants who live in perpetual fear of the gang. Recently, four severed, blindfolded heads—one belonging to a federal cop—were left on its main monument with a sign warning folks to 'take a good look' at what happens to those who cross the Michoacán mob" (<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1997449,00.html#ixzz0tsOwhgu9>). This same group is now said to base part of their ideology on the writings of John Eldredge]:

Violent Mexican gang hijacks U.S. evangelical's book, http://www.religionnews.com/index.php?/rnstext/violent_mexican_gang_hijacks_us_authors_book/ By Alfredo Garcia [Excerpts]: Drawing from an unlikely source, La Familia Michoacana (the Michoacan Family) bases part of its ideology on the book *Wild at Heart*, by John Eldredge of the Colorado Springs, Colo.-based Ransomed Heart Ministries.

Nazario Moreno Gonzalez, known in Mexico as "El Mas Loco" (The Craziest One), runs La Familia with rigid discipline and pseudo-evangelical spirit. Doubling as both a political and social force, La Familia is known in Mexico, a nation that has been plagued with drug-related bloodshed, for its

extreme violence. According to *Time* magazine, while Moreno Gonzalez ferried cocaine to the U.S. in the 1990s, he was influenced by Latino evangelicals and images of the mafia in *The Godfather* films. Later, he returned to Mexico with a sense of religious justification—and Eldredge's book.

The book has become central to La Familia's recruitment strategy and group mentality. For new recruits, the cartel turns to addicts in drug rehabilitation clinics, helping them overcome addiction before forcing them to join the group. Family values and religion are emphasized during the recruitment process, which includes daily group prayer sessions and mandatory readings. Included in the readings is Eldredge's book, Spanish translations of which have been found in police raids of La Familia strongholds. Eldredge's theology is based on a "muscular" view of Christianity, one that emphasizes an "authentic masculinity" that has been lost, he said, in modern Christian theology.

Central to *Wild at Heart* is an image of man as warrior, willing and able to fight the battle, rescue the beauty, and live the adventure. Eldredge says he has had mixed feelings about the group's use of his book. "You know, at first I was shocked and angry," he said, initially calling the mishandling of his book "pernicious....But after I had thought about it, I thought that I'm delighted that *Wild at Heart* has found itself into their cult because hopefully it will bring change."

[TBC: One wonders how godly change will come about in a terrorist organization that chooses to study this book. Using Hollywood productions, such as James Bond and Indiana Jones, John Eldredge seeks to help men "recover their masculine heart." After viewing the movie *The Gladiator*, he realized his own desire to be like Maximus, and claimed that God told him that he was "a great warrior—even Maximus." What do we know about Maximus? A polytheist, he sought bloody vengeance through violence and obtained it in his dying moments. Is this the example Christ left for men of God to follow? "For even hereunto were you called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Pt 2:21-23).]

BILLY GRAHAM'S ADDRESS:

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Aug 14-15 (TA)	Kilkenny Christian Assembly Kilkenny, Co Kilkenny, Ireland 087 243 2944
Aug 15 pm (TA)	Waterford Christian Assembly Waterford, Co Waterford, Ireland 087 205 9134
Aug 17 (TA)	Shanganagh Bible Church Shankill, Co Dublin, Ireland 086 077 6478
Aug 18 (TA)	Newbridge Bible Church Newbridge, Co Kildare, Ireland 087 645 4406
Aug 20- Sep 1 (TA)	UK Tour Marlow, Bournemouth, London, Manchester, Gloucester, Somerset, Heatree Truth4Youth 44 1494 764 913
Sep 8-11 (TA)	Great Lakes Prophecy Conference Appleton, WI (920) 735-1242

Letters

Dear Dave, T.A., et al.,

Thank you for your faithfulness in presenting the Scriptures so precisely and without equivocation over the years. We look forward to the newsletter eagerly every month. We take your CDs on our road trips, along with teachings of Bil and Scott Galatin. So each retreat or vacation becomes a time of spiritual refreshing as well as mental and physical renewal. P&CL (GA)

Hi,

I just got a website, and I put Dave on my links page—of course!...I was thinking about all the things that led me to do Bible studies for my friends, and then eventually to do a newsletter with studies and then a website. Well, Dave was the very first step. After I got saved, a friend gave me his newsletter. I didn't even know there was a whole world of ministries out there. I only knew about going to church, and my church was a mess. Dave helped me learn very quickly all the things that were not biblical, so when I studied, I could quickly weed out the false teaching and find stuff that was good. I found a good church and then started witnessing to people and then writing little studies to help my "babies" grow up! I am so thankful for TBC and I feel so much love and gratitude for Dave. KL (email)

Dear Friends,

I have just read Romans 10 again. Am I reading Scripture incorrectly? Faith comes by preaching to them that hear—are Calvinists so blinded that they cannot see this clear teaching? Dave, thanks for your teachings

and books on Calvinism. It certainly opened my eyes. I used to be Dutch Reformed, battled with baptism for almost nine years and now fellowship in a Baptist community. Calvin-"ism" reminds me of what another brother in Christ...once said: "There are only two "isms" worthwhile: evangelism and baptism—all the others are mostly bad news (atheism, evolutionism, communism, etc.)." DB (South Africa)

Dear Dave and Tom,

I would like to express our appreciation for your sound biblical teaching and advice given in *The Berean Call* and in all of your ministries. The fact that you remain true and stand firm for the cause of Christ brings a great deal of encouragement to us missionaries. AB (email)

Dear Dave,

Just finished *Cosmos, Creator, and Human Destiny*. Thank You! Outstanding work! As a former Catholic (*A Woman Rides The Beast*), and as someone who lived for a time surrounded by Mormons (*The God Makers*) I really appreciate your work. I bought a case of *Cosmos*, still have three left and I am awaiting hints from Him as to who should get them. Thanks again. God Bless you, Dave Hunt. JL (email)

Dear TBC,

Glory and praise to the Savior. What a wonderful and blessed time we had [at the 2010 TBC Conference]! Each of the speakers was excellent and truly complemented one another. Thank you, Tom and Dave, for an excellent program. God's blessings on you and your staff. You will be in our prayers. D&DS (OR)

Dear Mr. Hunt and Staff,

I am an old preacher—have preached the Gospel for over sixty-five years. I am still doing itinerant preaching. I see the move away from sound Bible doctrine. I believe Jesus is coming soon. I deeply appreciate your stand for the truth and authority of God's Word. May God bless you and give you strength to continue. BD (Canada)

Dear Mr. Hunt,

I [have] followed your ministry on and off from the days of *The Seduction of Christianity*. In those days I was just starting to watch Christian TV...and I was so naïve that I thought every show that was carried on Christian TV was blessed by God. Then I heard you...call out the apostasy of some of these people...I want to thank you...for not backing down on these impostors. Thank you for being a man and a ministry with integrity and one that will not compromise the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. BW (MS)

TBC Notes

Psalm 103

A Psalm of David.

¹*Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.*

²*Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:*

³*Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;*

⁴*Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;*

⁵*Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

⁶*The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.*

⁷*He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.*

⁸*The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.*

⁹*He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.*

¹⁰*He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.*

¹¹*For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.*

¹²*As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*

¹³*Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.*

¹⁴*For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.*

¹⁵*As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.*

¹⁶*For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.*

¹⁷*But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;*

¹⁸*To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.*

¹⁹*The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.*

²⁰*Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.*

²¹*Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.*

²²*Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.*

T. A. McMAHON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted”—Matthew 5:4



THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT THEY SHALL BE WHOLLY FREED FROM SIN BEFORE LONG, AND SHALL SOON BE TAKEN UP TO DWELL FOR EVER IN THE GLORIOUS PRESENCE OF THEIR LORD.

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The Holy Spirit will surely comfort those hearts which mourn for sin. They shall be comforted by the application of the blood of Jesus, and by the cleansing power of the Holy Ghost. They shall be comforted as to the abounding sin of their city and of their age by the assurance that God will glorify himself, however much men may rebel against him. They shall be comforted with the expectation that they shall be wholly freed from sin before long, and shall soon be taken up to dwell for ever in the glorious presence of their Lord.

—CHARLES SPURGEON
in *Cheque Book of the Bank of Faith*



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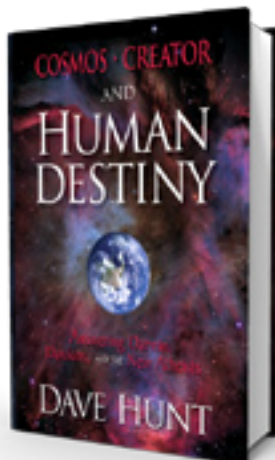
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