


earnestly

CONTEND

con·tend  Pronunciation Key (kən-tēnd')
v. con·tend·ed, con·tend·ing, contends
v. intr.

1. To strive in opposition or against difficulties; struggle:
armies contending for control of strategic territory;
2. To compete, as in a race; vie.
3. To strive in controversy or debate; dispute.

BELOVED, WHEN I GAVE ALL DILIGENCE TO WRITE UNTO YOU OF THE COMMON SALVATION, IT WAS NEEDFUL FOR ME TO WRITE UNTO YOU, AND EXHORT YOU THAT YE SHOULD *earnestly contend for the faith* WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS (JUDE 3). I THEREFORE SO RUN, NOT AS UNCERTAINLY; *so fight I, not as one that beateth the air* (1 CORINTHIANS 9:26). AND *he spake boldly* IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS, *and disputed* AGAINST THE GRECIANS...(ACTS 9:29). *Therefore disputed he in the synagogue* WITH THE JEWS, *and with the devout persons*, AND *in the market daily* WITH THEM THAT MET WITH HIM (ACTS 17:17). *I have fought a good fight*, I HAVE FINISHED MY COURSE, I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH (2 TIMOTHY 4:7).

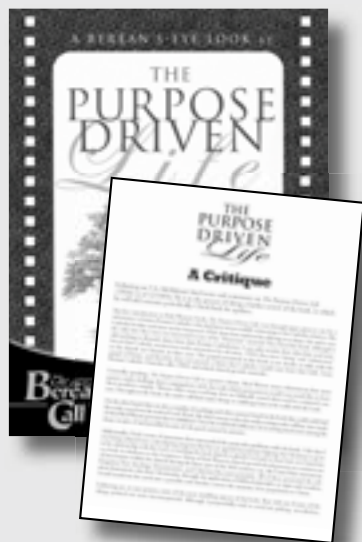
The
Berean
Call

JANUARY 2006

EARNESTLY CONTEND

by DAVE HUNT

WHAT DOES SCRIPTURE SAY ABOUT "THE PURPOSE-DRIVEN LIFE?"



• **FREE BONUS!** 16-page critique of *The Purpose-Driven Life*, by T. A. McMahon (see right for add'l copies)

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- 1) How biblical is *The Purpose-Driven Life*?
- 2) Can 20,000 churches be wrong?
- 3) Does *The Purpose-Driven Life* present the Gospel?
- 4) What could be wrong with "40 Days of Community"?

- 5) Is *The Purpose-Driven Life* just pop psychology?
- 6) Do you make God smile?
- 7) Are you best friends with God?
- 8) What is your spiritual "S.H.A.P.E."?
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ABOUT THE COVER: The word "contend" is a strong term with connotations offensive to many; and yet, it is consistent with Scripture's portrayal of believers as soldiers, wrestlers, runners, and yes, even boxers! Yet, in all our courage, boldness, and preparedness, we are to "contend" and "dispute" and "fight the good fight" in love—with humility and self-control.

THE BEREAN CALL

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EARNESTLY CONTEND

Dave Hunt

Hundreds of fulfilled prophecies prove God's existence, that the Bible is His inerrant Word, the Jews His chosen people, and Jesus of Nazareth the promised Messiah who died for our sins, has resurrected, and is coming again. Yet prophecy is neglected by most Christian preachers and writers. No wonder that the "last-days" apostasy warned of in God's Word is now upon us with a vengeance!

The few who do teach prophecy, when referring to "last-days signs," seldom mention apostasy. Yet when asked by His disciples, "What shall be the sign of thy coming...?" (Mt 24:3), Christ three times warned that the major sign would be apostasy, with false prophets and false Christs using false "signs and wonders" to deceive (24:4-5, 11, 24). That warning was echoed by Paul (2 Tm 3:8) and by Jude, who said we must "earnestly contend for the faith...once delivered to the saints" because "certain men [have] crept [into the church] unawares...ungodly men...denying...God, and...Christ" (Jude 3-4).

"False Christs"?! There have been many in our day, from Jim Jones to David Koresh. Numerous gurus in India claim to be "Christ." The false "Christs" presented by novels, videos, and movies have multiplied since *Jesus Christ Superstar*. The "Jesus" of *The DaVinci Code* is a fraud. The "Jesus" of ABC-TV's *Judas* confessed that he "blew it" in chasing the moneychangers out of the Temple. The media bombards us with false Christs!

That evangelical leaders called Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* "biblically accurate" is distressing. It was almost entirely unbiblical: A sinful man pretending to be the One who declared, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" and whom Paul described as "God manifest in the flesh"; this Hollywood "Christ" stomping on a huge serpent slithering into Gethsemane, and Satan tempting Him there; the two Marys wiping up "Christ's" blood with linens supplied by Pilate's wife; "Christ," knocked off a bridge on the way to Calvary, dangling from a chain and confronting Judas hiding beneath; "Saint Veronica" giving her veil to "Christ" to wipe his face, and the image of his face remaining on it as the first icon; a raven plucking out the eye of a thief on an adjoining cross; the endless beatings by Roman soldiers, giving the

false impression that Christ's physical sufferings paid for our sins, etc. *None* of this is in the Bible! Nor was there even a hint of the true payment for sin: "The LORD laid on him the iniquity of us all...it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin," etc. *The Passion* portrayed a false gospel of mostly myth!

The Bible is being "improved" by script writers, movie directors, and actors, who are replacing the actual "incorruptible...word of God" by which we are "born again," with dramatic representations. The entire New Testament is now on video, which may soon be the only "Bible" youth know. Who will earnestly contend?

For three years, "night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31), Paul warned the Ephesian elders about coming apostasy. Who warns about apostasy today? Rick Warren

AND FOR THIS CAUSE GOD SHALL
SEND THEM STRONG DELUSION, THAT
THEY SHOULD BELIEVE A LIE....

—2 Thessalonians 2:11

wouldn't dare for fear of losing his following. A prophesied apostasy doesn't fit Warren's plans and popularity, nor does it fit the mushrooming growth of other mega churches—or does it? Is the Bible wrong—or is this the apostasy foretold? What is the real condition of the church? A recent Barna poll revealed that 71 percent of Americans, 64 percent of "born-agains," and 40 percent of "evangelicals" reject absolute truth.

Paul faithfully declared "all the counsel of God [holding] back nothing" (Acts 20:20, 27). But the church today, like the world it mimics, believes the lie that to be "successful" one must always be "positive." Thus, most of the Bible is avoided. Were Jeremiah or any other prophets "positive"? Was Jesus "positive" when He said, "...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk 13:3, 5)? He repeatedly warned about hell. From which Christian leaders do we hear such warnings today?

Watching TBN, or reading James Rutz's *MegaShift* ("A megashift of spiritual power...is about to...put [the world] into vastly better shape....A whole new form of Christianity promises to bring a far greater impact than the Protestant Reformation"), would lead one to believe that the real sign of the last days is a worldwide revival (the "latter rain outpouring of the Spirit")

fueled by miraculous "signs and wonders." The Bible, however, calls it a deadly delusion led by false prophets.

Peter Howard, executive assistant to Bishop Michael Sheridan, head of the Catholic Diocese of Colorado Springs, warned Catholics not to attend Protestant services. In "positive" response, Ted Haggard, Senior Pastor of New Life Church in Colorado Springs and president of the 30-million-member National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), said, "New Life doesn't try to 'convert' Catholics" and would never discourage its members "from becoming Catholic or attending Catholic Mass." The 16th-century Reformers would be aghast!

The Council of Trent (1545-1563) was the response of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) to the Reformation. It pronounced more than 100 anathemas against the true gospel, damning to hell all who believe it. For example: "If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law [Catholic rituals] are not necessary for salvation but...men obtain from God through faith alone the grace of justification...let him be anathema."

On December 31, 1995, honoring Trent's 450th anniversary, Pope John Paul II declared: "Its conclusions maintain all their value." Those who claim that Christ paid the full penalty for sin on the Cross, who deny the necessity of suffering for one's sins in purgatory, and who reject indulgences to shorten that suffering are still anathematized by Rome. Yet in *The Body* (1992), Charles Colson denied that indulgences are still offered by Rome. I sent him the seventeen pages on indulgences from Vatican II, including Pope Paul's anathema upon those who deny indulgences today. Colson never acknowledged his error, which has led multitudes astray.

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association published a special "Crusade Edition" (1962, 1964, 1969) of *Halley's Bible Handbook* and boldly removed Halley's careful documentation of the evil of the popes and the slaughter of true Christians. Zondervan published a revised edition of *Halley's Bible Handbook* in 2000, which likewise eliminated references to the RCC's heresies and the millions of evangelical Christians slaughtered by Rome. Instead, it says: "The Roman Catholic Church responded to the Protestant Reformation by reforming and renewing itself."

When challenged about its lies, Stan Gundry, Zondervan's Vice President and

Editor-in-Chief responded, “The purpose of the rewriting was...to give a more balanced portrayal of the history of Christianity.” Whitewashing Roman Catholic doctrine and practice and leaving out the slaughter of millions of Christians gives a “more balanced” history?! And who owns Zondervan, publisher of *The Purpose-Driven Life*?

In 1988, Zondervan and its NIV Bible were purchased by Harper & Row Publishers (now HarperCollins Publishers), who put out pro-homosexual books such as *Making Out*, *The Book of Lesbian Sex and Sexuality* (“Beautifully illustrated with full-color photography...”) and others! HarperCollins is a subsidiary of Rupert Murdoch’s The News Corporation, which owns Twentieth Century Fox and Fox Broadcasting. The latter produces some of the most immoral, anti-family shows on television. Murdoch—to whom Pat Robertson sold the Family Channel (paid for by CBN donors) for \$1.9 billion—was knighted by the Pope after donating \$10 million for a new Catholic cathedral in Los Angeles. And Rick Warren claims to be Murdoch’s pastor.

Christian publishers have put profits ahead of sound doctrine and have made a lot of money by giving customers what they want instead of the biblical truth they need, selling out to the world monetarily as they already had morally. Isn’t this the opposite of contending for the faith?

On October 31, 1999, in Augsburg, Germany, representatives of the Lutheran World Federation and of the RCC signed a Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ). The Reformation was overturned! Colson says, “Justification by faith alone...doesn’t mean today among evangelicals what it meant in the reformers’ time.” The gospel has changed?!

For 1.1 billion Roman Catholics nothing changed. They still pray to Mary for salvation and wear her scapular, which declares, “Whosoever dies wearing this scapular shall not suffer eternal fire.” What an insult to Christ! The very doctrine of indulgences that sparked the Reformation remains a mainstay of Catholicism. Mocking JDDJ, John Paul II opened four “holy doors” in Rome and offered plenary indulgences for walking through them. (Catholic pilgrims came by the millions to do so, rejecting Christ as the only door to eternal life!)

Kneeling beside the Pope in front of the first “holy door” opened was George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury and spiritual head of the Church of England. John Stott said, “Evangelicals should join [the] Church of England in working toward full communion with the Roman Catholic Church.”

Do we believe the entire Bible or just the “positive” parts of it? Jesus said,

“Except a man be born again, he cannot see [or enter] the kingdom of God” (Jn 3:3,5). Peter said that a man is “born again... by the word of God...which by the gospel is preached” (1 Pt 1:23-25). Without believing the gospel, one is lost eternally (Rom 1:16; Acts 16:31, etc.). Haggard affirms “the necessity of being born again....” Yet he accepts Catholics as Christians who have been born again by infant baptism!

What is the faith (gospel) for which we are to “earnestly contend”? Paul defines it as the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ *according to the Scriptures*. Surely that involves who God is, who Christ is, the problem between God and man, the only means of man’s forgiveness by God, and the eternal consequences for those who reject the biblical gospel—all according to the Scriptures.

The entire Word of God is foundational to the faith. Sadly, the church and world are being robbed of the pure Word of God by professing evangelicals. Eugene Peterson’s *The Message* (NavPress, 1993) changes God’s Word into the “social gospel,” downgrading salvation to earthly improvement. (See *TBC* Oct ’95; Feb ’04.) The *Renovaré* “Bible” rejects divine inspiration and prophecies about Israel and Christ. (See *TBC* Aug ’05.)

The subject of Israel takes up most of the Bible. Its history and prophets lay the foundation for the Messiah’s identity and mission. If the Bible is not 100 percent true about Israel (as many evangelicals claim), we cannot believe what it says about Christ and our “redemption through His blood.”

For decades, Billy Graham has declared that his beliefs are “essentially the same as those of orthodox Roman Catholics....” He praised Pope John Paul II as a preacher of the true gospel and for “his strong Catholic faith,” hailing him as “the greatest moral and spiritual leader of the last 100 years.... I don’t know anyone else that I could put as high as he is. He’s traveled the whole world...spreading the Catholic faith....He and I agree on almost everything.”

It is indisputable that John Paul II, though praised by evangelicals, trusted Mary instead of Christ for his eternal destiny. (See *TBC* May ’05.) Yet, like Graham, Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptists’ Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, emphasized that any disagreements Protestants may have had “with John Paul II are [irrelevant] to the foundations of the faith.” Land praised the Pope’s “staunch defense of traditional Christian faith....” Pat Robertson enthused, “Pope John Paul II stands like a rock...in his clear enunciation of the foundational principles of the Christian faith.” Jack Van Impe has hailed the Pope as a staunch Christian and defender of the faith. J.I. Packer, a signatory to ECT, called John Paul II “a fine

Christian man” and declared, “Catholics are among the most loyal and virile brothers evangelicals can find these days.”

Who will obey Jude’s injunction to “earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints”? Not Rick Warren. Nor has Billy Graham ever raised a voice against those who deny the faith. Charles Dullea, Jesuit Superior of Rome’s Pontifical Biblical Institute, urged Catholics to attend Graham’s crusades because “A Catholic will hear...no word against Mass or Sacraments or Catholic practice.” Graham called the Mass “a very beautiful thing...straight and clear in the gospel I believe....” He recommended a biography of Pope John XXIII as “a classic in devotion.” Yet it contains page after page of John XXIII’s devotion to Mary and the Saints, worship of the host, and trust in the sacraments for salvation.

Billy Graham hailed Bishop Fulton Sheen as the “greatest communicator of the 20th century.” Though Sheen preached a false gospel, Billy exulted in their “common commitment to evangelism” and thanked Sheen “for his ministry and his focus on Christ.” Yet Sheen’s hope of heaven was in his 40 pilgrimages to Marian shrines at Fatima and Lourdes. When Sheen died, Billy said, “I...look forward to our reunion in heaven.”

Many evangelical leaders who generally preach the true gospel, commend, approve of, and praise those who preach a false gospel. Is it any less damning to souls for Billy Graham to praise and endorse Norman Vincent Peale, Robert Schuller, Pope John Paul II, and others who preach a false gospel than to preach it himself?

In *The Body*, Chuck Colson called for union with Rome. In an article titled, “Why Catholics are Our Allies,” he wrote: “And let’s be certain that we are firing our polemical rifles against the enemies, not [allies] fighting in the trenches alongside us in the defense of the Truth.” It would shock the Reformers (especially the millions Rome tortured and slaughtered for their faith in Christ) to learn that the enemies of the gospel were actually their allies “in defense of the Truth”!

Just as His people Israel, to whom He sent His prophets to warn them of their apostasy and its dire consequences, would not listen, so it is today in the church. Glad to follow any pied piper who plays an enticing tune, and unwilling (and one day unable) to hear the Lord, millions dance merrily on to judgment. Time on this earth will soon end. Let us earnestly contend for “the faith once delivered unto the saints”—and thereby rescue many before it is forever too late. And may our example give renewed courage and conviction to many others.

TBC

Quotable

If any one note is dropped from the divine harmony of truth the music may be sadly marred. Your people may fall into grave spiritual diseases through the lack of a certain form of spiritual nutriment, which can only be supplied by the doctrines which you withhold.... We must preach "the whole truth," that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works....

Since conversion is a divine work, we must take care that we depend entirely upon the Spirit of God, and look to Him for power over men's minds. [If] we were more truly sensible of our need of the Spirit of God, should we not...pray more importunately to be anointed with His sacred unction...? Do we not fail in many of our efforts, because we practically, though not doctrinally, ignore the Holy Ghost...? [We] are instruments in His hand, and nothing more.

C.H. Spurgeon, Lectures to My Students, pp. 336-37

Nothing goes further to help one understand the Bible than the purpose to obey it.... Nothing clears the mind like obedience; nothing darkens the mind like disobedience. To obey a truth you see prepares you to see other truths. To disobey a truth you see darkens your mind to all truths.

R.A. Torrey, How To Succeed In the Christian Life, pp. 60-61

Q&A

Question: Thanks for your powerful and poignant article for December. However, it is unfair to paint a sweeping generalization that "so much that passes for 'worship' in many churches today...is little more than the repetition of pitifully empty expressions from new song writers."

Isn't the most important issue whether the heart of the musician pleases God? Christian artists that are creating musical "milk" but whose hearts are pure may also be "precious in His sight."

I even wrestle with sacred "Christmas" music. Could we not argue against singing those carols since the holiday itself is of pagan origin and not "scriptural" and most of the music is shared with the Antichrist Catholic Church? And isn't even this a matter of the heart and personal conviction, rather than a doctrinal absolute?

Answer: I expressed my personal opinion out of deep concern for the shallowness of so much "worship." While I said that beat and style are not my complaint, some popular "contemporary music" has a worldly

rebelliousness to it and even a hypnotic beat that any witchdoctor would recognize as what he uses to call up spirits. But I'm only dealing with the words.

Yes, the hearts of Christian artists who "are creating musical 'milk' [may be] pure and 'precious in his sight.'" But worship songs for the entire congregation ought to glorify God and the person and work of Christ to the fullest extent possible. Why offer something inferior when so much that is far better is available?

Regarding the songwriter who lacks the maturity and appreciation of the Lord and is unable to give us anything but "milk" (no matter how pure his heart), let him mature before his music is considered worthy to lead others. While worship is "a matter of the heart and personal conviction," I disagree that doctrinal content is secondary. How can the heart be right if the doctrine is wrong? Tragically, many if not most "worship teams" have little or no acquaintance with the solid hymns of the faith and don't even know what they are missing.

Some "Christmas" songs are equally shallow and unbiblical. My criticism is the same for them.

Question: You and Tom both wrote good, factual articles in *TBC* and did ten radio programs about Rick Warren and *The Purpose-Driven Life*. Then, at his invitation, you [Dave] attended a pastors conference at Saddleback, and when you returned you seemed to have softened your position. As you know, Warren has had a column in the *Ladies' Home Journal* for nearly a year. I have yet to find the gospel in any of them!

What he does present is pop psychology exactly like Robert Schuller, yet you say he has broken all ties with Schuller. Here is just one example from his March 2005 column: "Self-esteem still wobbly...? These five simple truths will show you that you don't need to be perfect to be priceless.... To truly love yourself, you need to know the five truths that form the basis of a healthy self-image: Accept yourself; Love yourself; Be true to yourself; Forgive yourself; Believe in yourself."

This is typical of the non-sequiturs Warren offers. He promises five "truths" but gives five things to do, none of them a truth. This is pop psychology that even numerous secular psychologists and psychiatrists have refuted—and it contradicts the clear teaching of Scripture. Warren's "accept...love...be true to...forgive...believe in yourself" blatantly opposes Christ's "except a man deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me, he cannot be my disciple" (Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23, etc.).

How can you say Warren loves the Lord and has a passion for souls when his actions do not support such a claim? I think many people have been confused by your apparent change from criticizing Rick Warren to apparently supporting him.

Answer: Thank you for your concern. Hearing Rick in person and talking with him face to face gave me a different opinion from the one I had formed by reading his books and watching him on video. I would still say that he is a sincere Christian who genuinely desires the salvation of souls. That he so seldom, and then usually only obliquely, presents the gospel is an inexcusable contradiction—but that can be said of many Christian leaders. Joel Osteen has built the largest church in America (30,000 each weekend) by doing the same thing!

Rick's defenders told me that he wanted to gain the attention and trust of *Journal* readers before giving them the gospel—but he hasn't done so. [See Q&A Apr. '05.] Instead, as you say, he has given them the lies of pop psychology—again inexcusable. He can't be that ignorant—certainly not after reading the Bible for years. I had hoped through personal contact with Rick to help him. That opportunity seems to have passed. His huge success makes any admission of error increasingly difficult.

Rick is not alone in the promotion of psychology's deadly selfisms. They are now common fare in the church. Nor is he alone (and perhaps not the worst) in partnering with Roman Catholics and promoting AA's occult 12 Steps. That does not excuse Rick. But shouldn't we question the commitment to Christ and the gospel on the part of Billy Graham, Chuck Colson, and Bill Bright (all three praised Sir John Marks Templeton and his prize for progress toward the Antichrist's world religion and failed to give the gospel to the vast and needy audiences when they accepted that prize), J.I. Packer and every other signatory to ECT, Josh McDowell, David Jeremiah, James Dobson, and every Christian psychologist, and all who accept and promote their lies? Sadly, Rick is merely a reflection of the church of today.

I am not excusing Rick Warren. I believe he is a genuine brother who has been led into compromise in order to reach a wider audience—but with what? He seems to be only part of a compromise of biblical truth that has enlisted Christian leaders as never before in history and is playing into Satan's plan to produce a false church for Antichrist.

In his December 2005 article, Warren encouraged *Journal* readers to "offer a taste of God's peace to those who've lost hope... by following the example of Jesus." It was

good advice for Christians, but deadly deception for unsaved readers. The *Ladies' Home Journal* is one of the ten largest magazines in America with about 14.5 million readers. Millions of women who desperately need the gospel that will take them to heaven were instead treated to Warren's P.E.A.C.E. plan to improve life on earth: "Plant faith communities [any 'faith' will do whose adherents are willing to follow the plan]; Equip leaders [for earthly secular tasks]; Assist the poor [for a better life on earth]; Care for the sick [but what about the soul?]; Educate the next generation [for this brief life]." We credit Rick and his wife, Kay, with having tender hearts for the physical needs of the poor, uneducated, and dying, and for good works that put many of us to shame. But we fault them for hiding the gospel from those who need it and who without it will perish for eternity!

Question: Have you heard of John Piper's philosophy of "Christian Hedonism"? It is becoming more and more popular (especially among Christian youth) and I believe it to be a very dangerous teaching. Is Piper's philosophy biblical?

Answer: Piper writes, "Those who know me best know that I am a Christian Hedonist... my desire to be happy is a proper motive for everything I do. I do what I do because I think it will make me happier in the long run." This is the ultimate selfishness and it contradicts the Bible!

Christ said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Mt 22:37-38). If I love God because it will make me happy, that is not love at all. I must love God for who He is and because of His infinite love for me ("We love him, because he first loved us"—1 Jn 4:19) in paying the penalty for my sins in the purchase of my redemption.

Christ said we cannot be His disciples unless we deny ourselves, take up the Cross, and follow Him (Mt 16:24-25). How can I deny myself to make myself happy? That is like Buddha, whose greatest desire was to escape desire. For Piper to say that our highest goal is to make ourselves happy undermines loving God and denying self.

Yes, God has designed us and His law so that if we obey Him we'll be happiest. But if we obey God *because* it will make us happy, we have prostituted obedience to self. Piper's "Christian Hedonism" makes the pursuit of pleasure and joy the highest commandment and says that God punishes those who fail to make the pursuit of joy their highest priority.

Piper justifies his theory not from the Bible but from the Westminster catechism: "The chief end of man is to glorify God

and to enjoy Him forever." But the Bible never talks about "enjoying God," much less that this is why man was created. Solomon says that to "fear God, and keep his commandments...is the whole duty of man" (Ecc 12:13). Not a word about "enjoying God" being the "chief end of man."

To replace loving God with pursuing one's own joy as the first and greatest commandment makes man more important than God and will ruin those who adopt this philosophy. It takes little knowledge of Scripture, and little common sense, to realize that anyone who makes his own joy his highest motive will make the wrong choices in life!

Piper's "Christian hedonism" won't fit Job's "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Job 13:15). The Psalmist's "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God..." (Ps 42:1-2) becomes rank selfishness if the legitimate reason for seeking God is personal happiness. "Christian hedonism" will not help those struggling with fleshly lusts that seem so much more desirable at the moment than any "joy" that might result from resisting temptation.

Question: I have heard a number of prophecy teachers state that there could be a gap of weeks or even years between the Rapture and the beginning of the 7-year tribulation period. Why couldn't there be?

Answer: Referring to Antichrist, who will sit in the temple and declare himself to be God, Paul explained, "ye know what withholdeth [prevents] that he might be revealed in his time...he who now letteth [hinders] will let [hinder], until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed..." (2 Thes 2:4-8).

The only One who was alive in Paul's day ("now hinders") and will still be alive when Antichrist is revealed ("will hinder") and Who could prevent Satan from putting Antichrist in power is God himself. But God is omnipresent, so He can't be "taken out of the way." Paul can only be referring to the Holy Spirit indwelling Christians (a new phenomenon beginning at Pentecost — Jn 7:37-39). That presence of God will be removed when Christ fulfills His promise to His own, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn 14:3). Therefore, Antichrist cannot be revealed until the church has been removed by the Rapture.

But how long after? Paul indicates that as soon as the Holy Spirit, whose presence indwelling Christians has been hindering Antichrist from taking power, is removed, "then shall that wicked be revealed." Not only is it logical that Satan will act quickly

once the church is gone, but he must. Only the sudden, terrifying disappearance of perhaps 50-100 million persons from this earth could unite the entire world under Antichrist and cause the world to worship him. Nothing else could do it. Satan won't let that opportunity pass! So I believe that the Great Tribulation under Antichrist and the rule of Satan will begin immediately after the Rapture.

News Alert

Christianity Today, 11/1/05: NEW JOURNEYS ON WELL-WORN PATHS [Excerpts]—Rick Crocker wanted to go home. Two weeks into his sabbatical at a monastery in Pecos, New Mexico, Crocker felt uncomfortable. This was a strange place for a Christian and Missionary Alliance pastor from Erie, Pennsylvania, to find himself.

"One of the instructors, Bruce Demarest, is a professor at Denver Seminary who had studied spiritual direction there at Pecos," Crocker said. "To spend the time with someone who is thoroughly evangelical in the environment of Benedictine spirituality—*ora et labora*, prayer and work—with monks and nuns with a charismatic bent was thoroughly refreshing." Six weeks among them changed the way Crocker views spiritual formation.

In the nearly 30 years since Richard Foster wrote the classic *Celebration of Discipline*, the study of the spiritual practices of the pre-Reformation church has enjoyed a growing audience. To many Protestants at the time, it seemed the Quaker theologian practically invented the disciplines, until his exhortations to solitude, fasting, contemplation, and the like fueled the study of the Desert Fathers, ascetics, and monastics whose teachings were mostly the domain of Catholic spirituality.

"A lot of Protestants have discovered we kind of threw the baby out with the bathwater in the Reformation, in terms of practices," said Presbyterian minister Marjorie Thompson, director for the Pathways Center for Spiritual Leadership. "Now we're coming back and rediscovering them, and turning to our Catholic sisters and brothers because they're the ones with the expertise." So Protestants in increasing numbers are bringing the classic disciplines into their spiritual practice. Bible-only Baptists are finding Lent, exuberant Pentecostals are employing silence, staid Episcopalians are walking labyrinths, free churches are following *lectio divina*, and iconoclastic evangelicals everywhere are bringing art back into the sanctuary. Why, after five centuries of stripped-down, theologically precise worship and three decades of rhythm-driven contemporary relevance, are silence and stained glass cool again?

[TBC: Why? Because experientialism is in, sound doctrine is out, and apostasy is nearly in full bloom.]

Dave & T.A.'s Itinerary

Jan 11-15 (Dave)	Calvary Chapel Finger Lakes Farmington NY (585) 398-3550
Jan 27-29 (Dave & TA)	Calvary Chapel TriCity Tempe AZ (480) 345-6200
Feb 6-7 (TA)	Fellowship of Bible Churches Men's Retreat Mercersburg PA (301) 739-4245
Feb 24-25 (Dave)	Bible Skeptics Conference Whitby ON (905) 655-8381
Mar 3-5 (Dave & TA)	Word of Life Winter Wrap-up Schroon Lake NY (518) 532-2289
Mar 8-9 (Dave)	Prophecy Conference Allentown PA (610) 395-3613 ex 17
Mar 19 (Dave)	Bayside Community Church Tampa FL (813) 837-6007
Apr 21-23 (TA)	Calvary Chapel Yakima Valley Yakima WA (509) 249-1464

Letters

Dear Berean Call,

Thank you again for the monthly newsletter. It is such a blessing and it is the truth—not some distorted belief going around these days. [God] is still in control and I don't believe He will be grading on a curve, which is what it seems some want to believe. His word is true and He is faithful. MS (DE)

Dear Dave,

Judgment Day! is terrific! You continue to be an inspiration to me through your writings and radio ministry....Multiple sclerosis and diabetes keep me from getting out much, but not from continuing to grow in the Lord. In fact, I thank my God for my infirmities. This has given me the opportunity to study the Bible that I might not have done if my health were better. LM (OR)

Greetings Dave Hunt,

The article, "The Bible Is God's Word" (August 2005), helped me to understand some very disturbing things I have been hearing lately. I wondered where on earth such foolishness came from. I am glad you are out there doing what you are doing; you cover so many topics and so many errors and fallacies. I do not see you as some Christian star to be goggled at but a (fallible like us all but striving for truth) man of God, in love with the Lord and His Word. Thank you for being a watchman on the wall.... EJ (IL)

Dear Dave and friends at TBC,

My father and I first started "exchanging" Dave's books about 23 years ago, so I

know firsthand the treasure they are. Truth, clarity, and an unwillingness to compromise with this world are what I find in Dave's writings, and indeed throughout TBC's ministry....Thank you all for your unwavering commitment to THE truth. SS (Canada)

Dave Hunt,

I recently read *A Woman Rides the Beast* and am now halfway through *The Occult Invasion*. As an activist years ago, I was decrying many of the topics you discuss, especially Education, Religion, Abortion, the Equal Rights Amendment and Feminism....Actually, you have touched on so much more, and only The Book, the Holy Bible, has the solution. The world needs the Gospel of Jesus Christ—the entire Word of Truth—now more than ever....The extent of your research is astronomical! I am especially pleased with your exposure of the Catholic Church.... JB (NY)

Dear Dave and Ruth,

It seems to me that the difficulties we face help by testing what's in us. It's a long and oftentimes painful revelation....As the time gets closer to Jesus' return, intensity in situations seems to be common. [I think of] Luke 11:34-36. The comparison between the single [eye] and the evil [eye] is thought provoking....We wait on our Savior. If He doesn't "meet my needs" then they won't be met, and maybe I'll learn a new way! Thanks for your faithfulness and single eye. SD (CA)

Dear Reader,

The last three issues of *The Berean Call* were not very interesting. Repeat over old ground, etc....Dave goes...a long way to fill up his books with a lot of drivel which any Christian person can read in the Word of God. I am reading daily His Word and come across good things....[In my order] I notice a slip...now enclosed about the change in postal rates. Why quote mail prices to the outside world in *pounds*? Most of the modern world uses *kilos* and not pounds, just in case you people do not know. And lastly...why does David and others use the silly King James Version? Why can he not use a good translated modern Bible in modern language? So I have decided to cancel the subscription with you forthwith. And please do *not* send any more material. NG (New Zealand)

Dear Bro. Dave,

I have been blessed for years by reading *Berean Call*, but never have I been more blessed than from your "Victory in Christ" article in the November 2005 issue. Yes, some so-called leaders have lost confidence in the sufficiency of Christ, his Word, and the Holy Spirit to live the life of Christ. JM (KY)

Dear friends,

Due to the destructive hurricanes, so many have lost families and earthly belongings and their homes. We thank God for raising up helpers who are meeting the needs of these families and penniless ones. I do trust that people will see the hand of God in...sparing them from death, and that it will encourage them to turn to Jesus Christ while life lingers on. LB (FL)

Dear Dave,

Thank you for *What Love Is This?* I've been waiting for that book for years! I had always thought that "Perseverance of the Saints" was almost the same as Eternal Security (but poorly worded) and that Calvinists would enjoy the same assurance of salvation as we do. I had not realized that their assurance (or lack of) comes from their own perseverance (or lack of)—what a price many of them must pay for believing the TULIP doctrine! BE (New Zealand)

TBC Notes

Here I Go Again! Care to Join Me?

Every January, for as long as I've been a believer, I set a goal to read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation by year's end. What's my completion average? Dismal. Nevertheless, I keep trying. A couple of times I started in November in order to give myself a running start for the upcoming year.

The good news in all of this is that even in my weakest efforts I read at least half of the Scriptures. However, lest I forget the goal and nurture my self-esteem in spite of my anemic attempts, I need to keep in mind this embarrassing and convicting fact: It only takes about 50 hours to read the Bible through. So even with six to seven hours sleep per night, that leaves about 6,250 waking hours to accomplish the task.

If you would care to join me in the 2006 endeavor, we could make this a team effort by checking up on (encouraging, chiding, cheering on, harassing [in the Spirit, of course!], etc.) one another throughout the year.

T. A. McMahon
Executive Director

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This New Year, resolve not to pledge—but to pray!

New Year's resolutions are good, but fragile—that is, easily broken. New Year's prayers are better; they ascend to the throne of God and set answering wheels in motion. As we come to the beginning of another year, we would do well to make the following prayer requests our own:

PRAYER *for the* NEW YEAR

LORD JESUS, I rededicate myself afresh to You today. I want You to take my life this coming year and use it for Your glory. "Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee."

I pray that you will keep me from sin, from anything that will bring dishonor to Your Name.

Keep me teachable by the Holy Spirit. I want to move forward for You. Don't let me settle in a rut.

May my motto this year be, "He must increase; I must decrease." The glory must all be Yours. Help me not to touch it.

Teach me to make every decision a matter of prayer. I dread the thought of leaning on my own understanding. "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23).

May I die to the world and even to the approval or blame of loved ones or friends. Give me a single, pure desire to do the things that please Your heart.

Keep me from gossip and criticism of others. Rather, help me to speak what is edifying and profitable.

Lead me to needy souls. May I become a friend of sinners, as You are. Give me tears of compassion for the perishing.

"Let me look on the crowd as my Savior did ~ Till my eyes with tears grow dim ~ Let me view with pity the wandering sheep ~ And love them for love of Him."

Lord Jesus, keep me from becoming cold, bitter, or cynical in spite of anything that may happen to me in the Christian life.

Guide me in my stewardship of money. Help me to be a good steward of everything You have entrusted to me.

Help me to remember moment by moment that my body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. May this tremendous truth influence all my behavior.

And, Lord Jesus, I pray that this may be the year of Your return. I long to see Your face and to fall at Your feet in worship. During the coming year, may the blessed hope stay afresh in my heart, disengaging me from anything that would hold me here and keeping me on the tiptoes of expectancy. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

THIS MONTH SHALL BE UNTO YOU THE BEGINNING OF MONTHS: IT SHALL BE
THE FIRST MONTH OF THE YEAR TO YOU. —Exodus 12:2

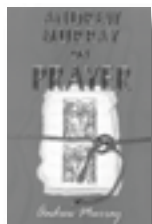
Resources to Inspire and Encourage "Effectual Fervent Prayer"



Prayer Power

Murray—Prayer brings us into vibrant contact with God, whose love and power are infinite. God wants us to bring our requests to Him, and He has promised to help. In these inspiring pages, you will uncover the prayer secrets of Paul and Jesus himself, as well as those of Hudson Taylor and George Müller. As you come to know that nothing is impossible with our prayer-hearing God, you will also realize that He is waiting to abundantly answer with showers of blessings. Whitaker House, 159 pages.

B05671 (wt .3) **\$5.00**



Andrew Murray on Prayer

Murray—Do you desire an exciting relationship of intimate communion with Christ? Andrew Murray explains biblical guidelines for effective, vital communication with God. Discover essential keys to developing a vibrant prayer life, including how to be victorious in prayer, intercede for others effectively, receive clear direction from God, and much more. Murray's writings can help transform your devotions so that you can realize the fullness of God's love, peace, and divine power in your daily walk. Lovingly explained, the principles presented here will permanently alter your prayer life! Whitaker House, 656 pages.

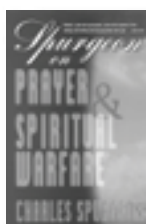
B97920 (wt 1.9) **\$16.00**



Prayer Guide

Murray—You may be weak, but your prayers can move mountains! This companion to Prayer Power contains keen scriptural insights to maximize your prayer life. Learn to let the Holy Spirit move through you as you earnestly intercede for others. This book will inspire you to pray, with daily topics for a Spirit-filled month of communication with the Almighty. Watch the Lord work in your life as you lift up the people around you in schools, businesses, and church. Impact the world for Christ through prayer.

B07100 (wt .3) **\$5.00**



Spurgeon on Prayer and Spiritual Warfare

Spurgeon—Prayer is the Christian's lifeline to God, and with it lives are changed for eternity! Charles Spurgeon knew the secrets of prayer and that God has established divine principles and promises for our every need. He reveals these principles and shares how God has answered the prayers of men and women since the beginning of Bible times. Because God keeps His promises, every Christian can have a prayer life that produces lasting results both personally and in the kingdom of God. Discover how you, too, can develop the essential characteristics required for power-packed prayer! 575 pages.

B29008 (wt 1.7) **\$17.00**



The Joy of Answered Prayer

Moody—Will I ever receive an answer to my prayers? Do I dare ask God for what I really want? Is this just an exercise in futility? Why would God want to answer me anyway? Questions like these may have plagued you for years; perhaps fear and shame over past failures and sins have even silenced your prayers altogether. Even so, the good news is that you are not alone. The even better news is that this book is tailor-made for you. Here DL Moody shares secrets of successful prayer and insights into reaching the heart of God. Discover how you can become truly intimate with the Lord and know *The Joy of Answered Prayer*!

B29005 (wt .4) **\$8.00**

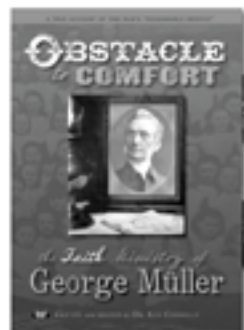


E.M. Bounds on Prayer

Bounds—This beautifully-produced edition is an anthology of seven classic works, all on the subject of prayer: *Purpose in Prayer*, *The Necessity of Prayer*, *The Possibilities of Prayer*, *Essentials of Prayer*, *Obtaining Answers to Prayer*, *Power through Prayer*, and *The Weapon of Prayer*. "Edward Bounds...prayed for long years upon subjects to which easy-going Christians rarely give a thought. He prayed for objects which men of less faith are ready to call impossible...." —C.L. Chilton, Jr. Whitaker House, 622 pages, \$17.99 retail.

B84160 **NEW!** (wt 1.8) **\$12.00**

THE REMARKABLE TESTIMONY OF GEORGE MÜLLER'S FAITH IN GOD THROUGH PRAYER



Connolly—George Müller of Bristol became a legend in his own generation. He was the builder of schools, a supporter of missions, and a father to some 10,000 orphans. The amazing issue of his life does not lie in what he did but in how he accomplished it. He operated by faith—relying solely on God to meet all his needs and those of the ministry he founded. He refused to tell anyone of his needs, mentioning them only to God, in private, on his knees. In reviewing the 63 years he spent in a true faith-based ministry, the results are staggering: 121,683 students taught; 10,000 orphans raised; 281,000 Bibles, 1.5 million New Testaments, and 111 million tracts distributed; several hundred missionaries assisted (63 foreign missionaries sent from Müller's church alone); and 10 other churches built.

In stark contrast to many "faith ministries" of today, all of this was accomplished without fund-raising appeals or modern technology: No satellite programming. No emotion-driven crusades. No mass mailings. No telethons. No tent revivals. No telemarketing. George Müller's testimony is a pure example of God's grace through "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man."

DVD038 55 minutes, \$21.99 retail **DVD** (wt .2) **\$20.00**

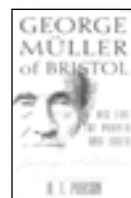
VT038 55 minutes, \$21.99 retail **VIDEO** (wt .2) **\$20.00**



Release the Power of Prayer

Müller—An easy-to-read edition with historical background and excerpts from Müller's own diaries, in which he testified that he knew of at least 50,000 specific answers to his prayers. His amazing account will both convict and inspire with faith and practical insight. Whitaker, 141 pp.

B87950 **NEW!** (wt .6) **\$9.00**



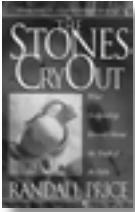
George Müller of Bristol

Pierson—These are the stories and life sketches of a man who lived as a witness to a prayer-hearing God. First published in 1901. 375 pp., \$16.99 retail.

B97555 (wt .9) **\$15.00**

NEW!

DVDs Answer Questions on Israel and Bible Prophecy



The Stones Cry Out: What Archaeology Reveals About the Truth of the Bible

Produced to convince skeptics that the Scriptures are trustworthy historical documents. Surveys biblical events in light of the recent archaeological discoveries and issues a challenge to believe the Bible based on the evidence it presents. This exciting video takes the viewer on location to see the archaeological excavations and hear from the archaeologists themselves!

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Jerusalem in Prophecy: God's Stage for the Final Drama

Jerusalem has a rich, fascinating history spanning more than 3,000 years. But the city's most significant days are still to come.

The stage is now being set for both a terrifying destruction and an amazing deliverance ... far beyond what anyone could imagine! Filmed in Jerusalem, the video includes interviews with Israeli and Palestinian leaders on the conflict over the city.

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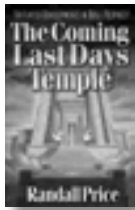


Secrets of the Dead Sea Scrolls

An introduction to the famous Dead Sea Scrolls written from an evangelical position that includes a look at how the scrolls impact the Old and New

Testaments, the Christian view of the Messiah, and rarely treated topics such as how cults misuse the scrolls, sensationalism and the scrolls, prophecy and the scrolls. Voted one of the best documentaries on the scrolls by Magen Broshi (former curator of the Dead Sea Scrolls Museum in Israel), this video includes the only film interview with the Bedouin who discovered the scrolls!

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RANDALL PRICE is Founder & President of World of the Bible Ministries, Inc. Holding a Th.M. in Old Testament and Semitic Languages, and a Ph.D. in Middle Eastern Studies, Dr. Price is a prolific author who lectures worldwide about Israel and Islam; he also leads educational tours and directs archaeological excavations in Israel.

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Explores the explosive nature of the Temple Mount and explains how the current conflict between Jews and Mus-

lims threatens to engulf the Middle East in a holy war, setting the stage for the fulfillment of endtime biblical prophecies.

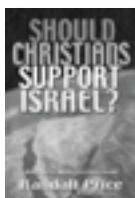
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Tackles the controversial issue of whether Israel continues to have a future in the purpose of God and whether Christian support of Israel is supported

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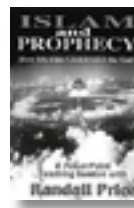


Searching for the Ark of the Covenant

Examines one the greatest unsolved mysteries of the ancient world: What happened to the lost Ark of the Covenant? What did the Ark of the

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