



# PSYCHOLOGY AND THE CHURCH

CRITICAL  
QUESTIONS



CRUCIAL  
ANSWERS

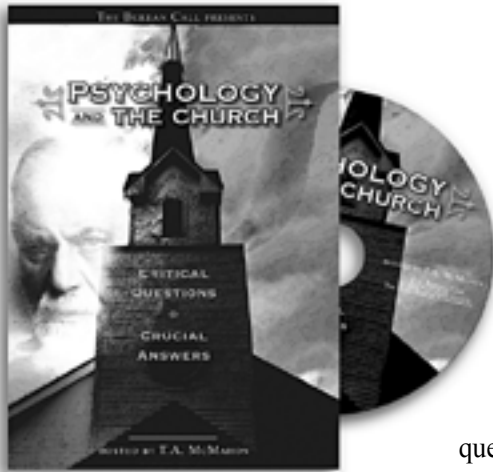
**The**  
**Berean**  
**Call**

MARCH 2006

*PSYCHOLOGY AND THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH*

*by T.A. McMAHON*

# TBC EXCLUSIVE! PSYCHOLOGY & THE CHURCH – VIDEO DOCUMENTARY



*PRODUCTION PRAISE REPORT: "It's a wrap! Thank you for your prayerful support!" —T.A. McMahon, Executive Director*

## PSYCHOLOGY & THE CHURCH: CRITICAL QUESTIONS...CRUCIAL ANSWERS

FOR NEARLY TWO THOUSAND YEARS prior to the rise of modern psychiatry and psychotherapy, the church has ministered to believers experiencing mental, emotional, and behavioral problems by using the teachings of the Scriptures and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Contemporary Christianity's embrace of psychology, then, raises an important question: Was there an insufficiency on the part of God's Word and His Holy Spirit during those two millennia that made it necessary for the church to turn to modern psychotherapy in order to more effectively address a Christian's problems of living?

Crucial answers to that question is the focus of this program, as we consider the influence of psychological counseling upon the church. In the history of contemporary Christendom, no secular enterprise has had such a profound influence on Christianity as has psychological counseling. The critical question raised by these developments is: Have they been helpful or harmful to the body of Christ?

T.A. McMahon, co-author of *The Seduction of Christianity*, is your host for this ground-breaking documentary. Featuring perspectives and insights of both Christian and secular experts including Dr. Martin and Deidre Bobgan, Dr. Tana Dineen, and Dave Hunt, this powerful presentation exposes the roots—and results—of Christianity's embrace of the beliefs of Freud, Jung, Rogers, Maslow, and others. Produced by The Berean Call. About 55 minutes (*DVD only—not available on VHS*).

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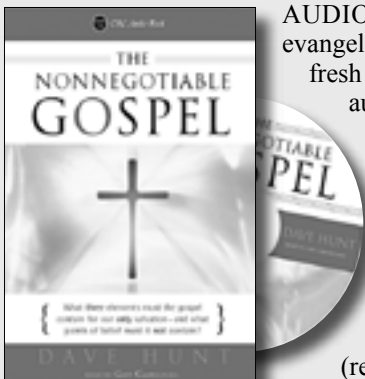
**NEW!** TBC'S NEW VIDEO ADDRESSES KEY CONCERNS:

- In the last fifty years, multitudes of pastors have added clinical counseling degrees to their theological credentials.
- Psychological theories have been preached so often and from so many pulpits that they are accepted without question by increasing numbers of Christians as biblical doctrines.
- The Christian church in the United States has become a major referral service for clinical psychologists and psychiatrists.

**ABOUT THE COVER:** As dark shadows loom over the church, the architecture of this steeple seems ominously occultic. Freud's gaze appears like that of a spell-caster; indeed, his destructive pseudo-science has enchanted many within the Body of Christ.

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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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MARCH 2006

## **Psychology And The Evangelical Church**

*T. A. McMahon*

Nothing in the history of the modern church has induced believers to abandon their faith in the *sufficiency* of God's Word like the pseudo-science of psychological counseling. Consider the following: the evangelical church is a primary referral service for counseling psychologists and psychiatrists. Many large churches have licensed psychotherapists on staff. Mission agencies are requiring their missionary candidates to be evaluated and approved by licensed psychological professionals prior to being considered for service. Christian psychologists and counselors are often better known and more respected by evangelicals than preachers and teachers. Who has not heard of psychologist Dr. James Dobson?

Most evangelicals are convinced that psychotherapy is scientific and is necessary to supply what is lacking in the Bible regarding man's mental, emotional, and behavioral needs. When I use the term, "psychotherapy," what I am referring to is psychological counseling, clinical psychology, and (non-biological) psychiatry. I may also use the general term "psychology." I recognize that there are some areas of psychology that are clearly distinct from psychotherapy and may have scientific merit and value, e.g., those fields that study perception, man-machine interface, ergonomics, some educational psychology, and so forth. They are, however, a very small percentage of the entire industry of psychology, which claims to have scientific insights into the mind of man.

So what's the problem with psychotherapy? According to numerous scientific studies, it rarely works (and then only superficially) and is known to be harmful. From a biblical perspective, it is an antichristian, religious counterfeit. Both conclusions will become quite apparent as we proceed.

Given the significant influence it has had on the church, the psychological way compared to the biblical way should be an issue of critical concern for all those who believe that the Word of God is their authority and that it is completely sufficient for "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3). How do these two ways compare?

They couldn't be more at odds. The basic theories of psychological counseling

are contradictory to what the Bible teaches about the nature of man and God's solution for his mental, emotional, and behavioral problems. Psychotherapeutic concepts regard humanity as intrinsically good. The Bible says that other than Jesus Christ, man is *not* good but was born with a sinful nature, "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

Psychological counseling often promotes the belief that problems adversely affecting a person's mental and emotional welfare are determined by circumstances external to the person, such as parental abuse or environment. The Bible tells us that a man's evil heart and his sinful choices cause his mental, emotional, and behavioral problems. "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23).

Psychotherapy attempts to improve the self through concepts such as self-love, self-esteem, self-worth, self-image, self-actualization, etc. The Bible teaches that self *is* humanity's main problem, not the solution to the ills that plague mankind. And it prophetically identifies the chief solution of psychological counseling, self-love, as the catalyst to a life of depravity. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves..." (2 Timothy 3:1).

The Bible teaches that reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ is the only way for man to truly remedy his sin-related mental, emotional, and behavioral troubles. "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he [Jesus Christ] reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in [God's] sight" (Colossians 1:21, 22).

Psychotherapy has shipwrecked the faith of many regarding the sufficiency of the Bible. Because psychologists claim to have insights into the nature of man and also methods for change not found in the Bible, it follows that the Bible cannot be sufficient for counseling or addressing believers' mental, emotional, and behavioral needs.

Psychotherapy has sold the church the lie that psychology can be integrated with the Bible. That ought to be scandalous to

any thoughtful believer. Since psychology and the Bible are fundamentally in opposition to one another, it should be obvious that there can be no real integration of their teachings. Moreover, if the Bible, the Manufacturer's handbook, isn't sufficient to cover all things that pertain to life and godliness, then His created beings must look elsewhere for their mental, emotional, and behavioral welfare. And if they must look elsewhere, then the Bible's claim to be authoritative, inerrant, and sufficient is also false.

How influential is psychotherapy in the church? It would be rare indeed to find a topical sermon with no supposed insights from psychology. Typical would be Willow Creek church near Chicago, whose influence is national and international through its 10,000-member association of churches. One researcher of church-growth methods who spent a year at Willow Creek observed, "[Pastor Bill] Hybels not only teaches psychological principles but often uses the psychological principles as interpretive guides for his exegesis of Scripture.... King David had an identity crisis, the apostle Paul encouraged Timothy to do self-analysis, and Peter had a problem with boundary issues. The point is, psychological principles are regularly built into Hybels' teaching." Rick Warren's record-breaking *The Purpose-Driven Life* furthers the acceptance of psychology in the church by including such psychobabble as "Samson was co-dependent" and "Gideon's weakness was low self-esteem and deep insecurities."

Why this psychologizing of Christianity? Well, primarily because the church has been sold three erroneous ideas:

- 1) Psychotherapy is a scientific endeavor;
- 2) Counseling is for professionals only;
- 3) Christian psychology reconciles science and faith.

Let's look at each of these. *First*, psychotherapy is not a scientific endeavor. Martin and Deidre Bobgan report in their book, *The End of "Christian Psychology"*: "Attempting to evaluate the status of psychology, the American Psychological Association appointed Dr. Sigmund Koch to plan and direct a study which was subsidized by the National Science Foundation. This study involved eighty eminent scholars

assessing the facts, theories, and methods of psychology. The results of this extensive endeavor were published in a seven-volume series entitled *Psychology: A Study of a Science*.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Koch sums up the panel's findings in these words: "I think it is by this time utterly and finally clear that psychology cannot be a coherent science."

Dr. Karl Popper, regarded as one of the greatest philosophers of science, after a thorough study of psychotherapy, declared: "though posing as sciences [psychotherapy] had in fact more in common with primitive myths than with science [and] resembled astrology rather than astronomy."

Secondly, counseling is *not* for professionals only. Psychotherapy, thanks to Freud and some others with medical backgrounds, has terms and concepts that falsely give the impression that they have to do with medical science. An understanding of the term "illness" is key to seeing through this mirage.

Can one's mental process—that is, his thinking or behavior—literally be ill? Our brains, which are physical, can certainly be, but our *minds*, which are nonphysical, can't be ill. So the term "mental illness" is a misnomer—a myth. Furthermore, with exceptions in the area of psychiatry, psychotherapists do not address the organic or physical problems of their clients.

So, what do psychotherapists do? Well, mostly they talk and listen. Research psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz spells it out for us: "In plain language, what do patient and psychotherapist actually do? They speak and listen to each other. What do they speak about? Narrowly put, the patient speaks about himself, and the therapist speaks about the patient....Each tries to move the other to see or do things in a certain way."

I assume that most evangelicals, whether in the pulpit or pew, can certainly handle the medium of counseling—which is simply talking and listening! But, few of us are trained professionals. We don't have an advanced degree in talking and listening, nor have we studied theories about human behavior, which are nothing more than the opinions and speculations of godless men. Furthermore, there are more than 500 different (often contradictory and sometimes utterly bizarre) psychotherapeutic systems and thousands of methods and techniques.

So, as nonprofessionals, we missed out on all of that knowledge-so-called. But still, aren't professionals more effective than nonprofessionals in helping people with their problems? No!

After reviewing the research comparing trained and untrained psychological counselors, researchers Truax and Mitchell report: "There is no evidence that the usual traditional graduate training program has any

positive value in producing therapists who are more helpful than nonprofessionals."

Consider the conclusion of a lengthy research project conducted by Dr. Joseph Durlak:

Overall, outcome results in comparative studies have favored nonprofessionals.... There were no significant differences among helpers in 28 investigations, but nonprofessionals were significantly more effective than professionals in 12 studies.

The provocative conclusion from these comparative investigations is that professionals do not possess demonstrably superior therapeutic skills, compared with nonprofessionals. Moreover, professional mental health education, training, and experience are not necessary prerequisites for an effective helping person.

Best-selling author, psychologist Dr. Bernie Zilbergeld, writes in his book, *The Shrinking of America: Myths of Psychological Change*: "...most problems faced by people would be better solved by talking to friends, spouses, relatives or anyone else who appears to be doing well what you believe you're doing poorly....If I personally had a relationship problem and I couldn't work it out with my partner, I wouldn't go and see a shrink. I would look around me for the kind of relationship I admire....That's who I would go to. I want somebody who's showing by his life that he can do it."

Now that's just good commonsense advice from a man who understands the field of psychotherapy. Yet, in this "perilous time" for the church, many (and the numbers continue to grow) have abandoned not only "common sense," but worse yet, they have discarded their biblical mandate, which is to minister to one another through the Word of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit. They've been intimidated by myths and have turned from the truth.

Finally, Christian psychology cannot reconcile science and faith. Why not? Because psychology is not a science, nor can it be Christianized. Of course, there are Christians who are licensed professional psychotherapists, but there is no recognized branch or stream of psychology identified as Christian.

Consider this statement representing the view of the Christian Association for Psychological Studies:

We are often asked if we are "Christian psychologists"...We are Christians who are psychologists but at the present time there is no acceptable Christian psychology that is markedly different from non-Christian psychology. It is difficult to imply that

we function in a manner that is fundamentally distinct from our non-Christian colleagues...as yet there is not an acceptable theory, mode of research or treatment methodology that is distinctly Christian.

How then do licensed psychotherapists who are Christians function? They selectively draw from the concepts learned during their secular education and training and attempt to integrate them into their Christian belief system. Yet, the concepts are all antithetical to the biblical way of ministering to a believer's problems related to overcoming sin and living a life that is fruitful, productive, and pleasing to the Lord.

You have to wonder why a Christian would turn to any of these wisdom-of-men approaches that were conceived by people who were so obviously anti-Christian. Freud considered religion an illusion and was known to have a hatred for Christianity because of what he believed to be its anti-Semitic teachings. Others, such as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, were blatant New Agers and occultists. Yet, consider this quote from a leading Christian psychologist: "Under the influence of humanistic psychologists like Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, many of us Christians have begun to see our need for self-love and self-esteem. This is a good and necessary focus." Not according to the Scriptures!

The Book of Nehemiah gives us a picture of what's happening in the church. Nehemiah (his name means "Jehovah is our comforter") is a type of the Holy Spirit. God sends him to rebuild and strengthen Jerusalem. Under the guise of helping Nehemiah, enemies of Israel attempt to subvert the restoration. Incredibly, the priest gives one such adversary, Tobiah, a room within the Temple. So it is with so-called Christian psychology today.

How serious is this psychologizing of the church? Although devastating even now, Scripture tells us it will far exceed what we can imagine. The Apostle Paul is emphatic in his warning (2 Timothy 3:1-5) that "in the last days" man's condition will be "perilous." That warning begins with a characteristic that is the cornerstone of humanistic psychology and which Paul indicates (verses 2-5) is the source of a host of evils: self-love. Next month, we will consider the prophetic aspects of psychology and Christian psychology as they contribute to the formation of the apostate church and the religion of the Antichrist. [TBC: Parts of this article were taken from the DVD *Psychology and the Church: Critical Questions...Crucial Answers*. See our resource materials.] —TBC



## Quotable .....

God has not promised His people a smooth voyage—only a safe landing. Heaven is not always angry when He strikes; for He most chastises those whom most He likes.

*W. Graham Scroggie*, spoken from experience after many trials including being dismissed as pastor from two different churches, *They Knew Their God*, Vol 5, 192-93

He has no enemies, you say? My friend,  
your boast is poor:  
He who fights valiantly in the fray of  
duty, that the brave endure,  
Must have made foes. If he has none,  
small is the work that he has done.  
He has opposed no traitor's stand;  
Has rescued none from Satan's hand?  
Has never turned the wrong to right? He's  
been a coward in the fight!

—Anonymous

## Q&A .....

**QUESTION: Does your mention in the January 2006 TBC of the “terrifying disappearance of perhaps 50-100 million persons from this earth” (at the Rapture) indicate your belief that approximately one out of a hundred of earth’s inhabitants are genuine heaven-bound believers?**

**ANSWER:** My figure was an estimate—only God knows hearts. About one-third of earth’s inhabitants (two billion) claim to be Christians. Fifty percent of these are Roman Catholics and twenty percent are orthodox. They all follow the same false gospel (that cannot save) of salvation through works, baptism and the other sacraments, the intervention of Mary and the other “saints,” etc. They are lost, yet many evangelicals rob them of salvation by calling them our “brothers and sisters in Christ” and refusing to confront them with the biblical gospel.

A high percentage of so-called protestants who call themselves Christians do not believe the gospel that saves. Jesus said that the way was narrow and the gate strait that leads to life and that few would be saved (Mt 7:13,14; Lk 13:23,24).

The Lord warned that some who seemed to be first would be last (Mk 10:31) and that many who thought they had done miracles in His name would be doomed for eternity in spite of claiming to have known and served Him (Mt 7:21-23). It behooves each of us to examine his or her own heart as Paul commanded (2 Cor 13:5).

**QUESTION: I recently purchased one of TBC’s devotional calendars, *Apples of Gold*. I was very concerned by the commentary on John 12:32. The paragraph above the verse asked, “Is it the Holy Spirit or the Father who draws us?” In John 12:32, Jesus plainly said, “I, if I be lifted up...will draw all men unto me.” To change the meaning of this verse this way borders on blasphemy. Frankly, I am very displeased and would like an explanation from you.**

**ANSWER:** The comment on the calendar for that day says: “Is it the Holy Spirit or the Father who draws us? It is possible that any disagreement lies in semantics. God is a Spirit, declares the scripture (Jn 4:24) and He is also holy (Ps 22:3). Therefore, we might be splitting hairs to argue that the Father draws us and the Holy Spirit never does. Indeed, as fallible humans we would have great difficulty in trying to fully compartmentalize the functions of the Godhead!”

John 12:32 then follows below by itself, not as though the comment above were explaining it but as the verse for the day.

Yes, John 12:32 says that Christ draws all men. But Christ also said, “No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him” (Jn 6:44). Thus, we can neither say that only Christ draws sinners to Himself or that only the Father does so. Obviously, it is both. Jesus said, “I and my Father are one” (Jn 10:30).

What about the Holy Spirit? Surely there is no schism in the Godhead. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one. Neither acts independently of the others. That would be impossible. What one does, all do in unison. Yet there seem to be different functions within the Godhead. The Trinity is a mystery that we cannot fully fathom.

I don’t see that the “meaning of the verse [has been] changed.” If I misunderstand your objection, please explain further.

**QUESTION: I’ve been surprised at the worldwide stir created by the Danish cartoons about Muhammad—not only by the predictable outrage, riots, and violence from Muslims but by the attention it has received in the non-Muslim world. Should such cartoons have been published? Do they do more harm than good? What is your reaction?**

**ANSWER:** The Danish cartoons are very mild compared with those regularly published in Muslim countries. Almost daily, Muslim cartoons mock Christians, Christianity, Jews, and Judaism, depict Jews as Nazis, as rats, as cannibals eating flesh of

Arabs and drinking their blood, etc. These are habitually enjoyed by the very Muslims who rioted to protest the Danish cartoons. This is worse than dishonesty—this is the ugly truth revealed of how Islam corrupts the human mind and spirit. The riots have ripped off the “Islam is peace” mask before a horrified West still reluctant to identify the real enemy!

The media (including Fox News) claims that rioters and terrorists represent a very small fanatical Muslim fringe. Not true! As Condoleezza Rice charged, Muslim leaders organized and urged the rioters on. The same Muslim countries that publish the worst anti-Semitic and anti-Christian cartoons are boycotting Danish goods. Malaysia made possession of the cartoons a crime. Such pressure must not succeed in imposing Islamic demands upon the West!

Palestinian gunmen took over the EU office in Gaza City, where an Imam at the Omari Mosque told 9,000 worshipers that the cartoonists should be beheaded; Danish embassies in many countries have been sacked and some burned, and Danish flags torn down and burned along with products from Denmark; Western businesses have been attacked; the death toll was still rising when this was written.

The Qur’an and Islam trash Christianity, denying Christ’s deity, that He died for our sins, that He resurrected, etc. Christianity is outlawed in Saudi Arabia (our “friend and ally” and the largest financier of terrorism!). By Saudi law, no Jew may enter Saudi Arabia. Any Jew who did, would be torn apart as the frenzied “Palestinian” mob in October 2000 literally tore apart with bare hands the two Israeli reservists who made a wrong turn into Ramallah. The murderers danced in joy while displaying for TV their victims’ entrails held high in bloody hands—and all the while shouting, “Allahu Akbar,” Allah is the greatest! Christians and Jews are persecuted and killed *in the name of Allah* wherever Muslims have the power to do so. And these are the self-righteous people who riot over a few cartoons!

In 1977, an English photographer secretly filmed the public execution in Saudi Arabia of Princess Mishael bint Fahd bin Mohammed (shot six times in the head) and her boyfriend, Khalid Muhallah (beheaded), but Western governments squelched the film. Carter opposed its airing on PBS. Bill Clinton recently warned of “rising anti-Islamic prejudice”—but he is silent about Muslims killing hundreds of thousands of non-Muslims and destroying thousands of churches in Indonesia, Nigeria, Sudan, et al.! That’s going on right now.

To the Muslim, terrorism is peace. Those who blow up innocent women and children are heroes rewarded by Allah with non-stop

sex with countless virgins in paradise. Nor is the declaration by Iran's president that Israel must be wiped off the map anything new. In *Judgment Day!* we provide dozens of quotes from Arab/Muslim leaders over the past 60 years demanding the same. No Arab map even shows Israel's existence. And Muslims riot to protest a few cartoons!

The God of the Bible says, "Come now, and let us reason together..." (Is 1:18); but there is no reasoning with Islam. All it knows is force. If the West weakens and gives in to the rioters once more, where will it end? The rioters demand that the cartoonists be beheaded. Suppose Muslim countries threaten to withhold oil until this happens? Will the West comply?

Muhammad declared that Allah had commanded him to fight all non-Muslims until "all people" had yielded to Islam. Every Muslim, no matter how "moderate," is obligated to join this fight. What if the riots will not cease and oil will not flow until the entire world confesses, "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet"? What then?

Intimidated by the threat of violence or an oil embargo, the West has toadied up to Islam by promoting the lie that Islam is peace, even though it flies in the face of 1,400 years of history and mocks the millions slaughtered by Muslims. The West must finally take an unyielding stand for justice and truth. Sadly, President Bush is one of the foremost in catering to Islam.

The cartoons originated last September in the Danish paper *Jyllands-Posten*. Muslims in Denmark made no protest. Months later, the cartoons were spread throughout Muslim countries, and Imams rallied the rabble to riot. The cartoons can be viewed at [michellemalkin.com/archives/004413.htm](http://michellemalkin.com/archives/004413.htm). One shows Muhammad standing at the gate of heaven and greeting a line of newly arriving suicide bombers, "Stop! Stop! We ran out of virgins." It legitimately asks what "God" would give a reward in heaven for murdering innocent women and children (repugnant to any normal conscience), as well as where these hundreds of millions of virgins come from to reward Muslim jihadists over the 14 centuries of Islam's bloody history.

The cartoon most often cited shows Muhammad wearing a turban bomb. And those who support suicide bombers complain?! Muhammad established Islam with terrorism, attacking caravans and villages for plunder and killing all who would not convert to Islam. Had bombs been available, he surely would have used them. Islam was spread from France to China by violent conquest at the cost of millions of lives. Today's riots are consistent with Islam's history.

Violence and terrorism are endemic to Islam. It makes "converts" by the threat of

death and holds them by fear. The penalty for attempting to leave this "religion of peace" is death. Worldwide terrorism is encouraged by a cowering and obsequious West that has licked the boots of Islam to keep the oil flowing. Truth, justice, and right have been sacrificed to evil on the altar of compromise, intimidation and fear.

In 1989, when Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini demanded the murder of British author Salman Rushdie for exposing the "Satanic Verses" in the Qur'an, other publishers should have supported him by also publishing the book. Instead, he has been in hiding to this day.

Yasser Arafat, with the blood of millions on his hands, was given the Nobel Peace Prize and a standing ovation at the UN when he called for Israel's destruction. France treated him like a hero in his dying days and was rewarded by thousands of Muslims going on a rampage of anarchy last year in the worst riots since the 1789-99 Revolution. We have given Muslims full freedom in this country and allowed them to build thousands of mosques which become centers for terrorism. Our reward was 9-11!

It is encouraging that this time Western media and governments are not all surrendering to Islam's bullying threats! Other newspapers in France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, and even in Jordan have republished the cartoons in support of the Danish paper. Had Salman Rushdie been supported like this, we would not be in today's intimidated position.

Danish Prime Minister Fogh Rasmussen has refused to apologize, stating that the government cannot interfere with freedom of the press—a concept anathema to Islam—but he fails to mention the far worse and continuous Muslim cartoons. Shamefully, British Foreign Minister Jack Straw criticized European media outlets for republishing the caricatures. Such cowardice will only encourage more suicide bombings in Britain. In the meantime, some Muslim leaders are backing off in embarrassment as Islam is being exposed and the West is refusing to be intimidated further.

There are hopeful signs that the West will no longer stomach the lie that Islam is a religion of peace! Let us pray that the world will awaken to the truth about Islam and will begin to expose and oppose it vigorously before it is too late.

**QUESTION: The Qur'an specifically forbids freedom of religion, demands a state religion, and advocates the violent overthrow of all non-Muslim governments, which includes the United States. Then how can President Bush praise the Qur'an as the Word of God and boast of adding it to the White House library?**

**ANSWER:** That is a logical question that every citizen ought to ask the President. He carries "political correctness" much too far! Millions of Americans ought to inundate the White House with complaints. He thinks he is pacifying the Muslims. In fact, he is only encouraging them to believe that no matter how much terrorism they effect, the United States will continue to blame it all on "fanatics" and "extremists" and continue in its delusion that "Islam is peace." Muslims see this as a sign of weakness to be exploited.

## News Alert .....

**Dakota Voice, 02/14/06: PREACHING THE WORD—ON GLOBAL WARMING?** Raymond J. Keating [*Excerpts*]  
Do you ever get the feeling that some pastors and priests just aren't happy with their jobs—that they have become bored with the business of saving souls, and seek more tangible distractions? How else to explain the misuse of Holy Scripture to justify ventures in the realms of social activism by church leaders? Every person in the United States has the right to spout off their views about any topic they like. Trouble arises, however, when churches and clergy in their official capacities start staking out political positions on topics straying far from Scripture. Indeed, the environment has become a fashionable favorite. Liberal church leaders have been using their positions to rail against so-called manmade global warming for some time, and now this collection of evangelicals has joined the chorus.

Pastor Rick Warren was one of the 86 who signed the "Climate Change: An Evangelical Call to Action." So, where does activism on global warming fit in? These evangelicals cite assorted, vague passages from Scripture, arguing that these somehow support a particular environmental policy agenda. Not only is all of this atrocious theology, but it also happens to be bad economics and questionable, at best, climate science. The declaration ignores that while many in the scientific community acknowledge some inconsistent, uneven, and slight warming, there is widespread disagreement over possible causes.

Nonetheless, these Christian leaders assert: "Millions of people could die in this century because of climate change, most of them our poorest global neighbors." Such a statement is grossly irresponsible.

In the end, statements like this one on global warming from church leaders do the most damage by undercutting the church's moral authority. After all, if pastors offer worthless declarations on environmental policy, then how many people wonder about their authority to speak on abortion, marriage, or even on saving souls?

[TBC: Anyone remember Y2K?]

## Dave & T.A.'s Itinerary

<b>Mar 3-5</b> (Dave & TA)	<b>Word of Life Winter Wrap-up</b> Schroon Lake NY (518) 532-2289
<b>Mar 8-10</b> (Dave)	<b>Prophecy Conference</b> Allentown PA (610) 395-3613
<b>Mar 19</b> (Dave)	<b>Bayside Community Church</b> Tampa FL (813) 837-6007
<b>Apr 1</b> (Dave)	<b>Calvary Chapel Philadelphia</b> Philadelphia PA (215) 969-1520
<b>Apr 2</b> (Dave)	<b>Calvary Chapel Chester Springs</b> Chester Springs PA (610) 524-5338
<b>Apr 21-23</b> (TA)	<b>Calvary Chapel Yakima Valley</b> Yakima WA (509) 249-1464
<b>May 12-28</b> (Dave)	<b>Prophetic Witness Ministries</b> UK Tour 01772 452846 <a href="http://www.pwmi.org">http://www.pwmi.org</a>

## Letters .....

### Dear Dave and Tom,

I noted in your April [05] newsletter the reference to the persecution of Christians in Northern Nigeria....But...there is a greater challenge for Christianity in Nigeria....I went out searching for some of the books listed in *TBC*, and I found none—not a single one. I found...books on motivation, psychology, business/marketing—offering various ways to be happy and successful. In Nigeria, millions run after “men of God” who offer them miracles, healing, deliverance from the demonic oppression, but very little on the truth of the Word of God. AA (Nigeria)

### Dear Mr. Hunt,

I was deeply shocked at your response to the question about Rick Warren in January's Q&A....Your reply seems almost wishy-washy....If Mr. Warren is really a “sincere Christian who genuinely desires the salvation of souls,” then why is he not spreading the Gospel...when he has numerous, beautiful opportunities to reach millions?...This nonsense about gaining “the trust of [Ladies' Home] Journal readers before giving them the gospel” is just that—nonsense. Peter did not wait to gain the trust of the crowd before he presented them with the Gospel in Acts 2 and 3....You call psychology's selfisms “deadly”...yet Mr. Warren...promotes them. We are supposed to “hold back those staggering toward the slaughter,” not help them along by feeding them false doctrine!...Granted that he is saved, shouldn't someone go and carry out Matthew 18 with him?...He is endangering people's souls with his teachings—and

aren't people's souls all that matter?...If Mr. Warren is teaching false doctrines that...will ultimately lead to their eternal damnation, what is the point in tending to their physical, earthly needs? CR (NJ)

### Dear Brother Dave,

I appreciate your ministry and enjoy reading *TBC*....But...after awhile, your newsletter can become like the “clanging cymbal” [1 Cor 13]. There's an edge to your words that sometimes sounds like a stodgy old man who bats a critical eye at any Christian pastor or ministry that doesn't...agree with you. That's why it was so refreshing to read your reply...regarding Rick Warren in the Jan '06 issue. For the first time, I saw your heart. You acknowledged that Rick was a brother in Christ with a heart for the lost but that you believed he had gotten off course in the midst of his growing popularity. Wow, I was encouraged. You actually critiqued someone from the standpoint of love....As a brother in Christ, I would say the biggest challenge for your ministry is to figure out how to balance “earnestly contending for the faith” with showing forth...the qualities of love (1 Cor 13:4-7). It is possible to critique Rick Warren...and at the same time say, “But you know, Rick is a brother in Christ with a pastor's heart. The enticement of popularity certainly has to weigh on him and we need to uphold our brother in prayer that he would stand strong in the faith even if it costs him some of his ‘followers’.” SF (NJ)

### Berean Call,

I especially appreciate your stand against anti-Zionism, Calvinism, and Catholicism. I found your website [[www.thebereancall.org](http://www.thebereancall.org)] ...while searching for good discernment sites, and it is the best I have ever seen. Many of these sites are run by staunch Calvinists. It's very hard to take someone seriously as a teacher of truth when they hold a position that goes against the entire theme of the Bible....Why would God want to program everything and fill His Kingdom with love robots, and Hell with hapless victims? “What Love?” indeed. Calvinists have for centuries been absolutely relentless at indoctrinating believers into their false teachings....I'm glad you are equally relentless at exposing this lie and gathering the evidence against it. JB (NC)

### Dear Bro. Hunt,

A.W. Tozer said, “As long as the church can sing the great hymns, it cannot be defeated, for hymns are theology set to music....Were the Scriptures to be destroyed or made inaccessible to the church, it would not be too difficult to extract from our hymns a complete body of Bible doctrine!” In these new songs, the Cross is gone, the

### “JUDGMENT DAY” MINISTRY NEWS

We recently received an order from an individual who purchased 350 copies of Dave's book **Judgment Day!** to place in all the libraries in his country. As we seek to get this book into the hands of as many as possible, we would like to encourage you to consider doing the same in your own town. Anyone who has previously purchased a copy of **Judgment Day!** or would like to purchase one now at full price (\$22) may also buy one or more additional copies for only \$12 each, which is the case price! This valuable book needs to be in our local public libraries as well as church and Christian school libraries. Other ideas might be prison libraries or military libraries. To receive your library copies, call the *TBC* Order Department at 1-800-937-6638.

blood is gone, God's grace and saving power are gone, Heaven is gone, the return of Christ is gone. The major theme is what they want to say: “I, I, I...” Not much of Jesus mentioned. MS (WA)

### TBC,

Loved your January *Berean Call*. You are right on target because you are looking to the Scripture and not to trends. It is sad but true what you state in your article. I am amazed that something so conservative can come out of Oregon! Keep up the good work. DH (KS)

## TBC Notes

### With Apologies... and an Update

*The mail we receive is both wonderfully helpful and, much of the time, overwhelming, yet we read every bit of it. Regretfully, it's impossible for Dave, me, or our correspondence staff member to respond to most of it. So please don't be upset if you don't get a reply. We are so thankful for your input, even when you are taking us to task for something.*

**THRU THE BIBLE IN A YEAR UPDATE:** Many have given me some great strategies; I'll have completed the New Testament by the time you read this! How's everyone else doing?

T.A. McMahon  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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## "CHRISTIAN HEDONISM" — A RESPONSE

Dave Hunt

Some readers complained that my response last month in the Q&A about John Piper and his "Christian Hedonism" (CH) showed that I hadn't read what he's written. But I have. Some form of CH has been present in his writings for the past 20 years. He says he's been "brooding over these things" for nearly 40 years.

I appreciate the letters rebuking me. Most were kind, though firm. Some were angry. All were erudite, quoting Scripture, and so well-versed in Piper's writings that it must encourage him. I was sorry to learn of his diagnosis with prostate cancer. I will pray for him and encourage you to do likewise. Many testify of great blessing through his writings. He commendably seeks to awaken Christians to rejoice in the Lord.

Much that Piper writes is biblical and glorifying to God. But I have concerns. Scripture was not the source of his CH. He says, "I found in myself an overwhelming longing to be happy...to seek pleasure." For that, he felt guilty until he found support in the Westminster Catechism ("The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever") and certain authors, especially Jonathan Edwards. *Desiring God*, which introduced CH openly to readers in 1986, develops it more from philosophical reasoning than exegesis: "Human life *should* be a 'living for pleasure.'" Elsewhere: "You can't love your own happiness too much." Biblical references, please!

Three basic concepts make up Piper's CH: 1) God's passion for His glory; 2) Man's obligation to find pleasure in God; and 3) God's total sovereignty to the exclusion of man's free will.

Piper writes, "...the message of this book [CH]...is my life. That God is most glorified in me when I am most satisfied in Him...." That saying is repeated almost mantra-like by his followers. I find it troubling and its meaning elusive. Surely, this idea, so important that Piper calls it his "life," must be a major theme of the Bible—but I can't find it there. The phrase "glorified in" is used seven times in the KJV, and none comes close to this slogan. That is disturbing.

"Satisfaction" depends upon one's taste. David said, "O taste and see that the LORD is good" (Ps 34:8), but even many Christians have little "taste" for God. It hardly seems biblical that God's glorification (even in me) should depend upon my satisfaction in Him. Was it the martyrdom of the young men killed by the Aucas, or the degree of their satisfaction in God at the time, that glorified God? Aren't these two different ways for God to be glorified in us?

He justifies Christian Hedonism first of all not with Scripture but with a quote from Blaise Pascal: "All men seek happiness....The will never takes the least step but to this object." Pascal often speaks truth—but not in this case. The soldier who throws himself on a hand grenade to save the lives of his buddies is seeking happiness?! Every act of the will is for happiness? People are driven by ambition, revenge, pride, lust, impulse. Furthermore, Pascal's statement about the will contradicts Piper's Calvinism: "...it is not within the power of our will to determine what that sovereign joy will be [i.e., what will delight us]" (*The Legacy of Sovereign Joy*, 59).

He says that the idea that "Glorifying God and enjoying Him are the same" is what CH is all about. Pleasure, joy, satisfaction—the stuff of CH—are only part of our relationship to God, but Piper has made them everything. God is glorified in us by more than our being satisfied in Him. When David went against Goliath "in the name of the LORD of hosts" (1 Sm 17:45) and delivered Israel, wasn't God glorified in him? When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego defied Nebuchadnezzar and declared, "We will not...worship the golden image" (Dn 3:18) and walked with the Son of God in the midst of that furnace, wasn't God glorified in them? Piper's theology is at least one-sided!

Yes, CH is pleasure *in God*, and that is good. It is one part of our worship of the Lord, but Piper has made it the *sine qua non*: "it is unbiblical and arrogant to try to worship God for any other reason than the pleasure to be had in Him." When I pray, "Lord, I love You! I want only that You be glorified," am I being "unbiblical and arrogant"?

He reasons that if we delight in God, there will be pleasure in worshiping Him. But that doesn't make such pleasure the only proper *reason* for worship-

ing. What about awe, fear, love? The result of worship will surely be supreme joy, but this can't be the *only* reason for worship! We are told that we must worship the Father in spirit and in truth but not *alone* for the "pleasure to be had in Him." This is not exegesis but philosophy.

Attempting to support Christian Hedonism from God's Word, he fails to show us how it comes from Scripture (except by implication). He refers to CH as a "discovery" with "stunning implications...that all the omnipotent energy that drives the heart of God to pursue His own glory also drives Him to satisfy the hearts of those who seek their joy in Him." Here is another slogan with elusive meaning that sounds good but cannot be found in Scripture. God is the I AM, infinitely glorious, unchangeable from eternity to eternity. How, where, and why would He pursue His own glory? And, again, what would that mean? This is philosophy, not Bible, but Piper writes an entire book to promote it (*God's Passion for His Glory*) based upon Jonathan Edwards' writings.

His attempts to find biblical support seldom follow from the verses cited. For example, to justify his idea that "the quest for joy in God relate[s] to everything," he quotes: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31). But the verse says nothing about a quest for joy in God—*nothing!*

His strongest effort to find support in Scripture comes in Chapter Four: "LOVE: The Labor of Christian Hedonism." He has problems with, "[love] seeketh not her own [i.e., is not motivated by self-gain]" (v. 5), but emphasizes, "though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and...give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing" (v. 3). From "profiteth," he argues that true love can be motivated by what one hopes to get in return. But Paul's entire argument is to extol love as that without which all else is worthless—and it would be consistent to interpret "profiteth me nothing" in that way. Certainly it doesn't directly say that we are to love in order to get a reward. Piper quotes, "[love] rejoiceth in the truth" (v. 6) and reasons, "if love rejoices in the choices it makes...it cannot be indifferent to its own joy!" No. It rejoices in the *truth*; there is nothing about rejoicing in its *choices*.

What about Christ enduring the Cross "for the joy set before him"? It was the joy of purchasing our redemption and of fulfilling the Father's will that motivated Him—not of what He would get out of it.

He even applies his theory to God: "...the ultimate ground of [CH] is the fact that God is uppermost in His own affections: The chief end of God is to glorify God and enjoy Himself forever....God's overwhelming passion is to exalt the value of His glory....He loves His glory infinitely....God's passion to be glorified and our passion to be satisfied are one experience in the Christ-exalting act of worship." That's Piper's statement, but where is it stated in the Bible?!

Piper says, "Not to enjoy God is to dishonor Him. To say to Him that something else satisfies you more is the opposite of worship." But to seek God for who He is without any thought of one's own pleasure does not mean that "something else satisfies [one] more." He goes on to say, "I must pursue joy in God if I am to glorify Him...." No, pursuing *Him* brings joy.

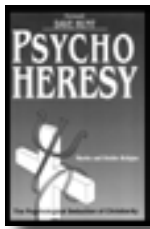
If I seek joy in God, it is still joy that I seek—and that detracts from Him. Yes, my supreme delight is in God, but that delight is not why I pursue Him. It is true that if I obey the command to love God with all my heart I will be supremely happy. But I do not love Him in order to be happy. Happiness is the by-product, but Piper makes it the compelling reason.

Yes, God promises satisfaction in the future kingdom: "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Ps 17:15); "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips" (Ps 63:5). But that does not tell us to *seek satisfaction*—even in God.

He writes: "God's pursuit of praise from us and our pursuit of pleasure in Him are one and the same pursuit....God, in seeking [the creatures'] glory and happiness, seeks himself...." I find such ideas troubling because they result from human reasoning and are not stated directly in God's Word. It seems that what began as Piper's desire to justify his passion for pleasure became the belief that God has the same passion—and, finally, that they are one and the same. —TBC



## WHAT ABOUT SCIENCE, PSYCHOLOGY, AND THE BIBLE? READ THESE EYE-OPENING RESOURCES!

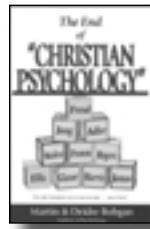


### PSYCHO HERESY

**M&D Bobgan—**

This groundbreaking exposé reveals the incontrovertible fallacies of psychological counseling theories and therapies; reveals the anti-Christian biases, internal contradictions, and documented failures of secular psychotherapy; examines various amalgamations of secular psychology with Christianity, and explodes firmly entrenched myths that undergird these unholy unions. Foundational reading. EastGate Publishers, 242 pp.

**B00003 (wt 1.0) \$14.00**

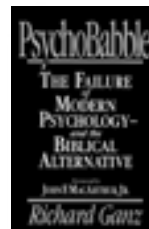


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What can be wrong with "Christian psychology"? It comprises the same confusion of contradictory theories and techniques as secular psychology. "Christian" psychologists have simply borrowed their theories and techniques from this world's wisdom. Packed with biblical and scientific evidence, this book thoroughly demonstrates that professional psychotherapy, with its underlying psychologies, is a deceptive spiritual counterfeit. EastGate, 271 pp.

**B00127 (wt 1.1) \$13.00**

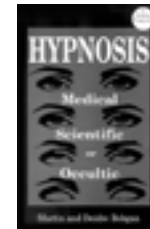


### PSYCHOBABBLE: The Failure of Modern Psychology

**Ganz—** Both church leaders and laypersons seem to believe

that the psychological "experts" have the answers for the wounded hearts and souls of God's people. *PsychoBabble* explains the dichotomy between secular and biblical counseling and shows the danger of incorporating secular techniques into a Christian approach. This book will arm believers looking for scriptural answers to the hurts of a broken world. Crossway, 173 pp.

**B07340 (wt .5) \$14.00**



### HYPNOSIS: Medical, Scientific, or Occultic?

**M&D Bobgan—**

Hypnotism opens an individual to psychic experiences and demonic possession. When mediums go into hypnotic trances and contact the dead, when clairvoyants reveal information that they could not possibly know, and when fortunetellers through self-hypnosis reveal the future, be assured that satanic forces are at work. As this book documents, there is no difference between the altered state of consciousness during hypnosis and the shamanic (occult) state of consciousness. 132 pp.

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### FOUR TEMPERAMENTS: Astrology & Personality Testing

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**B00070 (wt .8) \$12.00**

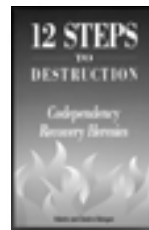


### COMPETENT TO MINISTER: The Biblical Care of Souls

**M&D Bobgan—** The authors' book *Against Biblical Counseling* drew

some hostile responses from those who perceived it as critical of counseling from the Scriptures. This resource clarifies their position on that issue, calling Christians back to the Bible—and to the biblically ordained ministries and mutual care in the Body of Christ that have effectively ministered to souls for almost 2,000 years. EastGate, 251 pp.

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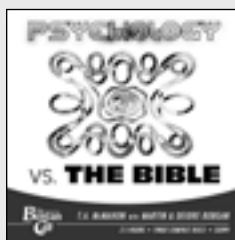
### JAMES DOBSON'S Gospel of Self-Esteem & Psychology

**M&D Bobgan—** In spite of the pluses of his ministry, self-esteem

and psychology are two major thrusts that too often supersede sin, salvation, and sanctification in the teachings of psychologist Dr. James Dobson. In fact, contrary to his claims, much of Dobson's work originates from secular psychological theorists whose opinions are based on a godless foundation—which unfortunately have become central to Focus on the Family. EastGate, 243 pp.

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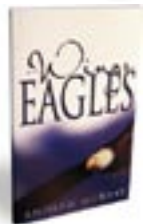


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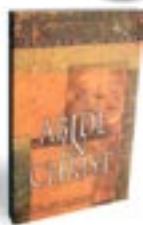


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3	\$22.	n/a
4	\$27.	\$23.
5	\$36.	\$24.
6	\$40.	\$25.
7	\$44.	\$27.
8	\$49.	\$29.
9	\$53.	\$31.
10	\$57.	\$33.
12	\$65.	\$36.
14	\$74.	\$41.
16	\$83.	\$43.
18	\$91.	\$46.
20	\$99.	\$50.

add'l per pound	\$3.00	\$2.50
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## Thank You!

MARCH 2006

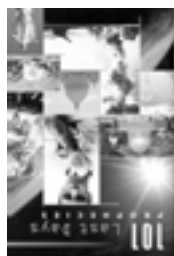


YE HYPOCRITES, YE CAN DISCERN THE FACE OF THE SKY AND OF THE EARTH;  
BUT HOW IS IT THAT YE DO NOT DISCERN THIS TIME? —LUKE 12:56



## 101 LAST DAYS PROPHECIES

**Eternal Productions—**  
The Scriptures give many signs to alert us and encourage us with the fact that the Lord Jesus' return for His church is near. This handy compendium of the Bible's prophecies concerning the Last Days is concise, easy to understand, and shows the precise and detailed information communicated through prophecy. As time ticks away, these events will come into clearer focus. Be alerted!



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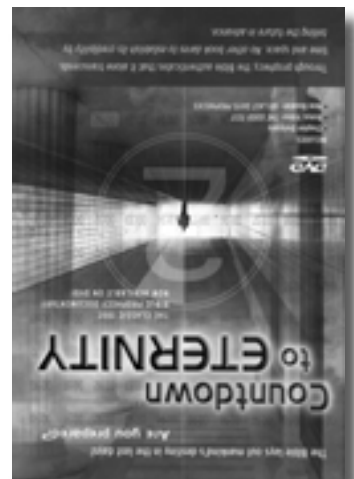
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