

"... Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error"

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THEOLOGICAL VAGARIES NO REMEDY IN PRESENT DILEMMA

by Prof. John E. Dahlin, Editor

Nearly all responsible leaders of our time admit that we are facing an unprecedented crisis. Whether you look at the situation morally, politically, or spiritually it is equally true. It is heartening to find, however, one area of thinking on which there is an agreement, namely, we face a dilemma. Regardless of all our disunity and divisiveness, we agree there is the danger both of physical destruction, and a moral and spiritual collapse. These are near at hand. Logically one would expect that remedies would be searched for in an attempt to stem the waves of unrighteousness.

In the religious sphere the liberals are the ones who have become most visibly exercised over our present dilemma, and hence they have come forth with tangible remedies to cure our present-day ills. We notice this definitely by their renewed emphasis on such terms as Ecumenicity, Christian Unity, Federation, and The World Council of Churches. By these avenues of hope, they believe that they have hit upon the real remedy for

the ills of mankind. We must admit that such expressions are soothing utterances in a time of international anarchy. The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches selected as its over-all theme: "Christ, the Hope of the World." Everywhere in liberal theology and writings we find an increasing emphasis on the matter of Christian Unity and an ecumenical spirit. They lay hold of Jesus' prayer of unity as recorded in Jn. 17:21 in order to bolster their drive towards religious oneness.

Let me point out right here, no normal fundamentalist is happy about splinterings and excessive divisions within the camp of Christianity. Schisms, or a spirit of come-out-ism, are justifiable only when supreme spiritual necessity requires such steps. Bible believing fundamentalists are not schismatics or promoters of disunity among Christians. But when the liberal forces by means of their diluted Gospel message bring about spiritual paralysis in the denominations and churches, no alternative remains but to depart from such associations.

It has become increasingly popular among leaders in the liberal camp to come forth with a new brand of piety. If we reduce their consistent program for unity in simple language, it clearly means this: Quit quibbling about doctrinal differences and convictions concerning special theological tenets; unite around the person of Christ and march forth as a united battalion for God. Even certain evangelicals in prominent pulpits have embraced these slogans, or at least expressed sympathy to such appeals. Those who want unity at any price are gullible, by accepting this streamlined emphasis on piety. If we dilute the Gospel in order to expand the cause of religious unity, we will find that the remedy is worse than the disease.

In John's 1st Epistle we are specifically enjoined to disengage ourselves from everyone who fails to acknowledge the incarnation and the deity of Jesus Christ. And, in his 2nd letter the apostle puts it even stronger by urging believers not to receive such in their house, nor bid them God-speed. Unity, you see, must rest on a true base. Any other unity is spurious and even futile.

We hear others say piously, why contend for a certain theory of inspiration; rather, let us lay hold of the great dynamics of the Scriptures. In other words, let us forget about verbal inspiration, and dilute the concept of inspiration in order to accommodate those who have diverse views on the subject. But unity achieved by watering-down the doctrine of inspiration

will be an unproductive attempt in furthering the work of the Gospel.

Perhaps most frequently of all, we hear flowery generalizations on the subject, *The Cross of Christ*. By the Cross of Christ the liberals simply mean the great example of his obedience and love for others, and that through His death all will be affected beneficially, that is, all who contemplate his love and sacrifice will be drawn to God. That isn't the Pauline language for he says precisely what the cross means: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." How can we maintain unity and fellowship with those who dilute the Scriptural doctrine of the atonement?

The New Testament is equally precise when it presents Christ's personal, imminent, and glorious return. Invariably the liberals broaden this to mean Christ's ultimate triumph at some distant date, and that the forces of righteousness will prevail in due time. What incentive will such nebulous expressions provide for sacrificial living and watchfulness in Christian service? None whatever.

The time has come for Christians to recite their creed and state their convictions unequivocally. Let us learn to say what we mean and mean what we say.

The Bible is remarkably precise in dealing with such major subjects as sin, salvation, judgment, atonement, heaven and hell. If we achieve unity through theological vagaries, it is an empty one indeed.

It is getting increasingly popular,

it seems, to hurl slurring epithets at fundamentalists for their so-called contentiousness. Frequently they are compared to stagnant pools, and arid as the desert, or as insensitive to humanitarian needs as the priest and levite in Luke 10.

Unity achieved through theological maneuvers or generalizations are not answers to the present dilemma in Christendom. Many of us feel there is an

urgent need in earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Popularizing Christianity by achieving external unity is a tragic error if it is being accomplished by diluting doctrinal points in order to accommodate various shades of concepts. The lessening of the dilemma is only achieved by fearlessly declaring the whole council of God.

A CREEPING MENACE

A Study of Cults

by Rev. LeRoy Gager

Do you cast a sidewise glance at a Jehovah's Witness "publisher" standing on the street corner and pass on your way unmoved—disinterested? What do Mormon missionaries suggest to your mind beyond that their religion has error attached to it? The Seventh Day Adventists—aren't they simply Christians who worship on Saturday instead of Sunday? Anyway, what difference does it make just so they are sincere—and don't bother me in my smug self-complacency. "Have you listened to the 'Voice of Prophecy' radio broadcast? Interesting, isn't it. And they do quote the Bible a great deal so they must be O.K." "I enjoy that Temple-time hymn program that comes from Salt Lake City over the network. They use the old hymns of the church just like we do. I wonder if they are really very different from us after all."

So the church goes on its way undisturbed while the cults give whole years of their time in missionary service, and dumping tons of their heresy-laden literature into the hands of a world of people who are rapidly becoming literate, erecting houses of worship in every mushrooming community, and stealing sheep out from under the noses of dozing shepherds.

WHAT IS THE NEED FOR DEFENSE TODAY, you ask?

There is greater need today for the defense of the faith than there has ever been since the birth of the church at Pentecost. These are the "later times" of which Paul wrote to Timothy, "when some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons."

The first major sign concerning the end of the age is the rise of many false Christs who will deceive many. Did you know that

within a 50-year period, from the 1820's to the 1870's the church witnessed the rise of five of the major false cults, not to mention Darwin's biological evolution which has been called "the root of all isms." A brief listing must suffice; Mormonism in the 1820's, the Millerite movement out of which grew the Adventist bodies in 1840's, modern Spiritism with the Fox sisters in 1848, the Russelite of Jehovah Witness movement in 1872, Christian Science with the publication of Mrs. Eddy's "Key to the Scriptures" in 1875. Add to this atheistic biological evolution, totalitarianism in politics, materialism, modernism in religion, Freudianism, free-loveism, behaviorism, anarchism on every level, etc.

How can the people of God fail to be impressed by this mass of evidence that we are now living in the last days of this dispensation. Jesus said, "Take heed that no man lead you astray." Paul warned, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock . . . for this I know that after my departure shall greivous wolves enter in among you not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Peter prophecied, ". . . there shall be false teachers among you who privily shall bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them; and bring upon themselves swift destruction." John indicated that "it is the last time; and as ye have heard that anti-christ shall come, even now are there many anti-christs;

whereby we know it is the last time." In case we should have missed the earlier warnings of apostasy, Jude stands forth to cry for contenders for the faith, which was once delivered unto the saints . . . "because there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ."

The church cannot call itself the Church Militant until it rises up to give a united, Spirit-empowered statement of the Truth and an intelligent refutation of the false cults. Jehovah's true watchmen must climb the tower and sound forth a blast that will awaken the sleeping church to the progress of this creeping menace.

WHAT IS THE AREA TO BE DEFENDED, is the second vital question facing us. Jude expresses for the faith once delivered to the saints." (verse 3). What are those particular doctrines for which we are to be contenders. Must we contend for every minor point, provided there are such, or is there a more limited area in which contention is to be waged?

Anyone venturing an opinion in these matters is certain to run into conflict with brethren on the left hand and on the right. But because the central issues are so important we will stick out the proverbial neck and express what we believe to be the area to be defended.

Perhaps we can do this most cogently by giving our own private

definition of a false cult. "A false cult is a religious system which takes the name of 'Christian' but which in its teachings denies one or more of the cardinal Bible doctrines essential to salvation, fruitful Christian living and effective spiritual service. Each has a 'prophet' ministry which it claims to be from God for the world in the last days. An exception is Roman Catholicism whose professed 'prophet' ministry began about the 4th or 5th century A.D." These cardinal Bible doctrines are the particular area for defense.

While there are peripheral matters of faith and practice wherein evangelicals differ, there is a common ground of evangelical truth upon which we have stood together throughout the centuries and upon which we must continue to stand by God's grace. Many feel that they can allow their brethren of other denominations to differ with respect to the form of church government, the mode of baptism, the order of divine worship, the use of paraphernalia, etc. But true evangelicals can allow no deviation in the essentials such as: the doctrine of the trinity of the Godhead, involving the full deity and unity of all three Persons, the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, His sinless life, His vicarious atonement, His death and bodily resurrection, the blood atonement as the only approach to a Holy God, the necessity of the new birth, the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, eternal bliss and punishment, etc.

Taken together, these and other related doctrines constitute a liv-

ing body of truth. To allow any one of these cardinal truths to be destroyed would be to see the rest waste away into death. Every doctrine mentioned is a vital spot in the body and is a particular point of attack by Satan and the false cults.

WHY MUST WE BECOME CONTENDERS FOR THE FAITH?
Why concern ourselves about such matters?

We say that we do not wish to offend our neighbors, many of whom are followers of these false cults. They are fine people, lovely neighbors, warm friends. We would rather be at peace with them than to try to change their religion. Consequently there is a spiritual inertia that seals our lips on matters of our faith. We would rather be courteous cowards than risk the chance of involving ourselves in an argument in the hope of winning these friends to Christ and eternal life. We know that the unsaved must be disturbed out of their lost condition but we could not take a chance on disturbing our own little world of selfish complacency in attempting it. We sleep on while the enemy sows the tares of heresy and they spring up unto eternal damnation.

An apology should be made for the attempted satire in the previous paragraph. However, if the description does not fit you, you will be in sympathy with it. If it does fit you, you need to be stung into shame, remorse and above all INTO ACTION. So we will let it stand.

The "faith" was "once delivered." It was committed to the church as a trust to be ad-

ministered. We are its guardians and at the judgment seat of Christ we will be called into account as to what we have done with it. It will not be enough to say that we have kept the faith, that we believe every word of it. Christ does not want it wrapped in a napkin of credal orthodoxy, He demands that it be put to work that it might multiply itself in the heart of others. The best defense is offense. You do not need to defend a lion. Simply turn him loose and he will defend himself.

Why contend with a Jehovah's Witness? Because his eternal welfare is at stake! Because he does not know the Triune God who alone can save. Because by his denial of the Son and His essential Deity he does not have access to the Father. Because by his denial of the person and Deity of the Holy Spirit he cannot know of the things of Christ, nor the experience of the new birth. Because they are announcing a kingdom of which they are not a part, when they should be accepting and preaching a Gospel of which they know very little, if anything.

How can we contend *for* the faith unless we contend *against* those who would destroy it? When Seventh Day Adventism teaches that "Christ inherited just what every child of Adam inherits—a sinful nature" it undermines the very foundation of salvation. How

could a being with a sinful nature of his own, take the place in punishment for other sinners? The Scriptures declare that "He hath made Him to be sin for us WHO KNEW NO SIN . . ." (2 Cor. 5:21). Quoting Dr. H. A. Ironside, "The Christs of these isms are not the Christ of the Bible. Each of the false cults has a hideous caricature of our lovely Lord."

The church is a sleeping giant that is being bound by Lilliputians. They are whispering their insinuations of impotence, division, clerisy and unconcern. They even shout and go unchallenged as the church shifts to a more comfortable position. May God awaken the sleeping church to the creeping menace of heresy. May we take up the whole armor of God including the shield of faith and the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God and "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints."

Editor:

The article by Rev. LeRoy Gager appeared many years ago in the Pilot Magazine. It is reprinted in the present issue as an encouragement to our readers that our organization holds the same position today towards cultic groups and every form of deviation from the Scriptural Truth. In an earlier period Rev. Gager served for a time as President of Religion Analysis Service and Editor of *The Discerner*. Our agency continues to maintain the ministry "To earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

EXPOSING ERROR: IS IT WORTH WHILE?

by the late H. A. Ironside, D.D.
(Long time Pastor of Moody Memorial Church, Chicago)

Objection is often raised, even by some sound in the Faith, regarding the exposure of error as being entirely negative and of no real edification. Of late, the hue and cry has been against any and all negative teaching. But the brethren who assume this attitude forget that a large part of the New Testament, both of the teaching of our blessed Lord Himself and the writings of the apostles, is made up of this very character of ministry—namely, showing the satanic origin, and therefore the unsettling results, of the propagation of erroneous systems which Peter, in his second Epistle, so definitely refers to as "damnable heresies."

Our Lord prophesied, "Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." Within our own day, how many false prophets have risen; and oh, how many are deceived! Paul predicted, "I know this, that after my departing shall greivous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch." My own observation is that these "greivous wolves," alone and in packs, are not sparing even the most favored flocks. Undershepherds in these "perilous times" will do well to note the Apostle's warning, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock over the which

the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." It is as important in these days as in Paul's—in fact, it is increasingly important—to expose the many types of false teaching that, on every hand, abound more and more.

We are called upon to "contend earnestly for the Faith once for all delivered to the saints," while we hold the truth in love. The Faith means the whole body of revealed truth, and, to contend for *all* of God's truth, necessitates some negative teaching. The choice is not left with us. Jude said he preferred a different, a pleasanter theme,— "Beloved, my whole concern was to write to you on the subject of our common salvation, but I *am forced* to write you an appeal to defend the Faith which has once for all been committed to the saints; for certain persons have slipped in by stealth (their doom has been predicted long ago), impious creatures who pervert the grace of our God" (Jude 3,4, Moffat). Paul likewise admonishes us to "take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them" (Eph. 5:11, R.S.V.).

This does not imply harsh treatment of those entrapped by error—quite the opposite. If it be objected that exposure of error necessitates unkind reflection upon others who do not see as we do, our answer is, it has always been the duty of every loyal servant of Christ to warn against any

teaching that would make Him less precious, or cast reflection upon His finished redemptive work and the all-sufficiency of His present service as our great High Priest and Advocate.

Every system of teaching can be judged by what it sets forth as to these fundamental truths of the Faith. "What think ye of Christ?" is still the true test of every creed. The Christ of the Bible is certainly not the Christ of any false ism. Each of the cults has its hideous caricature of our lovely Lord.

Let us who have been redeemed at the cost of His precious blood, be "good soldiers of Jesus Christ." As the battle against the forces of evil waxes ever more hot, we have need for God-given valor. There is constant temptation to compromise. "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." it is always right to stand firmly for what God has revealed concerning His blessed Son's person and work. The "father of lies" deals in half-truths, and specializes in most subtle fallacies concerning the Lord Jesus, our sole and sufficient Saviour.

Error is like leaven, of which we read, "A little leaven leaveneth the

whole lump." Truth mixed with error is equivalent to all error, except that is it more innocent looking, and therefore more dangerous. God hates such a mixture! Any effort, or any truth-and-error mixture, calls for definite exposure and repudiation. To condone such is to be unfaithful to God and His Word, and treacherous to imperiled souls for whom Christ died.

Exposing error is most unpopular work. But from every true standpoint it is worth-while work. To our Saviour, it means that He receives from us, His blood-bought ones, the loyalty that is His due. To ourselves, if we consider "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt," it insures future reward, a thousand-fold. And to souls "caught in the snare of the fowler"—how many of them God only knows—it may mean light and life, abundant and everlasting.

Note!

While visiting in our office in the fall of 1950, Dr. Harry A. Ironside dictated the above article for *The Discerner*. His eyesight was so nearly gone, he could not read. To be sure that it was just what he wanted, he had the article read back to him twice. He passed away the 15th of January 1951.

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We suggest that you send in gift subscriptions for your friends. They will benefit by the information provided by our magazine for the readers. 4 issues for \$2.00; 12 issues for \$5.00.

WHOLISTIC HEALTH

by Dr. Dave Breese, president
Christian Destiny, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois

We have a buzz word going in our time, it is the word WHOLISTIC. It can't be defined exactly, but it has a "sort of a" general meaning. It means "a unity of parts, though divergent" and implies that there are relationships between entities that have been considered dissimilar before new realizations have come upon us.

The word wholistic is used about health. In this area, it implies the need for a union of the physical, the psychological, the emotional and (now especially) the relational. The practitioners of "wholistic health" now speak of "the healing of the whole person" and "the healing of relationships" and the like. The treatment is now therefore, not in taking a pill or having an operation, it is in a series of therapies mysterious and in the meantime the price goes up. (One suspects that this is the real intention.) The idea of wholistic health moves things up into the realm of the psychic and the spiritual and brings in a new wave of vibrational practitioners. Within all this new medicine is, of course, a possible grain of truth. Along with it however, comes the greater possibility of quackery and exploitation. It invited in the patient introspection ad-nausium and the answerable and despair-producing question "Why am I still hurting and unhappy?" The best answer to this question is "Forget it—get

back to work!" Everyone hurts sometime and as life goes on, most of the time. Happiness comes only through duties fulfilled and responsibilities met.

"Wholistic," however, is now used more and more by Christians and even guruistic Christian "leaders." They preach a doctrine of "Wholistic Salvation" and even, pretending to some inside secret, have contracted the word into "Holistic." What meaneth this? It implies the idea that salvation is for the whole man and that the difference between the physical and the spiritual are undiscernable and inseparable. It also insists that man is not saved apart from his social context. Lost people have become "hurting souls," who are not "saved in isolation but rather in community." The Church is therefore called upon to operate "redemptively" in society, implying we reluctantly suppose, the redemption of the social structure.

Salvation, then, under the holistic view is not essentially personal, but relational, contextual, producing not so much eternal life but fulfillment and spiritual mutuality. The working of God is "in community" and such like. "The Holy Spirit came upon a group which was *incidentally* composed of individuals, rather than upon individuals who compose a group" says one. Dark, vaporous statements like these clutter the holistic landscape. More and more

the fog thickens.

What does all of this mean? There are many guesses, but it surely means that the days of ambiguity and doctrinal obscurity have come upon us. Actually, "holistic" is one of the words that have been invented at Christian cocktail parties to keep the conversation going. It doesn't really mean anything too specific. The user can therefore pretend that he is "with it" when he drops a few "holistics" into the conversation.

Concern mounts when we note the frequent use of the word by anti-doctrinal types with leftist, socialist, sub-Christian sympathies. The liberal journals are where the word thrives and the liberal mind (damaged by long unmedicated fevers and guilt) is a habitual user. The word grows where the lilies have festered and bears some of their unsavory odors. The liberals, caring for the whole person and in this life only having hope in Christ, have long since forgotten the gospel of eternal salvation.

Seriously, there are real spiritual deteriorations evidenced in the use of "holistic" and the attitude that grows therefrom. They include the following:

1. "Holistic" misunderstands the nature of salvation. When we exercise faith in the blood of Christ, the *spirit* of man is saved, not his physical body. The creation, as yet unredeemed, still suffers (Rom. 8:22). Man is therefore not saved holistically.

2. "Holistic" misunderstands the object of salvation. We are saved for heaven, (the epicenter of

our hope) not primarily for earth. We are saved "unto an inheritance . . . reserved in heaven" (I Pet. 1:4). This world and all things earthly are a shadow—heaven is the substance (Heb. 8:3).

3. "Holistic" misunderstands the nature of the Christian life. It promises fulfillment, realization and works to integrate the things of this life into a beautiful, "whole person fulfillment." Such a concern is futile. Life is inevitably characterized by problems, suffering, unanswered questions, frustration *always*. It is "our light affliction" and it works for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Cor. 4:17). The historical process contains no final fulfillment—being finite and sinful, it cannot be otherwise.

4. "Holistic" sacrifices the individual for the group. When used by Christians, "holistic" also promises "the healing of relationships," an innocent sounding euphemism but it gives ontological significance to *the group*. "No one is saved in isolation" they say. This is false! *Only* individuals are saved. "The group" does not exist of itself, it is a mental construction, a kind of delusion. Soon comes the commune, the study of Marx, then the asylum.

5. "Holistic" misunderstands the nature of the believer. We are both physical and spiritual beings and these elements, while integrated, are not the same (Heb. 4:12). They must be viewed separately and dealt with separately by the believers. Paul tells us about the outward man and the inward man. One perishes and the

other is renewed day by day (II Cor. 4:16). We are to concentrate not on "the things that are seen" but "the things which are not seen." This difference is unseen by the natural man but is perceived instantly by the spiritual man. The lack of this perception arouses real suspicion.

The holistic types claim this view is PLATONISM while they claim to be HEBRAIC in their doctrine of man. This accusation is false. Those who divide body and spirit are Pauline, they preach the doctrine of Christ. Holism is really psycho/physical monism, a long discredited philosophy.

Perceptive may well be the argument that "holistic" may be rooted in the occult. Indeed, its implied but unfounded promise of spiritual effects upon the physical, unwarranted in scripture or good sense, has occult overtones. The spiritual effects the physical in ways

unknown and unknowable, (those who profess to know the unknowable are occultic dabblers) but basically through the human will.

Beware then of holism in religion, it is a set of presuppositions which are sub-Christian. It is at best a smiling, benign appearing form of spiritual subversion. It is believed by the faddists but not by the faithful.

(Quotes and/or reprints of the above material authorized with mention of author, publisher and address.)

Position papers also available on the following subjects:

Existentialism, Communism, Evolution, Liberation Theology, The Church and the Kingdom, Justice, The Battle for the World, The Christian and His Government, Pornography, The Need of the World, The Gospel.

THE UNWILLINGNESS TO BE IN THE MINORITY

by John E. Dahlin

I am of the conviction that we as present-day believers need to be willing to cast our lot with the minority. It is well to keep in mind that it was the majority who crucified the Lord. Usually the judgment of the majority is faulty. The report of the majority of the spies who were sent into Caanan was a defeatist attitude. It was the minority report that prevailed. Earlier in O.T. history we have recorded that "Enoch walked with

God." It was one of the most ungodly generation in ancient history. This man of God was willing to go in God's direction despite the lack of support. Elijah also was alone, humanly speaking, when he stood on Mt. Carmel and conducted the test of the gods. Daniel, the man of God, and the Puritan in Babylon, was in the minority at the time the king's decree was published forbidding men to worship anyone but the

ruler in Babylon. Fortunately Daniel had a backbone and not a string of cartilage which you find in many persons, figuratively speaking. Martin Luther was in the minority when he appeared before that august body at Worms. He stood his ground and said: "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, so help me God." The world has never been the same since he took that historic stand in 1520.

Our generation is a time when Christianity is being popularized. People are prone to climb aboard the band-wagon with the majority, whose position for the moment may be popular. Not many are willing to "go outside His camp bearing His reproach." It has become exceedingly popular to federate. Ecumenicalism seems to be a strong trend at present. A massive world church has come into existence with the hope that it will make a major impact upon mankind. The Bible admonishes us "to come out from among them and be separate." One simply cannot run both with the hound and the hare. The separated church, when it has remained with the

minority, has shined the brightest for Jesus Christ. The Church of Smyrna is a clear example of the God-honoring position of that spiritual group during the days of great persecutions.

There are certain people who try not to be identified with either the majority or minority. They prefer to be spectators. And this position, they take when great issues are at stake. In this respect they are like the people who followed the throng on calvary's road. They had no convictions; they simply were there as spectators.

The need today is to encourage our Christian friends to remain loyal to the Lord, and manifest a willingness to remain with the minority who desire to go God's way. I see no other alternative if we are to honor our Lord and fulfill our God-given mission. We need Paul's admonishment, "Therefore, my beloved, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

SIX NEW BOOKS TO ADD TO YOUR CATALOG LISTING

We have received the following books since our latest catalog came from the printer. They are *good tools* and we recommend them for your use.

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3. What's Happening In The Roman Church? A Report From Rome/
Standridge \$1.50
4. Born Again Catholics And The Mass/William C. Standridge \$2.00
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6. How To Answer A Jehovah's Witness/Robert A. Morey \$2.95

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BOOK REVIEW

Reviewed by Rev. Ewald Eisele

ISLAM: A Survey Of The Muslim Faith. By C. George Fry and James R. King. (Baker Book House, 1980) 157 pages, paper, \$5.95.

"There is no God but God, and Muhammad is His prophet." This is the confession of faith that is associated with "Islam" and the Muslims. A Muslim is a amonotheist in the strictest sense, one who makes this profession and is a follower of the teachings of the founder of his religion, Muhammad.

The essential meaning of "Islam" is submission to God. The authors on page 73 point out that many in the west misname this faith "Muhammadism." But this is a mistake because though Muslims do indeed revere Muhammad as the supreme revelator of God in human history, they do not worship him. Islam is a religion of submission to God, not a religion about a man.

This book is written from a true Christian perspective with its sole purpose being that Christians might better understand this religion which includes not only a mission field over on the other side of the globe but one right at home on our college and university campuses.

It is a book designed to allow Christians to see the many false concepts that have been accepted as fact by the Christian community. In eight chapters the author unfolds not only the history of Islam but also the hidden meanings and

implications in the ritual and life of this community emphasizing religion. The chapter, "The Message Beyond Words," is one that every Christian ought to take to heart because it concerns not only Muslims but those of every religion in the world including Christianity. It deals with the Islamic expression as seen in the arts, beautifully designed pottery, the pattern in Arabic script, carpets, painting, a great mosque or a tiny tomb, wood or stone carvings. Reading this chapter will give one a greater sense of appreciation for the passive expressions in any religion.

There are probably between 700 and 800 million Muslims. Which means that Islam is larger than any single expression of Christianity, there being more Muslims than Roman Catholics, twice as many Muslims as Protestants and perhaps three times as many Muslims as there are Orthodox and Oriental Christians. Muslims are universal—true citizens of the world. They speak Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Swahili, French, German, English, Spanish, Russian and other Slavic languages; they speak Chinese, Japanese, Korean and all the various languages of Southeast Asia.

In trying to allow Christians to "see" this mission field the authors begin with a history of the religion and its founder. Muhammad is described as a man of great personal nobility and generosity

who has a strong element of asceticism in his character. A man who could punish with great severity those who had wronged him—and then forgive them in a most lavish manner.

If the founder of Islam is unique so is the individual Muslim. A potential Christian is born into the world and has nothing to do with the spiritual body and kingdom which is The Church Of Jesus Christ. He must make a decision regarding his relation to Christianity. A Muslim is *born* a Muslim and his birthright of faith pervades every facet of his life from cradle to grave. No decision needs to be made. He is, *IPSO FACTO*, of the faith. The first words the mother whispers in his ear are "there is no God but God, and Muhammad is His prophet." Unique too, the authors point out, is the fact that to be a Muslim is to be a member of a religious republic, a holy nation, and one is born into this community in the same sense that one is a citizen of the United States by virtue of birth here.

Chapter four has to do with the theology of Islam as revealed in the Qur'an (Koran). What the holy book of the Muslim says about God is summarized under five headings. Islam affirms the (1) unity of God, (2) identity of God, (3) vitality of God, (4) sovereignty of God, (5) the responsibility of man to God. The God of Islam shares many attributes with the God who is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, but the authors also point out the important differences between the two religions in their concept of God.

"Islamic Religious Practices" is the chapter that presents the "Pillars of Islam." These are presented in revealing detail—confession of faith, adoration or prayer, ministrations or almsgiving, fasting, pilgrimage to Mecca and Jihad (the act of fighting for the faith against unbelievers).

There is a chapter on sects and schisms in Islam and one of great importance to witness minded Christians, "Christianity and Islam: Models For Contact."

The format of the book is conducive to relaxed reading while at the same time absorbing the knowledge and experience of the authors. Footnotes at the bottom of the pages are very good and save much time and frustration, which is not the case when they are at the back of the book or at the end of each chapter. There are 16 illustrations that are helpful and 3 very good and helpful indexes, for which the authors are to be commended.

This is a good book. One which can be a real helpful tool in the hands of concerned Christians. You will want to read this timely book if you are interested in history, if you want to better understand this religion, or if you are at all interested in reaching a mission field of almost 800 million souls—many of whom are at our very doorsteps—themselves missionaries for *their* faith.

This book may be purchased from our office for \$5.95. When ordering be sure to include 63¢ for postage.

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PERTINENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

John E. Dahlin, Editor

QUESTION . . . What are the usual methods adopted in dealing with those identified with the cults?

ANSWER . . . One course which is commonly practiced by many is to ignore the cultists as if they are non-existent. Others have chosen to confront them orally with harsh and condemnatory words. This rude treatment of the misguided people will never be helpful in winning them back to the truth. The better way, which we recommend, is to provide such people, whom we often meet at the door, at work, or in other places, with carefully selected literature which offers information on these false teachings. But, best of all, we may pray for those who have come under the influence of erroneous teachings.

QUESTION . . . Are there many people entangled in cultic teachings who are delivered from such false systems?

ANSWER . . . In our many years of ministry in literature we have never found any reliable statistics as to the number who have turned away from the cults. It is safe to conclude that the number set free is relatively small. It is therefore imperative that we faithfully teach Scriptural doctrine to as many people as can be reached in our churches, institutions, and organizations before they come under the influence of the cultists. We have fine testimonies, however, of those who have been brought back to the truth of God who once were committed to false teachings.