

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

The
DISCERNER

AN
INTERDENOMINATIONAL
HERESY-EXPOSING
QUARTERLY

VOL. 13 ~~WWW~~ **NO. 10**

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APRIL - MAY - JUNE, 1991

The DISCERNER

Published Quarterly,
Price \$3.00 for 4 issues.
For foreign subscriptions,
add 40 cents a copy.
P.O. Box 806
Brainerd, MN 56401
Printed in the United States
1-800-562-9153

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THE EVERCHANGING CULTS

Editorial by Dr. William A. BeVier

One method repeatedly used in business marketing is that if a product's sales are declining, repackage it slightly, add another ingredient, call it "new and improved," and again try to sell it. It appears some of the cults are trying the same tactic today.

The four major cults (as defined by Anthony Hoekema in his book *The Four Major Cults*, i.e., Mormonism, Seventh-day Adventism, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Christian Science) are using this marketing technique from the business world, and Christians need to be aware of it. Others have noticed this same development, e.g., *The Biblical Evangelist*, May 1, 1991, page 13. This fine publication called attention to the *Christianity Today* article of March 11, 1991 titled "The NEW Denominations" where on a chart listing "conservative denominations and movements" (p. 29) appeared the Mormons, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Seventh-day Adventists.

During the past decade or so, all the major cults have had problems in this country attracting and retaining members. Now they are trying modified approaches to reach people and gain acceptance by being rid of their label as "cult." They all

still focus on "religious" people who don't really know much about the Bible, and who really don't know much about the cult being presented to them.

The Mormons, or as they prefer "Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints," received bad publicity and public criticism in recent years through the media on several accounts. The reported discovery of old letters written by early leaders in Mormonism, which contradicted Joseph Smith, Jr.'s accounts of finding and translating the "golden plates" didn't help. Then several Mormons were killed under mysterious circumstances in Salt Lake City just after it was reported they were going to expose information about the Church. Their killers have never been found. The published book about the vast financial holdings of the Mormon Church caused more embarrassment. Then defectors from Mormonism let it be known publicly that many of the secret ceremonies in the Mormon temples were based on the secret rituals of Freemasonry. This is to be expected, since most of the early Mormon leaders, including Joseph Smith, Jr., were Masons. Then there was another issue that long caused the Mormons difficulties with much of American society.

That was their exclusion from the Mormon priesthoods men who were Black. This exclusion was based on supposed revelations to Joseph Smith that dark skin indicated the curse of God.

Mormonism has officially responded to some of these criticisms with new revelations from God, but without changing any of the basic beliefs of the movement. For example, changes have been made in the "secret" temple rituals to downplay those characteristic of Freemasonry. The President of the Church, who is also "Prophet, Seer, and Revelator," had a new revelation that Blacks can now enter the Mormon Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods (some say it was so Brigham Young University could continue to recruit Blacks for their football team).

The Seventh-day Adventists have long sought acceptance by Evangelical Christianity. Their ministers seek fellowship with the evangelical ministerials rather than with the more liberal National Council of Churches groups. Walter Martin's position did much to further this acceptance. Ruth Tucker in her 1989 *Another Gospel*, though including SDA in her book on the cults, states in part: SDA ". . . are for the most part warm Christians"

However, Walter Rea's book, *The White Lie* (1982) documenting that without doubt Ellen White plagiarized many of her "revelations" and "visions" from already published works by other authors sent a ripple of shock through Seventh-day Adventism. Walter Rea, longtime respected pastor and college teacher in the SDA, found himself outside the movement. Their acknowledged leading theologian, Desmond Ford,

along with a reported some 150 other pastors and theologians, left the SDAs over a period of a few years. The secular press duly reported these developments. Then Walter Martin, several years before he died, was interviewed by the *Adventist Currents*, a SDA periodical, in which the headline to the article quoted Dr. Martin as saying: "SDA leaders are on Masada and they don't know it" (July 1983). I interpret this to mean Walter Martin thought the movement led by the White Foundation (the real leaders of the SDA), were committing suicide.

One Seventh-day Adventist response was to publish another major book seeking to explain their doctrinal position, this time based on the twenty-seven articles in their confession of faith. It is remembered they did somewhat the same thing in 1957 with their: *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*. Most everyone knowing anything about Adventism who wrote reviews of the book agreed it was no real change from their traditional doctrines based on the supposed revelations and visions of Ellen White. Chaplain (MAJ) Temple G. Matthews, a chaplain in the U.S. Army, published a review of the new (1988) SDAs book on their "twenty-seven fundamental doctrines." The review appeared in the *Military Chaplains' Review*, Winter 1990. Chaplain Matthews acknowledged the book cannot be considered an official statement from the SDA, though it was published by their General Conference (their highest ruling body). After reading the book, he wrote it: ". . . seems to indicate that it is an official statement." And: "It does contain the officially

voted beliefs." But there are no basic differences from their traditional beliefs.

Here, too, is a group that wants public acceptance, but has made no real changes in their historic theological position.

The Jehovah's Witnesses also have received bad publicity in recent years. Such former knowledgeable Jehovah's Witnesses as William Cetner and Raymond Franz, the nephew of Frederick W. Franz current President of the JW's, have left the movement and publicly stated much that is non-Biblical within the organization. The JW's continuing opposition to such medical attention as blood transfusions and inoculations, even for children, has turned many people against them. Their official attitude opposing all war and support of governments was not a popular position during the recent conflict in the Persian Gulf area. Another factor that has served to further isolate them from mainstream USA is that more Americans have learned of Jehovah's Witnesses' rejection of Christmas and Easter (in any form), as well as rejection of birthdays, even for their children. The Jehovah's Witnesses also have been reported publicly more frequently in recent years of their practice of "Disfellowshipping," e.g., excommunication, of JW's for many causes. I was told recently of a JW boy who was disfellowshipped because he dated a non-JW girl. Whatever Evangelical Christians may believe about breaking of fellowship based on the New Testament, most Americans don't understand such actions. The Jehovah's Witnesses do face a major internal problem at the moment. Their President is supposedly elect-

ed for life (as in the Mormons), and Frederick W. Franz is not well enough physically to provide capable leadership.

One response the JW's have made to widespread criticism is to increasingly include their young children in their door-to-door "witnessing." This tends to give the impression that they are very family-oriented in a society in which the traditional family is almost a thing of the past. Some JW's going from door-to-door have also been reported to be willing to discuss the Bible from something other than their own *New World Translation*. Many Americans know so little about the Bible, it makes no difference which one is used to talk about "religion." But the Jehovah's Witnesses have not changed any of their doctrines.

The Christian Scientists also are making new approaches to be acceptable in American society. They do not publicly report the number of members, but all outsiders who watch such things, both among the religious and secular media, indicate the Christian Scientists have been declining in numbers for some years. Several public court cases in which Christian Science parents and practitioners have been charged with criminal child neglect, among things, has caused a public reaction against them.

The Christian Science response to this negativism is to recently publish and widely distribute a major book defending the movement. This is titled: *Christian Science: A Sourcebook of Contemporary Materials* (1990). I have carefully read the book, and it reflects no significant changes in their traditional beliefs, unless it is a greater emphasis on prayer than Mary Baker Eddy

gave. Biblical sin still is not sin, Jesus Christ is not the Son of God incarnate who died, was buried, and physically arose from the dead for our sins, among other cardinal doctrines revealed in Scripture and not believed by orthodox Christian Scientists. The Christian Science Monitor, their media outlet, has managed to get a daily program on National Public Radio (NPR), which gives them nationwide exposure without ever stating their basic beliefs.

Even the Worldwide Church of God, to refer to another cult, appears to be going through a transition since the death of its founder, Herbert W. Armstrong. A careful reading of their periodical, *The Plain Truth*, will reflect this in issue after issue. The personal tirades of Mr. Armstrong and his repeated references to his past life are gone. There are more articles which might be considered Biblically-based and the tone of the publication has changed under the new editor in chief, Joseph W. Tkach. However, no basic change in their doctrines can be detected.

What does all this mean to

THE 1600-YEAR-OLD CULT

by Ewald Eisele

Of the many recent books on cults which have been written lately, unless I have missed it somehow or other, no author lists the Roman Catholic Church as a cult. Quite the contrary, many so-called Christian churches and denominations today consider the Roman Catholic Church (hereafter RCC) as a Christian church.

Admittedly, this church uses the Bible, Christian terminology,

Christians? We still need what the Bible terms a "spirit of discernment." The Lord warned us to expect many false Christs and false prophets to come (Mt. 24:23-25); the Apostle Paul repeatedly warns us against such deceivers (e.g., II Thess. 2:3-12; II Tim. 3:1-7); as does Peter (II Pet. 2:1-3); and John (e.g., II John 7-11). We have been told to expect this and we need to be alert for it.

Satan is not limited to one false approach. The truth is one, e.g., John 14:6, but error has many approaches and messages. The child of God only has one message, a child of the Devil can and does have many messages and can change them at any time in hopes of having a reception. The true currency is the only genuine one, but there are many counterfeits.

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claims to worship the same God as do Christians, honors Jesus Christ and emphasizes many things that Christian churches do. But of course the same could be said of Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-Day Adventists, Mormons, and other non-Christian cults whose religion does not follow the clear teaching of Scripture.

So probably the first thing that must be done is to find out what the

marks of a cult might be and then compare the RCC, and any other church as well, with those marks. Rather than take up space making a list and considering each mark, I will just make mention of one item at a time and then see if the RCC fits the category.

1) One of the outstanding marks of a cult is the claim that they are the exclusive religious organization on earth and that they hold exclusive rights to the "keys to eternal bliss," whether that bliss be heaven, Nirvana or some kind of kingdom here on earth or elsewhere. Does the RCC claim exclusiveness? I would suppose that there really isn't a good reason for asking the question. The RCC claims to be the only "true church" and brands all others heretics. Vatican II did nothing to change that firm belief which is a solid doctrine of the RCC. That council did recognize that other churches, which are now referred to as "separated churches or brethren," do bear many qualities of the RCC. However it was also made very clear that those who refuse to enter or remain in that church have no hope of eternal salvation. In fact, since the Second Lateran Council of 1139 A.D., literally millions of "non-conform-ists" have been executed by the RCC. While today the church is trying, with velvet tongue, to woo back the "separated brethren," the fact remains that they firmly believe that theirs is the only legitimate church.

2) Another glaring mark of a cult is that its adherents blindly follow the leadership of one man or organization instead of the Lord Jesus Christ. Generally at the head of the organization there is an individual who has the charisma to relate to most of the ones with whom he or she comes into contact.

The RCC has, of course, the Pope of Rome. He has of late endeared himself to perhaps a greater number of people world-wide than any man alive today. His reception in the United States on his 10-day visit in 1979 was nothing less than phenomenal. Millions, in person and through TV coverage, were won over by this mere man who is called by such high and mighty names in absolute adulation: "His Holiness," "Holy Father," "Ruler of the World," "Vicar of our Savior Jesus Christ" and "The Chief Shepherd." Yes, the RCC has a man who is practically worshiped, full of charisma, and not wanting in power. Unfortunately, in the multitudes that gave him such a thunderous welcome in 1979, there were many knowledgeable Christians who should have known better. He certainly is not called those fancy names in Scripture. Yet the RCC believes that this man, when he makes an official pronouncement, is absolutely without error. The name they give to that doctrine of the church is The Infallibility of the Pope. There is One who IS infallible, and that One is our Triune God. That John Paul II thinks of himself as THE religious leader of the world is obvious. He has traveled more than any other pope, and in his visits to dozens of countries his political impact is as great as his religious. His agenda has two parts: build up veneration for Mary, whom he now calls "The Mother of The Church;" and secondly, further world religious unity and ecumenism.

3) Another mark of a cult is that it believes in an ongoing revelation; the rejection of the Bible as the final and complete revelation and rule for faith and conduct. The documents, the traditions and the papal pronouncements are considered by the

RCC to be equal in authority, and sometimes of greater authority, than the Scriptures. Therefore it is not necessary for their teaching to be based on Scripture, and where a matter is not therein addressed the Church speaks with authority. So in actual practice the Bible is the lesser authority and the documents and directives of the Church the greater. The major written documents which are considered authoritative by the Church are those of the Council of Trent (1545-63) and those of Vatican II. The RCC teaches, really demands, that Catholics accept, obey, and practice literally dozens of heresies which are not found in the Bible. Most Catholics do not know all that is involved in church membership. A case in point is directive in "The Syllabus of Errors," issued by Pope Pius IX in 1864, part of which is quoted in "*Roman Catholicism*" by Loraine Boettner. The church: ". . . condemns freedom of religion, freedom of speech and the press, the separation of church and state, the public school system . . ." The RCC will tolerate these and other freedoms only until she is in power. This has been demonstrated in country after country where the church and state are not separated and the church being the real power politically. The bottom line is that what the Church says is law and the membership is required to toe the line whether it is in the Bible or not.

4) Another mark of a cult is that salvation, whatever form it takes, is merited only if the individual DOES certain things. If a Catholic ever makes it to heaven (and they never have any assurance of salvation) they must DO what the church says, because salvation resides in the church. In fact, the RCC is a "sacramental reality," in that it is regard-

ed as the historical extension of the Incarnation, and so is able to bestow or withhold salvation. While being more lenient lately, and especially in America, the RCC doctrine demands performance of a great number of works in order to merit the forgiveness of sins. Works begin with baptism, as an infant if possible, or, as an adult, if an adult convert. This is followed with confirmation, then confession, over and over, followed with penance, continued attendance at Mass, and then following death, which does not end works—there is the work of atonement in their man-made purgatory. The length of stay in purgatory depends on indulgences earned by doing works of one kind or another besides the above-mentioned requirements. Another aspect of works is carried on by survivors of one who has died and is presumably in purgatory. By doing good works and/or paying money they can alleviate the suffering of the deceased.

5) Probably the most important work of a cult is that it holds to doctrines that are not in the Bible, which is the only real inspired source man has to turn to in order to know the mind of God. Now many will point to areas of agreement between the RCC and protestants. Some of these have already been acknowledged. However, the areas of disagreement far outnumber the few where everyone is in agreement. Salvation has already been considered. The Bible declares that salvation is, according to Ephesians 2:8-9, free, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." In spite of what the Bible says on the subject in that verse as well as in many others, Pope John Paul II, in 1984, dismissed the "widespread

idea that one can obtain forgiveness directly from God," and exhorted Catholics to confess more often to their priests (*Los Angeles Times*, 12/12/84).

In the RCC, salvation cannot be had without Church bestowed sacramental grace which is earned by works. It can be lost if an individual commits a "mortal sin." Restoration to a state of sacramental grace can only come through the help of a priest. There are two categories of sin for the Catholic. **Venial sins** are those without eternal consequences and which can be forgiven by a priest, upon confession, saying prayers and performing works of merit or mercy. **Mortal sins** are those which, if left without confession, restoration and the doing of penance, will require the spending of time in purgatory to fully pay the price of punishment. According to the RCC doctrine of forgiveness, it would be unusual for any Catholic to believe that he or she would spend no time in purgatory.

Purgatory is perhaps the most vicious doctrine of the church. Not only does it, through fear, attempt to keep Catholics in line, it also attacks the doctrine of the Bible which is very clear in its teaching that Christ's sacrifice on the cross is a finished work and that that work fully atones for the sins of anyone who will accept His forgiveness. The doctrine of purgatory was seen by the Council of Florence, in 1439, as practiced by pagans, to be a real asset for the Church. Not only as a control over the laity but also as a source of revenue. It has had phenomenal success, especially in the area of finances, since the evidence is that it has, without doubt, brought more funds into the coffers of the church than all of their other sources. The most popular way, and

most profitable way for the Church, to get supposed relief for one who is believed to be in purgatory, is to pay for Masses to be said in his or her behalf. One of the problems is that no one knows how many Masses need to be said, or how many candles need to be burned (for so much money per candle), before one is released from the fires of purgatory. That there are torturing fires is plainly stated by RCC theologians. Boettner quotes Bellarmine, a noted RCC theologian; "According to the Holy Fathers of the Church, the fire of purgatory does not differ from the fire of hell, except in point of duration" (pg. 220).

One can easily see that salvation for Catholics is never sure, and is actually left to the power and discrimination of a priest. If a priest were to refuse to absolve one, the individual is left without sacramental grace and continues in a lost condition. There is, however, one problem with that system. Should one be refused absolution by one priest, there is nothing to stop a person from going to another parish, another priest, and another kind of answer and judgement. There is no established standard and besides, how does any priest know if a person is telling the truth concerning any matter?

Another doctrinal problem. When the Lord Jesus Christ gave His life on the cross He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30). Yet the RCC continues to have the Mass in which the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross is repeated. They do this because the tradition was established by Gregory the Great in 590 A.D. that there were to be repeated Masses, or offerings of Christ, as a sacrifice. The Mass is also called the Eucharistic Sacrifice and it is taught that Christ is really, literally and

physically present in the Eucharist. So the Mass is believed to be a bloodless sacrifice of Christ. Because Catholics believe that the wafer elevated by the priest during the Mass is actually Christ Himself they worship it in, what the Bible would call, idolatry.

Another type of idolatry is the veneration shown to Mary. While generally Catholics deny that they worship Mary, yet in practice they do what the Lord declared to be idolatry when the children of Israel bowed down to other man-made gods. There are shrines world-wide dedicated to Mary, and multiplied thousands each year attend novenas in her honor and to seek her favor. Thousands of churches, schools, hospitals and orders are dedicated to her glory, as well as individual shrines, in homes and along the roads, in countries where the RCC dominates. The ordinary Catholic is given to understand that Mary has the same power as the members of the Trinity and can be petitioned for the same things that God the Father or The Lord Jesus Christ would provide. But Mary is no different than any other human being in that she is not omnipotent but is one who is, as millions of other believers who have died in Christ, waiting for the Rapture of the church when she will receive a new body and will then be with the Lord forever. Yet, without one particle of evidence in the Bible, the RCC declared, in 1854, her immaculate conception, which teaches that Mary was born without sin. Then in 1950 the church declared her bodily assumption, that she ascended into heaven, where she was enthroned as the Queen of Heaven.

The greatest error regarding Mary is found in the titles that are bestowed on her. She is called: The

Virgin Mother of God, Queen of Heaven, Morning Star, Dispenser of Divine Grace, Door of Heaven, and several others. The most objectionable is The Mother of God. The RCC points to the fact that she was the mother of Jesus and that Jesus is God and so that makes her the Mother of God! She has also acquired the title "Spouse of the Holy Spirit" because it was with her, in her, and of her that He [the Holy Spirit] produced His Masterpiece which is a God-made man (a quote by Patrick Haffney in *Roman Catholicism*, Paul G. Schrotenboer, Editor).

Is the Roman Catholic Church and Religion a cult? By any standard she must be so declared. However, individual Catholics must be treated by Christians in the same way other cult members are treated. They are creations of God for whom the Lord Jesus Christ died. They need the Gospel. They should be the objects of determined evangelization. They should certainly be those whom Christians include in every approach to the throne of grace. Almost every Christian knows, and sometimes befriends, members of the RCC. Every effort should be made to reach them with the Truth who is Christ. As with other cults, there should never be criticism of their Church but rather a kind, loving presentation of Jesus. There are, as we all know, those in the RCC who declare that they are "born again." The message to them is the same. If they belong to Christ then they should be willing to obey Him and not the Church. He said, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (II Cor. 6:17).

DEMONISM —FACT OR FABLE

by C. Reuben Lindquist

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In spite of the fact that the Word of God clearly reveals the existence and reality of Satan and his evil emissaries, the demons, many reject these truths pertaining to the sphere of these supernatural beings as mere superstition, folklore or old wives' fables.

Someone has facetiously asked, "If Satan and his cohorts are not realities and do not exist, then who is carrying on this nefarious work?" If there are not any satanic or demonic forces in this wicked world, then, perforce, we must find another reason for man's depravity and evil behavior.

The sudden appearance and phenomenal manifestation of supernatural forces at work in our day have confirmed what the Scriptures say about the existence and activity of Satan as he operates through his henchmen, the demons. Ever since the encounter of Satan, the subtle serpent, with the woman in the Garden of Eden, which brought about the fall of mankind, as described in Genesis 3:1-6, the human race has been the object of Satan's attack, deception and seduction.

Both the Old and New Testaments testify of his cunning work as he reigns over, and operates through, the demonic forces at his command in his kingdom of darkness. The Lord Jesus Christ, in talking with the Jews on one occasion, graphically described the nature and work of Satan in these words:

"Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye cannot hear My word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no

truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:43-44).

Today, however, we are witnessing a sudden outburst of the occult and every kind of demon activity and manifestation. The apostle Paul warned us that in the latter days there would be

"... false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if **his ministers** also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (II Corinthians 11:13-15).

Likewise, concerning the onslaught and activity of demons, the apostle said,

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the **latter times** some shall depart from the faith, **giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils**; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (I Timothy 4:1-2).

It is obvious from these passages and many others found throughout God's Word that Satan is not only the archdeceiver of the whole world of unregenerate men, but through his emissaries, the demons, he is also relentlessly seeking to seduce and beguile the very elect, the children of God. By means of supernatural "signs and wonders," many of God's saints are "falling away" from the truth "giving heed to seducing spirits."

As we study God's Word, we find that demon activity can be classified under three general categories. The

first of these is:

DEMON DECEPTION

Even though the demons are depraved creatures, they have superhuman intellects and supernatural power. Therefore, under the control and direction of Satan, the archfiend and the enemy of God, their prime motive and objective is to defeat God's plan and purpose for the human race by deception. "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not . . ." (II Corinthians 4:4). Consequently, they are continually and consistently engaged in deceiving human beings concerning the revealed truth of God. By nature they are unclean (Mark 1:27), hypocrites (I Timothy 4:1-3), and seducing spirits, appealing to depraved man's lust and immorality and bringing about the degradation of the natural man's condition, as described by the apostle Paul in Romans 1:21-32.

However, satanic deception is not confined to the unregenerate who have deliberately turned away from God and His Word. In his intense hatred of God, Satan and his cohorts, the demons, are particularly directing their attacks on the **minds** and **lives** of believers. From the moment that God declared, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed," Satan, with his unseen host of evil spirit beings, has declared a relentless war on the saints of God down through the ages of man's history here upon the earth in an attempt to destroy "the Seed of the woman," the virgin-born Redeemer. Under the guise of seeking to lead them nearer to God by substituting "doctrines of demons" for the truth of God's Word, he causes them to go astray resulting and bringing them into delusion and bondage to himself (Matthew 24:24; II Corinthians 4:4).

Satan employs three tools or methods to deceive and beguile the

unregenerate and particularly the untaught and carnal Christians. These are clearly outlined in I John 2:16, as follows:

(1) the lust of the flesh (2) the lust of the eyes (3) and the pride of life, and are demonstrated in the serpent's seduction of Eve in the Garden of Eden, as recorded in Genesis 3:

- (1) "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food"—**the lust of the flesh**
- (2) "And that it was pleasant to the eyes"—**the lust of the eyes**
- (3) "And a tree to be desired to make one wise"—**the pride of life**—"she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

The same three methods of approach were evident when Christ, the Seed of the woman, was led into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted or tested of the Devil, as recorded in Matthew 4:1-11:

- (1) "Command that these stones be made bread"—**the lust of the flesh**
- (2) "If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down . . . his angels . . . shall bear Thee up"—**the lust of the eyes**
- (3) "All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me."—**the pride of life**

Whereas Eve was deceived (I Timothy 2:14) and succumbed to the lies of Satan, the Saviour defeated him by the power of the Word, "**It is written . . .**" (Matthew 4:1-11).

The apostasy, the preponderance of evil cults, and the moral decadence, so prevalent in our day, indicate that we are in the "last days" of this dispensation as described by the apostle Paul in II Timothy 3:1-13. We call attention to two verses in this portion in particular:

Verse 8—"Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of **corrupt minds,**

reprobate concerning the faith."

Verse 13—"But **evil men** and **seducers** shall wax worse and worse, **deceiving**, and being **deceived**."

Let us, therefore, heed the admonition of Paul to Timothy in the verses that follow:

"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of . . . the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus . . . profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:14-17).

The second phase of demon activity deals with

DEMON OBSESSION

Some years ago, the much publicized seance in which the late Bishop James A. Pike, a notable minister in the Disciples of Christ Church, was supposed to have communicated with his son, who had committed suicide, caused a resurgence of the occult phenomenon. Since that time, there has been a staggering increase involving black magic, fortune telling, astrology, metaphysics, satanism and false cults of every kind. This, coupled with modern-day scientific research, has produced some real questions on the part of former skeptics and those ignorant of God's Word, concerning the reality of spirit existence, influence, and involvement with mankind.

It is significant to note that most heathen cultures, destitute of biblical knowledge, recognize and readily admit and attest to the existence of these powers of darkness. Their religious rites, ceremonies and worship usually involve either appeasing the wrath of or imploring the assistance of unseen powers in the spirit world, as part of

their daily existence. The tragedy in our modern-world Christendom is the appalling ignorance on the part of so many professing Christians concerning what the Bible teaches with reference to the current satanic manifestations and activities. God's Word alone can fortify the born again believer against the onslaughts of Satan and his evil conspirators. Without it, any well-meaning soul will fall prey to Satan's delusions.

Demon obsession deals with the **power demons can exert over the mind** or the **thought pattern** of every human being. Since the unregenerate and the heathen are without the knowledge of the Gospel, they are particularly susceptible to satanic mental delusions or obsessions. As a result, he holds them captive at his will since he fully **controls** and **manipulates** the **thoughts of their minds**. In view of this fact, Satan and his cohorts are primarily focusing their attention and their deceptive efforts in influencing and captivating the minds and thought patterns of Christians, thus leading them astray.

Through their superphysical strength, demons are able to take advantage of mental depression and physical weaknesses, which can produce depression, anxiety, emotional upsets or various phobias and fears, sometimes even ultimately resulting in a deranged mind (Ephesians 2:2). Being cognizant of the effects of the mind and its behavior upon the physical body, they can harass the mind and afflict the body with psychosomatic diseases, physical disabilities, or organic and chronic disorders, which even defy medical and psychiatric treatment. Frequently these attacks will result in nervous breakdowns or mental instability, which in turn may drive their enslaved victims to self-destruction of other violent reactions.

Needless to say, the current use and

addiction to drugs is but another of Satan's diabolical methods, used not only to destroy the minds of our confused youth today, but also to wreck their physical bodies. This, coupled with the flood of pornographic literature, homosexuality, permissiveness, and violence associated with the various X-rated movies and TV programs, truly emphasizes the fact that we are living in a day when Satan and his seductive imps are waging an all-out war to capture the minds of mankind. The Bible declares, **"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he"** (Proverbs 23:7a).

The final phase or goal of demon activity involves

DEMON POSSESSION

Since the Bible clearly indicates that demons are disembodied spirits, they are seeking bodies or habitations which they can indwell and control. One notable instance is found in Matthew 8:28-34, where the Lord Jesus, together with His disciples, came into the country of the Gergesenes. There they met "two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce." Recognizing Christ and that they were doomed to perdition, they besought him, saying (verse 31), "If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine." When He gave them permission, they came out of the men that they had possessed, went into the herd of swine, taking control of them, and ran violently down a steep place, perishing in the water.

Many instances of demon-possessed victims are mentioned in the New Testament. In every instance it is to be noted that demon possession involves a condition where one or more evil spirits, or demons, actually inhabit a human body, thereby taking complete control of their victim. So complete is this transformation that the original personality of the human being is entirely set aside and the demon imposes or substitutes his own personality on the possessed victim, employing the

physical body as a means for expressing his demonic characteristics, personality and thought, even using the mouth of the one possessed to speak in an altogether distinct and different voice. Frequently, the demons leave their victim's body, coming and returning at will. When absent, the one possessed reverts to and manifests his original personality, until such time as the demon or demons elect to return.

The question is often asked, "Can a Christian become **demon possessed?**" While it is possible for a born again believer to experience **demon deception and obsession** if he yields to the wiles of Satan, or allows himself to be drawn into evil temptations, it is our definite conviction that a believer who has truly been regenerated and simultaneously indwelt by the Holy Spirit **cannot be demon possessed**. We base this conviction on several passages, such as I John 4:1-6 where we are definitely assured in verse 4, "Ye are of God, little children, and have **overcome them** (spirits): **because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.**"

Therefore, we are exhorted to "**try the spirits** whether they are of God" (verse 1).

"We are of God . . . Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error" (verse 6).

Another passage which confirms this fact is found in I John 3:9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

"It is God who has delivered us out of the dominion of darkness and has transferred us into the kingdom of His dearly loved Son, by whom **we possess** the ransom from captivity" (Colossians 1:13—Williams Translation).

Demon possession represents the ultimate in Satan's ability to completely victimize and subjugate a human being, body, soul and spirit, putting him under his dominion and control.

Needless to say, there is much that we do not know about the phenomenon of demon activity but, as we trace these three phases of Satan's operations in the world today, it is evident that the Word of God teaches, beginning with **demon deception** which affects all mankind, that there is a downward trend or a more accelerated form of activity in **demon obsession**, culminating in **demon deception** Satan seeks to "**blind the minds**" of men to the truth. In the case of the ungenerate, "... the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (II Corinthians 4:4).

With reference to the saved, Satan seeks to "pervert and distort" the truth of the Word, substituting "doctrines of demons."

The trends of our day, including neo-orthodoxy, liberalism and the charismatic mania, which is sweeping the world, with its emphasis on experience, bodily healing, tongues, and miracles, associated with the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a second work of grace, are evidences of turning from the truth. The apostle Paul gave warning that this would occur at the end of this age, when he wrote to Timothy, "Preach the Word . . . For the time will come when **they** (believers) **will not endure sound doctrine**: but after **their own lusts** (desires and designs) shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears: And they shall **turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables**" (II Timothy 4:2-4).

How then can we as God's children engage in this spiritual warfare without being defeated? In his letter to the Ephesian believers (6:10-18). Paul gives us the strategy and the list of the armor required to defeat our enemies. Let us take note:

- (1) **The source of our supplies** (verse 10)
"Be strong in the Lord, and in the **power of His might.**"
- (2) **Adequate protection** (verse 11)
"Put on the **whole armor** of God, that ye may be able to **stand against** the wiles of the devil."
- (3) **Know your enemy** (verse 12)
"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against **principalities**, and against **powers**, against the **rulers** of the darkness of this world, against **spiritual wickedness (wicked spirits)** in high places" (areas of conflict).
- (4) **Check each piece of armor** (verse 13)
"That ye may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand.**"
- (5) **Take the initiative** (verses 14-17)
"Stand therefore . . ."
 - a. **Loins** girt about with **truth**.
 - b. **Chest** — breastplate of righteousness
 - c. **Feet** shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.
 - d. **Shield** of faith (defensive weapon), wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.
 - e. **Head** — helmet of salvation.
 - f. **Sword** of the Spirit (offensive weapon), two-edged, the Word of God.
- (6) **Keep in constant touch with Headquarters** (verse 18a)
Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit" (information and guidance in coping with the enemy).
- (7) **Alert at all times** (verse 18b)
"Watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (striving for the unity of the Spirit).

Let us resist the Devil and he will flee from us!

Reprint from MISSIONGRAMS

(This article may be purchased from our office in tract form. It is an 8 page fold-out, #D1 - 10 @ 10 cents each.)

AMERICA'S TROJAN HORSE

By E. L. Bynum

In recent weeks we have seen irrefutable evidence from the lips of the television broadcast media, that they do constitute a Trojan Horse in America. CNN, CBS, NBC, and ABC day after day have shown their liberal bias. The people who control these news networks have tried to influence the mood of the American people. It is obvious that they wanted to block the U.S. from taking military action against Saddam Hussein. They have dragged pacifists, wimps, left wingers, anti-Americans, and radical Arabs from around the world before their microphones and cameras. They did this, so these people could denounce America and its leadership.

It is strange, with the horde of refugees of Kuwait, living in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, that the networks found little time to interview them. They could have broadcast to the whole world, the record of the awful atrocities and destruction committed by Saddam Hussein against that tiny defenseless country. (Since the liberation of Kuwait, they have been doing this. They should have done it long ago.) They could not do that, for they were too busy broadcasting the pictures from Baghdad. These were the propaganda weapons of a heartless killer, but they did not care.

Anyone can see, that the news anchor people from the major networks are very liberal. Not all of their reporters in the field share their opinions. It is clear that the majority do. The American people need to know the political and religious views of these people. Their political and religious views are

firmly slanted to the left, and they often make little effort to conceal their bias.

Now that the war is apparently coming to a swift and successful conclusion, they are changing their tune. This does not mean that they have basically changed their views. When almost 90 percent of the citizens are supporting the President and his policy, they are having to pull in their horns. The news media is dumbfounded that they cannot control the thinking of the American people in such matters. This does not mean that they will quit trying.

Baghdad Ted Turner— Hanoi Jane Fonda

Ted Turner owns and operates the CNN news network. His left-wing and anti-Christian views are widely known. He said on one occasion that Christianity is for losers. After he was deluged by angry protests, he did make a half-hearted apology. Turner is to marry, if he has not already done so, Jane Fonda, the actress and political activist. We have not forgotten her shameless visit to Hanoi, North Vietnam. While there, she became a propaganda weapon of the brutal Communist rulers. She told the world that our POW's were treated well, while nearby they were being brutally tortured.

Hanoi Jane Fonda, speaking at a U.S. college, said that if they really knew what Communism was, they would pray that it would come to America. (Shame on the people who go to her movies, and buy her exercise program! This has made her rich).

CNN—The Voice of Baghdad

When the war began, we were not surprised, that CNN became the voice of Baghdad. It is only fitting that people with the radical views of Ted and Jane, would be ready and willing to do the bidding of Saddam Hussein. Peter Arnett was ready day and night to broadcast the latest thoughts of the butcher of Baghdad to the whole world via CNN. It may be that Arnett was little more than a hostage of Saddam. He may have had no choice in making the broadcasts, if he wanted to live. However, it is certain, the CNN people in Atlanta did have a choice. They elected to broadcast this propaganda over and over again.

Jay Harris, editor of the *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal* said, "In some people's minds the 'other enemy' in Baghdad has to be CNN." He further wrote, "For awhile, as the only major U.S. new contact in Baghdad, and as a result often a conduit for Saddam Hussein's bombast, CNN's veteran, Peter Arnett, was both praised and damned."

"Then, the Baghdad Badman, realizing he had an open line to millions of Americans, let the other networks and print media return. And, instead of one 'voice,' as it were, Saddam and the Iraqi people had any number of outlets to vent their diatribes."

"The Butcher of Baghdad, who has executed family members, gassed his own people, and mowed down teenagers, made the best of it, 'playing for sympathy' during the Baghdad bunker bombing incident." (LAJ 2/22/91)

The war will soon be over. We should give Ted and Jane and the whole Turner Broadcasting business

of Baghdad. It is certain, America would be better off without them. We have not said much about the other networks, but they did not do much better than CNN. To the credit of the American people, most of them can see the bias of the network. It may be that they see that the network news is little more than propaganda and entertainment.

The Immoral Trojan Horse

So far we have confined our remarks to the news departments of all four of the networks. However, this is not where the most dangerous Trojan horse is parked. It is in the movies and programs aired on TV, that the fabric of American society is being destroyed by this dangerous filth column.

TV programs feature fornication, adultery, and homosexuality in a favorable light. Drugs, dishonesty, lying, cheating, cursing, and every conceivable wickedness, is piped into American homes, via TV. The cable companies help in bringing the worst filth into homes. We do not advocate censorship, but there should be responsibility on the part of these people. Their interest, is to fatten their bank accounts, while at the same time debauching the people of this nation.

It is outrageous that these irresponsible people can get by with this awful plan. When they face criticism, they simply say that you can turn off the TV if you don't like it. They have no concern for the millions of children out there, who do not have the knowledge to resist this garbage. In addition, there are multitudes of illiterate and incompetent people who are not capable of making such judgments.

Television could have ushered

in a golden age of education and clean entertainment. Instead it has brought an immoral holocaust, unparalleled in the history of the world. It is time that Christian people see that Hollywood and the networks have teamed up to drown this nation in a sea of filth. This is a greater danger than Communism or Islam.

Experts declare that the average American child watches 17 to 20 thousand hours of TV by the time they are 18 years of age. How can our nation possibly survive this diabolical poisoning of the minds of our youth?

We cannot expect many of the unsaved to understand the seriousness of this situation. Christians should either get control of their TV sets, or make scrap out of them. Children are ruined, and Christians are destroyed by the entertainment industry. Many professing

Christians are tied to their TV sets, so they cannot carry on a conversation with their family, much less their friends. These same people are so busy watching the TV that they cannot find the time to read their Bible, pray, or be faithful to their church. When they are constantly feeding their minds with fornication and adultery, no wonder that many homes are falling apart. This is certainly the reason morals are so low, even among professing Christians. The handwriting is on the wall. It is either wake up or perish. There may not be much time to decide.

—Reprinted from *The Plains Baptist Challenger*, published by Tabernacle Baptist Church, 1911 - 34th St., Lubbock, TX 79452. A publication that would be well worth your acquiring.

BOOK REVIEW

WHY YOU SHOULD BELIEVE IN THE TRINITY—by Robert M. Bowman, Jr. Here is a book that offers positive reasons for believing in this most important doctrine of Christianity. It was written to refute the claims made by the Jehovah's Witnesses that the Trinity is an apostate concept that should be rejected by all Christians. However, this is a valuable resource for those who are Christians, (the Jehovah's Witnesses certainly are not), and who want to increase their understanding of this doctrine. This is not an exhaustive study of this doctrine. It is rather a simple and clearly written explanation of the Biblical basis for faith in a triune God. The author demonstrates how

belief in the Trinity assumes that salvation is completely a work of God, a problematic position for those who would prefer a "works religion." He offers concise and easily understood definitions of often ambiguous terms and concepts.

The book closes with this ringing challenge:

The choice is between believing in the true God as He has revealed Himself, mystery and all, or believing in a God who is relatively simple to understand but bears little resemblance to the true God. Trinitarians are willing to live with a god they can't fully comprehend.

The author is an associate editor for the Christian Research Institute of Irvine, California, and is completing work for his Ph.D. in Westminster Theological Seminary. He is the author of *Jehovah's Witnesses, Jesus Christ, and the Gospel of John*, 157 pages, \$7.95 plus \$1.05 postage.

NEW BOOKS RECEIVED

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE by Dr. Paul Hooley. The author writes concerning the complexity of the biomedical decisions facing us today. He writes about many important and timely issues and addresses them in a very Biblical manner. Anyone in the church facing the issues of the beginning of life or the termination of life will find help here. 54 pages M1-53 \$2.50

BIBLICAL INERRANCY AND RELIABILITY by J. Otis Yoder and Harold S. Martin. This booklet contains two separate sections with the two authors each writing one. The first concerns Inerrancy, and the second Reliability. This should be read by anyone whose confidence in the Scripture has been shaken by those who deny that God inspired and preserved His Word. 44 pages B11 \$2.00

THE FACTS ON THE OCCULT
—47 pages D1-65

THE FACTS ON THE MOR-MON CHURCH—47 pages M2-47

(Here are two more booklets in the series by John Ankerberg and John Weldon.) \$2.50 each

GLOBAL PEACE AND THE RISE OF THE ANTICHRIST by Dave Hunt. This popular author and lecturer considers the centuries-

old prophecies that are the headlines of our newspapers and presents us with 21 chapters of insight which covers a wide spectrum of subjects relating to the title of the book. As usual, Mr. Hunt doesn't pull any punches. This is good as well as important reading. Included is a very complete index which includes the names of the people mentioned and also the topics covered. This is a very valuable addition. 309 pages NA-49 \$9.95

THE BATTLE FOR THE RESURRECTION by Norman L. Geisler. Many cults today, as well as some liberals, either deny the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ completely or they deny that His resurrection was a literal bodily resurrection. In ten chapters and seven appendices the author refutes every argument against a resurrection of the same physical body which was laid in the tomb following the crucifixion. The Bible claims that there is no such thing as a "spiritual" resurrection. 222 pages M1-55 \$10.95

DEMONS - A BIBLICALLY BASED PERSPECTIVE, by Alex Konya. This is about demon possession and related subjects. Not from a collection of "case studies," but from what the Bible has to say about the subject. The answers to many questions Christians ask are answered here from the Bible. There is no need to be confused any longer by those who claim that Christians can be demon possessed and who base their decisions on "case histories." Nor need there be confusion by others who go to the other extreme and deny the existence of demons. The Bible is THE authority and the answer to all questions are taken from its pages. 151 pages D1-66 \$10.95

THE DELICATE BALANCE, by John Zajac. The sub-title is: Coming Catastrophic Changes on Planet Earth. The author is a scientist, and looks at all that is happening, and what could happen in the near future, and writes his observation from his background of years of study and investigation. He covers floods, famine and finances, as well as pyramids and population. So fascinating that you will not be able to put it down. 200 pages P1-18 \$8.95

THE ACCOUNT WE MUST GIVE: Studies on The Judgment Seat Of Christ—Carl G. Johnson. The author has written this book to show both the positive and negative aspect of the Judgment Seat of Christ. Often Christians focus only on the pleasant elements and thus become lukewarm in their service for the Lord. Mr. Johnson wants to help motivate believers: "I believe it is important for Christians to realize the seriousness of the Judgment Seat of Christ and live in the light of

that meeting with the Lord. This truth should incite believers to a life of holy, faithful service to the Lord Jesus in view of a future accounting before the Lord." This book is published in an easy-to-read style. It is well-documented with many quotations throughout. There is a good bibliography as well. 131pp P1-17 \$5.95

THE GOD OF STONES AND SPIDERS: Letters To A Church in Exile—Charles Colson. Divided into four parts—Government & Public Policy, Culture, The Church, and Prisons & Criminal Justice—the book addresses the root cause of the drug problem, true Christianity contrasted with the "celebrity illusion," and why prisons don't and can't rehabilitate. These stirring reflections show once again that Charles Colson is one of a very few true prophetic voices among current American leaders. 224pp (6x9) M1-54 \$8.95

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WHAT'S NEW ON THE NEW AGE SCENE

Ewald Eisele

Even though there are new books on the New Age being published almost every week there is very little that is of earth-shaking consequence. Probably this is true, in part, because most emphasis today is not on a New Age but on a New World Order. Our man who said, "Watch my lips," continues to work toward this goal in spite of the set-back in health he suffered this past week.

However, some of the published offerings are of significance. The book by popular author, Texe Marrs,

NEW AGE CULTS AND RELIGIONS, is in this category. We are all rather in the dark about the emerging philosophies and religions and we must depend on authors who have proven themselves to be trustworthy.

Probably the real battle-ground is in the public education domain. It is there that the future leaders of the nation, world, and the church are being trained to inaugurate, not only a New Age but also, a New World Order. There are those who are conducting literary campaigns

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with the forces in public education, constantly attempting to alert parents to the dangers involved. Unfortunately, the general public is apathetic beyond belief! Two organizations engaged in this effort, and which deserve the support of every real American, to say nothing of the support that real Christians ought to give them, are: The Mel Gablers, Educational Analysts, Box 7518, Longview, TX 75607-7518, telephone 903/753-5993, and, Pro-Family Forum, POB 8907, Fort Worth, TX 76124, telephone 817/531-3605.

Pro-Family Forum, in their last newsletter, "*The Family Educator*," wrote in an article on the New World Order, ". . . we quote world leaders who freely admitted that the plans for children were but a part of the New World Economic Order, which was clearly indicated to be

merely another phase for world socialism."

Christians need to unite behind these and other organizations which are in the front-lines doing battle in the intellectual sector of this war. If we lose the battle for this generation of young people, the enemy will find it that much easier to win the next. We know that the battle is the Lord's, but He expects that His troops will follow His orders and not only occupy until He comes, but will put on His armor so that they can do battle in His Name. One way open to us to rebuke Satan and his cohorts is to use our influence through our pen-power and let school boards and politicians know where we stand on the educational issues of the day. If we do not, we may very well find ourselves fighting for the survival of our freedoms in a New World Order system.