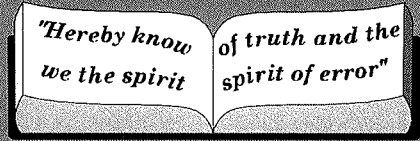


The Discerner



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AN INTERDENOMINATIONAL HERESY-EXPOSING QUARTERLY

Editorial	2
<i>William A. BeVier</i>	
Jehovah's Witnesses and the Military	3
<i>Thomas D. Sheehy</i>	
The U.N. Plan for Global Control, Part 1	8
<i>Berit Kjos</i>	
The Five Solae of Gospel Conversion in Pauline Theology, Part 2	12
<i>David A. Cook</i>	
Another Look at Islam, Part 2.....	16
<i>William A. BeVier</i>	
Book Reviews (3)	21

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EDITORIAL

By William A. BeVier

By now each of you should have received a copy of our semi-annual newsletter in which we attempt to update everyone on our mailing list of the ministry of R.A.S.

Also, many of you will note that your address label has a barcode on it. You probably are on the mailing list of other Christian organizations so you will see more and more barcodes. This is part of a program by the U.S. Postal Service named "Max It!" which it is claimed will speed up the handling of mail at less cost. As an incentive to use this program, the Postal Service gives lower rates to barcoded mail.

While you are looking at your address label (assuming you did), please note if it has "XVII 1" (Vol. 17 No. 1) on it. If so, your subscription expires with this issue and hopefully you will renew your subscription. You will need to do so to complete the articles we have to continue in the next issue.

Our first article in this issue is by Thomas Sheehy. He has been actively involved for several years in Minnesota with a ministry to reach Jehovah's Witnesses to have them

accept the Gospel of the New Testament.

We welcome back to the pages of The Discerner Berit Kjos, after an absence of several issues. Mrs. Kjos is a prolific writer in a number of areas, both in her books and topic articles. Her writings always are relevant to current Christian concerns.

This issue of The Discerner also has the continuation of two articles from the October-December issue. First is David Cook's "The Five Solae of Gospel Conversion in Pauline Theology." This is a carefully researched article comparing Roman Catholic dogma on conversion with that found in the writings of the Apostle Paul. A comparison all of us need to be aware of today. Mr. Cook has been serving as a member of our Board for several years and more recently as our Secretary. However, he has notified us he has taken a position in the Salt Lake City area and will soon be moving with his family from Minnesota. We will miss him and his contributions in so many ways to R.A.S. We wish God's best blessings on him.

We welcome as a new member of our Board of Reference Dr. Ron Carlson. For over 20 years Dr. Carlson has been speaking and writing from the Word of God informing Christians about the major cults. His seminars have taken him across the United States and into 75 foreign countries. A catalog of his books, cassettes, and videos is available from Christian Ministries International, 7601 Superior Terrace, Eden Prairie, Minnesota 55344. If you are not familiar with his ministry, you should want to contact him for further information.

In the July-August-September 1995 issue of The Discerner we invited attention to Dr. David L. Larson's newest book Jews, Gentiles, and the Church. We are receiving good reports about this book. If you are interested in prophecy, here is a book we can recommend by a man who has studied this part of Scripture for years. The book is published by Discovery House Publishers, Nashville, TN (a division of Thomas Nelson).

We also would like to congratulate another member of our Board of

Reference. Dr. Norman L. Geisler has been appointed the new President of Southern Evangelical Seminary in Charlotte, North Carolina. He formerly was Dean of the Seminary.

The second article continued in this issue is the one titled "Another Look at Islam." Anyone aware of what's going on in the world today, knows the impact Islam and its followers are having. Hopefully this series of articles will be informative.

Our issue this time concludes with three brief book reviews, two by members of our Board and one by a retired pastor and long-time friend of R.A.S. All three books are recommended by the reviewers.

Please continue to pray for the ministry of R.A.S. and as you are led, please contribute to our financial support. The office still is being staffed by volunteers, mostly Board members and their wives, but on-going expenses are not covered by the literature sold. We are grateful for those who regularly contribute to R.A.S., some of you have been doing this for many years (Eph. 6:18-20, 24).

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES AND THE MILITARY

By Thomas D. Sheehy

"How can I believe the God of the Bible, when the nations that have the Bible are among those feverishly stockpiling nuclear weapons? ...instead of following the wise counsel of the Bible, the nations of Christendom have become involved in a suicidal arms race." (Look I Am Making All Things New, pp. 11-12).

Wouldn't it be nice if Jehovah's Witnesses limited their arguments against "Christendom" just to theolo-

gy, and leave the peripheral issues behind them?

However, as the above quotation points out, one of the problems Christians face in reaching Jehovah's Witnesses is due to the "excess baggage" which they believe Christians must carry in belonging to a Christian church. JWs believe that unless you wear a cross, celebrate birthdays, decorate Christmas trees, color Easter eggs, salute the flag, sing

the national anthem, recite the pledge of allegiance, pray to statues, vote in elections, accept blood transfusions and join the military, you cannot be a member of Christendom.

Throughout their writings, they also imply that Christians consider these issues to be as important as the Trinity, the deity of Christ and His bodily resurrection, the infallibility of the Scriptures, the immortality of the soul, the virgin birth, the reality of Hell, and the visible second coming of our Lord and Savior.

Very few of them seem to realize that many of those in the military died so that they could worship freely within their Kingdom Halls, rather than in a national church such as in England.

However, in an attempt to link the church with the military, the Watchtower asks Jehovah's Witnesses to believe that the churches of Christendom, and not the Pentagon, controls our country's military.

But I have to admit, I have mixed feelings in writing this article. On the one hand, Jehovah's Witnesses bring up this subject often enough to warrant such an article. Especially if you've ever served in the military. On the other hand, my entire purpose in writing this article could be destroyed in the next issue of The Watchtower or Awake! by an announcement that Jehovah has suddenly shed "new light" on this issue, and perhaps even using some of my points.

I'm also not very good at debating Jehovah's Witnesses. At least not as much as I'd like to be. Maybe this is because I'm somewhat taken back by their tactics. Sometimes they play "biblical hopscotch"; sometimes they shun you; sometimes it's as if they're

only interested in having a one way conversation; or they speak to you as if there's a big chip on their shoulder and they're waiting for someone to come to knock it off.

Although Jehovah's Witnesses refuse to serve in the military, their tactics and organization closely resemble the military. Within the first five minutes of entering a person's house, they bait their listeners with "red herrings" in hopes of drawing them into an argument. Like a destroyer in search of an illusive submarine, Jehovah's Witnesses drop their own "depth charges" in hopes of triggering a reaction. They rarely fail.

Their primary argument is how can anyone who calls themselves "Christian" kill another "Christian" simply because they serve another country in the military. Of course, this question is based upon two fallacies: First, everyone who joins the military will eventually kill someone in combat. This is a false assumption. As a matter of fact, most of those in the military today serve in support roles such as cooks, dentists, mechanics, electricians, librarians, musicians, clerks, doctors, nurses, policemen, and photographers. Many of these people serve 20 years or more of active duty without ever firing a weapon in combat, much less killing someone. The second fallacy which this question seems to imply is that killing a Christian is somehow worse than killing a non-Christian.

In asking this question, Jehovah's Witnesses also assume that once you become part of a Trinitarian church, they issue you the weapon of your choice and several clips of ammunition in addition to serving communion. On the contrary,

patriots and pacifists often worship side by side in Trinitarian churches.

POSSIBLE REASONS FOR THEIR STANCE

One of the most plausible reasons for their stance is that The Watchtower shows a great deal of contempt for other authority figures, whether they be the government, the military, or the Church. (I mean universal Christian church, past, present, and future. Not a denomination.) Separation from "the world" helps to support their us-versus-them attitude.

Consider the fact that whatever the Christian churches accept, Jehovah's Witnesses reject. Within the doors of their Kingdom Halls, there is no church secretary, pastoral staff, nursery school, Sunday school, children's church. There are no pictures of Jesus, stained glass windows, pews, or unity candles. In fact, the Kingdom Halls look more like office buildings than any church. Even the public schools may have more religious items in their buildings than in a Kingdom Hall.

Aside from their beliefs that military service is an association of blood-thirsty murderers, there seems to be a logical link with some of their other beliefs. For example, one of the main places blood transfusions might be needed is on the warships and battlefields of the world. Since Jehovah's Witnesses refuse military service, they can forgo the need for blood transfusions in combat injuries.

On certain occasions, service members must also salute the flag, such as when it is being raised and lowered at sunrise and sunset. By rejecting military service, JW's are never put in a position of rendering

unto Caesar what is Caesar's (Luke 20:25). The decision has already been made for them.

Perhaps the strongest reason to reject military service is that it's easier to ensure a Jehovah's Witness remains in the Watchtower. Imagine trying to maintain control over your flock when they are at sea, and 3,000 miles from the nearest Kingdom Hall. However, this is also an opportunity where the Witnesses could have tested their faith.

Another thing which I'm beginning to notice is that those who have served in the military prior to becoming a Jehovah's Witness are taught to be ashamed of it. One Jehovah's Witness I spoke with would often tell me of his good times in the service, but always did it when he wasn't in the presence of other Witnesses.

POINTS OF SIMILARITY

Ironically, while Jehovah's Witnesses may not have to answer to generals and admirals, they too have a system which ranks their followers according to levels of importance. Even their chain of command also is similar to the military. The President of the Watchtower in many ways is likened to the President of the United States. Both are "Commander in Chief." Of course, if you tell a Jehovah's Witness this, he will most likely say that Jehovah is their commander in chief. But then, why do they have a President if that's so?

The Watchtower's governing body can be likened to the Pentagon. Both operate as the central nervous system. Both the Watchtower and the military divide their areas into regions or districts. When the Watchtower launches a new attack on Christendom

through their books, they do so with military-like efficiency.

When a Jehovah's Witness asks someone "What's your motive?" or goes door to door, they're on a reconnaissance mission. Inside each briefcase are weapons that are designed to destroy their opponents. Usually this is done through mockery. While they may never stand inspections, they maintain a "spit and polish" appearance, and their Kingdom Halls are often inspected by Watchtower officials each year. Like the military, any members who read and/or distribute enemy propaganda, or show any disrespect to those appointed over them are also punished by the Watchtower's own "Uniform Code of Military Justice." While no Jehovah's Witness has ever been court-martialed, those who have been found guilty of even the least infraction, face an inquisition just as grueling as those who face it in uniform.

Like those in the military, Jehovah's Witnesses are always eager in accepting defectors from the churches of Christendom, they also loathe those who leave the Watchtower; treating them as traitors much like those who sell out their own government.

When they're captured in an argument from which they cannot escape, Jehovah's Witnesses resist by lying to their "enemy." When outnumbered, they retreat to fight an easier battle somewhere else or engage in "hit and run" tactics which can effectively wear down their opponent.

DIFFERENCES

But you don't need bullets or bombs to kill someone. Scripture

notes that anyone who hates his brother is guilty of murder in the heart (Matthew 5:21-22; I John 3:15). And everyone is familiar with fact that Jesus, or even Paul, never condemned the Roman soldiers for serving in their army under men who were just as evil as Hitler.

When I pointed this out to one Witness, he said we don't hate people, just their doctrines.

Excuse me? Anyone who's ever been shunned by the Witnesses knows what it feels like to be treated as if you are dead. When Jehovah's Witnesses shun those who are unworthy of hearing "the truth," they not only kill them in their hearts, they ensure that they will never return to follow the Watchtower again. In essence, Jehovah's Witnesses may be responsible for "killing" more people than all those who died in World War II at the hands of "pagans."

SOME EXAMPLES JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES DON'T USE

While Jehovah's Witnesses have used some good examples as to why they shouldn't belong in the military, they are far from using other examples which are perhaps stronger and more valid than those they put forth.

For example, while many evangelical Christians avoid celebrating Halloween because of the Satanic images involved (skeletons, ghosts, a skull and crossbones and other symbols of death), they forget that many units in the military use symbols of death in their insignias. Some squadrons even use the devil or demons in their insignias.

A second point which Jehovah's Witnesses tend to ignore is that those in the military live under a great deal

of stress. Perhaps even more than those with in the Watchtower. As a result, many of them must sacrifice their family time and spend months away from their children. This eventually leads to problems such as adultery, fornication, alcoholism, foul language, pornography, divination (i.e., fantasy role playing games), gambling and perhaps the greatest sin which Jehovah's Witnesses seem to fear will lead them into apostasy: smoking.

A third point which Jehovah's Witnesses ignore is that the chaplains in the military are forced to treat all religions equally. This allows the service member to fill in the blank and pray to his own deity, despite the fact that the chaplain is most often a Protestant or Roman Catholic.

By neutering those whose main efforts are part of the Great Commission, they leave evangelical Christians in an awkward position. As a result, it is frequently not the chaplains who take part in leading others to Christ, but the layperson. Jesus' words could never be more true than in reference to the military: "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few" (Matthew 9:37; Luke 10:2).

In order to make up for this, chaplains are put in charge of efforts to maintain others morale—such as overseeing a command's library on Navy ships—not their morality. However, their libraries cannot contain books on cults and other books with an apologetic thrust aimed at those who aren't saved. In one instance, when I offered to send a chaplain books such as Walter Martin's Kingdom of the Cults for

their ship's library, I was politely refused for fear of "offending others."

SHOW THEM SOME RESPECT

It should be mentioned that when an angel of the Lord appeared to him, Joshua asked the angel "Are you for us or against us?" The angel's response was "Neither" (Joshua 5:13-14). This is something which I've never heard a Trinitarian or a Jehovah's Witness mention. In other words, this isn't a subject worth fighting over.

While these statements may seem to contradict each other, it should be noted that appearing too patriotic reinforces a Jehovah's Witness to believe he is correct, and you aren't. For example, consider the media's attack on those of us who want to prevent others from legislating their immorality on Christians. Has it made us give up? No, it hasn't. In fact, it's done just the opposite. Should we expect any less out of the Jehovah's Witnesses when we attack their views?

Walter Martin once said that Christians should never focus on peripheral issues such as this, but on the central doctrines of the Christian faith. While this is true to an extent, it is also true that it is often the peripheral issues which keep someone in the Watchtower when Christians have destroyed a Witnesses' arguments against such topics as the Trinity, the immortality of the soul or the bodily resurrection of Christ.

I also think that if you have the correct doctrine in regards to the central doctrines of Christianity, such as the Trinity, salvation by grace alone, the virgin birth, the vicarious propiti-

ation, the bodily resurrection, the second coming of Christ and numerous other issues, I must also have the correct view of the peripheral issues as well.

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THE U.N. PLAN FOR GLOBAL CONTROL

The Habitat II Agenda

By Berit Kjøs

Bicycles instead of cars? Dense apartment clusters instead of single homes? Community rituals instead of churches? "Human rights" instead of religious freedom?

The UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) which met June 3-14, 1996 in Istanbul, painted an alarming picture of the 21st century community. The American ways—free speech, individualism, travel, and Christianity—are *out*. A new set of economic, environmental, and social guidelines are *in*. Citizenship, democracy, and education have been redefined. Hand-picked civil leaders will implement UN "laws," bypassing state and national representatives to work directly with the UN. And politically correct "tolerance"—meaning "the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism" as well as "appreciation" for the world's religions and lifestyle—is "not only a moral duty, it is also a political and legal requirement." (The Declaration of Principles on Tolerance, adopted and signed by the Member States of the UNESCO on 16 November, 1995).

Hard to believe? Not for veteran UN observers who faced boos and hisses for expressing concern in open UN assemblies. Nor for pro-family members of NGOs (Non-

Governmental Organizations) who faced exclusion from public dialogues for opposing feminist commander Bella Abzug and her radical agenda. And not for those who watched the ecstatic welcome given Fidel Castro and his anti-American diatribe.

Yet our president and our non-elected American delegates, headed by U.S. Secretary Henry Cisneros, endorse this revolutionary plan, and our U.S. Department of Education is already establishing the framework for its local implementation. Why? What is happening?

Pro-Communist ideals. "We are the world and the world does not yield to masters nor to suicidal policies," declared Castro, concluding his June 14 plenary remarks aimed at Western capitalist nations. "The world does not accept that a minority of selfish, insane and irresponsible people lead it to annihilation."

"Fidel, Fidel..." shouted the audience. The thunderous applause followed him all the way back to the Cuban section on the other side of the hall, where fans lined up to shake his hand.

"Why are you so enthusiastic?" I asked some of his fans after the session.

"Because he stood up to America," someone answered.

"Because he is a living myth," explained another. "He was a simple guerrilla, fighting for the oppressed against the rich and powerful."

"Fighting for the oppressed..." The UN claims that mission, but third-world women who have faced its abusive birth control practices tell a different story. Like the Communist Manifesto, the alluring UN promises designed to win support cloak an agenda that shows little compassion once power has been won.

In fact, Communist ideology permeated major NGO (non-governmental organizations) workshops, official UN literature, and the organizational guidelines for local communities. Entering the huge "Best Practices" exhibition of model cities, visitors immediately faced wall-sized pictures and elaborate models of Chinese housing projects and community plans. Displays from the rest of the world shared the strips along the outer perimeter of the cavernous hall.

Behind the huge Chinese section, visitors watched Turner Broadcasting videos. Featuring Jane Fonda who once brought anti-American greetings to North Vietnam, each film taught a politically correct plan for personal empowerment: A roomful of men learn to use Singer sewing machines. Women are trained to run a collective construction company. A sad mother holding a crying baby brings a politically correct message: "Baby Miguel's life would be different if his mother was educated and working." A tough Jamaican supervisor at a women's collective shouts, "We don't want to make babies, we want to make money! We can become meaningful people to society without hav-

ing children! WE MUST PRODUCE, NOT REPRODUCE!"

Population Control. The Turner-Fonda message matches the feminist agenda. Former U.S. congresswoman Bella Abzug (Bella Abzug founded WEDO, Women's Environmental and Development Organization, which has joined with other feminist NGOs to form the Supercoalition), who had led the onslaught on traditional values at the 1995 UN conference in Beijing, now helped engineer an official partnership between UN leaders, national delegates, and NGOs that support the UN gender agenda. Stationed around the world, her feminist troops promise to serve as watchdogs, making sure "civil society" implements their program for indoctrinating students with feminist ideology. Inspired by the spirits of earthly goddesses such as Athena and Ishtar whom they worshipped in Beijing, they have little tolerance for Christians and others who oppose their agenda.

"We want to change things," declared Abzug. "We'll be on executive boards. We want the participation of NGOs on the security council."

She serves the globalist purpose well. Mobilizing worldwide rebellion against Christian values, pushing birth control and gender-role equality for every family, demanding sex education for every student, and requiring international surveillance to monitor compliance, her followers are speeding the global revolution. Like countless other UN partners, they are winning by propaganda, intimidation, and growing popular consent.

Note that population control means controlling people, not merely

births. Regarded as international law, the Habitat Agenda negotiated in Istanbul includes all the intrusive action plans outlined at former UN world conferences. "We want to ensure that previously endorsed language [from former UN conferences] is upheld and incorporated into this document," declared Henry Cisnerus, U.S. Secretary for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) who led the US delegation (US Press briefing, Istanbul, June 14, 1996).

This "international law" would limit not only the size of the world population but also housing, production, consumption, parenting, communication, and religious expression (Habitat Agenda items: 54, 103, 16, 9, 19, 97, 52 and others). Its alarming resemblance to the USSR Constitution (documented in a report by Linda Liotta and Joan Veon) implies far greater restrictions than those specifically stated in the Habitat Agenda. Since many specifics were detailed at previous UN conferences, it cannot be fully understood outside the context of the progressive plan for global governance as outlined in all the documents.

Training in global citizenship would begin with the universal education system outlined at the 1990 UN World Conference on Education for All. It matches Goals 2000, America's version of the international education system. Already molding minds around the world, the UN plan for "lifelong learning" indoctrinates young and old with the socialist ideology and earth-centered spirituality designed to create solidarity, an essential element to the envisioned world of peace.

Solidarity. Traditional beliefs simply don't fit the UN vision for 21st Century communities. To find more universal values, Habitat leaders convened a day-long "Dialogue" on the meaning of Solidarity at the elegant Ciragan Palace in Istanbul. The official list of 21 panel members included former Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek, historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Maurice Strong (Maurice Strong failed to come as scheduled) who led the 1992 UN conference on environment.

"I have gathered leaders with tremendous wisdom and prestige," began Habitat Secretary-General Wally N'Dow. "They are bringing the spiritual dimension—the only ingredient that can bind societies together." He had chosen an American moderator who would add credibility to the discussion: Robert MacNeil (of MacNeil-Lehrer), "one of the spiritual lights of the media industry today."

This hand-picked "interfaith group" left little doubt that solidarity meant a universal shift to the new globalist-New Age paradigm (or world-view). "Change your whole way of thinking, because the new order of the spirit is confronting and challenging you," said Millard Fuller, President of Habitat for Humanity.

"Citizenship for the next century is learning to live together," said Federico Mayor, Director General of UNESCO. "The 21st Century city will be a city of social solidarity...We have to redefine the words...[and write a new] social contract."

"We should stop bemoaning the growth of cities," added Dr. Ismail Serageldin, Vice President of The World Bank. "It's going to happen and it's a good thing, because cities

are the vectors of social change and transformation. Let's just make sure that social change and transformation are going in the right direction." Later he added, "The media must act as part of the education process that counters individualism."

The heart of lifelong education would be spiritual training. "What's needed is an interfaith center in every city of the globe," said James Morton, dean of the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine, who organized the panel. "The new interfaith centers will honor the rituals of every...faith tradition: Islam, Hinduism, Jain, Christian [a cross-less version that blends with other beliefs]... and provide opportunity for sacred expressions needed to bind the people of the planet into a viable, meaningful, and sustainable solidarity."

Sustainable development.

The guiding principle of the new universal education system is "sustainable development." People everywhere must be taught "facts" about environment "risks" that are sensational enough to scare them into compliance. They must be persuaded to accept unthinkable limits on consumption, land use, transportation, and family size. Everyone must protect resources for future generations, say UN leaders, but they agree that the real meaning of sustainability is based on the E's: Environment, Economy, and Equity, which point to a redistribution of the world's resources—money, energy, water, and people—in order to create global equality.

History has shown the emptiness of these promises. Long ago the Communist Manifesto announced a proletarian revolution which would empower the poor by redistributing

wealth. Everyone would be equal. Men and women alike would join the socialist workforce, and children would be trained by the state.

It happened! All but the leaders became equally poor, and all the children were indoctrinated with an anti-Christian socialist philosophy. Morally and economically, the masses sank to the level of the lowest common denominator.

The similarities between the Communist Manifesto and the UN agenda (outlined in the Beijing Declaration and incorporated into the Habitat Agenda) should be a call to action. Both revolutions—

- Use psychology and sociology to establish the victimhood, blame and anger needed to fuel the revolution.
- Use education to conform minds to the new ideology.
- Use synthesis (blending opposing views into compromise beliefs that match new goals) to produce group consensus.
- Promise economic equality to seduce the masses.
- Spread hatred toward "extremists" who refuse to compromise.

The Communist Manifesto led to religious, moral and economic bankruptcy. Yet UN-led activists and their US partners are determined to fulfill their utopian visions.

Implementing the plan. The US Network for Habitat II is one of a myriad of national and international UN organizations committed to carry out the UN plan in local communities. "The Network is a forum for making sure people are heard," explained one of its leaders. "Its role is to tie together the messages from all six UN conferences into practical action."

"Partnerships will be increasingly important," he continued. "People in faith communities can help us. We use the African proverb: 'It takes a village to raise a child.' ...Collaboration that links...government, the private sector, and the civil sector."

Do you see the resemblance to the "People's Government" that characterized the local "soviets" in the former USSR? Lenin knew he couldn't win through representative democracy, so he organized local assemblies called Soviets, each local Soviet was ruled by the uneducated proletariat,

the "raw material to be molded by an audacious leader" (Encyclopedia Britannica. Chicago: William Benton, 1968. 19-815), skilled in the use of propaganda. Private merchants, landlords, and priests were excluded from leadership. The chosen elite were supervised and disciplined by rulers at a higher level. Few dared complain. As Andrei Vishinsky wrote in The Law of the Soviet State, "There can be no place for freedom of speech, press, and so on for the foes of socialism" (5-163).

TO BE CONTINUED

THE FIVE SOLAE OF GOSPEL CONVERSION IN PAULINE THEOLOGY (PART 2)

By David A. Cook, M.A.

The fourth Biblical Protestant principle is that a sinner is justified through God's Word, the Scriptures. Scriptures' part, God's Word, becomes the sole "speaking" instrument in justification before God. God's justification does not depend upon a type of human tradition that is authoritatively equalized with the Bible. In Romans 4:3, Paul quoting the sacred writings of the Old Testament, states that Abraham was justified when he believed God, "FOR WHAT DOES THE SCRIPTURE SAY? AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS" [Emphasis mine]. Abraham believed God, but it was God's words through which Abraham believed. His righteousness came through the means of the words of God; and so, Abraham believed the God of the Word, and was justified. The promise that God made was spo-

ken not only to Abraham but also through the Scriptures (God's Word) to his descendants:

"Now not for his sake only was it written, that it was reckoned to him, but for our sake also, to whom it will be reckoned as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead" Romans 4:23, 24 (cf., Gen. 15:6).

The descendants of Abraham must believe the words of God (e.g., Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:ff) thereby, "believing in Him," the God of the words as well, and subsequently being justified by the Scripture, the speaking instrument of God.

The Scripture, Old and New Testaments, has authority, since it is God's Word that justifies and saves (cf., Romans 10:8-14; II Timothy 3:15, 16; I Peter 1:23; James 1:21). Justifying faith comes from the instrument of "hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ" (Romans 10:17).

Tradition is always secondary and subordinate to the Canonized Sacred Writings. The Apostle Paul appeals not to tradition but to Scripture (alone) in Romans 4 (five times) in discussing justification. In Acts 17:11, the Bereans were more noble because they believed Paul's teaching because it was vindicated by the Scriptures and the Scriptures alone, "Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so."

Roman Catholic dogma improperly equates and mixes Scripture with tradition at the Council of Trent, "...reverence all books both of the Old and New Testaments, since God is the author of both; also the traditions...."

And the Catechism of the Catholic Church follows Vatican II when it states, "[97] Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture make up a single deposit of the Word of God..." (Canons...Fourth Session p. 17; see also Catechism [81] p. 31, [85] p. 32 [97] p. 35; and Vatican Council II p. 755).

One of the problems with equating and mixing Tradition with Scripture is the fact that Tradition is not fully inspired and inerrant, as well as tradition will compete and eventually overturn God's Word: "And why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition....And thus you invalidate the Word of God for the sake of your tradition" Matthew 15:3, 6.

God's justification is worked by the Scriptures (cf., Romans 4:3), and by the Scriptures alone (cf., Acts 17:11), not by mixing it with tradition (Matthew 15:3, 6). To do this invali-

dates the Word of God, and so endangers Biblical justification.

The fifth and final Biblical Protestant principle is that a sinner is justified to the Glory of God. The whole plan in justification before God is to glorify God and not man. In Romans 4:20-22, Paul emphasizes that the purpose and goal in Abraham believing the promise of God, would properly result not only in God's justification, but also in His glory: "Yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God...IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS" [Emphasis mine].

Abraham was not justified through good works, so as not to boast in himself, "For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS" [Emphasis mine]. Romans 4:2-3.

However, the Council of Trent maintains that good works bring about justification unto eternal life: "Can. 32. If anyone says that the good works of the one justified...are not also the good merits of him justified; or that the one justified by the good works...does not truly merit an increase in grace, eternal life...let him be anathema." (Canons...Canon 32, p. 46). Roman dogma essentially says that the one justified does so by both faith and good works (i.e., merit). The Council qualifies that the good deeds were done by God's help. Whatever the case, Paul counters this line of thinking in Romans 4:4, 5 by saying: "Now to the one who

works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness.”

Paul and Trent do not agree on the proper place for faith and good works. They mix up the dichotomy. Trent, unfortunately concludes its section on justification by warning one and all: “Can. 33. If anyone says that the Catholic doctrine of justification as set forth by the holy council in the present decree, derogates in some respect from the glory of God or the merits of our Lord Jesus, let him be anathema” (Canons...Canon 33, p. 46).

The Council’s “Session on Justification” flies in the face of Pauline theology, because man’s works are an insufficient ground for boasting: “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast” Eph. 2:8, 9. And also: “...the one who has faith in Jesus. Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith” Romans 3:26, 27. (For further Scriptures on vain glory of human works to increase grace see also: Titus 3:5-8; Romans 1:21-25; I Corinthians 1:28-31; 10:31; and Luke 16:15.)

Adding human merit does, contrary to Canon 33, disregard the merits of Christ and makes man to fall short of God’s glory, “...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” Romans 3:23; cf., Luke 16:15.

A sinner is justified by God’s gift of grace for His glory and His glory alone (sola).

Conclusion

In summary then, having carefully analyzed the Christian Gospel in the writings of Paul, it is quite certain, essential, that the Gospel of justification is by Grace alone, Christ alone, Faith alone, Scripture alone, and to the Glory of God alone. Luther and the other reformers did get it right, after all. In regard to man’s part in justification, to add good works to man’s responsibility is to introduce a “works-system.” It is a misguided notion for people (Roman Catholic or not) to look at man’s part when looking at what needs to be done (i.e., worked) in order to be saved. All men need only (solely) to receive by faith what Christ has already done: “Sirs what must I do to be saved?” And they said: “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household.” Acts 16:30, 31; Cf., John 6:28, 29.

A cult can be defined as a group which maintains either a false gospel of Christ or a false Christ of the Gospel. Roman Catholicism maintains a works-based gospel, and they are “walking away from the Roman-road.”

It is critical that Christians put back the word “protest” in Protestantism, and so, direct their energies into Roman Catholic evangelism rather than “ecumenism.” And the message is: 1. a sinner is not justified by works, 2. A sinner is not justified by faith and works, but 3. A sinner is justified by faith and faith alone. Anything less is unacceptable to God...anathema [Gal. 1:8-9.]

Religion Analysis Service stocks several books which critically analyze Roman Catholicism from a broader scope than this article could cover. See especially The Gospel According

to Rome by James McCarthy, and Protestants and Catholics, Do They Now Agree? By Ankerberg and Weldon. Also please refer to the chart with this article for preparing to witness to Roman Catholics.

[Addendum by Author: In the previous article under the third section, The third Biblical Protestant principle is that a sinner is justified

through his faith, there was a misquoted section. Please note the correction, beginning with the quotation from Romans 3:24, 25, and 5:1. "...being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus...through faith." And also, "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" Romans 5:1 (underlining mine).]

				Galatians 6:13,14				
				Roman 3:21,22				
Five Solae of Gospel Salvation (i.e., conversion) in the book of Romans et.al.	GRACE (sola gratia)	A sinner is justified by God's grace. Romans 3:24; Eph. 2:8; Titus 3:7.	God justifies by grace and grace alone, not with works. Rom. 3:20,24; Eph. 2:8,9; Titus 3:5-7.	Mixing works with God's grace, make grace VOID! Rom. 11:6; Gal. 1:6-9; Gal. 2:21; 5:4	Mixing other's works with Christ's cross, makes Christ's death VOID! Gal. 2:21; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Cor. 1:17.	Mixing works with man's faith, makes faith VOID! Romans 4:4-14.	Mixing Tradition with Scripture will make Scripture VOID! Matthew 15:1-9.	
	CHRIST (solus Christus)	A sinner is justified by Christ, the Redeemer. Romans 3:24,25; 5:1.	God justifies through Christ, and Christ alone, not with any other human. Romans 3:23;5:8,9; Acts 4:12; Eph. 2:9	Mixing works with man's faith, makes faith VOID! Romans 4:4-14.	Mixing works with man's faith, makes faith VOID! Romans 4:4-14.	Mixing Tradition with Scripture will make Scripture VOID! Matthew 15:1-9.	Mixing man's glory to God's glory makes man fall short of God's glory. Rom. 3:23; 4:2; Eph. 2:8,9; Luke 16:13-15.	
	FAITH (sola fides)	A sinner is justified through his faith. Romans 3:24,25; 5:1	God justifies through man's faith, and faith alone, not with works. Romans 3:28; 4:4,5; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8,9.	God justifies through the canon of Scripture and Scripture alone, not with Tradition. Acts 17:11.	Mixing works with man's faith, makes faith VOID! Romans 4:4-14.	Mixing works with man's faith, makes faith VOID! Romans 4:4-14.	Mixing Tradition with Scripture will make Scripture VOID! Matthew 15:1-9.	Mixing man's glory to God's glory makes man fall short of God's glory. Rom. 3:23; 4:2; Eph. 2:8,9; Luke 16:13-15.
	SCRIPTURE (sola scriptura)	A sinner is justified by God's Word, the Scriptures. Romans 4:3,23; 10:8-14; II Tim. 3:15; I Pet. 1:23.	God justifies through the canon of Scripture and Scripture alone, not with Tradition. Acts 17:11.	God justifies through the canon of Scripture and Scripture alone, not with Tradition. Acts 17:11.	Mixing works with man's faith, makes faith VOID! Romans 4:4-14.	Mixing works with man's faith, makes faith VOID! Romans 4:4-14.	Mixing Tradition with Scripture will make Scripture VOID! Matthew 15:1-9.	Mixing man's glory to God's glory makes man fall short of God's glory. Rom. 3:23; 4:2; Eph. 2:8,9; Luke 16:13-15.
	GLORY TO GOD (sola gloria-Deo)	A sinner is justified for the glory of God. Romans 4:20.	God justifies for His glory and His glory alone not for man's glory. Rom. 1:21-25; 3:27; 4:20; I Cor. 1:28-31; 10:31.	God justifies for His glory and His glory alone not for man's glory. Rom. 1:21-25; 3:27; 4:20; I Cor. 1:28-31; 10:31.	Mixing works with man's faith, makes faith VOID! Romans 4:4-14.	Mixing works with man's faith, makes faith VOID! Romans 4:4-14.	Mixing Tradition with Scripture will make Scripture VOID! Matthew 15:1-9.	Mixing man's glory to God's glory makes man fall short of God's glory. Rom. 3:23; 4:2; Eph. 2:8,9; Luke 16:13-15.
Whole	Romans 4:20	Romans 4:20	Romans 4:20	Romans 4:20	Romans 4:20	Romans 4:20	Romans 4:20	
	Romans 4:16; 5:2	Romans 4:16; 5:2	Romans 4:16; 5:2	Romans 4:16; 5:2	Romans 4:16; 5:2	Romans 4:16; 5:2	Romans 4:16; 5:2	

ANOTHER LOOK AT ISLAM (PART 2)

By William A. BeVier

The Koran

The Koran is the final authority in Islam. As with many Arabic words translated into English, the spelling will vary, e.g., Koran (Quran), Muhammad (Mohammed), Muslim (Moslem). Most English writers today tend to accept the spelling given by Arabic writers using English.

The Koran contains many quotations and allusions to the Bible, the Jewish Mishna, and other sources readily identified, as well as references to incidents in Muhammad's personal life (Berry 18). All of these in a document which Muslims claim was engraved on a stone in heaven in eternity past.

Traditional Muslims claim the Koran can be read and understood only in Arabic. However, numerous translations exist in English and other languages (some by non-Muslims and some by Muslims), so that non-Arabic reading individuals have access to the Koran today. However, one should be aware that the English translations vary in arrangements, so that a reference in one translation may not match those in another.

The Koran is divided into 114 Sura (roughly corresponding to a chapter in the Bible). Some translations further divide the Suras into sections or verses (the system followed in these articles). The Suras in the Koran are not arranged chronologically, the general pattern is that the longest suras appear first, becoming shorter to the last which contains six verses in Rodwell's translation (Sura 2 contains 286 verses). Most of

the Suras also have a name, generally based on some key word, e.g., "The Cow," "Women," "Djinn," "The Backbiters." The revelations in the Koran are believed by Muslims to have come to Muhammad over a period of 23 years.

A study of the Bible and the Koran makes it evident that God, as revealed in the Bible, is not Allah of the Koran. Samuel M. Zwemer, for many years a missionary among the Muslims, wrote the classic work showing the differences (The Moslem Doctrine of God. New York: American Tract Society, 1905. The book has long been out of print). For example, Muslims do not refer to God as "Father." Muslims say He would have to have a wife to have children. Hence, Muslims never refer to the "children of God" or "sons of God." This means, of course, that Muslims deny the deity of Christ (Berry 24). But Gabriel, to whom Muslims give much credence, said to Mary: the Holy One born of her shall be called "Son of God" (Greek text, Luke 1:35). But, then, Muslims claim that such passages in the Bible are corruptions (in spite of the fact that hundreds of ancient manuscripts state it). See John 5:18 (reason why Jews wanted to kill Jesus, He affirmed God is His Father). See also Luke 22:70-71 (Jesus condemned because He asserted He is the Son of God).

The greatest and probably most significant difference between Jesus Christ and Muhammad is their end on this earth. Jesus Christ rose from the dead in a glorious resurrection and ascended to God the Father's

right hand having given His life for sinners. Muhammad died a natural death (after sickness), his body was buried, and there it remains in Medina, Saudi Arabia. Both events were recorded by eyewitnesses. No one claimed to have seen Muhammad mount a white horse and take off for heaven. The differences are stark.

The place of women in the Koran should be noted. Berry quotes the Koran to say in Sura 4:

Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property [for the support of women]. So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded. As for those from whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them. (Berry 34)

Anis Shorosh writes: "The husband possesses absolute, immediate, and unquestioned power of divorce. No privilege of a corresponding nature is reserved for the wife" (167). Quite different from Mt. 19:3-12; Eph. 5:22-33. Whereas the Koran limits a Muslim man to four wives, he may have an unlimited number of concubines, who receive no dowry and no inheritance (Berry 36).

Biblical Christianity and Islam have a different concept of sin. Islam believes mankind is born pure, without sin (Berry 37). This contradicts Scripture, e.g., Rom. 5:12-21; Eph. 2:1-3. The differing concepts of sin relate to differing views of salvation. Islam's "salvation" is based on an individual's good works outweighing their bad works (Berry 38). But see Rom. 3:19-31; Eph. 2:8-10; Tit. 3:5.

A Muslim cannot be assured of attaining Paradise (Koran's concept of heaven) unless he dies in a jihad ("holy war"). Then he goes immediately to paradise (which explains why Muslims are willing to die in terrorist acts, which have been proclaimed by Muslim leaders as part of a jihad. Since women normally do not die in battle, this route to Paradise is not open to them.).

Norman Anderson describes the Muslim concept of paradise as: "...where they will recline on soft couches, quaffing cups of wine handed to them by the Huris, or maidens of paradise, of whom each man may marry as many as he pleases. Others will be consigned to the torments of hell." (The World's Religions, 4th ed., 117).

In the Koran, Islam is more than a "religion." It is a complete way of life that includes political, economic, social, as well as religious conduct. In some ways it resembles the theocratic society of Biblical Judaism.

One should be aware Islam today is not monolithic, and never has been since the death of Muhammad in AD 632 (lasting divisions started over the question of his successor). All Islam claims to follow the Koran, but there are a multitudes of interpretations and applications of it among Muslims. One might accuse a Muslim of a certain view, and the Muslim would rightly deny it. One might accuse him of a Shiite view, and he is a Sunni (or vice versa). Also, Muslims wage war against Muslims, as is evident in our day, e.g., Iran-Iraq recent eight year war, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the civil war in Afghanistan. They also continue to attack non-Muslims, especially Jews and Christians in our day, e.g., Israel, Sudan, East Timor,

Philippines (as well as terrorist acts, e.g., New York World Trade Center bombing).

In addition to the Koran, Muslims accept what is called the Hadith (or sunna) as being authoritative. These are the traditions of Islam related to Muhammad collected after his death.

To quote the Forty Hadith:

As the Holy Qur'an is the word of Allah it must be strictly followed; in the same way the teachings contained in the Prophet's (one of the 99 names for Muhammad) sunna [Hadith] must be observed by all who profess to be Muslims, for about them the Holy Qur'an says: "And whatsoever the Messenger [Muhammad] giveth you, take it. And whatsoever he forbiddeth, abstain (from it)." (7)

The "Forty Hadith" is a selection from a much larger number. Several English translations of the total Hadith exist, most of them in four volumes. The "Forty Hadith" (actually 42) used in these articles are an extraction considered the most important ones by Imam An-Nawawis (d. AD 676) and are published in 127 pages with both the Arabic text and English translation.

The Theology of Islam

The Muslim concept of Allah is not what God presents Himself to be in the Bible. To say that God and Allah are two names for the same being reveals a lack of understanding of the Bible or the Koran or both. Christians are "unbelievers" ("infidels") say the Muslims because they believe in the Trinity, i.e., the Godhead is one but exists in three Persons.

When one investigates the origin of the word "Allah," it is found to be the names of one of the pagan, poly-

theistic Arab gods which Muhammad declared to be the one true god (e.g., Ankerberg 19). Allah was a "moon god" of the Arabs long before Muhammad's time (Morey 47-50).

Jesus as God's eternal Son is rejected in the Koran, e.g., Sura 43:59. "Jesus is not more than a servant whom we favored, and proposed as an instance of divine power to the children of Israel" (Rodwell's trans. 331). Muhammad, say Muslims, is Allah's last and greatest prophet and all should heed him, superseding Jesus and all other "prophets." [Again, the reminder different editions of the Koran in English have different arrangements of the Suras.]

Islam denies that Jesus Christ was ever crucified. Cf. Koran, Sura 4:156:

And for their [Jews] saying "Verily we have slain the Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, an Apostle of God." Yet they slew him not, and they crucified him not, but they had only his likeness. And they who differed about him were in doubt concerning him: no sure knowledge had they about him, but followed only an opinion, and they did not really slay him, but God took him up to Himself. (Rodwell 65)

To deny Jesus Christ's crucifixion is to deny His resurrection. Muslims believe in a resurrection, but not the resurrection of the crucified Lord Jesus Christ (read Paul's response to denial of Christ's resurrection in I Cor. 15).

Muslims believe in the reality of sin, but they don't believe God in Christ had to die and provide propitiation for our sins (see Rom. 5:8; I Pet. 2:24; I Jn. 2:2).

According to the Koran, anyone who says: "God is the Messiah, Mary's Son....God shall prohibit him

entrance to Paradise, and his refuge shall be the fire;... They are unbelievers who say 'God is the Third of Three...' (cited by Ankerberg 29).

Again: "Kill those who join other gods with God [Allah] wherever ye shall find them; and seize them, besiege them, and lay wait for them with every kind of ambush..." (cited by Ankerberg 29).

Remember, for a true Muslim the Koran is the "word of God," and to be believed and practiced literally. Apart from being a Muslim, there is no hope for a person according to the Koran.

Muhammad was exposed to such a corrupted form of Christianity that he thought they were teaching God the Father, Jesus, and Mary are three gods (the "Trinity"). See Sura 5:116 (Rodwell 79). Sura 2:110 states: "God has no Son."

Other quotations from the Koran should be noted.

"God loves no infidel or evil person." (Sura 2:277). But see John 3:16.

"The true religion with God is Islam." (Sura 3:17). This means no compromise between true Christianity and orthodox Islam.

Sura 3:30 confuses Miriam (Moses' sister) with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and states that Zechariah (Luke 1) shall be without speech for "three days." "Imran" was the father of both "Mariam" and Mary. Jesus was to speak to men while in his cradle and Jesus as a boy turned a lump of clay into a bird (taken from "The Evangel of Thomas").

Sura 3:79. "Whoso desires any other religion than Islam, that religion shall never be accepted from him, and in the next world he shall be among the lost." (Rodwell 39)

Sura 5:56. "O Believers! Take not the Jews or Christian as friends."

Sura 5:79. "The Messiah, Son of Mary, is but an Apostle, other Apostles have flourished before him; and his mother was a just person [not a goddess, as Muhammad claimed Christians asserted]: they both ate food" [were humans. God does not eat food, say the Muslims.].

Sura 6:101. "Sole maker of the Heavens and of the Earth! How, when He has no consort, should He have a Son? God has no wife, therefore He can have no Son."

Sura 6:100. "...they [Christians?] falsely ascribed to him [God] sons and daughters."

Muslims, based on the Koran, believe in one God (but not the Trinity), God as creator, Jesus as a "prophet" (but not the Savior God-Man), resurrection of all (including animals), final judgment, eternal punishment, etc. But not the Biblical revelation of these things. Also, much emphasis is put on Djinn (or Jinn), evil and good spirits, distinct from angels, e.g., Sura 72.

A major distinction between Christianity and Islam is the understanding of the nature of God. To Muslims God ["Allah"] is only transcendent (separate from, untouched by His creation). To Christians, based on the revelation in the Bible, God is both transcendent and immanent (in contact with His creation and creatures). In the Incarnation of Jesus Christ (which Muslims reject) the imminence of God is evident. In the Incarnation it is God coming to mankind, not man bridging the gap or contacting God.

Again from the Koran:

Sura 2:132. "Islam is the Baptism of God, and who is better to baptize than God?"

Sura 4:102. "...Verily the infidels [anyone not a Muslim] are your undoubted enemies."

Sura 4:143. "O believers! Take not infidels for friends rather than believers. Would you furnish God with clear right to punish you?"

Sura 4, titled "Women"

Sura 4:28. "And give those with whom you have cohabited their dowry. This is the law. But it shall be no crime in you to make agreement over and above the law." [Freedom to do as they place in this area.]

Sura 4:29. "And whoever of you is not rich enough to marry free believing women, then let him marry such of your believing maidens as have fallen into your hands as slaves; God well knows your faith." [Slavery accepted in Islam; Muslim men free to marry female slaves.]

These articles would be more than incomplete if they didn't present the "Six Basic Beliefs" of Islam and the "Five Pillars."

The Six Basic Beliefs are:

1. Faith in Allah.
2. Angels.
3. The Holy Books. The Old Testament and the New Testament, plus the Koran which supersedes all others. Allah's revelations in the Bible have been corrupted by Jews and Christians.
4. The Prophets. Allah sent 124,000 prophets, e.g., Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and the greatest and last, Muhammad (the influence of the Bible again seen).
5. Predestination. Allah's immutable decree (a type of fatalism, Kismet). Allah author of both, all that is good and all that is evil.

6. The Day of Judgment. Men's good and evil deeds weighed on a scale. Muslims go to eternal paradise (in reality described as a type of desert oasis), all others to eternal hell (not: "Lake of Fire," as in the Bible).

The "Five Pillars" of Islam are religious duties which determine one's destiny (if one is predestined by Allah).

1. Creed: "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet." The wording varies in this creed, but to say the creed with conviction makes a person a Muslim.
2. Five prescribed prayers a day toward Mecca.
3. Observance of month of Ramadan (ninth month in Muslim calendar). Fast during 28 days, but can eat all night. As a person who was in Jerusalem once during Ramadan, the month is one long period of feasting all night and sleeping all day for those who observe this month.
4. Alms to the poor. Give 2.5% of one's wealth by a complicated formula.
5. Pilgrimage to Mecca once in a lifetime for all physically able (can hire a substitute or those unable to go).

The "Holy War" or jihad is considered a "duty" by many Muslims. A jihad can be called by any recognized Muslim leader, as Saddam Hussein of Iraq did in 1990.

TO BE CONTINUED

BOOK REVIEWS

Project Lucid

By Texe Marrs

Reviewed by Rev. Herbert V. Caneday

It is well said in the heading of this book's first chapter: "We knew it was coming" – that is the mark of the beast (Revelation chapter 13). What we did not understand was that it may not be a physical mark in one's flesh that is visible like a scar, but may be an embedded chip that responds to an electronic scanner. It can even carry an encrypted identification and history of the one who is compelled to have it implanted under his skin.

Perhaps no one is better qualified to bring this to the attention of Christians than is Texe Marrs who is thoroughly conversant with the technology of our era. He was an assistant professor of the aerospace studies and American Defense Policies at the University of Texas at Austin for five years. And as a retired U.S. Air Force officer he had information at his disposal which few could acquire. As a dedicated Christian he sensed the need to alert fellow-believers as to how the modern technology fits into God's prophetic plan. What he has produced is of inestimable value to

present and future believers. Some of it may seem too futuristic for many minds, but that was also true of the automobile, telephone, radio, TV and most other developing inventions.

Wherein the author touches the area of the occult, again many may be skeptical of his conclusions. This reviewer has been conversant with the general developments in the occult world from the mid-1940s and onward and can assure the readers that this man is basically on target concerning the satanic deceptions of the last days. The average believer's appalling ignorance of Satan's devices does not bode well for them in these times when the god of this age would deceive the very elect if it were possible. This book's value is that it can shock true believers into sensing the perils of the approaching last days.

(This book is available from Living Truth Ministries, 1708 Patterson Road, Austin, Texas 78733-6507. Tele. 1-800-234-9673. If ordering, please refer to The Discerner).

Heaven Can't Wait

By William M. Alnor

Reviewed by Rev. Ervin D. Ingebretson

America is being hit with a fascination for what happens after death. Books on near death experiences (NDE) by authors Betty Eadie and

Dannion Brinkley have reached the top of the best seller list.

The author, William M. Alnor, has done an excellent work in research-

ing, analyzing, correlating and comparing NDEs with the Biblical record. Religious historians have recorded these experiences by visionaries as far back as the Early Church Fathers. Each one was affected by the period in which they lived.

Having analyzed hundreds of these NDEs the author describes some of the erratic, confusing stories of visions of heaven and in some cases hell. One reports a water fight with Christ, another asserts that dogs do not bark in heaven and horses praise God. They appear to be designed to promote sensationalism.

It appears that most of the stories circulating on NDEs are by people in the charismatic movement. People affiliated with this movement are usually driven more by experience than doctrinal truths of the Scriptures. Some prominent names included are David Yonggi Cho (Korean), Kenneth Hagin, Morris Cerullo, and Benny Hinn.

The author cites great dangers in accepting these NDEs at face value. Most seriously they promote false doctrines. Both Betty Eadie and Dannion Brinkley espouse Mormon doctrine. While Brinkley envisions a heaven without Jesus Christ, he joins Eadie in affirming a universalism doctrine in which all roads lead to God and everyone will make it. This defies the Biblical plan of salvation set forth in John 14:6 and elsewhere. The majority of these experiences fail the test of Scripture.

Another serious danger in the NDEs is their connection with the world of the occult. Communicating with spirits, channeling, medi-

umship, and other occult practices figure prominently in the NDEs. Elisabeth Kubler Ross who gained worldwide fame for her pioneering work in thanatology, the study of death, had numerous out-of-body experiences with the aid of Robert Monroe who was a practitioner of spiritism. The Bible passes severe judgment on these occultic practices (Lev. 20:6; Is. 8:19).

Perhaps the most serious danger is that Satan conspires to bring about these intriguing experiences. Again the Scriptures warn against being involved in any Satan-initiated work.

Raymond Moody, a practicing spiritist, lists in his research on NDEs fifteen elements (pp. 91-93) common to these experiences. Not every one who claimed to have a NDE has experienced all fifteen elements. But these can be helpful in analysis in the event of NDE.

The author issues a very important warning relating to mysticism in the Church. People who are experience-oriented will usually find the mystical element of NDE intriguing. Certainly not all mystical experiences are false. In fact, Scripture encourages believers to think of heaven.

One needs to exercise discernment. One can test the validity of these experiences by applying sound doctrine (Titus 2:17; II Timothy 3:10) and trusting the promises of God. The bottom line is to determine, with the aid of Scripture, what is of God and what is not.

(This book is available from R.A.S. Price: \$9.95, plus postage & handling.)

The Legacy of Billy Graham

By Brad K. Gsell, MDiv

Reviewed by Rev. John Ballentine

The subtitle of this book is: "The Accommodation of Truth to Error in the Evangelical Church."

The title and subtitle of this book may arouse your ire; but if you are one to pursue the truth, it will confirm your discomfort about Dr. Graham's directions in evangelism.

Some chapter contents are:

1. Apostasy-Now
2. False Teachers
3. Billy's Big Change
4. The Dilemma
5. Billy Includes Modernists on Committees
6. Catholics, Jews Too
7. Converts to the Same Kind of Churches
8. His View on Revelation
9. Billy and Communism
10. Man's Ways Versus God's Way
11. The Fruit of Dr. Graham's Disobedience

The author of this book is kind, discerning and scholarly in his approach to an exceedingly controversial matter rampant in Bible-believing churches of any denomination in America.

Brad Gsell is rendering a divine service in response to a classic verse found in I John 4:1. He is a resident of Graham's "back yard" in North Carolina.

The writer of this review was a counselor in Dr. Graham's first meetings in the Minneapolis Auditorium after the revival meetings in Los Angeles in the 1940's, as well as a student in Northwestern Schools when Graham was President there.

The Legacy... is must reading.

(Published by Fundamental Presbyterian Publications, Box 26164, Charlotte, NC 28221-6164. \$2.50.)

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