



CONTENDING FOR
FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY

The Voice IN THE Wilderness

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight."

Mark 1:3



CONTENDING FOR
AMERICAN FREEDOM

October 2004

SPECIAL EDITION – MISSION @ RISK



The old cross slew men;
the new cross entertains them.
The old cross condemned;
the new cross amuses.
The old cross destroyed confidence in the flesh;
the new cross encourages it.
The old cross brought tears and blood; the new cross brings laughter.
The flesh, smiling and confident, preaches and sings about the cross;
before that cross it bows and toward that cross
it points with carefully staged histrionics -
but upon that cross it will not die,
and the reproach of that cross it stubbornly refuses to bear.
I well know how many smooth arguments can be marshaled
in support of the new cross.
Does not the new cross win converts and make many followers
and so carry the advantage of numerical success?
Should we not adjust ourselves to the changing times?
Have we not heard the slogan, "New days, new ways"?
And who but someone very old and very conservative
would insist upon death as the appointed way to life?



And who today is interested in a gloomy mysticism
that would sentence its flesh to a cross
and recommend self-effacing humility
as a virtue actually to be practiced by modern Christians?
These are the arguments, along with many more flippant still,
which are brought forward to give an appearance of wisdom
to the hollow and meaningless cross of popular Christianity.

-A. W. Tozer



MY PERSONAL MESSAGE TO YOU

Dear Friends:

This edition of *THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS* is dedicated to the faithful brothers and sisters who have given their lives in obedience to our Lord's command to GO with the Gospel. Thank you for bearing the cross and following Christ.

The Lord has given us His Word and even though the world hates us because we are not of the world (John 17:4), we have His Presence, Power, and Promises in doing HIS WILL! Let us continue to be steadfast and faithful. He is worthy!

Though lengthy, please take enough time, even if more than one sitting, to read this month's sermon, "Mission @ Risk." I pray this exhortation and admonishment will be used of the Lord to provoke His

people to good works. Just remember, the only place success comes before work is in the dictionary.

Thank you also for the cards, emails, and gifts for our daughter. Last month I promised a photo. Mom and I praise the Lord for these two young people and their love for the Lord. God bless you Steven and Rebekah!

Now to all our readers, your friendship and partnership is so special to us. Thank you for standing with The Voice in the Wilderness in this missionary endeavor.

For Christ and Souls,
Bro. Ronnie
"Happy Trails" ☐
Isa. 40:31



*For Personal Correspondence,
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IS GOD'S WORK IN YOUR WILL?

A bequest in your Will to Voice in the Wilderness can assure that the outreach of this ministry at home and abroad will continue after you have gone to your eternal reward. Prayerfully consider us in your Estate Planning.
Thank you!

The Voice in the Wilderness is a nonprofit, independent incorporation, founded by Rev. Dr. J. Royce Thomason D.P.D. Ph.D., evangelist and medical missionary. The organization is dedicated to the spreading of the whole gospel to the world, especially in foreign lands. The program consists of building mission stations and schools, supporting the American missionaries and native pastors, providing needy students with room and board, administering medical and dental services free, and preaching Christ to the lost. We are supported by the gifts of those who care. All gifts designated by missions will go directly without any deductions. Contributions to The Voice in the Wilderness for projects or to support the ministry of a missionary will be used as indicated by the donor following approved policies and procedures. Gifts are tax deductible and should be made out to The Voice in the Wilderness. *The Voice in the Wilderness* Magazine is a fundamental publication, published each month in behalf of the work of the Lord and the preservation of the liberties of our United States. Printed material from other sources does not necessarily imply an endorsement from this ministry. There is no subscription charge; all interested people of good will may have a copy sent regularly to their address simply by requesting it. Address all correspondence to Voice in the Wilderness, P.O. Box 7037, Asheville, NC 28802.

Sermon of the Month

CHARLES SPURGEON SAID: "IF GOD HAS CALLED YOU TO BE A MISSIONARY, DON'T STOOP TO BE A KING."

MISSION @ RISK

"...And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.... For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost...?"

Luke 14:27,28

- I. The Dilemma – Detractors and Distractions
- II. The Delay or Dereliction of Duty
- III. The Deadening Deception – Death by Denomination
- IV. The Dressing-Down by the World
- V. The Dangers, but not Deterred
- VI. The Discernment Deficit
- VII. The Disease, Diarrhea, Death and Final Deliberation

It has been estimated that as many as 300,000 Christians are martyred for the cause of Christ each year worldwide. Jesus said, "...ye shall be hated of all men for my name sake..." (Matt. 10:22), "...the world hateth you" (John 15:19), and "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you" (1 John 3:13). Amazing, these words of Jesus! Yet much of what is done in His name on TV, and radio, even the Internet, is quite loved by the world. How can that be when Jesus said the world will hate you?

Recently on the island of Ambon in Indonesia, a young boy was leaving his church after Bible study. Indonesian Christians described how he was surrounded by Muslim toughs on motorcycles who asked him to deny the Lord Jesus. His response was, "I will not; I am a soldier of Christ."

The leader chopped off his arm with a machete and asked the same question. The Christian boy gave the same answer and the leader chopped off his leg below the knee. Again he was asked to deny Jesus. He refused and they took off his head and placed it on a pole and drove through the city proudly showing their trophy. The RISK, the COST to serve Jesus Christ, to carry out the MISSION can, may well be SELF-DENIAL, THE CROSS!

I. The Dilemma – Detractors and Distractions

Increasingly the scales are being tipped toward a radically liberal anti-Bible viewpoint in this nation. Traditional moral values have tragically eroded and even those who claim to be Christian have no semblance of a Biblical worldview. These individuals will defend political candidates that support homosexuality and abortion. Pathetically, they call bad good and good bad. Across America in public schools and colleges, liberals control textbooks, course selection and the classroom. Traditional values, limited government, fiscal conservatism and a strong national defense are amongst many on their hit list. Does the dilemma exist in the classroom or the halls of government?

No, the dilemma exists right in the homes of Christian

families that are not standing - families from Bible preaching churches and from backgrounds of conviction about right and wrong. But these mom's and dad's, for whatever their reason, will not choose right and reject wrong. Homes, that were once godly, have now compromised. Pulpits no longer preach it straight. No one wants to draw the line and make the decision to do it by the book – God's Book.

Life demands decisions. Daily you and I are confronted with choices. There are rewards and consequences that follow those choices. No partisan politics intended, but here is a bit of humorous satire:

The story said, "An airplane was about to crash; there were 5 passengers on board, but only 4 parachutes.

The first passenger said, "I am John Kerry, Democrat, war hero, Presidential candidate and the last hope for America. The world can't afford to lose me." So he took the first parachute pack and left the plane.

The second passenger said, "I am Al Gore, former Vice President. I invented the Internet and I must vote for the last hope of America." He took the second pack and jumped from the plane.

The third passenger was Hillary Clinton and she said, "I am the former first lady, Senator from New York, and future presidential hopeful. I am the smartest woman in American history, so America's people would not want me to die." With that she took a pack and jumped out of the plane.

The fourth passenger, President George W. Bush said to the fifth passenger, a 10-year-old schoolgirl, "I have lived a full life, and served my country, I will sacrifice my life and let you have the last parachute."

The girl said, "That's okay. There's a parachute left for you. America's smartest woman took my schoolbag."

In the satire, it's obvious the smartest did not make the smartest decision. All levity aside, each of us must make decisions - decisions that involve right or wrong. Is it not high time to step up, accept responsibility and make the important choices that matter for time and eternity?

These decisions to do right and take a stand often come with a host of critics. Loneliness may at times seem to be your only companion. Some may even say you are wasting your life.

H.W. Beecher wrote, "If there was ever a man who seemed to spend his life for nothing, it was Henry Martyn - a man of an exquisite nature, great power, and a sweet and loving disposition. Taking the highest honors at the university and having the best prospects in the church, he was led by the Spirit of God to consecrate himself to the cause of foreign missions.

"For that, he sacrificed that which was dearer to him than life - she to whom he was engaged declined to go with him. He forsook father, mother, native land, and love itself, and went - this elegant, accomplished scholar - among the Persians, the Orientals, and spent a few years almost without an apparent conversion. Still he labored on, patient and faithful, until, seized

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with a fever, he staggered.

"The last record he made in his journal was that he sat under the orchard trees and sighed for that land where there should be sickness and suffering no more. The record closed - he died. A stranger marked his grave.

"A worldly man would say, 'What a waste. He went abroad, sickened and died, and that was the last of him.'

"The last of him! Scores and scores of ministers in England and America, who have brought into the fold hundreds and thousands of souls and multitudes in heathen lands, have derived inspiration and courage from the eminently fruitful, but apparently wasted and utterly thrown away, life of Henry Martyn."

The aged pastor was reflecting over his many years of ministry. There were the bright spots, but the old soldier had seen a lot of battles. To stand had cost pastorates and friendships. He wondered now if anyone would even attend his funeral.

William Borden was the heir of the Borden Dairy estate and a millionaire. As a high school graduation gift, his parents sent him around the world. The Lord called him to be a missionary to the Muslims during his trip. He wrote home, "I'm going to give my life to prepare for the mission field," and at the age of eighteen, he wrote in the back of his Bible, "No Reserves." After graduating from Yale, he entered two more words in his Bible: "No Retreats." After finishing Princeton Seminary, Borden sailed to Egypt to begin his ministry. He developed meningitis and died within the month, but underneath the words "No Reserves" and "No Retreats," Borden had written the words "No Regrets" in his Bible.

Is your place a small place?

Tend it with care! -

He set you there.

Is your place a large place?

Guard it with care! -

He set you there.

Whate'er your place, it is

Not yours alone, but His

Who set you there.

-John Oxenham

Count Zinzendorf said, "I am destined to proclaim the message, unmindful of personal consequences to myself." His heart went out to the suffering and exiled Christians so Count Zinzendorf allowed the group to settle on his estate in Germany. These were people of faith and prayer. Zinzendorf had a vision for reaching others in far away places for Christ. Twenty-six Moravians volunteered and were commissioned as missionaries on August 18, 1732. In only two years twenty-two missionaries had died taking the gospel to the lost. Yet, even more volunteered to take their place until seventy Moravian missionaries went out from the small group.

When William Carey, known as "Father of Modern Missions," entered his work in India, over three hundred

Moravians had taken Jesus to the uttermost. Even John and Charles Wesley, along with the Great Awakening, were directly influenced by these Moravian preachers. Thousands were saved across Europe and America because these precious, persecuted, exiles believed, prayed and paid the price to be a missionary.

In *Christian Victory* the story is told... "You're just out-of-date," said young Pastor Bate to one of our faithful, old preachers who had carried for years, in travail and tears, the gospel to poor sinful creatures. "You still preach on Hell and shock cultured ladies with your barbarous doctrine of blood. You're so far behind, you will never catch up; you're a flat tire stuck in the mud."

For some little while, a wee bit of a smile enlightened the old pastor's face being made the butt of ridicule; but it did not ruffle his sweetness or grace.

Then he turned to young Bate, so suave, and said, "Catch up, did you say? Well, I couldn't succeed at that if I doubled my speed. My friend, I'm not going your way!"

Ronald Reagan felt being president was a sacred trust given to him by the American people.

Not many know that out of respect for the presidency, he rarely took off his suit coat while in the Oval Office. He felt it was almost hallowed ground. Wearing his suit coat there was a matter of honor for him and a way to show his gratitude to the American people for giving him the opportunity to serve.

Some of his detractors called him simplistic and old fashioned.

But when he spoke of freedom, respect for God, love of country, hard work, strong families, and helping your neighbor, he connected with millions of Americans who saw in him the very same values that they

held dear. He just communicated great things.

There are indeed RISKS for those who would dare dream, dare take the high road, and hold high great things for others to see and hopefully embrace.

As Christ's Ambassador, we press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. What an honour and privilege to represent The King of Kings and Lord of Lords. In this lofty, holy, and divine call, we can say come follow me as I follow Christ.

II. The Delay or Dereliction of Duty

The young missionaries were enthused about their opportunity to serve in Ireland. They shared their testimony during the Sunday-School hour and even presented beautiful gospel music on the viola with an Irish flavor. The congregation responded well, yet sadly, this wife was attired in a rather tight blouse that brought attention to certain anatomy and was inappropriate. Just the same, the couple continued and shared their testimony and song. Then it came time to preach. The pastor of the church welcomed the missionaries to his pulpit. After a brief comment, the missionary began to read the Bible text for the morning hour. It was easy to sense the congregation's reaction

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as this missionary read from a Bible other than the KJV. As a preacher myself, my mind began to race. I looked at this pastor seated on the front pew. Will he go to the pulpit and kindly as possible deal with this situation? He could possibly excuse the missionary and continue the service himself. Fifteen seconds, then thirty seconds passed. Perhaps this pastor would call for prayer and discreetly ask the missionary to use his KJV Bible, but the text (a rather lengthy one) is read in completion. Again, as a preacher myself, I readily thought, OK, perhaps none of the above was deemed necessary by this pastor, however, certainly before we leave this church today something will be said. I was thinking this pastor was stunned, perhaps unprepared for a quick response, and surely will address this pulpit violation. Perhaps he did not want to embarrass these missionaries, the congregation or even the numerous visitors present. All this rushed my mind in the span of two minutes.

Well, the sermon was concluded and the altar call given over to the pastor. In his invitation prayer, the pastor asked the Lord not to allow another Bible version to hinder the opportunity for decisions to be made. Eventually, all were dismissed and nothing else said, not even in the evening service.

It certainly appeared to me that the church's position on the scriptures had been violated. A host of visitors went away thinking who knows what, let alone, the members. Was wisdom used or failure to stand in a difficult moment?

Now many would say, "Don't over react and make matters worse." Some believe this is not a battle worth fighting. Others would have confronted the situation head on. What do you think? Is there a scriptural answer? Regardless your position on this situation, the tendency today is to be "tolerant" and not "confrontational." From the pulpit to the pew we have been intimidated out of boldly taking a stand for what is right.

With the proliferation of issues and complex ones at that, believers and preachers must take a biblical look and clearly delineate their scriptural position. As a matter of fact it must be in writing.

Dr. David Gibbs of Christian Law Association makes it clear that pastors, churches, and ministries must decide where they stand on the issues and clearly state that position in writing. Pastors are not being specific about Bible versions, music, dress, body piercing, hairstyles, and even tattoos. Below is Dr. Gibbs's legal brief...

"Your Faith in America is no longer protected by the religion clause of the Constitution. Your Faith is evermore being protected by Free Speech Rights. And that does not go well for our future.

"You need to pray that religious liberty not free speech would be protected.

"Now, the average Christian says, 'I don't understand the difference.' The differences are very important. The one says our Faith will be protected, the other says we will be protected to say whatever we want to say, including profane things.

"...Your church has to have a written document that

describes what you do and how you do it. You must have a written document which accurately and completely describes what you do and how you do it.... Most of you will call this document your Constitution and Bylaws, but there is no title required.... We do all kinds of stuff the document doesn't talk about. And all kinds of stuff the document does talk about, we haven't done in an age. An inaccurate document, the law says is the same as no document... They have now ruled that deacons and elders are personally liable for the church taxes if they don't have this document. Your religious liberty is protected to the extent it is in the document. If it's not in the document, it's not protected. Make sure you have these three things in your document:

1). "Be sure that your document covers your position on homosexuality, specifically. We are flooded with homosexuals applying for employment in fundamental churches. They say, 'We have read your document and there is not one thing in it, you cannot deny me employment. And you know what, they are absolutely right, unless it's in your document. So be dead positive your document covers your position specifically. I mean spell it out in detail. Don't be ugly, but be clear. Right now, if it's in the

document, you are covered. If it's not in the document, you have two choices. Either hire them, or get your checkbook out, because you're going to owe them a lot of money. The document is your religious liberty key.

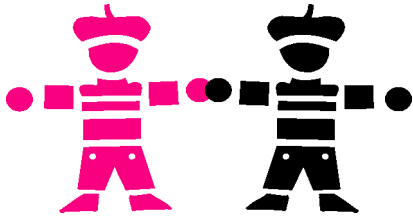
2). "Body piercing and tattoos. When Hollywood and athletes started making body piercing fashionable, our churches got inundated. By the way, when we go to court, you know what the court says? 'You're not against body piercing; most of

your women have done it. You're only against holes you don't like. 'And boy, they've got us. I had a judge the other day ask me, 'How many holes in lady's ears are okay with you?' Now we know one is - Is two okay? Then he asked me, 'How about three?' You decide what's okay. One hole is okay, two's okay, three holes... The law says if it is not in the document, you cannot stop anybody. We use to send missionaries to Africa to get the stuff out of them. Now, in America, everybody is drilling holes in their bodies. 70% of the most conservative churches, when they are polled, think there is nothing wrong with body piercing and tattoos. By the way, there is Bible on point. If it's not in the document, there's nothing you can do about it. We had a Christian School teacher, at a fundamental Baptist Church that had her tongue pierced. Man, why would you want to mess up what you eat with! How many would say, 'That strikes me as strange?' I mean, boring holes in your tongue. The pastor called in a dither, 'Man,' he said, 'I want to fire her, I'm not having this. I'm not having that model in front of' 'Okay,' I said, 'What's in your document?' He said, 'Nothing.' Now, put this down. If you fire her, you owe her about \$150,000. Make sure the document is covering what you are doing and how you are doing it. Here's what the law says. We're going to let you do what no one else in America can do. Businesses cannot fire people over body piercing and tattoos. You can. But it's gotta'

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NEWS BITS

FROM HERE AND THERE



FRANCE'S IDENTITY CRISIS

– When asked to define and explain the precise nature of what it means to be French, some 40 philosophers, politicians, academics and writers devoted more than 50,000 words to the issue. Pointing to France's loss of its position as a global power, its weakening role within Europe, its failure to integrate its immigrant population, its exhausted public services and its stumbling industry, the exercise has been imbued with nostalgia for a lost era of French greatness. A philosophy professor, Chantal Delsol, wrote: "How is it that such a brilliant nation has become such a mediocre power, so out of breath, so indebted, so closed in its own prejudices."

"HOLD THE BACON" - A woman says she was fired from her job because she ate a bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich at work, offending Muslim employees. Lina Morales has filed a religious-discrimination lawsuit against Rising Star Telecommunications, saying she lost her administrative position because she violated a policy banning pork and pork products from the workplace. She says the rule "constitutes religious discrimination

because it is based on Islamic law for the benefit of some Muslim employees..." *The Washington Times*

DOES THE "OSCE" HAVE AUTHORITY TO MAKE DECISION ON U.S. ELECTIONS?

– In a recent letter to Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, Texas Democrat, and Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs Paul V. Kelly indicated that the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) in Europe would be observing the federal elections this fall in the United States. If the OSCE "did not monitor our presidential elections in 1992, 1996, and 2000, are election observers being sent to the United States in response to the contested presidential election in 2000?" Does the OSCE "have any authority to... issue a report or make determinations as to whether elections in the United States are 'full' and 'fair?'" *The Washington Times*

TAKING THE 'GOD' OUT OF GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

– Christie Davies in *New Criterion* wrote: "At the end of the 19th century, there were comparable levels of religiosity in Britain and the United States.... Throughout the population, there was a somewhat vague general acceptance of central Christian beliefs, a strong respect for sacred things ... a moral code of helping others that was rooted in

Christian ethics and a liking for and ability to sing hymns, both of which had been learned in Sunday School. ... Regular attendance at Sunday School was a standard part of most people's youth, and it was the place where standards of respectability were inculcated.... This is the world Britain has lost.... By the millennium, Britain was one of the most thoroughly irreligious countries in the world. Less than half the population believes in God."



MALPRACTICE SUITS BLAMED

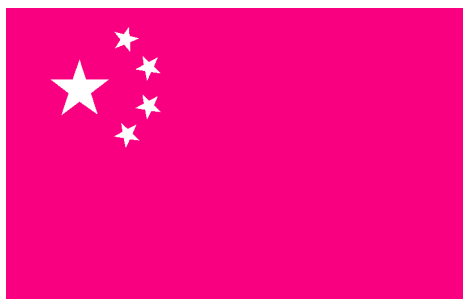
– The American Medical Association lists North Carolina's current health care situation as a "crisis" and blames it on medical-malpractice lawsuits. One of the most successful personal-injury lawyers in NC history, John Edwards, won dozens of lawsuits against doctors and hospitals across the state. He won more than 50 cases with verdicts or settlements of \$1 million or more. One of his most noted victories was a \$23 million settlement he got from a 1995 case - his last before joining the Senate.

.... Along the way of Edwards' political career, the Senator from NC

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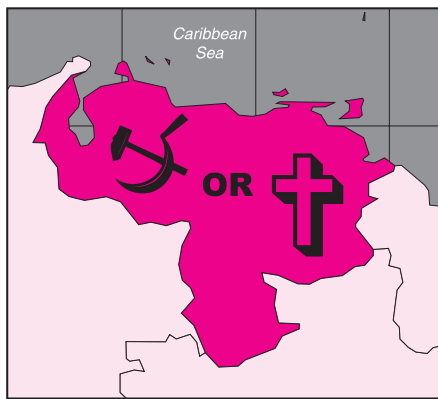
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voted against the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban on Oct. 21, 1999, helping to ensure it could not be sent to then-President Clinton with a veto-proof majority. When the ban was finally enacted in 2003 (it is now being tested in federal courts), Edwards still opposed it, but missed the Senate vote. The bottom line is: Edwards the Lawyer sued doctors for harming babies during childbirth. Edwards the Politician voted to let doctors kill babies during childbirth.



NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL – PRO CHINA? –

CIA analyst Dennis Wilder is to be the top China specialist on the National Security Council staff. Mr. Wilder is viewed by conservatives as one of the most liberal CIA analysts on China. He is seen as a major player in enforcing the “China-is-not-a-threat” political line within the intelligence, and policy communities... Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger made a secret visit to the White House a few weeks ago to talk with national Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice. Officials tell us the likely topic of the Kissinger meeting was Asia - either China or North Korea or both. Mr. Kissinger has been a supporter of Beijing since his policies led to the diplomatic opening in the 1970s. *The Washington Times*



IS THE U.S. PAYING ATTENTION TO VENEZUELA? –

A recent article in *The Washington Times* by Ariel Cohen and Stephen Johnson had some interesting thoughts concerning Hugo Chavez and Venezuela. Here are some excerpts from the article: “...During his six years in power, Mr. Chavez has increasingly politicized oil, nationalized and mismanaged the national oil company PDVSA, and used its finances as a political kitty (up to \$3.7 billion this year alone) to buy off the poor. Beyond Venezuela, he sees himself replacing Fidel Castro as the leader of Latin America’s radical left, opposing democracy, free markets, and American influence.... until the Chavez presidency, oil-rich Venezuela had been at peace with its neighbors and a firm American ally. The situation changed in 1998. As a presidential candidate, Mr. Chavez campaigned against the “savage capitalism” of the United States. He allegedly aided Afghanistan’s Taliban government following the September 11, 2001, attack on the United States. ...In Venezuela’s immediate area, Mr. Chavez has aided the narco-terrorist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). In Bolivia, Mr. Chavez supported indigenous activists who led an uprising that forced elected president Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada from office in

October 2003. And in El Salvador, Venezuelan troops on a post-earthquake mission urged villagers to support the leftist Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front. Mr. Chavez’s Fifth Republic Movement (MVR) party is allied with the Brazil-based Foro de Sao Paulo - an organization of some 39 rabidly leftist parties and guerrilla organizations from 16 countries in the hemisphere. It opposes U.S. counter-narcotics collaboration with Latin America and the Free Trade Area of the Americas. Beyond the hemisphere, he is preparing to shift exports to an increasingly oil-thirsty China, making Venezuela less dependent on U.S. petroleum sales.... Mr. Chavez brought Cuban intelligence advisers to facilitate what may become a Castro-style dictatorship plus petrodollars.... President Bush had better watch out!

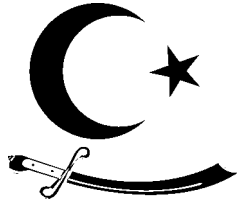


Nuggets of Gold

1. A nervous young preacher boy was supplying a city church in the absence of its pastor. While praying for the pastor, the young preacher boy said, “May the pastor of this church be filled with fresh *veal* and *zigor*!”
2. The late President Woodrow Wilson’s father was a Minister. One day Rev. Wilson was driving his fine horse down the street when one of his members said to him, “Pastor, your horse looks better than you do.” To which Rev. Wilson replied, “Yes, I take care of my horse, my congregation takes care of me.”
3. The worst part of doing nothing is that you can never take a day off.
4. We do not need—*Preacherettes* who preach *Sermonettes* to *Christianettes* for *Salarettes*.
5. Those who can be counted on - count.
6. Most preachers get paid weekly - very weakly.
7. A Preacher must - Begin slow, rise higher, strike fire, wax warm, quit in a storm.

RELIGIOUS NEWS

AND COMMENTS



ALLAH HAS NO SON, BUT THE GOD OF CREATION SENT HIS SON

– In a California school, teachers gave children Islamic names and had them dress as Muslims. (Evidently the school system was trying to show how benevolent it was to the Muslim faith.) It went so far as to teach Islam's Pillars of faith! That makes point with Muslims....Some prison officials in Northern California have said, "If you distribute tracts, we will arrest you." And in that same facility Islamic material is being poured into the hands of prisoners in their cells. Ever wonder why Islam is growing so rapidly in our prisons?...A whole generation of children is being taught that the god of Islam, Allah, is a peaceful god. In fact, they are even being told that he is the God of the Bible, which is absolutely blasphemous. Remember, as any Muslim can tell you, Allah has no son. But the God of Creation sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for our sins. *Chick Publications 10/03*

NUMBER OF SELF-DECLARED PROTESTANTS IS DWINDLING

– In *USA Today* Cathy Grossman reported, "New statistics on religious diversity show

the United States' historic Protestant majority has plummeted to 52 percent – and by the end of 2004 it may no longer be the nation's dominant religious group.

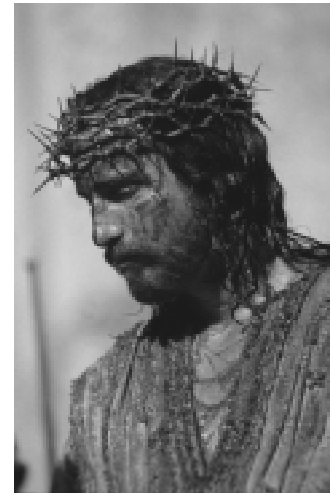
"Since colonial times the United States has been a Protestant nation. But perhaps as early as this year, the country will, for the first time, no longer have a Protestant majority, said Tom Smith, director of National Opinion Research Center. The survey makes a theologically controversial decision [whether] to include Mormons as Protestants. Nearly 2 percent of Americans said they were Mormons in 2002. However Mormons are counted, the trend is clear that the Protestant share of the nation faces 'imminent disappearance.'"

Some interesting elements brought out by the survey are: "The number of people who call themselves just "Christian" has nearly doubled. That category didn't exist in the 1970s. Most were once Protestants....among all immigrants—10 percent of the U.S. population in 2002—only one in four are Protestant. The number of Roman Catholics (25 percent) and Jews (2 percent) remained stable over the same period while the nation's share of other groups, including Muslims, Orthodox Christians, Buddhists and Hindus, rose from 3 percent in 1993 to 7 percent in 2002.

"The loss of a shared Protestant vocabulary and view point has

political and cultural implications," says political scientist Corwin Smidt, director of the Paul B. Henry Institute for the Study of Christianity and Politics at Calvin College, Grand Rapids Michigan. "Growing pluralism forces an examination of our commonality," he says. "How do we find basis for agreement in schools, neighborhoods and voting booths?"

"It's a lot more complicated now."



JESUS ACTOR MISTAKEN FOR THE REAL DEAL

– James Caviezel has been swamped with requests to perform miracles by Mexican fans who believe he really is Jesus Christ. While on tour in the east Mexican state of Veracruz the Mexican newspaper *Reforma* reported, "Dozens of residents from villages throughout the state, one of the poorest in the country, asked Caviezel to heal the sick and perform

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other miracles as he passed through. The actor, who is himself a strict Catholic, said: "The belief of these people really moved me. It was a shock for me to see how they came up to me to ask for my help. I had to explain to them that I was only an actor, and wasn't really the son of God." *The Berean Call* 7/10/04



JUDICIAL MISCONDUCT –

Christian Law Association filed a misconduct complaint with the North Carolina Judicial Standards Commission for judge James Honeycutt's actions of removing "so help me God" from the statutory oaths given to witnesses and dropping the statutory requirement that witnesses swear or affirm on the Bible on 6/23/04. The judge had also warned the courtroom bailiffs that they could no longer invoke the traditional proclamation, "God save the state and this honorable court" before the beginning of each court session. He threatened to hold the bailiffs in contempt if they did not follow his orders by 6/29/04. Because of the judge's looming deadline, the bailiffs could not wait for the commission's investigation. Therefore, CLA attorneys quickly prepared another petition, which was filed directly with the Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court two days later, asking the Court to order Judge Honeycutt to comply

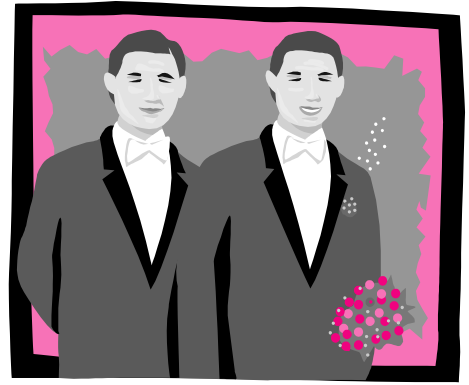
with state law and tradition. On 6/28/04 only one business day after the petition had been filed, the state supreme court ordered Judge Honeycutt to follow the state's oath procedures and to allow the bailiffs to invoke God's protection on the state and the court. Attorney David Gibbs of CLA said: "This is a victory over activist judges who are trying to make their own laws, enforce the laws they make up, and then judge the validity of the law in violation of the constitutional separation of powers doctrine. The NC Supreme Court should be applauded for its quick action and for upholding NC's two-hundred-year-old laws and traditions."

IN GOD WE TRUST – ADDED TO CITY SEAL –

The Oceanside City Council in California voted unanimously to add the phrase "In God We Trust" to the city seal earlier in July. The council first considered the measure in October of 2002, and made their decision official on July 7th, 2004. The seal will have the words "In God We Trust" inscribed below the logo, and the word "Liberty" written above it. The new seal will be displayed, among other places, on the council chambers. *Pacificjustice.org* 7/21/04

TRENDS TO DESTRUCTION

– Ake Green, the pastor of a Swedish Pentecostal church in Kalmar, Sweden, has been sentenced to one month in prison by a Swedish court, for inciting hatred against homosexuals. Green was prosecuted in January for "hate speech against homosexuals" for a sermon he preached last summer citing Biblical references to homosexuality. *The Berean Call* 8/04



SAME-SEX MARRIAGE LICENSES INVALIDATED –

On August 12, 2004, the California Supreme Court invalidated all of the marriage licenses issued earlier this year by San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, based on their ruling that he lacked the authority to issue same-sex marriage licenses. The court ruled 7-0 that the mayor and clerk of San Francisco exceeded their authority in issuing the marriage licenses, and 5-2 that the illegally issued licenses are invalid. A petition of this unlawful policy was filed back in May of this year by The Pacific Justice Institute. *PacificJustice.org*

INDIA – Following the victory of the Congress Party over the previous pro-Hindu govt., the first non-Hindu in India's history was installed as India's Prime minister. As a result of the political changes, in India's southern Tamil Nadu state, the state's anti-conversion law was immediately repealed and Prime Minister Manmoham Singh appointed P. R. Kindiah, a "Born-Again Christian," as India's "Minister of Tribal Affairs" all across the nation. In the wake of these events, an India based ministry plans to distribute millions of Bibles and to "set up 3,000 Christian schools around India's capital [city], new Delhi."



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be in the document.

3). “Make sure your document says that your standards of life at the church apply away from the church. We are flooded with cases that say, yeah, we’ll obey all your rules while we’re here, but when we go home, forget this nonsense. And suddenly they’re walking around the mall in bare midriffs, in short shorts, and platform shoes, that are nothing short of obscene, and the pastor is upset. But the document doesn’t say the standards apply away from the ministry. The courts have ruled that if the document doesn’t say it applies away from the ministry, it only applies at the ministry. Now some of you right now are breathing heavy. You say, we don’t have that document. Then get that document... Now I want to say this as polite as I know how. If you don’t have this document, you have a major case of the *stupid*s on your hand. By the way, there’s no way you’ve been a good steward of your ministry if you don’t have this document in good shape. Because all of its liberties depend on this document. Finally, note that you do not have to file it with anyone. Churches are exempt from filing with the government, but you must HAVE the document....

“Pastor, we best do our homework and understand the times that we can, in a definitive fashion, lead and instruct the people what they ought to do. “ And it is the pastor’s responsibility to protect the sheep, contend for the faith, and stand on the Truth.

DERELICTION OF DUTY AND ABDICATION OF OFFICE

Pastor, when was the last time *you* preached a red-hot message on sin – omission and commission. SIN named and exposed for what it is. Alcohol for example – how about attending office and work parties where alcohol is served. Lying, cheating and stealing – income tax time would be appropriate for such a sermon or even the fiscal year-end for voting the church budget and missions giving in terms of tithes, offerings and faith promise. The Apostle Paul has a few text for you that were of interest to Corinth; women in the church, sexual sins, immorality, immaturity, divisions, lawsuits, church discipline, spiritual gifts, worship, the role of church leaders and a host of confrontational topics. “BUT,” you say as pastor, “I don’t preach topically, I preach verse by verse.” Wonderful – you will cover all of these topics and more. Take the verse by verse approach and you must tell your people what the Bible says about hair – for example, short hair on women and long hair on men. Hummmm! Verse by verse and you will preach about body piercing. Is it okay for your ladies to have pierced ears? Well, perhaps you need to state how many piercings. If mother has two piercings, can daughter or son have four, six, or how about the eyebrow, nose, tongue, or wherever? “Some things are private and none of your business,” one might say. But could it be God’s business and could God’s business be the pastor’s business?

I cease to be amazed at all the Bible does talk about. As a matter of fact, the Bible talks about every thing that concerns man and his relationship to the Creator. Please, please, I beg you

to preach the Book, pastor. Your people are starving to know, “thus saith the Lord!” Have we preachers gone AWOL – perhaps guilty of *Dereliction of Duty or Abdicated our Office* to the seeker-friendly, therapeutic, entertainment pulpits of this age?

III. The Deadening Deception – Death by Denomination

The news media seemed to have a bit of revel in a Southern Baptist controversy. Reports said the Southern Baptist Denomination owned 14 million dollars (that’s \$14,000,000.00) worth of stock in Carnival Cruise Lines. Now apparently Carnival Cruise Lines had plans to host cruises for homosexual couples. Some within Southern Baptist ranks did not appreciate the fact they had \$14,000,000.00 invested in a business that was hosting events designated for homosexuals. The news media brought out the fact that Carnival Cruise Lines regularly have gambling, alcohol, and other amusements that these Southern Baptist investors apparently had no objections to. So why suddenly were these Christians decrying homosexual cruises?

Some of the devil’s deadliest work is in the name of religion. He is the master of deception. There are those who have crept in unawares bringing ever so subtly error upon error until a *Deadening of Deception* occurs.

The process has been described this way: God raises up a MAN. That MAN is greatly used of the Lord for a generation or so. Then that MAN becomes a MOVEMENT, say a denomination. That movement grows and over time compromise and error creeps in. Down the road what began with a MAN and grew into a great movement deteriorates into a MONUMENT of past glory. Thus, MAN, MOVEMENT, MONUMENT.

Do you know of a single denomination today that still stands and has not gone the way of compromise and error? The last days are days of apostasy; and face it or not, we are living in those days.

In *The Parables of Jesus*, Dr. Clarence Sexton describes evil and unbelief lodging in this great tree under the banner of Christendom. “Within the branches of what the world calls Christianity, all kinds of evil are lodging. In a book published in 1993 entitled, *Christianity in Crisis* by Hank Hanegraaff, many public figures are named who are preachers, and their errors are identified. Some people found the statements in this book so hard to believe that they would not believe them. Because of this, the author made tapes of the preachers actually saying these things.

“Kenneth Copeland is quoted as saying, ‘Satan conquered Jesus on the cross.’ Benny Hinn, a very popular preacher, is quoted as saying, ‘Never ever go to the Lord and say, ‘If it be thy will.’ ‘Don’t allow such faith-destroying words to be spoken from your mouth. [But doesn’t] the Bible plainly teach that we are to pray, ‘If it be thy will’? Frederick Price, who has a church or an assembly of about 16,000 members, is quoted as saying, ‘God has to be given permission to work in this earth on behalf of man. Yes, you are in control. So if man has control, who no longer has control?’ He answers the question, ‘God no longer

They have now ruled that deacons and elders are personally liable for the church taxes if they don’t have this document.

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has control.'

"Kenneth Hagan, another popular preacher, is quoted as saying, 'Man was created on terms of equality with God, and man could stand in God's presence without any consciousness of inferiority.' Friends, all these statements are heresy. All these statements are biblically incorrect."

Deceit and deception is prolific. Presently on the radio, TV, and in print these professionally marketed, charismatic personalities are promoting heresies to the damnation of multitudes. Their lies seem so obvious. When Robert Schuller says sin is a self-esteem problem and interviews celebrities who by their own lives and testimony do not have a biblically sound relationship with the Saviour Jesus Christ and yet Schuller promotes these people as godly examples; that is evil. That is saying Christ's death is unnecessary. His precious blood shed on the cross is not essential. Jesus was mistaken when He said, "I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE... YE MUST be born again." That is saying there are other ways. That is saying salvation through Christ alone is not the only way to God.

Tele-evangelists across this land have gained huge followings along with mega-churches broadcasting their message and ministries around the world. *Deadening Deception* has spread among even those who once took a true Biblicists position. Denominational machinery is big business with millions yea billions of dollars flooding the coffers with high powered investment managers playing the world's money games to get more.

Simple Bible study reveals this great falling away. But that's the point. The Word of God is no longer absolute. Anything goes. Just bring in the numbers and money. Multi-media, entertainment oriented, feel good, seeker-friendly Hollywood productions have replaced the preaching of God's Holy Word that calls out from sin and worldliness a Holy people. But this crowd looks like the world, sounds like the world and in many cases lives like the world. That's because it is of the world. Jesus said, "...because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." This seeker-friendly, politically correct, entertainment oriented, name no sin, step on no toes, don't preach hell fire or judgment but come as you are, stay as you were, go along to get along anything goes kind of *churchianity* is of the world, the flesh and the devil.

IV. The Dressing-Down by the World.

The Lord has given me the opportunity to travel and preach the gospel in some far away places. In this age of mobility it seems no matter how exotic the destination, Americans are there conducting business or on some sight-seeing excursion. It is amazing how many people of the world believe all Americans are Christians. Yet, when Americans show up in the Moslem or Hindu worlds dressed in tight blouses, vacuum packed blue jeans, shorts, sleeveless tank tops and very sensual and revealing clothing to say the least, the nationals are not impressed. *Lonely*

Planets sixth edition of its travel book on India gives an interesting perspective. Quoting from page 112 on "What to Bring When Traveling to India" the book states, "Modesty rates highly in India, as in most Asian countries. Although men - or women - wearing shorts is accepted as a western eccentricity, they should at least be of a decent length. Wearing shorts or a T-shirt in a more formal situation is definitely impolite.... Recently... the situation has become more difficult for women travelers mainly because the 'sexual revolution' which swept the West 25 years ago has now hit India... so foreign women are seen as even more free and easy as ever before. Close attention to standards of dress will go a long way to minimizing problems for female travelers."

Even some of the so-called "Christian Church Mission Teams" have had no respect for the cultures they are visiting and supposedly representing Christ. It was a joy to have three missionaries compliment our teams for their testimonies and dress. Sad to say, these missionaries told me that they had been embarrassed by the dress of some of the American churches that came to visit and work with them on their field of ministry. How can we be so insensitive, inconsiderate, and rude, let alone, in violation of biblical admonition?

Linda Baumgarten in her book, *What Clothes Reveal* states in the preface, "Clothing provides a remarkable picture of the daily lives, beliefs, expectations, and hopes of those who lived in the past. People of all eras (including those living today), use clothing not only to meet functional needs, but also to communicate. The language of clothing speaks of status, occupation, aesthetics, social cohesiveness, propriety, and a host of other meanings, subtle and overt..."

Colin G. Campbell of Colonial Williamsburg Foundation wrote in his president's message for Baumgarten's book, "Polonius, as crafted by Shakespeare at the beginning of the seventeenth century, may have been somewhat pretentious, but he spoke of his time when he said,

*Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd fancy, rich, not gaudy,
For the apparel oft proclaims the man."*

"That was an era when conclusions would be drawn from appearances - an era not unlike our own, in that respect. Indeed, clothes have always revealed much about attitudes and aspirations."

When will the church and Christians quit making excuses for their worldly dress and carnality? When will pastors be bold enough to preach what is right? When will pastors preach the whole counsel of God's Word? Many church people today are marching to the world's pied piper.

The creatures of the earth were endowed by the Creator to blend into their environment for the purpose of survival. The chameleon with its camouflage becomes hidden amongst the green, the trees, and the earth. It fits into the surrounding environment and virtually blends into the world. However, that illustration is in contrast to the Christian who is a new creature

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Make sure your document says that your standards of life at the church apply away from the church.

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in Christ and is to stand out, not be hid, but different, peculiar from above, not below. Yes, the believer is to look different in dress, countenance and attitude. Actually there should be a clash, an opposition, an obvious even confrontational distinction from the Kingdom child and the child of this world.

I was saved at the age of 17. Praise the Lord for that miracle. However, if that transformation had occurred earlier in life some of the scars and memory of sin would never have existed in my life. Yet, contrast the life before Christ and the life by His mercy, love, and grace – I can testify this. The sounds of the music in many churches today – the beat, rhythm, style and volume are the beats, rhythm, styles, and volume of the music I listened to before I was saved. Say what you will. Prefer what you like. Chalk it up to “the times have changed” – well our church is growing; we are reaching young people.” On and on – I’ve heard it all in defense of contemporary worship, music, etc. Just hear this. The sounds coming out of many “churches” today are the same sounds I heard from the devil’s crowd I ran with before I became a Christian. By the way, I could make the same case for dress today in many churches. Think about it!

V. The Dangers, but not Deterred

These are some personal thoughts from a pastor – “There are days when I feel like a foot soldier, a grunt on the front line. This front line is not just against the sin in our society, but we must deal daily with the apathy of the people in our churches for the most part. Then on the other hand, we have in our churches a growing group that is not apathetic. But they are contentious and dissatisfied. They are dissatisfied with God’s Word, God’s messenger and God’s methods. They don’t renounce God, but they add their idols; and everything comes before God in reality. They hail their ideas and decisions, seldom if ever truly praying about anything. When they seek to attack God, they don’t have any way to reach Him. So they come after His representative, His under shepherd. That’s me! I can handle it. Sometimes it’s not easy, though. It goes with the call. But my wife and especially my children are filled with questions. The most frequently asked one is, how can Christian people act this way? And I try and I pray.”

Another pastor said, “Some of the meanest people I have ever met are in the church.” The question should come, “Can such people be Christians?” One church split over the type of toilet paper in the restrooms. Whose mission is being furthered by such behavior?

A dear pastor friend and his wife experienced a lengthy period of personal illness. In the midst of this great trial, a church member harshly indicated the sickness was the judgment of God, and they should leave the church. Oh, my how unkind! The book *Loneliness in the Parsonage* states “Those who must uphold the standards of the church are often held at arm’s length by those who wish to compromise.” Sadly, a pastor’s wife and children pay a price that most laymen will never understand nor appreciate.

December 13, 1991, I wrote my daughter a letter addressing such concerns. At this time in our family, we were home schooling (which we did for ten years) but the majority of the young people in our church attended a Christian School. At times there were some conflicts of interest, and our daughter would often be left out of activities due to being home schooled. It seemed friends and fitting-in were of utmost importance at her particular age. On occasion, we had some tear-filled discussions – trying to understand this stage of life. After one of these special Dad-Daughter discussions, I penned her the following letter (which I use here with permission). “My Dearest Rebekah: After our talk about the will of God and your expression of the frustrations you face as a preacher’s kid, I thought it good to write this letter. First Rebekah, I love you very much! I always will love you. At times, life is difficult and you will think me to be hard. I may seem not to understand how you feel. But I love you and simply want what is best for your life. Second, I understand those frustrations, problems with friends, exclusion due to home school and so forth. We will work together on those areas, but we must also let God’s grace be sufficient when there

is no solution and the Lord asks us to sacrifice. Third, you must trust your Heavenly Father and your earthly father. Our Lord makes no mistakes, but I do. Yet, the Lord gave you to me for training. I want to do what’s right for you. Even where it gets difficult, and you think I don’t understand and your friends don’t care, and you want to cry and even “Kitty Witty”... well just remember, TRUST! Trust the Lord, He will work all things for your good! (Proverbs 3:5 & 6; Romans 8:28).

You are very special and your mother and I love you very much. With love, Daddy.”

Can you imagine shooting your own soldiers in the foot and burying them, wounded, and yet alive? It has been a God given privilege over the past dozen years to travel world-wide ministering for my Saviour. After thanking our supporters in a recent *The Voice in the Wilderness* issue for partnering with us in this gospel enterprise, a pastor wrote me quite tersely that he did not support my world tours and vacations. In lieu of that pastor’s criticism I thought of Pastor John Kelly, Curtis Corner Baptist Church, Rhode Island, who was a world traveler. He had a burden to carry the gospel to a far away place. In obedience to God’s call and a vision to reach the lost, Pastor Kelly recently died in Iraq. I’m sure Pastor Kelly had his critics, but he would not be deterred. He was willing to risk all for the Mission. The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. has been given unique opportunities to support national and indigenous missionaries around the world. These are not Americans but Africans, Asians, Indians, Mexicans, Venezuelans native to their mission field. Some American ministries will not support nationals due to inherent RISKS. Yes, there are RISKS, but when did the Lord call us to a RISK FREE MISSION? The following excerpts from an article in *BIMI WORLD* by Dr. James Ray places these RISKS in perspective: “The best national workers are those whom God has called and

A pastor’s wife and children pay a price that most laymen will never understand nor appreciate.

Yes, there are RISKS, but when did the Lord call us to a RISK FREE MISSION?

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that money cannot buy! They have a passion to serve God and they know that America is not God. They are not for sale! The ultimate goal of all missionary enterprise that is biblical is to produce national leaders and workers that can eventually stand alone in their own environment without outside support....

"Just as there are scams and shams in America that exploit donors through a super spiritual religious front, so there are deceivers in/from other countries. Many of our readers have received letters from Nigeria written in broken English with two or three paragraphs of super spiritual jargon ending with a list of needs and a request for money.... A letter came from Haiti to BIMI from someone who wanted to identify with our mission. The Haitian was using a mail merge and obviously had mixed up names and groups to whom he was writing. He said, 'We are willing to be Methodists.' Some Methodist group probably received our Baptist letter.

"In days past, these types of nationals were called 'Rice Christians.' Today we might call them the 'professional national workers.' Beware of 'professional national workers....

"The 'professional national' can look good, sing hymns, say beautiful prayers and even preach if that comes with American money."

"When the American mission leader or pastor visits the field, he is impressed. Then when mission leaders from Pentecostal, Presbyterian, and other groups come, they too are impressed. In these examples most groups have been led to believe that they are the only sponsors.

"Years ago when BIMI first entered Romania, just after the fall of communism, we worked with two nationals. Visiting a village one day with our national worker, he was embarrassed when mission leaders from Scotland also showed up to check on 'their' national worker. He made no effort to introduce us and tried to keep us apart. Both of our Western organizations had been led to believe that this national worker was representing only one group with its particular values.

"BIMI's African Director told of the missionary who visited some supported nationals in an African village. Wandering around in the church, he saw in a back room a pile of signs welcoming various denominations: 'Welcome Independent Baptist,' 'Welcome Presbyterians,' etc. Whatever sponsoring group showed up to visit 'their national work' was welcomed with the appropriate sign.... Unscrupulous foreign nationals do not always reside in foreign countries. Some of the 'professional national leaders' reside in America. These nationals appeal to churches and individuals to sacrifice to help the 'poor people' of their home countries. However, they, themselves, prefer to stay in America, live in American homes, and drive American cars....

"One national leader pleaded for funds to help support a church in a certain city in Africa. Other missionaries, upon physical survey, found that the city did not even exist.

"Missionary Doug Miller writes: 'It may be true that

nationals can do a better job among their own people, BUT... (1) To whom was the Great Commission given? It is for all, not just nationals. The call has been given to every believer, and we can work together in fulfilling the Great Commission. (2) Who won the national to Christ in the first place - the missionary? (3) God uses yielded hearts, not ethnic groups. A servant can be from anywhere. 'Miller also deals with the 'cheap national:' 'It is true that it is 'less expensive' to support nationals, BUT... who says that God wants ministry done cheaply?' (1) The Jewish Temple was magnificent! (1 Chronicles 22:1-5,14). (2) The ointment used for Christ was expensive. (Mark 14:3-5). Sometimes 'cheap' paid national workers disappear when the money stops.

"Pastors must realize that a visit to the field can be deceiving. Churches that have been established for years can be presented as 'fresh' works. Large groups quickly assembled by the 'professional national' do not necessarily present a church. A foreign language environment in which the visiting pastor understands 'only what he is told' can be absolutely deceiving.

"There is a case for supporting nationals. There is a right way and a wrong way. There is a methodology that produces, in the end, indigenous churches and there is a methodology that produces national beggars and degrades nationals as a 'cheap labor force.'

"Dr. Les Frazier in *BIMI World Magazine* emphasizes, 'Some of the fast-growing house churches in China are literally plagued with heresy. Their devotion to Christ is unquestioned, but they have no doctrinal moorings. The potential for doctrinal inconsistencies is great with

the support of untrained and uneducated nationals. Another area of accountability is finances. Many times there is inadequate or no accountability for nationals supported with American money.'

"Some national-only agencies boast that for \$50 per month or less one can support an indigenous national pastor; however, no pastor or national church is indigenous when it is tied to an American support base...."

Some suggested guidelines:

1. National workers should be supported only at the recommendation of local missionaries who are 'on the ground' and who can verify that the need is genuine. Exceptions might include countries in which no Western missionary can legally reside such as Burma, India, and Iraq. [Editor's comment: Keep in mind there are pastors and churches around the world doctrinally sound and doing a work for God that have their origin in the miraculous power of Christ and not an American missionary.]

2. National workers should be supported on a limited basis. Ten to twenty tithes make a salary in any country. There should be a goal for the church to become indigenous.

3. Those who desire to support national workers should channel the funds through missionaries who can monitor the ministry and prevent it from becoming a life-long money tree.

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The best national workers are those whom God has called and that money cannot buy!

The ultimate goal of all missionary enterprise that is biblical is to produce national leaders and workers that can eventually stand alone in their own environment without outside support.

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[Editor's comment: Take care to pray for the Lord's leadership in this area. Policy and philosophy is good but not to the rigid exclusion of the spirit's leading.]

4. Some of the 144 'National only' mission societies in the US do not provide adequate accountability. Churches should be very careful when sending mission funds through these types of agencies while remembering that a picture or quick visit to the field does not always give a true and clear account....

[Editor's comment: For balance, U.S. Mission Boards and denominations often have huge overhead, many salaried employees and need significant support just to maintain the stateside operations. How can we begrudge \$50-\$100 per month for a national, while we drive two cars, live in fine homes with hundreds of unneeded, unused square footage, and closets of clothes we never wear?]

5. ...Support nationals who are doctrinally sound. Do not be influenced by singing groups or with anyone with broken English. Ask, 'What do they believe, and what do they teach? Do they teach their people to tithe and give?'

6. Make sure you or churches like yours are the sole sponsors. Ask questions. Check with missionaries you know about the group.

"There is a case for national support and in some cases for sending national missionaries who are full time and fully supported. This article is an effort to raise a red flag to those churches that provide blind, blanket support of foreigners. Accountability and credibility are essential. Endless support of national workers who never become self-supporting does great damage to the New Testament concept of the indigenous church."

Excerpted from BIMI World, Dr. James Ray

[Editor's comment: Primarily the local church often farms out its responsibility. The sending church must be just that, and oversee accountability.]

V. Deputation, Details, Delays and Discouraged Missionaries

One pastor stated that God was going to hold us accountable for requiring His missionaries to spend three, four or more years traveling over 100,000 to 150,000 miles raising funds to get to the field. There is nothing wrong with visiting churches, preaching on missions, and sharing the vision; but it is extremely discouraging to pound the pavement for years, raising money while having such a burden to get started with the work God has called you to do. When a missionary who has a charismatic personality comes to a church to share his ministry with several talented children that sing and play instruments, he easily gets his support and in two years is on the field. On the other hand, when a missionary and his wife, equally called and burdened, spend four years passionately preaching the vision God has given and yet have only 40% of needed support, do you ask why? Is this a personality/marketing thing or a divine work the church should pray about, get behind, and support? (Of course, praying about it for a year or more, before the missionary would be added

to a budget, well, I suppose that adds to the length of time it would take to meet the support level needed as well.) The following letter from one of God's servants expressed *Deputation, Details, Delays, and Discouragement: Dear Friends and Family: AM I OPERATING ON FAITH OR FEAR?? This is the question the LORD has been dealing with me about for several weeks now. I seem to have run headlong into a faith crisis in my Prefield ministry. And I have asked myself: Has God had a bad year? Has He had to lay off a thousand – two thousand angels? Has mad cow disease devalued the cattle on a thousand hills? Are mansion starts down in Heaven? Have His resources been depleted? Well obviously not. So, the problem has to be with me, and that I have allowed Satan to redirect my focus. I am hearing so much about the economy, how offerings are down, and budgets are suffering that I got my eyes off the Source and onto the channel. Was I going to be able to raise my support? NO!! I can't but my God can. So, let me ask you the same question. ARE YOU OPERATING ON FAITH OR FEAR?? Please pray that I will keep my focus on the LORD. One of His wonderful names is El Shaddai, God Almighty, the shedder forth of bountifulness, our all-sufficient One (Genesis 17:1). Let us walk before Him and be perfect. Praise the LORD; my support is at 48%.*

Precious missionaries like this dear friend face the frustrations of protracted deputation, details, delays, and discouragements that would defeat the average person and place the Mission @ Risk.

VI. The Discernment Deficit

Don't rush to be too critical, but after 9/11/01 Afghanistan, Iraq, and comments made by the U.S. government make the lack of discernment obvious. Does anyone understand Abraham and Ishmael?

What about all the "churches" and Christians flocking to "The Passion?" Where is discernment today?

Speaking on a talk radio show Walid Shoebat, former terrorist turned Christian Zionist said, "What the West does not understand about Islam is that jihad has stages. If Muslims have the upper hand, the jihad is waged by force. If Muslims don't have the upper hand, then jihad is waged through financial and political means. Since Muslims do not have the upper hand in America or Europe, they talk about peace while supporting Hamas and Hezbollah. The whole idea of Islam being a peaceful religion emanates from that silent state of jihad." - Taken from *Israel My Glory June/July 2004*

Issues today are complex, but God's Word is clear. Men and women with discernment will understand the times and not place the Mission @ Risk.

VII. The Disease, Diarrhea, Death, and Final Deliberation

The Bad Water

Reports say that every eight seconds a child dies from diseases related to bad water. Over one billion people are effected

Has God had a bad year? Has he had to lay off a thousand – two thousand angels? Has mad cow disease devalued the cattle on a thousand hills? Are mansion starts down in Heaven? Have His resources been depleted?

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world wide by unsafe drinking water. That translates into almost 40,000 men, women, and children dying every day from diseases directly related to contaminated water. Diarrhea, cholera, skin sores, worms, and other horrid scourges prevent people from working, being productive, and pursuing opportunities. Children cannot concentrate, learn or escape poverty stricken communities and famine without pure drinking water.

In John chapter 4 Jesus reveals the "Living water," the water that He gives "springing up into everlasting life." Thank God for this water of life that whosoever drinketh shall never thirst again.

The Wrong Way

Throughout the world millions dig wells, drink from streams and rivers and die from polluted water. Obviously, their way is the wrong way - the way of disease and death. They do not know how or where to get life giving water. Digging bad wells and drinking from contamination means disease and death. When Charles Billingsley reportedly goes to Las Vegas to learn how to work the crowd from master showman Wayne Newton, this means Thomas Road Baptist Church has pollution in their "worship leader." That translates into a polluted "worship service." Somewhere down stream from Newton to Billingsley to consumer (student "worship leader" or congregation), this pollution is being passed on until it's too late. Again in John 4 Jesus states, "If thou knowest." Just as people physically need clean water to be healthy far more critical is for them to receive living water so they may have everlasting life. Bad water and bad gospel water will cause the "runs" - Running with the world, like the world and sometimes running the aisle and jumping the pews.

What the West does not understand about Islam is that jihad has stages.

It may be okay to run on Sunday, if you walk right on Monday.

The church must take care that the mission and message not be contaminated by this world. Maintaining biblical integrity in doctrine is essential to the mission and message. Holding the standard high and holy without compromise requires commitment and sacrifice.

The June 2004 edition of *Charisma* magazine featured Lakewood Church of Houston, Texas. That same edition featured letters scrutinizing John Hagee's views about Jewish evangelism - advertisements for a varied assortment of conferences, articles ranging from *The Passion* film, Healing Explosion, Islam and Homosexuality. It seemed every effort possible is made not to be divided over doctrine and Bible. Evident is that biblical lines are blurred, doctrine cannot be of issue - music, dress and philosophy must with open arms embrace a broad way.

Ladies and gentlemen this cannot be when honestly studying the scriptures. How much contamination and pollution is acceptable in your drinking water? If you see something floating in your glass of water at the restaurant or if the water is a little clouded do you say, "That's not too bad," and drink up? Satan is the deceiver and multitudes die from contaminated water while the water of life is available to "whosoever will."

The mission of the church is given in no uncertain terms in God's Word. There are rules of engagement and requirements for those who will follow Jesus (Luke 14:27 & 28 "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost?"). Count the cost, there are Risks. Yet in final DELIBERATION, consider this handy little chart:

A HANDY LITTLE CHART

1. We say: "It's impossible" -God says: All things are possible - Luke 18:27.
2. We say: "I'm too tired" -God says: I will give you rest - Matt. 11:28-30.
3. We say: "Nobody really loves me" -God says: I love you - John 3:16.
4. We say: "I can't go on" -God says: My grace is sufficient - II Corinthians 12:9 & Psalm 91:15.
5. We say: "I can't figure things out" -God says: I will direct your steps - Proverbs 3:5-6.
6. We say: "I can't do it" -God says: You can do all things - Philippians 4:13.
7. We say: "I'm not able" -God says: I am able - II Corinthians 9:8.
8. We say: "It's not worth it" -God says: It will be worth it - Romans 8:18.
9. We say: "I can't forgive myself" -God says: I Forgive you - Romans 8:1.
10. We say: "I can't manage" -God says: I will supply all your needs - Philippians 4:19.
11. We say: "I'm afraid" -God says: I have not given you a spirit of fear - II Timothy 1:7.
12. We say: "I'm always worried and frustrated" -God says: Cast all your cares on me - 1 Peter 5:7.
13. We say: "I don't have enough faith" -God says: I've given everyone a measure of faith - Romans 12:3.
14. We say: "I'm not smart enough" -God says: I give you wisdom - 1 Corinthians 1:30.
15. We say: "I feel all alone" -God says: I will never leave you or forsake you - Hebrews 13:5.

-Fundamentalist Digest



WHY THE INTEREST IN WITCHCRAFT?

Beware! Halloween may be more of a trick than a treat. Witches are for real. But why is there such an interest in witchcraft? One reason is that our society has treated the evil supernatural in an unrealistic manner. It is time we realized that witches don't have warts on their noses and don't turn handsome young princes into frogs. Witches consort with the power of demon spirits.

Witches have two main gods: Hecate (The Greek goddess of ghosts) and Lucifer (analogous to the Greek god Pan). These deities are worshiped by a coven (consisting of six couples and a high priest or priestess) that meets on a regular basis. Meetings are held every week and once a month in the light of the full moon. Clothes are shed and a circle is drawn with an Athane (ritualistic dagger). After a variety of activities such as drug taking, group sex, healing and herb subscriptions, the ceremony may conclude with the sacrifice of a goat or hen. Even human sacrifices are still used by some of the more secretive cults.

There are four major witchcraft festivals during the year: Feb. 2 (welcoming spring), April 30 (welcoming summer), August 1 (heralding harvest) and October 31 (announcing the onset of winter) – Halloween. The history of Halloween is traced to the ancient, pagan Druids of pre-Celtic Gaul. They were the builders of Stonehenge, constructed to calculate the sun's movements and determine the most auspicious day to worship the earth mother goddess by the sacrifice of a human. Halloween is a pagan, satanic festival that no Christian should take part in.

There is a supernatural world all around us inhabited by the angelic servants of God and the demonic messengers of Satan.

The blood of Jesus Christ is the only force in this world that can overcome the power of witchcraft. By confessing Christ as your Saviour, his power can be in you life. Then, you can say, "Greater is He (Jesus) that is in me, than he (Satan) that is in the world" (I John 4:4). – *Taken, in part, from a pamphlet by Bob Larson.*

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