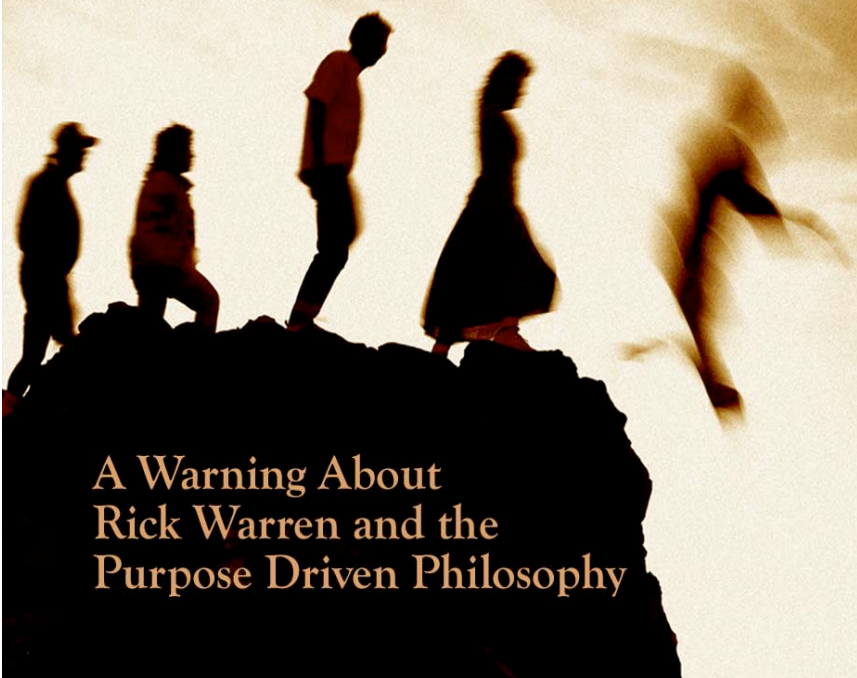


# PURPOSE DRIVEN

*or Scripture Driven?*



A Warning About  
Rick Warren and the  
Purpose Driven Philosophy

David Cloud

*Purpose Driven or Scripture Driven?*

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## **A Review of *The Purpose Driven Life***

The book *The Purpose Drive Life* by Rick Warren of Saddleback Church in southern California has sold more than 18 million copies.

Saddleback is associated with the Southern Baptist Convention, but Warren's "Purpose Driven" philosophy has spread to most denominations.

Called by *Christianity Today* "America's most influential pastor," Warren's influence is vast. It reaches into every sphere of Christianity in our day, from Catholicism to Mormonism to liberal Protestantism to evangelicalism to fundamentalist Bible and Baptist churches.

Many independent Baptist churches are being influenced by Warren's teaching. For example, Warren conducted a Purpose Driven Super-Conference in October 2003 at Jerry Falwell's Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia (Falwell affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention and the Baptist Bible Fellowship). Simultaneously, Warren's 40 Days of Purpose campaign was shown by telecast in more than 4,000 churches, including independent Baptist.

Bruce Ryskamp, president of Zondervan, said, "The Purpose Driven Life is more than a bestseller; it's become a movement."

Over 12,000 churches from all 50 states in America and 19 countries have participated in Warren's 40 Days of Purpose, which is drawn from the book. Over 60,000 pastors subscribe to Rick Warren's *Ministry Toolbox*. He has provided

materials and teaching to Christians in more than 117 countries on all seven continents.

Richard Bennett observes, “The movement is becoming a global empire.”

Rick Warren has been called “America’s pastor,” and it is for good reason. He is so shallow in his teaching, so positive in his approach, so slighting of repentance, so neglecting of unpopular doctrines such as Hell and judgment and repentance, so tolerant of heresies, so enthusiastic of rock music, so soft-spoken on that nasty subject of worldliness, that apostate America can’t help but love him.

All of these characteristics are reflected in his best-selling book.

### **Extreme Shallowness of His Gospel**

In chapter 7, “The Reason for Everything,” Warren explains to his readers how they can become a Christian.

“If you are not sure you have done this, all you need to do is receive and believe. ... First, believe. Believe God loves you and made you for his purposes. Believe you’re not an accident. Believe you were made to last forever. Believe God has chosen you to have a relationship with Jesus, who died on the cross for you. Believe that no matter what you’ve done, God wants to forgive you. Second, receive. Receive his forgiveness for your sins. Receive his Spirit, who will give you the power to fulfill your life purpose. ... Wherever you are reading this, I invite you to bow your head and quietly whisper the prayer that will change your eternity. ‘Jesus, I believe in you and I receive you.’ Go ahead. If you sincerely meant that prayer, congratulations! Welcome to the family of God!” (*The Purpose Driven Life*, pp. 58, 59).

This is one of the most superficial “gospels” I have ever seen. There is nothing here that would offend or convict the Pope or a Mormon. It’s not the gospel that was preached in the book of Acts or Romans.

For one thing, there is no clear dealing with the sin issue. Warren’s book is intended for wide distribution in society at large, and it is not enough in such a context merely to mention the word sin. The average person in North America will admit that he is not perfect and that he is a “sinner” in some sense, but he also thinks of himself as a pretty good person. When he thinks of himself as a sinner, he does not mean what the Bible means, that he was shaped in iniquity and conceived in sin (Psa. 51:5), that his heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9) and full of evil (Ecc. 9:3), that he is unrighteous and unprofitable (Rom. 3:10-11), that in his flesh dwells no good thing (Rom. 7:18), and that his very righteousness is as filthy rags before a holy God (Isa. 64:6). Warren’s incredibly shallow approach allows any person who will admit that he is a sinner in any sense to pray a prayer and then think of himself as a genuine Christian, even though he might continue to deny what the Bible says about sin.

There are many other things we could expose in Warren’s gospel. There is nothing about God’s holiness and justice. There is no clear teaching on what Jesus did on the cross. There is nothing about the blood. Warren invites the reader to “believe on Jesus.” What Jesus? People today believe in all sorts of false christs, but Warren does not warn them of this nor does he take the time to identify the true Jesus of the Bible in any clear fashion and to distinguish Him from false ones. Just a vague “believe on Jesus” and presto you are ready to Heaven.

And Warren completely ignores repentance. There is not a hint here that the sinner must repent of his sin and idolatry and false gospels. This is not the gospel that Paul preached. Paul summarized his message as follows: “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21). Warren says that he believes in the Great Commission and he mentions it in passing in *The Purpose Driven Life*, but he ignores repentance, which is a part of the Great Commission. Christ gave the Great Commission in Luke 24:44-48 and He commanded that “repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.” Paul boldly preached repentance to the philosophers and idolaters in Athens, and if he were alive today, he would certainly preach repentance to the idolaters in America! Paul said that God “now commandeth all men every where to repent” (Acts 17:30), and we can be sure that God hasn’t changed His mind.

## **Self-Esteem Theology**

Though Warren professes that his teaching does not exalt man but rather exalts God and he claims that he does not teach a self-help program, in reality he teaches nothing less than a Robert Schuller-style Self-Esteem theology.

Notice the following statements:

“The moment you were born into the world, God was there as an unseen witness, smiling at your birth. ... It proves your worth. If you are that important to God, and he considers you valuable enough to keep you for eternity, what great significance could you have? ... Anything you do that brings pleasure to God is an act of worship ... You may be gifted at mechanics or mathematics or music or a thousand other skills. All these abilities can bring a smile to God’s face. ... You



only bring him enjoyment by being you. Anytime you reject any part of yourself, you are rejecting God's wisdom and sovereignty in creating you. ... God also gains pleasure in watching you enjoy his creation. ... When you are sleeping, God gazes at you with love, because you were his idea. He loves you as if you were the only person on earth" (pp. 61, 64, 74, 75).

Here worship is turned on its head by making it as much about me as about God. I am so loveable and so important and so desirable to God that whatever I do brings God pleasure and therefore is worship. Wonderful me! The self-esteem theology is more about celebrating self than dying to self, even when it talks of dying to self! Warren says that if I reject any part of myself I am denying God's sovereignty. What about sin and what it has done to "myself"?

Consider another statement from Warren's popular book:

"If you want to know how much you matter to God, look at Christ with his arms outstretched on the cross, saying, 'I love you this much! I'd rather die than live without you'" (p. 79).

Thus, the cross is sanctified by the self-esteem theology so that it is about me and how the Lord couldn't live without me. Wonderful me!

Consider another statement:

"God is a lover and a liberator, and surrendering to him brings freedom, not bondage. When we completely surrender ourselves to Jesus, we discover that he is ... not a boss, but a brother..." (p. 79).

The self-esteem God is dedicated to liberating me. He is not a boss! He's just a Big Buddy, a Powerful Pal.

Warren quotes from Olympic runner Eric Liddell: "To give up running would be to hold him in contempt."

Thus, to deny what I am gifted at and what I like to do is to deny God. Isn't it clever how that Warren has identified self-will with God's will so that they have become one and the same?

In fact, things I am gifted for and enjoy oftentimes come into conflict with God's perfect will. God oftentimes calls upon an individual to give up even legitimate things for which he or she is highly gifted and qualified. Many men have given up such things when God called them to be a preacher or a missionary. Peter, James, and John gave up fishing. In the 1980s, I met a Chinese man in Singapore who was a brilliant chess champion. God had saved him and called him to preach and he was preparing himself in a Bible College. He told me how that for awhile he had written a column on chess for a newspaper for extra income toward his Bible training, but he discovered that it was not possible to keep the chess moves out of his mind when he was trying to study Scripture so he gave it up entirely, though he was highly gifted at it and enjoyed it. That is true dying to self.

Note the following quotes from chapters 30 and 31 of *The Purpose Driven Life* which deal with finding my place in God's will:

"Listening to your heart. The Bible uses the term heart to describe the bundle of desires, hopes, interests, ambitions, dreams, and affections you have. Your heart represents the source of all your motivations--what you love to do and what you are about most. ... Don't ignore your interests. Consider how they might be used for God's glory. There is a reason that you love to do these things. ... How do you know when you are serving God from your heart? The first telltale sign is enthusiasm. When you are doing what you love to do, no one has to motivate you or challenge you or check up on you. ... The second characteristic of serving God from your heart is effectiveness. Whenever you do what God wired you

to love to do, you get good at it. ... Figure out what you love to do--what God gave you a heart to do--and then do it for his glory. ... What I'm able to do, God wants me to do" (pp. 237, 238, 239, 243).

Note that Warren does not warn his readers that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9). What a gross, inexcusable omission! While it is true that you can trust your desires to some small extent when you are a mature Christian and you are delighting in God and immersed in His Word and obeying Him (Psa. 37:4), how many of the readers of *The Purpose Driven Life* are in that condition? A great many of the millions of readers of this book are doubtless complete unbelievers or nominal Christians or novices or carnal, and to teach them that what they love to do is God's will is frightful heresy. Many are professional sports fanatics, for example. Others are rock & roll fanatics. Others are fanatics about modern fashion trends. Are they fanatic about such things because that is the way that God made them? No, they are fanatic about such things because they are conformed to the world and walk in the way of sinners (Psalm 1:1; Romans 12:2).

There are many things that professing Christians are gifted for and effective at that are NOT God's will!

Again, we see that when Rick Warren's theology is examined carefully it is about self-fulfillment, but it is presented under the guise of worshipping and serving God.

Warren builds his self-esteem theology upon strange versions of the Bible. Consider an example:

"The Bible says, 'Noah was a pleasure to the Lord.' God said, 'This guy brings me pleasure. He makes me smile'" (*The Purpose Driven Life*, p. 69).

Warren is quoting Genesis 6:8 in the Living Bible. In fact, this verse should say, “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.” It has nothing to do with God getting pleasure from Noah. It has everything to do with Noah getting favor from the Lord! The Living Bible perverts this verse, turning it upon its very head. Nonetheless, since it fits Rick Warren’s theology he grabs hold of it and pretends that it is Scripture.

Consider another example of how Warren builds his self-esteem theology upon inaccurate versions of Scripture.

“The Bible says, ‘Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self’” (p. 19).

Here Warren quotes Matthew 16:25 in *The Message*. Actually, the verse should say, “For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.”

There is not a hint here about self-help or finding your true self. The verse is not teaching about finding yourself but about finding your life. What Warren quotes as Scripture is actually a presumptuous prefabrication by Eugene Peterson, the author of *The Message*.

*The Message* also takes away the Lord’s solemn warning that whosoever will find his life shall lose it. This fits in perfectly with Warren’s unscriptural positivism.

### **Slighting over Hell and Judgment**

The Lord Jesus Christ preached on Hell frequently. There are nearly 100 references in Scripture to fearing the Lord, and God’s judgment is a never-ending theme of Scripture.

However, when it comes to Rick Warren, he does not mention God's judgment, never urges his listeners to fear the Lord, and he makes only one passing reference to Hell. This is on page 37, and in the same section, he quotes C.S. Lewis twice. Lewis believed that Hell is a metaphor and a state of mind: "And every state of mind, left to itself, every shutting up of the creature within the dungeon of its own mind--is, in the end, Hell" (Lewis, *The Great Divorce*, p. 65).

Not only did the Lord Jesus Christ preach much on Hell, but he also preached it hot and furiously.

"And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Jesus Christ, Mark 9:43-48).

There is no a hint of this kind of preaching in Rick Warren's woefully inadequate ministry.

If ever there were an hour in which the people of this world need to hear Hell and judgment and the fear of God preached fiery hot and powerfully plain it is this present unbelieving, mocking, blasphemous, pleasure mad, self-loving, self-content, self-righteous age, but the popular preachers won't touch it. It is too negative. Too damaging to self-esteem. Too dogmatic and intolerant. Too likely to offend and cut into the size of my audience.

## Every Strange Bible Version

In *The Purpose Driven Life*, Warren uses 15 different Bible versions, including two Roman Catholic ones (The New American Bible and the New Jerusalem Bible). His favorites are the “dynamic equivalency” versions such as the Living Bible, the New Living Bible, Today’s English Version, the Contemporary English Version, and The Message. The latter seems to be his most favorite.

As a result, it is often impossible to know exactly what Scripture he is quoting because it is so strangely paraphrased and wildly inaccurate.

On page 70, Warren quotes Hebrews 11:7 from The Message.

“By faith, Noah built a ship in the middle of dry land. He was warned about something he couldn’t see, and acted on what he was told ... As a result, Noah became intimate with God.”

In the dependable King James Bible, this verse says:

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”

We can see that The Message adds to and takes away from the Word of God in an amazing manner. It adds the bit about Noah building a ship in the middle of dry land. It omits the fact that Noah moved with fear. It changes “became heir of the righteousness which is by faith” to “became intimate with God.”

On page 20 of *The Purpose Driven Life*, Warren quotes 1 Corinthians 2:7 from The Message:

“God’s wisdom ... goes deep into the interior of his purposes ... It’s not the latest message, but more like the oldest--what God determined as the way to bring out his best in us.”

In the King James Bible, this says:

“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.”

It is obvious that *The Message* is not a translation in any sense of the word; it is a presumption. It is not God’s thoughts but man’s. It is almost childish, not because it is simple but because it is ridiculous.

Warren claims to have quoted more than 1,000 Scriptures in *The Purpose Driven Life*, but most of the quotations are similar to the previous examples and have no right to be called Scripture.

When I visited a service at Saddleback Church in 2003, I observed that only a few people were carrying Bibles into the auditorium. The reason became clear when I saw the multiplicity of versions that were used in the preaching. It would be impossible to follow along in one’s Bible. The result is that the people do not bring their own Bibles and do not therefore carefully test the preaching. How could they, when any biblical statement they would attempt to examine has dozens of contradictory variations in various versions?

## **Slighting Scriptural Baptism**

*The Purpose Driven Life* has a page and a half dealing with baptism, but there is not a word about the mode, which is one of the most important aspects. Warren leaves the reader with the impression that pouring, sprinkling, or immersion is

equally acceptable. Obviously, it would offend many readers if he were to present a truly Scriptural position on baptism as a burial in water, but what else would a true Bible believer and a true Baptist do?

## **God Loves All Kinds of Music**

In chapter 8 of *The Purpose Driven Life*, Warren becomes a prophet, saying:

“God loves all kinds of music because he invented it all—fast and slow, loud and soft, old and new. You probably don’t like it all, but God does! ... Christians often disagree over the style of music used in worship, passionately defending their preferred style as the most biblical or God-honoring. But there is no biblical style! ... God likes variety and enjoys it all. There is no such thing as ‘Christian’ music; there are only Christian lyrics. It is the words that make a song sacred, not the tune. There are no spiritual tunes” (pp. 65, 66).

This idea that music is neutral and that any music can be used in the service of the Lord, has opened the door for the world to come into the churches, as few other things.

Though the Bible nowhere says, nor even hints that God loves all kinds of music, we are to believe that he does because Rick Warren says so. His only evidence for this outrageous statement is his reasoning that since God “invented it all” He must like it all. Yet, where is the evidence that God invented all music? Are you telling me that the devil and sinful men are not involved in the field of music? That is a ridiculous thought, seeing that the devil is called “the god of this world,” and music is one of the most powerful influences among men. Sinful men have used music since Cain’s children built the first society apart from



God and made musical instruments to satisfy their carnal pleasures (Genesis 4:16-21).

Styles of music are not neutral. Rock musicians have testified that they play their particular style of rhythm for the very reason that it is lascivious. Frank Zappa said: “Rock music is *sex*. The big beat matches the body’s rhythms” (*Life*, June 28, 1968). Gene Simmons says, “That’s what rock is all about--sex with a 100 megaton bomb, the beat!” (*Entertainment Tonight*, ABC, Dec. 10, 1987).

Note that they are not talking merely about rock music’s lyrics and associations but also about its RHYTHM, the thumping back beat! These men of the world believe there is such a thing as a sexy rhythmic pattern. Rapper Missy Elliot’s album, “Miss E ... So Addictive,” was described as “a seductive cocktail of quirky rhythms and hypnotic beats.”

Why do these secular rockers describe their heavily syncopated rock rhythms as sexy, seductive, and hypnotic? They are saying that music is *not* neutral and that the heavy rock & roll backbeat that can be heard on any Sunday at Saddleback Church is sensual and licentious and that is exactly why they, secular rockers, love it.

As for the idea that there is no biblical style of music, we could not disagree more fervently. The Bible tells us exactly what type of music to sing in our churches, as follows: “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19).

Spiritual songs are not the same as unspiritual or sensual or worldly, hymns are not the same as rock music, melody is not the same as raucous repetition. Spiritual is something that

is set apart from the world unto a holy God; something that is different in character than the things of the world. The Bible gives plain instruction about the Christian's affiliation with worldly things, and any music that draws the child of God into fellowship with the world is to be rejected (James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-16). The Bible forbids the Christian to be conformed to the world (Romans 12:2). Yet the Contemporary Christian Music that Rick Warren uses in his church is nothing if not conformed to the world's musical styles.

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2).

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11).

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17).

(For more about this subject see the book *Contemporary Christian Music under the Spotlight* and the video presentation *Distinguishing between Sacred and Contemporary Styles of Music*, available from Way of Life Literature, <http://wayoflife.org>.)

## **Judge Not Philosophy**

*The Purpose Driven Life* contains extensive documentation of Rick Warren's dangerous and unscriptural “judge not” ecumenical philosophy.

On page 164, Warren says:

“God warns us over and over not to criticize, compare, or judge each other. ... Whenever I judge another believer, four things instantly happen: I lose fellowship with God, I expose my own pride, I set myself to be judged by God, and I harm the fellowship of the church.”

In typical New Evangelical fashion Warren makes no distinction between judging hypocritically (which is forbidden in Matthew 7) or judging on the basis of personal preference in matters not taught in Scripture (which is forbidden in Romans 14) and judging on the basis of the Bible (which is required by God).

The child of God has an obligation to judge everything by God’s Word. The believers at Corinth were rebuked because they were careless in this regard and were tolerant of false teachers (2 Corinthians 11:1-4). The Bereans, on the other hand, were commended because they carefully tested everything by Scripture (Acts 17:11). The Bible says “... he that is spiritual judgeth all things” (1 Cor. 2:15) and Jesus taught that we should “judge righteous judgment” (John 7:24). We are to judge preaching (1 Cor. 14:29) and sin in the churches (1 Cor. 5). We are to try the spirits (1 John 4:1).

To test preachers and their message carefully by God’s Word is not a matter of pride, but of wisdom and spirituality and obedience.

On page 34 of *The Purpose Driven Life*, Warren says:

“God won’t ask about your religious background or doctrinal views. The only thing that will matter is, did you accept what Jesus did for you and did you learn to love and trust him?”

If this is true, why does the Bible say so very much about doctrine and why did the apostles call for doctrinal purity on every hand? Paul instructed Timothy to allow “no other doctrine” (1 Timothy 1:3). That is the very strictest stance on doctrinal purity, and it is precisely the stance we find throughout the apostolic writings. Rick Warren has a lot to answer for, because millions of people are basing their lives upon his teaching rather than upon the pure Word of God.

If God is unconcerned about doctrine, why did the apostles spend so much time warning about false doctrines and doctrines of devils? See, for example, 2 Corinthians 11:1-4; Galatians 1:6-12; Philippians 3:18-21; Colossians 2:8; 1 Timothy 4:1-5; 1 Timothy 6:20-21; 2 Timothy 4:1-4; 2 Peter 2; Jude 3-23.

Rick Warren requires his church members to sign a covenant promising to protect the unity of the church (*The Purpose Driven Life*, p. 167). This is a dangerous and unscriptural covenant. The child of God is not instructed to submit to a church or to its leaders blindly and at any cost. We are commanded to “prove all things” (1 Thess. 5:21), and *all* things means all things. The Bereans are commended and called noble because they “searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11). No preacher or church is above being tested by God’s Word. The Bible says, “Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge” (1 Cor. 14:29). Preaching is to be carefully judged by God’s Word. The pastor has God-given authority (Heb. 13:17), but it is not unquestionable authority and it is not his own authority; he is not a shepherd over his own flock; he is an undershepherd over God’s and he will give an account to the Great Shepherd (1 Peter 5:1-4). The pastor’s authority is not in his own word; it is in God’s Word (Heb. 13:7); and if

he strays from the Word of God he has no authority over God's people and he should not be followed. Blind loyalty to a church is popery and it is a gross heresy.

Warren even claims that "conflict is usually a sign that the focus has shifted to less important things" (p. 162).

If this were true, then the apostles and preachers in the early churches were sidetracked much of the time, because they were frequently involved in doctrinal conflicts. Paul was involved in such conflicts almost continually. Many of his epistles contain lengthy sections in which he takes a stand against false teachers. In his epistles to his fellow preacher Timothy, Paul repeatedly warned about false teachers by name (1 Tim. 1:19-20; 2 Tim. 1:15; 2:17-18; 4:12, 14).

Paul taught Timothy to have respect unto all doctrine and not only to the "cardinal truths." At the conclusion to the first epistle to Timothy Paul said:

"I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickenth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Timothy 6-13-14).

Observe that Timothy was instructed to keep the doctrine he had been taught in this epistle "without spot." That refers to the details. The theme of first Timothy is church truth. Paul said, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). The epistle contains instruction on matters such as prayer and the woman's spiritual ministry (1 Timothy 2), the qualifications of pastors and deacons (1 Timothy 3), avoiding doctrines of devils (1 Timothy 4), the

care of widows (1 Timothy 5), and the ordination and discipline of elders (1 Timothy 6). That type of doctrine is considered “peripheral” and “secondary” by evangelicals today, but Paul taught Timothy to have respect unto such doctrine and to keep it without spot.

## **Promoting Heretics**

In keeping with his unscriptural judge not philosophy, Warren uncritically quotes from a wide variety of theological heretics, especially Roman Catholics such as Mother Teresa, Henri Nouwen, Brother Lawrence (Carmelite monk), John Main (Benedictine monk who believes that Christ “is not limited to Jesus of Nazareth, but remains among us in the monastic leaders, the sick, the guest, the poor”), Madame Guyon (a Roman Catholic who taught that prayer is not from the mind and does not involve thinking), and John of the Cross (who believed the mountains and forests are God).

Warren does not warn his readers that these are dangerous false teachers who held to a false gospel.

Mother Teresa and Henri Nouwen, who are quoted at least four times in *The Purpose Driven Life*, believed that men can be saved apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ. When Mother Teresa died, her longtime friend and biographer Naveen Chawla said that he once asked her bluntly, “Do you convert?” She replied, “Of course I convert. I convert you to be a better Hindu or a better Muslim or a better Protestant. Once you’ve found God, it’s up to you to decide how to worship him” (“Mother Teresa Touched other Faiths,” Associated Press, Sept. 7, 1997). Henri Nouwen said, “Today I personally believe that while Jesus came to open the door to God’s house, all human beings can walk through that door,

whether they know about Jesus or not. Today I see it as my call to help every person claim his or her own way to God” (Henri Nouwen, *Sabbatical Journey*, p. 51).

Why does Rick Warren continually and non-critically promote heretics? The Bible asks, “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3).

### **Shallow Encapsulations**

On every hand, Rick Warren presents his own shallow encapsulations as the true essence of biblical Christianity. For example, in chapter 39 he lists “God’s five purposes for your life.” They are (1) Love God with all your heart, (2) Love your neighbor as yourself, (3) Go and make disciples, (4) Baptize them into [a church], and (5) Teach them to do all things.

There is nothing in these “five purposes” about holiness, contending for the faith, separation from the world, separation from false teaching, reproving sin and error, and many other things that are emphasized in the New Testament Scriptures. Obviously, Warren’s five purposes for life do not equal the sum total of God’s.

My friends, we don’t need some misguided man’s abbreviated form of Christianity; we need the “whole counsel of God” as found in the Scriptures (Acts 20:27). The Bible as a whole, not a few select parts thereof, is the sole and sufficient authority for faith and practice. The Lord Jesus Christ instructed the churches to teach “all things” rather than a few things (Mat. 28:19-20).

Beware of “The Purpose Driven Life.” It is not faithful to Scripture, and if followed it will lead you away from God’s will.



# A Visit to Saddleback Church

Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California, pastored by Rick Warren, is one of the most influential churches in the world. Warren says, “This is a world class church making a world class impact.” He is right about the impact, but sadly, that impact is not encouraging strict faithfulness to God’s Word.

I visited two of the three morning services at Saddleback on August 24, 2003, the one at 8 a.m. and the one at 9:45 a.m.

The church complex is huge. The main auditorium seats many thousands, and there are dozens of other buildings for various ministries. The overall mood of the services is casual in the extreme. The people dress much as they would for a secular sporting event. Women are dressed in shorts, short skirts, tight pants, and other types of immodest attire. The church bulletin for that Sunday was patterned after the cover to the *TV Guide*. The words “TV Guide” were replaced with “SC Guide” for Saddleback Church. Television was mentioned several times in the message but there was not a hint of warning about its dangers.

## The Music

The music was pure rock and roll. There were five singers, two electric guitars, a drum kit, an electric keyboard, two saxophones, a piano, trumpet, trombone, and flute. Three special numbers were performed with a nightclub effect, complete with swirling lights in the background and attractive female singers swaying and dancing to the music. It appeared to me that not many of the people were actually

participating in the worship service. Most were merely watching the show up front.

Saddleback Church features nine different “worship venues.” There is a worship style to suit every worldly taste. The Overdrive venue is “for those who like guitar-driven rock band worship in a concert-like setting that you can FEEL.” The Ohana venue comes “complete with hula and island-style music,” and on the first Saturday of every month you can take hula lessons during the potluck following the service. The Country venue features line dancing. I didn’t make this up, folks. It is right from Saddleback’s web site.

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17).

## **The Sermon**

The sermon, which was titled “The Potential of a Single Life,” was a witty, motivational challenge to single people to dedicate themselves to God. Rick Warren said, “You are as happy as you choose to be. ... You can waste your life on vanities, spend your life on yourself, and invest your life for God.”

Mother Teresa was used as an example with no warning about her false gospel. There was no specific mention of the hard things of God’s Word such as sin, separation, judgment, Hell, or repentance. These were replaced with general and vague references to biblical truth. No clear gospel message was given. Some of the statements were good, but the error lay chiefly in what was not said. This is the hallmark of New

Evangelicalism, which is characterized not so much by the heresy that is preached but by the truth that is neglected in an effort to present the Bible in a more positive light.

Everything about Saddleback is shallow. Truth has been boiled down to such a low common denominator that not much is left. For example, the Saddleback Statement of Faith has six simple points. Note the following statement on salvation, which we are quoting in full:

“Salvation is a gift from God to mankind. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God’s offer of forgiveness can we be saved from sin’s penalty. Eternal life begins the moment we receive Jesus Christ into our life by faith.”

Note that the gospel is not actually given in this statement. There is nothing about Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection, nothing about His shed blood and atonement. Sinners are exhorted to trust Christ but that is not explained in any sense whatsoever. Paul, on the other hand, summarized the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 as follows:

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”

I talked with one man who told me he has been a member of Saddleback for two years. I asked him when he was born again. He replied, “I have always been a Christian. I grew up in the Christian Church.” By that, he was referring to the Disciples of Christ, which preaches baptismal regeneration. He said that his mother took him to church, though his father was a Buddhist. I asked him what he was required to do to join Saddleback, and he replied that he “rededicated” his life

at that time. I asked him if that was when he was born again, and he insisted again that he has always been a Christian.

## **Bible Versions**

An outline of the sermon was handed out with the bulletin, and six or seven Bible versions were quoted, most of them loose paraphrases or dynamic equivalencies such as the Living Bible, the New Living Translation, The Message, the Today's English Version, and the Contemporary English Version.

I observed on the way into the auditorium that only a few of the people carried Bibles, and the reason became clear when I saw the multiplicity of versions that were used in the preaching. It would be impossible to follow along in one's Bible. The result is that the people do not bring their own Bibles and do not therefore carefully test the preaching. How could they, when any biblical statement they would attempt to examine has dozens of variations?

## **Avoiding Doctrinal Controversy**

In an interview with *USA Today* that ran in the July 21, 2003, issue, Rick Warren cited Billy Graham, the king of ecumenical "positive onlyism," as his model. Warren said:

"I'm not going to get into a debate over the non-essentials. I won't try to change other denominations. Why be divisive?"

Since Mr. Warren has asked his question, I will answer it.

The reason we need to be divisive in an apostate hour is because God has commanded us to preach all of His Word and to "reprove, rebuke, exhort" (2 Tim. 4:2). The emphasis

in 2 Timothy 4 is as much “negative” as “positive,” and that is the preacher’s divine standard.

God has commanded us not only to believe sound doctrine but also to earnestly contend for it (Jude 3). That means we are to fight aggressively against that which is false. This is exactly what we see in the uncompromising ministry of the Lord’s apostles. Their epistles contain strong and clear warnings about false teaching. Paul often named the names of the false teachers. Such a ministry naturally causes divisions between those who are committed to the truth and those who are following error. Paul made no effort whatsoever to avoid doctrinal controversy. He entered the fray in practically every one of his epistles.

The apostasy of our time is much advanced compared to that of Paul’s day (2 Tim. 3:1-13; 4:3-4). The Holy Spirit warned that “evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Tim. 3:13). That is the story of church history. The apostasy that was just beginning in the days of the first churches grew quickly as the centuries passed, eventually producing the Roman Catholic Church, and it has continued to grow and spread throughout the age. The Bible warns that prior to the return of Christ, the apostasy will be almost complete. Jesus asked rhetorically, “... when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8).

Thus, preachers today are obligated to be even more aggressive and more divisive, if you will, than the apostles! We are obligated to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

That, Mr. Warren, is why we should be divisive, and you will give an account at the judgment seat of Christ for promoting

your unscriptural “positive-only, avoid divisiveness” emphasis. And in that day the Word of God will wash away the man-made wall of church growth, seeker-sensitive philosophy that you have built up to defend your methodology and by which you have duped so many.

I believe this with all of my heart, and I weep over the damage that is being caused to the churches of Jesus Christ by a methodology that is breaking down the wall of separation between God’s people and the world but that is doing so under the guise of a love for the truth. This philosophy of rejecting strict scriptural separation destroyed Israel of old and it will destroy every church that goes down the same road. What God complained of then is occurring in our day:

“Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them” (Ezekiel 22:26).

## **Conclusion**

Our day is described plainly in Bible prophecy:

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

This generation has itching ears, and it will not hear the preaching of God’s Word that plainly rebukes its sin and forthrightly condemns its heresies; but it eagerly hears--yea, flocks in droves to hear--those soft-speaking teachers that are willing to tickle ears with a positive-only, non-offensive,

unifying message. The same generation that hates the uncompromising, plain-spoken, “old time” fundamentalist-style preaching, dearly loves the preaching of the Billy Grahams and the Rick Warrens and the Robert Schullers.

Rick Warren claims that he has not compromised the Word of God with his principles and methods, but when I look into the book of Acts and the Epistles I see a different kind of Christianity, a different kind of church there, than the one that Rick Warren has devised. Thus, I must reject Warren’s Purpose Driven methods and I must warn those who have an ear to hear, regardless of how small that crowd may be today, that they not heed the siren call of the contemporary church growth gurus.

# Warren's Anti-fundamentalist Tirades

Rick Warren preaches a non-judgmental message and refuses to denounce the Pope or the Mormons, but he has reproved biblical fundamentalists with great enthusiasm.

## Fundamentalism A Great Enemy

Warren says that Christian fundamentalism will be “one of the big enemies of the 21st century.” He lumped Christian fundamentalism in with “Muslim fundamentalism” and “secular fundamentalism” (“The Purpose-Driven Pastor,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Jan. 8, 2006). Thus, the Christian fundamentalist who merely seeks to take God’s Word seriously and to live it and to preach it faithfully before his Heavenly Master is said to be as dangerous to this world as a Muslim terrorist or a radical atheist.

Warren said that Christian fundamentalism is motivated by fear. One of the many problems with this statement is that the Bible often speaks of fear in a positive manner. Paul was afraid that the devil would deceive the believers. He said:

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him” (2 Cor. 11:3-4).

We should follow the apostle’s example and fear spiritual deception, both for ourselves and for others.

The Bible says pastors who sin should be rebuked before all “that others also may fear” (1 Tim. 5:20). Would that



Saddleback Church would take that verse seriously and rebuke their heresy-preaching pastor publicly!

Noah is commended because he feared God's warning (Heb. 11:7). We are to pass this earthly sojourn with fear (1 Pet. 1:17). We are to save some by fear (Jude 23).

May God's men today fear God enough to obey His Word and to preach the whole counsel of God, to "reprove, rebuke, exhort," to warn the people of false teachers like Rick Warren.

Where, by the way, are the "staunch conservative" or "nearly fundamentalist" Southern Baptist leaders who are exposing their fellow Southern Baptist Rick Warren's errors? They ridicule and speak against men like me for warning about errors within the Southern Baptist Convention, but they don't lift a voice on their own. Well, I think I will just keep on warning!

## **Likening Fundamentalists to Muslim Extremists**

In his interview on *Larry King Live* on December 2, 2006, Rick Warren again likened biblical fundamentalists to Muslim extremists and atheistic secularists. He said:

"There are all kinds of fundamentalists, Larry, and they're all based on fear. There are Christian fundamentalists. There are Muslim fundamentalists. I've met some Jewish fundamentalists. You know that there are secular fundamentalists. They're all based on fear. Secular fundamentalists are afraid of God."

This statement is a vicious libel against Christian fundamentalists. George Dollar, in his history of fundamentalism, defined it in this way:

“Historic fundamentalism is the literal interpretation of all the affirmations and attitudes of the Bible and the militant exposure of all non-biblical affirmations and attitudes” (Dollan, *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, 1973).

Looking back over the history of the fundamentalist movement since the 1930s, John Ashbrook defined it as follows:

“Fundamentalism is the militant belief and proclamation of the basic doctrines of Christianity leading to a Scriptural separation from those who reject them” (John Ashbrook, *Axioms of Separation*, n.d., p. 10).

That is the type of fundamentalism that thousands of churches throughout the world seek to emulate. Rick Warren has set himself up against this scriptural position and has likened it to Islamic terrorism and secular atheism.

If fear is a central aspect of biblical fundamentalism it is the fear of God that leads to strict obedience to His Word, and that is scriptural and right. That was exactly how Paul instructed the believers at Corinth to live: “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1).

Paul instructed the church at Philippi to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12).

Hebrews 12:28 says we are to “serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”

If Rick Warren does not have this fear, he is not a true Christian, and if he does, let him apologize publicly for saying that fear is a wrong thing and for likening those who

practice it to dangerous extremists. I won't hold my breath, though.

Friends in Christ, beware of Rick Warren. This popular Southern Baptist preacher is an extremely dangerous man.

## **Railing Against Fundamentalists**

In 2007, Rick Warren railed against fundamentalist Christians yet again. At a three-day summit on adoption in Colorado Springs Warren said:

“We’ve got some people who only focus on moral purity and couldn’t care less about the poor, the sick, the uneducated. And they haven’t done zip for those people.” He said that too often Christians these days are defined by their “big mouth”—what they argue against, not what they embrace (“Christian Groups Launch Massive Adoption Campaign, *Los Angeles Times*, May 13, 2007).

Warren mentioned James 1:27, which says pure religion is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction. What he failed to acknowledge is that the same verse says that pure religion is also to keep oneself unspotted from the world. That describes a very strict type of separation, which requires reproving every form of worldliness (Ephesians 5:11), and the Bible just as plainly teaches that we are to separate from and renounce error. Yet Warren denounces those who are attempting to obey these biblical injunctions.

Biblical Christianity involves caring for the needy *as well as* maintaining strict standards of holiness and truth, and that is what biblical fundamentalists are doing.

I have written more than 30 articles warning about Rick Warren’s error and compromise, so I obviously have a “big

mouth” by his definition, but my wife and I adopted a special-needs child and have dedicated almost two decades of our lives to the foreign mission field and to giving away thousands of dollars of our own money to the poor.

## Duplicity

Rick Warren apparently got some feedback in regard to likening “fundamentalism” to Islamic terrorism and humanist atheism and calling it “one of the big enemies of the 21st century” (“The Purpose Driven Pastor,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Jan. 8, 2006), so he is busy covering his tracks.

In an article entitled “Rick Warren on Fundamentalism” at the Saddleback Church web site, we learn that they are fundamentalists after all!

“Within Christianity, there’s a large group of believers who affirm that there are certain facts about our faith that must be embraced, even if it isn’t popular to proclaim these facts as true. These are facts such as Jesus was God in the flesh, God raised Jesus from the dead, and the Resurrection opened the singular path available for men and women to intimately and eternally connect with God. These are among the fundamental truths of our Christian faith (or, to use another phrase, they are foundational truths to our faith). Now, if you believe that these fundamental truths are essential to the Christian faith, then you are a ‘fundamentalist’ in the very basic sense of the word, and within that definition and context Saddleback Church is unapologetically fundamentalist. There is, however, another kind of fundamentalism that has nothing to do with fundamentals of the Christian faith; instead, it is about keeping the right rules in the right way in order to please the right people. I’m not speaking here about the Ten Commandments or any of the other God-spoken standards that light our way on the narrow path; I’m referring to the fanatical pursuit of keeping--and insisting that others keep--rules that are man-made and often culturally influenced, rules that

insist all Christians must look, act, and smell the same in order to be considered genuine believers.”

This statement is so wrongheaded it is difficult to know where to begin.

First of all, Rick Warren stood before the Pew Forum in May 2005 and made the following statement:

“Now the word ‘fundamentalist’ actually comes from a document in the 1920s called the Five Fundamentals of the Faith. And it is a very legalistic, narrow view of Christianity ... I am an evangelical. I’m not a member of the religious right and I’M NOT A FUNDAMENTALIST” (“Myths of the Modern Mega-Church,” May 23, 2005, transcript of the Pew Forum’s biannual Faith Angle conference on religion, politics and public life).

Warren did not try to explain to the Pew Forum that he is actually his own kind of fundamentalist and that he is merely opposed to certain types of fundamentalism. He simply stated that he is no kind of fundamentalist and criticized fundamentalism in the harshest of terms!

Will the real Rick Warren please stand up!

Of course, if we allow a man to make up his own definitions, he can be anything he pleases, and that is just what Saddleback Church has done in regard to fundamentalism. Real and acceptable fundamentalism, we are told, is simply to affirm that there are a few facts (Saddleback mentions only three) about the Christian faith that must be embraced.

That, my friend, is a brand new definition of fundamentalism. There never was a document called “the Five Fundamentals of the Faith.” The name “fundamentalist” was derived from a series of books called “The

Fundamentals” that was published from 1910-1915. The series, composed of 90 articles written by 64 authors, did not promote “five fundamentals” (or three) but rather dozens of fundamentals. (For more about the history of fundamentalism see <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/fundamen1.htm>.)

Notice that Saddleback Church warns of “another type of fundamentalism” that is described as “keeping the right rules in the right way in order to please the right people.” That is a smoke screen. It is a straw man. I doubt that Rick Warren knows anyone who actually fits that definition. How would he know whom other people are trying to please? Can he see the motives of men’s hearts?

Biblical fundamentalism does not “keep rules” in order to please people; it keeps the precepts of the Bible in order to please God and to help people be prepared to meet God.

How strict are we supposed to be in keeping God’s Word?

Consider Christ’s Great Commission:

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Mat. 28:19-20).

The church’s job is to teach each disciple to observe ALL things that Christ has commanded. That is a far-reaching command. It involves training the saints not only to know but also to obey everything that Christ has left us in the New Testament faith.

Consider Paul’s final instruction to the elders at Ephesus:

“For I have not shunned to declare unto you ALL the counsel of God” (Acts 17:27).

Paul left us the example of declaring all of the counsel of God. He didn't focus merely on three, four, or five “fundamentals.”

**THIS IS THE TRUE AND ORIGINAL “PURPOSE DRIVEN” CHURCH.** Its purpose is to glorify Jesus Christ by teaching and obeying all things whatsoever He has commanded us in the New Testament Scriptures.

Biblical fundamentalism does try to keep the right rules in the right way, because it seeks to honor Jesus Christ by exalting the Bible as the sole authority for faith and practice and keeping it as strictly as Jesus Christ and the apostles taught we should keep it.

Biblical fundamentalism does not exalt man-made rules; it seeks, rather, to be faithful to the principles and details of God's Word. When the Bible says, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world” and “be not conformed to this world,” the biblical fundamentalist takes this seriously and seeks to follow the Spirit's leading in applying this great truth to every area of his life, including the clothes that he wears and the music he listens to. When the Bible says it is a shame for a man to wear long hair and the woman's long hair is her glory, the biblical fundamentalist doesn't make excuses for it, he simply tries to obey it. When the Bible says God forbids a woman to teach or usurp authority over a man, the biblical fundamentalist doesn't try to find a way to ignore it.

Saddleback Church calls this “legalism,” but it is no such thing and one day Rick Warren will give a solemn account

for the way he has perverted and redefined terms and set up straw men to poison people's minds toward those who are guilty of nothing more than loving God's Word.

What kind of "legalism" is it for a blood-washed, saved-by-grace saint to aim to preach all of the truths of God's Word and to be faithful to God's Word in all matters? Though we are saved by grace without works, we are saved unto good works (Eph. 2:8-10). If that is legalism, Paul was a great legalist, for he testified, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). By my count, there are 88 specific duties that Christians are instructed to follow in the book of Ephesians alone, the very book that emphasizes salvation without works!

Rick Warren is a very dangerous man, the blind leading the blind. His books are accepted by the world (e.g., his "40 Days of Purpose" has been used by Coco-Cola, Ford, Wal-Mart, the NBA, LPGA, NASCAR, professional baseball teams, etc.), because he is of the world.

"Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets" (Luke 6:26).



# Saddleback Church Rocking and Rolling

We have often warned that one of the dangers and errors of contemporary Christian music is its refusal to separate from secular party music such as rock and rap. This is evident at Rick Warren's Saddleback Church in southern California.

## Purple Haze

On April 17, 2005, when Warren announced his P.E.A.C.E. program to Saddleback Church, he first sang Jimi Hendrix's drug-drenched song "Purple Haze" to the congregation, accompanied by his "praise and worship" band. He said he had wanted to do that for a long time.

Though long dead, Jimi Hendrix's influence lives on, but it is an evil influence that should be reprovved rather than encouraged. His music and his life epitomized the rock and roll philosophy, which is live as you please; don't allow anyone to put restrictions upon you; flaunt any law that gets in your way; have fun while you can; if it feels good do it.

Music was Jimi Hendrix's god. He attended church some in his youth, but later he testified: "I used to go to Sunday School BUT THE ONLY THING I BELIEVE IN NOW IS MUSIC" (cited by Curtis Knight, *Jimi*).

Hendrix flaunted an immoral lifestyle, living intimately with a succession of women but never marrying. He said: "Marriage isn't my scene; we just live together. Those bits of paper you call marriage certificates are only for people who feel insecure" (Henderson, p. 245).

Hendrix also promoted immorality through his music and his concerts. His song "Fire" was "basically a vehicle for shouted phrases of sexual innuendo that went as close to the borderline as possible" (Henderson, *Scuse Me While I Kiss the Sky*, p. 115). Hendrix's 1968 album *Electric Ladyland* featured 20 nude women on the album cover.

When complaints were made about his erotic behavior onstage, he replied: "PERHAPS IT IS SEXY ... BUT WHAT MUSIC WITH A BIG BEAT ISN'T?" (Henderson, p. 117). Hendrix was more candid and honest about the character of rock than the CCM musicians who are defending it today. We would agree that rock & roll is sensual by its very nature.

Hendrix also promoted violence through his music, at times destroying his guitars and amplifiers during concerts and setting his guitar on fire. This would send the young concertgoers into a frenzy.

Hendrix abused drugs and alcohol. He took acid, smoked marijuana, used heroin and amphetamines, and drank liquor. Hendrix' bassist, Noel Redding, testified: "Whether it was true or not, we felt we had to be stoned to play properly. Good dope equaled good music" (*A Time to Rock*, p. 200).

Hendrix was deeply involved in occultism and mysticism and these themes permeated his music. His song "Voodoo Chile" glorified voodoo practices such as out of body experiences.

His biographer, who spent five years researching his life, noted that "Hendrix demonstrated a high order of voodoo ... [he] showed the voodoo that related to the stars and to magical transformation" (Henderson, p. 394). Hendrix believed in numerology, UFOs, transcendental meditation, reincarnation, and a variety of pagan and New Age concepts.

He thought rainbows were bridges that linked this world with the unseen spirit world.

In July 1970, Hendrix set up a performance in Maui, Hawaii, in an attempt to reach a higher level of New Age spiritual awareness. When he arrived in Hawaii, he consulted an elderly German fortune teller named Clara Schuff and was told that he descended from Egyptian and Tibetan royalty and that his next life would be concerned with the magical systems of Tibet. The performance was called “The Rainbow Bridge Vibratory Color-Sound Experiment.” Hendrix was invited to participate in this experiment by a commune called the Rainbow Bridge Occult Research Meditation Center. The Hendrix group gathered on the side of the Olowalu Volcano, revered as a very holy place and called the Crater of the Sun by native Hawaiians. For the occasion, Hendrix wore Indian medicine-man clothing and used a medicine-man tent. He and all of the participants were high on LSD, hash, and liquor during the “experiment.” (Two months later, he was dead.)

Hendrix believed his music could open his listeners to “cosmic powers” and that people can rise through various spiritual levels through music. He believed in reincarnation and thought he was from another planet, an asteroid belt off of Mars, and that he had come to earth to show people new energy. He thought he had assumed other life forms in previous lives:

“There's no telling how many lives your spirit will go through--die and be reborn. Like my mind will be back in the days when I was a flying horse” (Hendrix, interview with Robin Richman “An Infinity of Jimis,” *Life* magazine, Oct. 3, 1969).

Hendrix understood the mystical and hypnotic power of rock music. He said:

"ATMOSPHERES ARE GOING TO COME THROUGH MUSIC, BECAUSE THE MUSIC IS A SPIRITUAL THING OF ITS OWN. ... I can explain everything better through music. YOU HYPNOTIZE PEOPLE to where they go right back to their natural state, which is pure positive-like childhood when you got natural highs. And when you get people at weakest point, you can preach into the subconscious what we want to say. That's why the name 'electric church' flashes in and out" (Hendrix, interview with Robin Richman "An Infinity of Jimis," *Life* magazine, Oct. 3, 1969).

"ONCE YOU HAVE SOME TYPE OF RHYTHM, LIKE IT CAN GET HYPNOTIC IF YOU KEEP REPEATING IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN. Most of the people will fall off by about a minute of repeating. You do that say for three or four or even five minutes if you can stand it, and then it releases a certain thing inside of a person's head. IT RELEASES A CERTAIN THING IN THERE SO YOU CAN PUT ANYTHING YOU WANT RIGHT INSIDE THAT, YOU KNOW. So you do that for a minute and all of a sudden you can bring the rhythm down a little bit and then you say what you want to say right into that little gap. It's somethin' to ride with, you know. You have to ride with something. I ALWAYS LIKE TO TAKE PEOPLE ON TRIPS. THAT'S WHY MUSIC IS MAGIC" (Hendrix, cited by Henderson, p. 356).

These are observations and warnings that should be taken seriously by Christians. Though Hendrix was a licentious drug user, he was also a brilliant and gifted musician and he understood the nature of rock music as few men have. He was using music to "take people on trips." What trip? We know that his trip is actually the devil's trip. Hendrix had a "church," but it was not the church of Jesus Christ. Those who think that there is no spiritual danger in rock music are deceiving themselves and are leading others down the primrose path of delusion. Observe that Hendrix was referring to the power of the music itself without the words.

Hendrix believed in religion and “spirituality,” but he unhesitatingly rejected Bible-believing Christianity and considered the laws of God a form of bondage. He saw himself and other rock singers as liberators of young people from such laws:

“We’re in our little cement beehives in this society. People let a lot of old-time laws rule them. The establishment has set up the Ten Commandments for us saying don’t, don’t, don’t. ... The walls are crumbling and the establishment doesn’t want to let go. ... The establishment is so uptight about sex...” (Jimi Hendrix, quoted by Henderson, pp. 214, 215).

In January 1969, Hendrix expressed his philosophy as follows:

“When I die I want people to play my music, go wild and freak out and do anything they wanna do” (Hendrix, interview with Don Short, *Daily Mirror*, Jan. 11, 1969).

Hendrix believed he was possessed by the devil. Girlfriend Fayne Pridgon said:

“HE USED TO ALWAYS TALK ABOUT SOME DEVIL OR SOMETHING WAS IN HIM, you know. He didn’t know what made him act the way he acted and what made him say the things he said, and the songs and different things like that ... just came out of him. It seems to me he was so tormented and just torn apart and like he really was obsessed, you know, with something really evil. ... He said, ‘You’re from Georgia ... you should know how people drive demons out’--He used to talk about us going ... and having some root lady or somebody see if she could DRIVE THIS DEMON OUT OF HIM” (sound track from film *Jimi Hendrix*, interview with Fayne Pridgon, side 4, cited by *Heartbeat of the Dragon*, p. 50).

Producer Alan Douglas stated the same thing:

“Now one of the biggest things about Jimi was. . . he believed that he was possessed by some spirit, and I got to believe it myself; and that’s what we had to deal with

all the time—he really believed it and was wrestling with it constantly” (sound track from film *Jimi Hendrix*).

Note the two following testimonies about Hendrix by fellow rocker Carlos Santana:

“Everything was fine for the first few moments but then, Carlos remembered sadly, Hendrix started freaking out and playing some ‘wild s—’ that had nothing to do with the song. . . ‘His eyes were all bloodshot and he was foaming at the mouth. It was like being in a room with someone having an epileptic fit..” (Marc Shapiro, *Carlos Santana: Back on Top*, p. 91).

“On another occasion, Santana was taken to watch Hendrix recording and what he saw frightened him, ‘The first time I was really with him was in the studio. He was overdubbing “Roomful of Mirrors” and it was a real shocker to me. He started recording and it was incredible. But within fifteen or twenty seconds he just went out. All of a sudden he was freaking out like he was having a gigantic battle in the sky with somebody. The roadies look at each other and the producer looked at him and they said, “Go get him”. They separated him from the amplifier and the guitar and it was like he was having an epileptic fit” (Simon Leng, *Soul Sacrifice: The Santana Story*, p. 51).

On September 18, 1970, Jimi Hendrix died in London at age 27. The official cause of death was “barbiturate intoxication” and “inhalation of vomit.” He died in a Purple Haze.

It is inexcusable for Rick Warren and his “worship” team to perform any Jimi Hendrix song on any occasion whatsoever.

## **Rock Dances**

The following information from the Saddleback website for 2005 describes their enthusiasm for rock and roll dances:

“Our dances have become some of the most anticipated of our social events with hundreds of people attending.

This Summer's Night dance in our Worship Center promises to be the same. It will begin with a light buffet style dinner followed by dancing to the sounds of our DJ on a huge 3,000 square foot ballroom competition floor. Professional lighting, effects and sound all blend together for a high-quality experience, all at an extremely reasonable price! Whether you bring a special friend, come alone or with a group, make sure you come ready to have fun! Music will consist of a wide variety providing for specific dances and freestyle. And what's a summer night without some beach music and reggae?"

## **Pelvic Thrusts**

The following statement from the Extreme Theology website for December 9, 2006, describes a video on YouTube of a Saddleback "Worship" Concert that featured vulgar "pelvic thrust" rock moves:

"This is a video of a Saddleback Worship Concert. There are teenage girls doing dance moves that include Pelvic Thrusts. Is this really worship to the one true God of the Bible or is this worship to one of those pagan sex gods? You be the judge? You can go to the original YouTube post at [http://youtube.com/watch?v=Gq\\_heSAajS0](http://youtube.com/watch?v=Gq_heSAajS0). After seeing this, Is there any wonder why Saddleback's worship is so appealing and attractive to unbelievers? Saddleback is offering jiggly-dancing and sexual stimulation at church and calling it worship. 'Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire' (Matthew 7:17-19)."

Recently a Southern Baptist state association made a ruling that churches supporting homosexuality are not welcome. That is commendable, as far as it goes, but why is immoral dancing in the name of worshipping a holy God any less wicked than same-sex relations? Where is the Southern

Baptist Convention when it comes to such things? The silence is deafening.

## **Lennon's Atheistic Song**

Another YouTube video containing a slide show from an Argentina missionary trip by Saddleback Church members featured John Lennon's atheistic song "Imagine." The trip, made August 1-12, 2006, was part of Warren's P.E.A.C.E. program. The soundtrack uses several pieces of music, including John Lennon's original recording of *Imagine*. The lyrics say:

"Imagine there's no heaven/ It's easy if you try/ No hell below us/ Above us only sky."

## **Worship Your Way**

Saddleback Church features nine different "worship venues." There is a worship style to suit every worldly taste. The Overdrive venue is "for those who like guitar-driven rock band worship in a concert-like setting that you can FEEL." The Ohana venue comes "complete with hula and island-style music," and on the first Saturday of every month you can take hula lessons during the potluck following the service. The Country venue features line dancing.

## **School of Rock**

Under the Worship section of Saddleback Church's web site there is a "School of Rock," where you can learn to sing "like your favorite pop artist" and play guitar "songs by legendary bands."

This is "worship" of a holy God--Rick Warren style.



The “Beyond the Blues” class “will take your blues playing to another level, along with classic blues licks by the masters.”

They forgot to say that the legendary rockers, pop stars, and classic blues artists were and are drug- and alcohol-drenched and their lives and music morally filthy.

### **Saddleback Rap Video**

A rap video prepared for Warren’s Purpose Driven Worship Conference 2006 is one of the sickest things I have ever seen, and I have been researching the spiritually sick world of CCM for many years. It is by a rapper named Smitty and is mis-titled “Filled with the Spirit.”

It featured a heavy sensual rap beat with the following lyrics:

“Ohhhhhh, I’m filled with the Spirit; come gather round so all ya’ll can hear it. Ohhhhhh, I feel so amazing; can’t stop the music; got my hands raising. Ohhhh, I feel this divinity; stronger than Samson; it is the Trinity. Calm me down I need the tranquility; Satan try to stop me; you got to be kiddin’ me. ... Uuhhhhhh, now break it down ya’ll; uuhhhhhh, now break it down ya’ll; uuhhhh, uuhhhhhh, now break it down, now break it down, Old Testament style. Do the burning bush, do the burning bush, now everybody in the crowd do the burning bush. ... The walls of Jericho, the walls of Jericho, make the booty drop like the walls of Jericho [the rapper turns around and shakes his backside to the camera]...”

Not only do the lyrics turn the things of Christ and life’s most serious issues into pure silliness and even descend into moral filthiness (e.g., rap dancing to the burning bush and shaking your booty to the falling of the walls of Jericho), but the way the words are sung are downright blasphemous. You have to see the video and hear the voices to understand just how sick

and blasphemous this thing is, but I am not going to give out the link because I don't want young people, especially, to be influenced by this vile thing.

Ingrid Schlueter of “Crosstalk Radio Talk Show” on VCY America Radio Network made the following observation:

“The sneering, mocking expressions and tones of voice in this video have to be witnessed to be understood for what they are. By his speech and manner, the rapper takes the name of the Holy Son of God in vain, but the video contains something more. There is hatred here, hatred for who God is according to the Scriptures. The spirit of this video, ironically shown at a so-called worship conference, is anti-Christ. You cannot know the Lord of glory, the living Word of God and speak of Him in this manner. ... The monstrous treatment of the name of God under the guise of worship is evidence of the hearts behind the video. The grimace when the rapper says, ewwww, I feel this divinity... is manifestly evil. The name of the Lord, by whose mercy we live and breathe and have our being, is to be revered above all earthly names. Anyone who can listen to the spirit of mockery and ridicule in this video and not feel a holy anger needs to return to the Bible and learn who God really is” (“Purpose-Driven Rapper Crosses the Line to Blasphemy”).

We agree with that assessment totally.

The next time someone tries to convince you that the Southern Baptist Convention is “conservative,” remember that you will find every worldly thing in the SBC. Worldly Christianity is not “conservative” Christianity.

There is no separation from the world at Saddleback Church. Any sorry piece of rock or rap music is fine as long as it is accompanied by a thin veneer of religiosity.

There has never been anything innocent or pure about rock and roll. From its inception, it has had two grand themes: licentiousness (sex, drugs, etc.) and rebellion (“I can do what I want to do any old time”), and this is nowhere more evident than in the music of Jimi Hendrix and the Beatles.

There is no excuse for this action on the part of an influential pastor who should set a standard of godliness instead of carnal foolishness. I want to say again publicly, Shame on Rick Warren, and shame on his fellow Southern Baptist Convention leaders for not publicly and unequivocally rebuking him for such worldly shenanigans.

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2).

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11).

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4).

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17).

## Warren's P.E.A.C.E. Plan

Speaking before 30,000 members and attendees of Saddleback Church at the congregation's 25th anniversary celebration on April 17, 2005, Rick Warren announced his plan for a global vision called P.E.A.C.E.

He told the crowd, "I stand before you confidently right now and say to you that God is going to use you to change the world."

Warren's plan is described as nothing less than "a new reformation in Christianity and vision for a worldwide spiritual awakening in the 21st century."

Warren wants to enlist "one billion foot soldiers" to overcome the five "global giants" of "Spiritual Emptiness, Self-serving Leadership, Poverty, Disease and ignorance (or illiteracy)."

The acronym PEACE gives the means of overcoming these giants:

- *Promote reconciliation*
- *Equip servant leaders*
- *Assist the poor*
- *Care for the sick*
- *Educate the next generation*

(Originally the first point was "Planting churches," but it was changed to the more vague and humanistic objective of "Promoting reconciliation.")

Warren's program both expands and narrows the Great Commission given by the Lord Jesus Christ after His resurrection and described in the following Scriptures:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:19-20).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

"And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46-47).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Warren's P.E.A.C.E. plan expands on Christ's Commission with a global social agenda that we see nowhere in the New Testament. Christ's Commission focuses on preaching the Gospel to every soul and discipling those that believe, and that is the program that we see carried out in the book of Acts. There is not a hint there or anywhere else in the New Testament that the apostles and early churches pursued any sort of grandiose social-justice program. They did not set out to save the environment. They did not organize protests against the social-political ills of the Roman Empire. They did not try to rid the Empire of poverty and sickness. They preached the gospel and lived holy lives and planted churches and discipled believers and loved their neighbors (but not in the way this is defined by Rick Warren).

It is true that believers should have a godly influence in this world. We are light and salt, but that does not add up to the social-justice gospel as spelled out by Warren. We agree with the following statement by Jonathan Leeland from the Pastors' and Theologians' Forum on Church and Culture on the 9Marks web site:

"The church is not called to transform culture, at least not in the sense that most people use that phrase today. If by transform one means 'convert,' then fine. But that's not how the phrase is being used. You cannot transform what is blind except by giving it sight. You cannot transform what is deaf except by giving it hearing. You cannot transform what is stone except by making it flesh. You cannot transform what is dead except by making it alive. How do you 'transform' something that's dead? If you happen to be supernatural, you can make it alive (John 1:13). But you cannot transform it. ... In the same way that Christians are called to live and love like Good Samaritans, we should always be looking for ways to serve our non-Christian neighbors--that they might be given sight, hearing, hearts of flesh, and life!" (Leeland, Pastors' and Theologians' Forum on Church and Culture, [http://www.9marks.org/partner/Article\\_Display\\_Page/0,,PTID314526|CHID598016|CIID2371850,00.html](http://www.9marks.org/partner/Article_Display_Page/0,,PTID314526|CHID598016|CIID2371850,00.html)).

God's Word bears this out:

"Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Peter 2:12).

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10).

Warren's plan also narrows Christ's Commission by abridging and simplifying New Testament doctrine and practice. Whereas Christ commanded that believers be taught "to observe all things whatsoever I have taught you" (Mat. 28:20), Warren suggests they observe a few things that have

been summarized and reinterpreted by a contemporary church growth guru.

Warren's plan also calls for broad ecumenical and interfaith practice. He says the fulfillment of the P.E.A.C.E. plan requires a "three-legged stool" consisting of government, business, and the churches. And he means ALL churches. He wants to mobilize every church in the world. In an interview with Charlie Rose, on August 17, 2006, Warren said:

"There are 2.3 billion Christians in the world. Probably 600 million of them, I believe, are Catholic. And so when you take all of these together, it is the largest network in the world."

Speaking before the Pew Forum on May 23, 2005, Warren said:

"Now when you get 25 percent of America, which is basically Catholic, and you get 28 to 29 percent of America which is evangelical together, that's called a majority. And it is a very powerful bloc, if they happen to stay together on particular issues. ... I WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO LOOK AT THIS EVOLVING ALLIANCE BETWEEN EVANGELICAL PROTESTANTS AND CATHOLICS" (Warren, "Myths of the Modern Mega-Church," [www.pewforum.org/events.index.pho?EventID=R80](http://www.pewforum.org/events.index.pho?EventID=R80)).

Not only does Warren want to bring evangelicals and Catholics together to fulfill his P.E.A.C.E. program, but he also wants to include homosexuals, Muslims, Hindus, EVERYBODY!

Warren said that after he prayed to God about how he could reach the world, he found the answer in Matthew 10 and Luke 10, where Jesus sent the apostles out to preach the gospel of the kingdom. Warren says that Jesus told him:

“There’s a man of peace in every village, in every government, in every business, in every church. ... When you find the man of peace, if he’s open and he’s willing to work with you, you bless him and you start your work there. ... The man of peace is open and influential. ... The man of peace does not have to be a Christian believer. Could be a Muslim. Could be Jewish” (Warren interview with Charlie Rose, Aug. 17, 2006).

Roger Oakland rightly observes:

“While Warren believes that a conversation with Jesus inspired his plan to establish the kingdom of God on earth, it would be important to check out the words of Jesus written in the Bible. Ironically, Jesus said much the opposite of what Warren is proposing. ... Jesus sent His disciples out with a Gospel of repentance in proclaiming, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand’ (Matthew 10:7). ... Jesus did not say they were to look for a ‘man of peace’ in every town. Rather, He said, ‘whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence’ (Matthew 10:11). Now Jesus did tell His disciples to use the greeting, ‘Peace be to this house’ whenever entering a house, and if a ‘son of peace’ is there, to remain in that house (Luke 10:5-7). However, it is important to realize that the criterion for staying in a house was not the greeting of peace itself but whether those in that house received the message. ‘And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet’ (Matthew 10:14). ... Let me speak very boldly here: if we are going to link hands with those who believe in another gospel or no gospel at all for the sake of establishing an earthly, unified kingdom, we will not be building the kingdom of God” (*Faith Undone*, pp. 150, 151).



# Warren Tells Pastors to Get Rid of Troublemakers

In the November 14, 2007, issue of *Ministry Toolbox*, Rick Warren told pastors to get rid of troublemakers.

Warren begins with the erroneous statement that the Bible “talks more about unity of the church than it does about either Heaven or Hell.” In fact, the Bible speaks more about Heaven and Hell than about unity and it speaks far more about the importance of sound doctrine and practice and separation from error than it does about unity.

Warren makes no distinction between trouble that comes because of heresy and self-will and trouble that comes because of the truth. God’s people are nowhere instructed to blindly follow pastors. They have an obligation before God to “prove all things” (1 Thess. 5:21).

In a fashion that is one of his fearful trademarks, Warren lifts Scripture out of context to prove his point.

First, he uses 2 Timothy 2:23-26, which only deals with how to handle “foolish and unlearned questions” asked by those who are in the snare of the devil. It has nothing to do with legitimate biblical questions asked by sincere Christians who care about God’s Word.

Next, he uses 2 Timothy 2:14, which is a warning about striving about “words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.” Again, this is a warning about how to deal with false teaching, and it has nothing whatsoever to do with sincere biblical challenges.

Warren also uses Titus 2:15, which is an exhortation to preachers to be bold in proclaiming the truth but which says absolutely nothing about kicking people out of the church because they love the truth.

He also uses Titus 3:1, which is an exhortation to be subject to the authorities that God has put in this world, but by comparing Scripture with Scripture we know that it does not entail blind submission (i.e., Acts 5:29; 17:11; 1 Cor. 14:29; 1 Thess. 5:21).

Finally, Warren uses Titus 3:10-11, which contains instruction about how to deal with heretics or false teachers who are causing division based on their heresies. This passage has nothing whatsoever to do with those in the church who love the truth and who are sincerely trying to be faithful to Christ and His Word.

Rick Warren is the heretic who is causing divisions among God's people through heresies. He is the one that should be rejected.

## Warren Critics Called “Leaders from Hell”

*Transitioning: Leading Your Church through Change*, a book by Dan Southerland that is highly recommended by Rick Warren, implies that those who oppose the Purpose Driven philosophy that so many pastors are trying to push upon their people are “leaders from hell.”

Southerland is speaking of opposition in general, but it obvious from the overall context that he is referring to those who resist the new philosophies. Southerland is “the leading expert on implementing the Purpose Driven paradigm in existing churches” (Church Transitions web site).

Southerland says they have experienced two major sources of criticism as they have transitioned churches to the Purpose Driven model: Christians from traditional backgrounds and traditional pastors. He hastens to add that not all of the traditionals oppose them, “just the meaner ones” (p. 116).

On page 115, he likens opponents to Sanballat who resisted the building of the walls of Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah. Southerland says, “Sanballat is a leader from hell. We all have some Sanballats in our churches. This is the guy who opposes whatever you propose. ... You cannot call this guy a leader from hell to his face--but you could call him Sanballat” (p. 115).

Sanballat was an unsaved opponent of God’s Word, God’s work, and God’s people. To liken Bible-believing Christians who love the Lord Jesus Christ and who stand for His Word in this apostate age to Sanballat is a slander.

Isn't it interesting that about the only time that the Warren crowd talks about Hell is when they mis-apply it to fundamentalists and evangelicals of a stricter stripe!

It is a sad fact that Southerland has trained 100,000 people in the transitioning principles in the last seven years, but it is a sign of the times.

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

# Joining Hands with Baptist World Alliance

Rick Warren was a featured speaker at the Baptist World Alliance's (BWA) Centenary Congress in Birmingham, England, in late July 2005.

In this venture Warren joined hands with Jimmy Carter, who has stated that Mormons are Christians and they should not be targeted for evangelism, and Tony Campolo, who says that homosexuality is an inborn trait and who refers to "evangelical homosexuals" (*Christian News*, March 4, 1991).

During a press conference at the BWA Congress, Warren called the Southern Baptist Convention's withdrawal from that organization "silly" and "a mistake" ("Warren: Global Baptists Are in This Together," *Kentucky Western Recorder*, July 27, 2005).

A mistake to pull out of an organization that is shot through with theological liberalism? Rick Warren obviously has a greater love for wolves in sheep's clothing than Jesus Christ does. See Matthew 7:15-17.

Warren said Baptists should have "unity without uniformity."

This is not the kind of "unity" we find in the Bible. Paul instructed the churches, "... that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10).

Warren said, "I see absolutely zero reason in separating my fellowship from anybody."

He needs to read the Bible, because it contains many reasons for separation from error.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Romans 16:17).

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (2 Corinthians 6:14-16).

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Timothy 3:5).

Warren also warned that Baptists often are “known for what we’re against rather than what we’re for.”

In his opinion, that is wrong, but it isn’t wrong when measured biblically. The Lord Jesus Christ frequently preached red-hot messages on Hell, and He was known for His opposition to the Sadducees and Pharisees, the theological liberals and Catholic priests of His day. The apostle Paul, following in His Master’s footsteps, also spent much of his time preaching against sin and error, both in the book of Acts and in his epistles.

The Baptist World Alliance is an ecumenical alliance of 211 Baptist denominations in more than 140 countries. It is permeated with theological liberalism and supports new age one-world organizations such as the United Nations (UN).

As far back as the 1930s, the Baptist World Alliance was a hotbed of modernism. When J. Frank Norris led the Temple

Baptist Church of Detroit, Michigan, to withdraw from the BWA in 1935, he cited its “modernistic dominated leadership” as a reason (*The F. Frank Norris I Have Known for 34 Years*, p. 311). Prior to that, fundamentalist leader A.C. Dixon had tried to have a resolution passed in the Baptist World Alliance affirming “five fundamental verities of the faith,” including the verbal inspiration of Scripture and the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, but an apostate majority of the BWA representatives voted down this simple resolution.

Things have only gotten worse since then.

Desmond Tutu spoke at a Baptist World Alliance meeting in 1988. Anglican archbishop Tutu is a rank liberal who in February 1996 called for the ordination of homosexual priests. Consider the following quotes that expose Tutu’s unbelieving heart:

“Some people thought there was something odd about Jesus’ birth. ... It may be that Jesus was an illegitimate son” (Desmond Tutu, *Cape Times*, October 24, 1980).

“The Holy Spirit is not limited to the Christian Church. For example, Mahatma Gandhi, who is a Hindu ... The Holy Spirit shines through him” (Desmond Tutu, St. Alban’s Cathedral, Pretoria, South Africa, November 23, 1978).

Brutal Marxist dictator Fidel Castro, who has persecuted and restricted the churches of Jesus Christ in Cuba for decades, was a speaker at the Baptist World Alliance meeting in July 2000.

On January 24, 2002, Denton Lotz, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, joined hands with Pope John Paul II and the leaders of other denominations and pagan religions at the third Day of Prayer for World Peace at Assisi, Italy. This

ecumenical pagan prayer gathering featured some 200 religious leaders, including representatives of such denominations as Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Reformed, Baptist, Lutheran, Mormon, Methodist, Quaker, Pentecostal, Mennonite, as well as representatives of Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Bahai, Confucianism, Shintoism, Hinduism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Tenrikyo (Japan), and members of African and North American “traditional religions.”

The religious leaders traveled to Assisi with the Pope by train from Rome, arriving at the blasphemously named Railway Station of St. Mary of the Angels. The Pope said, “Violence never again! War never again! Terrorism never again! In the name of God, may every religion bring upon the earth justice and peace, forgiveness and life, love!” The Pope’s prayers weren’t answered and neither are those of the other false religious leaders gathered with him, for the simple reason that they worship false gods and preach false gospels and blatantly disobey God’s Word.

That the general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance would participate in such a thing is irrefutable evidence of his and his organization’s apostasy.

Among the denominations and organizations that are united under the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) umbrella are the American Baptist Churches USA, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, all of which are permeated with modernism.

## **Baptist Union of Great Britain**

The Baptist Union was already going apostate at the end of the 19th century when famous London preacher Charles



Haddon Spurgeon separated from it in protest in 1888. Spurgeon called this theological battle the “Downgrade Controversy” and he dedicated many issues of his paper to warning about the heresy and compromise that had entered the Baptist Union. Note the following statements from 1887:

“A chasm is opening between men who believe their Bibles and the men who are prepared for an advance upon Scripture. The house is being robbed, its very walls are being digged down, but the good people who are in bed are too fond of the warmth, and too much afraid of getting broken heads, to go downstairs and meet the burglars ... Inspiration and speculation cannot abide in peace. Compromise there can be none. We cannot hold the inspiration of the Word, and yet reject it; we cannot hold the doctrine of the fall and yet talk of the evolution of spiritual life from human nature; we cannot recognize the punishment of the impenitent and yet indulge the ‘larger hope.’ One way or the other we must go. Decision is the virtue of the hour” (Charles Spurgeon, *The Sword and the Trowel*, September 1887, pp. 464-5).

“What action is to be taken we leave to those who can see more plainly than we do what Israel ought to do. One thing is clear to us: we cannot be expected to meet in any Union which comprehends those whose teaching is on fundamental points exactly the reverse of that which we hold dear. ... To us it appears that there are many things upon which to compromise is possible, but there are others in which it would be an act of treason to pretend to fellowship. ... To pursue union at the expense of truth is treason to the Lord Jesus” (Spurgeon, *The Sword and Trowel*, October 1887, pp. 515, 558

“Constantly we hear of proposals for union, and truly these are welcome where mere technical matters divide true Christians; but what is the use of pretending to create union where there can be none? There is another matter which needs to be thought of as well as union, and that is TRUTH. To part with truth to show charity is to betray our Lord with a kiss. Between those who believe in the eternal verities and those who constantly cast doubt on them there can be no union. One cried of old, ‘Is it peace?’ And the answer was a sharp and true one. We render it thus--‘What hast thou to do with peace

while departures from the truth of God are so many?' The first question is--Are we one in Christ? and are we obedient to the truth revealed in the Scriptures? If so, union will necessarily follow: but if not, it is vain to clamour for a confederacy which would only be an agreement to aid and abet each other's errors" (Spurgeon, *The Sword and Trowel*, February 1887, p. 91).

"The spirit of Scripture is one, and therefore we may be sure that decision for truth and separation from the erring are in full consistency with the charity of 1 Corinthians 13, to which we are so continually pointed. It is true charity to those who err to refuse to aid and abet them in their errors. 'Charity' sounds very prettily in the mouths of those who wish to screen themselves, but, if they had exercised it in the past, they might not have driven us out from among the people to whom we naturally belong" (Spurgeon, *The Sword and Trowel*, December 1887, p. 642).

Spurgeon believed that the Bible requires separation from error, that truth is more important than unity, and that separation is not contrary to, but is consistent with Christian love. None of these principles are welcome within the Baptist Union today.

The apostasy that Spurgeon witnessed within the Baptist Union in the 19th century has long since become complete. In 1986, the *Australian Beacon* made the following observation about the Baptist Union:

"It is a Union which harbours apostates and succors infidels while ostracizing faithful servants of Christ. It is a friend of Rome, a bed-fellow of idolaters and spiritists in its membership of the World Council of Churches. No true man of God could remain within it in good conscience" (*Australian Beacon*, No. 240, July 1986).

In the early 1970s, for example, Michael Taylor, principal of the Baptist Union's Northern Baptist College, addressed the London Baptist Assembly on the theme, "How much of a

man was Jesus?” He denied that Jesus Christ is God. Though many protested the man’s heresy, the Baptist Union refused to discipline him or remove him from office.

In 1989, the Baptist Union yoked together with the Roman Catholic Church in the newly formed ecumenical union in Britain.

In May 1998, Catholic Cardinal Basil Hume was invited to participate in the Baptist Union’s assembly. He “led their spiritual reflections and was present when newly-accredited ministers met the Baptist Union president” (*Australian Beacon*, August 1998). The Union’s General Secretary, David Coffey, praised the cardinal and said the Baptist Union recognizes “the deep spirituality which undergirds his ministry.”

In 2004, John Rackley, President of the Baptist Union, endorsed the “As Good As News” Bible translation saying, “I recommend his [Henson’s] work to anyone who enjoys an unpredictable reading of Scripture” (<http://www.o-books.net/goodasnew.htm>). Rackley is referring to John Henson, the translation coordinator of “As Good as New” and a retired Baptist pastor. The “As Good as New” version of 1 Corinthians 7:1-2, 8-9 says:

“Some of you think the best way to cope with sex is for men and women to keep right away from each other. That is more likely to lead to sexual offences. My advice is for everyone to have a regular partner. ... There’s nothing wrong with remaining single, like me. But if you know you have strong needs, get yourself a partner. Better than being frustrated.”

Thus, this Bible says that what the world really needs are more regular sexual partners. This version replaces demon possession with mental illness, calls the apostle Peter

“Rocky,” changes “Son of Man” to “the Complete Person,” and otherwise boldly perverts the Word of God. “As Good As New” is advertised as “women, gay, and sinner friendly,” yet it was recommended by the president of the Baptist Union.

## **American Baptist Churches**

The Baptist World Alliance-affiliated American Baptist Churches USA (formerly the Northern Baptist Convention) is also thoroughly liberal.

As early as 1910 Baptist leader William B. Riley admitted that the denomination had been “surrendered into the hands of the Higher Critics” (George Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism*). The term “Higher Critics” refers to liberals who teach that the Bible is not the infallibly inspired Word of God.

Between 1920 and 1932, a group of fundamentalist Baptist pastors unsuccessfully attempted to root the modernism out of the convention. They formed the National Federation of Fundamentalists of Northern Baptists. In 1932, many of these pastors left the Northern Baptist Convention because of its liberalism and formed the General Association of Regular Baptists. In 1947, the Conservative Baptist Association of America was formed by another group of pastors who departed from the modernistic Northern Baptist Convention.

The leaven of theological heresy has since permeated the Convention. The schools and pulpits of the American Baptist Churches are filled with men who deny the infallible inspiration of Holy Scripture and who question or deny Christ’s virgin birth, Godhead, vicarious atonement, and resurrection from the dead. The apostate American Baptist

Church has produced some of the most notorious, blasphemous heretics of the 20th century.

In 1926, the Northern Baptist annual convention debated for almost five hours whether to retain in its fellowship the Riverside Baptist Church of New York City, pastored by modernist Harry Emerson Fosdick, who denied practically every doctrine of the Word of God. This should have been a simple decision, since the Bible commands that God's people mark, avoid, and reject doctrinal heresy (Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10-11), but by a vote of three to one the Northern Baptist Convention refused to exercise discipline. In 1945, Fosdick wrote the following to an individual who inquired about his beliefs: "Of course I do not believe in the virgin birth or in that old-fashioned substitutionary doctrine of the atonement, and I know of no intelligent person who does."

In the first half of the 20th century, Dr. Robert H. Beaven, president of the Chicago Baptist Missionary Training School (Northern Baptist), denied that Jesus Christ is God, saying:

"Christ's uniqueness lay not in his divine substance but in the relationship which existed between him and God. God chose Jesus, the human Galilean carpenter, nurtured in the cradle of Jewish religion, to whom he came with his living fellowship, and through whom he introduced such to men. Jesus was divine because God 'raised' him to a new level of life. But this was not a oneness of substance. Christ's life is an example, revealing the kind of life God wills for, and from, man; it is not a supernatural act set before us as a miraculous means of salvation" (Beaven, *In Him Is Life*).

This was the man chiefly responsible for the education of Northern Baptist missionaries in those days.

In 1924, missionary M.R. Hartley of India represented the views of many Northern Baptist preachers when he stated:

“We have no assurance that we have a trustworthy record of anything that Jesus Christ either said or did. ... I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God but I must interpret that in my own way. I can conceive of myself coming to a position where I could sincerely say that I believe in the deity of Jesus. I could almost say it now, but it would mean something different from orthodoxy, but orthodoxy seems like an impossible view. I do not see the necessity of the death of Christ. I do not believe in the second coming.”

Dr. Frederick Anderson, secretary of the Foreign Board of the Northern Baptist Convention in the late 1920s, questioned the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

“My mind is still open on this subject, which I do not consider of the first importance. I am rather inclined to believe in the virgin birth, but it is not essential to Christian faith, and should not be made a condition of church membership or ordination” (Anderson, *The Life of Jesus*).

This is a false and wicked statement because if Jesus Christ was not virgin born, the Bible is a pack of lies and our faith is in a fable. Further, if Christ was not virgin born He could not have been the sinless Son of God and could not, therefore, have died for our sins.

In the 1940s, Andover-Newton Baptist Theological Seminary (American Baptist) graduate Myron J. Hertel gave the following reply when asked about the blood of Christ:

“The blood of Jesus Christ is of no more value in the salvation of a soul than the water in which Pilate washed his hands.” Yet the American Baptist Home Mission Society called this young blasphemer to the position of the superintendent of the Boston Baptist City Mission (Robert T. Ketcham, *The Answer, Sword of the Lord*, pp. 10-16).

The 1948 congress of the Northern Baptist Convention featured the influential modernist heretic George Buttrick. On page 284 of his book *Christian Fact and Modern Doubt* he stated:

“The future is hidden. We must be faithful to our ignorance ... Jesus apparently conquered death ... But we do not know, why pretend we do ... We covet the chance to say to God hereafter, if God there be; Lord, they told us to grab the present gain, but there was more gain in staking life on a grand Perhaps.”

The apostle Paul said, “I KNOW whom I have believed, and am PERSUADED that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (2 Timothy 1:12).

The American Baptist-supported Buttrick reduced the glorious Christian faith to an inglorious PERHAPS.

The 1950 Northern Baptist Convention congress featured blasphemous modernist G. Bromley Oxnam, who referred to the God of the Old Testament as a “dirty bully,” because his unregenerate, rebellious mind would not accept the righteous judgment of God upon sin (Oxnam, *Preaching in a Revolutionary Age*, p. 72).

Dr. A.S. Hobart, professor at the American Baptist Crozer Seminary, denied the substitutionary blood atonement of Jesus Christ:

“I cannot see anything understandable or acceptable in theory that my guilt and my penalty were placed upon Christ, or that Christ’s holiness is imparted to me, in any way that involves a substitution of his holiness for mine, or his suffering for what was due me, that view of the theory of the atonement finds no foothold in my consciousness or my reason” (A.S. Hobart, *Transplanted Truths from Romans*, p. 29).

Another Crozer professor, Henry Vedder, concurred with Hobart in denying Christ's salvation:

"Of all the slanders men have perpetrated against the Most High, this doctrine of his substitutionary atonement is positively the most impudent and the most insulting. Jesus never taught and never authorized anybody to teach in his name that he suffered in our stead and bore the penalty of our sins" (Vedder, cited by R.T. Ketcham, *The Answer*, pp. 10-16).

Norris L. Tibbets, former pastor of the American Baptist Riverside Church in New York City, denied Christ's bodily resurrection:

"Then the third day came. A stone was rolled away and an imprisoned spirit was set free" (Tibbets, *Secret Place*, April-June 1950, published by the Northern Baptist Convention).

Duncan Littlefair was pastor of the Fountain Street Baptist Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan. He was also a leader in the Northern Baptist Convention. As host pastor of the 1946 annual convention he said:

"The Resurrection was not a physical event in history. If the body of Jesus had been raised physically it would only have been required to die again. We have made the physical aspect of the Resurrection the important thing. ... It is a shame and disgrace, really, that after all these centuries we should be living and thinking about the glory of the Resurrection on such levels as these" (Littlefair, *The Nature of God*).

Littlefair also denied that Jesus Christ is God:

"Was Jesus God? There are two major approaches to this question. One of them seeks to make Jesus God. That seems to be the traditional notion of Christianity or at least the popular understanding of it, but I want to say here this morning, once and for all, if I haven't said it before, and if I don't say it again--That is idolatry. Jesus is not and cannot be God. He was God in the same way



that you and I may be God, by being an expression of him, and allowing him to express himself in us” (Littlefair, cited by R.T. Ketcham, *The Answer*, pp. 25-31).

American Baptist minister Jitsuo Morikawa, former pastor of the Riverside Church in New York City, said in 1964:

“God has already won a mighty redemption ... for the entire world ... The task of the church is to tell all men ... that they already belong to Christ ... Men are no longer lost ... There cannot be individual salvation” (Jitsuo Morikawa, Riverside Church, New York City, *Christianity Today*, March 13, 1964, p. 26).

American Baptist missionary D.T. Niles of India made the following statement espousing universalism before the American Baptist Convention:

“...everybody is within the ministry of Jesus Christ whether or not he accepts it ... The only question [is] ‘Do you know that Jesus Christ is your Saviour?’ Jesus is Lord whether man knows it or not--believes it or not” (J.O. Sanders, *What of the Unevangelized*, p. 21).

Nels F.S. Ferre, professor at the Northern Baptist Andover-Newton Theological School, was a modernist and a blasphemer of the highest caliber. He denied the virgin birth, deity, miracles, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He claimed that the Old Testament taught an “outworn morality” (Ferre, *Pillars of Faith*, p. 95). He stated that “God differs from all men, including Jesus, in that His personality alone is eternal and the Creator of all other personalities” (Ferre, *The Christian Faith*, 1942, p. 102). He conjectured that Jesus might have been the son of a Roman soldier (Ferre, *Christian Understanding of God*, p. 186). He claimed that accepting the Bible as the infallible Word of God is idolatry (Ferre, *The Sun and the Umbrella*, p. 39).

In the 1960s, Professor William Hamilton of Colgate Rochester Divinity School (American Baptist) taught that God is dead. Hamilton was defended in 1966 by Colgate president Gene Bartlett who refused to remove Hamilton from the faculty because he “was within the allowable measure of dissent.”

The American Baptist Convention in 1968 stated that abortion “should be a matter of responsible personal decision.”

In the early 1970s, Dr. L. McBain, former president of the American Baptist Convention and president of the American Baptist Seminary of the West, argued that Jesus Christ is not referred to as God in the Scriptures (*F.E.A. News & Views*, Fundamental Evangelistic Association, Nov-Dec. 1976).

In an article in the December 1979 issue of the *American Baptist Magazine*, Dr. L. Howard McBain, president of the American Baptist Seminary of the West. McBain, stated that the Bible does not teach that Jesus was God.

In 1980, American Baptist Dr. Ralph Wendell Burhoe received the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion for his “revolutionary hypothesis that finds religion central to the evolutionary emergence of civilized humanity” (*EP News Service*, May 31, 1980).

The American Baptist Biennial Convention in 1981 featured Rosemary Radford Reuther, a Roman Catholic feminist whose “language often sounds more like it belongs in the gutter than in the church” (*Foundation* magazine, Fundamental Evangelistic Association, January-February 1981, p. 18).

American Baptist professor Harvey Cox of Harvard University is a notorious modernist. In his book *The Secular City*, he claimed that “the world, not the church, is the proper focus of Christian life” and “the world of politics is a primary sphere of God’s liberating work today” (quoted from Richard Quebedeaux, *The Worldly Evangelicals*, 1978, p. 19). In his book *The Feast of Fools*, Cox referred to Jesus Christ as a harlequin and a clown. Cox does not believe that followers of pagan religions are on their way to Hell. He was a speaker at the World Congress for the Synthesis of Science and Religion in India in 1986. The conference was arranged by a Hindu organization.

The June 1991 issue of *WATCHword*, a women’s ministry paper of the ABC, stated: “What I have come to love about Scripture is the fact that it is not inerrant. That it is not perfect. That it is not complete. That it does contradict itself...”

Former American Baptist Churches president James Scott stated in the March 1992 issue of *American Baptist* magazine that the issue of homosexuality should be re-examined and that there might be various legitimate points of view about it other than the traditional biblical one that it is an abomination before God.

In August 1993, American Baptist deputy general secretary for cooperative Christianity, Joan S. Parrott, sat with 386 cardinals and bishops surrounding Pope John Paul II at the Roman Catholic Church’s World Youth Day in Denver. She was part of a nine-member ecumenical team including Protestant and Jewish leaders who were given a special banquet before the prayer vigil and met with the pope after

his sermon. She had lavish praise for the ecumenical event (*Calvary Contender*, Jan. 1, 1994).

The American Baptist Churches sent representatives to the Re-imagining conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in November 1993. Speakers included Chung Hyung Kyung, a Korean “theologian” who equates the Holy Spirit with ancient Asian deities and who prays to trees and deceased spirits. At the conference, Delores Williams said: “I don’t think we need a theory of atonement at all. I think Jesus came for life and to show us something about life. I don’t think we need folks hanging on crosses and blood dripping and weird stuff.” Virginia Mollenkott said that Jesus was “first born only in the sense that he was the first to show us that it is possible to live in oneness with the divine source while we are here on this planet.” Chung Hyung Kyung said: “My bowel is Buddhist bowel, my heart is Buddhist heart, my right brain is Confucian brain, and my left brain is Christian brain.” During the conference, a group of roughly 100 “lesbian, bi-sexual, and transsexual women” gathered on the platform and were given a standing ovation by many in the crowd. They were “celebrating the miracle of being lesbian, out, and Christian.” In a workshop called ‘Prophetic Voices of Lesbians in the Church,’ Nadean Bishop, the first ‘out’ lesbian minister called to an American Baptist church, claimed that Mary and Martha in the Bible were lesbian ‘fore-sisters.’ She said they were lesbian lovers.

## **Cooperative Baptist Fellowship**

The latest group to join the Baptist World Alliance is the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF), which was accepted as a member in 2003.

The CBF is a very liberal organization that was formed in 1991 by Southern Baptists discontented with the national convention's conservative direction in recent years. Its liberalism could be demonstrated with many examples, but I will give just one.

For example, at the annual CBF's conference in June 2002, the book "The Wisdom of Daughters" was sold. It advocates lesbianism, abortion, worship of a female Sophia goddess, and the practice of Wicca. One essay in this book described the doctrine of Christ's substitutionary death for man's sin as an example of "divine child abuse." This perverted book was commended in materials distributed at the conference by Baptist Women in Ministry, a partner ministry to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Any man associating with the Baptist World Alliance is in open disobedience to God's Word:

"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 10, 11).

# Warren at Yoido Full Gospel Church

Rick Warren conducted a Purpose Driven conference at the charismatic Yoido Full Gospel church in Seoul, South Korea, in 2006.

Yoido's pastor, David Yonggi Cho, teaches that God promises healing and prosperity for every believer and considers this part of the gospel.

The church's web site says, "Full Gospel faith not only accepts the Gospel of salvation which Christ made complete as He was resurrected from the dead, but also believes in the release from physical illness and salvation for the cursed life."

In 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, Paul clearly stated the gospel and he mentioned nothing about healing.

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

Cho claims that he received the call to preach directly and personally from Jesus Christ, who supposedly appeared to him dressed like a fireman ("Paul Yonggi Cho," *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*).

Cho's book *The Fourth Dimension* sets out his strange doctrine, which he claims to have received directly from God. Cho teaches that effective prayer requires visualizing

the thing desired exactly in your mind and “incubating” that image in your heart by faith until you receive it.

“Through visualization and dreaming you can incubate your future and hatch the results” (*The Fourth Dimension*, p. 44).

Ignoring the Bible’s emphasis on living by faith rather than sight and the fact that most who witnessed Christ’s mighty miracles did not believe, Cho claims that “without seeing miracles, people cannot be satisfied that God is powerful. It is you [Christians] who are responsible to supply miracles for these people.”

According to the Yoido Full Gospel Church’s web site, 279 of its 527 pastors are women.

Does Rick Warren care about any of these errors?

# Warren and Hybels on AIDS Bandwagon

Rick Warren spoke to a “gathering of faith-based organizations” in Toronto in August 2006 on the subject of addressing the HIV/AIDS problem. The forum was the Ecumenical and Interfaith Pre-Conferences that were held in advance of the 16th International AIDS Conference.

Warren said there are 2.3 billion Christians worldwide, which represents the largest potential volunteer force in the world. Apparently, he considers Roman Catholicism, Greek Orthodoxy, liberal Protestantism, and other nominal and sacramental groups that make up the 2.3 billion statistic as legitimately “Christian.”

Warren called for a strategy he calls “CHURCH”--

C stands for caring and comfort.

H stands for counseling and testing.

U stands for unleashing a force of volunteers.

R stands for reducing stigma.

C stands for championing healthy life style and behaviors.

H stands for help through medications and nutrition.

Warren is calling on churches to become AIDS testing centers and wants to reduce the stigma of the homosexuality and other types of moral debauchery that are at the heart of the AIDS epidemic.

Bill Hybels, senior pastor of the Willow Creek Community Church (and head of the 12,000-member Willow Creek Association of Churches) is also on the AIDS bandwagon. At the urging of rock star Bono, Hybels has made AIDS one of his priorities. An interview with Bono was broadcast to the



70,000 people who participated in the annual Willow Creek Leadership Conference that was held in August 2006.

Bono complains that the churches have not gotten involved in such issues because of “a judgmental attitude.”

In fact, Bible-believing churches do not jump on the world’s bandwagons for the simple reason that they have a different and a higher calling. Bible-believing churches are in the business of obeying the Great Commission of Jesus Christ, which was repeated five times in the New Testament to emphasize its importance (Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:44-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8).

In the book of Acts, we see how the apostles interpreted the Great Commission. They did not launch impressive social-justice projects. Rather, they preached the gospel and baptized those who believed and established churches and disciplined believers to live holy lives in the midst of a wicked generation.

It is impossible to obey God’s Word and at the same time have a non-judgmental AIDS outreach. Ephesians 5:11 commands, “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”

When churches obey this and similar commands and reprove sin, many AIDS-infected persons will curse them rather than seek their help.

Rick Warren and Bill Hybels are probably sincere men, but they are deeply deluded; they are the blind leading the blind. When a church jumps on the world’s bandwagon, it is certain that it has jumped out of God’s will.

## Warren Teams up with Alpha

Rick Warren has teamed up with Alpha International and the Billy Graham Association in the My Hope India project.

The *Alpha International Newsletter*, published December 4, 2006, contains Warren's high recommendation of Alpha. He calls it "one of the most effective evangelism tools for the 21st century" and says that you can use it to win the lost and "revitalize your church."

He says his 40 Days of Purpose and Alpha "fit together like hand in glove." He claims that both programs are "inspired by the Holy Spirit to deepen and develop the Church."

He concludes, "I, Rick Warren, want to tell you that Alpha has my 100% endorsement."

This exposes the radical nature of Warren's ecumenical philosophy. The Alpha program was birthed out of the charismatic Laughing Revival that broke out in the Holy Trinity Brompton Anglican parish in London in the early 1990s, and it is promoting a charismatic-ecumenical agenda throughout the world.

I visited a service at Holy Trinity Brompton in March 1997 and witnessed their charismatic error firsthand. There was "spirit slaying" and "holy shaking."

The Alpha program consists of 15 sessions and runs for ten weeks, covering some of the basic teachings of the Gospel and Christian living. Its broad denominational appeal is the product of its doctrinal shallowness and experiential charismatic orientation.

It refers to salvation, the cross, the death of Christ, etc., in such a general way that false doctrine is not refuted. It says salvation is by grace, for instance, but it does not say that salvation is by grace ALONE by faith ALONE through the blood of Christ ALONE without works or sacraments. It refers to the Bible as God's Word in a general sense, but it does not explain that the Bible is God's inerrant, infallible, supernatural Word that must be revered and obeyed in every detail and that the Bible is the SOLE authority for faith and practice. It refers to Christ's death on the cross, but does not plainly explain the vicarious atonement that was required for man's salvation. It refers to man's need, but it does not describe man as a depraved sinner by nature.

If Alpha were *that* specific, it is certain it would not be ecumenically popular in this apostate hour.

The reason Rick Warren recommends this shallow approach 100% is because it is the same approach that he uses, which a quick reading of *The Purpose Driven Life* will prove.

About halfway through the 10-week Alpha program, the leaders conduct "Holy Spirit Day" or even have a "Holy Spirit Weekend Away." The purpose is to bring the participants into a charismatic experience. The leader "takes them through the experience of receiving the Holy Spirit." Those who take the course are urged to open themselves to the "slaying in the spirit" and other unscriptural experiences. The participants are taught that "tongues speaking" can be learned. They are taught to expect extra-biblical revelations from God through dreams and "words of knowledge."

THE ALPHA PROGRAM HAS BEEN USED WIDELY IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH SINCE THE 1990s. There is even a Roman Catholic division of Alpha.

In the December 2006 edition of the *Alpha International Newsletter*, the one containing Warren's 100% endorsement, Catholic priests praise Alpha after the same fashion as the "evangelical" pastor. There is a report on the activities of "Alpha for Catholics" in various parts of Asia and South America. Alpha founder Nicky Gumbel, who Warren calls his "friend," spoke in Rome in May 2006 at the Catholic Charismatic Renewal's 40th anniversary.

## Warren's and the *Ladies Home Journal*

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"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves,... Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." – 2nd Timothy 2: 1-2, 5-7

James Sundquist, author of a great new book entitled, "Who's Driving the Purpose Driven Church?" (which I highly recommend, by the way) recently sent me a copy of Rick Warren's column from the March 2005 edition of the *Ladies Home Journal*. What makes this particular piece a must-read for any Christian, is how perfectly it illustrates what Pastor Warren REALLY believes and/or wants YOU to believe.

In it, this wolf momentarily steps out of his sheepskin to address what is most important to him; his REAL religion: making people feel good about themselves, which of course, makes them feel good about Rick Warren, and his "ministry." It is the essence of good marketing: telling people what they want to hear, even if it is a bold-faced lie; and because he claims to be doing it for Jesus, the "spiritual" end justifies the diabolical means.

You see, a “successful” salesman always makes his prospects feel good. If he accomplishes this, he knows that many, if not most, will reward him by purchasing whatever it is he has for sale, because you see, the REAL product for sale IS the salesman. Everything else is just an accessory. The better the customer feels, the more they like the salesman. The more accessories that likeable salesman sells, the more he is acclaimed worthy by the world. Not only that; but the more he is acclaimed worthy by the world, the EASIER his accessories are to sell. In time, the salesman’s growing popularity and the trustworthy image that is perpetuated before the public eye provides all of the necessary momentum to sustain his "success" at least until, for whatever reason, the good feelings wane or the next big thing comes along.

How does a “successful” salesman make you feel good? In a word: Flattery—what we all want to hear from those around us. Flattery and The Big Lie.

In Pastor Warren’s March column, he wrote:

“To truly love yourself, you need to know the five truths that form the basis of a healthy self-image.”

Here he begins by endorsing the very thing conservatives loathed Bill Clinton for--narcissism. Now, keep in mind, this is a “man of God,” a “preacher of the Gospel,” laying out five “truths” for your consideration. But these “truths” came not from the Bible, the Word of God, every legitimate shepherd is called to proclaim. No, they came from the world of secular psychology. But, if any preacher or pastor proclaims something other than God’s Word as truth at the expense of the Gospel, he is betraying Christ, not obeying Him.

## **1. Warren: “Accept yourself ... God accepts us unconditionally...”**

Does God accept us without Christ? Does He accept us even when we reject Him and/or willfully disobey His Word? Is that not what “unconditionally” means? So, is Pastor Warren implying here that Jesus really didn’t need to suffer and die on a cross two thousand years ago to atone for our sins with His own shed blood to make those of us who belong to Him acceptable to God the Father because God ALREADY accepts anyone and everyone unconditionally? If so, is he also suggesting that Hell is reserved only for the devil and his fallen angels or are they accepted unconditionally, as well?

The truth is, Hell is never mentioned in the article; neither is sin, repentance, redemption or the cross of Christ; only God’s “unconditional acceptance” of everyone reading the *Ladies Home Journal*, Christian or not.

## **2. Warren: “Love yourself”**

Tell me, who’s more in love with “self” than self? At the very heart of our sinful nature is an unrestrained self-love. Does Scripture say: “Thou shalt love thyself with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength?” Of course not! There is a reason for that. We already love ourselves instinctively. We were born with an undying love for self. If it weren’t so, Jesus would not have told us to “...love thy neighbor AS THYSELF.” (Mark 12:31).

Even those that commit suicide are doing it for themselves, in spite of the life-altering pain and suffering they inflict on their family and friends. They don’t hate themselves. They’re

filled with fear, anxiety, guilt, anger, loneliness, resentment and a desperate need to BE LOVED. If they are simply instructed to “love self,” then their sin and separation from God remains ignored; and not only are they still lost and bound for an eternity in Hell, they are encouraged by false prophets like Warren to love themselves all the more for it! This is the perfect recipe for disaster. It is the anti-gospel and the doctrine of demons.

So, here’s a “minister of the gospel” instructing his readers from every walk of life, Christian or otherwise, not to love others or even to love God as the Bible teaches; but instead, to “love yourself.”

OK--All you--Mary Kay Letourneau, Lynette “Squeaky” Fromme, Hillary Clinton, Janet Jackson, Madonna, Britney Spears types, listen up! I hope you renewed your subscription because the good reverend is about to say something here that I’m quite certain you’re going to like:

**3. Warren: “Be true to yourself...consider your heart—what you love to do—as well as the strengths and weaknesses of your personality...Don’t deny your weaknesses...be content with them.”**

You might hear that in a Walt Disney movie or on the Dr. Phil Show but you won’t find THAT in your King James, folks. What you WILL find is this:

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9).

And this:

“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself...” (Matthew 16:24).



#### **4. Warren: “Forgive yourself...God doesn’t expect perfection...”**

If we forgive ourselves without Christ, without confession and without repentance, not only are we fooling ourselves, we are unwittingly condemning ourselves through delusion and have essentially learned how to bypass the conscience God has given us and “seared” it from ever feeling the burden of our sin and guilt again.

Furthermore, if God doesn’t expect perfection from us, Jesus would not have said:

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48).

Apparently, somebody’s lying to us. Do you believe Jesus Christ or Rick Warren?

#### **5. Warren: “Believe in yourself...The truth is God has created you with talents, abilities, personality and background in a combination that is uniquely you.”**

The Lord has NEVER ONCE instructed us to “believe in ourselves!” This is the world’s religion—the heart of humanism and “the pride of life” that the Bible repeatedly warns us against! There is nothing to gain from believing in oneself, but the praise and admiration of the world, which is not only what Rick Warren wants but also what he knows YOU want, even though it could cost you your very soul.

Here’s what the Word of God says about self:

“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away” (Isaiah 64:6).

“Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD” (Jeremiah 17:5).

“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matthew 16:24-26).

And, here’s what Scripture says about WHOM we should believe in:

“Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me” (John 12:44).

“And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die” (John 11:26a).

Pastor Warren closes his heretical commentary with the following:

“It’s your choice. You can believe what others say about you, or you can believe in yourself as does God, who says you are truly acceptable, lovable, valuable and capable.”

Amid all these lies, Rick is right about one thing: IT'S YOUR CHOICE. And what a choice it is! You can believe what God says about you in His Word or you can “believe in yourself” as Warren and every other self-help motivational speaker advises us to do. But ask yourself this: When did God EVER say He believed in you and me? When did He EVER say we were “acceptable, lovable, valuable and capable?”

Here’s what He REALLY said about you and me:

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

FIVE TIMES He said this:

“...there is none that doeth good...” (Psalm 14:1, Psalm 14:3, Psalm 53:1, Psalm 53:3, Romans 3:12).

But about Jesus Christ, God the Father had THIS to say:

“And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Mark 1:11).

This is the beloved Son whose precious name was NEVER ONCE mentioned in Rick Warren’s article. THAT ALONE should speak volumes about what he believes and in whom he believes. Sure, he used the name “God” throughout the article; but to a Muslim, that’s not Jesus; to a Mormon, that’s not Jesus; to Moonies and countless other followers of the world’s various religions, that’s not Jesus. That’s how he and others like him slip in under the radar. The way he presented “God” in the magazine, “God” could be anybody you want Him to be, including yourself (telling you what you want to hear while offending no one). Well friends, he sure offended me, and I HOPE he offended you!

About the name of Jesus Christ, the Bible says this:

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

According to *Time Magazine*, Rick Warren is “America’s New People’s Pastor.” Judging by the millions of *Purpose Driven Life* books sold and the thousands of churches that have embraced him, his programs and his accessories, I am inclined to agree.

YOU, my fellow Christian; whether you’re a preacher, a pastor, an evangelist, a church leader, teacher or simply a

layman, after reading here what Pastor Warren wrote in *The Ladies Home Journal*, have an obligation to take a stand for Jesus Christ and His Word and warn others about Warren's unbiblical teaching. If you do not, and just sit silent to save your ministry, church, career, family, friends or your own reputation, then I would encourage you to re-read Matthew 16:24-26 one more time because he is leading people astray around the world in vast numbers and we are commanded to rebuke him for it with the Word of God and separate ourselves from him and his heresy if he does not repent.

That is our duty as disciples of Jesus Christ. If we accommodate anyone's lies and deceit for selfish reasons, especially those who call themselves a "brother," then we show our Lord, the world around us, and that "great cloud of witnesses" that we are not FOR Christ, but are in reality, AGAINST Him.

"Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 23:1).

# Warren Doesn't Mention Jesus

In June 2006, Rick Warren spoke at the Jewish Sinai Temple in Los Angeles and did not mention the name of Jesus one time.

Rob Eshman, the editor of *The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles*, observed:

“Warren managed to speak for the entire evening without once mentioning Jesus--a testament to his savvy message-tailoring” (“Jesus’ Man Has a Plan,” *The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles*, June 23, 2006).

No, it is a testament to his wretched compromise. For Warren not to mention the name of Jesus when preaching to Jews is inexcusable, for “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

The congregants at Sinai Temple do not need to hear about Rick Warren’s seeker-sensitive philosophy and organizational methods; they do not need to hear him talk about how many copies of books he has sold or how much money he gives away; they need to hear that they are lost in their sins and will go to eternal Hell if they reject Jesus as the Messiah.

Warren and other Church Growth gurus claim that have not changed the Christian message, only the methods. In fact, if Rick Warren preached the same message that the apostle Paul preached he would have the same response from unbelieving Jews today that Paul had in his day. They would ridicule and oppose him.

“For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord

Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost" (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16).

Rabbi Ron Wolfson of the Sinai Temple has been influenced by Warren's "Purpose-Driven Church" book and has had personal discussions with Warren, and Warren told him "his interest is in helping all houses of worship, NOT IN CONVERTING JEWS."

## Warren Predict's A "New Reformation"

In his appearance before the Pew Forum in May 2005, Rick Warren predicted a "New Reformation" or a "Third Great Awakening" for America. He said:

"You know, 500 years ago, the first Reformation with Luther and then Calvin, was about beliefs. I think a new reformation is going to be about behavior. THE FIRST REFORMATION WAS ABOUT CREEDS; I THINK THIS ONE WILL BE ABOUT DEEDS. ... The first Reformation actually split Christianity into dozens and then hundreds of different segments. I think this one is actually going to bring them together. Now, you're never going to get Christians, of all their stripes and varieties, to agree on all of the different doctrinal disputes and things like that, but what I am seeing them agree on are the purposes of the church. ... Last week I spoke to 4,000 pastors at my church who came FROM OVER 100 DENOMINATIONS in over 50 countries. Now, that's wide spread. WE HAD CATHOLIC PRIESTS, we had Pentecostal ministers, we had Lutheran bishops, we had Anglican bishops, we had Baptist preachers. They're all there together and you know what? I'd never get them to agree on communion or baptism or a bunch of stuff like that, but I could get them to agree on what the church should be doing in the world" ("Myths of the Modern Mega-Church," May 23, 2005, transcript of the Pew Forum's biannual Faith Angle conference on religion, politics and public life).

Warren's New Reformation is not about beliefs or creeds or doctrinal purity; it is rather about "the purpose of the church."

Let me see if I understand this. It is not important that a church hold biblical doctrine and practice (e.g., it is fine if they hold to erroneous Episcopalian or Lutheran doctrine) or even that it preach a biblical gospel (e.g., it is fine if they

preach Rome's sacramental gospel). It is only important that "churches" agree on their purpose? How can a "church" have a biblical purpose when it does not have biblical doctrine? How can it have a biblical purpose when it preaches a false gospel?

If sound doctrine is not a foundational issue, I wonder why Paul instructed Timothy to "charge some that they teach NO OTHER DOCTRINE" (1 Tim. 1:3)? I wonder why he didn't rather instruct Timothy, rather, to go easy on the doctrine issue?

Could it be that the apostle Paul's teaching is contrary to Rick Warren's?

I, for one, am certain of it!



# **An Analysis of the “Purpose Driven” Strategy**

**By Dennis Costella**

The following article by Dennis Costella is from *Foundation Magazine*, March-April 1998 (Fundamental Evangelistic Association, 1476 W. Herndon, Suite 104 Fresno, CA, 559-438-0080, <http://www.feasite.org/Info/fbcprice.htm>)

After personally covering the Saddleback Community Church “Building a Purpose-Driven Church” seminar held in Southern California this past January, it became clear to me that some of today’s most influential religious leaders misunderstand and misrepresent the true purpose of the church today. Dr. Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Community Church and director of the “Building a Purpose-Driven Church” workshops, has influenced thousands of churches during the last decade that are interested in the “Church Growth Movement.” Without doubt, every church in the United States must give, or has already had to give, an answer to the strategies of building a superchurch. Sadly, many have already jumped on board. The possibility of dynamic growth for struggling churches, especially old-fashioned, Bible-believing, Bible-preaching fundamental churches, is tremendously appealing. However, it is imperative to ask this question: “What actually must be done in order to accomplish dynamic church growth?” We must warn about Rick Warren’s unbiblical answer to that question.

The purpose of this report is not to warn or challenge mainline denominational churches or middle-of-the-road evangelical churches to accept Biblical principles regarding church growth and to gain a proper understanding of the very

nature of the church. No, these groups are already committed to a course of compromise. It is not surprising that the vast majority of liberal and New Evangelical churches today readily fall for the superchurch growth strategy, for they vehemently reject Bible separation and have long since adopted theologies and ministries that do not insist upon contending for the Faith or for the inerrancy of Scripture. The Biblical counsel we would give to one who might find himself in such a church is to come out of it and follow the Lord's leading to a solid, Bible-believing, Bible-preaching, separated and militantly fundamental church.

The purpose of this report is, however, to exhort and encourage those churches that are attempting to maintain a strong, fundamentalist testimony. Our burden is for churches that are trying to stay true to the Lord and have experienced little or no growth through the years as a result of their stand for the truth. The temptation to incorporate some of the techniques of the dynamic church growth model is great. Who does not want to reach more people, draw a larger crowd or be more effective in ministry? Nevertheless, the question that every Bible-believing Christian and fundamentalist pastor should ask is "What must be sacrificed in order to gain more members and become a 'superchurch'?" After observing and evaluating the Saddleback Seminar, we firmly believe that if the "Purpose-Driven Church" model is to be followed, then fidelity to the Lord and His Word must be sacrificed in order to gain the numbers. It is important to note, however, that Warren does not say a church must be huge in order for it to be vital or healthy; rather, he believes that a church's health can be equated to its dynamic growth.

So what are some of the changes that must take place for a local assembly to adopt the growth strategy of the Saddleback model? From our understanding of the plan which was clearly spelled out at the seminar, the following must occur in order to transform a traditionally-styled church of any size into one that can boast dramatic growth:

- A contemporary-styled “Seeker Service” aimed at drawing in the unsaved and the unchurched from the community must replace the traditional Sunday worship service. To do this successfully, the church service must be non-threatening, familiar and comfortable to the “seeker” (the unsaved visitor).
- The dress must be casual. The typical “Saddleback Sam” (a researched composite of the unchurched yuppie commonly found in Saddleback Church’s surrounding community) dresses up for work all week, and he wants to “dress down” on the weekends. (As we shall see throughout this article, Saddleback Sam’s likes and dislikes are what determine the style of the church service.) Attendees and church staff alike shun any ties, suits and dresses. Warren, dressed in a casual shirt, khakis and loafers told his seminar audience, “Get comfortable. This is as dressed up as I get in this church. My idea of winter is I put on socks, and obviously I don’t think it’s winter yet.”
- The music must be contemporary. Not only must the lyrics of the music be more recent, but the style of music should be that which the unsaved hears on a daily basis. The entertainment composite of the Saddleback sound system, band, singers and presentation would rival that of any secular rock concert. Warren stated that one of the first things a church should do is “replace the organ with a

band.” But he went on to say that if a band was not feasible, then at least a church could purchase a keyboard that will incorporate midi disks in order to give the sound of a band. Furthermore, the purpose of the church choir should be “backing up the soloist. That’s the 90’s way to use a choir rather than just having them sing.”

- The message must be only positive. We consider this to be the most flagrant flaw. Yes, the saved and unsaved alike can feel better about themselves after a message that often mixes psychology and an uplifting Scripture text. Such topics as dealing with guilt, self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, mood enhancement or motivation for success will encourage the worldly, weary individual. But what is God’s command to the faithful undershepherd of the flock? Far, far different.

- The ministries of the church must be geared to meeting the needs and special interests of the thousands who attend. Support groups for depression, eating disorders, infertility, family and friends of homosexuals, post abortion, and separated men and women were abundant. Many ministries were intended to bring together ones with similar business or professional interests, common recreational interests and so on. We could not find one single ministry listed in Saddleback Community Church’s bulletin that involved the taking the Gospel message out to the lost in the community. In fact, Warren scoffed at the idea of passing out tracts or going door-to-door since “Saddleback Sam” is offended by such old-fashioned, out-moded forms of evangelism.

- Doctrinal instruction is not given to the church as a whole on the Lord’s Day. Despite the fact that the early church

clearly sets forth the example that doctrine is to be taught on Sunday to all the church body, at Saddleback, doctrine is only taught to sub-groups of the congregation apart from the regular church services. Warren emphasized Saddleback's strategy of moving new members "around the bases" by having interested Christians take special classes to prepare them for service. Although Bible study groups also meet together, our question is this: Why is not the pulpit used to proclaim the "whole counsel of God" to the whole congregation assembled before it on the Lord's Day (Acts 20:20-31)? Why make serious, systematic Bible instruction an option, heard only by the relatively few in the crowd who desire to "round the next base"? The whole counsel of God is to be proclaimed, to all seated before the pulpit, all the time!

- A spirit of compromise must prevail in the church that is to experience dynamic growth. The embrace of contemporary culture and style will most assuredly set the desired mood that totally opposes the Biblical mandate to earnestly contend for the faith and separate from error. What works, what is least offensive and what is positive and uplifting is what should define the ministry, according to Warren. The church leaders who are interested in dynamic growth must embrace the attitude that says, "Don't try to tell me the Bible requires holiness and a style for worship and ministry that is different from that of the world." This "grace-in-your-face" attitude is so prevalent today because of church elders who are not willing, or not aware of how, to instruct ones to behave in the house of God (1 Tim. 3:15).

Rick Warren began the seminar by revealing the vast influence his message has had throughout the world. He told

the pastors and church leaders who were attending the seminar, “You’re joining a group today of over 45,000 pastors and church leaders that have gone through this conference in the last few years from about 42 different countries, from about 63 different denominations. We have a number of different countries that flew in today just for this one day conference, from Europe, from Asia, from South America.” To accent the ecumenical mood of the seminar, Warren later suggested, “It really doesn’t matter your denomination, folks. We’re all on the same team if you love Jesus.”

Warren’s book *The Purpose Driven Church* and the related publications of Saddleback’s literature ministry have influenced tens of thousands more who have never attended any of his seminars. As Warren indicated in a closing prayer, the impact of the Saddleback experience is extensive, to say the least: “Thank you that there is a movement, a stealth movement, that’s flying beneath the radar, that’s changing literally hundreds, even thousands of churches around the world.” It is necessary for the faithful believer today to be wary of any “stealth” (camouflaged, secretive) program intended to fly “beneath the radar” in order to avoid detection. For many years now the church growth movement has certainly flown into congregations undetected by thousands of churches worldwide. The onslaught must be detected, the warning must be sounded now!

This report will identify and analyze the programs suggested by the Saddleback Community Church model and will ascertain whether or not this model is consistent with what the Bible says concerning the nature, purpose and strategy of the church. Although Saddleback Community Church is one of the largest churches in America (comparable to Bill

Hybels' Willow Creek Community Church), the believer must not take a pragmatic approach to church growth. While the contemporary strategies of worship and ministry employed by both Warren and Hybels seem to be successful (according to the world's standards) and do indeed attract thousands of saved and unsaved alike, results do not determine what is acceptable to the Lord--only God's Word reveals if their methods please Him.

One of the primary problems with the Saddleback approach is that all traditional, conservative forms of music, worship and decorum in the church are abolished and subsequently replaced with new methods and styles designed after the world. The programs of this new "superchurch" are aimed at making the unsaved, or the "seeker," feel comfortable and entertained and at meeting his temporal needs. Some Christians feel that any method of worship and evangelism is appropriate as long as the lost are being reached for Christ. Thus, they have accepted a pragmatic view of worship and evangelism--the end justifies the means; if it works, it must be right. But believers and pastors alike must ask, "Is the proper way in which God's people approach unto their Lord in corporate worship relative?"

The goal of the superchurch is to draw a crowd so that the crowds will, eventually, be saved and worked into the church membership. Furthermore, the core ministry of the church allows for the abandonment of everything "traditional" that would in any way appear to be offensive to the neighborhood "seeker." Are godly pastors and believers to fashion their style of service after the comforts of the unsaved "seeker," or could it be that Romans 12:2 is at least somewhat applicable to the church today? God's Word clearly says, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the

renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Rick Warren’s Saddleback church growth model seems to totally contradict this portion of Scripture.

This report will also make reference to the Saddleback model, as presented in the workshop, and discern whether or not God does indeed have something to say concerning the way in which believers should worship and minister. From our admittedly fundamentalist perspective, we believe that the Bible does have something to say about the style, as well as the content, of the church service. The Scriptures speak very clearly about the way in which God’s people are to approach unto their God, both by way of principle and type from the Old Testament and also apostolic directive in the New Testament.

Before making our observations regarding the sessions we attended, it is needful to point out that Rick Warren has been trained as a Southern Baptist and obviously knows the Bible extremely well. He is a personable individual who is a skilled communicator of his ideas. Warren mentioned that when he developed these concepts as a young man in seminary, no one paid attention to him. However, now that the strategy obviously works, he has an extensive and eager audience. One cannot help but enjoy his presentation, even though the aftertaste is far less pleasant when more careful consideration is given to what was actually said or implied. Many of his suggestions were indeed helpful, but the main thrust of his church growth model is certainly questionable in light of God’s Word.

Warren encouraged his seminar attendees to view Saddleback Church as a model for their respective ministries and to use



as much or as little of his strategy as they deemed worthwhile. He also said, however, that unless the main aspects of the program were incorporated (the contemporary style and positive-only content of the message, music and program) then the resultant growth would be something far less than dynamic.

Warren's plans for motivating the people, charting an organizational structure for ministry and developing a marketing strategy for building a superchurch are much like what one would hear in a secular management training seminar. In fact, during an intermission this was even mentioned in a conversation with corporate businessmen who were also in attendance. The same techniques that are used to build the base of support for a business can also be used to build a ministry's clientele. What is the key? One must provide a product that will meet the real or perceived needs of the consuming public. For Saddleback Community Church, that meant they had to determine via a survey the needs of the Saddleback community at large and then provide programs at the church to meet those needs. As a result of the survey, a composite "Saddleback Sam," or unsaved church seeker, was defined, and the style and programs of the church were then redefined to meet his needs. Hence, the ministries (support and special interest groups, recreational fellowships, etc.) and the style and content of the "Seeker Service" were aimed at making the typical "Saddleback Sam" feel comfortable, helped and encouraged.

Obviously, some are skeptical of Rick Warren's novel approach to church growth, and Warren is certainly aware of such individuals. He employed effective techniques to disarm his critics by first shooting down a "straw man" representing

an exaggerated example of the critic's position or by using humorous one-liners to side-step the criticism before his own proposition was advanced. For example, he advanced the replacement of traditional hymns and musical accompaniment with contemporary Christian rock songs and backup bands that accentuated the driving beat enjoyed by the unsaved with the following reasons:

*First, Warren made it clear that loud, raucous music with a driving beat is the kind of music to which Saddleback residents listened, inside and outside of the church:*

Now, at Saddleback Church, we are unapologetically contemporary... I passed out a three-by-five card to everybody in the church, and I said, "You write down the call letters of the radio station you listen to." I wasn't even asking unbelievers. I was asking the people in the church, "What kind of music do you listen to?" When I got it back, I didn't have one person who said, "I listen to organ music." Not one. I didn't have a single person who said, "I listen to huge choirs on the radio." Not one. In fact, it was 96-97% adult contemporary, middle-of-the-road pop. It wasn't heavy metal rock, but it was something with a beat like you hear most commercials have today on television. So, we made a strategic decision that we are unapologetically a contemporary music church. And right after we made that decision and stopped trying to please everybody, Saddleback exploded with growth. Now, I'll be honest with you, we are loud. We are really, really loud on a weekend service.... I say, "We're not gonna turn it down." Now the reason why is baby boomers want to feel the music, not just hear it. Now, I can give you two dozen really good churches within driving distance that are my friends, we're in small groups together, that don't have it as loud as us. Go there. Why should every church have the same music? ... People can find that God loves variety!

The bottom line of his philosophy is this: What is popular in the community, whatever style of music currently has the ear of "Saddleback Sam," must be the music of the church.

Church leaders can try to mix the contemporary with the traditional in the same service, or even in separate services, but Warren said doing so would be “like kissing your sister. You could do it, but who’d want to?” His humorous concluding statement cleverly serves to divert the attention away from the larger issue at hand--allowing the world to determine the type of music that belongs in the house of God.

*Second, Warren equated insisting upon the use of traditional music in the church to the sin of idolatry.* He said:

You see folks, to insist that all good music came from Europe 200 years ago is thinly veiled racism, if you want to be truthful about it. It’s cultural elitism saying that all the good music was written 200 years ago in Europe.... Now for 2,000 years, the Holy Spirit has used all kinds of music. And to insist that one particular style of music is more sacred than the other, there’s a word for that. It’s called idolatry. Idolatry.

This statement is an example of one of Warren’s straw men, for the use of eighteenth-century hymns is not the issue. The question at hand is whether music intended to appeal to the flesh should be used in the church. Much fine and worshipful music penned in this present century is being used in Bible-believing churches today. Style is the issue here, not the century in which the songs were written. The words or message are not what get the place “rocking” on Saturday evening or Sunday morning; it is the arrangement and the orchestration.

Warren claims the Bible says nothing regarding the style of music, only its content. But if the unsaved and saved alike are attracted to a church by its style of music, then how can such a response (which is obviously based upon a fleshly appeal) possibly communicate a message that will edify the spiritual inner man? Can a response of the flesh produce a

truly spiritual effect within? Study Galatians 5:16-26 and see if there is not a contradiction of forces at work here. Reverence in praising God will never appeal to the unregenerate, but it certainly will prepare the believer for worshipping God “in the beauty of holiness” (1 Chron. 16:29) and receiving “with meekness the engrafted word” (Jam. 1:21).

*Third, Warren’s supposed Biblical justification for using contemporary music is sorely deficient.* Warren told his audience:

The Bible says in Psalm 40:3, “He put a new song in my mouth; many people will see this and worship Him. Then they will trust the Lord.” Notice the parallel or the correlation between music, worship, and evangelism. It says, “Then they will trust the Lord.” Now there’s a word that I want you to circle in that sentence; it’s the word N-E-W. The same old tired songs are not gonna reach anybody...but a new song says, “God is doing something new in our midst.”

Dear reader, to what is the psalmist referring when he uses the term new? First of all, remember that Warren said the Bible has absolutely nothing to say about the style of music or worship, so according to his own logic, this verse cannot possibly refer to a contemporary, “new” melody or current lyrics. No, David is talking about the new song that comes forth from one of God’s redeemed saints. The Holy Spirit touches the heart of the believer to respond by song in a way the unsaved can never experience, much less desire; this spiritual song is not something the unbeliever can “get into.” If the Lord is to be worshipped “in spirit and in truth” (Jn. 4:24), then only those who have been washed in the Blood can truly sing this “new” song. Warren intimates that the unsaved are turned off by the “golden oldies,” the “blasts from the past,” as he refers to the old hymns. When a

believer stops to think about it, the unbeliever's dislike for hymns is understandable. The songs of worship and praise for the Lord obviously only appeal to the spirit of the regenerated man (Rom. 8:16) because the focus is upon the Lord, not man's flesh. If believers cannot see an unreconcilable dichotomy between fleshly and spiritual music, then further study on the holiness of God is advised.

What does Warren say regarding those in the church who oppose the switch from conservative to contemporary in order to bring in the crowds? He stated in no uncertain terms that the old stalwarts would have to go:

Be willing to let people leave the church. And I told you earlier the fact that people are gonna leave the church no matter what you do. But when you define the vision, you're choosing who leaves. You say, "But Rick, yes, they're the pillars of the church." Now, you know what pillars are. Pillars are people who hold things up ... And in your church, you may have to have some blessed subtractions before you have any real additions.

How terribly sad! We have heard from many dear, godly, older saints (and some discerning younger believers as well!) who are heartsick about what happened to their churches after the leaders attended Saddleback seminars. Invariably, these now-dispensable saints have a spiritual maturity and an awareness of Bible truth that is obvious. Yet, instead of their church recognizing the place and blessedness of such believers in the local body of Christ (see Titus 2:1-15), they are brushed off to the side, told to come only to the "more traditional" mid-week service or frankly told to move on and find another church. Because Warren is located in the Southern California area, he mentioned that he often refers others (either visitors or dissenters) to such churches as Robert Schuller's Crystal Cathedral or Jack Hayford's Church on the Way.

No doubt Warren has been criticized by denominational leaders who recoil at his strong suggestion that denominational “labels” should be abolished (thus, Saddleback Community Church, the People’s Church, Willow Creek Community Church, etc.). This is common to ecumenical endeavors which minimize doctrinal differences. Warren feels that terms like Baptist, Bible, Presbyterian, etc. might unduly offend some or unnecessarily narrow the group of those who would visit:

The unchurched hang-ups determine our strategy...We found a hang-up about denominational labels. I went out. I went door to door and said, “What do you think of when I say ‘Southern Baptist?’” They said, “You don’t want to know.” ...So, we chose a neutral name. Why? Well, it wasn’t a theological decision, a compromise. It was an evangelistic strategy decision because we wanted to reach out.

Interestingly, Warren worked into his presentation the fact that the Southern Baptist traditionalists evidently smile on his approach. Notice what he said concerning his meeting with several Southern Baptist notables:

Once a year the pastors of the twenty-five largest Southern Baptist churches get together, and we hole up in a hotel for two or three days and just talk about our churches. All these churches are running at least 2,000 in attendance. And it’s people like Adrian Rodgers and Charles Stanley and Ed Young and just all kinds of guys you may have heard or may have never heard of....we were sitting in a room together with all these people, and they said, “Rick, take a couple hours and just tell us about Saddleback. What’s going on?” Sitting catty-corner to me--I was a little nervous about this--sitting catty-corner to me was Dr. W. A. Criswell....for two hours I’m just telling what’s going on at Saddleback. And here’s W. A. Criswell in his seventies taking notes as fast as he could, writing things down, writing things down. And I walked out of there, and I started crying. I was so

humbled by that experience, and I realized why he was a great man. He'd never stopped learning.

This account was not given to merely express Warren's humility; it was to authenticate his church growth strategy by revealing that the respected experts, the "denominational giants," accepted his methods. Furthermore, this was a subtle hint to his audience that if even W. A. Criswell felt he needed to learn from Warren on how to minister and grow a superchurch, then certainly each of the 3,500 church leaders attending the seminar also needed to take careful notes. Rick Warren made it expressly known that if one wants growth, dynamic growth, then he must do it this "Saddleback" way, but if that person decides to stay in the conservative, traditional mode, his ministry and church will wither on the vine.

The church growth/church marketing strategy has had a great impact upon the churches of this land and around the world, and it will be even much more pervasive in the days ahead. What church does not want to grow -- dramatically and dynamically!? In this article, we are not trying to question the motives of those who design and those who adopt dynamic church growth methods. It is the methods themselves that we condemn. Warren candidly said,

The unchurched culture determines our style. We're laid back Southern California. We're just a few miles from the beach, so we have a laid back Southern California style. ... Regardless of the style you choose, you're going to be criticized. Okay? So, the key question is, "Who are you trying to impress?" The unchurched populations determine our goals.

Are we to seek to impress the world? Is the world to determine the strategy of the church? Christ warned that the world would hate the church, not admire it (Jn. 15:18). The Word, not the world, is to determine the strategy of the church.

Even though Warren would probably protest this observation, the fact remains the same--the message, not just the methods, dramatically changes when one employs the purpose-driven church strategy. The Bible commands that the “whole counsel of God” be preached in the church; that necessarily includes preaching the negative as well as the positive and having a pulpit ministry that obeys God’s call to equip the saints to go out into the world and to be “ambassadors for Christ” in reaching the lost in the community. A “feel-good message” appealing to saint and seeker alike does not fulfill God’s command to “contend for the faith,” “reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine” and “warn of the wolves in sheep’s clothing.” Where in the Bible does it say the church’s ministry is to meeting the psychological, emotional and interpersonal relationship needs of the unsaved? Such a philosophy cannot be found in God’s Word.

The traditional church service has tried to equip the saint for service and witness and to foster a spirit of reverence in the worship and adoration of the Lord. We believe there is Biblical justification for this design, or “style,” of worship. Warren says that if one wants dynamic growth, he must choose between the traditional or the inventive, contemporary, user-friendly church like that of Saddleback Community. Our concern is that thousands are indeed opting for the latter, and we believe the Bible gives us some reasons why that choice is wrong.



A quote from John Moffat's book *All Truth God's Truth?* seems to be particularly fitting for the Saddleback strategy of designing the church's service after the contemporary worldly context:

I can imagine Nadab and Abihu talking before the early worship service in the wilderness. One says to the other, "All fire is God's fire. God made all fire; therefore it is all of Him." Or while Moses was up on Mount Sinai, the children of Israel could have said to Aaron, "All worship of god is God's worship." These analogies have the same deceptive sound of being logical at first glance, but they are full of the same ambiguity and deceit as the expression "all truth is God's truth."

Rick Warren made the statement, "I don't think God cares two bits about your style of worship as long as it's in spirit and in truth."

Is he correct? The terms spirit and truth must first be defined in a Biblical context. When worshipping the Lord, man's spirit is to be moved only by the Holy Spirit of God; furthermore, worship is to be in truth which means it can only be defined according to what God's Holy Word says (not what man says). The Bible says that worship is to be practiced in holiness and reverence--these qualities of "style" are not subjective! If the methods of worship were totally relative to the individual, then the demonstration of "spirit" and "truth" in worship would mean absolutely nothing--there would be no way to distinguish the church from the social institutions of the unregenerate world. No, the Bible says the people of God are to be holy, as He is holy. They are to be a "peculiar people," "a light set upon the hill"; they are noticeably different from the world. Thus, Warren's statement is not correct; God does indeed care about one's "style" in worship and methodology. Our worship is to be patterned after the likeness of Christ Himself and in

accordance with the principles set forth in the eternal, unalterable Word of Truth.

First Chronicles 16:29 says, “Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.” Is “holiness” subjective to the individual? Absolutely not--only God is holy; therefore, the characteristics of holiness are found in the Lord, not man. Many examples and direct statements in God’s Word guide the believer in his worship and in his witness away from the course of this present evil age. The qualifications of holiness are invariably different from the world; thus, holy worship includes both reverence and separation from a worldly style.

Notice the New Testament counterpart for the Lord’s people in the church: 1 Timothy 6:11-14 says,

But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. I give thee charge in the sight of God... That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

First Peter 1:13-19 and Peter 2:5, 9 furthermore provide believers in the Church Age with commands that must be considered when defining purpose:

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: [NOT stylizing our current walk after the former unsaved, worldly walk] But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I

am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.... Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Who comprises the local church? The church is to meet together on the Lord's Day, the first day of the week; we find that the local New Testament church consisted of believers who met together for worship, fellowship, instruction and edification. First Corinthians 3:16-17 tells us that the church is the temple of God. When believers gather together as a local church, they must view themselves as the dwelling place of God and must realize that it is a place where man and God meet together for fellowship. The local body of believers, the church, is the temple of the all-holy God.

Ephesians 4:11-12 clearly shows that God gave individual leaders of the local church (pastors and teachers) special gifts for a particular purpose--"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." The local church is not an organization that is ordained by God to conform to the world in order to reach the lost. No, the purpose of the local church is to worship God, to grow in His grace and knowledge and to train the individual believers in the Word so that they might better reach the lost for Christ and be a testimony to the world. They are to be different from the world--patterned after Christ--not imitating or conforming to the world.

One of the most revealing slogans used by Warren to show what must occur in any church in order for growth to result is this: "Never confuse the method with the message. The

message must never change, but the methods must change!” Is it true that Saddleback Community Church has not changed its proclamation to the thousands assembled beneath its pulpit? What about Willowcreek Community Church and other contemporary, dynamic-growth ministries? No, these mega-churches have indeed changed the message--they have departed significantly from the Biblical mandate regarding the declaration of the whole counsel of God to be proclaimed by the elders/pastors of the faithful New Testament church. The message has clearly changed, and Warren’s own words prove it:

Read Scripture from a newer translation. And as you read that Scripture, realize that you’re trying to pick out Scriptures that appeal especially to baby boomers. And try to find Scriptures that specifically relate to the benefits that Christ can bring into a person’s life. They’ve never heard the Scripture before, so try to pick positive Scriptures that talk about the benefits of Christ... you want to pick out Scriptures that are very positive.

Choosing only “positive texts” to preach on the Lord’s Day (or on Saturday evenings for those churches that desire to make the services more “convenient”) and using only “positive texts” to define the purposes of the church (of the 41 “verses that relate to the purposes of the church” listed in the seminar workbook, none were included which dealt with insistence upon warning, doctrine, etc.; none were from Acts 20, Romans 16, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, 2 Peter, Jude or Revelation) resulting in a glaring deficiency in one’s message. Vitally important texts dealing specifically with the church’s doctrine, message and ministry must be ignored in order to maintain positive-only preaching. Indeed, the message does change!

Notice the following quote from a revealing essay entitled “Does Theology Still Matter?” by Gary L. W. Johnson in the book *The Coming Evangelical Crisis*:

Although most of today’s professing evangelicals would acknowledge that theology, in some sense of the word, does matter, a recent survey in *Christianity Today* revealed that this is more lip service than anything else. According to this survey...theology, in any sense of the word, is really not all that important to the very people to whom it should matter most: those in the pew and in the pulpit. Both groups listed theological knowledge as last in terms of pastoral priorities. ... We are sadly experiencing, on a rather large scale, a subjectivism that betrays its weakened hold on the objective truth and reality of Christianity by its neglect or even renunciation of its distinctive objective character. ... Men ... really wish to have a creedless Christianity. “Creeds,” they shout, “are divisive things; away with them!” ... Where does this leave us? An undogmatic Christianity is no Christianity at all. (Moody Press, 1996, pp. 58, 66, 67)

What does the Bible say about the purpose of the church worship service and what the faithful pastor must preach to the “crowd” (as Warren describes it) that assembles each Sunday? No doubt, Saddleback Church leaders would be quick to point out that the four Christian education classes available to the congregation do deal with doctrine. However, the Bible is clear that doctrine is to be faithfully proclaimed on the Lord’s Day through the pulpit ministry of the pastors/elders. Providing optional training, apart from the instruction given from the pulpit, cannot side-step what God intends the public church service to be.

The Saddleback seminar said that only positive Bible texts should be used from the pulpit, but God’s Word says something quite different. The apostle Paul had very straightforward directives for the elders of the Ephesian

church regarding their ministry, and the same is essential today. Acts 20:20-31 says:

... I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.... For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

Was the apostle's instruction negative? Yes, but certainly also necessary! Many of the duties that the Lord requires of faithful pastors and teachers are found in texts that were "overlooked" by the Saddleback workbook. Whatever text came across as negative was obviously passed over. Another such text is Titus 1:3-11:

[God] hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour.... For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: ... [Hold] fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers [those who contradict or speak against the truth of God]. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped....

Second Timothy 3:16-4:5 gives further instruction regarding the purpose for the church; this text was also ignored by Saddleback's dynamic growth strategy:

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers [those who will not practice the above], having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

Are you identified with a church that is led by faithful undershepherds who are committed to obeying these commands? Are they willing to contend for the faith and warn their people--from the pulpit? Or is it a "positive-only" message? We must stand only with those willing to obey these essentials for faithful ministry.

The Saddleback strategy is, again, to design the weekend "Seeker Service," the programs and the support ministries of the church in order to attract the unsaved in the community. According to the strategy, the "seeker" must want to come to church; therefore, the services must be designed in such a way that he will be comfortable, entertained and find the answers to his problems as he perceives them. Warren teaches that the ministry of the church must be stylized after those things to which the unsaved are accustomed--whether that style includes the language used, the music performed, the casual attire worn or even the message proclaimed from

the pulpit. The character, the style and the contemporary interests of the unregenerate community are what determine the makeup, the appearance and the content of the weekend services.

The following comments by Rick Warren reveal Saddleback's "Biblical" justification for making the church "user friendly" to the unsaved:

Now Paul's evangelism strategy was this: 1 Corinthians 9--"To the Jew I became like a Jew to win the Jews. In the same way with the Gentiles, I became like a Gentile in order to win the Gentiles. I have become all things to all men that I may save some of them by any means possible." He's saying, "Adapt to the situation God puts you in." Today, he'd say, "When in Southern California, become like a Southern Californian to reach Southern Californians."

Let us take a closer look at this portion of Scripture found in 1 Corinthians 9. First, the apostle is not defining in this text the purpose and character of the worship service of the local church. Instead, this discourse is the personal testimony of Paul, the evangelistically-minded missionary, as he took the message of Christ to the lost in their respective communities, cultures and circumstances. Second, the "assembling together of the saints" on the first day of the week, Sunday, was for the purpose of being built up in the faith, of giving attendance to the "reading [of the Scriptures], to exhortation [the charge to continue in God's truth], to doctrine [the teaching of 'all the counsel of God']"--1 Timothy 4:13.

The overwhelming volume of instruction in the epistles was given to the elders of the churches and to ones such as Timothy and Titus who were to "set in order the things which are wanting" (Titus 1:5). This apostolic instruction had to do with what the Christian was to believe and how he was to



“behave [himself] in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15). For Warren to suggest that the church’s purpose is to provide common ground for the “seeker” and present him only positive Biblical texts that speak to his emotional, psychological and inter-personal “needs” is absolutely ludicrous! The pastor is to preach the Word--all of it--or it ceases to be “the pillar and ground of the truth”!

The purpose of 1 Corinthians 9 is not to define the church’s worship service, but rather it details the resolute purpose and godly motivation of the apostle Paul to take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all, Jew and Gentile, bond or free, regardless of the ethnic, cultural or social standing the lost might have. Paul had no target group! All needed to be saved, and he dedicated himself to going out to meet the lost in their situation, but never at the expense of being anything less than what God called him to be, and that was to be “holy, even as I [God] am holy.” Second Corinthians 5:14-21 confirms Paul’s selfless, evangelistic purpose:

For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: [Christ died for all; all need to be saved; we seek to win all] ... Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Paul was willing to be a servant to all so that he might present Christ to all, regardless of their station in life (vv. 19, 20). He went out; he did not stylize a “seeker service” to lure unbelievers in. The walk of the believer is to be distinctly

different from that of the world; it is not to mirror the walk of the world (Eph. 2:1-3).

No, Paul did not become like the unsaved with respect to their lifestyle nor address their desires to meet their perceived “needs” of the flesh! He was still ministering “under the law to Christ” (v. 21) and kept his body under the control of the Holy Spirit of God (vv. 24-27). The difference was that he was willing to be “a servant,” to do what he could to gain a hearing. No one was beneath any social or educational constraints. No one was off-limits due to their ethnic or cultural differences. To the philosophers on Mars hill, Paul used their idolatry and superstitions as a springboard to tell them of the “unknown God” that they ignorantly worshipped; he preached to them Christ crucified and risen again (Acts 17:22-34). The Gospel testimony in the pagan city of Ephesus did not result in the church being patterned after the predominate culture of the community--the temple of Diana. No, the proclamation of Christ ruined the business of the ungodly, and changed lives resulted in a changed culture, not a changed church (Acts 19:21 ff). Another example of this willingness to subjugate personal liberty to win the lost is found in the advice given by the apostles at Jerusalem in Acts 15. Even the Gentile converts living among unsaved Jews were to be “under the law” in the sense that they would not eat that which would be offensive to the Jews they were trying to reach with the Gospel (Acts 15:25-29). “Style” of ministry is not the issue here.

The church is to evangelize, but in such a way that the Biblical purpose for the church is not compromised. Saddleback’s strategy is deficient and dangerous.

## Judge Not?

The following is from our book ***JUDGE NOT! IS IT LEGALISM TO JUDGE SIN AND ERROR?*** This book is a reply to 21 of the most common charges that are brought against a fundamentalist Bible approach to Christianity. These are the challenges that every fundamentalist Bible-believing Christian must learn to deal with, because there is no part of the world so remote that the believers there will not be confronted with this thinking. This very practical material would make a good series of study for Sunday Schools at the Junior High level or above or for Youth meetings or Bible Institutes. The sections of the book are as follows: The Bible Says We Should Not Judge; Love is Nonjudgmental and Tolerant; Being Strict about Biblical Issues is Legalism; Fundamentalists Are Pharisees; Jesus Told Us Not to Forbid Others; Why Don't You Follow Matthew 18? We Should Heed Gamaliel's Advice; We Should Leave the Tares until the Harvest; We Should Not Touch the Lord's Anointed; If We Don't Stand Together We Will Hang Separately; The Christian Army Shoots Its Own Wounded; God Does Not Look on the External Appearance; We Will Be in Heaven Together; The Christian Life Should Be Liberty and Fun; We Should Be All Things to All Men; Denominational Divisions Should Be Erased; It is Not Possible to Know That Your Doctrine Is Right; Loving Jesus Is All that Is Important; Fundamentalism Is a Belief in the Five Fundamentals; We Should Limit Our Message to Broaden Our Fellowship; We Should Be Balanced.

This is one of the free eBooks available from the Way of Life web site.

The following are some of the key passages on judging that are widely abused today:

**MATTHEW 7:1-5 -- Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."**

First, if we examine the context of this passage we see that the Lord Jesus is not condemning all judging; He is condemning hypocritical judging (Mat. 7:5). To forbid something in another person that I allow in my own life is hypocrisy, and it is a great and deep-seated sin among men. For a parent to tell his children not to listen to rock music when he listens to Country-Western music is hypocrisy. To tell my children not to smoke when I smoke, or to attend church when I don't attend church, or to be serious about God's will when I am not that serious about His will, or to be kind to others when I am not kind to them or to their mother, or to obey me when I don't obey my husband, is hypocrisy. This is the type of thing that Christ was warning about.

This is not to say, though, that Christ forbade judging in general. That He is not condemning all judging is evident from the context. In the same sermon He warned about false prophets.

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall

know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (Mat. 7:15-17).

It is impossible to beware of false prophets without judging doctrine and practice by God's Word. How can I know who a false prophet is if I do not measure preachers by God's Word?

That Christ is not condemning all judging is also evident by comparing Scripture with Scripture. In other passages we are commanded to judge. The Lord Jesus Himself said we are to judge righteous judgment (Jn. 7:24).

We are to judge sin in the church (1 Cor. 5:3, 12). *"For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, ... For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?"*

We are to judge matters between the brethren (1 Cor. 6:5). *"I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?"*

We are to judge preaching (1 Cor. 14:29). *"Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge."*

We are to judge those who preach false gospels, false christ, and false spirits (2 Cor. 11:1-4). *"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which*

*ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.”*

We are to judge the works of darkness (Eph. 5:11). *“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”*

We are to judge spirits (1 John 4:1). *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”*

We are even to judge all things (1 Cor. 2:15-16). *“But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.”*

The spiritual man does not judge things by his own thinking but by the mind of Christ in the Word of God. He knows that he lives in a fallen world filled with lies and error and spiritual deception and he knows that he has the light of God in the Scripture and he thus judges all things by that.

**ROMANS 14:4 -- “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.”**

This passage is frequently abused by those who have the ecumenical philosophy. It is said that this verse forbids us to expose sin and error and compromise. The verse is also used to support the doctrine that Scripture can be divided into fundamental or essential and non-fundamental or secondary doctrine. One pastor wrote to me and said:

“Romans 14 is probably the most violated passage by those of us who call ourselves ‘fundamentalists’ (note

that I include myself). We have either skipped over that chapter or given it a sinfully surface interpretation and danced around its powerful mandates for dealing with differences over 'secondary' doctrine within the church. By 'secondary' I do not mean 'unimportant.' I must be 'fully persuaded' about all Scriptural issues, though I must welcome and neither judge nor look down on those who differ on some of them."

To this I gave the following reply:

Romans 14 is an important passage, but it has nothing to do with the idea that there are things in Scripture of secondary value, in the sense of how we are to deal with them. The two examples plainly given by the apostle are eating meats and keeping holy days. These are matters about which the Bible is silent. There are no divine requirements upon the New Testament Christian in these matters.

Thus, Romans 14 is discussing how we are to deal with matters NOT CLEARLY TAUGHT IN SCRIPTURE. In matters in which God has not plainly spoken, I am to give liberty.

On the other hand, in matters in which God has plainly spoken, the only liberty is to obey. People use Romans 14:4 to defend many areas of plain disobedience, such as worldly music, long hair on men, immodest dress on women, etc. Since the Bible has spoken plainly about these matters, it is a misuse to apply Romans 14:4.

You are missing the mark by a great distance in your understanding of this passage.

**1 CORINTHIANS 4:3-5 -- "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know**

**nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.”**

Paul is not saying that believers should judge nothing at all and should leave all judgment to God. This would be contrary to many other passages in the same epistle (i.e., 1 Cor. 2:15; 5:3, 12; 6:2-3; 14:29).

He is saying, rather, that believers are not to judge ministers by their own human thinking as to what a minister should be and how he should teach and act, but they are to judge righteous judgment according to God’s Word. He is talking about being judged by “man’s judgment” (1 Cor. 4:3). It is not required that a minister suit men and bend to their thinking; it is required that he be faithful to God, and this is the only proper standard by which he can be judged.

Paul, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is also saying that ultimate and final judgment belongs only to the Lord; therefore, we must be humble and cautious in our judgments in this present time (1 Cor. 4:4-5). Even though we have the Word of God and we are obliged to judge everything on the basis of God’s Word, we must not think that we are infallible. We have to walk in the light that we have and live our lives and exercise our ministries on that basis, but our knowledge is very imperfect in this present world.

We can know if a man’s teaching is false and we can know enough, therefore, to mark his error and to avoid it, but we do not know the secrets of men’s hearts and we do not know all of the things that will be brought to bear and come into



play when God judges men in that perfect light of a coming day.

**JAMES 4:11-12 -- “Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?”**

Like Matthew 7:1, Romans 14:4, and 1 Corinthians 4:5, James 4:11 is frequently misused by the ecumenical crowd to support the false doctrine that Christians are forbidden to judge doctrine and practice. To make these verses teach that Christians can never judge, though, throws the Bible into confusion. There is a right judgment and a wrong judgment. Many verses command us to judge righteous judgment (Luke 12:57; John 7:24; 1 Cor. 2:15). We are to judge preaching (1 Cor. 14:29), sin in the churches (1 Cor. 5:3), issues in the churches (1 Cor. 6:5), sin in our own lives (1 Cor. 11:31), false teachers (Mat. 7:15; Rom. 16:17), spirits (1 John 4:1), etc.

When, then, is James forbidding? The context clarifies the matter.

First, James is referring to speaking evil (Jam. 4:11). Proper judging is to speak the truth in love. The truth is not evil and speaking the truth in love is not evil. The type of judging condemned by James is judging in the sense of tearing down, tale bearing, and slander. It is judging with an evil intent. When one judges sin and error scripturally, it is never with a desire to hurt people. The Pharisees judged Jesus in an evil manner (Jn. 7:52). The false teachers at Galatia and Corinth judged Paul in the same manner, trying to tear him down in

the eyes of the churches (2 Cor. 10:10). This is what James forbids.

Second, James is referring to judging in a way that is contrary to the law of God (“*there is one lawgiver,*” Jam. 4:12). This refers to judging others by human standards rather than divine, thus setting oneself up as the lawgiver. The Pharisees did this when they judged Jesus by their traditions (Mat. 15:1-3). On the other hand, when a believer judges things by God’s Word in a godly and compassionate manner, he is not exercising his own judgment; he is exercising God’s judgment. When, for example, I say that it is wrong for a woman to be a pastor, or it is a shame for a man to have long hair, or those who love the world are adulterers, this is not my judgment or law; it is God’s (1 Tim. 2:12; 1 Cor. 11:14; Jam. 4:4).

For more on verses misused by the ecumenical crowd, see *THINGS HARD TO BE UNDERSTOOD: A COMMENTARY ON DIFFICULT PASSAGES* on 1 Sam. 24:4-10; Matt. 7:1-1; 18:15-17; Mk. 9:38-40; John 13:35; 17:21; Acts 5:38-39; James 4:11-12. This book is available in print and eBook editions from Way of Life Literature, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org)

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For some suggestions, see the report "iPads, Kindles, eReaders, and Way of Life Materials," at the Way of Life web site at the Way of Life web site [www.wayoflife.org/database/styled-3/](http://www.wayoflife.org/database/styled-3/)

## Which Format?

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## Powerful Publications for These Times

Following is a selection of the titles published by Way of Life Literature. The books are available in both print and eBook editions (PDF, Kindle, ePub). The materials can be ordered via the online catalog at the Way of Life web site -- [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org) -- or by phone 866-295-4143.

***FUNDAMENTAL LESSONS IN HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE.*** This very practical course deals with requirements for effective Bible study, marking your Bible, and rules of Bible interpretation. 174 pages

***THE BIBLE VERSION QUESTION ANSWER DATABASE,*** ISBN 1-58318-088-5. This book provides diligently-researched, in-depth answers to more than 80 of the most important questions on this topic. A vast number of myths are exposed, such as the myth that Erasmus promised to add 1 John 5:7 to his Greek New Testament if even one manuscript could be produced, the myth that the differences between the Greek texts and versions are slight and insignificant, the myth that there are no doctrines affected by the changes in the modern versions, and the myth that the King James translators said that all versions are equally the Word of God. It also includes reviews of several of the popular modern versions, including the Living Bible, New Living Bible, Today's English Version, New International Version, New American Standard Version, The Message, and the Holman Christian Standard Bible. 423 pages

***CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSIC: SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED AND SOME WARNINGS GIVEN,*** ISBN 1-58318-094-x. This book expounds on five

reasons why we are opposed to CCM: It is worldly; it is ecumenical; it is charismatic; it is experience-oriented; and it weakens the fundamentalist stance of churches. We give examples of how changes are occurring in formerly fundamentalist churches through the instrumentality of contemporary music. The rest of the book deals with questions that are commonly asked on this subject, such as the following: What is the difference between using contemporary worship music and using old hymns that were interdenominational? Didn't Luther and the Wesleys use tavern music? Isn't the issue of music just a matter of taste? Doesn't the Bible encourage us to use cymbals and stringed and loud sounding instruments? What is wrong with soft rock? Didn't God create all music? Love is more important than doctrine and standards of living, isn't it? Since God looks on the heart, why are you concerned about appearance? Isn't Christianity all about grace? What about all of the young people who are being saved through CCM? 190 pages

***THE FOREIGN SPIRIT OF CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP MUSIC.*** This hard-hitting multi-media video presentation, published in March 2012, documents the frightful spiritual compromise, heresy, and apostasy that permeates the field of contemporary worship music. By extensive documentation, it proves that contemporary worship music is impelled by “another spirit” (2 Cor. 11:4). It is the spirit of charismaticism, the spirit of the latter rain, the spirit of the one-world church, the spirit of the world, the spirit of homosexuality, and the spirit of the false god of *The Shack*. The presentation looks carefully at the origin of contemporary worship in the Jesus Movement of the 1970s, examining the lives and testimonies of some of the most influential people. Nearly 60 video clips and hundreds of

photos are featured. It is available on DVD and as an eDownload from the Way of Life web site.

***ISRAEL: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE***, ISBN 978-1-58318-116-4. This is a package consisting of a 234-page illustrated book, a DVD series, and a series of Powerpoint/Keynote presentations for teachers. The package covers all of the major facets pertaining to Israel in a professional, technologically cutting-edge way: geography, culture, archaeology, history, current events, and prophecy. The series begins with an amazing aerial flyover over the land of Israel.

***KEEPING THE KIDS: HOW TO KEEP THE CHILDREN FROM FALLING PREY TO THE WORLD***, ISBN 978-1-58318-115-7. This book aims to help parents and churches raise children to be disciples of Jesus Christ and to avoid the pitfalls of the world, the flesh, and the devil. The book is a collaborative effort. It contains testimonies from hundreds of individuals who provided feedback to our questionnaires on this subject, as well as powerful ideas gleaned from interviews with pastors, missionaries, and church people who have raised godly children. The book is packed with practical suggestions and deals with many issues: Conversion, the husband-wife relationship, the necessity of permeating the home with Christian love, mothers as keepers at home, the father's role as the spiritual head of the home, child discipline, separation from the pop culture, discipleship of youth, the grandparents' role in "keeping the kids," effectual prayer, and fasting. 531 pages

***MUSIC FOR GOOD OR EVIL (4 DVDs)***. This video series for July 2011 is a new replacement for previous presentations we have produced on this subject. The series, which is

packed with graphics, video and audio clips, has seven segments. I. Biblical Principles of Good Christian Music: II. Why We Reject Contemporary Christian Music. III. The Sound of Contemporary Christian Music. IV. Transformational Power of CCM. V. Southern Gospel. VI. Marks of Good Song Leading. VII. Questions Answered on Contemporary Christian Music.

***ONE YEAR DISCIPLESHIP COURSE***, ISBN 978-1-58318-117-1. (new title for 2011) This powerful course features 52 lessons in Christian living. It can be broken into sections and used as a new converts course, an advanced discipleship course, a Sunday School series, a Home Schooling or Bible Institute course, or preaching outlines. The lessons are thorough, meaty, and very practical. There is an extensive memory verse program built into the course, and each lesson features carefully designed review questions. 221 pages

***THE PENTECOSTAL-CHARISMATIC MOVEMENTS: THE HISTORY AND THE ERROR***, ISBN 1-58318-099-0. This book begins with the author's own experience with the Pentecostal movement. The next section deals with the history of the Pentecostal movement, beginning with a survey of miraculous signs from the second to the 18th centuries. We deal with Charles Parham, Azusa Street Mission, major Pentecostal healing evangelists, the Sharon Schools and the New Order of the Latter Rain, the Word-Faith movement and its key leaders, the Charismatic Movement, the Roman Catholic Charismatic Renewal, the Pentecostal Prophets, the Third Wave, the Laughing-Drunken Revival of Toronto, Pensacola, Lakeland, etc., and the recent Pentecostal scandals. The last section deals with the

theological errors of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements.  
317 pages

**REPENTANCE AND SOUL WINNING**, ISBN 1-58318-062-1. This is an in-depth study on biblical repentance and a timely warning about unscriptural methods of presenting the gospel. The opening chapter, entitled “Fundamental Baptists and Quick Prayerism: A Faulty Method of Evangelism Has Produced a Change in the Doctrine of Repentance,” traces the change in the doctrine of repentance among fundamental Baptists during the past 50 years. 2008 edition, 201 pages

**SEEING THE NON-EXISTENT: EVOLUTION’S MYTHS AND HOAXES**, ISBN 1-58318-002-8. (new title for 2011) This book is designed both as a stand alone title as well as a companion to the apologetics course *AN UNSHAKEABLE FAITH*. The contents are as follows: Canals on Mars, Charles Darwin and His Granddaddy, Thomas Huxley: Darwin’s Bulldog, Ernst Haeckel: Darwin’s German Apostle, Icons of Evolution, Icons of Creation, The Ape-men, Predictions, Questions for Evolutionists, Darwinian Gods, Darwin’s Social Influence.

**SOWING AND REAPING: A COURSE IN EVANGELISM**. ISBN 978-1-58318-169-0. This new course (for 2012) is unique in several ways. *It is unique in its approach*. While it is practical and down-to-earth, it does not present a formulaic approach to soul winning, recognizing that individuals have to be dealt with as individuals. The course does not include any sort of psychological manipulation techniques. It does not neglect repentance in soul winning, carefully explaining the biblical definition of repentance and the place of repentance in personal



evangelism. It explains how to use the law of God to plow the soil of the human heart so that the gospel can find good ground. *The course is unique in its objective.* The objective of biblical soul winning is not to get people to “pray a sinner’s prayer”; the objective is to see people soundly converted to Christ. This course trains the soul winner to pursue genuine conversions as opposed to mere “decisions.” *The course is also unique in its breadth.* It covers a wide variety of situations, including how to deal with Hindus and with skeptics and how to use apologetics or evidences in evangelism. There is a memory course consisting of 111 select verses and links to a large number of resources that can be used in evangelism, many of them free. The course is suitable for teens and adults and for use in Sunday School, Youth Ministries, Preaching, and private study. **OUTLINE:** The Message of Evangelism, Repentance and Evangelism, God’s Law and Evangelism, The Reason for Evangelism, The Authority for Evangelism, The Power for Evangelism, The Attitude in Evangelism, The Technique of Evangelism, Using Tracts in Evangelism, Dealing with Skeptics. 104 pages, 8x11, spiral bound.

***THINGS HARD TO BE UNDERSTOOD: A HANDBOOK OF BIBLICAL DIFFICULTIES***, ISBN 1-58318-002-8. This very practical volume deals with a wide variety of biblical difficulties. Find the answer to the seeming contradictions in the Bible. Meet the challenge of false teachers who misuse biblical passages to prove their doctrine. Find out the meaning of difficult passages that are oftentimes overlooked in the Bible commentaries. Our objective is to help God’s people have confidence in the inerrancy of their Bibles and to protect them from the false teachers that abound in these last days. Jerry Huffman, editor of *Calvary Contender*, testified: “You don’t have to agree

with everything to greatly benefit from this helpful book.”  
Fourth edition April 2006, 385 pages

***AN UNSHAKEABLE FAITH: A CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS COURSE***, ISBN 978-1-58318-119-5. (new title for 2011) The course is built upon nearly 40 years of serious Bible study and 30 years of apologetics writing. Research was done in the author’s personal 6,000-volume library plus in major museums and other locations in America, England, Europe, Australia, Asia, and the Middle East. The package consists of an apologetics course entitled *AN UNSHAKEABLE FAITH* (both print and eBook editions) plus an extensive series of Powerpoint/Keynote presentations. (Keynote is the Apple version of Powerpoint.) The 1,800 PowerPoint slides deal with archaeology, evolution/creation science, and the prophecies pertaining to Israel’s history. The material in the 360-page course is extensive, and the teacher can decide whether to use all of it or to select only some portion of it for his particular class and situation. After each section there are review questions to help the students focus on the most important points. The course can be used for private study as well as for a classroom setting. Sections include The Bible’s Nature, The Bible’s Proof, The Dead Sea Scrolls, The Bible’s Difficulties, Historical Evidence for Jesus, Evidence for Christ’s Resurrection, Archaeological Treasures Confirming the Bible, A History of Evolution, Icons of Evolution, Icons of Creation, Noah’s Ark and the Global Flood.

***WAY OF LIFE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE BIBLE & CHRISTIANITY***, ISBN 1-58318-005-2. This lovely hardcover Bible Encyclopedia contains 640 pages (8.5X11) of information, with more than 6,000 entries, and 7,000 cross-references. It is a complete dictionary of biblical

terminology and features many other areas of research not often covered in Bible reference volumes. Subjects include Bible versions, Denominations, Cults, Christian Movements, Typology, the Church, Social Issues and Practical Christian Living, Bible Prophecy, and Old English Terminology. An evangelist in South Dakota wrote: “If I were going to the mission field and could carry only three books, they would be the Strong’s concordance, a hymnal, and the *Way of Life Bible Encyclopedia*.” Missionary author Jack Moorman says: “The encyclopedia is excellent. The entries show a ‘distilled spirituality.’” A computer edition of the Encyclopedia is available as a standalone eBook for PDF, Kindle, and ePub. It is also available as a module for *Swordseacher*.

***Way of Life Literature***

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*Purpose Driven or Scripture Driven?*

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