

Christ in Prophecy
Apologetics 4
“Defending the Faith with Eric Barger: Part 4”

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: One of the most popular ideas in the world today, even among many Christian leaders is a form of universalism. It is the idea that there are many different roads to God and that one is no better than any other. Faithful Christians who disagree are characterized as intolerant bigots. So what about it are there many roads to God? Stay tuned

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus our blessed hope and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. And I am delighted to have once more with me this week for the fourth time, Eric Barger. Eric is the Founder and Director of a ministry called Take a Stand, I love that name brother. Glad to have you back with us.

Eric Barger: Thank you brother.

Dr. Reagan: Appreciate you sharing your insights with us over these four programs. Also with me this week is Nathan Jones who is our Web Minister, and Nathan is the one you will be communicating with if you get on our website. He is there eight hours a day talking with people all over the world. Nathan, why don't you start us off with the first question.

Nathan Jones: Alright, well, it seems like the number one virtue today is tolerance, that we have to tolerate everything under the sun that was once considered evil, like homosexuality. Okay, so is Christianity, then, like Dave led off with, is Christianity one of many paths?

Eric Barger: Well, that is the politically correct question today. You know if says there must be other paths. Oprah says there are more paths, can Oprah be wrong? The world would say that of course you know. But really they're saying that you know you've got to be tolerant and that all paths are okay, and of course Universalist have taught this for a long time. In fact many Christians have bought into the idea. We go back to the First Century we see a couple of the Church fathers who explored it but then gave up on the ideas of universalism, the idea that many paths lead to God or that all religions can lead you to the same place. I heard Oprah arguing with a couple of her audience members about whether there was just one way or many ways. Now just to get the philosophy right, if there is any other path to get to God, then our God, the Christian God is the worst of all Gods who would send His Son to needlessly die on a cross when we could get there through Buddhism, Hinduism or some other way. So we must have the worst, most heinous of all Gods, the most callous and cruel who would sacrifice His Son for nothing. When I hear people say that all paths lead to God, I have to stop and remind them how could that be true if Jesus claimed, "I am the way the truth." He didn't say me and Buddha and Confucius or whatever you make up as your own religion is the way. He said, "I am the way the truth and the life." The world does not like exclusivity. I don't think that I said that very good, what do you think?

Nathan Jones: Sounds good to me.

Dr. Reagan: Well I know what you are talking about.

Nathan Jones: Yeah.

Eric Barger: But the world does not like that idea, that idea of being exclusive, saying that it is the only way. But the truth is we as Christian have to present that as the fact. And God has to sort this out we're just the messengers we can't change the message along the way to try to get the world to accept half a message. It's all or nothing.

Dr. Reagan: Well we're not the ones who are saying that Christianity is the only way, Jesus said it was.

Eric Barger: That's right.

Dr. Reagan: Peter said it was.

Eric Barger: But we're bound to keep that Gospel and to hold to that Gospel.

Dr. Reagan: Peter said, "There is no other name under Heaven by which you can be saved."

Eric Barger: That's right.

Dr. Reagan: "Except the name of Jesus of Christ."

Eric Barger: That's right.

Dr. Reagan: So who are we to say different?

Nathan Jones: Who are these people then who are saying that all paths lead to... I mean, what kind of insights do they have into this that says, "All paths lead to God." What is the commonality that gives that idea?

Eric Barger: The commonality is that a loving God could never judge.

Nathan Jones: So, okay.

Eric Barger: But a loving God, if it is really the God we see in the Bible, He is a God of love and a God of justice. And you can't have His absolute love without also having justice, and Jesus went willingly to that cross. God said, "Go." He went and He went willingly that we could then once again know God because we are all separated from God by sin. And those are things that the world at large around us doesn't, they don't want to come to that conclusion. They don't want to believe that we are all sinners they want to just say that we are good. So they deny what the Scripture says about that we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. And what Jeremiah 17 says, "The heart is deceitful and wicked inside men." They don't want that. They want the loving God without a cross to go to. They don't want a bloody cross to bring us back into reconciliation with God, they want to believe that we can be there just because we live or exist.

Nathan Jones: So, if we are all sinners, if we are all sinners then we have committed sin, then you can't punish the child molester. You can't punish the person, because to punish them would be to punish ourselves cause we are also guilty.

Eric Barger: People would say, "Well how could a loving God send anybody to Hell?" And to turn that around, I would say, "How could a just God send His own Son to rescue anybody from it? When we have all sinned and decided to go our own way?"

Dr. Reagan: There is another aspect to this idea of many roads to God. In fact I would say an amiable from it, and that is idea that all religions worship the same God. Do they?

Eric Barger: No, no. And I am very concerned about the movement that is going on around right now among Evangelicals and Muslim scholars to try to some how coagulate the two together.

Dr. Reagan: That Allah is the same as Yahweh.

Eric Barger: Yeah, Jehovah God and Allah are not the same.

Dr. Reagan: How are they different?

Eric Barger: Well Allah is the God of the Koresh tribe; he was one of over 300 Gods worshipped at the Kaaba in ancient Mecca many, many years ago, in the 7th century. And by the way the God of Islam was the god of Mohammed's tribe which he installed by the sword. Well anyway, every Muslim cleric who understands Islam knows that. And they are behind our backs I believe pretty much laughing at the idea that Christians would buy into the idea that Jehovah and Allah are the same. Now Muslims will follow along up until about Genesis chapter 16, but it is there with which son went up the mountain with Abraham that they separate from us, believing that of course their birthright has been stolen at that point and time.

Dr. Reagan: But the God of Islam is totally different from the God of Christianity. He is a God who is aloof, he is distant, he is never mentioned as a god of love anywhere in the Koran that is just apart from it. You never know for sure whether you are saved or not, because god is arbitrary.

Eric Barger: It is all about works. You can even do the 5 pillars of Islam and end up in the end with too many things on the. There are two angels in Islam, every person has 2 angels, right? There is a recording angel to write down the good things you do and the bad things you do. And you can be very orthodox about all your life, but if you do too many bad things there is no guarantee that

you will make it into paradise. Yale University is spear heading this idea or bring evangelicals and liberals and Muslims together to make us some how agree that, that one god is the same god. I wrote an article posted on my website right now about this one was, "I Can't Sign the Letter". That's the name of the article, I could not ever if I was asked to sign the letter that Yale put out that says, "Allah and Jehovah are the same." This is not the same god. You know I want to find commonality whenever I can to discuss things with other humans. But if there are trying to come together under the banner that their god is our God, no way!

Dr. Reagan: But the logic often runs like this: the Muslims believe there is one God, only one, we believe Christians, there is only one God, therefore they must believe the same God.

Nathan Jones: Well, then how do they explain Buddhism? Where there is no God. Or, Hinduism where everything is God? How can all these religions be the same path when the destination is totally different?

Dr. Reagan: Well, they can't, but how would you answer the logic, they believe in one God, therefore we must believe in the same god?

Eric Barger: Two different Gods. There is only one God, capital G. Yeah. You know that's the thing only one God capital G.

Dr. Reagan: There are a lot of false Gods.

Eric Barger: A lot of false gods. And we look at the Scripture in Galatians chapter 1, "Though we or an angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel then the one that was preached by the Apostles," the Apostle Paul is saying this, "let the messenger be accursed, let alone the false Gospel." And he says it again in verse 8 and 9, verse 9 says, "As I said before so I say now again, if any man preach any other Gospel then the one we have preached to you, let him be

accused.” We are by our being Christians we are bound to preach the one and true Gospel which says that Jesus died for the sins of the entire world when he went to the cross.

Dr. Reagan: And by world you mean people?

Eric Barger: Yes I certainly do.

Dr. Reagan: Not mother earth.

Eric Barger: Yes, I don't have the emergent idea of what the world is, the world is lost.

Dr. Reagan: Now a few minutes ago you mentioned something about judging, you said that people don't believe that God should, would judge, a loving God would not judge. And part of that also is that we should not judge each other you know. I've noticed on the Oprah Show or shows of that nature, if anybody ever stands up in the audience and says, “Well I think what you are doing is wrong or immoral.” The audience turns on them like a pack of wolves, who are you to judge, who are you to say what's right and wrong? It is different strokes for different folks. Now this leads to a major question that has to do with discernment, and that is over and over every time I write an article when I say this particular guy is way off base here. I get 10 e-mails saying, “Thou shalt not judge, we are not to judge one another.” How do you respond to that?

Eric Barger: Yeah I have gotten them to brother, because every time you mention something about what and right and wrong is, somebody comes back with the Scripture and it is the only Scripture that seems the atheist knows. Judge not lest you be judged, you know I get it all the time. But you use righteous judgment, the Scripture tells us we must judge.

Dr. Reagan: Absolutely.

Eric Barger: Anybody who tells you, or tells a viewer right now, that were not to judge does not know what the Scripture says that is the only way we can know what truth is.

Dr. Reagan: Over and over the Bible says, test this, test this, test this, test yourself how can you do that if you don't judge?

Eric Barger: That's right.

Dr. Reagan: I mean you've got to say what he is doing is wrong.

Eric Barger: Now Jesus was dealing with hypocrisy there don't judge unjustly.

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Eric Barger: Judge righteously and that is what we must do, by using the Bible. I'm not perfect, we're not perfect we know that. But what we are saying that Scripture is truth, it is perfect.

Dr. Reagan: And it doesn't mean you have to hit the person over the head with the Bible, or act like you are some self-righteous bigot, but you must at least confront them with the truth and that requires judgment.

Eric Barger: That's exactly right.

Dr. Reagan: Well I get it all the time, and the other one that I get, if you ever say anything critical of someone in Christianity even though he may be totally off the wall, immediately it is the statement, "You shall not touch those who are anointed by the Lord."

Eric Barger: Yeah and of course that is David speaking about Saul.

Dr. Reagan: I know, I know.

Eric Barger: A whole different thing. I mean if that was a New Testament edict in that fashion of course was being used about then the book of Titus, both books of Timothy, both books of Thessalonians all that would be thrown out the window. The book of Titus is very clear that those who bring division, those who are preaching false doctrine, their mouths Paul said must be stopped.

Nathan Jones: Paul even rebuked Peter.

Eric Barger: Exactly.

Dr. Reagan: Not only that but he also said, "Hey here are two guys, he named them, don't have anything to do with them because they are teaching the resurrection has already occurred."

Eric Barger: That's right, that's right. And if we don't mention those things and point those things out we do an injustice to the Church and we do damage to what the Scripture tells us to do, we abuse our calling.

Dr. Reagan: So you are saying point blank that there are not many roads to God.

Eric Barger: There is only one path. I would love to tell people there is more than one way, I would love to announce that the Book says there is more than one way. But there is only one way according to the Bible. Jesus said, "I am the way the truth and the life and no man come to the Father but by me." Either that's true or the Bible is not true, and Jesus was a liar.

Dr. Reagan: And it makes Christianity the most distinctive religion in the world because it is the only one that teaches that you can not earn salvation. Every other religion that I know of teaches salvation by works.

Eric Barger: I started to mention that about Islam because they are completely hung up on the idea of being good enough. Now we see this worming it's way into so called Christian circles with liberalism telling us; if you are just good enough, if you just get baptized, just join the church, join enough committees in your church, do a little good works here and there, read your Bible once and a while, come to church on Sunday and make sure you give your tithe. As long as you do all that everything is okay, God will sign off on you. That's not how you get there that's not how you become a Christian.

Nathan Jones: That there is even a way is a wonderful thing that God provided us a way to get to Heaven. It's like there is a guy drowning in the ocean and sharks are nipping at his heels and a boat pulls up and they throw out the life preserver and the guy yells back to the boat, "Can I have one in pink instead? How about square, do you have a square one?" The guys on the ship are like, "Take it! The sharks are there!" And he ends up drowning as he tries to swim to the boat. It is impossible! We have a way and it's a wonderful thing. Why do you need other ways to get to Heaven when God has given us one.

Eric Barger: Yeah, I have said for so long the world doesn't like these ideas. But our mission is to try to cut them off before they run headlong off the cliff.

Dr. Reagan: There you go.

Eric Barger: And even if they don't like it when we tackle them, when we get them up and walk them to the edge to show them where they were about to go they'll be for eternally grateful for us. So our mission isn't to see if they will like us

or not. And too many churches and too many and we can all name the names of the people who do this, the philosophies out there that says owe you don't want to teach about that stuff it is negative to church growth it will run people off. I say we have to preach the truth and God will then save who He will save. Who are we? We don't save anybody, we are God's glorified FedEx messengers we bring the whole truth, we've got to bring the whole truth then the Holy Spirit can work and save them. And telling people there is more then one way or you have your way, and I've got mine, you've got your way and you've got yours, all that does is help damn souls.

Part 2

Dr. Reagan: Eric I never cease to be amazed at how Christians are so easily deceived by books that are being published today. One that comes to mind is the *Celestine Prophecy* I remember when that was so popular and Christians all over the place were reading that and getting goose bumps and so forth. And it was just as New Age as it could possibly be. But in recent months there has one book in particular that has concerned me because it is much more subtle then the *Celestine Prophecy*. On the surface it appears to be just simply a very heart wrenching emotional tale about a parent trying to cope with the loss of a child. And it grabs the emotions and as you well know when you grab the emotions the mind does not work too well. And that book is called, *The Shack*, and I read it and I was deeply concerned about it theologically. What is your attitude about *The Shack*?

Eric Barger: I have the same opinion. But you know we are in an era when Christians will defend to the teeth the Harry Potter books they will then see nothing wrong with the Shack. And you know it sounds we are really down on the Church, and were not, I am for the Church. I am for the local church.

Dr. Reagan: Owe man you better believe it.

Eric Barger: I am for the local Church, I mean my ministry is to the local church, I go out and speak in the local churches 40 or more times a year, 40 weeks a year. And so I want to see the church changed and turned around so we will all understand or so the people will understand Biblical thinking, get a Biblical worldview in their hearts. But when you have *The Shack* come in that has so many it is fraught with problems so many different problems in it, it makes you wonder how could the Church have accepted this so easily? The only way is we turned off our biblical worldview and let our emotions guide us, because it is as you said a very emotional story.

Dr. Reagan: Let's get specific.

Eric Barger: Okay. *The Shack*, is by a fellow named William Paul Young, he likes to be called Paul. He is a Bible School graduate, he graduated from Warner Pacific College in Portland, Oregon after going to school in Canada in another Bible School, one that I have spoken in by the way. This is his first book and there are several things in it. First of all God passes a note to him to tell him to meet Him in the shack a place in the Oregon wilderness where his little girl we assume from the book was murdered, there a very tragic story. Well so God is now reduced to passing notes to people I thought God spoke through His Word and through His Holy Spirit to us, but now its notes.

Dr. Reagan: Yeah.

Eric Barger: So when God comes to the shack God comes in the form of an African American women named Papa, now it is tough to talk about because of the genders going on here. Well Papa is a god, an African style or a black god from Polynesian occultism this is where it came from. Now he is not about to announce this when he goes on Christian TV and radio the author and talk about

this. And there have been many Christian ministries that I am shocked that they have offered this book and talked about it favorably. But that Papa figure comes from Polynesian occultism basically. The Holy Spirit in this book is an Asian woman and the Jesus in the book is never called the Christ. What does that tell you? It is another Jesus? And of course Paul warns us that that there will be false Jesus' and false Gospels false spirits, Second Corinthians 11:3-4 and I think that it fits that classification.

Dr. Reagan: So you don't think it could be an accident that he was never called the Christ.

Eric Barger: I don't think that it is any accident at all as I read. So we have a Trinity but not THE Trinity in the book. Now the next thing we see, and there are many things but I will just bring out a couple for time sake. Jesus is said to be the best way to know Papa, not THE way to know Papa.

Dr. Reagan: The best way.

Eric Barger: Very subtle language there.

Dr. Reagan: Boy you better believe it is.

Eric Barger: That leaves the door open for of course universalism to be a truth that he is trying to bring out. The third thing is that the author crafts God into the image of a man. First it says in Romans 1:21-23, that is forbidden for us to do, to craft God into the image of a man. And I know that it is a novel and I realize you can take liberties in a novel, you can't in some other type of book. But in this case this is playing with something that the Scriptures speaks so clearly about. Now, the author is a good friend with a professor at Western Seminary in Portland who has written a very scholarly 38 page paper and has broken ties with his friend Paul Young. The author of this paper is named James DeYoung. And

he has written this paper saying that he knows that Paul Young is a Universalist they've had arguments about it. They have talked about it over and over and yet Paul Young is going on television programs, Christian TV programs and in Q&A sessions after he speaks in churches and volunteering out of the blue saying, "I am not a Universalist." And yet nobody is asking the question but he is volunteering it. And here is why, because according to this James DeYoung this professor at Western Seminary the editors of the book they took over a year trying to convince him to take the universalism out of the book and he never got it all the way out. It is still there.

Dr. Reagan: So this is not just a guess that this is a Universalist right?

Eric Barger: No this is a guy, and he is teaching what is called Reconciling Universalism which is different then the idea that all paths lead to God, that is Classical Universalism. Reconciling Universalism says that Jesus died for the sins of the whole world, that God wishes none to perish so we're all saved. It is the same thing that Carlton Pearson fell into up in Tulsa.

Dr. Reagan: Yeah.

Eric Barger: The same heresy, and by the way the doors of that church are totally closed now, and he sent the rest of his people to a Unitarian Church in Tulsa. It's the idea that we're already saved and we need to tell the world, "Bring the missionaries in off the field, because if they are in a dangerous place there in the wrong place because we don't have to tell anybody, every bodies saved, whether they ever heard about Jesus or not." This completely destroys the messages of the Bible to think like that, but that is what Reconciliation Universalism is about. And *The Shack* teaches it, and it is shocking to me how many seasoned Christians have shut off their Biblical thinking because of the emotional grip the story has on them from the very beginning of the book.

Dr. Reagan: Okay well I tell you I think you summed it up pretty well there. Great. Thank you.

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: Eric as we bring this series of programs to an end. I want to give you an opportunity to do something that you haven't had an opportunity to do yet. And I really wanted you to do it, and that is just look into that camera and speak to any viewer who may be watching this moment who does not know Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

Eric Barger: I can only say that I wish I would have done it earlier. I went to church as a child got far away from God. Finally after my life got to the very bottom of the barrel, I finally said yes to Jesus. You don't have to wait to you get that place. I know a lot of people watching right now have church backgrounds, a lot of you go to church. But if you are not positive that you know Jesus as Lord and Savior you need to pray a simple prayer and ask Him to come into your heart and then turn from your sin and walk toward Him and follow Him and seek Him. It is one thing to pray a simple prayer it is another thing to then turn from your sin and walk after Him. I just wish I would have done it earlier.

Dr. Reagan: What do you say to a person who is sitting there and saying, "Okay Eric, but you don't understand, you don't understand how evil I've been. You don't understand the horrible sins that I have committed. God could never forgive me of what I have done."

Eric Barger: I know when I read in the Scripture that Paul said he was the worst of sinners, I wondered did God know who I was, because I know what I was Dr. Dave. I know where I was and what I was. And God forgave me of my sins and cleansed me and delivered me from drugs. And He can change any life,

any person, He loves us, He wants the best for us. He is just there for you if you'll call out to Him and trust in the name of Jesus.

Dr. Reagan: Thank you so much and one other thing would you tell the viewers how they can get in touch with your ministry and get some of your wonderful materials.

Eric Barger: Thank you. The website again is EricBarger.com, E-R-I-C-B-A-R-G-E-R.com, and we'll have a link there that folks can tap that link and we will send you out an information pack. And if you don't have web access you can of course call us at 214-289-5244 and that's to get a list of our materials or for me to come to your church, and I would love to contact you, thank you.

N: Dave always asks this question and I am going to beat Dr. Reagan to the punch this time. No matter what your background is he will ask you this, so I am going to do it this time. Do you believe we're in the season of the Lord's return and if so why?

Eric Barger: I believe I could be living at the time that He'll return. I hope if I am 99 behind a pulpit on a Sunday night the last thing I preach about is the Rapture and the Coming of the Lord. That's where I believe we're at.

Dr. Reagan: What would you say is the most important sign to you that we may be living in the season of the Lord's Return?

Eric Barger: Well my expertise in dealing with cults and the occult I believe the occult and supernaturalism had to rise, the craving for supernaturalism I think it is one of the signs, but the great apostasia, the apostasy that we see around us. Do you want some more?

Nathan Jones: Yeah.

Eric Barger: Israel becoming a state again. I mean we have so many things that have happened that we see the signs of the times. Jesus told us we wouldn't know the day or the hour, but we'll know the times when we are in them.

Dr. Reagan: Well the very first one your mentioned is extremely important because in Matthew 24 when Jesus gives us a long series of signs we are to look for, the very first one He mentions is false Christ's and false prophets. And it is the only one He repeats, and He repeats it two more times and says some of these will even do major signs to deceive people.

Eric Barger: Yes, yes that's right.

Dr. Reagan: So it is very important.

Eric Barger: Yup.

Dr. Reagan: And we just had a literal explosion of this on, both in America and on the world scene.

Eric Barger: Well America is hooked on the supernatural, the world is. But not on God's supernatural and I believe that has helped prepare the way for the Antichrist that people will be craving spiritual things that of course don't lead them to God.

Dr. Reagan: We've had this guy just recently out of Puerto Rico who has come in Jesús Maranda I believe is his name, claiming to be Jesus Christ in the flesh. And just like that he's got 60 churches in the United States and people giving him everything they've got and kissing his hand and all, and he's claiming to be Jesus Christ.

Eric Barger: Yeah, and he's in south Florida I think isn't he?

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Eric Barger: Yeah, it is amazing what's happening but it is happening right before our eyes. Folks do not despair we see all these things we have the tendency to want to run for the hills and hide for cover. No, tell your lost friends about Jesus, tell people about the Lord, don't despair in this hour. This is a great hour for the Church, if we'll stand up and take advantage of it.

Dr. Reagan: Well that is what I tell pastors who so often tell me, well I don't preach on Bible prophecy ever because it doesn't have any relevance to the here and now it is just all pie in the sky. Well hey, salvation has a relevance to the here and now it's not just a fire insurance policy it has to do with how you live life right now and the blessings that you receive in this life. And the same with Bible prophecy anyone who ever believes that Jesus is really coming back and number two that that can occur at any moment will have their lives transformed, because number one they will commit their lives to holiness, and number two they will commit their lives to evangelism, they will want to share the Gospel with as many people as they can as quickly as they can. I don't know how anything can be more practical then that.

Eric Barger: Owe I think it is very practical. I mean I want to live my life as if He is coming back in any moment.

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Eric Barger: But yet plan my life as if I am going to live until I am 100.

Dr. Reagan: That's right.

Eric Barger: My grandmother is 103 in 10 months my Dad is 84 in great health. I have good genes, I have good genes on both sides.

Dr. Reagan: They'll have to beat you to death with a baseball bat.

Eric Barger: Exactly. So I want to plan my life out, but I believe He could anytime. And I think as we see these signs take place the Scripture says, "Look up for your redemption draws neigh."

Dr. Reagan: Amen, Amen.

Eric Barger: That is the Good News.

Nathan Jones: You took his line.

Dr. Reagan: Well, brother, I want to thank you again for all that you have shared with us. I praise God for your ministry. We will be praying for you regularly and we will be praying that God will magnify you voice. And that you will be able to reach more and more people particularly the Church. I am so concerned about the Church and I know you love the Church and to develop more discerning Christians, who can really discern truth and the lack of truth when they run across it.

Eric Barger: Thank you brother, I appreciate it.

Dr. Reagan: Okay. Well, folks that is our program for this week I hope that you will be back with us next week, the Lord willing. Until then this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb and Lion Ministries saying, "Look up be watchful for our redemption is drawing near."

End of Program