

LAMPLIGHTER

"Prophecy is like a lamp shining in a dark place." - II Peter 1:19

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A photograph of a Black man in a dark suit, white shirt, and striped tie, looking upwards and to the right with a slight smile. The background is a blurred cityscape with tall buildings.

Living with an
Eternal Perspective



Observations by the Editor

Embracing Paganism

Every time I think our society cannot get any worse, some new decision is made by the President, the Supreme Court or the Congress that further propels us toward paganism and chaos.

Women on the Front Lines

The latest blow came when the Obama Administration decided to open up combat positions in the military to women. What insanity! Only a barbaric culture would send its women to fight its wars.

Increasingly our men are returning from warfare with deep psychological wounds called post-traumatic stress syndrome. How much more so will women, who are by nature much more emotionally sensitive than men, be impacted by the overwhelming brutality of war?

And when women are captured in combat, does anyone really believe they will be treated humanely? Of course not. They will be raped repeatedly.

Liberal ideologues are blind to the inherent differences between men and women. They believe they are simply a matter of cultural conditioning, when the truth is that God created men and women to be very different and to fulfill different roles in the home, the Church, and society.

Liberals are determined to castrate men and debase women by making men of them — all in the name of “equality.” Well, men and women are simply not equal in physique or emotions.

When we start bringing home women from war who are totally traumatized or who are scarred by rape and torture or who are brought back home in body bags, maybe we will come to our senses, but I doubt it. We have just gone too far down the trail of paganism to turn back.

Homosexual “Rights”

The same is true of the homosexual agenda. Our President has made it clear that he is not going to be satisfied until he can outlaw all criticism of homosexuality, even by preachers in the pulpit. Our courts have already ruled that homosexual “rights” take precedence over personal religious beliefs.



Dr. Reagan with his daughter, Rachel, aboard a boat on the Sea of Galilee.

Take for example, the bizarre case that occurred recently in New Mexico. The case began in 2006, when a lesbian couple filed a complaint with the New Mexico Human Rights Commission after Elane Huginin, a local photographer who runs a small photography business with her husband, declined the couple’s request to take pictures of their commitment ceremony because of her religious beliefs concerning the definition of marriage.

In 2008, the Human Rights Commission subjected Mrs. Huginin to a one-day trial, and ultimately charged her company with sexual orientation discrimination, ordering it to pay a fine of \$6,637.94 in attorney’s fees to the plaintiff. The Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) filed an appeal of the Commission’s decision on behalf of the Christian photography company.

The New Mexico Court of Appeals ruled in behalf of the lesbian couple, in June of 2012. The Supreme Court of New Mexico has accepted the case on appeal. Let us pray that religious liberty will triumph in this case.

Obama’s Promise

In the 2008 presidential election Obama promised “Change.” He never specified what it was. He kept it intentionally vague. The American people bought the promise hook, line and sinker.

And now he is delivering what he promised, making radical changes primarily through arbitrary executive orders which are rapidly converting this nation into a secular, pagan welfare state which will soon collapse under the weight of its moral rot and its shameful debt. ❖

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Living with an Eternal Perspective

Dr. David R. Reagan

One of the greatest public servants in the history of England was William Gladstone (1809 - 1898) who served as Prime Minister four times during the latter half of the 19th Century.



William Gladstone

Gladstone was a committed Christian who always attended church. He also taught a Sunday School class throughout his adult life. In fact, his aim early in his life was to become an Anglican clergyman, but after his graduation from Oxford, his strong-willed father insisted that he enter politics.¹

Shortly before he died, Gladstone gave a speech in which he told about being visited by an ambitious young man who sought his advice about life. The lad told the elder statesman that he admired him more than anyone living and wanted to seek his advice regarding his career.²

A Remarkable Interview

“What do you hope to do when you graduate from college?” Gladstone asked.

The young man replied, “I hope to attend law school, sir, just as you did.”

“That’s a noble goal,” said Gladstone, “Then what?”

“I hope to practice law and make a good name for myself defending the poor and the outcasts of society, just as you did.”

“That’s a noble purpose,” replied Gladstone. “Then what?”

“Well, sir, I hope one day to stand for Parliament and become a servant of the people, even as you did.”

“That too is a noble hope. What then?” asked Gladstone.

“I would hope to be able to serve in the Parliament with great distinction, evidencing integrity and a concern for justice — even as you did.”

“What then?” asked Gladstone.

“I would hope to serve the government as Prime Minister with the same vigor, dedication, vision, and integrity as you did.”

“And what then?” asked Gladstone.

“I would hope to retire with honors and write my memoirs — even as you are presently doing — so that others could learn from my mistakes and triumphs.”

“All of that is very noble,” said Gladstone, “and then what?”

The young man thought for a moment. “Well, sir, I suppose I will then die.”

“That’s correct,” said Gladstone. “And then what?”

The young man looked puzzled. “Well, sir,” he answered

hesitantly, “I’ve never given that any thought.”

“Young man,” Gladstone responded, “the only advice I have for you is for you to go home, read your Bible, and *think about eternity.*”

Good Advice

Think about eternity! What good advice. Life goes by so quickly. It is like a vapor that is here one moment and evaporates the next. We are preparing for eternity. Are you ready?

Or, are you living like you expect to live forever? Are you focused on this life, determined to accumulate all the money, power and fame you possibly can? Are you like the young man who visited Gladstone — are you a person who has never given eternity a thought? If so, the Word of God has a stern warning for you (James 4:13-15).³

And now I have a word for you who brashly announce, “Today — at the latest, tomorrow — we’re off to such and such a city for the year. We’re going to start a business and make a lot of money.”

You don’t know the first thing about tomorrow. You’re nothing but a wisp of fog, catching a brief bit of sun before disappearing.

Instead, make it a habit to say, “If the Master wills it and we’re still alive, we’ll do this or that.”

The Fleeting Nature of Life

This passage always reminds me of an incident that occurred in my life several years ago. A dear friend of mine whom I had taught with in a Texas college called me one day and told me he had been diagnosed with prostate cancer.

“The doctor has given me only six months to live,” he reported.

I told him I was very sorry to hear the news, and I promised to pray for him and his family. Then, I added, “But keep in mind, I may be dead before you.”

“Oh? Do you have cancer too?” he asked.

“No,” I responded, “it’s just that I do not have the promise of even one day of life, much less six months.”

We all tend to live like we are going to live forever, when the fact is that we are all mortal and can die at any moment from a thousand different causes, natural or accidental.

Ironically, the Bible tells us that we are to live like we are going to live forever — but not on this earth. We are to live in preparation for eternity, hopefully an eternity with God.



“... he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal.” Jesus in John 12:25.

Most likely you are a born-again believer who has given serious thought to eternity, but who finds it difficult to maintain an eternal perspective. You repeatedly find yourself caught up with the problems of life, and the result is stress, anxiety, and even depression.

Living with an eternal perspective is one of the keys to living as an overcomer. It is a virtue that is going to become increasingly important as society continues to disintegrate and Christians come under increasing attack.

What is the secret to maintaining an eternal perspective? Much of the answer lies in your attitude about this world.

Your Attitude Toward the World

Stop for a moment and think. What is your attitude about this world? Are you enthusiastic about it? Or do you feel uncomfortable with it? Do you love the world? Or do you often feel alienated from it? Are you at home in this world? Or do you feel like a stranger?

There’s an old Negro spiritual song that always challenges me to examine my attitude toward the world. The first verse goes as follows:⁴

This world is not my home,
I’m just a passing through.
My treasures are laid up
Somewhere beyond the blue.

The angels beckon me
From heaven’s open door,
And I can’t feel at home
In this world anymore.

Do those words express your feeling about this world? What word would you use to summarize your feeling? Zealous? Anxious? Enamored? Estranged? Are you comfortable or do you feel ill-at-ease?

My Attitude

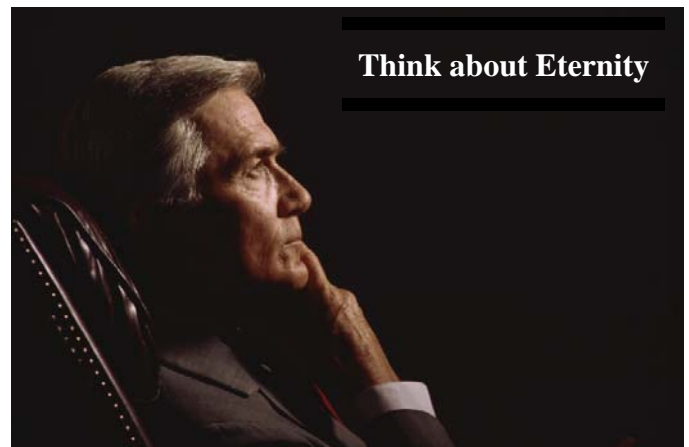
Let me ask your indulgence for a moment as I share my personal feeling about this world. The word I would use is “hate.” Yes, I hate this world. I hate it with a passion so strong and so intense that I find it difficult to express in words.

Now, let me hasten to clarify my feeling by stating that I do not hate God’s beautiful and marvelous creation. I have been privileged to see the majesty of the Alps. I have been awed by the rugged beauty of Alaska. I never cease to be amazed by the creative wonders of God in the great American Southwest. I have been blessed to see the incredible beauty of Cape Town, South Africa. And I have been overwhelmed time and time again by the stark and almost mystical bareness of the Judean Wilderness in Israel.

When I say that I “hate” this world, I’m not speaking of God’s creation. I’m speaking, instead, of the evil world system that we live in. Let me give you some examples of what I’m talking about:

- I hate a world where thousands of babies are murdered every day in their mother’s wombs.
- I hate a world where young people in the prime of life have their lives destroyed by illicit drugs.
- I hate a world that coddles criminals and makes a mockery of justice.
- I hate a world that glorifies crime in its movies and television programs.
- I hate a world that applauds indecent and vulgar performers like Lady Gaga.
- I hate a world where government has converted gambling from a vice to a virtue.
- I hate a world in which professional athletes are paid millions of dollars a year while hundreds of thousands sleep homeless in the streets every night.
- I hate a world where people judge and condemn one another on the basis of skin color.
- I hate a world that calls evil good by demanding that homosexuality be recognized as a legitimate, alternative lifestyle.
- I hate a world in which mothers are forced to work while their children grow up in impersonal day care centers.
- I hate a world in which people die agonizing deaths from diseases like cancer and AIDS.
- I hate a world where families are torn apart by alcohol abuse.
- I hate a world where every night I see reports on the television news of child abuse, muggings, kidnappings, murders, terrorism, wars, and rumors of wars.
- I hate a world that uses the name of my God, Jesus, as a curse word.

I hope you understand now what I mean when I say, “I hate this world!”



Jesus’ Viewpoint

But how I personally feel about this world is not important. The crucial point for you to consider is the biblical view. Let’s look at it, and as we do so, compare the biblical view with your own.

Let’s begin with the viewpoint that Jesus told us we should have. It is recorded in John 12:25 — “He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal.”

Those are strong words. They are the kind that cause us to wince and think, “Surely He did not mean what He said.” But the context indicates that Jesus meant exactly what He said. So, what about it? Do you hate your life in this world or do you love it?

The Viewpoint of the Apostles

The apostle Paul gave a very strong warning about getting comfortable with the world. In Romans 12:2 he wrote: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” How do you measure up to this exhortation?

Are you conformed to the world? Have you adopted the world’s way of dress? What about the world’s way of speech or the world’s love of money? Are your goals the goals of the world — power, success, fame, and riches?

The brother of Jesus expressed the matter in very pointed language. He said, “Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God” (James 4:4).

Are you a friend of the world? Are you comfortable with what the world has to offer in music, movies, television programs and best selling books? Friendship with the world is hostility toward God!

In fact, James puts it even stronger than that, for at the beginning of the passage I previously quoted (James 4:4), he says that those who are friendly with the world are spiritual adulterers.

The apostle John makes the same point just as strongly in 1 John 2:15-16:

Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves 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 boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

There is no way to escape the sobering reality of these words. Do you love the world? If so, the love of the Father is not in you!

The Focus of Your Mind

Paul tells us how to guard against becoming comfortable with the world. In Colossians 3:2 he says, “Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.” In Philippians 4:8 he expresses the same admonition in these words:

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.



Christians are called to be “aliens and strangers” in this world because we are passing through on our way to our ultimate heavenly home.

As these verses indicate, one of the keys to living a triumphant life in Christ — to living a joyous and victorious life in the midst of a world wallowing in despair — is to live with a conscious eternal perspective.

What does that mean? In the words of Peter, that means living as “aliens and strangers” in this world (1 Peter 2:11). Similarly, in the words of the writer of Hebrews, it means living as “strangers and exiles.” (Hebrews 11:13). Paul put it this way: “Do not set your minds on earthly things, for our citizenship is in heaven” (Philippians 3:19-20).

The great Christian writer, C. S. Lewis, explained that to live with an eternal perspective means “living as commandos operating behind the enemy lines, preparing the way for the coming of the Commander-in-Chief.”⁵

A Biblical Example

There is a powerful biblical example of what can happen when a believer gets his eyes off the Lord and starts focusing on transient things rather than eternal matters. It is found in Psalm 73.

All students of the Bible are familiar with Psalm 51 in which David confessed his sin of adultery with Bathsheba. But few seem to be aware of Psalm 73 which contains the confession of David’s worship leader, Asaph.

In this remarkable psalm, Asaph confesses that he almost lost his faith when he lost his eternal perspective. It happened when he did something that all of us tend to do from time to time — namely, he took his eyes off the Lord and put them instead on the wicked. When he did so, he noticed the prosperity of the wicked and began to wonder if his devotion to God was really worth the effort (Psalm 73:1-3).

Has that ever happened to you? Surely it has. I think it has happened to all of us from time to time.

Struggling with the Prosperity of the Wicked

It’s the end of the month, and the bills are due. You’re sitting at your desk writing check after check. Suddenly, you reach that minimum balance you must maintain in order to pay the daily bills of the new month — food, gasoline, clothing, repairs, etc. But you still have a stack of bills to pay! You sigh in exasperation, wondering when you will ever be able to catch up with what you owe.

As you sit there staring dejectedly at your meager balance, you begin to think about a friend of yours at work. He is a vain and profane man, with a mouth like a sewer. He could care less about God. He is unfaithful to his wife. He ignores his children. He is consumed with sports and gambles constantly. Yet, he never seems to have a worry. He lives in a beautiful house, drives a fancy car, and eats at the finest restaurants.

Your heart begins to fill with envy and anger. You feel like crying out, “Lord, I serve You faithfully, and all I ever seem to get in return is trouble. My colleague at work is a complete

reprobate, and he doesn't seem to have a worry in the world! What's wrong? Am I spinning my wheels with You? Is my tithe a waste of my money? Is my faithfulness of no concern to You? The way things are going, I might as well serve the devil and get some enjoyment out of life!"

Sound familiar? Well, this is exactly what happened to Asaph. He lost his eternal perspective, got his eyes on the wicked, and started wallowing in self-pity (Psalm 73:2-3).

Asaph's Sin

It's amazing how irrational we become when we allow self-pity to take over our thinking. When it happened to Asaph, he started fantasizing about the rich. He began to tell himself that they are "always at ease," always increasing in wealth, never facing the problems of other people (Psalm 73:4-5,12). All of which, of course, is utter nonsense. In fact, the opposite is true. The rich often tend to have far more problems than other people. For one thing, they must constantly be concerned about their money — how to protect it and multiply it.

It was while Asaph was caught up in this fantasy world that he committed a grievous sin against God. He blasphemed the love and faithfulness of God by exclaiming: "Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and washed my hands in innocence; for I have been stricken all day long and chastened every morning" (Psalm 73:13-14).

Asaph's Turning Point

Asaph was literally on the verge of losing his faith. His spirit was in turmoil. He was wrestling with monstrous doubt. The wrestling match continued until . . . "Until I came into the sanctuary of God; then I perceived their end [the end of the wicked]" (Psalm 73:17).

Asaph is maddeningly vague at this point. He does not tell us what happened to him when he went to the Lord's house, except that his eternal perspective was restored. Was it a song that touched his heart? Could it have been a scripture reading or a sermon? Perhaps it was a word of encouragement from a discerning friend. It might even have been a death in his family. We just don't know. All we know for sure is that something touched his heart and reminded him of the eternal destiny of the wicked.

He states that he was reminded that the wicked walk in "slippery places" and that God may cause them to be cast down at any moment, being swept away by "sudden terror" (Psalm 73:18-19). In other words, Asaph was reminded that life is very tentative — here one moment and gone the next.

The Impact of Death

I think this is the reason that the death of Princess Diana had such an enormous impact on the world. Here was a woman who



An artist's rendition of Asaph leading in worship on the occasion of the laying of the cornerstone of the Temple.

had it all — everything the world dreams of having. She had beauty, charm, wealth, fame, and influence. She had the "good life." Yet, in one terrifying moment, it all disappeared. She was reduced to equality with all of us — a mortal person gone to meet her Creator.

It was a sobering event. It drove home the transitory nature of life. I'm sure it caused many people to pause and think about eternity for the first time in their lives.

The Bible says that most people live in life-long fear of death. In fact, the Bible puts it even stronger than that. It says that most people live in "slavery" to the fear of death (Hebrews 2:15). This is the reason that a death in the family, or the death of a friend or a celebrity, al-

ways has such an impact. It reminds us of our mortality, and it triggers our eternal perspective.

Asaph's Faith Restored

I think it is interesting to note that once Asaph's eternal perspective was restored, he looked back on his combat with doubt and marveled over how stupid he had been. He concluded that he was as "senseless and ignorant" as a beast (Psalm 73:21-22).

Asaph wrapped up his psalm by praising the Lord for His faithfulness in words reminiscent of Paul when he wrote, "If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself" (2 Timothy 2:13).

Asaph expressed his restored priorities in memorable words (Psalm 73:25-28):

Whom have I in heaven but You?
And besides You, I desire nothing on earth.
My flesh and my heart fail,
But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
For, behold, those who are far from You will perish;
You have destroyed all those who are unfaithful to You.
But as me, the nearness of God is my good;
I have made the Lord God my refuge,
That I may tell of all Your works.

The solution to Asaph's spiritual agony was the restoration of his eternal perspective. He was reminded that this life is fleeting, and a day of judgment is coming. He realized that he may never see justice in this life, but one day justice will prevail. He realized that he had been called to live by faith and not by sight.

Another Test of Attitude

Let me give you one last test for determining whether or not you are living with an eternal perspective: How do you feel about the Lord's return? This is an acid test that will determine whether you are in love with the world or the Lord.

The attitude of the person who is in love with the world can best be expressed in these words: "I want the Lord to return, but . . ." There is always a "but."

- "I want the Lord to return, but I want Him to come after I have made a million dollars."
- "I want the Lord to come, but I want Him to come after I've written a great novel."
- "I want the Lord to come, but I want Him to come after I've made the cover of *Time*."
- "I want the Lord to come, but I want Him to come after I've built a great church."
- "I want the Lord to come, but I want Him to come after I'm 85 years old and have experienced all that life has to offer."

What these people are really saying is, "I want Jesus to come, but I don't want Him messing up my life!" They are in love with the world.

You see, when you are in love with someone, you want to be with them. That's a fact of life. Watch people who have just fallen in love. They want to be with each other all the time. When they are apart, they are constantly on the phone talking about when they will be together again!

The same is true of the Lord. If you truly love Jesus, you will want to be with Him. You will talk with Him in prayer. You will fellowship with Him in His Word and in worship. But these forms of communication will never satisfy your longing to be in His presence, to have personal, intimate fellowship with Him, face to face.

You will be like Paul, willing to stay on in this world serving the Lord, but yearning for the day when you will be united with Him, either through death or His return (2 Corinthians 5:8 and Philippians 1:23-24).

A Practical Suggestion

I suggest that the next time you let your eternal perspective slip, remember Psalm 73 and read it. When you finish, reverse the numbers and go to Psalm 37. There you will find a powerful summary of what Asaph learned. It is a psalm of Asaph's mentor, King David.

David says, "Do not fret because of evildoers . . . for they will wither quickly like the grass and fade like the green herb" (verses 1-2). He tells us what to do instead: "Trust in the Lord, and do good . . . delight yourself in the Lord" (verses 3-4). Over and over again he warns us not to fret over evildoers, for he says the day will come when they will be "cut off" (verse 9). In contrast, "those who wait upon the Lord" shall "inherit the earth" (verse 9).

What is Your Attitude?

Are you focused on this world? Are you attached to it, or do you have a sense of the fact that you are only passing through, heading for an eternal home?

This life is transitory. This life is only a prelude to eternity. The song writer, Tillit S. Teddlie put it all in perspective when he wrote:⁶

Earth holds no treasures
But perish with using,
However precious they be;

Yet there's a country
To which I am going:
Heaven holds all to me.

Why should I long
For the world with its sorrows,
When in that home o'er the sea,
Millions are singing
The wonderful story?
Heaven holds all to me.

Heaven holds all to me,
Brighter its glory will be;
Joy without measure
Will be my treasure:
Heaven holds all to me.

There is a more contemporary song that sums up the whole essence of what it means to live with an eternal perspective:⁷

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth
Will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace.



Leonard Ravenhill

A number of years ago I was given the blessing of meeting a great man of God named Leonard Ravenhill, a prophetic preacher from England. After our meeting, we corresponded briefly. Right before he died, in the last letter he sent me, he enclosed a small card containing a brief, one sentence message. He urged me to memorize the message and live it daily.

That was July of 1988. I still have the card. It is worn and tattered because I have made it a point to keep it in my shirt pocket at all times. The message printed on it is simple but profound: "Lord, keep me eternity conscious." ✚

Notes:

- 1) Roy Jenkins, *Gladstone: A Biography* (New York, New York: Random House, 1997), 768 pages.
- 2) There are many versions of this conversation that circulate on the Internet, all making the same point. The version reproduced here is a composite prepared by the author.
- 3) Eugene H. Peterson, *The Message* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Navpress, 2002), p. 572.
- 4) Albert Brumley, "This World is Not My Home (I'm Just A Passing Thru)," a Negro spiritual of unknown origin arranged by Albert E. Brumley. Arrangement © by Albert E. Brumley.
- 5) The author was unable to locate the precise source of this quotation that is attributed to C. S. Lewis. Lewis refers several times to "living on enemy territory" in his classic, *Mere Christianity*, (New York, New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1960), p. 51.
- 6) Tillit S. Teddlie, "Heaven Holds All for Me," public domain.
- 7) Helen H. Lemmel, "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus," © 1922, renewed 1950 by Singspiration, Inc.

This article is abbreviated from a chapter contained in Dr. Reagan's book, *Living for Christ in the End Times*.



The Exclusionary Promises of God



Dennis Pollock

(Editor’s note: Dennis Pollock is a former evangelist for Lamb & Lion Ministries. He currently heads up his own ministry called Spirit of Grace. It is an evangelistic ministry that focuses on proclaiming the Gospel in Africa. You can find his website at www.sogmin.org.)



Dennis Pollock

In the New Testament there are three lists given, which tell us plainly who will not make it to Heaven. One is found in First Corinthians 6, and the other two are listed in the last two chapters of the book of Revelation. I call these the “exclusionary promises.” We often talk about claiming the promises of God, but these are not promises any sane person would ever want to claim. Claim them or not, however, these promises will be fulfilled in the lives of all who fit the qualifications.

Someone once said that when we get to Heaven there will be three surprises: who will be there that we thought wouldn’t make it, who will be missing that we were certain would surely be there, and the fact that we are there. The three lists we are going to take a look at clearly identify some of those whom you will never see walking the golden streets or drinking the water of life.

The Three Lists

The first list is found in Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians. He writes:

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Corinthians 6:9,10)

The second listing, found in Revelation 21, declares:

But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. (Revelation 21:8)

And the third and final list is found in the next chapter, the final chapter of the Bible, where we read:

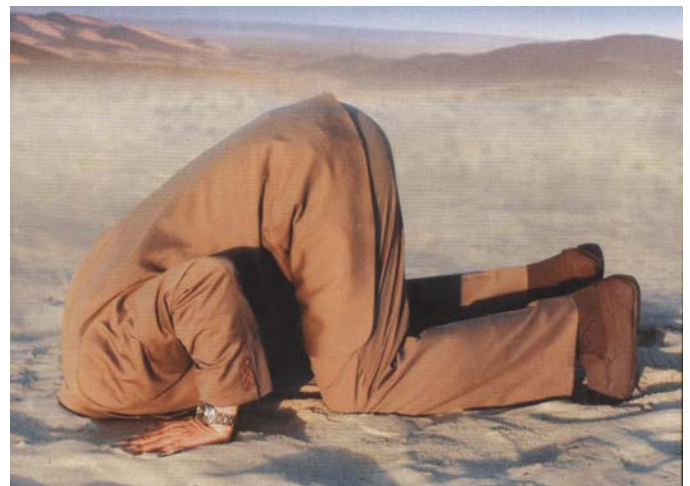
Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexu-

ally immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie. (Revelation 22:14,15)

All three passages are saying essentially the same thing: people who practice certain wicked behaviors will not go to Heaven. The First Corinthians passage says they will not inherit the kingdom of God; the Revelation 21 passage says they will “have their part” in the lake of fire; and the Revelation 22 passage says that they will not be allowed into the holy city, New Jerusalem. In short you might sum up what these verses are saying with this idea: don’t expect to find wicked people in Heaven.

Now that hardly seems revolutionary, but it does elicit a few questions. An immediate thought that will occur to some is that it seems kind of surprising to see these lists, given so much emphasis in the New Testament on grace. If we are not saved by what we do, why should anyone be punished for what they do? And what about the idea of “believe on Jesus and be saved?” If these people believe on Jesus, why shouldn’t they be saved, even if they do practice these behaviors? If grace really means grace and if believe really means believe, why should it matter what we do? Aren’t we all just “sinners saved by grace?”

Don’t Be Deceived!



<http://chuckv.co.za>

We find the reason for these lists clearly declared in the First Corinthians passage, which says, “Do you not know?” and “Do not be deceived . . .” Paul starts out with, “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?” He seems to be implying that they should know this, but in fact they do not know it. He follows this with, “Do not be deceived...” Here we have the reason the Holy Spirit inspired Paul and John to include these lists in the holy Scriptures: It is easy for many to assume that since salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus, it doesn’t really matter how we live, as long as we believe. Paul’s words, “Do not be deceived,” and these three lists serve as a flashing red

light to those trusting in a mental belief which has never transformed their lives.

By listing specific sins, the Bible grabs the attention of the readers, and forces them to recognize their perilous situation. Had the Bible merely said, "Bad, nasty, wicked people will never make it to Heaven," no one would have ever considered that this referred to them. But when a promiscuous man or an alcoholic, or a homosexual or a swindler reads this, he knows instantly that this is pointing straight at him.

It is interesting that the First Corinthians list, describing people who will not inherit the kingdom of God was written by the apostle Paul, the foremost expositor of the grace of Jesus. Some have decided that salvation by grace means that it hardly matters how you live. Jesus accepts us one and all, as long as we believe in Him.



But grace does not mean a free pass to sin as you like. Salvation is not a matter of receiving a Jesus shield to hold above your head while you fornicate, steal from your company, and cheat on your taxes, so that God only sees Jesus and isn't even

aware of your wicked, ungodly lifestyle. In Romans Paul writes, "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace" (Romans 6:14).

Grace does not free us to sin; grace gives us power over sin! To Timothy Paul writes, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Timothy 2:19). Certainly there is forgiveness when we slip, but forgiveness is not a license to continually trample upon the blood of Jesus.

Observations from the Exclusionary Lists



As we review the three lists of people that you will not see in Heaven one type of sin stands out as particularly prominent. It is the sin of sexual immorality. In First Corinthians Paul's first five categories of sinners include: fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, and sodomites. He goes on to list others, but it is significant that four out of the first five sins listed are sexual sins. God could hardly have said it any more plainly. Having sex outside of marriage is a big deal to Him; it will keep you out of Heaven.

Some years ago I had a man come to me and ask me to mentor him in the things of God. He was a likeable guy, but it soon became clear that he was something like Reuben of the Old Testament: as unstable as water. We got together from time to

time, and then he dropped out of sight and I didn't see him for a while. When I finally saw him again I was eager to find out how he was doing spiritually. He was in a backslidden condition, but he wanted me to not think too badly of him, and he told me, "I'm really not doing anything too wrong... except that when I go out with women on dates I usually sleep with them." I gave him Paul's words and told him the Bible declares that fornicators will not inherit the kingdom of God - that what he was doing was no small thing.

When you place the three exclusionary lists side by side you discover that sexual immorality is found in all three lists. Some have worried that since they have slipped into the sin of adultery, or had sex with several partners before marriage, there is no hope for them to live with God in eternity. This is most definitely not what the Scripture is saying. These passages are not referring to people who fall under temptation, and then repent and are restored to the path of righteousness, or those who sinned sexually before coming to Christ, but rather to those who regularly, consistently, and flagrantly live in these sins without repentance.

A hunter is one who hunts regularly. A fisherman is one who fishes regularly. He does it today, plans to do it tomorrow, and has no thoughts at all about ever stopping. Likewise the fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals, swindlers, and drunkards in these three lists are people who practice these sins regularly, frequently, without feelings of guilt, and with no intention of ever giving up their sins.

Idol Worship



Another sin which makes all three lists is the sin of idolatry. In the days of the New Testament idolatry was common and it was literal. There were literal idols around in those days that men and women worshiped, idols made of stone and wood.

Today that type of idolatry is almost non-existent, especially in the western nations, but spiritual idolatry is as rampant as ever. Modern idolatry exists when your major life obsession is with anything other than God.

God is very serious about this. He demands that He be our supreme love and receive our foremost allegiance. Christians are permitted hobbies, but they are allowed only one true passion — and that must be our triune God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord has declared that the first and greatest of all the commandments of God is: "you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30). Those who refuse to do so will never see that holy city whose streets are made of gold and where pain and sorrow, tears and death are not allowed.

No Liars Allowed

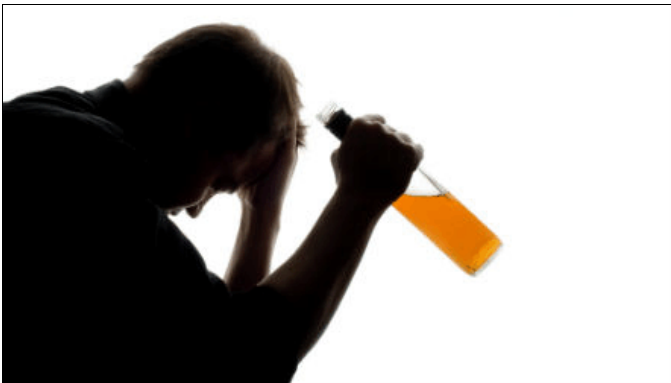


<http://health.usnews.com>

One surprise we find is that lying makes both of the Revelation lists. In fact the Scriptures seem to put an extra emphasis upon this sin. In Revelation 21 we are told that “all liars shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.” And in Revelation 22 it says that “whoever loves and practices a lie” will not enter the holy city . . .”

I was always very careful to emphasize to my children that Christians do not lie and that the Bible tells us that liars will not go to Heaven. One of the funniest and most unforgettable scenes from my child-raising days was when my youngest son confronted his brother over what he supposed was a lie. The little guy was furious with his older brother over this, and shouted at the top of his lungs, “Liars go to Hell, liars go to Hell!” His spirit may not have been exactly right, but his theology was right on. Revelation tells us that hell is exactly where all liars will go.

No Drunkards (Alcoholics)



<http://e-watchman.com>

One sin that makes the First Corinthians list runs contrary to our modern thinking about addictions. Paul declares that drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God. Modern psychology is telling us that alcoholism is a disease and has nothing to do with one’s morality. If you drink like a fish it is because you have alcoholism disease, or perhaps an alcoholic gene that makes you do what you do.

But God tells us that being a drunk is not a disease; it is a sin. The word of God does not say that people with cancer or heart disease, or smallpox, or cholera, or malaria will not make it to Heaven, but it does tell us that drunkards, people who frequently and consistently get drunk, will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Forgiven

We find some wonderful words of encouragement in the First Corinthians exclusionary list. After Paul finishes declaring that fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals, swindlers, and drunkards will not inherit God’s kingdom, he adds this postscript: “And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:11).

The Corinthian believers had (past tense) been drunkards, fornicators, and idolaters, but now all that was changed. Jesus Christ had come into their lives, forgiven their sins, and lifted them out of their pit of sin. They were now children of God, justified in the sight of God through Christ’s blood, and with just as much a hope of Heaven as those who had never indulged in those things in their lives.

Such is the power of the cross, blood, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. Or as Paul put it: “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1). ❖

How to Live in a Pagan Society

Dr. Reagan wrote this book in the year 2000. He wanted to identify the two greatest challenges facing Christians as we began a new century. And he wanted to outline in detail some ways that Christians could respond to those challenges.

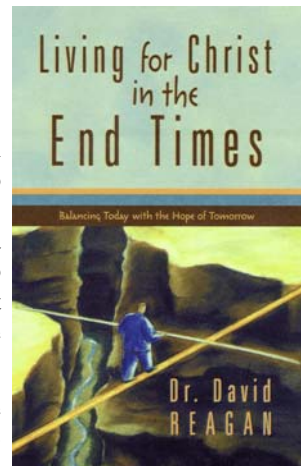
The two challenges were the decay of society and growing apostasy in the Church. Both of these trends have continued full speed ahead since the book was written.

Today, 12 years later, we are living in the midst of a thoroughly pagan society, and the witness of the Church has been destroyed by dismissal of the authority of the Scriptures and friendship with the world.

Dr. Reagan’s prescription for how to live in the midst of such paganism in both the Church and society is found in a series of challenging chapters:

- 1) Standing on the Word of God
- 2) Believing in the Power of God
- 3) Relying on the Holy Spirit
- 4) Practicing Tough Faith
- 5) Ordering Your Priorities
- 6) Keeping an Eternal Perspective
- 7) Standing for Righteousness
- 8) Persisting in Prayer
- 9) Surrendering in Worship
- 10) Clinging to Hope

The book runs 263 pages in length and sells for \$15, plus the cost of mailing. ❖



APOSTASY

Gone to Seed!

Dr. David R. Reagan

You will have to see it to believe it, and you can see it at www.queenjamesbible.com.

What I'm talking about is a new "Gay Bible" that was published in December 2012. The very people who put this abomination together have dubbed it The Queen James Bible!

The name they have given it is based on two things. First, the text of the bible is the King James Version as it existed in 1769 (why that date is never explained). Second, they argue that King James was a bisexual who had many gay lovers — hence, the Queen James Version.

This perverted "bible" is not a new translation, nor is it even a new paraphrase. Again, it is the King James Version. The only thing different about it is that those who published it simply rewrote the 8 verses in the Old and New Testaments that specifically condemn homosexual behavior.

The "bible" features a rainbow colored cross on the cover — the colors that have been adopted as the symbol of the LGBT Movement (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender). The paperback edition sells on Amazon.com for \$34.95.

Clothed in Mystery

The background of the "bible" is mysterious. No publisher is identified, nor are any editors mentioned by name. On its Amazon purchase page, the author is listed as God, and Jesus Christ is named as a "contributor." (What blasphemy!)

The mystery continues with the press release in December that announced the new "bible." It was signed by "Reverend J. Pearson of the Holy Innocents Episcopal Church in San Francisco." Internet searches produce no information about such a person, and the website of the church does not list such a person on its staff.

A Misleading Claim

The press release emphasizes that homosexuality was never mentioned in any English language Bible prior to the 1946 Revised Standard Version. It is true that the word, homosexual, was not contained in any English Bible prior to 1946, but that was because the first known use of the word in the English language did not occur until 1892.¹

The important thing is not what the English Bible says, but what the Hebrew and Greek texts have to say. And in both the Old and New Testaments, homosexuality is clearly mentioned in the original languages in graphic detail and is condemned. Take Leviticus 18:22 for example: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is an abomination" (KJV).

In the New Testament, in 1 Corinthians 6:9, a list of sinners

is presented who "shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Included in this list are the "effeminate" and "abusers of themselves with mankind" (KJV). The latter phrase is translated as "homosexuals" in most modern translations (NKJV, NLT, NIV, ESV and NASV). The use of the term, homosexual, is entirely appropriate, for the Greek term used is *arsenokoites*, which, according to *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* means "one who lies with a male as a female."²

The Greek word is a compound one made up of two terms: *arsenos*, which means male, and *koitain*, which means sleep with and have sexual relations with. As one expert has put it, the literal, if not wooden, translation of the term would be "male bedders."³

Incredibly, the editor's notes in the "bible" say that they originally just considered deleting the 8 offending verses from the Bible! They decided against that approach because it "brushes the problem under the rug."⁴ Also, they felt that people would throw Revelation

22:18-19 at them which warns against editing the Bible — even though they claim that warning applies only to the book of Revelation. So, they decided to leave the verses in, but to rewrite them. As they put it, "We wanted our Bible bullet-proof from the ones shooting bullets."⁵

Imaginative Editing

The "editing" they proceeded to do was right out of Alice in Wonderland. Declaring Leviticus 18:22 to be a "horribly outdated" moral code, they rewrote it to read: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind in the temple of Molech: it is an abomination."⁶ The words, "in the temple of Molech," were simply made up and inserted in an effort to argue that the verse is talking about sex with male prostitutes in pagan temples.

The Genesis 19 story concerning the homosexuals of Sodom and Gomorrah who demanded to have sex with the men visiting Lot is converted into a story about "bullying strangers" and raping them.⁸ And the New Testament reference to the story in Jude 1:7 is rewritten to condemn sex with angels!⁹

Romans 1:26-27, which clearly condemns both lesbian and gay sex is written off as "obtuse language."¹⁰ These verses are then reinterpreted to refer to woman defiling themselves, as with "pagan dancing" and the men "worshipping pagan idols."¹¹

Finally, in 1 Timothy 1:9-10 there is a list of unlawful acts. In modern English translations, verse 10 refers to "immoral men and homosexuals" (NASV). The King James refers to "whoremongers" and those who "defile themselves with mankind." The editors of the Gay Bible changed the verse by dropping the words, "with mankind."¹²

Concluding Thoughts

The press release announcing the publication of the "bible" concluded with these words: "You can't choose your sexuality, but you can choose Jesus. Now you can choose a Bible too."¹³

Yes, people are free to choose the Jesus of their choice. But it is only the true Jesus who saves, not the false Jesus of the



Mormons or the Jehovah's Witnesses or the editors of the Gay Bible who have selected a gay-friendly Jesus who winks at their sin.

"But Jesus never specifically condemned gay sex," they always claim. He didn't have to because in His teaching about sex, He made it clear that all sex outside a marriage relationship between a man and a woman is immoral and sinful (Matthew 19: 4-5).

The editors of the Gay Bible have done exactly what the editors of the Jehovah's Witnesses Bible did in 1961 when they published their *New World Translation*. They rewrote all the verses they disagreed with.

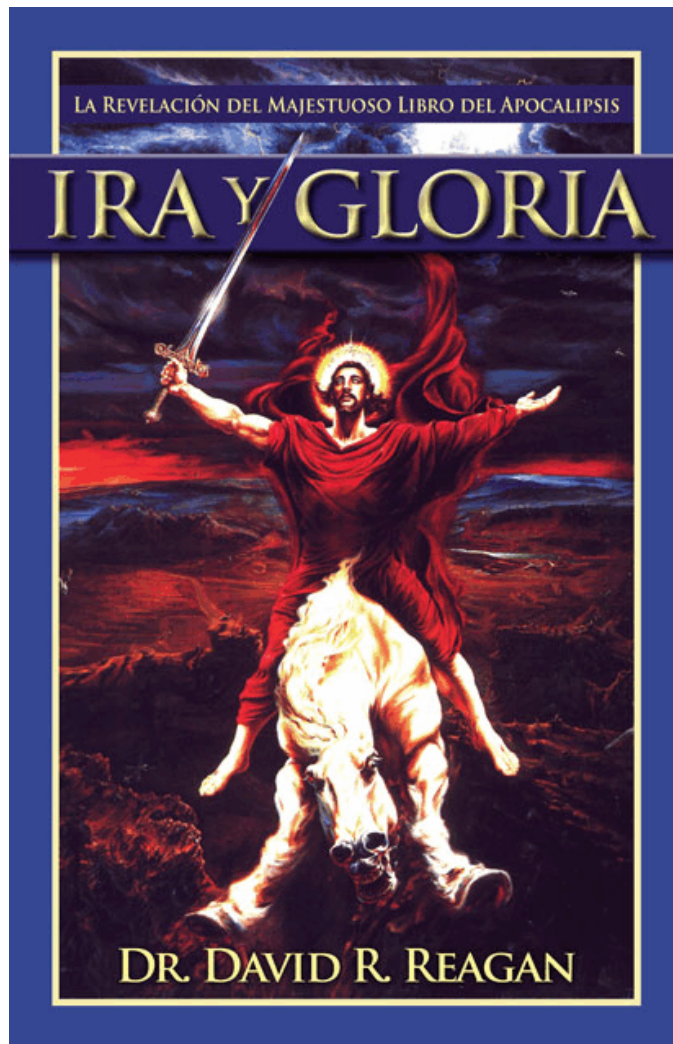
What will be next? The Adulterer's Bible? The Fornicator's Bible? Why not go all the way and just cut out all the verses that refer to sin?

But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self . . . unholy . . . haters of good . . . lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God . . ." 2 Timothy 3:1-4 ❖

Notes:

- 1) *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, www.m-w.com.
- 2) "New Testament Greek Lexicon — King James Version," www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/kjv.
- 3) William Muehlenberg, "Review of the Queen James Bible," www.amazon.com.
- 4) "Editor's Notes to the Queen James Bible," <http://queenjamesbible.com/gay-bible>, page 2.
- 5) *Ibid.*
- 6) *Ibid.*, pages 2 and 4.
- 7) *Ibid.*, pages 5-6.
- 8) *Ibid.*, page 3.
- 9) *Ibid.*, pages 11-12.
- 10) *Ibid.*, page 6.
- 11) *Ibid.*, pages 7-8.
- 12) *Ibid.*, page 11.
- 13) "A Gay Bible," <http://queenjamesbible.com>, page 2.

New Spanish Version of Wrath & Glory



Dr. Reagan's survey of the book of Revelation has just been published in a Spanish edition. It has been a long and tedious project, but the finished product is outstanding.

The translation was done by one of Christendom's finest Spanish translators, Dr. Andrés Carrodegua of Hialeah, Florida. The funds for the translation and printing were supplied by Prophecy Partner Joe Wright of Clermont, Florida, the former pastor of Central Christian Church in Wichita, Kansas.

We have a limited quantity of the printed edition. This is a missions outreach project, so we are making the printed copies available for only \$5 each plus the cost of shipping. We can supply free copies (for the cost of shipping) to Spanish ministries.

We are going to make the book available for free downloads as an e-book or a pdf file. Donald Dolmus in Nicaragua will make these electronic editions of the book available on his website at www.endefensadelafe.org.

If you are familiar with a Spanish ministry, let them know about the availability of this new book. ❖

School Shootings

Dr. David R. Reagan

After the recent school shooting tragedy in Connecticut, I noticed that the TV news programs focused on interviewing psychologists and psychiatrists as they sought an explanation for the senseless rampage. And most of what I heard in response to their questions was what I would call “psychobabble.”

But their questions got me to thinking. It occurred to me that during the time I was in the public school system, from the first grade in 1945 to my senior year in high school in 1956, there were no such massacres. And that caused me to wonder, “What has changed?”

The Reinterpretation of the First Amendment

The first thing that came to mind was the way in which our legal system has distorted the First Amendment of our Constitution from stating there must be a separation of church and state to meaning there must be separation of religion and state. It is true that the words, “separation of church and state,” do not appear in the First Amendment, but that was clearly the meaning of the statement:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . .

In short, the First Amendment prohibited the government from establishing an official state church, while it guaranteed the free exercise of religion. Nothing more. But since the 1960’s secular judges have changed the interpretation of the First Amendment to mean that the state must be divorced from religion.

That was never the intention of our Founding Fathers. In fact, they emphasized in their writings that a representative form of government could continue to exist only if it were based upon religious morality. Consider the following statements by our first two presidents.

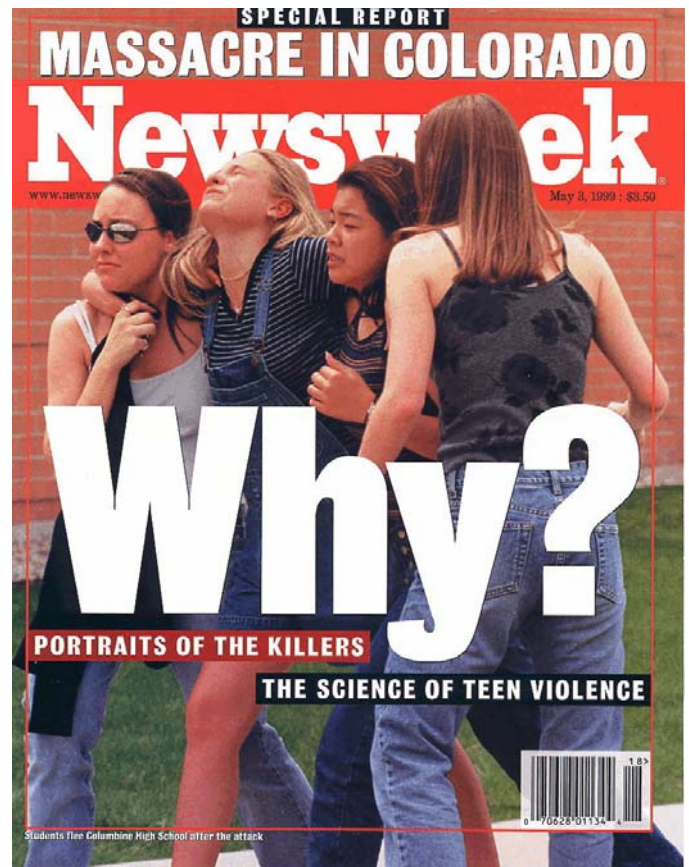
George Washington (1732-1799) —

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports . . . in vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens . . .¹

John Adams (1735-1826) —

We have no government armed in power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion . . . Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.²

In 1962 the Supreme Court ruled prayer in the public schools to be unconstitutional, and the assault began to remove all vestiges of religion from the public arena. The next year, the Court advanced its secular agenda by ruling that Bible reading in



schools and other school-sponsored religious activities is also prohibited. The movement climaxed in 1980 when the Supreme Court ruled that a Kentucky statute requiring the posting of a copy of the Ten Commandments on the wall of each public classroom in the State, was unconstitutional. Overnight, the Court forced our schools to throw out the foundation of American law and morality! Incredibly, the Court justified its decision with these words:

If the posted copies of the Ten Commandments are to have any effect at all, it will be to induce the schoolchildren to read, meditate upon, perhaps to venerate and obey, the Commandments. However desirable this might be as a matter of private devotion, it is not a permissible state objective under the Establishment Clause of the Constitution.³

Read those words again. The Court is saying that the Ten Commandments cannot be posted in our schools because the children might be motivated to obey them! So we would prefer to have our children kill each other as opposed to having them live in a civilized manner?

To sum it up, in very short order we kicked God out of our schools and declared His basic law to be illegal. The result has been a very quick and total transformation of our public school system.

Only a person my age (74) can realize how drastic the transformation of our schools has been. For example, when I was in the public schools, we prayed daily and read a devotional passage from the Bible. We had Christmas plays and Easter pageants. Our English readers were filled with stories from the

Bible that were used to teach a moral lesson.

In 1956, when I graduated from high school, there would be 100 or more pickup trucks parked in the school parking lot each day. Almost every one of those trucks had a gun rack, and most held a 22 rifle, a shotgun, and a deer rifle. Many had pistols in the glove compartments.

Yet, no one lived in fear of their lives. The idea that someone might shoot up the school was unthinkable. We were civilized people who had been imbued with Christian morality.

The Closing of the Evolution Debate

The second change factor I would point to is the purging of our schools of any consideration of alternatives to Evolution.



When the 20th Century began, the teaching of Evolution was not a part of any standard curriculum in our public schools. But that was not to last long. The turning point came in 1925 with the Scopes Trial in Tennessee. It became a media circus, and it propelled the issue onto the national scene.

At first, the Evolutionists simply demanded “equal time” with any presentation of special creation as the answer to the

origin of the universe and life. But as the years passed, they began to argue that Evolution was the only scientifically valid version of origins, and that all other versions should be banned.

The Supreme Court began to endorse this exclusionary thinking in a series of opinions leading up to a case in 1987 in which it outlawed the teaching of Creationism as an alternative to Evolution.

Today, the teaching of origins is a matter of Evolutionary propaganda and not true education where all theories are examined.

In the words of the book of Romans, our society has “suppressed the truth in unrighteousness,” for we have “exchanged the truth of God for a lie.” (Romans 1:18,25). We are teaching our children that they are nothing more than an animal that has evolved from scum and that they should worship the creation rather than the Creator.

Why, therefore, should we be surprised when they conduct themselves like animals? Why should we be shocked when they shoot each other over a pair of tennis shoes?

The Transformation of the Entertainment Industry

The third thing I would point to that has changed since my public school days is the nature of American entertainment.

In 1939, The epic movie, *Gone With The Wind*, ran into trouble with the censors because it ended with Clark Gable saying, “Frankly, my dear, I don’t give a damn.” One month before the film’s scheduled release, the Motion Picture Associa-

tion had to amend the code it had adopted in 1930 to allow the use of the word, damn.⁵

The Motion Picture Code lasted until the cultural revolution of the 1960’s. First it was radically amended to give producers much more freedom, and then it was replaced by the film rating system which basically allows a film to contain anything, as long as it is rated properly.⁶ This change opened the flood gates of filth, and we began to export the filth all over the world, becoming the moral polluter of planet earth.



Likewise, when television began to spread nationwide in the 1950’s (I saw my first TV set in 1952) there were strict codes of conduct for the producers of television programs. Over the years since that time, those codes have eroded to the point that almost anything is allowed on TV today.

The contrast is stunning. When I was growing up, we watched wholesome programs like “The Life of Riley,” “I Love Lucy,” and “Father Knows Best.” All these programs taught basic Judeo-Christian moral values.

Today the channels are flooded with morally depraved reality shows like “The Bachelorette,” with sex-laden situation comedies like “Two and a Half Men,” with demented dramatic series like “Revenge,” with brutally lurid shows like “Criminal Minds,” and with programs that are constantly pushing the homosexual agenda.



The Nelsons



The Osbournes

Perhaps the best way to illustrate the stark contrast between the early years of TV and today is to compare two programs about families, the Nelson Family (Ozzie & Harriet) which blessed American TV from 1952 to 1966 and the Osbourne Family (Ozzy & Sharon) which polluted the airways from 2002 to 2005. One featured a family (the Nelsons) who were loving and supportive of each other. The other (the Osbournes) focused on a totally dysfunctional family led by a man-child who lived in a drug haze while the rest of the members of the family were at each other’s throats, constantly fighting and cursing. The Nelson family showcased moral values. The Osbournes never heard of morality.

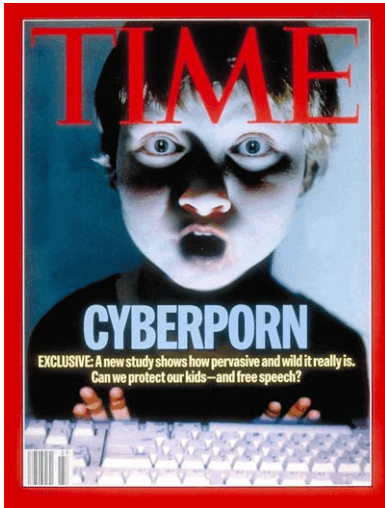
And then there is the music industry with its hard rock beats designed to appeal to the flesh and rap music that glorifies crime.

The Computer Revolution

A fourth major change in my lifetime has been the revolution in society that the computer has produced.

The first desktop computers hit the market in the late 1970's. At first they were used primarily for tasks like word processing and accounting. But by the mid-1980's most of the software being sold consisted of computer games which rapidly began to focus on violence and the occult.

Also, in the mid-1990's the Internet was made accessible for public use, making pornography easily available to people of all ages in the privacy of their homes.



My wife was a first grade teacher for 30 years. I vividly remember her coming home one day very agitated. When I asked what was wrong, she explained that she and her class had been exposed to pornography during their computer lab time! She said each child had selected an animal to write an essay about. When the children got seated at their computers, she asked them to type the name of their animal into a search engine. One boy

had selected the cheetah as his animal. When he typed that word in, the first thing that popped up was a photo of a nude dancer whose stage name was Cheetah. It was just that easy for a 6 year old boy to be introduced to the lurid world of porn.

The Evolution of the Church

The last change factor that I think has been crucial relates to the Church.

When I was a kid, the Church was a central part of my life and the lives of the kids I played with. My family went to church on Sunday morning, Sunday evening, Wednesday evening, and to several Gospel meetings each year. Additionally, I attended Sunday School and Vacation Bible School. I was taught to revere God, His Word, and His moral code.

Sundays and Wednesday evenings were sacred. No school events or sporting events were ever scheduled on these days. And on Sunday, all the commercial enterprises were closed. It was truly a day of rest — time to spend with the family.



Today, Sunday and Wednesday are just like any other day

of the week. They are filled with diversions, and one of the consequences is that it is hard to find a church that meets more than once a week on Sunday morning. And many, if not most, churches have adopted the seeker-friendly mentality that sugarcoats the Gospel and seeks primarily to entertain. Youth programs focus on pizza parties rather than Bible study. It is no wonder that 70% of kids from Christian families end up revoking their faith and embracing the world.

How can we expect any child to learn morality one hour a week in Sunday School when they are assaulted the rest of the week with the pagan values of our schools, movies and television programs? It is completely understandable that we have an entire generation growing up among us who believe that life is all about sex, violence and money.

And if every problem in TV programs, movies and computer games is solved with violence, why should we be surprised when our children resort to violence to solve their problems?

Conclusion

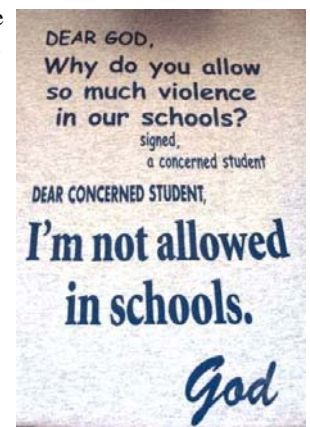
The Bible says that in the end times, society will become as violent and immoral as it was in the days of Noah (Matthew 24: 37).

We have arrived.

Let's end with the question we began with: "Why is there so much violence in our schools and society?" The answer is that we have put guns in the hands of moral pygmies. ❖

Notes:

- 1) The Great Books Foundation, *The Will of the People: Readings in American Democracy* (Chicago: Great Books Foundation, 2001), page 38.
- 2) John Adams, "Letter to Zabdiel Adams, Philadelphia, 21 June 1776," in *The Works of John Adams — Second President of the United States*, ed. Charles Francis Adams (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1854), vol. 9, p. 401.
- 3) Wikipedia, "Stone v. Graham (1980)," www.firstamendment.org/freedoms/case.aspx?id=1422.
- 4) Wikipedia, "Edwards v. Aguillard (1987)," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edwards_v._Aguillard.
- 5) Wikipedia, "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frankly_my_dear_I_don't_give_a_damn.
- 6) Tom Herd, "Indecency and the FCC: A Short History," <http://civil.liberty.about.com/od/freespeech/tp/FCC-Indecency-Timeline.htm>.



Rapture New? Get a Clue!

Nathan E. Jones

“I wish I could believe there is a Rapture in the Bible, because that would be something really great to look forward to. Sadly, the rapture theory was first spoken of by a sickly woman in 1830 and the ministers at that time just ran with it as prophecy.” — Mariano, New York

If I were to receive a dollar for every time somebody told me there is no mention of a rapture in the Bible and that the concept is a fairly modern day invention, I'd have enough money to pound a considerable dent into the federal deficit (depending on the Administration, that is).

Can the Rapture, separate and apart from the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, be found anywhere in the Bible? How does looking forward to the Rapture bring us hope? And, is the Rapture as a whole too new of an idea to be true? Get ready to give me that dollar, Mariano!



Nathan Jones

Rapture in the Bible

The Bible does indeed teach about the Rapture of the Church. First Thessalonians 4:17 in particular speaks of an event called “the Rapture,” derived from the Latin word *rapio* which was translated from the original Greek word *harpazo*. *Rapio* means “to catch up, to snatch away, or to take out,” and that’s how it’s often written out, as in that verse which reads, “After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.”

Other references on the Rapture are found in Isaiah 26:19-21; Malachi 3:17; John 14:1-4; I Corinthians 15:51-58 and I Thessalonians 4:13-18.

Encouragement to the Believer

The Apostle Paul states that the Rapture is meant to encourage believers during this age (1 Thessalonians 4:18). And yet, what encouragement could the Rapture bring to any believer who thinks they will have to endure all the horrors of the coming 7-year Tribulation? What would be the point of the Rapture then? It wouldn’t really be as Mariano has stated, “something really great to look forward to.”

True encouragement and hope comes from the Bible’s teaching of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture. We know that the Rapture will happen before the Tribulation because according to the Bible the Church isn’t destined to endure God’s judgment on the world. God has promised the Church a rescue beforehand. For example in 1 Thessalonians 1:10 we are told “to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.” (See also 1 Thessalonians 5:9; Romans 5:9; Ephesians 5:6; Colossians 3:4 and Revelation 3:10).

Evidences of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture also come from Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 who comforted the Church of Thessalonica when he wrote, “Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come.” The church there was concerned that they had missed the Rapture and were living in the Tribulation. Paul assures them in verse 3, “Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for (that day will not come) until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.” In other words, they’d know if they were living in the Tribulation.

The only hope that could comfort the Church Age Saint staring into the face of the horrors of the Tribulation is that they will not have to endure it. These words from Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:18 provide that very encouragement and hope of the Lord rapturing the Church beforehand.

An Ancient Concept

Those who argue that the Pre-Tribulation Rapture view is just “too new” to be considered viable point to John Nelson Darby (1800-1882) as its originator, and they claim he took the idea from a 15 year old girl named Margaret MacDonald. But, is that assessment historically accurate? Indeed, it is not.

The Early Church fathers’ such as Barnabas (ca.100-105), Papias (ca. 60-130), Justin Martyr (110-195), Irenaeus (120-202), Tertullian (145-220), Hippolytus (ca. 185-236), Cyprian (200-250), and Lactantius (260-330) wrote on the imminent return of Jesus Christ, the central argument for the Pre-Tribulation Rapture view.

When Augustine (354-430) began spiritualizing the Bible, his view of a non-literal interpretation took hold of the Church until the Renaissance, obliterating the Premillennial and Pre-Tribulation Rapture views in favor of Amillennialism. But, some Medieval writers such as Ephraem of Nisibis (306-373), Abbot Ceolfrid (c. 642-716), and Brother Dolcino (d. 1307) wrote statements that distinguished the Rapture from the Second Coming.

When the chains of allegorical interpretation began to fall off, beginning with the Reformation in the 1400’s and 1500’s, writers such as Joseph Mede (1586-1638), Increase Mather (1639-1723), Peter Jurieu (1637-1713), Philip Doddridge (1702-1751), John Gill (1697-1771), James Macknight (1721-1800), Thomas Scott (1747-1821) and Morgan Edwards (1722-1795) all wrote concerning the Rapture occurring separate from the Second Coming. Even in the more modern church, those like William Witherby, who wrote about the Rapture in 1818, were precursors to John Darby in support of the Rapture.

The Rapture is indeed then not only biblical, but supported throughout Church history. And, Mariano is absolutely right in one respect, for the Rapture sure is “something really great to look forward to.” It’s our “blessed hope” (Titus. 2:13). ❖

Nathan Jones is the Web Minister for Lamb & Lion Ministries. He is also an Evangelist who is available for speaking engagements.

1) Television and Video

Broadcast 52 weeks of *Christ in Prophecy* TV programs over five national networks and two regional networks with access to over 80 million homes inside the United States.
 Broadcast via Daystar and Church Channel satellites to almost every nation in the world.
 Produced a record number of 38 new *Christ in Prophecy* TV programs and revised 3 others.
 Broadcast our 538th television program at the end of December.
 Produced 2 new video albums and revised another.
 Reproduced and distributed over 30,000 DVD video programs.

2) Internet and Website

Sent out 28 e-newsletters to 22,500 subscribers, sharing biblical messages and the electronic *Lamplighter* magazine.
 Launched the Lamb & Lion App for iPhone, iPad and Android.
 Experienced 180,000 to 250,000 unique visitors to our website each month.
 Experienced growth of “The Christ in Prophecy” Facebook group to over 5,000 members.
 Experienced growth of our Twitter outreach to 1,800.
 Posted 243 Bible prophecy related articles on “The Christ in Prophecy Journal” blog, celebrating the 1,000th article.
 Streamed over 200 different “Christ in Prophecy” TV shows.
 Answered hundreds of spiritual questions submitted by email and discussion forums.
 Produced 3 Bible Prophecy Insights videos.
 Podcast over 80,000 mp3s per month.

3) Preaching and Teaching

Completed a total of 20 speaking engagements:
 13 Weekend conferences at churches.
 7 Bible prophecy conferences.
 Participated in 10 media interviews.
 Conducted our first Skype TV interview and conference.

4) Publications

Published a Holy Land calendar for 2013.
 Produced 6 issues of the Ministry’s magazine, *The Lamplighter*.
 Continued publishing a version of our magazine in India.
 Published a new book, *The Man of Lawlessness*.
 Published a booklet, *A Prophetic Manifesto* and distributed copies to more than 17,000 pastors.
 Published a customized version of *The Tim LaHaye Bible Prophecy Study Bible*.



5) Missions

Shipped Bible study materials to individuals and missions in many different foreign countries.
 Supplied more than \$22,000 for relief aid to Nigerian Christian refugees.
 Provided regular monthly financial support to 19 missions — 8 domestic and 11 foreign.
 Donated a total of more than \$236,000 in cash and services to missions.

6) Israel

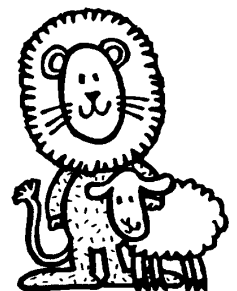
Conducted one Holy Land pilgrimage with 45 pilgrims.
 Provided financial assistance to several ministries in Israel.

7) Conferences

Conducted our annual Bible conference with 850 attendees.
 Hosted a conference in Louisville, Kentucky on the book of Revelation.
 Participated in 6 Bible prophecy conferences sponsored by other ministries.

8) Finances

Received 21,712 gifts from 4,085 donors.
 Experienced growth in Prophecy Partners to a total of 2,450.
 Received re-certification as a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.
 Received a four star rating (the highest possible) from Charity Navigator.
 Ended the calendar year with all bills paid in full for the 33rd year in a row.



Television Update

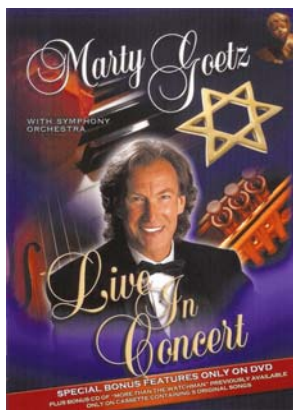
Busy, Busy!

Dr. David R. Reagan

We have been extremely busy in recent months shooting new television programs. We began the month of December at the annual Pre-Trib Prophecy Conference in Dallas where we interviewed 17 people regarding questions about the book of Daniel. One of those interviewed was Tim LaHaye who is shown below getting makeup put on by Rachel Houck.



Later in December we did two interviews with Warren Smith, an expert on the New Age Movement. We also shot a couple of interviews with Mike Riddle who is a master teacher of Creationism.



For our last program of the year, we broadcast a re-run of a program about the ministry of Marty Goetz, a Messianic Jewish musician. We received an overwhelming response that kept us busy for a couple of weeks as we tried to keep up with all the orders we received for his fabulous DVD album, "Live in Concert." The album contains a DVD with 17 songs (130 minutes) and a CD with 5 songs. It sells for \$20 plus the cost of shipping. You can order it by calling 972-736-3567 Monday thru Friday, between 8am and 5pm Central time.

We began the new year taping two interviews with Noah Hutchings, the director of Southwest Radio Ministries in Oklahoma City. He had just turned 90 years old and is still going strong, working 10 hours a day! We also did a couple of interviews with a pastor named Carl Gallups from Milton, Florida who has written a remarkable book titled, *The Magic Man in the Sky*. It is a brilliant defense of the existence of God. We concluded the month of January with the taping of Dr. Reagan's *Prophetic Manifesto*. It will soon be released as a DVD album.



Carl Gallups

We regrettably had to cancel the broadcast of our program over the Inspiration Network, effective January 1st, because they decided to go secular. We are now seeking a time slot on the Trinity Broadcasting Network to replace the Inspiration Network. Please pray for us to get a good time slot on TBN soon.

We recently added a new station in El Paso, Texas — KSCE, Channel 38. It is also available on Time-Warner Cable, channel 16. It is aired on Sunday mornings at 10:30am.

“Christ in Prophecy” Broadcast Schedule

National Networks

Daystar Network				
DirecTV Channel 369		DISH Channel 263		
On cable networks throughout the nation.				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Wed. 4:00pm	Wed. 5:00pm	Wed. 6:00pm	Wed. 7:00pm

The Church Channel				
DirecTV Channel 371				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Sat. 6:30pm	Sat. 7:30pm	Sat. 8:30pm	Sat. 9:30pm

National Religious Broadcasters Network				
DirecTV Channel 378				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Sun. 2:00pm	Sun. 3:00pm	Sun. 4:00pm	Sun. 5:00pm

Golden Eagle Broadcasting Network				
DirecTV Channel 363				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Tues. 4:00pm	Tues. 5:00pm	Tues. 6:00pm	Tues. 7:00pm

Regional Networks



“Christ in Prophecy” is broadcast throughout southern Louisiana on the **Family Vision Network** at various times. See: www.kajn.com/familyvision.



New Mexico Family Stations is a network consisting of two stations in Albuquerque. Our program is broadcast on Thursday at 11:00pm and on Saturday at 3:00pm.

Register Now for Our Annual Conference

New venue! Our Bible Conference this year will be held at the beautiful new Allen Performing Arts Center in Allen, Texas — a suburb of Dallas.



The conference is scheduled to begin on Friday evening, June 28 and continue all day on Saturday, June 29. The conference is free of charge. There will be a banquet Saturday evening immediately after the last conference session. It will cost \$35 per person. The banquet will also be held at the Allen Performing Arts Center.

The banquet will showcase a concert by Jack Hollingsworth of Acts 29 Ministries. Jack is the featured singer on the Lamb & Lion television program. Another special feature of the banquet will be an appearance by Lyndy Phillips, a former pastor who now performs as a humorist and illusionist. The banquet will conclude with a presentation by Dr. Reagan.



Lyndy Phillips



Robert Jeffress

The theme of this year's conference is "Living on Borrowed Time." Speakers include Dave Reagan and Nathan Jones from Lamb & Lion Ministries, Don McGee of Crown & Sickle Ministries, Ron Rhodes of Reasoning from the Scriptures Ministries, Robert Jeffress, pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas, and Alan Franklin, a newspaper editor from London, England.

The conference will begin on Friday evening with a concert by a Southern Gospel Quartet called X-Alt. This very gifted group of singers was selected by the Gospel Music Artists Association as their musical group of the year in 2012.

To register for the conference, call 972-736-3567 between 8am and 5pm Central time, Monday thru Friday, or register at the Lamb & Lion website: www.lamblion.com. ❖

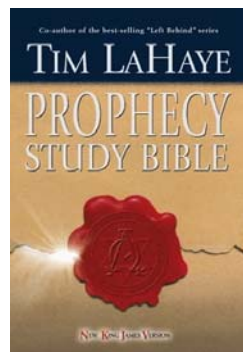
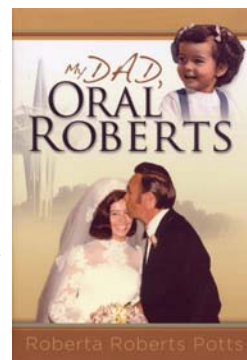
Ministry News

Speaking Schedule — Dr. Reagan will be speaking twice during the month of **March**, first at a conference at the Summit Church in Wichita, Kansas (1-3) and then at a Sync-Up Conference in Los Angeles, California (15-16). In **April** Dr. Reagan will lead a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and will be assisted by Gary Fisher of Lion of Judah Ministries (6-17). Later that month Dr. Reagan will speak to the Believer's Class at First Baptist Church in Forney, Texas (28). Dr. Reagan will begin the month of **May** conducting a prophecy conference at First Baptist Church in Alma, Arkansas (4-5). Later in the month he will speak at a Sync-Up Conference in Chicago, Illinois (17-18). In **June** Dr. Reagan and Nathan Jones will conduct a prophecy conference at Woodland Hills Baptist Church in Longview, Texas (1-2). Both of them will also be speaking at the Lamb & Lion Conference at the end of the month (28-29).

Holy Land Pilgrimage — The Ministry's next Holy Land pilgrimage is scheduled for November 2-13. Dr. Reagan will host the trip. The group will spend two nights in Tel Aviv, two in Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee, and six nights in Jerusalem. Give us a call, if you are interested, and we will put you on a list to receive a brochure as soon as they are ready.

Our Greatest Need — We need more Prophecy Partners in order to expand our television program to more outlets. To become a Prophecy Partner you must make a commitment to pray for us daily and to give \$25 per month for one year. You will receive a special report from Dr. Reagan each month about the Ministry's activities, and you will also receive a monthly gift. Every other month that gift will be a copy of this magazine. During the other months, the gift will be a DVD containing either a TV program or a teaching program. You will also receive a copy of the Ministry's yearly calendar. Prophecy Partners also receive special discounts on purchases of materials produced by this ministry. We ask our Prophecy Partners to aim for one dollar a day or \$30 per month. Many give much more than that. The minimum commitment is \$25 per month. To sign up as a Prophecy Partner, just give us a call at 972-736-3567.

Book Specials — We are offering a special sale on Roberta Potts' great book, *My Dad, Oral Roberts*. The book tells the inside story of her dad's remarkable ministry, and it is illustrated with dozens of photographs, from beginning to end. The book is hardbound and runs 302 pages in length. Its retail price is \$24.99. We are making it available for \$12 plus the cost of mailing.



We have some copies left of our customized version of the Tim LaHaye Prophecy Study Bible. It is the New King James Version and it is bound in genuine leather, burgundy colored. It contains 84 articles by 55 Bible prophecy experts, as well as extensive footnotes. The regular price is \$75. We are offering it for \$65 plus the cost of shipping. ❖



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New Video Album

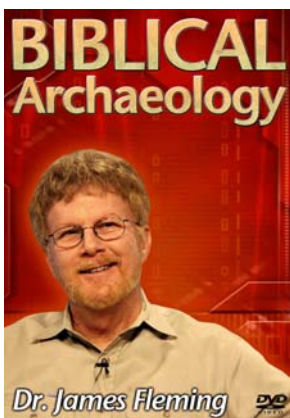
This new one hour and 45 minute album contains four television programs on two DVD discs. It runs 130 minutes in length.

The programs were all shot on site at the Explorations in Antiquity Center in LaGrange, Georgia. This center was created by Dr. Jim Fleming, one of Christendom's foremost experts on biblical archaeology.

The programs cover First Century agricultural techniques, the importance of city gates to external defense and internal governance, the Last Supper, and crucifixion and burial methods.

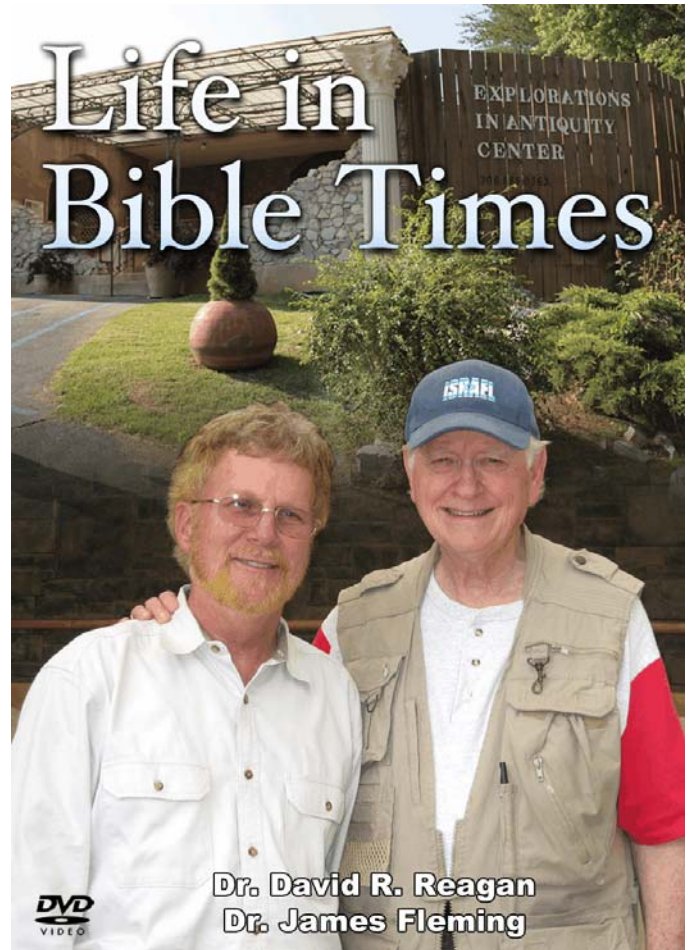
One of the most fascinating of the programs is the one about the Last Supper. It contrasts the reality with the painting by Leonardo Da Vinci, showing where each person sat and why.

Throughout the programs, Dr. Fleming demonstrates how a greater knowledge of First Century customs will help a person to better understand the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles. The programs received an overwhelmingly positive response when they were broadcast on national television.



This is the second video album that Dr. Reagan has produced together with Dr. Fleming. The first was shot in our studio and consists of four fascinating programs in which Dr. Fleming discusses the importance of biblical archaeology, the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the relationship of the Eastern Gate to the location of the ancient Jewish Temple. In the final interview, he discusses

a wide range of archaeological issues such as the sites of Mount Sinai, the Mount of Transfiguration, and the tomb of Jesus. The running time of the biblical archaeology video is 80 minutes.



To order a copy of either album, call **972-736-3567** Monday through Friday from 8am to 5pm Central time. The Biblical Archaeology album sells for \$12, plus the cost of shipping. The Life in Bible Times album sells for \$15, plus the cost of shipping.

We are offering both albums for the special price of \$20, plus the cost of shipping. This offer is good through May 1st. ✦

