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COUNTERFEIT REVIVAL AT LAKELAND FLORIDA

by Pastor Jackson Morro

I was asked by Paula of Faith On The Earth to give a brief evaluation of the current “outpouring” and manifestations of the Todd Bentley “revival” in Lakeland, Florida.

I have preached against this “revival” at my home and Christ’s Chapel, and I categorically condemn it as false, counterfeit, and deceptive. I have notified an officer of the local Full Gospel Businessmen’s Chapter to warn his people of this deception and I am contacting people to warn them of the demonic nature of this outpouring. Because of space limitations, I will just briefly list my objections:

1) Todd Bentley’s “third heaven visitations” alone *totally disqualifies* his ministry as being valid and of the Holy Spirit.

The “third heaven visitation” method is a psychic, New Age demonic technique that was described in a book *The Beautiful Side of Evil* written by Johanna Michaelson, who as a young, charismatic Christian in the 1970s, fell prey to these techniques where she encountered many “angelic” beings who eventually proved to be demonic. One spirit even disguised itself as Jesus and then manifested itself suddenly as a “werewolf.” She ended up needing deliverance.

2) As a young Christian, I briefly attended a pseudo-Pentecostal church that followed the teachings of Franklin Hall and his teachings about “Holy Ghost fire.” This proved to be guided by a deceiving spirit (not the Holy Spirit) and had many of the same “fire” and “heat” and “angelic” manifestations as Bentley’s ministry. I quickly left that church in 1976 and renounced any part in it before the Lord.

3) The barking dogs and squawking chicken manifestations of prophecy and uncontrollable body actions while “prophesying” clearly contradict Paul’s (and the Holy Spirit’s) teaching. “And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets, for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.” (1 Corinthians 14:32-33)

4) The emphasis on angelic encounters and visions and the CONTENT of those encounters and visions are contrary to many scriptures, specifically Paul’s warning in Colossians 2:18: “Let no man rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshipping of the angels, dwelling in the things which he hath seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.”

5) There is no mixture (i.e., half Holy Spirit/half New Age). The Holy Spirit NEVER mixes His work with occult garbage. God warns about mixing Holy Fire and strange fire (Exodus 30:9; Leviticus 10:1; Numbers 3:4; Numbers 26:21). The “outpouring” is totally counterfeit.

6) Many of the “jerking” and “gyrating” motions are very similar to the worship of Baal during their ecstatic pagan Old Testament ceremonies. One particularly troublesome manifestation described on Andrew Strom’s website is “women just gyrating like they are being ravaged from behind from some unseen force” – a clear parallel to the sexual frenzied worship of Baal ceremonies in the Old Testament.

7) The use by Bentley of “BAM” or “Bam! Bam! Bam!” often seems to be a substitution for the name of Jesus. In Strong’s Concordance (Hebrew section), we find:

- #1116 - *bamah* - a high place
- #1117 - *Bamah* - a high place (for idols)
- #1120 - *Bamoth* - a high place in Moab
- #1181 - *baale bamoth* - lords of the high places

Is Bentley knowingly or unknowingly calling on demon power?

The whole remedy for this sorry Lakeland abomination is for the Pentecostal and Charismatic leadership to be holy and bold with 1 John 4:4 discernment and call Bentley to repentance of these errors. I fear, however, many will get on the bandwagon of deception.

This is a defining moment in the Pentecostal movement. God is getting ready to separate wheat from the chaff. Holy Fire will conquer strange fire.

For fuller coverage of the Lakeland “outpouring,” visit Andrew Strom’s website, www.revivalschool.com where the “revival” is exposed for the deception that it is.

Editor’s Note: The following is Christopher Dart’s response to a local pastor’s blog titled, “Is The Church Relevant In Today’s Society?” His answer is a must read that address what ails the Church today. Christopher wrote to me: “In this one, I really wanted to include music ministers, as those guys usually get away with incredible worldliness, offering strange fire before the Lord.”

IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION “IS THE CHURCH RELEVANT IN TODAY’S SOCIETY?” by Christopher Dart

[March 7, 2008, 4:59 am]

To the question, “Is The Church Relevant In Today’s Society?”: The answer, in almost all cases is a resounding, no. Most certainly, however, the Church should be most relevant. In the weeks following 9-11 there was a tremendous surge of “Christian” activities. Amid all the religiousness were no answers found. Now Church attendance is at an all time low. Many committed Christians won’t even go. I still struggle to go.

A few years ago, a group of pollsters took to the streets asking, “What would make church more enjoyable to you?” or “What would get you to go to church?” Answers ranged from changing the traditional appearance to removing the altar, choir, the use of contemporary music. Most of all, offensive preaching must be removed. The cross, the blood and accountability to God for sin was found to be offensive. Most offensive, however, is the consequences of eternity in hell for rejecting Jesus Christ.

I believe if we tailor the Gospel to fit the emerging community today, we grieve the Holy Ghost and merely operate an organization with no power in the heavenlies. The contemporary music is vague and can be used by any cult without offense. Notice the lack of exuberance among the worshippers when performing contemporary apostate music. Notice how the people wake up with the old hymns. Can’t we make new music with uncompromised truth as the old hymns? All of the Bible is true and all of the Bible is to be preached.

Another thing overlooked by almost all people in leadership is consecration to Christ and diligent, non-compromised, undistracted, secret prayer. The Lord told Moses, "Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually (Leviticus 24:2)."

Oil is representative of the Holy Spirit. Everyone is to bring oil to the service. The only way to obtain this is through consecration to Christ and seeking His face daily in prayer. Those who don't come with oil are only taking oil out of the lamp. The result is, the lamp goes out. We have a picture of that in the New Testament. "Repent or I will come unto thee quickly and remove the lamp stand from his place." So if you take prayer and the presence of the Holy Ghost lightly, the Lord, Himself will make sure your church has no life in it at all!

I believe that means not compromising our time with Him. We all know He calls us to daily, secret time with Him; not to be shared with any other activity. As our Lord said to Moses, "I want you, Moses, to come up to the top of the mountain and be near."

I've been stating the importance of seeking the face of God for some years now. I'm writing to tell you that God has set me as a watchman (the least of all military jobs). He has put me before you to sound the alarm. That is to seek his face.

The reason the Church is something the populace can't believe but finds irrelevant is because the Holy Ghost is absent. The Holy Ghost has, for 2000 years, drawn men to the cross. How are men different today that His message and work must be any different? There is no difference. Men have always been sinners needing to be saved by grace.

Let's get back to being the temple of the Holy Ghost, ourselves, and we will see revival. Our lives will be the Gospel.

AN "OBAMANATION" AND OTHER SAD REALITIES by Paula Leanues

I'm not sure which is more of a circus at this moment in American history: mainstream "Christianity" or the presidential race.

The top story of ultra-liberal CNN this morning, June 5, 2008, was that "Bishop" T.D. Jakes congratulates Sen. Barack Obama on winning the Democratic nomination for the presidency and making history. CNN published a brief, but very telling (of the nature of modern "Christianity") article written by Jakes. In it, Jakes also congratulates Sen. Hillary Clinton for making history.

His point is, now his sons and daughters can see that anyone can do anything, regardless of race or gender, and what a wonderful country we now live in. In making Obama's victory a black issue, and by congratulating Clinton as well, making her campaign a gender issue, Jakes misses the more important moral issue. His praising of two liberal candidates with blatant anti-God voting records further makes God's people look like a bunch of yahoos who just don't know what we believe. Anti-abortion, pro-abortion, hot, cold, lukewarm...

I state without retraction: T.D. Jakes does not stand for true Christianity. He certainly does not stand for me. He, along with Paula White, Joel Osteen, and so many others today are wealthy and famous for preaching "other gospels." There are many of these different types of preachers and different gospels, all having the same source: the devil. (Read Galatians 1:8.)

For any voter, Barack Hussein Obama's background should be problematic at the very least. He was schooled in Muslim schools and yet since converted to his own

brand of Christianity which has nothing to do with the God of the Bible. Muslims hate Christians. Muslims also hate democracy – which brings to mind Obama’s halfwit wife who admitted she only recently became proud of her country. Obama’s Muslim ties and willingness to have tea with Iran (whose madman, America-hating president Ahmadinejad said the end of Israel is coming) make him well-liked and in fact endorsed by Muslim groups, including terrorist group Hamas.

Jakes apparently ignored (or was unaffected by) the “preaching” of Obama’s “pastor,” Jeremiah Wright who called for God to damn America *not* for its overall wickedness and immorality (that, I believe, is coming), but because he wrongly sees the country as some monster trying to weed African Americans out of society. His twisted views, anti-Christian Christianity and hatred of the white man made him another wealthy preacher and put him in a position of authority. His ties to a prominent and, to say the least, controversial and hate-filled Muslim, Louis Farrakhan (who also endorses Obama), further make him a questionable leader. (I say “questionable” – I mean “wicked.”)

When the presidential primaries began, I never saw Obama’s skin. God doesn’t see Obama’s skin – He sees his heart, as He sees the hearts, not the outside, of all men and women. I *still* don’t see Obama’s skin unless someone like Jakes insists on making it an issue. Race should have no significance on a candidate. Their heart for (or against) God and their moral (or lack of) stance and ability to make laws and defend a country are what matter. If a sincerely moral, God-fearing – black, white, or of *any* race – candidate were to run for president, someone who would uphold the laws and truth of God, he’d have my vote without question. But currently, the unfortunate thing is, there is not a man of any race that wholly has these qualities who would run the race – because the people would run him out before he started.

I’m grieving as much as I’m steaming, as I realize that both race and gender have superseded the true matters of morality by not only unbelieving (non-Christian) Americans, but by those professing to be Christians.

There also have been other unexplainable facets to this presidential race where Christians are concerned. In the beginning of the primary race, Pat Robertson endorsed Rudy Giuliani. This was apparently the kiss of death for Giuliani, as he soon had to drop out of the race. I believe Pat Robertson’s slap in the face to a holy God reaped a slap in the face in return from God Himself. How dare Robertson, a man who – in the ever-increasingly-distant past – had done so much for the Kingdom of God, endorse a man like Giuliani? A few Giuliani highlights are that he moved in with two gay roommates after separating with his wife; he has a pro-abortion voting record; he made the following statement in December, 2007: “I believe that homosexuality, heterosexuality, as a way that somebody leads their life isn’t sinful”; and he once wore a woman’s dress and makeup to a much publicized party. (Deuteronomy 22:5 states that cross-dressing is an “abomination” to the Lord.)

I’m not surprised at Jakes. His half-gospels, pseudo-gospels, false gospels and send-me-all-your-money-if-you-want-God-to-approve-of-you gospels show where his true heart is. I was more surprised at Pat Robertson, who once having \$3 in his bank account to begin what has now become CBN, has apparently forgotten where he came from (that God delivered him from Egypt, so to speak). I’m appalled at both of them. I’m appalled at mainstream “Christianity.” I expect many other prominent “celebrity Christians” to come out of their holes (yes, I’m calling them worms – we all know they’ll come out of their lavish mansions) to endorse Obama who stands for everything that the One True God of the Bible is against... unless they fear their tax-exempt status is going to be taken away by their doing so.

Men like Jakes and Robertson, both of whom I used to read and listen to, have proven over time that they have many gods, not the least of which are their wallets, their power and position, and their influence before many people. Over a decade ago, I followed what has become a corrupt lot and I have since repented.

CBN recently has profiled the Lakeland “outpouring” and revival of “signs and lying wonders” as the most spectacular God-inspired thing to happen in centuries. As Pastor Morro, upon hearing this, put it, “CBN has lost all discernment.” I agree. Todd Bentley with his New Age tactics has deceived many professing Christians into believing that what is happening is of God. He said he intends this “movement” to go around the world.

Sadly, I am sure it will. “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” (Matthew 24:24) (See article re: Lakeland “Revival” in this issue written by Pastor Jackson Morro for biblical commentary on what is happening there.)

Mainstream “Christianity” is in the saddest state it has ever been in. I truly believe it is past the time for those who are seeking only Jesus and His Truth and those who are fed up with these rich and famous preachers to “come out from among them, and be ye separate,” and (saith the Lord) “touch not the unclean thing.” (2 Corinthians 6:17) The promise is, *then* will we be received by the Lord. We are warned not to go the way of those who willfully stray. Believing in two or more part-gospels never equals the whole of the true Gospel.

We are living in days very similar to those of the prophet Jeremiah: “Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it. And though they say, The LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely.” (Jeremiah 5:1,2) This was written right before Israel was overtaken by their enemies and went into captivity. Can we ward off the judgment that may be coming to this country?

The answer is, not if even those in the pulpits are preaching lies and endorsing devils. Philippians 3:18 states, “For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.” Currently, those who come in the name of Christ, who love to feed themselves with luxuries and position, and who mind earthly things, are the ones who have the attention of the masses. This is more than dangerous for a nation and for God’s people.

Even so, vote with the potential peril of your nation in mind. Pray as if there is still opportunity for America to avert its destruction. However, America may just get what it deserves. “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.” (Proverbs 29:2) This proverb goes for the Church as well: When the righteous are preaching the truth from the pulpits, God’s people rejoice in that truth: but when the wicked, the deceived and the depraved are in the pulpits preaching their own gospels and calling evil good and good evil, we should be on our knees in mourning.

We always hear today Jeremiah 29:11 that declares God’s blessing upon those who faithfully walk with Him (encouraging even those who do not walk faithfully with Him to believe it for themselves). We never hear Jeremiah 23:11, which says: “For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD.” I believe in God’s houses, the churches, today, He has found their wickedness as well.

In closing regarding this upcoming presidential election, I understand there is no perfect candidate. But a vote against evil could just buy us more time with which to repent. We need to put this election in God's hands. If God passes the decision back to the people and even to our churches, then woe to us.

The nail in the coffin of Republican nominee John McCain's campaign (unless God's people truly repent and pray) may be Obama's choosing Clinton for his running mate. Polls showed die-hard Clinton supporters weren't so much in favor of Obama if he were to become the Democratic presidential nominee, and in fact some would vote for McCain. If Clinton is still on the ticket, it could be the Democrats' ticket to the White House.

While the possibility of Obama choosing Clinton for his running mate makes my skin crawl twice, it may make quarter-baked Christian T.D. Jakes and some others all the prouder to be Americans. After all, it's not about morality. "It's about race and gender, stupid!"

LETTER FROM GRACE BIBLE CHURCH & ORPHAN CARE IN MALAWI

Editor's Note: The following is a letter from a ministry in Malawi, Africa, that is in need of many things to take care of its outreaches and orphan care:

Grace Bible Church & Orphan Care
PO Box 169
Bvumbwe, Malawi, Central Africa

Dear and much beloved sister Paula,

Greetings and the peace of the Lord be with you. I pray that all is well with you. I pray for all the staff at Faith On The Earth for the work of God that you are doing of reaching the many lost souls with the Word of God through your publication. May He continue to bless you and your ministry more abundantly.

Sister Paula, you and your ministry are always in our thoughts and prayers. We love you and bless you in Jesus' precious name.

I am writing this letter requesting for your prayers and for your help. Our ministry here continues to grow so very tremendously. As a charity ministry which is helping the many orphans here in Malawi, we have a very, very desperate need for used clothes, shoes, bed sheets and blankets to help the many poor and needy orphans.

Also, we have a very desperate need for used Bibles, Christian books, Gospel tracts, teaching gospel tapes, video tapes, Christian magazines, children's books and Sunday school teaching books and pictures. Also we have a very desperate need of toys for our nursery schools.

Please kindly put our request in your Faith On The Earth newsletter for many Christian families to read and help with our needs.

Please pray for Sister Barbara. She is deaf in one ear and has lost 40 percent hearing in the other ear. She is our international president and has a beautiful ministry here which is helping the many orphans. Sister Barbara has assisted the ministry here with two cows to give milk to the orphans.

Also pray for Nickey, sister Barbara's granddaughter. She has an eye problem. Nickey is a beautiful girl who loves the Lord.

Sister Paula, if God provides, send the clothes and the books in an M-bag. Send them directly to our ministry and church address here in Malawi, Africa.

May God richly bless you. Yours in Christ and love,
Rev. Fanny Masangano

Dear Rev. Masangano,

I wrote to you privately, but will include a note in this newsletter. Please consider the printing of this letter a way for me to reach others with your ministry's needs.

Now to the readers: If anyone is touched by the story of this ministry and is able to help, please email Rev. Masangano at gbcmalawi@yahoo.com or write by mail to the address above.

An update – the U.S. postal service has unfortunately made it very, very costly to send packages overseas. The service is pitiful once crossing from country to country as well. M-Bags are no longer acceptable, and that was once an affordable way to send items overseas – slow, but affordable. I sent packages to another ministry in Malawi and they sometimes did not arrive until 6 months later!

We need to pray for God's provision for these overseas ministries that are truly answering Jesus' call to care for the needy.

Blessings in Him, and thank you,
Paula

FROM "GOD KEEPS HIS WORD"
Sermon by William Branham, April 7, 1957

The following quote was printed a year ago in Faith On The Earth, but it is worth repeating, especially in light of current gas prices. We are experiencing the consequences of doing business and making pacts with Muslim countries. Instead of praying to God for help in ways to tap into our own resources, we now suffer. Holding hands with Arabs/Muslims (enemies of God's chosen Israel) will greatly contribute to the death of any nation.

William Branham from "God Keeps His Word" preached April 7, 1957:

“And I say this, with the reverent heart to God: The testing time has come for America, and she’s failed. The Gospel has been preached from east to west, from north to south; they’ve combed every little place and crack and corner... Yes, sir. The testing time has come. What did I tell you from this pulpit? Last year America made her fatal mistake. I said, ‘Fatal mistake.’ And look what she’s doing now. You see it in the government affairs. They’re trying to go right over and hook up with the Arabs. Don’t you know, God’s Word said, ‘Ever who curses Israel, will be cursed?’ Certainly.

“... And here the Gospel comes and gives a mercy call throughout the nations for years; and we’ve turned it down. And now working, the devil taking his seat, is turning the hearts of these political men against Israel, and they’re hooking up over yonder with the Arabs. Brother, we’re as good as gone. Man, we’ll sink as sure as the world. I love my nation. I love what it stands for; but brother, I love my Lord above everything. And I love to see my nation to its knees, but I’m afraid we’ll never do it. We’re at the end time. What happened? A mixed multitude got in.”

“And I think of yonder, those Jews; I see that old six-point Star of David, the oldest flag in the world, hanging yonder. Why can’t the nation see it? And to think that our own beloved nation is going to hook up with the Arabs. They’ll be cursed just as sure. They’ve spurned the mercy of God. Now they must stand judgment.”

Editor’s Note: The following article is chapter entitled “The Kingdom at Hand” from a new book by Pastor Jackson Morro with the same title. If you’d like to order a copy of the book, The Kingdom at Hand, in its entirety, free of charge (donations accepted, but not necessary), write and request from Christ’s Chapel, PO Box 3182, Fall River, MA 02722, or email pastormorro@faithontheearth.com.

THE KINGDOM AT HAND by Pastor Jackson Morro

In this chapter, we are going to look at the central message of Jesus’ ministry—the Kingdom of God—the realm of reality where God rules on behalf of those who come to Him in faith. It’s also the realm where Jesus Himself is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

As the Gospel of Matthew opens, we see people coming to a mighty prophet, John the Baptist, who tells them to repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand. Shortly thereafter, John is arrested and imprisoned by the wicked, adulterous King Herod. But then we see a young man from Galilee, Jesus of Nazareth, going out to people and preaching the very same message: “Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand.” The message of the Kingdom of God was absolutely central to the ministry of Jesus. The Kingdom of God was the cornerstone of the message He brought to people.

It’s interesting to note that Jesus went *to* people. People had to come to John the Baptist, but Jesus was a traveling preacher, going *to* people. Here we see the difference between Old Testament law and New Testament grace. Old Testament law required people to do things to try to please God, a task that was impossible to do perfectly. But New Testament grace manifested the saving action of God going *to* people of Jesus of Nazareth. God Himself went looking for people and offered them salvation, healing and wholeness.

We see that as Jesus went around preaching and healing, He aroused very strong reactions. People either radically accepted Him and began a new life—or they fiercely rejected Him.

The atmosphere of Jesus' time was very tense both politically and religiously. Politically, the Romans occupied the Jewish nation as conquerors and they were extremely cruel and oppressive. This led to frequent violence and rebellious uprisings in Israel. It was also a time when the Jewish religious leadership was corrupt and morally inept. The High Priest and the Temple crew were greedy and immoral, and the local leadership of the Pharisees and Scribes had fallen into a rigid legalism and fundamentalism that oppressed the very people they should have brought salvation to.

Many people began longing and crying out for the Kingdom of God—the intervention of Almighty God who would set up a kingdom of justice and righteousness for those who were downtrodden or oppressed—or trapped in the failure of their own sins. We read in Luke 3:15 that many were hoping the Kingdom of God would soon appear. Even some righteous Pharisees, like Joseph of Arimathea, were looking for the Kingdom of God. But, the “Kingdom of God” meant different things to different people. There were three main ideas popular about the Kingdom of God.

1) *Some looked for the political restoration of King David's royal kingdom.* God would send a messiah (or Christ) who would be a military leader to destroy the Romans and re-establish the nation of Israel. Originally, the Apostle Peter had hoped for this (Acts 1:8).

2) *Others looked for the immediate end of the world where God Himself would destroy all wickedness and set up a new world consisting of only righteous people.* John the Baptist looked for this.

3) A third view looked for a kingdom that would originate in the heart of man, in the very spirit of man—a kingdom where God would rule over the individual's heart—and, where this rule was set up, all of God's power and God's life would be present, and by releasing this power through faith, *all things* would be possible and *nothing* would be impossible. This was clearly the Kingdom that Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, preached and proclaimed: “Behold, the Kingdom of God is within you.” (Luke 17:21, KJV) (See also 1 John 4:4.)

Jesus proclaimed that we would enter this Kingdom and understand how to move and operate in the power of this Kingdom by being “born again.” We would receive this new birth as a gift from God if we would repent, or turn away from sin and embrace God and allow Him to rule over our lives and seek His will for us instead of insisting on and asserting our own will.

For Jesus, the Kingdom of God had very specific meaning:

1) It was a Kingdom where the broken fellowship between God and man would be restored and the broken fellowship between man and man reconciled.

2) The Kingdom of God was a place where the goal was to make every life whole and fulfilled.

3) The Kingdom would end everything that caused oppression, slavery and bondage of any and all types.

4) The Kingdom would be the place that offered the option of victory for *everything* that seemed a defeat, even death itself.

We read in Acts 10:38 that as Jesus went around preaching the Kingdom, He also went around *doing good* and healing all who were oppressed by the devil. The very power of the Kingdom was revealed in and through Jesus. And every life that opened itself to Him became A *JESUS SUCCESS STORY*.

The Kingdom of God was first of all the place where individuals would be made whole. As individuals were made whole, then relationships would be made whole. As relationships were made whole, even society itself could potentially be made whole.

The Kingdom of God offered people a way out from their despair, defeat and failures. Moral failures like Matthew, Zaccheus and Mary Magdalene could have a brand new start. Blind Bartimaeus could regain his sight. 5000 hungry people could be miraculously fed. Even the dead Lazarus could live again. In all of this, Jesus was always doing what God the Father would do—heal, show mercy, have compassion. One of the biggest mistakes we can make is to see Jesus as coming to save us from an angry Old Testament God. Jesus did not come to save us from God. Rather, God sent Jesus to save us from the devil and save us from the consequences of our own sins (Matthew 1:21).

The Kingdom of God is the Kingdom where people open their hearts to God, and God is allowed to enter the human heart and rule over a person's life. When God is allowed to enter and rule a person's heart, God brings the very presence of His own life. He brings a new life that overcomes inner alienation and spiritual death, and He establishes a spirit of celebration, peace, freedom and communication. Through faith, all things become possible because all the resources of God's own life and power enter a person.

Jesus said we enter the Kingdom of God:

- 1) Through *repentance* (Greek word *metanoia*) - a change of heart. We turn from our old way of ruling our own life and instead we submit to God's rule. We turn away from sin and all that displeases God and instead we make God the focus of our life. We acknowledge we are sinners and that we need His forgiveness and His new life.
- 2) We undergo the new birth, or we become what Jesus called "born again," born of the Holy Spirit. God gives us this new birth when we publicly confess His Son Jesus as Our Lord and believe in our heart that God *did* raise Him from the dead. We accept Jesus' personal sacrifice on the cross as payment for our sins.

If you have not entered the Kingdom of God, you can do so right now through the simple, but heartfelt act of confessing your sins to God and then inviting the Risen Lord Jesus into your heart, your spirit. It costs no money, nor do you have to join an institutional church or go through a religious ceremony. Entering the Kingdom of God is an act you perform in your heart.

ARCHBISHOP SAYS MUSLIM LAW IN BRITAIN "UNAVOIDABLE"

Printed in *Battle Cry*, Chick Publications, Issue Date: May/June 2008

"I am fed up with being under the thumb of this population [Muslim immigrants] which is destroying us, destroying our country and imposing its acts," Bardot said.

As the Muslim population grows in the Western World, the clash of cultures is becoming more obvious. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, recently

suggested that it was “unavoidable” that some aspects of Muslim Sharia law would be adopted in Britain. Sharia is government law based on the Qur’an.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown was quick to chastise Williams. “Our general position is that Sharia law cannot be used as a justification for committing breaches of English law,” Brown’s office countered.

For a glimpse of how English laws and Sharia laws collide, one need only look at nations under strict Islamic law. Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt, are examples where Sharia law condones: forced marriages, multiple wives, 99 lashes for adultery, and execution by family members for leaving Islam.

Recently in Scotland, a Muslim restaurant owner was about to lose his license for speeding. He pleaded undue hardship because his two wives lived in different towns and he had to spend every other night with them. An exemption was granted.

In February, the British government cleared the way for husbands of multiple wives to claim welfare benefits for all their partners. Though bigamy is outlawed, Muslim men have never been prosecuted who brought more than one wife when they immigrated.

The government estimates there are at least 1000 polygamous marriages in Britain. Authorities are also having to deal with honor killings and forced marriages, allowable in Islam, but contrary to Western laws.

It is increasingly obvious that Islamic law and laws based on biblical morality are miles apart. Another Muslim practice is called Mutaah or Urfi, a short-term, temporary “marriage” that can last for a few weeks, a few days or even hours. To Westerners this looks too much like prostitution but it is considered legal in Islam.

Western courts are struggling in other ways with this “culture shock.” In France, retired actress Brigitte Bardot is facing a fine of thousands of Euros for publicly stating that the Muslim community is “destroying our country and imposing its acts.” She is being charged with “inciting racial hatred” and has already been fined four other times for speaking out against Muslim practices.

Christians must not be afraid to speak out against Islam. Would you rather be “politically incorrect” or see your daughter in a “short-term marriage” to a Muslim immigrant.

Muslim leaders have lost their fear of sending people to the U.S. They no longer worry that they will be won to Christ. Soul winners, they need to begin worrying again!

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THE WHOLENESS OF MAN BEFORE A HOLY GOD

by Paula Leanes

If we ask our believing (born of Christ) neighbor if they think they have ever sinned, they will respond, “Yes” and perhaps quote Romans 3:23, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” If we ask our unbelieving (not born of Christ) neighbor if they have ever sinned, even they will probably respond, “Yes.” Instead of scripture being their reasoning, it may be something like, “Nobody’s perfect.”

Everyone easily recognizes our human fallibility and imperfection. However – what would someone, saved or unsaved, respond if asked, “What *is* sin?” Answers run from

“Not keeping the Ten Commandments” to “Doing bad things” to “Hurting another person.”

And as true as this is, it's only a part of the picture, because it doesn't draw a difference between the man who sins and the sinful man. “Sinning” is one thing. “To be sinful” is another. Many have argued that this is just not right or not fair, but we are all born into the world with a sinful nature. In this nature, we are unacceptable to God. This has been since the Fall of man (read Genesis 3) which created a new, not-so-desirable nature from the perfect nature God created for man. God, who created us in His image (Genesis 1:27), expects us to be holy, for He is holy (Leviticus 19:2, 11:44; 1 Peter 1:16).

We have inherited the “sinful nature” and therefore *are* sinful. We are born with this nature, or “born sinners.” Even at birth, we are in need of a Savior to remove this inherent sinfulness and cleanse us to be acceptable before God. We can argue that this just isn't fair, but we cannot change the truth. David stated, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” (Psalm 51:5)

I need to interject briefly that because we are born with a sinful nature, it does *not* mean that babies who die go to hell. I have heard this surmised and it made me cringe. God in His law drew a distinction between those who sinned willfully (Numbers 15:30,31; Hebrews 10:28) and those who sinned in ignorance (Numbers 15:24-28; Leviticus 4). I believe we can conclude that there is an “age of accountability” based on our awareness of our place before God.

14But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

15Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

16And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

Mark 10:14-16, quoted above, tells us we are to be trusting, like a child, when we come to God in prayer. We are also shown that Jesus accepts and loves these children by taking them in His arms and blessing them.

As we are given the choice between life and death, salvation and eternal banishment, we are accountable to a holy God. The simple truth is that God is holy, and because of His nature, He cannot look upon our sinful nature or our sinfulness. God the Father had to turn away from His only begotten Son as He bore our sins on the cross. It is His love for us that desires our wholeness before Him so that we can have a right relationship with Him. It is not that He desires to slam a hand of judgment upon us.

Some of the judgments and laws we read of in the Old Testament seem harsh. Understand, all this is before Jesus came to cleanse us of sin and make us acceptable before the Father once and for all. Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's sons, were consumed by the fire of God for offering strange fire on the altar (Leviticus 10:1-3). It is not clear what this strange fire was, but rebellion was obviously involved, as they offered incense when the high priest was the only one who, by God, had the authority to do so. They were consumed on the spot! How many of us today, without Christ, because of our sin and rebelliousness, would be worthy of the judgment received in the times before Christ? We all know of Lot's wife who turned into a pillar of salt for disobeying God and looking back upon the city (Genesis 19:26). Then there was Korah and a group of men who rebelled against Moses and were “swallowed” by the earth (Numbers 16:32) for their rebellion. There was probably an earthquake that took place, and the men got pulled into the cracks of the earth during it. This was judgment from God.

God does not desire that His people be judged and die and go to hell. He desires that they obey His commandments – in our case, accept Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and repent of our sins. We can assume those who were judged harshly before Christ came were at a point of no return, that their hearts were so hardened towards God that no sacrifice could bring them back. So God dealt with them immediately. Today, God turns people with hardened hearts over to their own lusts (read Romans 1), and at the final Judgment, they will be dealt with.

Why? Because He is holy. Again - rebelliousness and the sinful nature of man cannot stand in His presence. As no man (with a sinful nature) can look upon God, who is all light, and live, neither can He look upon man's sinfulness. It is contrary to His nature to even be able to see sin. How thankful are we that we have Christ, the Lamb of God, who makes us presentable before Him? All the Father has done is take steps to insure we have a road back to Him since the Fall of man. First, it was the blood of unblemished animals required to atone for sins, and simply for the sinful nature. Now, we have Jesus, the perfect Man who died once for all time for the sins and sinfulness of mankind.

God cannot even look upon sickness and imperfections in our bodies, unless we have the stamp of Jesus upon us. A man could not be considered for the priesthood if he had some kind of physical deformity. A person with any kind of sickness was considered "unclean" because sickness is something that would not have entered into our lives if we had been perfectly obedient in the beginning. Imperfection cannot stand before God. Animal sacrifice was required before Christ came; now Christ is required for us to be blameless before God.

Many today joke about their sin. If they really knew what sin is, they would not be laughing. It is what separates us from God. We are unclean and not presentable before God if we have sin. Many also resent what is called "fire and brimstone preaching" and instead go for a soft gospel that preaches only the love of God. The soft gospel doesn't get to the heart of the sin matter and it doesn't bring us to repentance, turning from sin, and acceptance of Jesus' sacrifice, which is what makes us presentable before God. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." (Hebrews 10:26,27) Jesus is ALL. He is THE ONLY sacrifice – the only One who can restore our right standing before a holy God.

The issue is our wholeness. Adam and Eve were whole before they believed they could decide what is good and evil for themselves. We are whole only when we do not have a sin stain upon us. Certainly God wants us whole so that we can have fellowship with Him again. This is His love. But there is no tolerance in His Kingdom for outright rebels. Our sin is darkness before God. When His light shines on us, that darkness is exposed. We are "found out." The sinful nature is not acceptable. In John 15:22, Jesus said, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin." Jesus – God – is the One who makes us aware of our sin. When that light shines, we are exposed and we are accountable. Once becoming aware that we have sin, we have no excuse.

And lest anyone argue that we do not have Jesus to "come and speak" to us in person today, we need to read Romans 1:20: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." We have within us a sort of "holy-o-meter" from God. We, created beings seeing the wonder of the created things around us, are to have an understanding that there is a God, and that He is holy. If we ignore this inner pull, we are guilty before God.

I believe so many of our issues of shame, inadequacy and “lack of confidence” that exist today are because there is an innate, yet undefined awareness of our sinfulness before God. Unbelievers have a gnawing on the inside that something is just “not right,” but they can never figure out what it is unless they come to Christ. It takes Jesus’ sacrifice to remove that uneasiness so that we can stand before God and have wonderful, unhindered fellowship with Him. What was broken can now be restored. But many do not seek Jesus as the Way back to wholeness and way back to God. When earthly history is written, Nadab and Abihu will not have been the only ones consumed by holy fire.

We so easily separate Jesus from the “Old Testament God,” as if they are different. Jesus is the Word of God – the Law of God – all that God is – and yet He took the form of a man in order to bear mankind’s sin. Jesus is the same God who wrote the Law. He is the same God that killed rebellious people on the spot. And yet He is our loving Savior. It is because of His love, and His desire that *no man* be separated from God, that He walked on earth, died and rose again.

There is only One God. Although Jesus is not God the Father, He is still the Word and the Law and all Truth. Jesus was the embodiment of God the Creator – His packaging, if you will, was “flesh.” And yet He was the living, breathing, walking Truth of whom we think of as the “Old Testament God.” Hence, although our human tendency is to separate Jesus from God because of His flesh, He really was God and all that God is, in flesh.

The understanding of this truth can only be revealed to us by the Spirit of God – the HOLY Spirit of God.

I recently pictured the text of the Bible, the Word of God, inside a sort of translucent man Jesus. He is the embodiment, or incarnation, of God. As He went about on the earth, there inside Him was all the Law, all the words God the Father ever spoke, and hence – the Law and the words – the *Word* – were Him. They were not just “in” Him; they *were* Him. They *are* not just “in” Him; they *are* Him. Jesus IS God. As God is LORD, Jesus is our Lord.

When God sent His Son, He sent Himself. “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14) He extended His very self and nature and life to us, those born into sin, and made a way for us to be free from sin and live eternally with Him.

Through Jesus, we are offered the wholeness we need in order to stand before a holy God. Without man having Jesus as the all-time sacrifice, and only “Remover” of our sin, God cannot look upon us. The nature of God is holiness, purity, and unblemished truth. God, for His holiness, cannot be in the presence of sin, because sin is in direct opposition to His very nature and character.

Jesus referred to Himself as “the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6) He is the WAY for us to return to God the Father, the only bridge we have since His death and resurrection. Paul states in Hebrews, “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” Jesus’ sacrifice did “take away” our sins, not just “cover” them.

God made a way – *the Way* – through His Son – for us to return to Him in confidence and without shame of sin. His Life in us is the only Way we may be whole before a holy God.

JESUS, MY CARPENTER

In a world filled with loneliness,
searching for good,
I laid myself in Jesus' hands,
like a broken piece of wood.

And with His gentle tools of love,
my heart at first He carved,
and filled it with His guiding light
where it once was dark and starved.

Then He filled my fears with perfect love,
and my doubts He chipped away,
with His Promise of eternal life
and peace for every day.

As the finish coat He painted,
His Precious Blood all over me,
then the vice of life was loosened,
and my spirit was set free!

For Jesus now this life I live,
to me He's been so good;
He made me such a happy man,
from just a broken piece of wood.

- Lawrence Peter Medici

OUR AMERICA

Ambling clamorous chatter,
Never-ending dead-end words,
Every trite obnoxious voice
Scrambling to be heard:

This is our America,
A gushing of the free,
A land of Christian conscience turned
For each a land of "Me!"

The days when men in err
Would proudly wisdom claim:
Sights as these, the Word of God
Perfectly foretold.
Sailing on audacity's sea,
This land should hide in shame.
Yet mocked our God will ne'er be:
We're reaping as we've sown.

- Paula Leanes

REBELLION

Laced with anguish years allotted are;
Hence repentance from most sits afar.
In the stead of seeking purity,
Dwellers of the years e'er bitter be.

Excuses of the heart on Judgement Day,
Unbeknownst to those hearts gone astray,
By our God dissolve as being naught.
Iniquities once hidden must be sought.

Who are we to tease the God of all,
Mock righteousness and flaunt imposter's
will?
Oh, that more would understand the fall
Of man, lest seen is settled Eden's bill.

- Paula Leanes

SOME EXCELLENT QUOTES FOR THOUGHT

(The Church makes a) "...vain effort to be acceptable to a Christ-hating world."
- Leonard Ravenhill, *Meat For Men*

"Eleven times in this book of Jeremiah (more times than in any other book in the Bible) we read, 'God rose up early.' God tried to intervene. As they made their first steps to calamity, He called them – but all was to no avail. At such a time, 'Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches' (Jeremiah 9:23). But when there is danger around we are prone to do all three things. Yet brains cannot help us out of the jam we are in."
- Leonard Ravenhill, *Meat For Men*

"Almost every natural man that hears of hell flatters himself that he shall escape it. He depends upon himself for his own security; he flatters himself in what he has done, in what he is now doing, or what he intends to do... But the foolish children of men miserably delude themselves in their own schemes, and in confidence in their own strength and wisdom; they trust to nothing but a shadow."
- Jonathan Edwards, sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"

"America has passed her 200th anniversary. We have been reminded that the Golden Age of great empires is 200 years. The decline of these empires goes like this:
From bondage to faith, from faith to courage
from courage to liberty, from liberty to abundance
from abundance to selfishness, from selfishness to complacency
from complacency to apathy, from apathy to dependence
from dependence to bondage."
- Leonard Ravenhill, *America Is Too Young To Die*

"Many do not recognize the fact as they ought, that Satan has got men fast asleep in sin and that it is his great device to keep them so. He does not care what we do if he can do that. We may sing songs about the sweet by and by, preach sermons and say prayers until doomsday, and he will never concern himself about us, if we don't wake anybody up. But if we awake the sleeping sinner he will gnash on us with his teeth. This is our work - to wake people up."
- Catherine Booth

"They often strengthened the hands of the wicked by promising them life. They comfort people before they convince them; sow before they plow: and are busy in raising a fabric before they lay a foundation. These foolish builders strengthen men's carnal security by their soft, selfish, cowardly discourses. They have not the courage or honesty to thrust the nail of terror into the sleeping souls!"
- Gilbert Tennent

"All too often, it seems, we're willing to be students of Christianity rather than disciples of Christ. The fact is that most of us are substituting learning and information for practical obedience."
– K.P. Yohannan, *The Road To Reality*

"Don't be humble. You're not that great."
- Golda Meir, former foreign minister and prime minister of Israel

"The men American people admire most extravagantly are the most daring liars; the men they detest most violently are those who try and tell them the truth."
- H. L. Mencken

“If Thomas Jefferson thought taxation without representation was bad, he should see how it is *with* representation.”

- Rush Limbaugh

“Islam is a religion in which ‘God’ requires you to send your son to die for him... Christianity is a faith in which God sent his Son to die for you.”

- Attorney General John Ashcroft

“Just before the Great Depression of the 1930s, America went through a period called the “roaring twenties.” It was a loud, sensuous, wicked time in our nation, when people wined and dined profligately, bought fur coats in excess, and spent the modern equivalent of \$200,000 on automobiles. America’s leaders assured everyone our future was going to be glorious. They said, ‘We see fifty years of prosperity ahead – with two chickens in every pot, and two cars in every garage!’ But overnight, the dream ended. Everything crumbled into dust. Why? We misread the times! We said, “God must be with us, because we’re blessed and prosperous.” But America’s boom days ended suddenly. And, beloved, today we are misreading our times of blessing as well!”

- David Wilkerson, *America’s Last Call*, 1998

“The Biblical explanation of the end of societies uses the concept of judgment. It depicts them as either having submitted to God, or having rebelled against Him. Far from being a typical nationalistic exaltation of a ‘chosen people,’ the Old Testament portrays Israel as having become an evil nation, fully deserving the judgment that God meted to it. Its rebellion against God was accompanied by a turning to idols, and this idolatry brought the nation to its end. ‘With their silver and gold,’ said the prophet Hosea, ‘they made idols for their own destruction.’ Idolatry, in its larger meaning, is properly understood as any substitution of the created for the creator. People may worship nature, money, mankind, power, history, or social and political systems instead of the God who created them all.”

- Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols For Destruction*, 1983

“Grace is but glory begun, and glory is but grace perfected.”

- Jonathan Edwards

“What good does it do to speak in tongues on Sunday if you have been using your tongue during the week to curse and gossip?”

- Leonard Ravenhill