

Previously published as:

My denomination does not promote
New Age Spirituality
Through
Spiritual Formation!

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ANDERSEN

Redemption: Bible Prophecy Simplified

125 Years of Bible Version Debate: Why?

Woman Submit! Christians & Domestic
Violence

Some Will Depart

Now the Spirit speaks *expressly* that in the *latter time* many shall *depart* from the faith... (1 Timothy 4:1).

The scriptures are very specific that there is a great falling away, a great departing from the faith, predicted to occur during the *Latter Time* (1 Timothy 4:1, 2 Thessalonians 2:3).

That time has arrived.

The scriptures say that those who are involved in the latter-day departing—apostasy—will be turned over to a strong delusion, because they believe the lie.

And because they will not receive a love of the truth, their doom will be sealed forever (2 Thessalonians 2:9-11).

This is obviously nothing to take lightly or flirt with in the slightest.

The passage in 2 Thessalonians 2 is a specific reference to the same latter day departure mentioned in 1 Timothy 4:1.

The scriptures tell us those who fall away in the latter time will not necessarily do so in order to live overtly sinful lives (although some will). Instead, they will forsake the true faith by embracing a counterfeit faith.

Many will sincerely believe they are following Christ but will find out too late that it is another Jesus, not the Jesus of the Bible that they are following (Matthew 7:22-23).

***Seducing Spirits and doctrines
of devils....***

There are two movements advancing at lightning speed through the Body of Christ today. Both movements are extremely seductive and promote a spirituality which corrupt believers from the simplicity found in Christ by weaving New Age/Occult precepts and practices into the very fabric of their lives and faith.

Due to the aggressive promotion of these movements through church leaders and vast interdenominational networks (along with the prevalence and availability of media and internet exposure), no group or denomination has been spared the influence of one or both of these movements.

These *doctrines of devils* are presented in such subtle, and *seductive* ways that a complete paradigm shift (a shift from one position or one belief system to another) begins to take place within the hearts and minds of those who are drawn to and embrace the concepts taught through these movements.

Once this happens, the believer—completely unawares—begins the process of becoming prodigal. The Word of God, at that point, becomes secondary to the experiential (that which can be *experienced*), and the danger of becoming apostate, at that point, becomes a real possibility.

These movements also have the devastating effect of drawing many into Christian church

membership without ever coming to a saving knowledge of Christ. They are drawn to, and embrace, a spirituality—a form of godliness—that has *no* saving power whatsoever.

Almost all prominent proponents of the modern Church Growth Movement promote the spirituality of one or both of these movements.

Spiritual Formation programs are now being implemented within every major evangelical denomination.

Spiritual Formation is defined as, *the teaching and application of “spiritual disciplines.”*

And seminary graduates, of every doctrinal persuasion, are being trained in ever increasing

numbers to introduce certain spiritual disciplines into the lives and prayer habits of those within their spheres of influence.

When the term “spiritual discipline” is used, it is almost always referring to the incorporating of “contemplative prayer” into the lives of church members.

Many churches are even introducing contemplative prayer into their *children’s* programs.

Contemplative prayer is, by far, the main practice promoted by the Spiritual Directors who lead church members onto the slippery slopes of spiritual formation. It is also called soaking or centering prayer. The terms spiritual formation and

contemplative prayer are practically synonymous.

The most widely accepted and pervasive of the two movements within the evangelical church is the Spiritual Formation movement.

Pentecostals, Charismatics, and non-Pentecostals alike are being influenced, through almost identical Spiritual Formation programs that promote this unbiblical form of prayer.

Contemplative prayer is actually not prayer at all, but rather a “Christianized” form of unbiblical, eastern meditation. Most of us know it by the name, transcendental meditation (TM). It is rightly associated with Hinduism and New Age Spirituality.

Webster's dictionary defines a contemplative as one who practices contemplation. To contemplate means to ponder, to *meditate* upon. So what's wrong with that?

Well, nothing is wrong with pondering or meditating upon things—as long as they are the *right* things, and as long as the pondering and meditating does not become obsessive.

The only thing upon which we can appropriately meditate on obsessively is the Written Word of God. Psalm one instructs us to do that.

So how do we apply Webster's definition of contemplate to what is known today as contemplative prayer? Can we apply it at all?

No, we cannot.

The term “contemplative prayer,” is an oxymoron. The two words, *contemplate* and *prayer*, are contradictory, and mutually exclusive one from the other.

How does one ponder and meditate upon something while at the same time communicate with God about it?

It cannot be done. The two may be closely related but are definitely separate activities.

Add to that, the contemplative’s practice of eastern meditation (transcendental meditation [TM]), which is “clear your mind of all thought,” and we have yet another contradiction.

How does anyone meditate on something with a blank mind?

The answer to that is—they don't. They can't. It is simply not possible.

Eastern meditation and contemplative prayer both mandate clearing all thoughts from the mind, and opening the spirit to receive the thoughts of someone or something else. New Agers are not ashamed to admit that when they are in that thoughtless state, they are essentially at the mercy of any number of spirit beings.

The goal is reaching a place of no thought *whatsoever*. That state is called, among other things, entering into *the silence*—also referred to by Christians as, “The Secret Place.” The term *contemplative prayer* is not only oxymoronic, as the one automatically cancels out the

other, but it is also a very deceptive and erroneous term.

Contemplative prayer traces its roots to a group of monks called, The Desert Fathers. The Desert Fathers taught that it didn't matter what method you used to seek God—all were good, and they unashamedly sought and implemented non-Christian, eastern, methods of meditation into their spiritual practices.

Scripture commands us not only to meditate upon something—the Written Word of God (Psalm 1:2), but also to refrain from learning the way of the heathen (Jeremiah 10:2).

Without going any deeper into the subject of contemplative prayer, we see that it is derived from Hinduism (Christian

contemplatives do not even try to deny this) and is diabolically opposed to the scriptural form of meditation prescribed in Psalms chapter one verse two.

There is little argument that spiritual formation programs and contemplative prayer go hand in hand. In addition to contemplative prayer, the spiritual disciplines include, but are not limited to, yoga and labyrinth walking. The latter are widely promoted within more liberal evangelical congregations.

Just because your local congregation may not, as yet, be familiar with any of these things is no reason for assuming that your denomination has not already jumped on the contemplative bandwagon. Take a look at the list of

denominations which have instituted these programs in their theological seminaries and key churches:

- **Andover** **Newton**
Theological School
- **Assemblies of God** (*AG Theological Seminary*)
- **Baptist** (*Baylor University & Dallas Theological Seminary*)
- **Church of God** (*Mount Paran*)
- **Methodist** (*Dubuque Theological Seminary*)
- **Moody Bible Institute**
- **Nazarene** Theological Seminaries
- **Presbyterian**
Theological Seminaries
- **Wheaton College**

I personally received an email from within the Dean's office at

*the United Methodist University
of Dubuque Theological
Seminary requesting information
concerning labyrinth walking.*

They had our ministry, Hungry
Hearts Ministries, confused with
a prominent, online, Presbyterian
spiritual formation outreach with
a similar name. They wrote
requesting my permission to use
a certain newsletter article in
training their seminary students
to facilitate labyrinth walking as
part of their spiritual formation
program.

Below is a copy of that
correspondence:

"The University of Dubuque Theological
Seminary located in Dubuque, Iowa would
like copyright permission to reproduce
"Labyrinth" from the summer 2000, Vol. 8,
No. 2 edition of Hungry Hearts.

The purpose is for use in our Spiritual
Formation Group class. We are seeking

permission to use as part of our curriculum for several years. Is there a one time copyright fee that would cover us for several years? We have approx. 30-40 students in the class per year.

Thank you for your assistance.”

I responded that I had no idea as to what they were referring and received a rather brusque reply when they realized their mistake.

Herein lies the real danger of contemplative spirituality, *all* who embrace contemplative spirituality, at some point, experience an ecumenical paradigm shift. And once that happens, they begin to hold the traditional beliefs of evangelical Bible-believing Christianity in utter contempt—even such basic beliefs as the authority of the Bible and the importance of preaching the gospel in soul winning.

Former Sunday school worker/now contemplative author, Sue Monk Kidd, is an example of this. Within the familiar confines of her Baptist Church, she came to the unfortunate conclusion that her ultimate authority was not the Bible at all, but rather the “divine voice of her own soul” (*Dance of the Dissident Daughter*, 1996).

Kidd now boasts in her newest title that she has moved past the traditional to the sacred “feminine.”

With these types of things happening unchallenged within the Body of Christ, it is becoming increasingly easier for unsaved persons to obtain church membership and lead active “Christian” spiritual lives while being accepted as one who has

inherited eternal life, when in reality no saving conversion has ever taken place.

Bill Hamon, called the Father of the Apostle-Prophet Movement (which is the second movement sweeping like wild-fire through the Body of Christ) promotes contemplative spirituality and attacks traditional, evangelical beliefs and practices in just about every area. A decade ago he had this to say about the amazing fact that 20,000 new believers *per day* were being won to the Lord in China, he wrote, "...that sounds great, ***but***..." (Apostles Prophets and the Coming Moves of God 1997)

How can you add a "*but*" to the fact that 20,000 believers *a day* are coming to the Lord? Bill Hamon does it because he claims

that signs and wonders are the definitive proof that God is validating a ministry and that these are the definitive fruit of any ministry—the fact that souls are won to Christ is merely incidental.

Experiences, signs, wonders and our own inner voices do not supersede the authority of the written word of God and the amazing miracle of the salvation of a soul.

Rick Joyner, another prophetic leader who promotes contemplative prayer, also emphasizes the experiential in place of the authority of the Bible. He did this when he claimed he had lots of scripture to back up the things he wrote in his incredibly anti-Bible, anti-evangelical, unscriptural book,

The Harvest, but that he was not going to use much of it as he wanted the reader to “*commune with the spirit*” about whether or not what he had written was true.

What if a defense attorney, or prosecutor, tried using that approach with a jury at a court trial? They’d get laughed out of the courthouse wouldn’t they (in addition to any other consequences they would face from the judge and their clients)?

So why is it Christians, people who claim to have God almighty residing inside them, seem to be the most gullible people on the planet? Could it be due to the influence of a spirit of whoredom and rebellion—whoring after what God has not given and rebellion against his revealed, written word—the Bible?

In a later book, Joyner shared a vision he received where he saw a holy mountain which portrayed Christians who focused primarily on soul winning as being at the bottom of the developmental heap.

According to Joyner, ardent soul winners are the least spiritually developed and most pathetic of all Christians (The Final Quest, 1996).

All who embrace this spirituality, sooner or later, begin losing their respect for the written word of God and their burden for soul-winning.

Aggressive evangelism, by preaching the gospel, becomes discouraged (even ridiculed) and relationship or prophetic evangelism is encouraged to

replace it. That may sound good on the surface but denies the biblical fact that it is the gospel of Jesus Christ—and nothing else—that is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16).

Again, *do not think your fellowship is immune to the influence of contemplative spirituality*. Spiritual Formation programs are taking root within literally *every* denomination and belief platform of evangelical Christianity—including both Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals.

Embracing the Prophetic Movement is not a requirement for implementing the spiritual discipline of contemplative prayer, nor is rejecting the prophetic movement any protection against it.

Southern Baptist *Life Way* Bookstores has been confronted by concerned evangelicals, to no avail, on more than one occasion, concerning their promotion of contemplative authors—like Sue Monk Kidd—who boldly deny biblical authority and the exclusivity of the Christian faith.

Although contemplative spirituality is obviously rooted in non-Christian, eastern, religious systems, believers should be alerted to the fact that the modern day contemplative movement, promoted within Protestant evangelical fellowships through spiritual formation programs, descends directly from the Roman Catholic mystics (who in turn adopted it directly from the eastern religions).

It is commonly acknowledged among serious contemplatives that contemplative prayer cannot be fully embraced without referencing, at some point, the Roman Catholic mystics—Saint Teresa of Avila, Saint Ignatius, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, and the Desert Fathers are just a few of these.

However, this may not be mentioned at first while introducing Spiritual Disciplines to non-Catholic evangelicals.

Mike Bickle, a leader in the prophetic movement who heavily promotes contemplative prayer, makes no excuses for the fact that if you want to “go deeper into God,” you must embrace both contemplative prayer and the Roman Catholic Mystics.

He freely admits contemplative prayer cannot be found in scripture nor can it be found *anywhere* in protestant tradition—it can only be found within eastern religions (Hindu and Buddhist) which passed it on to Christianity via the Roman Catholic Church.

Most leading contemplatives have no problem agreeing with Mike Bickle on this.

Some (but by no means all) descriptive terms used by those who promote contemplative spirituality are:

- Going deeper into God
- Experiencing the presence God
- Meditation
- The Silence
- Solitude
- Reflecting / Reflection

- Lectio Divina
- Spiritual disciplines
- The Secret Place

One of the first observable fruits of contemplative spirituality in an evangelical Christian is an ecumenical mindset which fails to discern important doctrinal differences between Protestant and Roman Catholic beliefs and practices.

All Christians, both Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals alike, who are experiencing paradigm shifts by means of these “spiritual disciplines,” become enamored with eastern culture. Both their words and writings are peppered with frequent references to the un-spirituality of the “western” church.

Peace, peace, love, love and “Don’t Judge!” are becoming words of the day. Actually “judgmental” is the most frequently used word in the new spirituality. But the same ones whose conversation is so liberally sprinkled with these also have no problem with criticizing—often viciously—those with more “traditional” beliefs.

All contemplatives eventually experience a failure to understand why there are religious differences—at all—between anyone in *any* religion—who is seeking God using *any* means.

The prevailing attitude becomes, “*Seek God. It does not matter how you do it—just do it—he’ll accept you regardless.*”

Bible believing Christians know this is simply not true. Jesus Christ, *the Jesus of the Bible*, is the only way, the only truth and the only life. Far too many have fallen in love with another Jesus. One they will find out, unfortunately when it is too late, cannot save.

Within Pentecostal, Prophetic, and non-Pentecostal circles—among those who adopt the “Spiritual Disciplines,” the doctrine that God only indwells those who are saved by faith in the shed blood of Christ takes second place to the unscriptural belief that God is in everything and everyone. In fact, the word *doctrine* becomes a dirty word and subordinate to the experiential.

Contemplative prayer is an “experiential spirituality.” That means that in the course of practicing this spiritual discipline the person *experiences* something. That is the whole purpose of it, to experience God. Only it is not the God of Heaven and earth who is experienced.

Contemplative prayer is dangerous. In his book, *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*, Richard Foster warns his readers that *they may receive guidance during contemplative prayer that is not divine guidance*. He warns that the person entering into such meditation may not be safe from “dark and evil” spirits. *Yet he encourages the pursuit of it anyway.*

Brian Flynn, a former new age medium who now exposes new

age practices within the church, suggests that Christians pursue this unscriptural, dangerous, form of meditation, because they become infatuated with the seductive *feeling* that accompanies it.

Mike Bickle strongly emphasizes the *experience* that contemplative prayer produces while introducing the subject to potential victims.

A few well known authors who are now promoting contemplative spirituality are as follows:

- Beth Moore
- Bill Hamon
- Brennen Manning
- Chuck Swindoll
- C. Scott Peck
- David Jeremiah
- Father Thomas Keating

- Henri Nouwen
- Max Lucado
- Richard Foster
- Rick Joyner
- Rick Warren
- Sue Monk Kidd
- Thomas Merton

This is a very short list (comparatively) which highlights the pervasiveness of this movement and the diversity of religious affiliations and backgrounds of those who promote contemplative prayer.

It is a frightening fact that the list of former evangelical, contemplative authors is growing daily.

The dangers of contemplative, experiential, spirituality are severe enough that Bible believing Christians should give

anyone promoting these beliefs a very wide berth.

When allowed to run its course, the end result of embracing this spirituality is a complete paradigm shift—not only away from the simplicity found in Christ, but altogether away from the fact that Jesus Christ, the Jesus of the Bible, is the only way, the only truth, and the only life.

To a man, all evangelical contemplatives profess belief in Christ. But it cannot possibly be the Jesus of the Bible they are professing as he condemns their heathenistic practices in no uncertain terms when he forbids vain repetitions in prayer. Therefore, I submit that it is another Jesus they follow.

All prominent, admitted, contemplatives—*all*—as in Every... single... one...—stress that they have finally come to the understanding that God is in all things. The scriptures do not even hint at such a thing.

This is an admission, whether they own up to it or not, that, in their refined, revised, contemplative, opinion, Jesus is no longer the only way to eternal life.

There is no way God can be in everything and only in those who belong to his son at the same time. The two ideas are mutually exclusive—each diabolically opposed—to the other.

The end result of contemplative spirituality is *Panentheism*.

Panentheism is the unscriptural belief that God is in all things as opposed to the biblical teaching that he resides, not in all things, but only within those who belong to him through faith in his risen son, the only Christ—Christ Jesus.

Part Two

Various articles on
Contemplative Prayer
and the
Apostle-Prophet Movements

Mike Bickle on Contemplative Prayer

Mike Bickle, director of the International House of Prayer (IHOP) in Kansas City, and a well-known leader in the Prophetic Movement, claims that God is restoring contemplative prayer to the church.

He goes on to claim that contemplative prayer is a God ordained means of entering into the fullness of God, and that the *brightest lights in church history have been Roman Catholic mystics* who lived during the dark ages. He went on to say the western church had much to learn from the mystics.

Anti-evangelical propaganda is prominent throughout his speeches. He informs his

followers that they are constantly being put on the defensive by, and being forced to apologize to, evangelical Christians for their (Bickle's followers) intensity toward God by saying "Other Christians force us to hide our intensity—to wear a façade."

However, he comforts them with the good news that they don't "have to wear any façade" when they got together in little oasis' "*like this*" (meaning they can openly hate and ridicule evangelicals at his and other prophetic meetings like his?).

He continued his barrage against evangelicals by saying, "They don't grasp it at all—being introduced into the deep realms of love (referring to the seductive experience of contemplative prayer)."

Bickle freely admits to pursuing non-Christian eastern religious philosophies and has nothing but criticism for the “unspiritual” Western Church.

According to him, evangelical Christians are a pathetic and ignorant bunch. He says the following of evangelicals, “The *Protestant wing* of the western church, which is a tiny percentage of the Body of Christ, is nearly completely (98%) unaware that the Holy Spirit is restoring contemplative prayer to the church.”

He quotes over and over again from the book *sacred pathways, which recommends carrying some symbol or icon, choosing a mantra and visualizing God.*

Each one of these things are common in all forms of occult,

and are contradictory to the Word of God, which forbids imagery of any sort or *vain repetitions* being used in prayer.

Bickle says (in all earnestness) that Barnes & Nobles is prophesying to the church that we need the Roman Catholic mystics.

He says he believes this because the book store chain has carried so many books on the mystics and contemplative prayer. He insists we need to study the lives and writings of the Roman Catholic mystics.

Bickle wants to know why the church is not picking up on the fact that God is calling the entire Body of Christ to live lifestyles of contemplative prayer?

A hindrance, he says we have to dismantle (“we” meaning he and his followers), is the idea that church history began with Martin Luther (I wasn’t aware we had that idea until he informed me of it).

Bickle claims the *most inspiring light* in all of Christianity came out of the Roman Catholic Church during the dark ages.

He goes on to minimize the false doctrine and atrocities (i.e., the murder of true followers of Christ) by that vile institution by saying, “But didn’t Catholics do some *funny* things? Well, when you stand before the Lord you’ll find out you did some funny things too.”

I say the brightest, most inspiring, light ever produced by

the Roman Catholic Church was the light produced by the fires at Smithfield where they burned true Christians to death for standing up for the totality and exclusivity of the “*doctrine*” of Jesus Christ, and I fail to find anything at all in that, that can be called “*funny*.”

Bickle heavily promotes Bernard Clairvaux (who he falsely claims was a just a quiet little monk who only wanted to stay in his hermitage, praying and reading The Song of Solomon). He leaves out the part where Clairvaux travels extensively as a major instigator of the second crusade (not one single true Christian ever participated in those brutal—Roman Catholic—crusades).

The writings of Roman Catholic Monk, Father Thomas Keating (the modern day Father of contemplative prayer) are also promoted heavily in contemplative writings.

Bickle says the Roman Catholic contemplatives are examples for us of, “a way to a deeper life in God.” He went on to say, “*The protestant world is in great need of examples (like these) that will beckon us to the fullness of God.*” The bottom line is, Mike Bickle is telling the Body of Christ that the Bible does not contain everything we need to know concerning life and godliness. He is telling us we are woefully deficient in having lost God’s fullness and need to look to New Age, Eastern philosophy and to Roman Catholic mysticism as examples of how to restore it.

More from Mike Bickle on Contemplative Prayer

Mike Bickle says this of contemplative prayer: "... this is an imperfect science... it (the term contemplative prayer) is not a term that is a biblical term... it's an idea. ... there's no place where Paul the apostle said the term contemplative prayer means this... different ones throughout church history define it differently... I have 30, 40, 50 titles on contemplative prayer in my home... any book on contemplative prayer, I just buy em... at first it confused me, because one person talked about it so different from another person, it took me a few of years to figure it out that there is no clear infallible definition..."

The above quote from Mike Bickle is taken from his audio message “Contemplative Prayer part 2.”

What Bickle just said in the quotes above is this:

- Contemplative prayer is an evolving thing.
- Contemplative prayer cannot be found in the Bible.
- To one person it means one thing—to another it means something else.
- Mike Bickle will read *anything* on contemplative prayer regardless of who writes it.
- Contemplative prayer cannot be defined.

Here is another Mike Bickle recommendation concerning contemplative prayer: "You're gonna need resources to do it (to go into the deep waters of God). The Protestant world is really, really narrow on the resources of contemplative prayer."

May I comment as to why the Protestant world is really, *really* narrow on resources of contemplative prayer?

Because it is not found in the Bible!

During the protestant reformation, people rightly claimed that the Bible alone tells us everything we need to know about life and godliness. They rightly rejected extra-scriptural revelation such as that which

came from the Pope and from the Roman Catholic mystics.

Contemplative prayer is not found in the Bible. Even proponents of it admit to that.

Yet they go right on assuring us it is perfectly safe, beneficial, and even necessary to our spiritual growth, to pursue an unbiblical spiritual activity.

In case no one has ever told you, I will tell you now. Contemplative Prayer is an unscriptural spiritual activity. It is not a perfectly safe, beneficial or necessary spiritual activity for Bible believing Christians.

And if it is an **unscriptural** spiritual activity, what does that make it?

That makes it dangerous.

The Holy Spirit certainly cannot be a part of any spiritual activity that is unbiblical. So, what spirit is behind it?

We only have two choices here.

Christians, we are not lacking in resources to help us connect with God. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the written word of God, and the Holy Spirit of God really do give us all the resources we need in order to experience God to the fullest.

It does not get any simpler than that.

There are no gifts like the authentic gifts of God. I beg you—do not fall for cheap, soul-stealing counterfeits!

I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ (2 Corinthians 11:3).

Do You Honestly Believe...?

...that the Church of the Living God went into apostasy shortly after the last of the original 12 apostles died?

Bill Hamon says it did.

Do you honestly believe God would heal a transvestite by giving him an instant sex change operation?

Cindy Jacobs says he will.

Do you honestly believe the least spiritually developed—bottom of barrel Christians are those who focus on soul-winning?

Rick Joyner says they are.

#1) The scriptures assure us that God's Truth has never been

taken from his people, and it never will be.

Those who depart in the latter-day apostasy (predicted in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 and 1 Timothy 4:1), will do so out of rebellion against the truth—not because truth has been lost. It will be a deliberate *rejection* of God's truth (his written word, the Bible)—which the scriptures tell us endures to every generation (Psalm 100:5).

#2.) Transvestites are effeminate men—homosexuals—men who desire to be women and have sexual relations with other men. The Word of God is explicit on where God stands on the sin of effeminacy and homosexuality. The Bible says the effeminate will not enter the kingdom of God.

God will not contradict his Word by giving an effeminate man a miraculous, instant, sex change operation. He will, however, deliver the repentant from sinful oppressions (1 Corinthians 6:9).

#3.) The very last words of Jesus included a command to win the lost. Jesus himself said that he came personally to seek and to *save* them that were lost. The scriptures say, “He that winneth souls is wise.”

There is no higher calling or more worthy activity than that of being a soul-winner. The accuser and opposer of our souls (the devil), however, will do or say anything he can to prevent Christians from being obedient to Christ in this commission.

And remember, Satan's ministers are transformed as into ministers of righteousness... (2 Corinthians 11:15).

Jesus had harsh words for those who opposed soul-winning in his day—he said, “Ye are of your Father, the devil. You do not enter in yourselves, and you prevent those who would...”

The three people whose names are mentioned at the beginning of this article are respected leaders of the, false, prophetic movement which has infiltrated the Church of Jesus Christ to an alarming degree.

This movement is known by many names, by far the most common is “*The Prophetic*,” followed by *the Apostle-Prophet Movement*, *the Five-Fold*

*Ministry Restoration Movement,
or Apostolic-Prophetic
Restoration Movement.*

Those affiliated with this movement have a mandate from Bill Hamon (often called the “Father” of the movement) to network, network, network! And network they do.

They usually infiltrate subtly and deceptively, by saying, in their initial contact, that they have a, “vision to network with other Christians for the purpose of ‘taking Jesus *outside the four walls*’ and *into the streets*.”

- **Taking Jesus outside the four walls**
- **Taking Jesus to the Streets**

Sounds good doesn’t it? But do you hear the subtle reproach in

those words? Don't you feel the sting? Does the barb hit home?

What a pompous arrogant bunch they are! If the Body of Christ has not been taking the Gospel "outside the four walls," and who says they aren't? Neither are those in the prophetic movement—for they are only interested in networking in order to promote their prophetic agenda.

Start listening for the buzz-words of this movement. I guarantee you will hear them:

- Present Truth (or Present *Restored* Truth)
- Taking Jesus to the streets
- Outside the four walls
- Five-Fold Ministries/Ministers (restoring the...)

- Prophetic/ The Prophetic
Prophetic Evangelism/
Prophetic Activation
- Spiritual Gift Activation
- Awakening / spiritual
awakening
- Paradigm/ Paradigm Shift
- Harvesting Souls
- Ascension Gifts/
Ascension Ministers or
Ministries

If you hear any of these—the influence has somehow crept into your life and church fellowship on some level.

Present *Restored* Truth

The phrase “Biblical insights [combined] with personal rhema...” is found on the commendations page (xvii) of Bill Hamon’s book *Apostles Prophets and the Coming Moves of God*.

Exactly what is *personal rhema*?

Hamon calls it “*present restored truth*.” This is so-called “truth” the apostle or prophet receives by direct revelation, and no claim is made that it can be backed up by scripture.

Here is a quote from a disciple of Bill Hamon’s: “God is restoring truth to the Church that was lost during the dark ages of Church history (500-1500 A.D). The believer will understand the

importance of being established in “present truth.” (Prophet Quinn Mitchell from his prophetic in action website).

“Present Truth,” according to its purveyors and Bill Hamon spin-offs, is extra-scriptural revelation supposedly from God that has nothing whatsoever to do with Biblical Truth. And they are not at all ashamed of admitting to this fact. In fact, they are frequently quoted as saying, “*you won’t find this in the Bible, but...*”

According to present truth, one of the main premises of the prophetic movement is that Christians should be seeking spiritual growth and ascension to new and higher levels in the “ascension” gifts (i.e., the prophetic).

“Ascension” gifts is a new age term (along with the new age concept of “higher levels”) that has been integrated into Christian vocabulary by prophetic leaders such as Bill Hamon and many others. Although they will loudly protest this conclusion by saying they coined the term using Ephesians four, I find it more than a little interesting that new age “ascension” books and gifts can be purchased alongside metaphysical books and gifts at new age book stores. I am also more than a little convinced that those rising to “higher levels” in the ascension gifts are doing it, not with the help of the Holy Spirit at all, but with the help of spiritual entities known among the more advanced new agers as the, “ascended masters.”

Present truth, as already stated, is truth that was supposedly lost to the church during the Dark Ages and is now being restored, via revelation, by those who are highly developed in the “ascension gifts.”

Those who focus merely on growing in the knowledge of God with the help of the Holy Spirit through his written word and who focus on soul-winning are regarded as spiritually under-developed Christians.

The king pins of the Apostle-Prophet “Prophetic” movement, who supposedly have ascended to “higher levels,” have demonstrated a zero tolerance policy in regards to those who will not let go of what they derisively call “old” religious traditions—*unless of course it is*

*the “old” Roman Catholic
religious tradition of
contemplative prayer.*

The *old religious traditions* they
are trying to overcome and do
away with are twofold.

The old tradition of holding to
the authority of scripture as the
standard for judging any and
every utterance and evangelistic
soul-winning by way of
preaching the gospel are things
they say must go.

Extra-scriptural revelation,
prophetic evangelism (soothe-
saying), having spiritual gifts
“activated” (another new age
term and practice) and growing
in the “ascension” gifts are the
major priorities of the apostle-
prophet movement—along with
networking of course.

The concept of the prophetic movement's "present truth" is at variance with the scriptures which clearly say God's truth (contained in his word—the Bible) endures to *every* generation.

Does that mean God's truth was available (albeit difficult for the common man to access) during the Dark Ages? That is exactly what it means. Don't forget, the term "Dark Ages" is a man made term coined to describe a particularly difficult period in history in which the Roman Catholic Church made a cruel, aggressive, *unsuccessful* attempt to snuff out the light of the word of God.

China, North Korea, and many other communist countries are still doing that today.

Jesus demonstrated very different priorities from those who exalt spiritual growth in the “ascension gifts” over understanding the written Word of God and over soul-winning.

When he gave his disciples, not just the 12 he called apostles—but the seventy others as well, power over all the power of the enemy (fairly spiritually developed group I’d say).

Jesus warned them not to get caught up in the fact that they had such great power. He said having all that power was not the most important thing.

Well, if having all power over all the forces of the enemy was not so important, then what was the better thing?

They were told to rejoice because their souls were saved.

Imagine that.

Jesus said being saved and winning souls was the better thing.

With that warning, our Lord and Savior lumped himself with the same group of pathetic, under-developed Christians Bill Hamon claims are part of the “*anti-Christ religious system*.”

I cannot recommend reading his book *Apostles Prophets and the Coming Moves of God*, but that is where you will find the above mentioned phrase used in reference to the traditional evangelical believers who refuse to buy the bill of goods he has

been so successful in selling to so many.

The man's words are smoother than butter, but it is clear that war is in his heart—and not against that old serpent, Satan, as they so love to boast.

It has been pointed out that movements do not necessarily need a god in order to be successful, but that no movement can be successful *without a devil*. Even Hitler admitted the Jews served an important purpose in being the devil of the Third Reich.

Almost nothing rallies a diverse group of people together in the same cause like a common devil can do.

I propose that the “devil” of the prophetic movement is not Satan at all, but rather traditional, evangelical, Bible believing Christians who contend earnestly for the faith and oppose the prophetic movement’s unscriptural “revelations” and the false foundations they are building based on them.

The Bible says: “You shall know the *truth*, and the *truth* will make you free.”

But those who resist *present restored truth*, by stubbornly clinging to scripture, are called a number of nasty names by the leaders of the apostle-prophet movement. Here are a few examples of the names Bill Hamon calls ordinary Bible believing, evangelical, Christians who refuse to be seduced by the

doctrines of devils he promotes (most of the below can be found in just the *first* chapter of his book):

- Rebellious
- Critical
- Jealous
- “Traditional” (as in “old foggy”)
- Contentious
- Narrow Minded
- Not open to the Holy Spirit
- Not very spiritually developed
- Discriminating
- Belonging to the “anti-Christ religious system”
- Withered hand

Jesus embodies truth. He “is” the truth as well as “speaks” the truth. And He—as our creator—chose to give us the truth in his *written* Word, the

scriptures—which will endure forever. The scriptures themselves claim to *endure* to every generation—to be *preserved* to every generation. The scriptures themselves claim to be *complete* in that they are “settled forever.” Where does that leave room for those who say God’s truth has been lost? Which generation is not included in “every?”

So whose “truth” is going to carry the most weight with us—the “present truth” of Bill Hamon, Peter Wagner, Rick Joyner and their crowd (which is growing exponentially and who waste no opportunity to pooh-pooh, ridicule and viciously stereotype Bible believing soul winners)... or the Word of Truth that endures to all generations—the Bible?

Long after “*present restored truth*” has dropped its rotten fruit, dried up, and like the dust, has blown completely away, that which has *been written...* will still endure.

What Kind of Fruit is the Prophetic Movement Producing?

The Father of the Apostle-Prophet movement begins his Apostle-Prophet book by laying a false foundation and building from there.

Hamon's unscriptural premise is stated very early and very clearly on the dedication page (V) of his 1997 book *Apostles Prophets and the Coming Moves of God*.

It is here that the reader is informed that Jesus will not be "released" from heaven (to raise the dead, catch out his church and establish his kingdom) until the way is prepared, in advance, for him by a certain group of spiritually advanced

people getting down to business and restoring all things *first*. This is spin on the Universalist belief that the entire race must rise to a higher awareness of God before all things that are possible with God become actual. It goes without saying that Hamon claims all this will be done by those who are well advanced in the “ascension gifts.”

Now, I read my bible daily. I pick up reading every day exactly where I left off the day before. I have been doing that since 1980. I do not know what Bible Bill Hamon has been reading, but I do know what is, and is not, written in the scriptures. And no such thing as Bill Hamon describes in the dedication of his book is contained within the pages of the Bible I read.

Uh-oh, there I go aligning myself with those he calls the *rebellious*, anti-Christ religious system again. I have come to the conclusion those are really all who disagree with Bill Hamon—and I am not being facetious here.

Although the scriptures accurately predict the general condition of the world (and the church) in the latter times, nowhere in scripture do we read that Jesus' return is dependent upon any human behavior or accomplishment.

The scriptures are clear the time for his return is an “appointed” time—decreed before-hand by the Father, and known only to the Father. There is a day and there is an hour. And it has been *pre-*

determined since before the foundation of the earth.

Psalms 119:89 says the matter has already been settled! The writer of Ecclesiastes (3:1) backs up the psalmist by telling us there is a *time* for every purpose under heaven. Those are just a few of the scriptures that speak of a set, pre-determined day and hour for Christ's return.

Long before either of the above scriptures were written. The Prophet Daniel wrote that the *end* (which is culminated by the visible, physical return of Jesus Christ to earth) was already an "appointed" time (Daniel 8:19).

The Father already knew both the day and the hour, and the issue, as the psalmist said, was "settled" long before Daniel ever

penned those words and long before Jesus came the first time and informed us, yet again, of that fact.

As for the “restoring of all things,” that Hamon claims this committed group of super-Christians will accomplish, only Jesus himself can restore all things. And nowhere in scripture can we find where that will be accomplished before his physical return.

The establishment of Christ’s kingdom is what brings the restoration—not visa versa, and even then, we will not see total restoration until the first 1000 years has been completed (Revelation 20:5, 7-10, 1 Corinthians 15:24-25, Psalms 102:25-26, Isaiah 65:17).

As clear as the unscriptural foundation, in the dedication of Hamon's book, is his New Age philosophy.

Who wouldn't want to be part of an elite group responsible for ushering in the return of the King of Kings and then to rule and reign with him?

Do I hear an objection at this point that New Agers (along with socialists) do not promote the idea of elite groups but rather equality among all men?

Do not deceive yourselves. They certainly do believe that some are "more equal" than others. In all socialistic (communistic) societies, there are the "equal" masses and the "more equal" ruling elite. So it is within the New Age Movement and the

Apostle-Prophet movement. There is even a reverse rapture included in new age teaching (which almost exactly matches that of dominion theology) where less developed souls will be transported out of this sphere of existence to another, more suitable location.

Although Hamon repeatedly claims there are no hierarchies within the apostle-prophet movement, he also contradicts himself by saying every church fellowship must be in submission to an apostle—sounds fairly hierarchal to me.

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that he “accepts” the responsibility of being an apostle over apostles. He makes it very clear that it is the apostles and prophets who are, or should be,

in charge, while at the same time loudly proclaiming no one is in charge.

So, which is it?

It is true, though, that those in the prophetic movement are very loosely networked in an identical fashion to the way those involved in the new age movement are loosely networked, so the movement is not threatened or stopped if one part of the network goes down (Constance Cumbey has much to say about this in her book, *The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow*). But for them to claim no hierarchy is a deliberate lie. Both Bill Hamon and Rick Joyner clearly describe the hierarchy—Hamon in his book *Apostles Prophets and the Coming Moves of God*, and Joyner in his blasphemous

description of God's Holy Mountain contained in his book *The Final Quest*.

Jesus said we would know false prophets by their fruits—there is no need to quibble about semantics here—false prophets, false apostles, or false teachers—they all fall into the same category. So let's take a brief look at one example of the *fruit* this movement is producing.

Since Bill Hamon is the apostle of apostles and the undisputed *Father* of this movement, it only stands to reason that others who have embraced his philosophy, and are leaders in the movement today, would be considered his... *fruit*.

Rick Joyner is a self-proclaimed “Prophet.” He is considered to be one of the king pins in the Apostle-Prophet movement. In his book *The Final Quest*, he teaches about how to tell who the high man or the low man on the totem—I mean—*holy mountain* is.

In his book, he claims to have seen a vision of God’s Holy Mountain. There were people climbing that mountain. According to Joyner, those who had reached the highest “levels” (New Age terminology), are those who embraced the higher levels of truth concerning the prophetic, i.e., *present truth* and are advanced in the “ascension gifts.”

Those who never progress past the very lowest “levels,” are the

“traditionalists,” those pathetic, spiritually underdeveloped souls with a passion for soul-winning (the very ones Hamon describes as belonging to the *anti-Christ religious system*). Joyner leaves the reader perceiving them as pitiful, un-evolved Christians who content themselves with being *just* soul-winners.

It is bad enough these poor growth-stunted souls will never be as “equal” as those at or near the top of Joyner’s Mountain, but since these religious traditionalists will not surrender to the consensus of the group, according to Hamon, they are—by default, pitted *against* the group—causing disunity and hindering the progression of “present truth” and the current moves of God from being accepted (which in turn, keeps

Jesus trapped in Heaven and hinders him from establishing his Kingdom here on earth).

These critical, nay-sayers who will not accept present truth are therefore alienated, as hindrances, from the group.

And what is “Present Truth?”

Anything the apostle or the prophet says.

That’s right—*anything*. And how do we know if what the prophet or apostle is uttering is actually truth?

We don’t—unless we reference it against the written word of God—the Bible. And God forbid that any of us un-evolved, lower-level Christians challenge the utterances of the more highly

evolved upper-level apostles or prophets.

Even worse—don't dare quote *scripture* to prove how ignorant we really are.

The Bible, as the standard for measuring what is or what is not "truth," is of necessity undermined, vigorously (even though it is quoted, or should I say misquoted, constantly), by the leaders of this movement.

Here some of the comments being thrown around at prophetic gatherings these days:

- God is a lot bigger than doctrine.
- The church is so hung up on Bible study, they don't know Jesus!

I ask you, where is the only place we find Jesus revealed as the risen Son of God—and the only name given under heaven whereby men can be saved?

The answer to those questions is only found in the Bible!

And where does *doctrine* come from?

It comes from the Bible.
And what does the Bible have to say about sound doctrine?

It says to give attention to it...because the days are coming when men will ***not endure it***.

So, in light of that, what kind of fruit is being produced by the Apostle-Prophet movement?

Rotten I'd say.

Signs and Wonders

Does God still do signs and wonders today?

Of course he does. He is the same today, yesterday and forever. Not only does the Word of God verify that God never changes, but I have experienced signs and wonders in my own personal life in the form of supernatural health and supernatural healings.

My husband is a documented miracle at Hamilton Medical Center in Dalton, GA. We have both experienced the supernatural power of God in our lives, and we believe with all our hearts that we should never forget that we serve a God of the miraculous.

But we should also take heed to the fact that Jesus' severely rebuked those who sought after signs.

How many today are touting signs and wonders in order to validate their ministries and draw people to their meetings? How many are *seeking* and following after signs and wonders?

Jesus said wicked and *adulterous* people seek after signs.

The miracles—the signs and wonders Jesus performed during his ministry were in response to real needs—they were not frivolous manifestations that catered to sinful lusts to see and experience the supernatural.

We even see Jesus refusing to meet a legitimate need when a

crowd was hungry and wanted another meal—because he perceived they were not following him for who he was but rather *for what they could get from him*.

That was a very subtle and dangerous shift in motivation on their part—ours too if that is the case. It changes us from faithful followers of Christ to adulterous, whoring, children.

We are cheating on God when we begin following after signs, wonders and words from the so-called prophets/soothe-sayers. The word of God says if we dream a dream, tell it. If we have a word, speak it faithfully. These things benefit us all by turning us from our own wicked ways to God's life-giving ways.

But there are far too many who run when God has not sent them and speak words they did not hear from God. God says these deceitful dreamers actually steal his words from his people and bring them to ruin (Jeremiah 23:21-32).

New Light? No Light!

“Is there anything whereof it may be said, See this is new? The thing that has been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done.”

And there is “no” new thing under the sun
(Ecclesiastes 1:10, 9).

In light of the above information (straight from the Word of God), how should we be dealing with those who claim to be receiving *new* light or *new* revelation (that would be “present truth”)?

Isaiah gives clear instructions on how to receive “light” from God:

“Should not a people seek unto their God... to the Law and to the testimonies (the written word of God)? If they speak not according to *this word*, it is because... There is *no light in them* (Isaiah 8:19-20)!

That is a direct reference to the written word of God—the Holy Scriptures. Isaiah is saying every utterance must be weighed against what has *already been written*.

If these were the only two references in the Word of God dealing with those who claim to be saying something *new* or receiving *new* revelation, they would be enough to debunk these false apostles and prophets who claim to be restoring **“present truth,”* but they are not.

*Remember, present truth is stuff
that cannot be found
in the scriptures!

So do not listen to *anyone*
claiming to receive *new*
revelation from God that, even
they will admit, cannot
be backed up by scripture.

These people, no matter how
good they sound, no matter how
genuine they seem to be,
are *false*, and, according to
Isaiah, there is *no light* in them.

Doctrine is Not a Dirty Word

Those who are committed to the Apostle-Prophet movement love to tell those of us who love the Bible that our theology is getting in the way of our faith and spiritual growth.

Doctrine, to them, has become a dirty word—unless it is an ever-evolving, Darwinian type of doctrine that morphs with each tasty morsel of *new light* that proceeds from the mouths of the “prophets.”

If one chooses to follow the leaders of this movement, the Holy Scriptures must be trashed... because the “new light/present truth” that is continuously spewing forth

from the mouths of these apostles and prophets contradicts the written Word of God.

On a daily basis, the followers of these clouds without water choose to reject what is *written* in favor of “present truth” spoken by present day oracles.

When Jesus was tempted, he did not entertain Satan’s seductive offers for even one second. He was very stubborn in his choice of clinging to what was already written.

We must be just as stubborn about it as our Lord was.

Satan had a comeback, which many fall for in spite of Jesus’ example. He too said, “It is written.” *Satan can quote*

scripture quite well, and so can his ministers.

If we are not doers of the Word,
if we are hearers only..., *we...
will... be... duped!*

We are told in the Bible to give attention to *doctrine*. We are told in the written Word of God that in the last days, men will not endure sound *doctrine*.

What is doctrine?

Is doctrine that complicated,
incomprehensible stuff
theologians spend their lives
analyzing, obsessing
with, writing and debating about?

I hope not! For if that is what it is, I do not want anything to do with it either!

Fortunately, that is not what doctrine is. The word “Doctrine” means *instruction*. That entails a bit more than simply teaching. However, the Bible says that in the last days, sound doctrine will be despised and people will be heaping *teachers* to themselves—specifically teachers whose words make the hearer *feel good*.

That is happening now. The time Paul spoke of in 1 Timothy 4:1 and 2 Timothy 4:3-4 is upon us in full force.

Doctrine is purely and simply what God has to say about any given subject. And he arranged to have that *written*, very simply, and very clearly, in his Word—the Bible—which will endure forever, and has been preserved to *every* generation.

Notice the Psalmist said the written Word of God would be *preserved* to every generation—not evolved or edited according to Bill Hamon’s, or anyone else’s definition of “present truth.”

The reason for that is two-fold:

1.) First, the written Word of God is timeless. It is never outdated. It was written by the great *I Am*—not by the great *I Have Been* or the great *I Will Be*.

Any “time” with our awesome God (the one who inhabits eternity) is always the *present* time. Therefore, essentially, everything written in the Bible is *present* truth. “Present Truth” has *already* been written and is contained within the canon of scripture—Genesis through Revelation.

2.) Second, the basic needs of humans—who are created in the image of God—remain the same from generation to generation. There really is nothing new under the sun.

What, I ask you, is wrong with being clear about our doctrines (biblical teachings, instructions, and beliefs)? And what is wrong with being clear about the authority we base those beliefs on?

Do we base them on the unchangeable, rock solid, foundation of the written Word of God, which is preserved to *every* generation? Or do we base them on the words of those who build on sand and change with every wind of...*@!#?

Doctrine is not a dirty word!

More information regarding the subjects of “the prophetic” and contemplative spirituality can be found online at:
www.HungryHeartsMinistries.com
www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com

Authors we recommend who have written at length concerning contemplative spirituality include:

Ray Yungen who wrote “*A Time of Departing*” which is a thorough work exposing Contemplative Spirituality and Spiritual Formation.

Brian Flynn, a former New Age Medium wrote “*Running Against the Wind*” which exposes the New Age teachings involved in contemplative spirituality and spiritual formation programs.

Dave Hunt & T.A. McMahon,
who wrote extensively on the
subject over 20 years ago in
**“The Seduction of
Christianity.”** The book has not
lost its relevance. Rather, we
have found it to be even more
relevant today than when it was
first written.

**A Few Prominent Ministries
that currently promote
Spiritual Formation**

Focus on the Family

Awana Clubs

CMA (Christian Management
Association)

InterVarsity Christian
Fellowship

Reformed Church in America

Biola University

Bethel Seminary

Salvation Army

Dallas Theological Seminary

Baylor University

Baptist State Convention of
North Carolina

ABOUT the AUTHOR



Photo by Steve Morales

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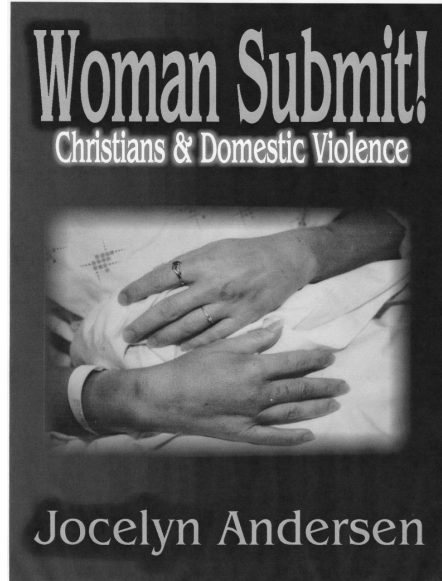
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1

I Should Be Dead...

But I'm Not!

*I shall not die, but live, and declare
the works of the Lord....
The Holy Bible*

**My pastors and I had made
the difficult decision not to
hide the abuse from our
church family any longer.**

As a member of the Praise Team,
I was accustomed to standing before
the congregation, but this particular
evening, the bruises on my face
made the public appearance a bit
more difficult. Due to the unusual
absence of my husband, the person
responsible for the bruises and an

associate pastor of our church, it was imperative that the issue be dealt with as quickly, delicately, and honestly as possible.

He was evading arrest. This was the second time in six months he had tried to kill me.

~~~

*In my distress, I called upon the Lord....  
Friday, 8:30 a.m., August 29, 2003*

“Jesus won’t help you!”

With those words ringing in my ears, John brought his loafer-encased foot crashing down onto my face. Then, as suddenly as the violence started—it stopped.

I sent up a silent prayer of thanks saying, “*Yes you did, because everything stopped.*” It had not yet occurred to me that I was lying on my back, staring at the ceiling, in

the opposite direction, and in a completely different position than I had been in just moments (or so I thought) before when I had cried out to Jesus for help.

John was standing over me pacing back and forth and ranting about letting me live, "*this time*." It wasn't until he stopped, looked down at me, and said, "Oh my God, *look at you*," that I realized something else must have happened. It also began to dawn on me that I could not raise myself up from the floor. I was not in any pain. I simply could not get up.

After John lifted me off the floor, I knew he must have injured me very badly. Besides not being able to focus my eyes clearly, close my mouth all the way, or sit or stand without assistance, I was afraid I was going into shock. Although it was August and very hot outside, I

was freezing—I was shivering violently.

I asked him if he would take me to the Emergency Room. He said, “No, you’ll call the police.” When I asked if I could call someone else to take me to the Emergency Room, he said, “No, either God will take care of you or he won’t.”

It was obvious he was afraid he had fatally injured me, and I could see that my repeated requests for help were beginning to agitate him. I knew I had said all I could safely get away with, so from that point on, I asked for help only from God. I consigned myself to His care and began praying for rescue.

There was a telephone on the nightstand just next to the bed I was lying on, but I was too injured to reach for it. Unable to do the slightest thing for myself, a portion of the sermon our assistant pastor

had preached just two days previously kept running and re-running through my mind, “The devil,” he said, “comes to steal, to kill and to destroy, but *I have come...*” Those words were a lifeline to me. I repeated them over and over to myself and said to the Lord, “You came, Jesus. You *came...*”

But the circumstances looked hopeless. I was injured, isolated, and completely helpless. I was at the mercy of a man who had just tried to kill me and was steadfastly refusing to allow me to receive help of any kind. He was more willing to allow me to die than to face possible arrest and incarceration for assaulting me.

John was on a frightening emotional roller coaster. His behavior was erratic and unpredictable. At times he appeared very calm, then for no apparent reason, he would begin raging

again—particularly against women he felt wanted to *rule over men*. I knew my position was precarious at best. Whenever I was forced to speak to him or answer his questions, I chose my words very carefully. I knew only the Holy Spirit could help me navigate the situation and keep me alive until help came.

It concerned me that I did not have a definite sense of the Lord's presence. I remember asking, "*God, where are you?*" He answered my question with a question of his own, "**Do you feel this peace?**"

*Yes I did.* And I knew that peace only came from one source—God. It was good to know I was not alone.

I had not looked in the mirror yet, so I did not know I had what the emergency room physician would later describe as "raccoon eyes." I had not yet seen that my right jaw

was grotesquely swollen, though it concerned me greatly that I could not close my mouth completely—I could not bring my teeth together. I felt certain I had a broken jaw. I was experiencing severe dizziness and equilibrium problems. I could not sit or stand without assistance; walking was completely out of the question; I was very nauseous, and each time John lifted me to a sitting position, I began retching violently. If he let go of me, I collapsed like a rag doll. I was having severe problems with my vision; I could not focus clearly on anything. And whenever I moved, even slightly, the vertical hold on the room would spin out of control. Within a short period of time, I also realized blood was seeping from both ears. I learned later that most of my symptoms corresponded with those of a skull fracture. My right hand and arm were fairly useless but, besides a mild headache, were the only real source of pain I experienced. That

was my condition for about 20 hours.

Sometime during the early hours of the next morning I woke up and realized I felt different. I felt *better*.

I thought, “*I think I can sit up*,” and I sat up. I thought, “*I think I can stand up*,” and I stood up. I thought, “*I think I can walk*.” And I walked!

I knew that a supernatural healing from God had just taken place.

This was an exciting development. The first thing that occurred to me, of course, was not to tell John. I reasoned that if he thought I was still helpless, he might relax his guard and I could get away from him. But instructions from the Holy Spirit came quickly and clearly—I was not to try and deceive him. It did not seem at all logical, but I knew I had heard from



God. So, when daylight came, I confided to him that I had been able to get up by myself during the night. His answer was chilling. He said, “I know—*I was awake.*”

In spite of my desperate circumstances, the peace of God guarded my heart, and I was in a deep sleep most of the time. I awoke at some point during the second morning and found myself alone; of course I headed straight for the telephone. *But it wasn't there.* John had removed all of the phones from the house.

This was a *big* problem, because even though I could walk and the visual disturbances I had been experiencing were now gone, my balance was still extremely bad. I was still very weak, and I was too slow and unsteady on my feet to attempt leaving the house with no guarantee that anyone would be near-by to help.

We had a large fenced yard that, in my condition, looked as large as a football field. I knew it would take me quite a while just to make it to the street, and if John came home before I cleared the yard, it would take no effort at all for him to drag me back inside. If that happened, I knew that I would not survive the consequences of trying to escape. I was confident the Spirit of the Lord was leading me not to try just yet.

When John returned, I asked, "Am I a prisoner?" He said, "No." I was nervous about questioning him, but felt a boldness to go on. "Then why are all the phones gone," I asked? He said he had removed them so I could not call the police. I promised him, before God, that if he would return the phones I would not call the police; *and he did*. Then he left again!

But now I had another problem. I had just made a vow before God that I would not call the police. I stared at the phone and mentally worked through my options—breaking my vow was not one of them.

I did not know how much time I had before John returned, and most people I knew lived at least twenty miles away. Simple things overwhelmed me. I could not remember telephone numbers, and John had taken my cell phone with my frequently called numbers programmed in it. The phone book wasn't any help, because (besides my mother and my pastor) I could not think of anyone to call. *I could not remember who I knew.*

I picked up the cordless phone, looked at it, thought about it—then carefully replaced it.

I knew I was having a difficult time thinking clearly, but, again, I was confident God was leading. John returned after being gone only a short while and made a point of looking to see if the phone had been moved. It had not. I had returned it exactly as he left it. Then, after a few hours, he left again.

This time, with no hesitation, I picked up the phone and quickly dialed my pastor's cell phone number. God's timing is always perfect—my pastor and his wife “just happened” to be in my neighborhood—only blocks from my home. Within minutes I was safely on my way to the emergency room where X-rays and an MRI confirmed what I already knew; nothing was broken, and there was no internal bleeding, because God had already healed me of the most serious of the injuries inflicted on me 32 hours earlier.

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There is not a doubt in my mind that I should not be alive today to tell this story. Had it not been for the immediate and supernatural intervention of a great and mighty God, I am convinced that my life and death would already be a statistic.

I would have either become a missing person (mysteriously disappeared) or my family and friends would most certainly have found me, within a just few days, lying in my home—beaten to death. And every year on August 29th, they would celebrate a tragic anniversary. Some would make pilgrimages to my gravesite to offer me flowers and heavy hearts filled with remorse. Others would remember missed opportunities, and guilt would gnaw at them for the miserable comforts they had offered in their frantic concern for my

safety. They would wish with all their hearts they could take back unkind and condescending words and actions they now understood had only acted as wedges—alienating them from their beloved daughter, sister, mother or friend.

But what could they have done differently? What could my pastor, family or friends have said or done that could have helped me? What could *I have done* that could have helped me, and why couldn't I have done it sooner?

These questions must be answered. *Lives* depend on it. It is time to stop the useless rhetoric. *Why doesn't she just leave? If she stays, she deserves what she gets... well if I were her....*

Well we're *not* her!

To my everlasting shame, there was a time in my own life when I

said the same hateful things. I knew that *I* would never tolerate abuse. My attitude towards the battered woman was more condescending than compassionate. Certainly she was an object of my pity but more so of my contempt... until I unwillingly joined her ranks.

Then I experienced, first hand, the terrible dynamics that bind a wife to an abusive husband.

If this book helps shed a little light, into a very dark arena, from the perspective of one who has been there but is there no longer, if it can help induce compassion where formerly there was little or none, perhaps save a life and give a happy ending to someone else's story, then it will have accomplished its purpose.

In this I am reminded of the story about a small boy walking along a beach that was littered with dying

starfish. It seemed thousands of them had been washed ashore, but the little boy walked among them picking them up and, patiently, one by one, threw each back into the ocean where it belonged.

A gentleman approached the boy and asked why he bothered. How in the world, the man asked, did he think he could make a difference when there were simply too many to throw them *all* back?

In reply, the boy stooped down, picked up another starfish, tossed it into the waves, and said, "It makes a difference to *this* one."

Being a support to a battered or abused woman is a frustrating experience at best and frightening at worst. She is often indecisive and cannot be counted on to keep her promises to get out, and stay out, of the line of fire. Her abuser holds tremendous emotional influence

over her...and we do not. The temptation is great to throw up our hands and say, "I'm through with you! You deserve what you get! Let yourself be beaten to death if that's what you want!"

But do *not* do it.

We need to remember that we are merely inconvenienced—she is genuinely suffering and possibly in very real danger. Our friendship and support can make all the difference to an abused woman in the face of seemingly overwhelming circumstances. Our friendship and support can help make her existence a little more bearable, thereby giving her the strength she needs to make choices that, ultimately, may help to change her circumstances and possibly even save her life....