

An Enduring Monument to Pagan Origins

by Joy A. Veinot

We are heading into the Christmas season again, and you know what that means. Some Jehovah's Witness (JW) is certain to show up on your doorstep and hand you a *Watchtower* or *Awake!* magazine,* scolding "Christendom" — that's you, Bub — for celebrating Christmas despite the fact the holiday has "pagan origins." Before being guilted into giving up this most glorious season of holiness and fun, please consider that almost *everything* in our culture today has "pagan origins." For example, we have a pagan calendar. But, do you really worship the god Thor on "Thursday" or Woden on "Wodensday?" Probably not. I know I don't. Wedding rings are of "pagan origin," yet JWs wear them just as you might. So do not allow yourself to be judged in these areas. Christ has set you free from that pagan mess, so you can live everyday with Him in mind, and enjoy life with your friends and family. The Apostle Paul says it best in Romans chapter 14, verses 4-6,

"Who are you to judge the servant of another? ... One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord ..." (NASB)

But I'd like you also to consider something else: Does it seem strange to you that the average JW knows all about the pagan origins of every holiday in which you like to participate, but he has no clue about the pagan origins of his own religion?

Russellism

The founder of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (WTBTS),[†] Charles Taze Russell, was a religious eclectic. *Webster's Dictionary* defines an "eclectic" as a person who selects from different systems, doctrines or sources. That's exactly what Russell did. He rejected the Christian faith of his fathers and collected doctrines and beliefs from various pagan systems and wacko scientific theories that were making the rounds in late 19th-century America. He spliced these together with selected Bible texts and Second Adventist teachings to form the new religion of Russellism.

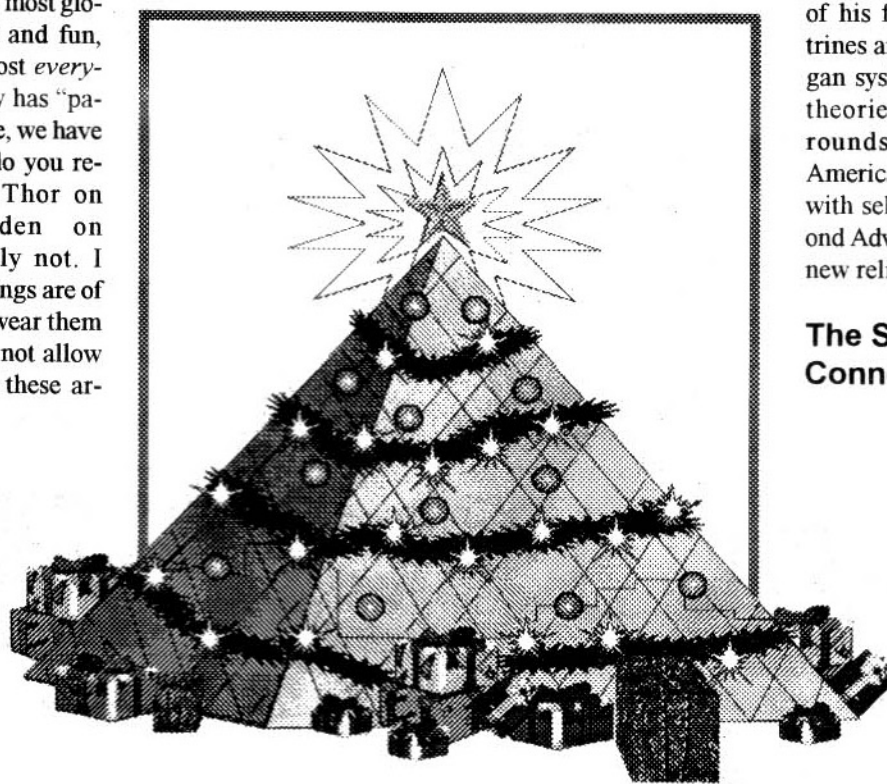
The Second Adventist Connection

From the Second Adventists, of which he was one, he borrowed the "invisible presence" doctrine (among other false teachings) which they had developed in response to a failed prophecy. Jesus didn't show up *visibly* as was predicted for 1874;

ergo, He *did* return in 1874, but He was *invisible*. *ZION'S WATCH TOWER*, October 1881, p289,

"When 1874 came and there was no outward sign of Jesus in the literal clouds and in a fleshly form, there was a general re-examination of all the arguments upon which the 'Midnight Cry' was made. And when no fault or flaw could be found, it led to the critical examination of the Scriptures which seem to bear on the *manner* of

(Continued on next page)



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"Origins" (Continued from page 1)

Christ's coming, and it was soon discovered that the expectation of Jesus in the *flesh* at the second advent [*sic*] was the mistake."

Other doctrines which Russell "borrowed" from the Adventists were "the remnant" teaching, much of his chronological understanding, and the labeling of Christendom (excepting themselves!) as the evil Babylon. He also adopted their penchant for making false prophecies and then claimed, as they did, these predictions had been fulfilled *figuratively* when they did not come to pass *literally*.

Quack Science

From quack science, he adopted phrenology (among other wacky ideas) which is the belief that the shape of one's skull can indicate one's character and desire to worship God.

"The drawing power which the almighty exercises over humanity is in different degrees. Some have a strong desire to worship God, others have a weak desire, and others have no desire at all. This difference is due to the shape of the brain. Mankind are born with differences in this respect." *The WATCH TOWER*, March 15, 1913, p84.

Russell's character, it turns out, was impeccable. He had a good head, so it was said.

"A dear brother who is a phrenologist, speaking of brother Russell, said the Lord knew perfectly well when he picked out that head, that there was not one iota of self-love in his make-up." 1911 Convention Report, p281.

Star Gazing

Russell found his gospel in the Zodiac, of all places, and determined that God's throne room was in the star system of the Pleiades.

"Our solar system of planets is also found to be revolving together around some other great center ... the group Pleiades. And the reasonable suggestion has been made that the center may be in the heavens, the highest heaven, the throne of God." *ZION'S WATCH TOWER*, May 15, 1895, p121.

"No nation has ever

claimed the invention of the Zodiac, though doubtless they would have been glad to have the honor had they invented it ... The higher critics of today, though denying the inspiration of the scriptures [*sic*], admit that there is a close and strange agreement between the Bible and the Zodiac. If then, we find the divine plan written in these constellations, realizing that men could not have written a Plan that they did not even understand, it would be only reasonable to ascribe its origin to God ... Indeed, the same Bible which points to the Great Pyramid, points also to the heavens as declaring the wonderful Plan of Salvation."

1914 International Bible Students Souvenir Convention Report, p252.

God's Stone Witness

Also from the pagans, Russell adopted pyramidology. Page 17 of *Thy Kingdom Come*, the third volume in Russell's series of *Studies in the Scriptures*, reads as follows:

THE TESTIMONY OF
GOD'S STONE WITNESS
AND PROPHET, THE GREAT
PYRAMID IN EGYPT.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION
OF THE GREAT PYRAMID —
WHY OF SPECIAL INTEREST
TO CHRISTIANS — THE
GREAT PYRAMID A STORE-
HOUSE OF TRUTH — SCIENTIFIC
HISTORIC AND PROPHETIC —
BIBLE ALLUSIONS
TO IT ...

Then on page 362 of the same book, Russell says of "God's Stone Witness,"

"Its wonderful correspondencies [*sic*] with the Bible leave no room for doubt that the same divine inspirer of the prophets and apostles inspired this 'Witness' also."

Russell believed and taught that the measurement of a passageway in the Great Pyramid in Gizeh gave mankind the date (1874) for "the beginning of the period of trouble."

"Measuring down the 'Entrance Passage' from that point, to find the distance to the entrance of the 'Pit,' representing the great trouble and destruction with which this age is to close, when evil will be overthrown with power, we find it to be 3416

inches, symbolizing 3416 years from the above date, B.C. 1542. This calculation shows A.D. 1874 as marking the beginning of the period of trouble ..."

Studies in the Scriptures, vol. 3, *Thy Kingdom Come*, 1901 ed., p342.

Interestingly, in the seven short years between 1901 and 1908, the pyramid's "Entrance Passage" grew 41 inches longer to accommodate a necessary change in Russell's dating system! The 1908 edition reads like this:

"Measuring down the 'Entrance Passage' from that point, to find the distance to the entrance of the 'Pit,' representing the great trouble and destruction with which this age is to close, when evil will be overthrown with power, we find it to be **3457** inches, symbolizing 3457 years from the above date, B.C.1542. This calculation shows A.D. **1915** as marking the beginning of the period of trouble ..." *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 3, *Thy Kingdom Come*, 1908 ed., p342.

Now we know why the Egyptians built their pyramids out in the desert ... they needed growing room! I'm thinking that, if they keep growing at this rate, they're going to need more land! Of course, if the "Pinocchio syndrome" has any factual basis, it may have been Russell's nose (and not the Great Pyramid) that was growing in those years.

The Blind Corroborating the Blind

In the July 15, 1894 *ZION'S WATCH TOWER*, p226, Russell explains that he could not change his prediction that 1914 "is not the date for the *beginning*, but for the *end* of the time of trouble." After all, 1914 was "God's date," he asserted, and not his. Okey dokey, but how do we know 1914 was "God's date" and not Russell's? Well, as Russell explained on the same page (226), the Great Pyramid in Egypt shows its "corroboration of the dates and other teachings of the Bible." Amazing! And of course, the Zodiac undoubtedly corroborated the pyramid ... and the cited 1914 Convention Report informed readers that "there is a close and strange agreement between the Bible and the Zodiac" ... so we come full circle. And, dear friends, it's quite possible the Wizard of Oz put his stamp of approval on the entire mess, although Russell didn't specifically make that claim to my knowledge. I've said it before, but it bears repeating — if Russell was not a pagan, we shall have to apologize to King Tut!

Well, to make a long story short, 1914 turned out not to be "the end of the time of trouble," and neither did the battle of Armageddon end in A.D 1914, as Russell had confidently prophesied. Nuts! Nevertheless, Russell died on October 31, 1916 ... still convinced the end of the age was right around the corner. And of course, all these decades later, *it still is!*

The WTBTs' Enduring Monument

Despite these disappointments, Russell and his followers were so captivated by pyramidology that, today, Russell lies not 25-feet away from a 7-foot-tall replica of an Egyptian pyramid. It stands in mute testimony to the pagan origins of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. I call it "Charlie's pyramid," although actually, of course, it is not *Charlie's pyramid* at all, since it was erected in 1919 and Charles Russell was dead several years by then. I've gone twice to Russell's gravesite and pyramid — once in 1992, and again this year on my way to the "Witnesses Now For Jesus" convention that is held annually in Pennsylvania.

Rosemont United Cemetery is located on the north side of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It is not exclusively a Watchtower Society cemetery, but many of the anointed "gods" (the anointed were thought to be one big happy 144,001-member "god family" along with Jesus Christ!) besides Russell are buried there. It is just off of Rte. 19 (Perryville Ave.) on Cemetery Lane located across the road from the Catholic Northside Cemetery. The pyramid looms large and dominates the landscape. It has the Society's name on one side of it, as well as the supposedly "pagan" cross and crown symbol the Society used at the time. There is an open Bible engraved on each side, as well, with some names etched into the rock "pages," though time has all but erased or made unreadable most of the names etched thereon.

Proclaimers of Half Truths and Outright Fibs

I noted with amused interest that, although the bogus history book *Proclaimers of God's Kingdom* (published by the WTBTs in 1993) shows Russell's headstone on page 64, *only* the headstone is shown — with *none* of the surrounding area. In fact, JWs to whom I have talked about the cemetery pyramid have accused me of lying about it, because the picture of Russell's headstone in the *Proclaimers* book does not show the pyramid looming large just behind it. *So the Watchtower Society would have you believe*, my dears. Don't be fooled by that book. It does NOT tell the whole truth about *anything*.

A Fractured Fairy Tale

The most interesting aspect of this WTBTs pyramid to me, however, is how it shows the entire history of the Society to be a carefully constructed lie. You see, this pyramid was erected by the WTBTs in 1919, just when Jesus was supposedly appointing the WTBTs over all his belongings. You know the story ...

The "Baloneyish" Captivity

Once upon a time, Jesus "returned" in 1914 in a highly convenient, invisible fashion (after having supposedly returned in 1874, also invisibly). On His return, He supposedly found a faithful servant on earth — the "anointed remnant" of the WTBTs. He promptly (and inexplicably, I might add — if the slave was *faithful*, why punish him?) sent this "faithful slave" into "Babylonish captivity" to be "cleansed" of his pagan practices etc. Pagan practices? Like what?

"There were many false doctrines and practices that had not yet been cleaned out of the organization ... With considerable misunderstanding, they had accepted earthly political governments as the 'superior authorities' that God had ordained according to Romans 13:1 ..."

Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose, 1959, p91.

Isn't that what they believe *NOW*? Perhaps they are about to be shipped off to Babylon again! But let's continue ...

"... many were putting emphasis on so-called 'character development' ... and there was considerable creature worship in the organization. Furthermore, such pagan holidays as Christmas were being celebrated, and even the symbol of the cross was used as a sign of Christian devotion ... although the name of Jehovah was used from time to time, it was held in the background ... Organizationally, the Witnesses were still practicing the democratic style of local con-

(Continued on page 10)

Why God Holds Pastors Responsible

— from the book *“Beware: The New Prophets”*
A Caution Concerning the Modern Prophetic Movement —

by Pastor Bill Randles

“A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?”

— Jeremiah 5:30-31 (KJV)

“I think you’ll find that the prophets are pretty nice people, by and large. I’ve come to know them and love them. We’ve invited several of them here, I think maybe five or six, that are from the Kansas City Fellowship. And then we have Paul Cain ...” (John Wimber, *“Unpacking Your Bags,”* audio tape)

Jeremiah 23 is a polemic against false prophets, which starts out by putting the blame where it really belongs. Who does the Lord make responsible for the explosion of false prophets, initially? Not the false prophets, nor the congregations, but the Pastors! God knows that the ministries of these false prophets would be all but impossible without pastors opening up their platforms and pulpits to them.

“Woe be unto the Pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, saith the LORD. Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD.” (Jeremiah 23:1-2)

How would these false prophets even exist without the shepherds opening up their pulpits to give them meetings? Therefore, it is the shepherds God addresses when He opens up this passage about false prophets. Pastors are supposed to feed their sheep the Word of God and protect them from wolves. The flourishing of false prophets is an indictment against us for failing to faithfully do this! The Word of God, like manna, has failed to satisfy the lust too many have for the novel and exciting! A good number of us shepherds are going to have to answer to charges that for gain, and out of greed, or fear of being left out, we have opened our flocks to the teachings and prophecies of these men who speak such great swelling words of great vanity.

The current false movements have succeeded in creating an incredible peer pressure in the ministry. The pressure is on to distinguish yours as a church which is “cutting edge,” in pace with

the latest of the current religious fads. The last thing anyone would want to be accused of is being “dead” or “religious.” Thus, a good many pastors are “desperate,” but it is not the type of desperation that pushes an individual to seek God. The kind of desperation many pastors are experiencing these days is the desperation to keep up with the fast-moving trends in the religious world of today. “If we don’t open up to the Pensacola revival, the church down the road just may, and I’ll lose half of my people.” This desperation never leads one to fasting and prayer but rather to conferences and church-growth seminars. When asked about why he plunged his church into Toronto, in spite of his admitted reservations, one pastor candidly replied,

“I wasn’t sure if it was of God or not, but we were so dry, and so desperate, we couldn’t afford not to take the chance ...”

Results. Truth is secondary these days, just give us some results, generate some excitement, or we will scatter in this wilderness. Hirelings are defined as those who run when the wolf comes rather than lay down their lives to protect God’s sheep. Who are the modern hirelings? The ones who know these new religious fads are unscriptural but are afraid of standing up to them, lest they lose their numbers, prestige, “anointed” reputation, and so forth. Like Aaron in the “Golden Calf” incident, they know this is wrong; but in order not to scatter the people, they are willing to offer them something to see, feel, and experience. They don’t advocate a new God, but they inaugurate ways — of worshiping Him and “points of contact” to Him — that He, Himself, never instituted. This is called “Will Worship” in the Scriptures, the worship of God on our own terms. As in the “Golden Calf” incident, they have proclaimed a “feast unto Yahweh” where there is no feast (Exodus 32:5)!

There are a lot of Aarons these days in Pentecostal and Charismatic leadership who know these movements — Toronto Blessing, Pensacola, Promise Keepers, drunkenness in the Spirit, ecumenism — are wrong, but they are afraid of losing their lives and ministries for truth; so they compromise. Besides that, it is profitable to cater to recent religious fads. When Aaron took an offering for the golden calf, it was one of the most willing offerings ever taken, for people will gladly pay for their idols.

“And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me, and all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears and brought them unto Aaron.” (Exodus 32:2-3)

The Assemblies of God are an example of this, for they condemned Toronto and the laughing revival, until they had their own version of it. What is the difference between Toronto and Pensacola? One gave birth to the other. Pensacola sprang from the Holy Trinityrompton Church in London, England — the church which virtually blanketed England with the Toronto Blessing and literally coined the phrase “Toronto Blessing.” Can both good and bad water come from the same source? ... How the Assemblies of God could have shone brightly these days by holding up the truth of the Gospel! There are many independent Pentecostals who have looked up to the Assemblies because of their previous strength, experience, and holiness. I have no doubt, there are still many within the denomination who are grieved over the apostasy, but the leadership seems to have taken the “ends justify the means” approach. These new revivals are appealing because they do generate excitement!

Going back to Jeremiah 23. It is because of the hireling mentality of the shepherds, the pastors, that the people of God were affected by the prophets. And what are those effects?

Folly and Error

“And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria; They ... caused my people Israel to err.”
(Jeremiah 23:13)

There are numerous examples of the folly and error that false prophets have brought upon God’s people. Jacob Prasch tells of the British Prophet Gerald Coates ... who foretold of an earthquake in New Zealand which persuaded the leaders of a Pentecostal denomination to appear on national television to warn the nation. The national news coverage leading up to it featured churches taking survival courses on the basis of that “prophetic” word. When the predicted date came and went, the Christian church was made into a national laughing-stock. A sincere, but naive Christian leader was made a fool of in his own nation, all because he allowed himself and many others to listen to a false prophet’s predictions.

Profaneness

“... for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land.”
(Jeremiah 23:15)

Do you know what the word “profaneness” means? To profane something means to make it into something common, nothing special at all. It is the opposite of the words “holy” or “sacred” which mean “special, set apart.” God’s Word is Holy — special and set apart. It is to be regarded as Holy by His people. When Christians — who have been bought with the blood of the Lamb, have received the Holy Spirit, and have been exposed to the Bible — then feel they need to go out crossing land and sea to get a “word from the Lord” (through people like the Kansas City prophets), they are profaning the Holy Word of God. The Word of God is being profaned by those who are constantly saying things like: “God is a lot more than God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Book,” or “God is a lot bigger than a doctrine,” or even, “The church is so hung up on ‘Bible study’ they don’t really know Jesus.” These are the same people who produce reams and reams of prophecies, expecting you to take those seriously! This profanity will spill out into other areas for it cannot long be contained. I believe the prophecy movement is partly responsible for a kind of “been-there-done-that” attitude to the teaching and preaching of the Word of God.

They Make You Vain!

“Thus saith the LORD of Hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you; they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD.”

(Jeremiah 23:16)

The false prophets will make you vain! This is the warning of Jeremiah to those who would be enamored of these new “seers.” In biblical thought, vanity is a blight to be avoided for it means “lightness, irrelevancy, to be futile and of no consequence.”

Think about it; we live in a world that is in spiritual and moral confusion, and a good many thinking people — both saved and unsaved — are aware of this. At a time when the Christian church could be holding forth substantial answers that actually speak to the current dilemma of man, answers that are a part of our inheritance from Christ, we are, instead, being seduced into abandonment of our thinking faculties by the Rodney Howard-Browne’s of this world; who beckon us to “turn off your mind and go with the flow.”

This false prophetic movement has made us vain! It has promised renewal to countless thousands of pastors and churches, but it has, instead, tended to self-absorption. That shouldn’t surprise us when you consider the content of the bulk of these prophecies. They fall into the categories of either the “You-are-the-greatest-generation-of-the-church-ever” variety or more along the lines of an “Annias-and-Sapphira-are-the-fate-of-those-who-dare-question-this-movement” type of utterance. After 20 years or more of this, anyone would be vain. Pastors, we are responsible for this. Why have we opened the flocks up to this? What were we looking for when we sought these ministries? We have succeeded in making our people vain, when they could be sharp, sober, and ready — able to give an answer for the hope we have in Christ — instead of being self-absorbed, drunk in the Spirit, living for the next “out-pouring.”

I warned in my earlier book, *Weighed and Found Wanting: Putting the Toronto Blessing in Context*, that spiritual drunkenness is real, but it is not a blessing from God but rather a judge-

(Continued on page 9)

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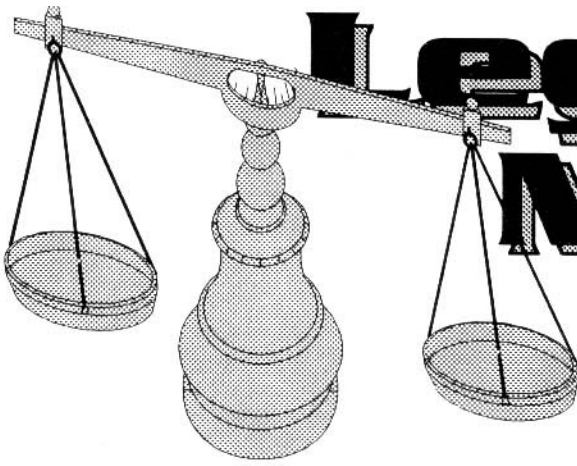
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Legislating Morality:

Why Everyone Is Doing It.

by Frank Turek

Co-author of *Legislating Morality: Is it Wise? Is it Legal? Is it Possible?*

It never fails. Whenever some conservative takes a stand on a moral issue, some liberal somewhere will indignantly claim, "You can't legislate morality!" How many times have you heard that worn-out phrase? Incredibly, it's not even true. As the Apostle Paul declared in 2Cor. 10:5, Christians must "*demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God.*" It's time we demolish the pretension, "You can't legislate morality."

Morality is about right and wrong, and that's what laws put into legal form. Can you think of one law which doesn't declare one behavior right and its opposite wrong? The truth is all laws legislate morality (even speed limits imply a moral right to life). And everyone in politics — conservatives, libertarians and liberals — is trying to legislate morality. The only question is: "Whose morality should be legislated?"

You say, "But what about the separation of church and state?" What about it? The First Amendment says nothing about the separation of church and state. (The Supreme Court obviously can't read because the amendment says "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." Article 1, Bill of Rights.) But even if it did mandate the separation of church and state, the First Amendment does not prohibit legislating morality. In fact, the First Amendment *itself* legislates morality: it clearly implies it would be *wrong* for Congress to legislate a national religion or prohibit the free exercise of religion; it also implies any congressional attempt to abridge freedom of speech, the press, or assembly would be morally wrong. When lobbying for moral legislation in the public square, Christians must learn to cite documented evidence and appeal to the common ground of reason. This is exactly the strategy employed by the Apostle Paul on Mars Hill before the Greek Philosophers. He did not quote Bible verses to them, because they did not believe in the Hebrew Scriptures! Instead, he reasoned with them. We must do the same in our anti-Christian

public square. One such reasonable distinction we must draw is the distinction between religion and morality. While it is true that morality comes from God, there's a big difference between religion and morality: *for purposes of legislation* religion involves our duty to God while morality is concerned with our duty to one another. Laws against murder, child abuse, rape and theft are moral (not just religious) issues, because they are needed to restrain evil and protect the innocent. We can and should avoid legislating religion, but we can't avoid legislating morality — that's what laws inevitably do! We don't want to make a law to tell people how to

worship, where to worship, or if to worship; that would be legislating religion. But we can't avoid making laws that tell people how we should treat one another; that's legislating morality. In short, *legislating religion is unconstitutional, but legislating morality is unavoidable. All laws legislate morality.*

Everyone Is Trying To Legislate Morality

Let's use the most divisive issue in America — abortion — to illustrate how morality is *always* legislated and imposed on others by *both* sides in the debate. It's widely believed the "religious

right" (read pro-life) are the ones who want to cram morals down the throats of everyone else, while the "pro-choice" (read pro-abortion) folks are the reasonable ones who don't want to impose on anyone. Nothing could be further from the truth. In reality, both sides in the abortion debate are actively seeking to impose moral standards on others.

Everyone realizes what pro-life people want to impose: they want to protect the baby and, thus, impose on the mother the duty to carry her baby to term. But what is so often missed in this debate is that pro-abortion activists want to impose their morals on others as well: they want to impose the morals of the mother on the baby and, in some cases, the father. When abortion is chosen, the morals imposed on the baby come in the form of a knife, vacuum, or scalding chemical. Such a "choice" also imposes on the father by depriving him of fatherhood and the right to protect his own baby.

*"Congress Shall Make
No Law
Respecting An
Establishment Of Religion,
Or Prohibiting
The Exercise Thereof . . ."*

In short, while the pro-life side wants to impose continued pregnancy on the mother, the pro-abortion side wants to impose death on the baby. That's right — even liberals want to legislate and impose morality on others! The only question is: "Whose morality should be legislated?"

Whose Morality Should Be Legislated?

Thomas Jefferson had the answer: the morality that should be legislated is the one Jefferson declared is "self-evident" (the Apostle Paul wrote in the second chapter of his letter to the Romans that such morality was "*written on [our] hearts*"). Jefferson wrote in the *Declaration of Independence*, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Notice that rights come from the Creator, and "Life" is the first stated. In other words, true morality comes from God who bestows on His creatures certain moral rights.

In an imperfect world, these rights will conflict at times. In such cases, the lower right must give way to the higher right. When life and liberty conflict, as they do on the issue of abortion, liberty must give way to life, because life is the ultimate right. The right to life is the right to all other rights — if you don't have life, you don't have anything.

You may be thinking: "If this Moral Law is indeed 'self-evident' as Jefferson declared, then why doesn't everyone agree about abortion?" We all don't agree about abortion because some of us suppress the truth about right and wrong (Rom. 1:18). We know this truth about right and wrong (i.e. the Moral Law) by how we react to what's done to us rather than by what we do to others. In other words, our *reactions* help us discover right and wrong better than our *actions*. For example, you may not be conscious of the Moral Law when you lie to someone else (*your action*); but when someone lies to you, the Moral Law becomes bright as the sun because being lied to upsets you immediately (*your reaction*). Likewise, a pro-abortion activist might not think abortion is wrong if she wants the convenience of getting an abortion (*her action*), but if you could put her back in the womb her opinion regarding abortion would change immediately (*her reaction*). As Ronald Reagan said, "I've noticed all those in favor of abortion are already born."

Don't Cram Your Morals Down My Throat! Why Not?

If Christians are to be effective in politics, then we must be able to answer this "cramming morals" objection. As with most liberal objections, Christians must learn to challenge the assumption behind the objection. This objection assumes that it is immoral to impose morals! Therefore, good questions to ask such a person are these: "Why shouldn't I cram my morals down your throat? Is there something immoral about that? And if there is, by what standard do you come to such a conclusion? Is it just your opinion or is it really, absolutely wrong according to an objective standard outside yourself?"

Notice that the person stating this objection is really trying to cram *their* own morality down *your* throat. As we have seen on the issue of abortion, liberals are trying to impose their morals through political (or judicial) means. They also seek to do so on each of their pet causes including affirmative action, homosexuality, smoking, euthanasia, government health care, arts funding, welfare, etc.

Indeed, all political positions are attempts at legislating morality. Once again, the question is not whether morality can be legislated; the question is: "Whose morality should be legislated?"

Whose morality? The answer is very simple. We shouldn't impose *my* morality or *your* morality; we should impose *our* morality — the one inherited by us all. So when someone protests "Don't cram your morals down my throat!" — after pointing out that *their* position actually does that — simply respond by saying, "These are not my morals, I did not make them up. I didn't make up the fact that abortion is wrong, that murder is wrong, that stealing is wrong. In fact, if it were up to me, I might like it if some of those things were not morally wrong. Abortion might help me get out of trouble, and theft could solve my money problems. So I'm not imposing my "personal" morality on you any more than a math teacher is imposing her "personal" math when she teaches her students that $2+2=4$. Morality like math is not based on subjective feelings; it is based on objective facts."

If they say, "Well, that's just your interpretation!" Respond this way, "Of course, but that doesn't mean my interpretation is false. I also interpret that Mother Teresa was better than Hitler, and that interpretation is certainly true. Second, *your* position is also an interpretation. For example, when you say that the unborn are not human beings so abortion is okay, you are indeed making an interpretation. Why should your interpretation be the law of the land? Why should your interpretation go unchallenged? The question is not about who is interpreting; the question is: "Whose interpretation and conclusion best fits the *facts*?" While many in our society may *want* to suppress the medical facts which affirm the humanity of unborn children, those facts compel the conclusion that the morality which should be legislated is the pro-life morality. This is the morality inherited by all of us, but only accepted by some of us. It is our common morality. Facts are hard things."

Why Christians Should Be Involved In Politics

Some Christians believe we should not be involved in law-making and politics. They believe we should stay out of politics

(Continued on next page)

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"Morality" (Continued from page 7)

and concentrate only on evangelism. After all, laws can't change people, only a commitment to Christ can. I believe this thinking overlooks three very important facts which support Christian involvement in politics.

First, the evangelism-instead-of-politics plea presents a false dilemma. There is no good reason why evangelicals cannot both win souls *and* participate in politics. Indeed, we are *commanded* to do both! When Jesus instructed believers to be salt and light (Matt. 5:13-16), He did not qualify that command by excluding politics. Moreover, why would it be wise for Christians to stay out of politics? Would the nation be better off if only atheists were allowed to provide the government with moral leadership (we've been trying that for the last 40 years and the results have been disastrous)? You say, "give to Caesar what is Caesar's." To which I respond, "In our representative republic, Christians can run for office to become 'Caesar'!" We should all be thankful that our Christian founding fathers got involved in politics, otherwise our country would not exist today.

Second, since many people believe whatever is legal is moral and vice versa, the law is a great teacher. It helps teach people right from wrong. The Apostle Paul wrote "*Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law*" (Rom. 7:7).

Third, the law actually does *help implement changed attitudes and behaviors*. Two major moral issues in our nation's history prove the powerful effect of the law on attitudes and behaviors. The first issue is slavery. One-hundred-and-forty years ago, there was so much controversy over the question of slavery that many people thought it better to divide the nation and kill their own relatives rather than agree on a legislative solution. Today, outside of the tiny fraction of racist extremists in this country, everybody believes that slavery is morally wrong. Did attitudes change overnight because we outlawed slavery? No — behavior changed immediately because slave owners did not want to go to jail — but the law did help change pro-slavery attitudes over time. Legislating against slavery helped change attitudes over the long run because many people have always believed that whatever is illegal must also be immoral and vice versa. Before the Civil War, slave owners could rationalize the obvious immorality of slavery under the cover of "it is legal." Afterwards, the law did not provide that convenient excuse, and attitudes slowly changed.

The second issue, abortion, also demonstrates the power of law to change attitudes and behaviors. For nearly the first 200 years of our nation's history, abortion was outlawed in all cases unless the mother's life was in danger. (In 1967, a few states such as New York began to include rape and incest as other legal exceptions, but abortion on demand remained illegal). So when the Supreme Court decided *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, they overturned 200 years of judicial and legislative precedent as well as the laws of every state — all 50 — which prohibited abortion. In effect, seven *un-elected* judges reversed the expressed will of the nation's majority by judicial fiat. And when all 50 states have outlawed something, the prevailing attitude of the country is not hard to figure out — in 1973, the vast majority of Americans believed abortion was immoral.

But today, the country is about evenly split. What happened? Why has there been such a change in attitude about abortion since 1973? Simple: the law was changed. In a situation the reverse of slavery, what was once considered illegal (and thus, immoral) became sanctioned by the federal government. Couple the impact of

the law change with the fact that abortion has since been deceptively promoted as a private "choice" that entails a "safe medical procedure" to "terminate a pregnancy," and we can understand why more people now believe abortion is morally acceptable.

Not only has the law helped people *believe* differently, it has also helped them *behave* differently. Upon legalization of abortion by *Roe*, the number of abortions performed in this country exploded and soon reached approximately 16 times the pre-legalization level. The law obviously had an effect on behavior.

For these reasons Christians work to pass moral laws. If Christians do not get involved in politics, then the other side will continue to legislate the immorality that is bringing our country pain and suffering and even death. As Edmund Burke declared over 200 years ago,

"All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing."



Adapted from *Legislating Morality: Is it Wise? Is it Legal? Is it Possible?* by Frank Turek and Dr. Norman Geisler. The book is now available in paperback from Bethany House at 1-800-328-6109, Amazon.com, or your local Christian bookstore.

Frank Turek, a graduate of Southern Evangelical Seminary, is a professional speaker and author who conducts training programs for businesses and apologetic seminars for churches and parachurch organizations. Dr. Norman Geisler, Dean of Southern Evangelical Seminary (1-800-77TRUTH), is the author of over 50 books and world-renowned defender of the Christian faith.

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gEET ANSWERS!

"Pastors" (Continued from page 5)

ment on an unfaithful and unbelieving church! Isaiah proclaims,

"His watchmen are blind; they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, everyone for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant."

(Isaiah 56:10-12)

They Encourage Them That Despise The LORD

"They say unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh in the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you."

(Jeremiah 23:17)

There is a tremendous judgement coming upon our nation for her many sins and, of course, judgement must begin in the house of God; for as Peter has rightly said, *"If the righteous scarcely be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinners?"* (1 Peter 4:18). Peter and the Apostles called the church to soberness, vigilance, good works, and so forth in view of the coming day of God's judgement.

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God ..."

(2 Peter 3:11-12)


Those who "despise" the Lord are not necessarily those who "hate" the Lord for, in biblical usage, to despise is "to esteem lightly, to fail to take a person seriously." The new prophets are dangerous, because they make the church the issue and not the Lord. Their prophecies, as I have already demonstrated, are about the coming greatness of the church — what we will do, how we will reign, our exploits (of course, "in the power of God"). The actual bodily return of Jesus is not the true goal of the new prophets in many cases; rather it is the coming glory — the "presence of God" — that has been prophesied by these in order to envelope the church in the days immediately preceding the bodily return of Jesus. Instead of calling men to *"... Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgement has come ..."* (Revelation 14:7). An indulgent church is being urged to "soak up" as much of the "anointing" as possible, to get drunk on the new wine, and to enlist themselves into Joel's army — an army that, itself, is doomed to be judged by God (Joel 2:20)!

They encourage them who despise the Lord to carry on in a thousand-and-one ways! For example, if a man really fears the Lord, he will want to exercise discernment, to think critically, and not to just throw open his spirit to every passing religious fad. These new prophets strongly discourage this — to the point of mockery and threatenings! They have helped to foster an antagonism in the church between the ones they have seduced and those who are more cautious. The "Civil War" prophecy of Joyner, Campbell, Bob Jones, and James Ryle, the sarcasm of Rodney Howard-Browne (rarely missing an opportunity to mock and castigate his detractors), the whole "us vs. them" mentality has given much encouragement to those who despise the Lord enough to relish this division.

"But if they had stood in my counsel and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings."

(Jeremiah 23:22)

In Conclusion ...

The pastors have been given the charge to feed and protect the flock of God which He purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28). Therefore, the responsibility for the false prophets, in part, is laid to rest at their feet. These false prophets would not be able to operate if the people of God had been fed sound doctrine and the shepherds were willing to bark! Therefore, the chapter in Jeremiah that explicitly discusses false prophets, begins with *"Woe to the pastors ..."* (Jeremiah 23:1). In the very face of false predictions, outrageous teachings, and glaring misuse of spiritual gifts, too many pastors insist all of that can be overlooked for the potential benefits that these false prophets offer. 

The staff would like to thank Pastor Bill Randles for his contribution to this issue of the Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc. Journal. This article is actually a chapter out of one of Pastor Randle's books, **"Beware the New Prophets" A Caution Concerning the Modern Prophetic Movement.**

Bill is the pastor of Believers in Grace Fellowship Church in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He has a wife, Kris, and four children.

Bill is the author of two other books: **Weighed and Found Wanting Too Light: Putting the Toronto Blessing in Context**, and **Making War In The Heavens: A Different Look.**

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Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.
would like to wish our readers a
Healthy, Happy, Holy Day
and
God's richest blessings on you and
yours in the upcoming New Year!

"Origins" (Continued from page 3)

gregation government ... it was a time of everyone's doing what was considered right in his own eyes ..."

Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose, 1959, p91.

About this era, the *WATCHTOWER* of May 1, 1989 on p4, offers this whitewash,

"In the early part of our 20th century prior to 1919, the Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then known, had to be released from a form of spiritual captivity to the ideas and practices of false religion. Although having rejected such false teachings as the Trinity and the immortal soul, they were still tainted by Babylonish practices ... some were exalting creatures, indulging in a personality cult that focused on Charles T. Russell ..."

Some were exalting creatures? Oh my dears — *all* the Bible Students were worshipping Pastor Russell including that great "stamper-outer" of creature worship — second President Joseph "Judge" Rutherford! It wasn't until 1927 that Rutherford got sick and tired of Russell getting all the glory and "rooted out" Russell worship². Russell's "character development" teaching was not repudiated until 1927³, and the democratic election of elders was not outlawed until 1932⁴. And what of the other so-called pagan practices like celebrating Christmas, displaying the cross, and neglecting to sanctify Jehovah's name? Christmas was celebrated until 1926,⁵ Jehovah's name was not "sanctified" by the Bible Students until 1929⁶ (many years after their supposed "release") and the cross was prominently displayed on *every WATCHTOWER* magazine until 1931!⁷ And, as we have already pointed out, the WTBS *currently* teaches the "superior authorities" of Romans 13 are the earthly governments. So the question begs to be asked — of what exactly was the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society cleansed?

But that aside — I don't see that "Babylonish captivity" stuff anywhere in the favored Matthew 24 text, do you? Jesus' parable in Matthew 24 teaches pretty straightforwardly that Jesus would return to find a *faithful* "faithful servant," and *reward* him. But the WTBS is not one to let the facts get in the way of a good story! So, according to the tale, the unfaithful faithful slave was released from Babylonish captivity after their "purification" by trial, was again inspected by Jesus in 1919, and given new duties and great privileges. In fact, they are pretty much the bosses of the world right now—the big cheese, God's only channel of communication. In short, they are IT. Modest, too.

The 1959 book *Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose* speaks of the anointed slave's release from Babylon on p91,

"Now from the year 1919 a glorious new outlook presented itself. These dedicated servants began to recognize their mistakes and make a public confession of their wrongdoing in their effort to be restored to his favor, which they realized had temporarily been lost. They repented of their former course, expressed the desire to change their ways and prayed for Jehovah's forgiveness."

Yep, and what was the *first thing* they did after having been allegedly "cleansed" from paganism and released in 1919? They built this humungous pagan pyramid in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania! But let's allow the Society to speak for itself ... Here is a VERY interesting item to read, taken from the Bible Students Convention Report of January 1919 ...

"AT THE GRAVE

On Monday, a party of about 150 was conducted by Brother Bohnet to the grave of Brother Russell. Upon a hillside, sloping towards the south, we joined hands

around the grave and sang: 'Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.'

Our last lingering look upon the scene recalled the peaceful manner of our Pastor's 'passing beyond the veil.' Brother Rutherford's words came to mind: 'I am glad this prison experience was reserved for us, rather than for our dear Brother Russell.'

We visited the marble works and there watched the workmen slowly but surely chisel out the monument to be erected as a memorial to the Society. The Watchtower Society burial lots in Rosemont United Cemeteries, five miles due north of Pittsburgh City, contain ample grave space for all the members of the Bethel family, and the pilgrims and their wives — in all more than 275 adult graves. In the exact center of the Bethel lot will be erected diagonally the Pyramid Shape Monument as designed by Brother Bohnet, and accepted by Brother Russell as **the most fitting emblem for an enduring monument** on the Society's burial space. The size of this structure is nine feet across the base, and its apex stone is exactly seven feet above the ground surface level.

It rests upon a concrete foundation five feet deep and heavily reinforced with barbed wire, the work of Brother Bohnet, who would not entrust this important task to anyone else, so we are assured that the job was well done. The brother gave a full description of the securing of the rock material at the time he piloted the conventionists to the cemetery and urged us to help ourselves to **souvenir chips** in the shop of the granite worker nearby ...

Each slope of the pyramid will face one of the large lots, and on each of these slopes is cut in four-inch embossment a Teacher's Bible, on the pages of which will appear the names of the ones buried there. The burial space for Brother Rutherford was indicated and his name, like that of Brother Russell, will be at the top of opposite Bible pages. A Bible space is being set apart for the Pilgrims — all in one lot of forty eight grave space[s], so all their names will appear on the same Bible.

Above the Bibles are spaces for inscriptions in full, W.T.B & T.S., I.B.S.A., 'Dead with Christ', 'Risen with Christ', etc. And above these the Cross and Crown and Wreath, and the whole capped with the apex stone, highly polished — its shape of course being pyramidal.

Within the structure, incased [*sic*] in a block of granite, will be a sealed metal box in which is a **complete set of Karatol Scripture Studies**, the Memorial Tower, and **one of every tract**, photographs of Pastor Russell, a **copy of the Society's charter**, and many other things **to interest the people who at some future date may open the pyramid and find them.**

It is expected the monument will be in place before the next Decoration Day. Any truth people desiring a chip of the stone may send postage enough to carry a piece about the size of an egg, with enough additional to pay the Society for the trouble of having it wrapped for the mail."

Souvenir Report of the Bible Students Convention, Pittsburgh, PA. 1/2-5/1919, p7.

Well, there it is from the horse's mouth! I think what the Society itself wrote about the **most fitting emblem** for the Society's

enduring monument is far superior (and more humorous, too) than anything I could say about it! I must admit to succumbing to a fair amount of restrained hilarity just typing their momentous words on the subject. ☺

I am sincerely most grateful for the great care taken in the construction of the Society's *enduring monument*, without which it might not have endured long enough for me to have gotten such a charming video tape of it.

I also note the irony of the fact that the "interested people from the future" are people such as myself — and *not* JW's — for whose benefit these things were undoubtedly preserved. These early "anointed" (members of the elite 144,000 "slave class") actually preserved their early teachings in a carefully sealed metal box that was itself encased in a granite block, as if they expected these "truths" to *REMAIN TRUE!* But alas, WTBS "truth" has moved on to keep up with the times, leaving Russell's outdated teachings hermetically sealed in a pyramidal pagan vault.

I have to wonder how many of the "anointed" sent in their postage for their "pyramid relic," and wonder how many of these blessed relics may still be packed away in the attics of these old faithful Bible Students.

It is also interesting that, although in 1919, Rutherford had evidently planned to be buried near *this enduring monument* in Pennsylvania, he was instead buried on the grounds of the very beautiful Beth Sarim in California (which is yet *another enduring monument* to the false teachings and false prophetic ideas of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society).

So, if by chance a Jehovah's Witness stops by in December and wants to speak to you about "pagan origins," perhaps you could show them these pictures of Charlie's Pyramid, and kindly *ask them what they know about the pagan origins of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.*

Yes, *kindly.* Our motivation in discussing this topic with the JW at the door is *not* "to get even with him" because the Society has slammed us, but to *open his eyes to the deceptive and hypocritical nature of the Society.* He needs to be weaned from the idolatrous devotion he has to that cultic religious organization. Until he can look at the Bible without his "Watchtower glasses," he will be blind to the *true Gospel* of Jesus Christ, and unwilling to receive the *free gift* of forgiveness and salvation the Father graciously offers him in Jesus. ☺

Love to all,

Joy

*The *WATCHTOWER* and *Awake!* magazines are the two bi-monthly publications of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (also known as Jehovah's Witnesses) which, among other things, keeps people informed about the alleged Pagan practices of other religions.

†The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society is the government (or clergy) of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

1) According to *ZION'S WATCH TOWER*, December 1881, p301.

"Our high calling is so great, so much above the comprehension of men, that they feel that we are guilty of blasphemy when we speak of being 'new creatures'—not any longer human, but 'partakers of the divine nature.' ...Now we appear like men, and all die naturally, but in the resurrection, we shall rise in our true character as Gods."

2) *God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached*, 1973, p347.

3) *WATCH TOWER*, June 15, 1927, p184. 4) *Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, 1993, p213. 5) *Ibid.*, p200. 6) *Ibid.*, p124. 7) *Ibid.*, p200.

REASONING WITH A JEHOVAH'S WITNESS ABOUT THE PAGAN ORIGINS OF THE WTBS

Anyone who has dialogued with Jehovah's Witnesses is aware that they seem to come up with an answer for almost everything. It may not be a *good* answer, or a *logical* one, but *any* answer may serve to deflect critical analysis and give the JW's a chance to change the subject! It is your job to hang tough, and keep the discussion on track ... at least long enough to make your point.

If a JW says—

"That pyramid was built a long time ago! I only care about what the Society teaches *now.*"

You might answer—

"It seems strange to me you would care about (and ask me to care about) the pagan roots of Christmas and other holidays that go back *many, many centuries*; and yet, you don't care about the pagan roots of the WTBS that only reaches back a few decades."

If the JW says—

"The Society did have some pagan leanings and practices in the early years because of their long association with Christendom ... all paganism was cleaned out over time."

You might answer—

"That's odd. Your organization seems to teach that pagan celebrations should not have been "Christianized" but should have been abandoned. For example, the December 15, 1999 *WATCHTOWER* (on p. 7) says regarding Christmas,

"What do we learn from such historical background and development? If a shirt or blouse is buttoned unevenly from the start, the only way to correct the situation is to begin again."

Yet, Russellism, which was infused through and through with paganism, was never abandoned but supposedly "Christianized" over a period of many years. In fact, many of Russell's alleged 'errors' supposedly cleansed forever from the organization (allowing alternative military service, understanding the superior authorities of Romans 13 as civil rulers, etc.) have been revived and presented again as 'new light.' How can TRUTH keep changing?"

If he should then say—

"According to Proverbs 4:18, the light on the path of the righteous keeps getting brighter and brighter. That's why our truth can be constantly refined."

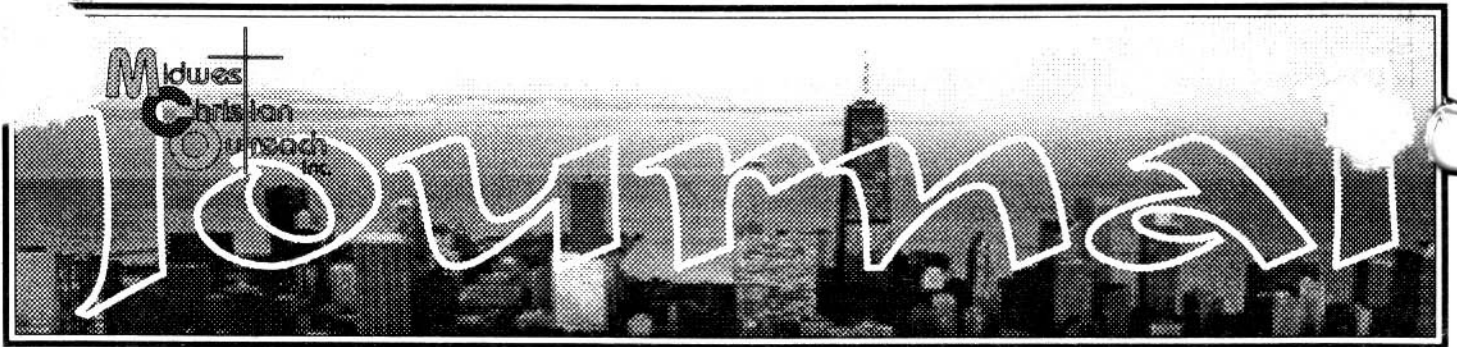
You might answer—

"Proverbs 4:18-19 speaks of *two* paths — the path of the righteous and the path of the wicked. Would a false prophet and pagan organization like the Russellite "Bible Students," (and the current WTBS organization that Russellism morphed into) be considered *righteous* or *unrighteous*? Proverbs 4:19 tells us that it is the *unrighteous* one who keeps stumbling around in darkness, continually moving but never finding true light."

This is just a small sampling of things you could say. I plan to address the "New Light" excuse thoroughly in a future issue of *Journal*.

— JAV
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— Thank You

IN THIS ISSUE!

An Enduring Monument to Pagan Origins Page 1
 Joy A. Veinot

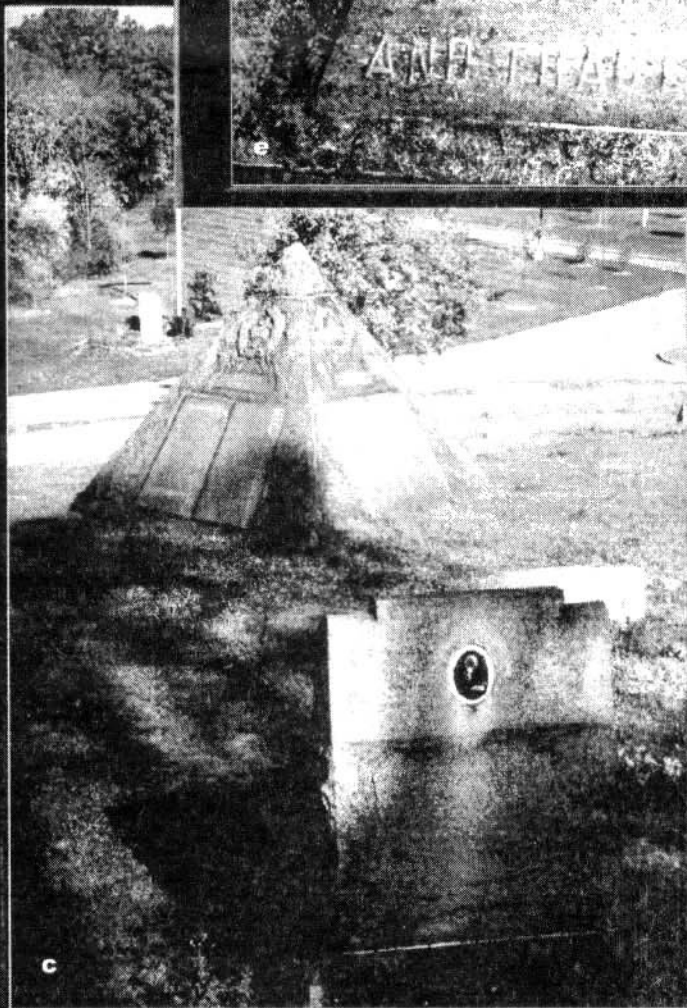
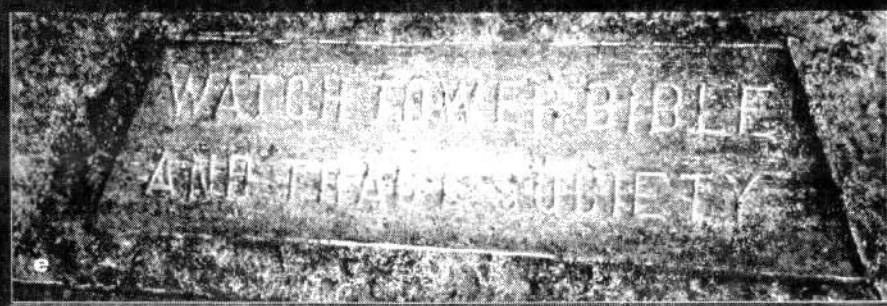
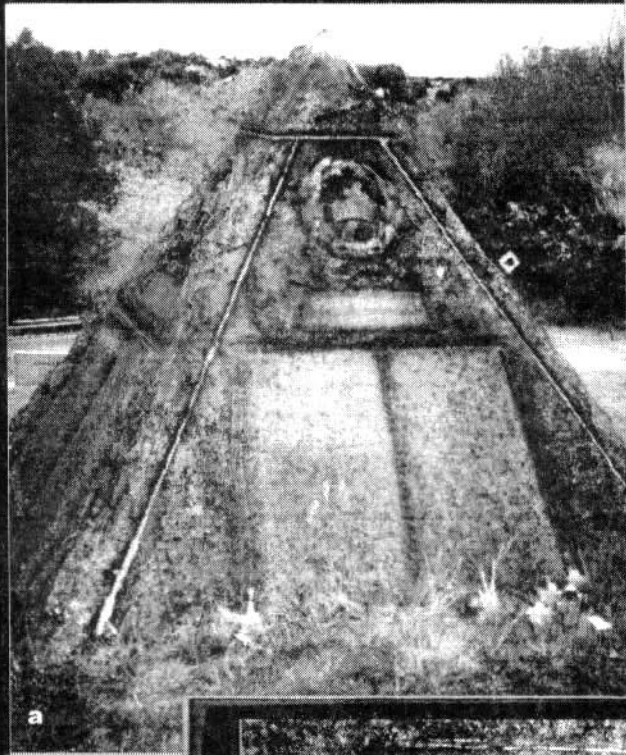
Why God Holds Pastors Responsible Page
 Pastor Bill Randles

Legislating Morality Page 6
 Frank Turek

Rep

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Page



Pictures in Collage

***b. Front view of Russell's headstone.
"The Laodicean Messenger"***

***a. Full view of the pyramid. It
stands 7-ft. tall and 9 ft.
in diameter. Built in 1919.***

***e. Close up of the pyramid's nameplate
"Watchtower Bible and Tract Society"***

***d. Closer view of pyramid showing cross,
crown and wreath, and WTBTS name-
plate.***

***c. Back view of headstone showing
pyramid in background.***

**A full-color, first-generation copy of the pyramid collage is available for a small donation to the ministry of
Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.**