

## Those “Freedom Fighters” of Brooklyn, NY

By L.L. (Don) & Joy Veinot

**W**elcome to *Independent Lens*. I’m Terrence Howard, your host. Now, they’ve probably knocked on your door with a Bible message, and in fighting for the right to do that, they’ve won rights for us to live the way we want to. Few of us know how Jehovah Witnesses have shaped America. With the record Supreme Court victories that have expanded freedom for everyone, or how their refusal of blood transfusions led to medical breakthroughs, and that they spoke out against Hitler—choosing to suffer in concentration camps rather than renounce their religion. They’re people with uncompromising faith. Working with independent producer Tom Shepherd, first-time film-maker Joel P. Engardio takes us inside the world of Jehovah Witnesses. Raised in a religion, trained as a journalist, he asks what happens when fundamentalism and freedom meet at your front door, knocking, next on *Independent Lens*.<sup>1</sup>

So began a PBS special about Jehovah’s Witnesses (JWs) that aired in May of 2007. Produced by a first-time film-maker Joel P. Engardio, who was raised as one of Jehovah’s Witnesses, it presents the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (WTBTS, aka Jehovah’s Witnesses) in the best possible light. The producers appear to make a stab at impartiality by quoting a grieving grandmother who basically has lost her family to this cult, when her adult daughter converted and left her out in the cold. However, the documentary is overwhelmingly favorable to the Jehovah’s Witnesses, while casting Christians as intolerant bigots. It is a puff piece extraordinaire—a very carefully guided tour through the mine-field of false and dangerous doctrines that constitute the body of beliefs of the Jehovah’s Witnesses. It is also an exercise in rewriting embarrassing history.

### JWs and the Holocaust

Engardio extols the Jehovah’s Witnesses for their sacrificial stand against Nazism in WW2 Germany:

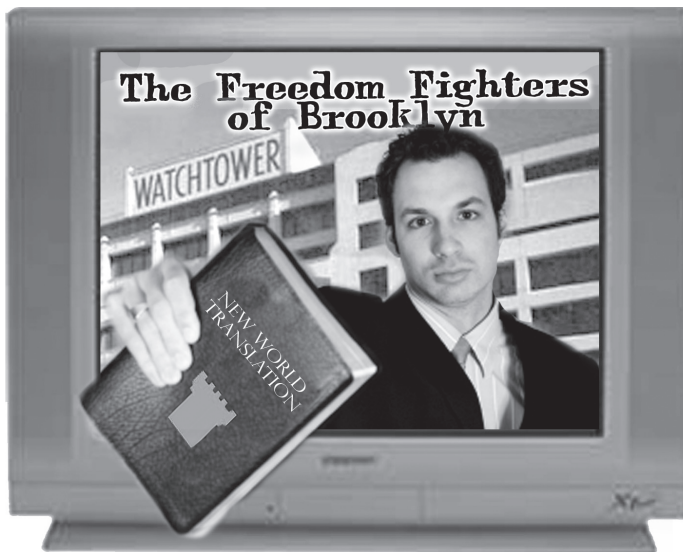
**During WWII, Jehovah’s Witnesses refused to fight. They wouldn’t follow Hitler in Germany and wouldn’t support the war effort in America ... By the 1930’s, the Jehovah’s Witnesses had 25,000 members in Germany. Like their American counterparts, the German Witnesses**

**es were nonviolent and apolitical. They refused to say, “Heil Hitler” or serve in the army. Instead, they stood on street corners proclaiming their allegiance only to God ... 10,000 Witnesses were sent to prison and concentration camps. The rest went underground ... The Nazis offered the Witnesses a deal. If they signed a document renouncing their faith they could leave the camps for good. No other group was given this choice. Overwhelmingly, the Witnesses refused ... Six decades after the holocaust, Auschwitz has opened its first exhibit, recognizing the experience of Jehovah’s Witnesses in**

**the camps and honoring their memory.<sup>2</sup>**

Jehovah’s Witnesses did suffer greatly at the hands of the Nazi’s during World War II. Many bravely refused to recant their religion and went to the camps as a result. The Watchtower Society often brags about its supposed integrity in Nazi Germany in World War II. The August 22, 1995 edition of *AWAKE!*<sup>3</sup> gives a highly propagandized version of the events surrounding the JW persecution in Germany in the early thirties. It relates how the Nazis seized the Society’s branch office in Magdeburg and launched a persecution of Jehovah’s Witnesses in June of 1933. WTBTS President Rutherford bravely (from a safe distance and from a free land) stood up to Hitler, issued him an ultimatum, and threatened to expose Nazi persecution to the world if the persecution of JWs did not cease by March 24, 1934. Would the

—Continued on page 2



The  
Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.

## Journal

is a publication of:

Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.  
P.O. Box 446, Wonder Lake, IL 60097-0446

Phone: (630) 627-9028

Fax: (630) 627-6829

E-mail: info@midwestoutreach.org

Don Veinot ..... President  
Joy Veinot ..... Director  
D.L. McGehee ..... Editor  
S. Todd McGehee ..... Layout/Art

### ADVISORY BOARD

**Dr. Norman L. Geisler**  
President,  
Southern Evangelical Seminary  
Charlotte, NC

**Janet Brunner**  
Layman,  
Glen Ellyn, IL

**G. Richard Fisher**  
Senior Pastor,  
Laurelton Park Baptist Church  
Brick, NJ

**Dr. Jerry Buckner**  
Senior Pastor,  
Tiburon Christian Fellowship  
Tiburon, CA

**Jhan Moscowitz**  
North American Director,  
Jews for Jesus  
Brooklyn, NY

**Ray Kollbocker**  
Senior Pastor,  
Parkview Community Church  
Glen Ellyn, IL

**Dr. Ron Rhodes**  
President,  
Reasoning From The Scriptures Min.  
Frisco, TX

**Bill Honsberger**  
Director,  
Haven Ministries  
Aurora, CO

**Gino Geraci**  
Senior Pastor,  
Calvary Chapel South Denver  
Littleton, CO

**Phil Ballmaier**  
Senior Pastor,  
Calvary Chapel  
Elk Grove, IL

*Your response to this publication  
would be greatly appreciated!!!  
Please send all correspondence and  
subscription inquiries to the above address.  
Thank you for reading the Journal.*

**Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.**  
*is a non-profit organization.  
Financial donations are welcomed  
and make this ministry possible.*

### "Freedom Fighters" Continued from page 1

WTBTS have exposed the persecution of *other groups* if the Jehovah's Witnesses *had been* exempted? I guess we'll never know that for sure, but we do know that Rutherford was no friend of the Jewish people. You see, what the *AWAKE!* article *leaves out* of this narrative, and what Engardio leaves out today, is far more telling than what it includes. The rest of the story, as Paul Harvey would say, can be found in the WTBTS's *1934 Year Book*. Page 130 of that book tells us:

**In June [of 1933] the president of the Society visited Germany to take some action to get the Society's property restored to our possession and to carry on the work further.<sup>3</sup>**

Pages 131-138 inform us that a "**Declaration of Facts**" was prepared and unanimously adopted by the Witnesses at the 1933 Berlin convention, and that the resolution was printed and distributed throughout Germany. This "**Declaration of Facts**" was Rutherford's pusillanimous attempt to appease Hitler. In it Rutherford says:

**It is falsely charged by our enemies that we have received financial support for our work from the Jews. Nothing is farther from the truth. Up to this hour there never has been the slightest bit of money contributed to our work by Jews. We are the faithful followers of Christ Jesus and believe upon Him as the Savior of the world, whereas the Jews entirely reject Jesus Christ and emphatically deny that he is the Savior of the world, ... This of itself should be sufficient proof to show that we receive no support from Jews ... The greatest and the most oppressive empire on earth is the Anglo-American empire. By that is meant the British Empire, of which the United States of America forms a part. It has been the commercial Jews of the British-American empire that have built and carried on Big Business as a means of exploiting and oppressing the peoples of many nations ... This fact is so manifest in America that there is a proverb concerning the city of New York which says; "The Jews own it, the Irish Catholics rule it, and the Americans pay the bills."<sup>4</sup>**

**The present government of Germany has declared emphatically against Big Business oppressors and in opposition to the wrongful religious influence in the political affairs of the nation. Such is exactly our opinion ...<sup>5</sup>**

**Instead of being against the principles advocated by the government of Germany, we stand squarely for such principles ...<sup>6</sup>**

**Instead, therefore, of our literature and our work's being a menace to the principles of the present government we are the strongest supporters of such high ideals.<sup>7</sup>**

So much for the vaunted "neutrality" of the WTBTS. Sounds as if Rutherford knew which side he was on, and it was not the side of that supposedly "**most oppressive**" ... "**British-American empire.**" No, he found Nazi Germany more in line with the WTBTS "ideals." Even more importantly, please note Rutherford's cruel willingness to throw the persecuted Jews right under the bus! Don't worry, Hitler—we agree with you that the Jews are the problem! They are "**Big Business oppressors**" who are "**exploiting and oppressing the peoples of many nations**"—they own New York! We're on your side, Hitler—surely you can see that the Jews are no friends of ours!

However, Herr Hitler was not impressed with Rutherford's attempted "bedfellowship," so the persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany continued. This enraged Rutherford, who then threatened to publish a worldwide exposé of the Nazi's brutality if the persecution of JW's did not cease. Again, Hitler was unmoved, and that is why Rutherford began denouncing Hitler and Nazism—safely from his home in the evil, oppressive Jewish-owned (in his view) American empire. He agreed with Hitler's "**high ideals**" so long as his "idealism" was directed at other groups. The aforementioned *AWAKE!* article ironically states that in October of 1934, JW's from 49 countries sent a telegram to Hitler warning him that he must refrain from persecuting Jehovah's Witnesses or "**God will destroy you and your national party.**" God eventually did destroy Hitler and the Nazis. And how did He accomplish this destruction? With fire and brimstone from Heaven? No, God used the brave armies of the Allies—the most evil and oppressive empire on the face of the earth according to WTBTS's President Rutherford!

What about the 10,000 Jehovah's Witnesses detained in Nazi concentration camps? There is no denying their courage in being willing to suffer and even die for what they believed in. Are they not to be considered martyrs? Perhaps. But being a martyr does not make you a Christian. There have been countless Muslim martyrs throughout the centuries and, of course, continuing even today—right before our eyes. But all of the

Muslims who have died for Islam have died for a lie! And the same holds true for those Jews who were imprisoned or even lost their lives as victims of Hitler. They did not die so that righteousness could prevail, or because they took a righteous stand in defense of their defenseless neighbors. They were just following orders. And what about all the young men of "Christendom" who died in the struggle that freed the Jews in the camps? Any praise in *THE WATCHTOWER* magazine or in the "Knocking" documentary for these Christian martyrs? No.

## Warriors For Freedom?

The introduction alone portrays the WTBS as "American as apple pie," having virtually "**shaped America**" as they have fought doggedly in the courts to secure freedoms for all of us, staring down the maddest madman of the twentieth century and single-handedly bringing about wonderful breakthroughs in medical science! Wow, what a swell organization of superheroes that is making the world safe for democracy; fighting for truth, justice and the American way!

The WTBS is a freedom-fighting organization in the "freedom-fighting" mold of Fidel Castro or Che Guevara. It has primarily fought hard for the freedom to oppress others! It is true that the WTBS has won quite a few court battles to secure their own freedom to practice their religion as they so choose—including the "freedom" to die (and force their minor children to die) for the organization's egregious and unbiblical stand against taking needed blood transfusions; but *do not* look to the WTBS to concern themselves with the freedoms of others. It is almost funny to see Engardio portray the WTBS's followers as great warriors for freedom, considering they will not defend their country (or any country) from any tyranny. As Jews, they do not even have the FREEDOM to do so! They are forbidden by their leadership (the Governing Body in Brooklyn, NY) to join the military, to vote, or to run for elective office. So the WTBS only can use the freedom secured by the brave and sacrificial efforts of others even to bring their self-serving lawsuits to court in order to uphold their unfortunate views and practices.

Interestingly, Engardio does not mention a recent lawsuit brought up in Denmark, in which the WTBS lost its bid to suppress freedom of speech and freedom of the press in that nation.

William Bowen of Silentlambs\*\* writes:

**In a Denmark court ruling, December 2006, Jehovah's Witnesses lost a key decision to suppress freedom of the press. They were ordered to pay legal fees of 50,000 kroner to one of the largest newspapers in Denmark, *Ekstra Bladet*. *Ekstra Bladet* had published a series of articles on the epidemic of child abuse within the Jehovah's Witness organization. Since May of 2002, media worldwide have circulated reports of child-abuse problems. Stories include those from *The New York Times*, *Dateline*, and eight different countries offering testimony from sexually abused kids within the religion.**

**In the autumn of 2004, the Denmark newspaper ran a series of articles that blasted the religion for policies of covering up abuse allegations. The Jehovah's Witness local Branch Office Committee in Denmark filed a 350,000-kroner slander lawsuit against *Ekstra Bladet* and the editor of the newspaper. The religion went further and attacked victims of abuse who had been interviewed for the newspaper articles. Victims were told they would be sued into poverty if they did not retract the stories of being raped as children, which they had given to the newspaper. Because of intimidation, one girl withdrew her story and other victims went into hiding ...**

**So while "Knocking," a Jehovah's-Witnesses-endorsed documentary, airs on PBS and provides accolades for court victories that make the group champions for freedom of speech, the facts show that lawyers funded by a multi-billion-dollar corporation are making a mockery of the U.S. Constitution. They use the Supreme Court as a knife to cut out the tongues of people who are victimized by this religion. Professor Marci Hamilton's article at *Findlaw* notes the irony of the Denmark case:**

**"It is extraordinarily ironic, then, that the Jehovah's Witnesses have recently, in Denmark, taken the position that speech, including speech by the press, should be punished and suppressed. It appears that when the topic is alleged clergy abuse within the organization, its position on**

—Continued on page 4

## ***MCOI Branches***

### **MAIN OFFICE:**

#### **Wonder Lake, Illinois**

P.O. Box 446

Wonder Lake, IL 60097-0446

Phone: (630) 627-9028

E-mail: [Info@midwestoutreach.org](mailto:Info@midwestoutreach.org)

President: L.L. (Don) Veinot, Jr.

Director: Joy A. Veinot

### **Spring Hill, Florida**

3338 Landover Blvd.

Spring Hill, FL 34609-2619

Phone: (352) 684-4448

E-mail: [dgholson@atlantic.net](mailto:dgholson@atlantic.net)

Director: Diane Gholson

### **Wayne, Ohio**

171 Church Street

Wayne, OH 43466

Phone: (419) 288-2780

E-mail: [jkmiles@bgnat.bgsu.edu](mailto:jkmiles@bgnat.bgsu.edu)

Director: Jonathon Miles

### **Lohrville, Iowa**

408 Main Street

Lohrville, IA 51453-1004

Phone: (712) 465-3010

E-mail: [cultwatch@juno.com](mailto:cultwatch@juno.com)

Director: Jeff Hauser

### **Scranton, Kansas**

101 Kenton Street

Scranton, KS 66537

Phone: (785)-793-2309

E-mail: [mcoscranton@usa.net](mailto:mcoscranton@usa.net)

Co-Directors: Randall Birtell

Randal Ming

### **Cape Coral, Florida**

P.O. Box 150743

Cape Coral, FL

Phone: (239) 542-1914

E-mail: [ronhenzel@msn.com](mailto:ronhenzel@msn.com)

Director: Ron Henzel

### **Cortez, Colorado**

12828 Road 21

Cortez, CO, 81321

Phone: (970) 565-7285

E-mail:

[danichaffin@midwestoutreach.org](mailto:danichaffin@midwestoutreach.org)

Director: Dani Chaffin

freedom of speech makes a 180-degree turn. Apparently, the Jehovah’s Witnesses support free speech for themselves, but not for their critics.”<sup>8</sup>

## Upholders of Democracy and the American Way

After attempting to make the case that Jehovah’s Witnesses are brave, freedom fighters (gag me), Engardio then presents them as a tolerant “live and let live” brand of fundamentalists who, while being highly moral personally, merely proselytize their religion in a positive way, while letting others live in their own way and not forcing their morality on society as a whole, but rather eschewing political action to bring about societal change.

Engardio starts right off by comparing JW “fundamentalists” favorably as opposed to other *intolerant* “fundamentalists.”

**I can relate to Jehovah’s Witnesses more than most journalists I know. When I was a kid, my mom became one. Despite the television jokes and slammed doors, she felt a great sense of purpose in her knocking. I never joined. I became a journalist instead. The media has always liked to focus on fundamentalists, who are either ridiculous or dangerous.**<sup>9</sup>

Here Engardio puts up short clips of disgraced televangelist Jimmy Swaggert and cult leader David Koresh,<sup>10</sup> along with a sign in front of a building that reads: **“Ye must be Born Again!”** and people carrying placards about God’s judgment and homosexuality, and states:

**I’m certainly afraid of extremists who want to take away my rights or threaten our democracy.**<sup>12</sup>

By this Engardio insinuates that all other so-called fundamentalists are jack-booted thugs who somehow **“threaten our democracy.”** It is true that some Christians, or groups calling themselves Christians—such as Rev. Phelps of Westboro Baptist Church (which *is not* a Christian church), cause harm to the cause of Christ by the way they communicate their views on *cultural* subjects. Some seem to care more about pointing fingers at judgment of sinners than they do about communicating God’s love to a lost and dying world. However, whether we agree or disagree with the messages on the signs and placards, or the advisability of using such methods to try to influence society, such tactics are a quintessentially American and democratic way to express opinions—hardly a fascist takeover of the government! How is it un-American and scary to carry a sign promoting a point of view, but perfectly A-okay to publish and peddle weekly magazines promoting a point of view while harshly denouncing contrary views, as does the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society?

Engardio continues:

**The Jehovah’s Witnesses practice a different kind of fundamentalism. Their door-to-door message may be annoying, but their uncompromising faith hasn’t hurt our freedom. In some surprising ways, it’s actually helped define it.**<sup>13</sup>

It certainly is true that JWs practice a different type of fundamentalism—chiefly because JWs are not “fundamentalists” at all! They also are not a *Christian* organization, though that is their claim. In order to be a Christian fundamentalist, wouldn’t you have to subscribe to the *fundamentals* of the *Christian* faith? The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society *does not* subscribe to ANY of the most important fundamental doctrines of the faith such as: the Deity of Christ, the Trinity, the bodily Resurrection of Jesus, etc.

Engardio resumes:

**Jehovah’s Witnesses are moral conservatives, but they say mixing religion with politics is unchristian. Is it possible for a morally conservative religion to stay out of the culture wars? To merely share their message, not legislate it? Witnesses won’t protest or impose their beliefs on groups with whom they disagree.**<sup>14</sup>

This is yet another slap at Christian conservatives—people who vote and run for office and do try to effect positive change at the ballot box. Engardio presumes that JWs are so far superior to say ... politically incorrect Evangelicals, because the WTBS does not allow their followers to vote or get involved in politics at all. If you have any knowledge of the WTBS publications, you will be very familiar with the arguments put forth by Engardio. He may not have “joined” the group, but he certainly has bought into their dogma!

But let’s not leave this issue without commenting about why the WTBS organization does not allow its adherents the *FREE-DOM* to participate in political causes or actions. It is because the WTBS teaches their god, Jehovah, is about to completely destroy all governments and sinners at Armageddon (as he has been just-about-to-do for over 100 years, according to the WTBS). So what does it matter if the world goes to heck in a hand basket? Besides, cultural breakdown and societal immorality are some of the WTBS’s best recruiting tools as the JWs go door to door. And, of course, the JWs have to attend five meetings a week and go out “in service” selling their magazines and proselytizing for their religion, which leaves them no time to involve themselves in any improvement of society. So again, the WTBS self-righteous stance against Christian political involvement is really a question of the organization putting its own self-interest first.

## Enslaved “Freedom” Fighters

After telling us all about the JW’s brave fight on behalf of freedom, Engardio then tells us:

**The people who choose to join must give up some personal freedoms. To be one of Jehovah’s Witnesses, you must study and accept their doctrine and moral values. When it comes to worship, there’s little room for individual freedom. If you insist on living a different way or speak out against major beliefs, you’re expelled and shunned. Family and friends stop talking to you. Every year more than 30,000 Jehovah Witnesses are disfellowshipped.**<sup>15</sup>

Oh yeah, *that* little problem ... In truth, these “freedom fighters” must give up ALL of their personal freedoms if *any* of their personal choices contradict the dogma fabricated by the men at WTBS headquarters in Brooklyn, NY! They are forbidden to celebrate holidays, birthdays, pledge allegiance to any flag, attend a non-JW church service, take life-saving blood transfusions, and on and on; and this is enforced by the threat of losing all of your friends and family members! Talk about legislating morality or imposing their particular (and often **“ridiculous or dangerous”**) views on others – the Governing Body in Brooklyn takes home the prize for these things!

## Willing to Die

### For the Governing Body—Not for God

Engardio next introduces us to a nice young JW man named Seth and his loving family. Seth tells us that he suffers from a condition called Schlerosing Cholangitis.

Says Engardio:

**Following the Witness way of life isn't easy. At 23, Seth's own faith is being tested. A rare genetic disease has been attacking Seth's liver since he was a teenager. Jehovah's Witnesses accept most medical treatment. Seth takes 30 pills a day and gets nightly injections to keep his liver functioning. However, he'll need a liver transplant and this is a problem. Seth wants the transplant, but as a Jehovah's Witness, he won't take a blood transfusion, even his own stored in advance, and without blood, hospitals won't take him. To Witnesses, blood is sacred. Their interpretation of the Bible tells them to abstain from blood. They say Jehovah used the blood of Jesus to save mankind. Blood represents life, and should be left alone.<sup>16</sup>**

Seth needs a liver transplant, and he has a donor ready to give one to him—his own father, who is a match. But Seth may need a blood transfusion during the procedure, and his father may need one as well. Okay, so what's the problem? Well, Jehovah's Witnesses do not have the FREEDOM to receive this potentially life-saving procedure, because the WTBS leadership wrongly and foolishly equates receiving a blood transfusion with the eating of blood, which was a command given to the *Israelites* in the book of Leviticus (see Lev. 17:14, but compare Lev. 3:17 where *fat* is included!).

## What Would Jesus Do?

For the sake of argument, let's say that eating blood is the same thing as receiving a blood transfusion. Let's just pretend that blood transfusions (not even heard of in Moses' time) were forbidden in the law. The Governing Body of the WTBS blithely ignores the fact that Jesus, Himself, proclaimed that *the saving of a life trumps the law in any case!*

***On another Sabbath he went into the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was shriveled. The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath.*** (Luke 6:6-7, NIV)

Those Pharisees sure seem very much like our boys in Brooklyn! So what did Jesus do?

***But Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Get up and stand in front of everyone." So he got up and stood there. Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath; to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?"*** (Luke 6:8-9, NIV)

Then Jesus proceeded to heal the man, which made the Pharisees furious! Some religious leaders just do not understand the *mercy* of God and prefer to make people follow their dictates—even if it kills them ... or leaves them paralyzed.

Many innocent JW children and young men like Seth would not have to die if the WTBS leadership understood that God wants "*mercy, not sacrifice*" (see Hosea 6:6, Mt. 12:7).

But the WTBS does not seem to care at all that their "*ridiculous ... dangerous*" and merciless prohibition yearly costs so many lives among Jehovah's Witnesses—including numerous minor children. If the general public knew how many people to date have died from this deadly religious error, there certainly would be an outcry. People easily could see how dangerous Jim Jones was, because his followers all died *at one time* and *in one*


*place*—in Guyana, South America. Same goes for David Koresh, whose followers all perished together in a fiery compound in Texas. But in the case of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society whose merciless and Pharisaical leadership has caused scores more deaths than Jones and Koresh *put together*, the WTBS followers *die one by one in hospitals scattered around the world*; so the average person (including the average JW!) has no idea of just how incredibly many have perished.

In the May 1994 issue of *AWAKE!*, the WTBS, itself, admits (and actually brags!) that thousands of children continue to die because their parents have refused to give them a needed blood transfusion because of the dictates of the WTBS "god!"

**In former times, thousands of youths died for putting God first. They are still doing it, only today the drama is played out in hospitals and courtrooms, with blood transfusions the issue.<sup>17</sup>**

In former times, thousands of youths died for putting God first, and they are still doing it! Yes, these innocent children are still dying, but not for God. They are dying for the rules of a few heartless men who are controlling the members of the WTBS from their headquarters in Brooklyn, NY.

—Continued on page 6



The  
**A.I.D.S.**  
**EPIDEMIC**  
( Aquired Ignorance of the Doctrines of Scripture )  
is reaching alarming proportions with-  
in the Church. Sound doctrine is the  
medicine that strengthens the immune  
system in the Body of Christ.

**"Doctor" Don Veinot makes House Calls.  
Call today to make an appointment for  
him to minister at your church or event.**

**630-627-9028**

## **“Freedom Fighters” Continued from page 5**

It should be noted that, as of this writing, Seth is allowed by the WTBS to receive an organ transplant. However, a few years back they also forbade organ transplants by decreeing that organ transplants were the same thing as cannibalism—the actual eating of another person’s flesh.

**Is there any Scriptural objection to donating one’s body for use in medical research or to accepting organs for transplant from such a source? - W. L., U.S.A.**  
**... removing the organ and replacing it directly with an organ from another human, this is simply a shortcut. Those who submit to such operations are thus living off the flesh of another human. That is cannibalistic. However, in allowing man to eat animal flesh Jehovah God did not grant permission for humans to try to perpetuate their lives by cannibalistically taking into their bodies human flesh, whether chewed or in the form of whole organs or body parts taken from others.<sup>18</sup>**

One has to wonder if the WTBS can even understand the difference between eating (which involves the digestive system) and transplantation (which does not)! Silly? Yes, very. But also deadly. Just how many JWs died during the decades organ transplants were forbidden supposedly by Jehovah God? No records were kept, so we probably will never know; but Seth certainly would have been doomed. Did the WTBS ever apologize to all the individual JWs who died or were permanently maimed as a result of this prohibition? No, never. The WTBS simply received their so-called “**new light**” from Jehovah and changed the doctrine. Jehovah of the Watchtower randomly changed his mind, and it’s too bad for all of the unfortunate victims of the Watchtower god’s wishy-washy decision-making process and misunderstanding of medical practice. If Jehovah did not know or decide until 1980 that transplants were not cannibalism, what kind of god is he, anyway? And what will happen when the Jehovah of the WTBS eventually learns (or decides) that receiving a blood transfusion is not the same as “eating blood,” thus realizing that *thousands of innocent JWs died in vain*? Will he just say, “Oopsy doopsy—my bad?”

## **Medical Malpractice**

Just look at the WTBS’s medical track record: JWs in the not-too-distant past did not have the FREEDOM to have their children inoculated against childhood diseases. Why?

**Vaccines are useless, poisonous, a violation of God’s law, and a tool of the Devil. Thinking people would rather have smallpox than vaccination, because the latter sows the seed of syphilis, cancers, eczema, erysipelas, scrofula, consumption, even leprosy and many other loathsome affections. Hence the practice of vaccination is a crime, an outrage and a delusion.<sup>19</sup>**

The WTBS leadership also confidently asserted that:

**It has never been proven that a single disease is due to germs.<sup>20</sup>**

But then Jehovah of the WTBS, who supposedly communicates (channels) all of these truths to the Watchtower leadership, *changed his mind!* So JW children now *can receive* vaccinations, and presumably the WTBS god (who is *NOT* the God of the Bible!) now has gained some understanding of bacteria (germs) and viruses.

We easily could fill page upon page with these types of “**ridiculous**” medical statements made by the WTBS, but we must move on. Suffice it to say that the WTBS has no idea

what it is talking about, and it is tragic that the lives of so many innocent children are in its hands.

## **No Substitute for Blood**

Despite the confident assertion at the opening of the documentary that the JWs “**refusal of blood transfusions led to medical breakthroughs,**”<sup>21</sup> there currently is no effective substitute for blood transfusions. The *Chicago Tribune* reported in December of 2006, under the bold heading “Blood Substitute ‘a disaster’ in trial.”

**In a potential blow to the future of an Evanston-based biotech company, a clinical trial showed Tuesday that its key product, an experimental blood substitute, performed worse than standard treatments in patients who suffered traumatic injuries.**

**In a trial of 712 patients, Northfield Laboratories, Inc. reported 13.2 percent of the 349 who had been given Northfield’s product died, compared with 9.6 percent in the control group of 363 who received either saline solution in the ambulance or blood in the hospital.**

**“No matter how they slice it, it’s a disaster,” said Martin Shkreli, a hedge-fund manager at New York-based Elea Capital, which invests in health care companies and sold its Northfield shares earlier this spring. “If you look at the absolute number of deaths, it kills more patients than saline does.”**

**In the trial, 46 in the group receiving the blood substitute Polyheme died, while 35 in the control group died, according to Northfield Laboratories.**

**“If the FDA would even consider this, they would violate their mandate to protect public safety,” said Elea Capital’s Shkreli. “It would be shocking to see the FDA even consider this.”<sup>22</sup>**

Of course, this is not to say everyone who receives a blood transfusion survives a surgery or a traumatic injury. However, the administration of a blood transfusion *greatly increases* the odds in favor of survival. Nor, for that matter, does everyone who refuses a blood transfusion die. But far too many *do* die, which is a terrible and completely unnecessary tragedy.

## **No Pressure?**

In order to escape legal liability and to fight off the “cult” label, the WTBS has recently decided to portray the decision to refuse blood as a personal decision of the individual JW.

In the “Knocking” documentary, Jared Hardie, a JW elder, gives the “company line” when he states:

**This is not mere compliance to some organizational dictum. It’s their personally, deeply held religious beliefs that that’s what God expects of those who serve Him. So they don’t feel like they’re being pressured into not taking a blood transfusion.**

But we’ll let you, the reader, decide if there is any pressure from the WTBS brought to bear on the individual JW in this matter.

**Little do men in general appreciate today that they are under the Creator’s law concerning blood and that they will be punished for violating its sacredness. It is no light punishment, but it will call for their very life.<sup>23</sup>**

**In view of the seriousness of taking blood into the human system by a transfusion, would violation of the Holy Scriptures in this regard subject the dedicated, baptized receiver of blood transfusion to being disfellowshipped from the Christian congregation? The**

inspired Holy Scriptures answer yes. ... According to the law of Moses, which set forth shadows of things to come, the receiver of a blood transfusion must be cut off from God's people by excommunication or disfellowshipping. ... if in the future he persists in accepting blood transfusions or in donating blood toward the carrying out of this medical practice upon others, he shows that he has really not repented, but is deliberately opposed to God's requirements. As a rebellious opposer and unfaithful example to fellow members of the Christian congregation he must be cut off therefrom by disfellowshipping.<sup>24</sup>


Jehovah's Witnesses ... know that if they violate God's law on blood and the child dies in the process, they have endangered that child's opportunity for everlasting life in God's new world.<sup>25</sup>

... resorting to blood transfusions even under the most extreme circumstances is not truly lifesaving. It may result in the immediate and very temporary prolongation of life, but that at the cost of eternal life for a dedicated Christian.<sup>26</sup>

Okay, let's say an individual JW does not see any problem with taking a transfusion. If that JW decides to follow his or her own conscience and makes a personal decision to receive a transfusion or give one to his dying child, he will be completely rejected by Jehovah god, is basically giving up his eternal life, and is subject to disfellowshipping while here on Earth. To be disfellowshipped is to be totally cut off from all JW family members, friends and acquaintances, and *completely shunned*. You lose everybody you know and care about and, for most JWs who follow the WTBS dictates which discourage having any outside friends—that means EVERYBODY. But, . . . no pressure . . . just follow your conscience.

Thankfully, Seth and his father both survive the organ transplant process without receiving a blood transfusion. We are very thankful for the happy ending in this case. But there are no happy endings for so many more.

In closing, we recall Jesus' words to the Pharisees:

***If you had known what these words mean, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice," you would not have condemned the innocent.*** (Matthew 12:7, NIV) 

\**AWAKE!* is one of two bi-monthly publications of the WTBS which recently has changed to a monthly publication.

\*\*Silentlamb is a collective of individuals that have taken the courageous step to stand up for what is right. The website was started in March of 2001 with the writing of a simple story, "*The Day the Lambs Roared.*" The point of the story was that victims of abuse should never be silent and together they can move mountains.



Don and Joy Veinot are co-founders of Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc., which is a national apologetics ministry and mission to new religious movements based in Wonder Lake, IL. He and Joy, his wife of 37 years, have been involved in discernment ministry as missionaries to New Religious Movements since 1987. Don is on the Board of Directors for Evangelical Ministries to New Religions (EMNR), a consortium of discernment ministries. In addition to being staff researchers and writers for the *Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc. Journal* and co-authors of *A Matter of Basic Principles: Bill Gothard and the Christian Life*, they have been published in the *CRJ Journal*, *PFO Quarterly Journal*, *Campus Life Magazine* and other periodicals. Don was ordained to the ministry by West Suburban Community Church of Lombard, IL at the Garden of Gethsemane in Jerusalem, Israel in March of 1997. They have two adult children and three grandchildren.

**ENDNOTES:**

1. *Independent Lens*, "Knocking," prod. and dir. Joel P. Engardio & Tom Shepard, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, 2006.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *1934 Year Book*, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1934, p130.
4. *Ibid.*, p134. This issue has been widely discussed on the internet, and the WTBS is under tremendous pressure to respond to its critics. After this article had been sent to the editors, I received the July 8, 1998 issue of the *AWAKE!*, which contained an admission (pp.13-14) that Rutherford had, indeed, written to Hitler, denied having Jewish financial support, and blamed the "commercial Jews" for the current oppression of the peoples of many nations. The *AWAKE!* then offers the lame excuse that "**This statement clearly did not refer to the Jewish people in general, and it is regrettable if it has been misunderstood and has given cause for any offense.**" I see. Rutherford was not lambasting the Jewish people in general; but only the oppressive moneyed Jews who ran the world. I am not sure that Hitler would have seen the subtle distinction. No, Rutherford knew exactly what he was doing in agreeing with Hitler that the Jews were responsible for the world's ills. I do not know which is more contemptible; Rutherford's actions in the 30's or the WTBS's present attempt to excuse the inexcusable. And, the fact that Rutherford's condemnation DID refer to Jewish people in general can be clearly seen from Rutherford's statement, "**We are the faithful followers of Christ Jesus, and believe on him as the Savior of the world, whereas the Jews entirely reject Jesus Christ and emphatically deny that he is the Savior of the world sent of God for man's good.**" This statement, of course, is nowhere to be found in the July 8, 1998 *AWAKE!*
5. *Ibid.*, p135.
6. *Ibid.*, p136.
7. *Ibid.*, p138.
8. Wm. Bowen, "Opinion Column: Jehovah's Witnesses Lose Court Battle to Suppress Freedom of Speech," International Cultic Studies Association E-Newsletter, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2007. [http://www.icsahome.com/infoserv\\_articles/bowen\\_william\\_jehovahsandfreespeech\\_0602.htm](http://www.icsahome.com/infoserv_articles/bowen_william_jehovahsandfreespeech_0602.htm)
9. "Knocking" Op. Cit.
10. The theology of David Koresh and the Branch Davidians is much more closely akin to that of the WTBS than to mainstream Christianity. This is because both the WTBS and the Davidians are cult breakaways from Adventism.
11. "Knocking" Op. Cit.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. *AWAKE!*, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, May 22, 1995, p2.
18. *THE WATCHTOWER*, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 11/15/1967, p702.
19. *The Golden Age*, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, May 1, 1929, p2.
20. *The Golden Age*, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Jan. 16, 1924, p643.
21. "Knocking" Op. Cit.
22. *Chicago Tribune*, Section 2, December 20, 2006, p1.
23. *THE WATCHTOWER*, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 11/01/1959 p645.
24. *THE WATCHTOWER*, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 01/15/1961 pp63-64.
25. *Blood, Medicine and the Law of God*, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1961, p54.
26. *Ibid.*, p55.



**Subscribe by visiting our web site**

# Introduction To Rabbinic Judaism

By Mariano Grinbank



It would seem appropriate to begin by asking and answering the question: “Why refer to *Rabbinic Judaism* and not simply to *Judaism*?” The term *Judaism*, in and of itself, can refer to many things including the Judaism of the Old Testament and the modern-day orthodox, reformed and conservative movements. It may be useful to liken modern-day Judaism’s *Orthodox* to Roman Catholicism or Greek Orthodoxy—which emphasize tradition; *Reformed* with Unitarianism—emphasizing humanism; and *Conservative* to modern liberal Protestantism—emphasizing form over doctrinal content.<sup>1</sup>

At this point, we should mention that Jewish people would not use the term *Old Testament*, but rather they would refer to the *Torah* or *Tanakh*. *Torah* technically refers to the five books of Moses, but it is sometimes used in referring to the entire Old Testament. *Tanakh* refers to the Old Testament division into three sections: Law, Prophets and Writings (Hagiographa). In Hebrew, these are *Torah*, *Nevi'im* and *Ketuvim*; and given that Jews love acrostics (turning the first letters of each word into a new word), the *T*, *N*, and *K* are put together and pronounced as *TaNakh*.

So, “Why refer to *Rabbinic Judaism* and not simply to *Judaism*?” Because doing so makes us aware of the distinction between the religion of the *Tanakh* and that which, by necessity, grew out of it. But what is that distinction? Well, the religion of the *Tanakh* was one based on a Temple with its priesthood and sacrifices. But then something happened, the Babylonian captivity—when the Jews were taken from Israel and held captive in Babylon (606 BC). And so, why did we state that Rabbinic Judaism grew “by necessity?” Imagine that God has specified to you, His people, a religion centered on a particular Temple, priesthood, and sacrifices. Now, imagine that you are carried away to a foreign, Gentile land away from the one and only Temple (Gentile basically meaning *non-Jewish*). How could you still be Jewish? How could you still practice your God-ordained religion? Appeals were made to the *Tanakh* which, while ordaining a Temple, priesthood, and sacrifices, also expressed the higher purpose God had in mind—to convert the heart.

... “Has the LORD [as] [great] delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, [And] to heed than the fat of rams.” (I Samuel 15:22, NKJV)

“To what purpose [is] the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?” Says the LORD. “I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams. And the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, Or of lambs or goats. ... Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to

*Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies—I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. ... Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow. “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, ...* (see Isaiah 1:11-18, NKJV)

*Therefore the Lord said: “Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, But have removed their hearts far from Me, And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men, ...”* (Isaiah 29:13, NKJV)

*“For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.”* (Hosea 6:6, also see 2:11 & 4:6, NKJV)

From this foundation, Judaism under the guidance of the rabbis developed its ability to survive in and out of Israel. It was in Babylon where the synagogues and yeshivas came to be established. A *synagogue* was not like the Temple, of which there was only one, but it became a place of prayer, congregation, and community. The *yeshivas* were houses of study, where the *Tanakh* was studied and from which would come the rabbinic commentaries/interpretations.

This brings us to the rabbinate. By way of comparison—a system of bishops (such as in Roman Catholicism) is known as a *bishopric*, one of imams (Islam) is an *imamate*, and likewise, one of rabbis (Judaism) is a *rabbinate*. One of the earliest figures to whom Rabbinic Judaism points as a change from priesthood to rabbinate is Ezra the priest and “*ready scribe*” (see Ezra 7:6) (450BC).

*For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do [it], and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.* (Ezra 7:10, NKJV)

*So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly ... he read from it in the open square that [was] in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday ... Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law ... they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped [them] to understand the reading.* (Nehemiah 8:2-9, NKJV)

Ezra and his band of scholars read and gave the sense, which enabled the congregants to understand. In other words, reading and interpreting in order to make the meaning clear.



The term *rabbi* (*my master*) was originally used as an expression of respect. Jesus was referred to as *Rabboni* (John 20:16). In Israel, it came to be used in reference to members of the Sanhedrin in the first century AD.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the Babylonian scholars were referred to as *rav* (*master*). *Rabbi* and *rav* are terms that, through the ages, have been applied to men of learning, community leaders, ordained spiritual leaders, teachers of *Torah*, and Jewish Religious Law (the *Halakah*), etc.

After the Babylonian captivity, some Jews remained in Babylon further developing Rabbinic Judaism. The exiles that returned to Israel took the concept of the synagogue with them and eventually spread it to Egypt, Rome, etc. Finally, after the Second Temple was destroyed (70AD), the rabbinate and its synagogues were firmly established.

The vast amount of rabbinic commentary/interpretation that developed eventually was put into written form. The *Mishnah* (the oral laws) was compiled around 200AD along with the *Gemara* (which comments on the *Mishnah*). When both the *Mishnah* and *Gemara* were combined, it came to be called the *Talmud* (which means *study*). Sometimes the term *Gemara* is used in referring to the *Talmud* as a whole. There are actually two *Talmuds*: the *Babylonian* or *Bavli* and the *Jerusalem* (or *Palestinian*) or *Yerushalmi*. They were put into writing between 400-600AD.

For the *ultra-orthodox* sects of Rabbinic Judaism, the *Talmud* is as much the Word of God as the *Tanakh*. It is also interesting to note that, as a general principle, in order to lend weight to cherished religious traditions, certain groups will claim their teachings were revealed long ago by very important people. For example, Roman Catholicism claims its traditions came from the Apostles who passed them on in oral form. Islam claims that its traditions (the *Hadiith*) were passed orally by people who heard or saw Muhammad do or say something. Likewise, Rabbinic Judaism claims that the *Mishnah* was revealed on Sinai by God to Moses who passed it on orally. (Later Jewish mystics also claimed the same for their beliefs.)

The *Talmud Bavli* surpasses the *Talmud Yerushalmi* in authority, girth and scope. This is due, in part, to the fact that in Yerushalayim (Jerusalem), the sages had to contend with the followers of The Way (Messianic Jews/Christians) who disputed with them about the interpretation of the text of the *Tanakh*. Because of this, the sages in Jerusalem had to focus their studies on the Old Testament Scriptures. On the other hand, the Babylonian sages were free to study their traditions and expound Jewish religious law, thus making the Babylonian *Talmud* the more important one within Rabbinic Judaism.

Other significant Rabbinic writings are the *Midrash*, which are compilations of homilies, including Biblical exegesis<sup>3</sup> and sermons from 400-1200AD. Two well known Midrashim are *Midrash Rabbah* (fourth century AD) and *Pesikta Rabbati* (ninth century AD).

Other related literature includes the *Targums* (*Targunim*), which are Aramaic translations/paraphrases of the *Tanakh* that were passed down orally from 200BC and written between 100-700AD.

Rabbinic Judaism is, therefore, a religion based on the rabbis' authority, interpretations and proclamations. Thus, it is the rabbinate that has attempted to discredit Jesus' Messiahship. While Jews have **never changed the text** of the *Tanakh*, they have **changed the interpretations**. Generally, Rabbinic writ-

ings date from after the time of Christ. This late date means they contain argumentation against Christianity. For example: Texts such as Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 were once interpreted by Judaism as referring to the Messiah, but they are now said to be references to either historical figures or the Jewish nation as a whole.

Consider this example from Maurice Liber's book entitled *Rashi* (an acrostic for Rabbi Shlomo ben Yitzchak, 1040-1105AD), which is published by the Jewish Publication Society of America. To this very day, Rashi is one of the most well-known and respected rabbis.

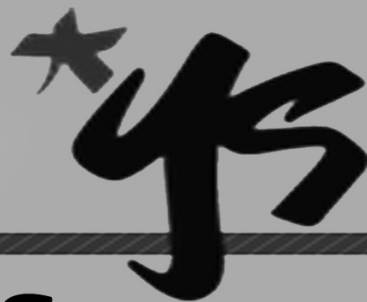
**The Church, it is well known, transformed chiefly the Psalms into predictions of Christianity. In order to ward off such an interpretation and not to expose themselves to criticism, many Jewish exegetes gave up that explanation of the Psalms by which they are held to be proclamations of the Messianic era, and would see in them allusions only to historic facts. Rashi followed this tendency, for instance, he formally states, "Our masters apply this passage to the Messiah; but in order to refute the Minim, it is better to apply it to David."<sup>4</sup>**

—Continued on page 15

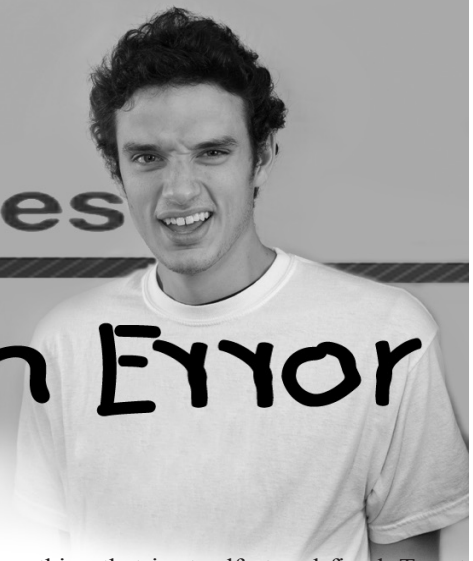


**Is This Your Last ISSUE?**

**It could be, if we haven't heard from you in the last year or so. We are getting ready to trim our mailing list; so, if you wish to continue receiving the MCOI JOURNAL, please make sure you contact us via e-mail, phone, or letter and let us know how much you LOVE our publication!**



youth  
specialties



# Specializing in Error

By Pastor G. Richard Fisher

**“Mysticism is therefore antithetical to discernment. It is an extreme form of reckless faith.”<sup>1</sup>**

Acts 2:42 is such an incredibly meaningful and timely verse: **“And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine ...”** (NKJV). There was no hesitation here at all by early believers but a confident and committed adherence to the Apostles’ teachings and their theology. That is why we can sing, *“How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord is laid for your faith in His excellent Word.”*

F. F. Bruce sees the continuing force of the commitment of the early Church:

**The apostolic teaching was authoritative because it was the teaching of the Lord through the apostles. In due course this apostolic teaching took written shape in the NT scriptures. To this day the apostolic succession, on which many ecclesiologists lay such emphasis, is most readily recognizable in those Christian churches which continue steadfastly in the apostles’ teaching.<sup>2</sup>**

Many say they want to be like the early Church, but how can they if they do not believe what the early Church believed? How can they if they will not commit to a fixed set of doctrinal propositions called the Apostles’ doctrine? Jude calls it **“... the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints”** (verse 3). That pattern of fixed doctrinal belief is all over the New Testament. Peter referred to it as **“... the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior”** (2Peter 3:2).

Early believers would not deviate from the Apostles’ doctrine as is obvious by statements made by early Church fathers like this one by Ignatius (105 AD):

**Study, therefore, to be established in the doctrines of the Lord and the Apostles.<sup>3</sup>**

Tertullian also recognized the importance of the Apostles’ doctrine:

**In the Lord’s apostles we possess our authority. For even they did not of themselves choose to introduce anything [new], but faithfully delivered to the nations the teaching that they had received from Christ.<sup>4</sup>**

These statements could be multiplied many times over.

In Psalm 57:7, the Psalmist cried out, **“My heart is steadfast [or fixed], O God, my heart is steadfast [or fixed]; ...”** (NKJV). However, in order to have a steadfast or fixed heart, one must

set their heart on something that is steadfast and fixed. To set one’s heart on that which is always changing or emerging is nothing but instability and unrest. The Apostles’ doctrine—as a fixed reference point for faith—is a far better choice than the rapidly changing fads and crazes that swirl within the Church at large and create so much instability. The trends in the religious world change faster than we can keep up with them anyway. The Church today is like the city of Athens with its flea market of ideas where they **“... spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing”** (Acts 17:21).

Very few seem to be listening to the warning of the Apostle Paul these days. He puts us on notice that when we leave the solid foundation of the sound Apostolic doctrine, we will be **“... tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ...”** (Ephesians 4:14). He also warns that if we turn from truth, we will **“... be turned aside to fables”** (2Timothy 4:4).

The religious world can really get very strange and very bizarre. One only has to read *Charisma* magazine or visit a religious bookstore to see it. Even the once-safe *Christianity Today* magazine seems now to have a smorgasbord of beliefs and ideas. Some might think to rename it Confusion Today. The religious lunacy is unending. The Apostles’ doctrine is the only safe, sure, and fixed harbor.

## Specializing In What?

Enter Youth Specialties. What Youth Specialties is suggesting these days sounds inviting, and it would be very enticing if we did not have the sure and unchanging foundation of the Apostles’ doctrine in the New Testament. Youth Specialties (like many others) is suggesting that, in the midst of all the religious confusion, we need to get back to a fixed reference point. So far so good. Who would not agree with that? This ancient reference point is where deep spirituality can be found—the really deep stuff.

However, as it unfolds, we find they really do not want to go back far enough, but rather they stop centuries short. Youth Specialties (and so many others) is promoting a return to medieval Catholicism, which is simply the Roman Catholic Mysticism of the Dark Ages. It did not work then, so why should it now?

Youth Specialties is calling us to bring our young people

under the dark spell of a subjective Mysticism, which is man-centered and not based on the Bible at all. The deceptive part is that, while the Bible is referred to, it is misused and twisted out of shape. It is the old game of trying to tack a Bible verse onto an idea to give it at least some credibility.

Youth Specialties is a company that prints and sells youth curriculum to churches and Christian institutions. They also have an inordinate amount of influence by collaborating with Bible colleges to provide seminars and training for students heading toward youth ministry. In an absolutely mind-boggling move, Philadelphia Biblical University (Pendel, PA)—once a bastion of Dispensational and Fundamental teaching—entered into a partnering relationship with Youth Specialties and bragged on their web site:

**We are happy to announce that we have established a partnership with one of the finest publishers of Youth Ministry resources in the world. Youth Specialties provides our students with samples of all their latest releases. Students are also given outstanding discounts to the National Convention and Resource Seminars.**<sup>5</sup>

I addressed a letter of objection to President Babb (and we will see why the letter was sent as we progress), and no response was ever received. Time will tell if this marriage ever should have taken place, and what kind of offspring this unequal yoke will produce. In my opinion, it is a tragedy of the first order.

Youth Specialties was the brainchild of Mike Yaconelli who died at 61 years of age in an auto accident in October of 2003. He was a pastor in Yreka, California, but all of his ministry life was devoted to youth. Yaconelli was probably better known for his ownership of *The Wittenburg Door* magazine—a religious satire publication which he owned from 1971 to 1994. Yaconelli always seemed to be within the mainstream of evangelicalism, but in 1998, he confessed in his book *Dangerous Wonder* that in a time of confusion, he began reading material by (now-deceased) Roman Catholic Priest Henri Nouwen (1932-1996). Nouwen's claim to fame was his attachment to Hinduism. It is well documented that Nouwen believed in pantheism\* and universalism.\*\*<sup>6</sup> At this point, Yaconelli turned back toward the Middle Ages. Doctrinal error does not always begin with an obvious major run in the wrong direction; but it simply can start with a glance the wrong way.

## Where In The World Have They Gone?

On the Youth Specialties web site, Mike Perschon (one of the Youth Specialties writers) gives instruction on various ancient religious disciplines and advises leaders to try to introduce these to youth without using too much “**inside language**” because it will “**tend to evoke images of medieval monasteries populated by celibate monks, which lack in appeal to 21-century sensibilities.**”<sup>7</sup> Is this directive an attempt to be diplomatic and reframe old errors to make them palatable and acceptable and not let anyone know where they really originated?

Perschon conveys that we can be enriched spiritually and enrich our youth by introducing them to the practices of “**Contemplative Prayer ... Lectio Divina**” and “**Labyrinths.**” He also mentions deep breathing—which is an integral part of Contemplative Prayer; Ignatian Contemplation—which is using imagination and visualization (also part of Contemplative Prayer); and Taize—which is a whole Contemplative worship service.

*Taize*, which originated in France, is a word meaning *thin*

*place*. The idea is that there is a veil between God and us; and with certain mystical practices, we can make the veil very thin and get a better experience with God. The emphasis is not getting to know God as revealed in the Scriptures as we study His works, wonders, and attributes, but rather it is simply to get a better experience for ourselves. Of course, the idea of a thin veil is not in the Bible; however, there is mention of the veil of the Temple being completely torn in two from top to bottom (Matthew 27:50-51), which assures us that we now have full access to God through Christ. The throne room of God is wide open to all who will simply come through faith in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 4:14-16). What a shame many are trying to reconstruct veils for us which we have to find and negotiate. If the veils that have to be made thin are fictional (and they are), then the practices are, in fact, nonsense—just pure, unnecessary nonsense!

We need to look a bit more closely at the first three concepts: Contemplative Prayer, Lectio Divina, and Labyrinths.

## Looking A Little Closer

What is glaringly absent—nowhere to be found in the above practices—is any *hint* of preaching the Gospel (the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ) or evangelism. The unspoken assumption is that most, if not all, sincere people already have God within them. There is not *even* a hint of the biblical teaching found at Romans 3:23: “**for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.**” Rather, they assume this totally undefined, indwelling “god” is just waiting for us to tap into our center and his center so he can communicate to us from somewhere deep within us. What is not said is crucial. Perschon and others probably would not admit that there is a latent pantheism as well as a latent universalism involved.

In the above practices, there are no references to sin, repentance, salvation or the Gospel. They put forth truncated and deficient views of Christianity. These are not about man's most basic need, but they are simply how we can get an esoteric experience and feel better. This is in contrast to true salvation, where we have to feel *worse* before we feel better.

One could search high and low in the New Testament and never find a hint of these exercises. Of the 18 prayer meetings in the Book of Acts, *none* of these mystical disciplines are mentioned! The Scriptures are minimized if not totally ignored by the practitioners of mystical practice. They assume that god is within most of us waiting to be contacted. We just need the right formula, the right discipline, and in the end, almost anyone can do it. This is more like magic and manipulation than true spirituality. There is no warning by Perschon that we could, in the end, just be talking to ourselves or being totally misled by our feelings or wild imaginations. There is no caution that one might even encounter an occult realm or a demonic source with such practices. Consequently, what is missing is vitally and eternally important.

The other false assumption is that if we have followed the rules (which are not biblical to begin with), we always end up with good positive results and cannot be misled. One major problem is that many doing this know little or nothing about Scripture, so they in no way can test the messages they are getting from this imagined god within. They have no way to evaluate what they are feeling and experiencing. These assumptions fail at every point, because they have no basis in reality and they have no criteria for evaluation.

—Continued on page 12

## Is It Really Prayer?

I would suggest that people are being misled just by the designation Contemplative “Prayer.” Whatever it is, it *is not prayer* at all! It is nowhere near the idea of prayer; in fact, it is quite the opposite. It does not even come close to the biblical definition of prayer. Why call it something that it is not except to mislead—either by design or by ignorance? A stand needs to be taken: What is called “Contemplative Prayer” just is not prayer. Some of it qualifies as *“vain repetitions”* (Matt. 6:7) but not prayer.

One word translated *prayer* is the Greek word *euchomai*. It is often translated simply as *wish*. One can desire God to do or provide certain things in prayer. What needs to be noted in this word is the full use of the mind and the direction of the desire—that is, upward and outward to God. God in heaven is the object. Our wishes are expressed to Him. We are dependant suppliants.

Another Greek word always used for *prayer* to God is *proseuchomai*. As well, this has to do with articulated requests directed upward and outward to God. It is used of requests directed to a superior. It is a mind-engaging activity as well as a discipline.

Yet another Greek word used for *prayer* is *erotao*, which carries the meaning of making requests to God. It shows that God is external to us as we address Him. None of these words express God communicating with us, because He does that through His Word.

Then there is the Greek word *deomai*, which is often translated *beseech* or *plead*. It also can be translated *call* or *entreat*. We can come boldly to the throne of grace, which certainly is not within us; but rather it is where our Mediator and High Priest dwells.

There is also the Greek word *deesis*, which indicates a need. It is translated *supplication*, *entreaty*, or *request*. As W.E. Vine correctly notes:

**Prayer is properly addressed to God the Father ...**

**Prayer is to be offered in the Name of the Lord Jesus.<sup>8</sup>**

What all the words for prayer indicate is that Christian prayer involves mind, heart, words and will. During prayer, we let our *“... requests be made known to God ...”* (Phil. 4:6). There are words being clearly articulated and addressed out, away, and upward to God.

When Jesus taught the Apostles to pray, He did not instruct them to violate the direction of prayer. He did not tell them to reverse the route by going deep inside themselves. He did not tell them to get spacy while looking for a mystical encounter with the force within. Rather, He told them that their focus must be heavenward and away from themselves. He clearly said, *“In this manner, therefore, pray: ‘Our Father Who art in heaven, ...’”* (Matthew 6:9). Prayer, then, is clearly directed *heavenward not inward*.

**Indeed, the Lord’s Prayer is a fitting summary of Jesus’ teaching on the subject. God, to whom we pray, is a Father who, dwelling in heaven, receives our adoration. The true aim in prayer is not the imposition of our wills upon God but the hallowing of his sacred name, the extension of his kingdom, and our submission to his will. Only then does Christ direct us to petition the Father. Then the prayer ends, not with our needs or desires but with God, with whom it began; with his kingdom, his power, his glory. Truly, “When we pray**

**rightly and properly, we ask for nothing else than what is contained in the Lord’s Prayer” (Augustine).<sup>9</sup>**

As we can see, Contemplative Prayer advocates go totally in the wrong direction. They do not understand the very basics of prayer; but rather, they pretend to have found some superior way. In the dark of the lowlands, they wrongly imagine themselves in the highlands.

## We Have Met The Enemy and The Enemy Is Us!

Who ever would have thought that Bible-believing evangelicals would come to a place where they no longer knew what prayer was? Contemplative practices could be called introspective—man-centered, naval gazing—but *never* “prayer.” Prayer may not always be tranquility and peace, but a demanding exercise as the Apostle Paul states in Romans 15:30: *“... strive together with me in prayers to God for me ...”* Look at some of David’s prayers in Psalms, and see a man doing spiritual *work*.

Contemplative Prayer practice is wrong because it goes in the wrong direction—inward, rather than outward and upward. The communication process is entirely wrong, because it ends up being communication with ourselves rather than to God. Subsequently, both the *direction* and the *object* of communication are wrong and the biblical concept of prayer is turned on its head. Contemplative Prayer (so-called) is a mystical exercise totally bound up in human imagination. I emphasize again: It absolutely should not be called “prayer” since *it is not prayer in any sense!*

One may want to do deep breathing or relaxing at the end of the day to ease stress and that is purely physiological (assuming it is not integrated with mystical disciplines). Why call *that* “prayer?” Deep breathing and relaxing are . . . deep breathing and relaxing! So why redefine words to mean something they do not?

Contemplative Prayer is extremely self-centered. James warned us not to *“ask amiss”* by using self-centered prayer in James 4:3. True praying is not self-centered since we are to be, *“praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints”* (Ephesians 6:18).

## Into Inner Space and Confusion

On the Centering Prayer web site, we find that Contemplative Prayer (wrongly called “prayer”) has nothing to do with words, thoughts, or understanding. It is about becoming mindless and vacant:

**Christian Contemplative Prayer is the opening of the mind and heart—our whole being—to God, the ultimate mystery, beyond thoughts, words or emotions, whom we know by faith, is within us, closer than breathing, thinking, feeling and choosing even closer than consciousness itself. The root of all prayer is interior silence. Though we think of prayer as thoughts or feelings expressed in words, this is only one expression. Contemplative Prayer is a prayer of silence, and experience of God’s presence as the ground in which our being is rooted, the Source from whom our life emerges at every moment.<sup>10</sup>**

In actual fact, prayer—as thoughts or feelings expressed in words—is the only biblical expression of prayer as all of the Greek words for *prayer* testify. The idea of prayer directed inwardly toward one’s self is simply contrived and has no biblical basis. The Book of Psalms is almost exclusively written with

words and emotions directed to God using the repetitive phrase: **“I cried unto the Lord.”** There is not even a tiny hint of “I became mindless and empty before the ultimate mystery with deep breathing.” Even when David spoke of being still before God, it simply meant he shut his mouth in acknowledgement of God’s sovereignty, power, and might. David’s mind was calculating these truths.

It is clear that what is called *Contemplative Prayer* is not rooted in the Bible or normative Christianity. It really is a product of ancient pagan Greek philosophy and mythology that worked its way into the Church during the Middle Ages. This is hardly a pedigree to attract a Bible-believing Christian. In Greek thought during one period of time, it was thought advantageous, in purely self-effort, to squelch any sin that might reside in our being by trying to quiet and mortify the mind, heart, and will:

**Since God is a mystery beyond words and understanding, Evagrius Ponticus (the most influential spiritual writer in the Greek East) taught that the human mind had to rise above concepts, words, and images and above discursive thinking in order to apprehend and gaze upon God intuitively. Thus abstract concepts about God are replaced by a deep sense of the immediacy of the presence of God. This noniconic, nondiscursive consciousness of God’s presence is often called hesychia (tranquility and inner stillness). This Greek approach entered into Western spirituality through the influence of the writings of Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite. His teachings on mystical theology and the threefold pattern of union with God (purgative, illuminative, and unitive) became available when John Scotus Erigena translated them into Latin in the 9th century A. D. One important effect of this mystical theology was to help to cause the general abandonment of the Platonic-Augustinian synthesis of knowledge and love in contemplation ... this teaching has been widely received within the Roman Catholic Church. In contrast, Protestants have been suspicious of it, believing that its emphasis on mystical union with God does not take account of the doctrine of justification.<sup>11</sup>**

## Back to the Latin

The next offering from Youth Specialties is *Lectio Divina*. Though they say that in this exercise they do involve the Bible, but **“the goal isn’t exegesis or analysis.”<sup>12</sup>** If the goal is not exegesis or analysis of the text of Scripture, then what is the goal? On one of the *Lectio Divina* web sites, we find a detailed explanation of what *Lectio Divina* is all about. The goal, we will find, is similar to that of so-called *Contemplative Prayer*, that is, immersion or absorption into “god” by means of going within ourselves. The way there is just a bit different:

**1. The Process of Lectio Divina. A very ancient art, practiced at one time by all Christians, is the technique known as lectio divina—a slow, contemplative praying of the Scriptures which enables the Bible, the Word of God, to become a means of union with God.<sup>13</sup>**

Note that it is an “art” and a “technique” somehow using the Bible (or misusing it, as the case may be) to facilitate **“union with God.”** What is misleading, as we will see, is how the Bible is then “used.”

This is where it gets a bit confusing. *Lectio* means *reading*. The technique is that one reads a few verses of Scripture until a word or phrase begins to **“speak to us personally.”<sup>14</sup>**

Up to this point, it almost sounds good. We then are to begin repeating the phrase or word over and over **“till it affects us at the deepest levels.”<sup>15</sup>** This really is an attempt to create what is known as a mantra and involve oneself in vain repetitions. This technique allegedly creates inner healing and moves one to a place where there is a wordless rest—contemplation, enjoying the experience of being in the presence of “god.”

No one could object to the reading of the Bible. There could be no objection to those who say we should meditate on Scripture. After all, that is taught in Psalm 1 and Psalm 119 as well as many other places. However, to take a phrase or a word and create a mantra that is repeated again and again goes against the very purpose of the Word of God. *Lectio Divina*, as sincerely intentioned as it might be, reminds me of the following: We invite a coworker to dinner. He comes famished looking forward to the great meal of steak, potatoes, and vegetables (with homemade bread!). He sits down to eat, and you pile his plate full of food. He is about to dig in but you say, “Wait.” You then instruct him to cut a tiny corner of his large filet mignon. You then instruct him to put the sliver of meat in his mouth, but he is to be sure not to chew it. You then instruct him to roll it around in his mouth for the next 20 minutes. You assure him that if he gets in the right frame of mind, he will really connect with all the benefits of the meat and have a wonderful filling experience. You tell him it is all a matter of just realizing all the positive benefits of what he is doing. I think that at some point he would just ignore you and dig in. The meal is what he really needs. You may say, “How silly.” Yet, the parallel is obvious. To be really nourished, he needs to eat the whole meal.

What is missing in *Lectio Divina*, I believe, is a clear understanding of the purpose of the Word of God. We are not to repeat Bible words or phrases just to get an experience or an emotional

—Continued on page 14

**There Are Still Dates Available!**  
MCOI is currently taking requests for the Fall and Winter speaking schedule. If you would like to have Don Veinot visit your church, please contact us for details and to make arrangements. Whether it's for one day or several nights, Don and his staff have a variety of topics to choose from, all of which are relevant to the Church today.

## “Youth” Continued from page 13

high. The Scriptures are to be interpreted properly with a view toward life-style change and living out of God’s directives. **“All Scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work”** (2Timothy 3:16-17).

Maybe we could not say that Lectio Divina is a totally heretical practice (except where it plugs us into an Eastern or Buddhist mind set in meditation), but at the very least, it leaves people malnourished and untaught in the purpose for Scripture. It really is junk food doctrine. It hooks people on adrenaline rather than obedience to God’s commands. It robs them of vital resources for sanctification and growth in grace. In the end, is Lectio Divina more about us and how we feel rather than God and His glory?

## Going In Circles

That Youth Specialties could then encourage people to walk labyrinths is, perhaps, a vivid illustration of where people end when they ignore the purpose for Scripture. Perschon encourages walking labyrinths:

**The point of the labyrinth is to journey to the center of a spiral pattern traced on the ground and journey back out again. While walking through the pathway in the labyrinth, participants are encouraged to ask God to speak to them in the walking. While many labyrinths are permanently fixed to their location, there are some groups that rent out (and sell) large canvas labyrinths.**<sup>16</sup>

To some, this seems silly and benign. Walk in a circle; and for some reason if you do it right, God will speak to you. That God still speaks to mankind in His Word does not seem to be enough. Those that encourage walking labyrinths want us to know labyrinths are not mazes. People can get lost in mazes, but labyrinths have a way in and a way out. How or why these configurations got their sanctity is not entirely clear, but Perschon declares, **“think of a labyrinth as a short prayer walk.”**<sup>17</sup>

Labyrinths are becoming popular with many religions:

**For those who are familiar with classical mysticism of any stripe, you will immediately recognize that labyrinths are merely a tool to move the worshipper into mystical union with God (as you understand him).**<sup>18</sup>

Labyrinths re-surfaced in modern times around 1995 when an Episcopal priest and psychotherapist from San Francisco, Lauren Artress, started a one-woman campaign to popularize this meditation technique. She discovered one in a friend’s home four years earlier. She believes they are a way back to God. They can be traced as far back as about 800 years with some certainty. She indicates that they are another means to **“centering prayer.”**<sup>19</sup> Somehow, Artress believes the center of the labyrinth is a place of spiritual illumination and rest. All anyone knows for sure is that the first one was put in a French Cathedral by craftsmen in 1201AD (Chartres Cathedral Labyrinth). The original is largely forgotten today, but some believe it served as a miniature metaphor for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land somewhat like the Stations of the Cross served as a mini trip through Jerusalem on the Via Dolorosa.

Artress believes the design itself is **“sacred geometry”** that somehow **“bestows on the walkers, a calming, quieting, clarifying experience,”** and she readily admits it is **“a tool of mysticism,”** which helps us to **“connect with the divine.”**<sup>20</sup>

This **“divine”** is undefined, which should cause concern.

The Christian objection would be: Who knows to what people are being connected. An undefined god is left to the sinful musing and imagination of man. Esoteric experiences can set anyone up for delusion.


Author Dr. Gary Gilley sees the danger as he writes on labyrinths and other mystical practices:

**Most evangelical Christians probably would not recognize themselves in the previous discussion of mysticism, but there are subtle influences at work drawing believers in this direction even without their knowledge. While firmly denying any part in classical mysticism, many are actually participating in time-honored mystical practices. It must be recognized that most are doing this unintentionally, for new opportunities are turning up that seem to defy recognized categories. Some are innocently adopting ancient mystical practices because they are being endorsed by trusted Christian leaders, or even the medical community. The danger is that involvement in some of these things; no matter how pure the motive, may easily lead the participant away from a biblical faith and into the quagmire of subjectivism and mysticism, or at times even into the occult.**<sup>21</sup>

## It Is A Tragedy

In 1816, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley had her novel *Frankenstein* published. This macabre book told the story of Dr. Victor Frankenstein, and how he created a monster by assembling body parts gathered from dissecting rooms, slaughterhouses, and graveyards. After stitching and patching the body parts together, the doctor was able to animate his creation. The evil monster begins to kill others, and then he turns on his creator. There is a lot more to the story, but that is the essence.

The church at large reminds me of Dr. Victor Frankenstein. It assembles long-dead, lifeless heresies and errors, animates them and turns them loose. Main-line denominations wonder why they are losing members and money and slowly are being put to death. The lifeless bodies of beliefs these church leaders are cobbling together are wreaking havoc among those under their care. The tragedy in spiritual terms is incalculable.

Those involved with mystical pursuits say they are seeking God, but they really are seeking only experiences for themselves and in themselves. We could call it the “adrenaline church.” Self-centeredness is *never* a sign of spirituality, but rather it is only a ploy of the deceived imagination. The monumental tragedy is that Youth Specialties is training youth leaders who are training impressionable youth who may be the future leaders of the Church. Naïve parents are allowing their children to be exposed to this and are thinking churches are safe places. Churches ought to be that way, but sadly, churches are not safe places anymore. Bible colleges are helping the slide into error, and very few voices in the evangelical world are expressing concern—let alone outrage. This is a tragedy of incredible proportions that will be reaped over the next decades until churches wake up, stand up, speak up, and insist on a return to the doctrine of the Apostles. I say, **“Dr. Frankenstein out—the Apostles in.”** 

All Scripture references are from the New King James Version.

\*Pantheism is the belief that God is in everything and is, in fact, everything.

\*\*Universalism is the belief that everyone makes it into the after life.



**Pastor Dick Fisher** has been serving as pastor of Laurelton Park Baptist Church in Brick, NJ for the last 39 years. He was on staff of the Jersey Shore Bible Institute, where he taught night courses for over 30 years. He has traveled extensively with 30 trips to Israel and numerous study tours to Jordan, Egypt, Greece, Turkey, and Italy. He is presently on the Executive Committee of the Jersey Shore Evangelical Ministers Group (a voluntary organization of 40 churches). Pastor Fisher is also a researcher, writer, and board member for Personal Freedom Outreach—a counter-cult organization based in St. Louis. He has articles published in the *Journal of Pastoral Practice*.

**ENDNOTES:**

1. John MacArthur, *Reckless Faith*, Crossway Books, Wheaton, IL, 1994, p.28.
2. F.F. Bruce, *Commentary On The Book Of Acts*, William B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1954, p.79.
3. David Bercot, *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs*, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 1998, p.28.
4. Ibid., p.29.
5. www.pbu.edu/academic/ccm/bsb/ym/distinct.htm
6. See Ray Yungen, *A Time of Departing*, Lighthouse Trails Publishing, Silverton, OR, 2002, pp.63-64.
7. Contemplative Prayer Practice, p.1, <http://www.youthspecialties.com/articles/topics/spirituality/contemplative.php?print=yes>
8. W.E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, Fleming Revell, Westwood, NJ, 1966, p.200.
9. Everett Harrison, Editor; *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1973, 413.
10. Centering Prayer, [www.centeringprayer.com/cntgryr.htm](http://www.centeringprayer.com/cntgryr.htm), pp.1-2.
11. J. D. Douglas, Editor; *New 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 1991, p.234.
12. Centering, op. cit. p.1.
13. <http://www.valyermo.com/ld-art.html>, p.1.
14. Ibid., p.2.
15. Ibid., p.2.
16. Ibid., p.1.
17. Ibid., p.1.
18. Gary Gilley, *This Little Church Stayed Home*, Evangelical Press, Webster, NY, 2006, p.136.
19. Bruce Nolan, "Modern-day Meditators Re-discover Ancient Technique," *Christian News*, April 96.
20. Ibid.
21. Gilley, op. cit., p.133.

**Would you like to host an**



UNDERGROUND

Youth Training Event in your area?  
Contact us for more info  
[www.xpunderground.com](http://www.xpunderground.com)

**"Judiasm" Continued from page 9**

For context, note that Rashi was commenting on Psalm 21 and that *minim* literally means *sectarian* and was usually a reference to Christians. Thus, we see the ancient and established interpretations admittedly were changed *solely to counteract the claims that Jesus is the promised Jewish Messiah*. There are many more examples of these sorts of reinterpretations. The authority of the rabbi's reinterpretations means that unless individual Jews conduct research into the history of the *Tanakh's* interpretation, they inevitably will think Judaism has always viewed certain texts in the way they are being taught today. They will not know that the explanations of the *Tanakh* they consider to be established upon an unchanging tradition of interpretation are, in reality, revisions based on polemics.\*

\*Polemics refers to debating controversial, often religious, issues.



**Mariano Grinbank** is an Argentinean-American Jewish Christian who attended private Jewish school and had his Bar Mitzvah in Israel. He was also involved in the New Age Movement and was a practitioner of Reiki, Tai Chi Chuan, Chi Kung and the I'Ching. He has been involved in the apologetics ministry at Calvary Chapel of Albuquerque for six years and has lectured at The Santa Fe Conference on Biblical Discernment. Many of his apologetics essays are found at [www.lifeanddoctrine.blogspot.com](http://www.lifeanddoctrine.blogspot.com)

**ENDNOTES:**

1. Rich Robinson, *Judaism: An Overview* (January 1, 1995) [www.jews-forjesus.org/resources/witnessing/judaismprofile](http://www.jews-forjesus.org/resources/witnessing/judaismprofile)
2. Jews refer to AD (*Anno Domini*) as CE (*Common Era*) and refer to BC (*Before Christ*) as BCE (*Before Common Era*).
3. An interpretive method that derives meaning from the text rather than forcing into it preconceived notions.
4. Maurice Liber, trans. from French by Adele Szold, *Rashi* (Jewish Publication Society of America, 1906), p119. Also see J. J. Stewart Perowne, D.D., *The Book of Psalms, A New Translation with Introductions and Notes Explanatory and Critical* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975) p232 and Arthur W. Kac, M.D., *The Messianic Hope* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1975) p75.

Recommended reading on accepted rabbinical interpretations of key Messianic texts:

- *Jesus was a Jew*, Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Ariel Ministries.
- *What the Rabbis Know About the Messiah*, Rachmiel Frydland, Messianic Publishing Company.
- *Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus Volume Three: Messianic Prophecy Objections*, Michael L. Brown, Baker Bo



Back Issues of the  
**JOURNAL**

in Adobe Reader .pdf format

Available at: [www.midwestoutreach.org](http://www.midwestoutreach.org)

Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.

# Journal

Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.  
P.O. Box 446  
Wonder Lake, IL 60097-0446

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
LOMBARD, IL  
PERMIT NO. 1

Address Service Requested.

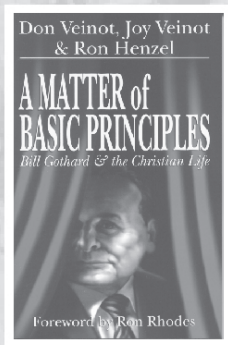
"A Matter of Basic Principles deserves a hearing . . . Those who have experienced abusive spiritual authority in any context will be more inclined to find this book refreshing for its thoroughness."

—Christianity Today

## A MATTER of BASIC PRINCIPLES

*Bill Gothard & the Christian Life*

Don Veinot, Joy Veinot and Ron Henzel



"A must read for all thinking believers who wish to protect their churches.."

—Dr. Jay Adams  
Westminster Theological Seminary  
Philadelphia, PA

**ORDER YOUR COPY TODAY!**

Call, write, or visit our web site:

[www.midwestoutreach.org](http://www.midwestoutreach.org)

### ***In This Issue!***

**Freedom Fighters of Brooklyn** .....Page 1

By L.L. (Don) and Joy A. Veinot

**Rabbinic Judaism** .....Page 8

By Mariano Grinbank

**Specializing in Error** .....Page 10

Pastor G. Richard Fisher

Midwest  
Christian  
Outreach  
Inc.