

Beware of False Profiteers

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



ABC News planned a global extravaganza—live coverage of the turn of the millennium from around the world. We slept through the first wave of the century-rollover coverage—even the “end of the world as we know it” takes a back seat to our beauty rest! But in the morning, when we signed on to check our e-mail, we found we had received a note from a friend in New Zealand, where they had already passed the mark. He assured us the lights were still on, the homes were warm, the stars hadn’t fallen out of the sky and, in short, the day was very much like any other they had seen. But that was New Zealand—who knows what would happen when the new century dawned on civilization. ☺

We let the exuberant coverage run throughout the day, and we periodically checked in to watch the various celebrations that were happening around the globe. (London had the most awesome display in our opinion, but Paris and New York were lovely, too.) As the day wore on, the news reporters actually seemed to be a bit disappointed because nothing of real note, aside from the beautiful displays of fireworks, happened. No nuclear meltdowns, no nuclear missiles homing in on our town, no airplanes falling out of the sky; we didn’t experience even the slightest inconvenience! The microwave oven, all of our cameras, video equipment, as well as our computers, all greeted the new century with a collective yawn. Our stupid machines didn’t even seem to know what year we were in and certainly didn’t care!

We couldn’t help but wonder throughout the day how Michael Hyatt (and others who had profited so handsomely from their false predictions of doom) were faring. Would they be quick to admit their error—perhaps even offer some monetary compensation to the folks who had been hurt by their “advice?” As it turned out,

some of the prognosticators were fairly quick to admit their error, but others have egregiously attempted to fudge the issue and/or even take credit for the smooth transition.

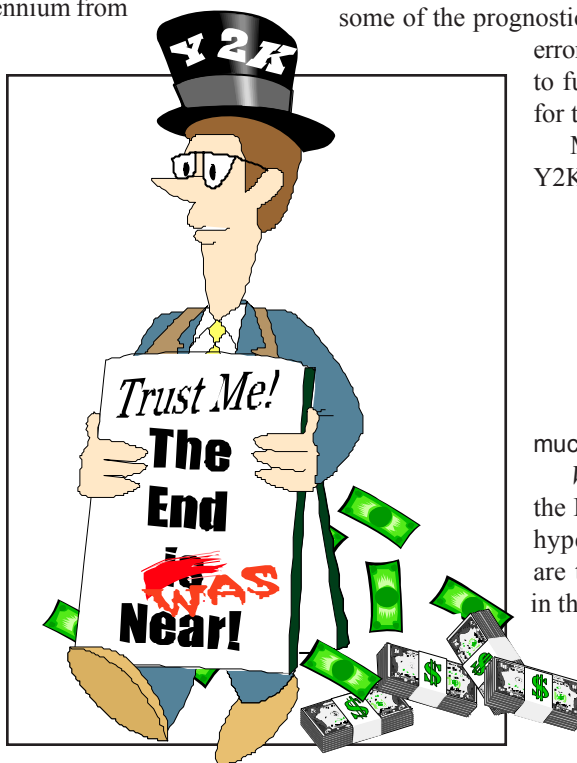
Michael Hyatt, one of the leaders of the Y2K pack, asked this question very soon after the world made an uneventful transition from 1999 to 2000, “Was the Y2K problem over-hyped? I don’t think so ... Regardless, if we had not sounded the alarm and brought focused attention to this problem, things may have turned out much different.”¹

Was the Y2K problem over-hyped??? Is the Pope Catholic? Of course it was over-hyped! Think about it—if the alarmists are the reason the Y2K bug didn’t “bite” in the developed world, why did it not bite in countries where no alarm was sounded? Remember the ridiculous “embedded chip” bogeyman? How did raising the issue affect the outcome there? The embedded chips are still embedded, and life goes on

as before.

As most of our readers know, Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc., Personal Freedom Outreach, Answers in Action, Steve Hewitt of *Christian Computing Magazine*, Dave Hunt, and a few other ministries spent time attempting to calm people’s fears by calling for the Christian community to practice discernment about the claims that were being made. We received a number of phone calls, e-mails, and letters from programmers who thanked us for giving a balanced and researched presentation. We also caught a fair amount of flack for “criticizing fellow Christians” and even for taking a position at all. Were we wrong to take a position? We do not think so. It

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and make this ministry possible.

"Profiteers" (Continued from page 1)
is our God-



given responsibility to warn the flock to hold on to their fleece! And, we decided long ago that we must either be willing to criticize problems and false teachings within the church or quit criticizing JW's and Mormons. Fair is fair... Nevertheless, since we did not join in the fearful chorus, we were, to a certain degree, affected financially over the course of the year.

People Were Hurt

There is no question many people were financially hurt by the hysteria surrounding the whole Y2K "scare-nario." In the days following the big non-event, at least one newspaper reported on many disillusioned folks who had gone into debt—spending \$20,000-30,000 on preparedness items with which they now do not know what to do. Some who had pulled out of the stock market early in the year and invested in gold lost a lot of money because of that ill-advised decision. Others pulled their life savings out of banks (which were predicted to fail) and were robbed.²

For some Christians, the devastation affected more than their finances. Some who were quite vocal about the need to stockpile have found their reputation damaged and their ability to share the gospel with their lost friends and co-workers hampered.

Michael Hyatt, who strongly encouraged people to prepare for chaos, admitted this to be true in a letter to Steve Hewitt. He wrote:

"I am very sorry about those who now feel that they were hurt by their preparations. I have corresponded with some

of these people. Some went into debt to make preparations and are now struggling to meet their financial obligations ... Still others allowed their preparations to cause a rift in some of their most significant relationships and are going to have difficulty recovering."³

Many are emotionally hurt, feeling foolish, and wondering how Christian leaders—Hyatt and others—could have been so wrong on this issue. Some folks have said this whole thing has made them cynical and distrustful, and they are wondering if they will ever trust "Christian leaders"

again.

We cannot assign motives to Hyatt, Missler, and the rest of the Y2K brigade. It certainly does not look good that they profited handsomely from the panic they generated, but they seemed sincerely convinced everything they were saying was true, and that civilization was doomed. But, however sincere they may have been, they were *sincerely wrong*, and as such, they bear responsibility for the hysteria they generated. Moreover, some continued fanning the fear and profiting from it long after they should have known that Y2K was just not measuring up to their dark predictions. As late as June 1999, when a number of his predictions had already failed, Hyatt's ad in *World Magazine* states:

"Get Your Y2K Food from Someone you Know and Can Rely On ... As the reality of Y2K approaches, food is certain to be the issue that causes the greatest panic ... any widespread emergency—like the Year 2000 computer crisis—**or even just the fear of it** could cause people to start buying out of panic rather than careful planning. Then, the food supplies we all take for granted would vanish overnight ... But for you and your family, security is just a phone call away. With an investment like long term food storage, make sure you know who you're doing business with."⁴ (Bold italics added for emphasis.)

"The nerve!" as my mother would

say. Scare folks to death, profit from that fear, and then attempt to profit further from *the fear of the fear you have induced*—whether or not your original predictions come true! That's cheeky. In this ad, Hyatt offers food supplies at \$3,395 plus \$280 shipping, and says, "ORDER NOW. Time is not on your side!" I don't know what circles all of our readers travel in, but I don't know many people with \$3,675 to spare. It is difficult to soft peddle it—regardless of his motives—it would appear Hyatt profited from the fear he engendered in the people who trusted him.

Hyatt seems to be talking out of both sides of his mouth at present. On the one hand, as we have already shown, he does express regret that people went into debt because of his prognostications. Yet, he attempts to deflect any responsibility from himself by saying:

"I am truly sorry for this, but I strongly counseled against these actions, both in my writings and in my public pronouncements."⁵

Each one of us is responsible for the decisions we make, but realistically, could any such caveats have been heard by anyone who really *believed* what Hyatt all—who is going to worry about going into debt when they have been convinced their children's lives are at stake? Who would have collected on the debt anyway since the banks and the governments would be in chaos?

Human nature is such that when you work people up into a panic, they are not going to make their best decisions. They are far more likely to act upon the fearful images you project than any cautionary statements you offer as an afterthought. Let's do a review of what was predicted to happen through 1999 and into 2000. Our readers can make up their own minds what to think about it. (The following chronology was taken from the web site <www.y2ktimebomb.com/Computech/Issues/hyatt9840>. (In all cases the bold type added for emphasis.)

Dates With Destiny:

- **January 1, 1999.** On this date, 80 percent of infrastructure providers and businesses that were to have begun testing "will have missed the deadline." And, the circumstance of the European Common Currency system going online "will create its own level of chaos and continued drain on Information Technology resources that could be used on the Year 2000 computer problem."
- So what happened on January 1, 1999? Nothing happened!
- **April 1, 1999.** "On this date, Canada, Japan, and the state of New York begin their fiscal year ... Planning systems, especially budgets that have not been repaired will fail as they attempt to process Y2K dates. I expect the stock market to react and begin (or continue) its downward spiral. Public confidence will continue to wane and the number of Y2K optimists will continue to dwindle."

What happened on April 1, 1999? Nothing happened, or at least nothing BAD happened, which made people *far more optimistic* than they had been about our ability to weather Y2K unscathed.

fiscal years. The problems that began in New York **will** now spread exponentially across the country and around the world ... the failures **WILL** be real and widespread. We **will** begin seeing the public begin to panic ..."

Result? Zip, zero, nada happened. No panic in the public sector at all. Perhaps some of the outspoken jeremiads began to panic, seeing their credibility threatened, but we don't know that for sure.

- **August 22, 1999.** "Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) technology **will** fail in receivers that are not upgraded or replaced." This failure "**will** produce inaccurate data that could prove to be dangerous and even life threatening. While not specifically a Y2K related problem, this computer glitch **will** add to the chaos and confusion."

Result: According to a radio news report on August 23, 1999, one motorist in Japan was led into a traffic jam. While this likely was confusing for the poor guy, it doesn't seem that his life was actually in any real danger.

September 9, 1999. "On this date, many computers **will** encounter the infamous "99" problem. For decades programmers designated the end of a file or the termination of a program by entering a series of four nines in a row (i.e., "9999") in a date field ... This code, like the Millennium Bug, is embedded in millions of computer programs throughout the world. Unless it is tracked down and removed, these programs **will** abruptly terminate - often with unexpected results."

What happened on September 9, 1999? Don Veinot celebrated his 47th birthday, but not much else of note happened.

- **October 1, 1999.** "On this date, the federal government will begin its fiscal year ...

thirteen out of twenty-four key federal government agencies **will not** make the deadline. Computer systems operated by the Defense, Transportation, Treasury, and Medicare Departments, among others, **will** begin malfunctioning. All the smoke and mirrors **will** be gone. The government - and the administration - **will** be forced to admit the truth. There **will** be no place to hide. The naked truth **will** be evident to all."

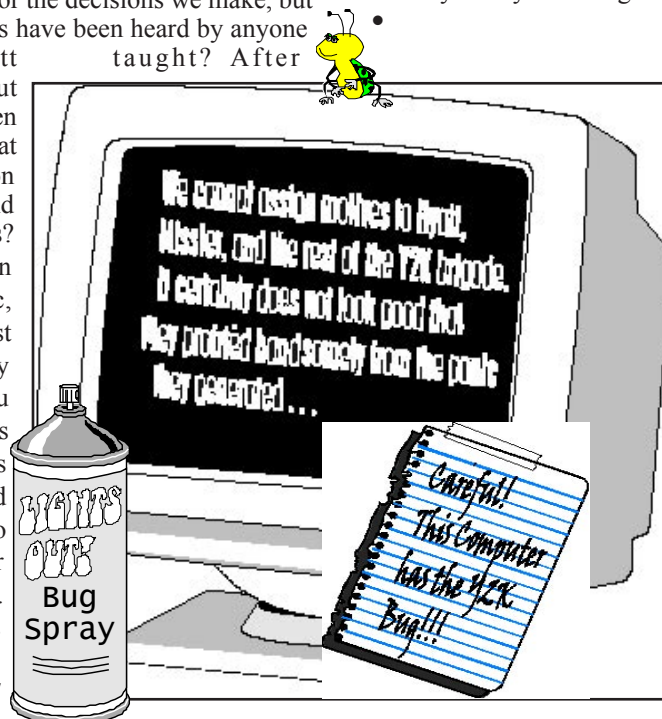
Result: Even when nothing happened again, at this late date, Michael Hyatt refused to admit what had become obvious to most people—the Y2K bomb was a dud.

- **January 1, 2000.** "On this date, all non-compliant computer systems **will** fail or generate corrupt data, propagating it across systems and bringing down many computers that are compliant. The world **will** watch with anticipation as the systems fail, one time zone at a time."

You all know what happened—we don't have to tell you. But for any who missed it or have forgotten—nothing happened, except the world had a grand party.

- **January 4, 2000.** "On this date, the first business day of the New Year begins. Many businesses, utility companies, and

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INSTITUTIONAL BACKSLIDING:

The English language has a fine old family of words. One venerable member is “liberality.” The word is synonymous with generosity and big-heartedness. It should bring to our minds those character traits which are the opposite of stinginess, mean spiritedness, and pettiness. Another word sharing the august etymology of liberality is “liberate” - to set free. To attain the state of liberty is the passion of all who feel oppressed in body, mind, or spirit. Those who fight for the liberation of others are the heroes of the human race. Thus, when we hear or read these fine old words, images of cheerful and lavish givers, the wonderful state of freedom, noble tolerance, and humble open-mindedness should fill our minds.

There’s another term hanging on this linguistic family tree, which those called conservatives count as fruity indeed: *liberal*. Meanwhile, those who count themselves as liberals do so (or at least, the progenitors of liberal ideology did so) because they see their position as exemplifying the noble values of liberality. Despite the gainsaying of conservative pundits, liberals believe their views exalt true human liberty. So, is this to be an article on politics?

To be sure, a distinctly biblical philosophy of the role of the state and government emerges in a believer as his overall biblical worldview grows in strength and purity. However, our immediate purpose here is not to discuss liberal vs. conservative politics. Our purpose is to expose THEOLOGICAL liberalism. It needs to be exposed because this type of liberalism is not worthy of its noble family name; in fact, it belongs on the list of aberrant cults and heresies which only mock true Christianity. Sacrificial liberality is the very heart of the God of the Bible, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*” (John 3:16, NKJV). God’s plan of salvation anticipates a consummation of eternal freedom, “*... because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God*” (Romans 8:21). Theological liberalism, however, is not a giver and a liberator but a destroyer and an oppressor.

Like eels and most slimy things, theological liberalism is hard to get a handle on; it is not easy to define. Sometimes called “modernism” or “neo-orthodoxy,” it is characterized by a denial of the essential, biblical, doctrines of historic Christianity. It comes in like a deteriorating disease. First, the doctrines are challenged and abandoned. In the wake of that wasting pestilence, true Christian spirituality and ethics slowly erode as well. It robs a church or denomination of the precious Gospel, and causes it to retain only its outward form—its tradition. Here is an example.

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The Bible is clear: in fulfillment of prophecy (itself miraculous by its foretelling of a future event) and by power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary without the conjugal involvement of any man. Mary remained a virgin until Jesus was born (cf. Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23-25).

Unbelief scoffs at such an idea, and insists that Christ must have been conceived in the ordinary way. In the name of tolerance, open-mindedness, charity (those noble virtues of that fine old verbal family), Christians glibly accommodate the unbelief. Believing that the essence of the faith would remain intact even without the Virgin Birth Doctrine, seminaries and pastoral search committees permit preachers and teachers to proclaim a non-virgin birth of Christ. When this occurs, theological liberalism has crept in. The acceptance of one such watered-down position makes the next one even more acceptable. Subsequent attacks on the Incarnation and Deity of Jesus Christ eventually establish an emaciated Christology (doctrine of the person and work of Jesus Christ). Jesus is perceived as only a man and a noble example instead of the Redeemer Who is both fully God, fully Divine, as well as being fully human (and Who is also an example for His disciples). Thus, a major characteristic of theological liberalism is its dangerous “slippery slope.”

The term “slippery slope” originated with England’s late-nineteenth-century “prince of preachers,” Charles Haddon Spurgeon. The



by Keith Graham

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image is almost self explanatory. Once you've finally worked up the courage to start down that water slide at your favorite summer theme park, no natural force is going to bring you back up to the top platform. A skier contemplating her jump may decide to abort it before her descent begins; but once she begins, turning around and skiing back to the top is essentially impossible.

Apply this concept to spiritual life in the kingdom of God and theology. Writing under the Holy Spirit's inspiration, the Apostle Paul wrote the following in his zeal for the Corinthians:

"For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present [you] [as] a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:2).

Like the first inch or two down a slippery slope, once stealthy and deceitful theological liberalism creeps into faithful realms within Christ's vast kingdom, it begins to woo believers to a more worldly, humanly manageable, pseudo-Christianity which is nothing more than moralism with Christian wrapping. Like the diabolical work of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who led ancient Israel into idolatry, theological liberalism is spiritually seductive.

A Tale of Two Charlies

Adding insult to injury, theological liberalism goes on to the treachery of sanitizing the apostasy it has engendered. It provides justification and rationale for the slippery slope descent of a previously faithful Christian church or denomination. The mid-nineteenth century provides a classic example. Imitating Dickens, we might call it "A Tale of Two Charlies."

The less-well-known Sir Charles Lyell (1797-1875) and his fellow Englishman Charles Darwin (1809-1882) both advanced what (in their day) were radical ideas. Lyell assumed uniformitarianism—the idea that the same geological forces observable today are responsible for all the earth's features (stratified sedimentary rocks, the Grand Canyon, etc.). This fatal assumption led him to conclude that the earth was far older than a biblical worldview will allow. Darwin, self consciously dependent on Lyell's ideas, advanced the theory which today bears his name and also despises the clear teaching of Scripture. We can think of these two men as the fathers of the twin errors of pseudo science: (1) that the earth is untold millions of years old, and (2) that all life on earth arose by evolution. The unbelieving masses, as if intuitively seeing in this doctrine an escape from accountability to the Creator God of the Bible, drank in the twin errors like water. The "scientific" establishment of today regards the twin errors as twin pillars and bulwarks of truth!

What about the Church? Like the little leaven that leavens the whole lump, theological liberalism crept into many branches of the Church—the true pillar and bulwark of truth—because of the way she reacted to the ideas of the two Charlies. Instead of being willing to appear foolish for Christ, to stand for the truth of Scripture though Mr. Worldly Wiseman lampooned and mocked, some Christians compromised. They became willing to allow the Holy-Spirit-inspired, infallible, inerrant, fully authoritative Word of God to be judged and distorted by the sin-corrupted, fallible mind of man. Compromising doctrines such as "theistic evolution" were baptized and put forth as orthodoxy, when in reality they are as far from orthodoxy as is a Christology with no virgin conception and birth. Thus, we have today not only a pope who declares evolution

and Christianity to be compatible, but leaders and teachers of formerly evangelical bodies asserting the same thing. The sneaky lie has suddenly taken on the authoritative trappings of truth!

Although the term "theological liberalism" is fairly new, spiritual declension, of course, is not. The wisdom of God in Ecclesiastes tells us that ***"[there] [is] nothing new under the sun"*** (Eccl. 1:9). Thus, we can find the same force that drives theological liberalism in the pages the Bible itself.

Consider the book of Judges. In the days when the judges ruled, when ***"everyone did [what] [was] right in his own eyes"*** (Judges 17:6, 21:25), there is a self-evident, cyclic nature to the history of God's people. Finding themselves unoppressed by enemies, prosperous, and all things going well, they would forget God Who gave them all their blessings. In their sinful folly, they would begin to serve other (false, of course) gods—such as the Canaanite idols, Ashtoreth and Baal—forsaking the one true and living God. The Bible clearly teaches that this one true and living God is, indeed, the God of love; but He is also a jealous God, a consuming fire. Seeing His people forsake Him, His wrath would rise against them, yet not so as to completely destroy them. To chastise and correct them, He would raise up adversaries against them to oppress them. This would have the effect of causing them to call out to the LORD for deliverance. God would then allow Himself to be moved by their entreaty, and raise up a judge, an heroic deliverer such as Moses and Joshua had been, who would remove the yoke of bondage. For a season, all would be well. Then the cycle would repeat itself, as the people forgot God, served false gods, and were again disciplined by the true God who condescended to tolerate them again and again, having determined that He would have a people for Himself, often in spite of themselves!

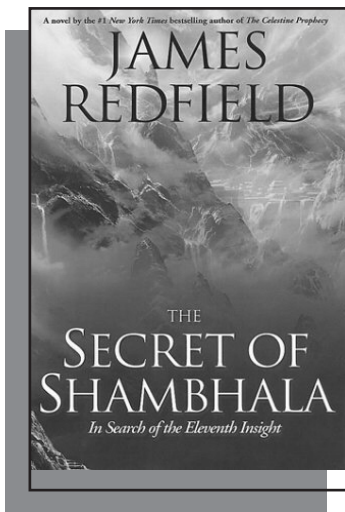
This trend among the covenant people of God didn't change with the end of the period of the judges and the advent of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The prophet Jeremiah wrote:

"Has a nation changed [its] gods, which [are] not gods? But My people have changed their Glory for what does not profit. Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid; be very desolate," says the LORD 'For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, [and] hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water' "(Jeremiah 2:11-13).

Nor did this fatal human tendency to apostasize end in Jeremiah's day. Jesus and the Apostles dealt with the Sadducees, who ***"... say that there is no resurrection—and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both"*** (Acts 23:8). Down through Church history and up to the present, there are the Pharisee-type heresies wherein many of the cardinal, supernatural doctrines of the Bible are confessed but legalism or other problems exist. However, there are also the Sadducee-type heresies where the satanic strategy seems to be to set up ***"... a form of godliness, but denying its power"*** (2 Tim. 3:5). The first type of error self-consciously distances itself from historically orthodox (which means "true glory") Christian bodies by saying the truth is with us only. The second type of error usurps the place of historic orthodoxy within Christian bodies, hence it effectively neutralizes it. Theological liberalism is rightly categorized in the latter group.

Perhaps, we can further expose liberalism by considering some of its fruit. Let's return to the example of evolution. What has accommodating this evil, anti-Christian system of thought brought

(Continued on page 10)



Book Review

A Worldview Conflict

by Sarah Flashing

Looking at James Redfield's Secret of Shambhala:

In Search of the Eleventh Insight



Just imagine . . . You are Indiana Jones on an adventure seeking to discover a lost civilization. On part of the journey, you run through a cave that leads to an exciting, mythical world. Well into the excursion, you race through corridors of a religious temple while its walls are crashing down around you. In spite of this, you are able to utilize the special powers you recently have discovered within yourself. With these powers of visualization, you intend (with your mind) a force field opening in the space of air immediately in front of you that serves as an escape route to safety. The only things really missing from this adventure are the power coins that provide life-sustaining energy and the stars with cute little smiley faces which you are entitled to obtain at the end of the game—your reward for successfully overcoming the evil which you have so bravely endured. Wait a minute—a game? While this very closely describes a popular high-tech video game, it also portrays many of the events (minus the power coins and smiley face stars, of course) in James Redfield's most recent book entitled *The Secret of Shambhala: In Search of the Eleventh Insight* (hereafter *The Eleventh Insight*). It is the latest contribution by Redfield to *The Celestine Prophecy* series. The intent of this blatantly New Age (yet somewhat intriguing) page-turner is to follow up on the previous ten insights to spiritual awareness found in the first two books of this series. Indicative of the title, the eleventh insight to spiritual awareness is to be found within the pages of this book. As a fictional work, it serves as Redfield's illustration for the virtually unlimited power a person attains after discovering the insights that provide spiritual awareness.

The main characters of *The Eleventh Insight* are two American men who separately venture to Tibet with intentions of meeting each other upon arrival. The purpose of their adventure is to locate the *not-so-mythical* community of Tibetan Buddhist legend referred to as Shambhala upon which the stories of Shangri-La are based (page 19). Arriving at Shambhala is dependent upon their arriving at spiritual awareness, but upon closer examination, the arrival at Shambhala seems to be metaphorical for arriving at spiritual awareness. As an element of this spiritual nature, Redfield teaches

that people can engage others in a world where each person is in control of their own reality—this being due to the expansion and utilization of their newly discovered spirituality.

The eleventh insight into this spiritual awareness, in detail, is the extension of prayer fields to other people and consists of four parts, or extensions. In the first extension, a person must "... first improve the quality of energy ..." (202) taken in physically. This means one must eat foods that are "alive" because they have an "... alkaline effect and enhance our vibration ..." (202). Food allegedly is the source of this energy that produces 'vibration.' "Heavy and processed foods build up acid solids in our molecular structures, lowering our vibration and eventually causing disease" (202). Obviously, the idea here is to be health conscious because the healthier food one eats, the more enhanced one's vibration becomes. But why is it necessary for anyone to have a vibration, let alone a healthy one? How is it known that such vibrations even exist? No explanation is supplied for these questions. According to *The Eleventh Insight*, "... the purer we vibrate, the easier it is to then connect with the more subtle energies available within us" (202). And the "legends say" that the "... higher our level of energy, the more beauty we see ... using our emotional state of love as a measure that this is occurring" (203). The ambiguity and relativistic nature of this concept is evident. Terms such as "love" and "beauty" are left undefined, because without an objective base by which to measure, they simply cannot be defined. An "emotional state of love" provides no answers regarding truth—especially regarding this "energy" which remains a vague concept at any rate. But above and beyond this, it is not explained (apart from "the legends say ...") how it is known that such vibrations exist and why they are necessary for spiritual growth. No logical reason is stated as to why anyone should believe in the supposed health benefit of vibrations.

The second extension involves being "... in a state of conscious alertness and expectation for the next intuition or coincidence that moves our lives ..." (203). This state of "alertness and expectation" is considered a vehicle for sending out energy to others so that the inner energy of everyone becomes stronger, thus enabling the intentions of people to align with the "intended process of growth and evolution structured into the universe itself" (203). It is never explained how it is known that there is this "energy" within anyone,

or how it can go out and become stronger. Likewise, how it is known that our intentions can align with the “intended process of ... the universe” also goes unexplained. How Redfield knows what these intended processes are also remains a mystery. Redfield maintains an abundance of beliefs but does not show that his beliefs have a solid foundation. Redfield gives no account for *any* of his so-called knowledge. His is a worldview that stands on the authority of his own imagination.

The third extension of the prayer field is closely related to the second extension in that the energy that goes out boosts the level of energy in other people (203). This process enables them to connect with the “divine” within them and serves “the likelihood of them giving us intuitive information that can further enhance our own level of synchronicity” (203). In other words, once people recognize that they have within themselves a divinity, they will send out information that will cause others to be more in tune with the universe and, in turn, recognize their own divinity.

Finally, the fourth extension involves positive thought processes and expectations. The belief that negative thoughts produce negative results and positive thoughts cause positive results is the basic teaching being presented here. An example of teachers and their expectations of students is utilized in *The Eleventh Insight*, asserting that students give to teachers only what the teachers expect (204). In challenging this faulty logic, questions need to be asked regarding the parent’s expectations of the same student or even the student’s expectations of himself. If a parent (or the student) expects positive results, while the teacher expects negative, is it a duel of expectations? Whose expectations determine the results for this student? The idea that one person can determine the success or failure of another person with negative or positive thoughts is simply absurd. An analysis of Redfield’s ideas seems to leave one with more questions than answers regarding his logic. All tested hypotheses down through history would confirm that man has not the power to control his own reality, nor anyone else’s.

For Redfield, Shambhala serves as an example to his readers of how life on Earth can and should be. In Shambhala, people are the masters of technology and use it in the service of spiritual development (204). This allows people to begin to understand

“... the real reason we are here on this planet: to create a culture on Earth that is conscious of our role in spiritual evolution and to teach that understanding to our children” (204).

Redfield again provides no objective proof that he *knows* the “real reason we are here.” Also, his belief in a spiritual “evolution” is quite ambiguous. What are we evolving *from and to*? Possibly “revolution” would be a better term, as his worldview appears to be just another revolt against Christian truth. In his efforts to put forth the idea that everyone has a personal divinity within—that they alone are the power behind prayer—he denies that this power belongs to the Creator alone. Paul states in his letter to the Romans:

“For since the creation of the world, His invisible [attributes] are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, [even] His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse ...”
(Romans 1:20, NKJV).

While Redfield hasn’t denied the existence of God, he has wrongly attributed divinity to creation as well, thus denying the Creator/creation distinction that exists between God and man. He more closely identifies with a pantheistic view in that he asserts,

“... everything in the universe is alive with spiritual energy and is a part of God. We must intentionally ask to connect with the divine inside us.”

Redfield is in a position of futility because he can give no objective basis for his assertions. Outside and independent of the Christian worldview, one cannot account for any knowledge. Only within the bounds of the biblical Christian faith can anyone comprehend God and ultimate reality because through the Bible. His knowledge has been revealed to us.

This book not only promotes the significant details of New Age philosophy, but it also displays evidence of Postmodernist thought. It expresses a view of pick-and-choose theology; a conglomeration of different faiths and religions in which the warm fuzzy “love” of each religion is retained and the remaining

doctrines, beliefs, and teachings are tossed aside. Redfield essentially regards no one single religion as true ... and none are completely false. It is on this basis that Redfield can borrow from religious systems to create his new (and notably inconsistent) worldview. This is the heart of his agenda – “the final unity of all religions” (170). Such false unity is dangerous to the hearts and minds of those truly seeking the one true God. In a world where truth doesn’t matter and people are forced to rely on subjective standards to determine their spirituality, one can be expected to follow the path that seems to make them feel good over the path that leads them to the truth of the Lord Jesus.

Taking a selected passage from the third chapter of the Old Testament book of Daniel, *The Eleventh Insight* opens with:

“Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste and spake ...
Did we not cast three men bound in the midst of the fire?
... Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire ...,
and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the son of God ...
Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego
who has sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted him.”

Placing this passage even before the first chapter of *The Eleventh Insight*, Redfield begins by setting up the notion that he accepts the authority of Scripture—that it is inspired by God. However, this is not the case. If Redfield were not attempting

(Continued on page 11)

An analysis of Redfield's ideas seems to leave one with more questions than answers regarding his logic ...

"Profiteers" (Continued from page 3)

government agencies **will** not open - many **will** not be able to open. Many that do open **will** be swamped with customer complaints. Chaos and pandemonium **will** reign."

Result: Many who spent lots of money preparing for one to three years of chaos began to realize that Michael Hyatt—the name you could trust—should not have been trusted. Others began sheepishly coming down out of the mountains and picking up their lives where they left off. Still others refused to come to grips with reality and looked grimly forward to February 29, when all could yet be lost.

- **February 29, 2000.** "On this date, leap day occurs. Most people assume that every fourth year is a leap year. However, every fourth turn-of-the-century is a leap year, too ... Unfortunately, many programmers were unaware of this rule, and their programs **will** stumble over this date, increasing the chaos."

Result? Around this time Michael Hyatt changed his web site name from *Y2K Prep* to *Self-Reliant Living*.

Waiting For The Shoe To Drop

After the uneventful rollover (on January 12, 2000, to be exact), we checked out Hyatt's web page to see if he had yet admitted his error. What we found were ludicrous claims of cover-up and con-spiracy, along with a few goofy stories that, in our opinion, on degraded Hyatt's credibility. One headline read, "Mass. Courts Still Without Computers."⁶ As we read the article, it soon became apparent we were being offered the old "bait-and-switch" routine. While it was a true, actual, and indisputable fact that the Middlesex Probate and Family Court didn't have a working computer as of 1/12/00, it turned out that they had NEVER had one.

Another story on Hyatt's web site that day was "Y2K Bug deals 'Fatal Blow' to Toronto Transit Hotline."⁷ A "Fatal Blow" sounds like serious trouble to us, so we contacted the Toronto Mass Transit to see what sort of chaos they were experiencing. How were they handling all of the stranded commuters? How was the city dealing with the shut down? How long before they can get it repaired? We spoke with Martin Collicott who was genuinely perplexed by our call. To his knowledge everything was operating fine, but he said he would check into it and get back to us. Was it possible he hadn't noticed a serious problem with the mass transit system for which he worked? We know bureaucracies can be a little out of touch, but this seemed a bit odd. He e-mailed us later that day with the information he had learned. It turned out that the Toronto Transit Hotline is an informational phone line with old equipment which had been deemed too expensive to overhaul. They made other

provisions for commuters to get the information they needed, and it had not caused a problem of any consequence.

Then there was a contribution on Hyatt's site from a Mr. Warren Bone. He wondered if the lights *really* stayed on around the world, or was the appearance of global normalcy merely a "cover-up." "Why did it go smoothly?" Bone asked darkly. He continued:

"Or did it? Where were all the embedded chip problems? The lights stayed on worldwide? No major problems? Not anywhere? No problems with government systems? How'd they do that? Or did they?" ... "It appears to most people that 2000 came and nothing happened at all." ... Why does it appear that way to most people? "What we (the general public) know about any Y2K related problems is only what was reported to us, unless of course, it affected us directly."⁸

He then points out how *obvious* it would have been to us that there was a problem if the lights had gone out. Well, DUH! We certainly can agree with Bone on this point. Even *we* would have been forced to admit there was a problem if our lights had gone out! And blessedly, Bone did notice that our lights here in the U.S. had stayed on. So far, then, we're on the same page. Then he asked the question that put us at odds with his reasoning.

"Now what about the rest of the world? Did we not see the New Year's Eve celebrations from many countries on live TV? And did the lights there not stay on? Yes, the lights at all those specific 'press sites' did stay on during the time the press was present."⁹ "Is there any doubt whatsoever that all the electricity, water, sewer treatment, communications, and other critical infrastructures stayed intact all over the world? That these utilities just rolled right into 2000 with no problem?" ... "Yes, there is doubt."¹⁰

Yep, we're in the *Twilight Zone*! Since there is no *evidence* that the world is actually in deep doo-doo, *it must be* that there is a giant, worldwide conspiracy to *conceal the evidence*, so we'll keep right on believing everything is hunky-dory—just so we won't panic. Ooooooooookay! Let's just step away slowly ...

Michael Hyatt wasn't alone in this debacle. He had plenty of company, and he got his "facts" from many supposedly reliable "experts." Other Y2K profiteers—such as Hal Lindsay, Grant Jefferys, and Jack Van Impe—seem to have returned quietly to their normal end-time themes. Nevertheless, there has been fallout from the debacle. Steve Hewitt points out:

"As a result of Y2K, there is now much division and pain within the Christian community. And as a result of Y2K some have left the church, and many others are hurt and disillusioned."¹¹

Hewitt believes we need to hold the Y2K profiteers accountable for the panic they fostered. Recently, Hewitt initiated reconciliation with Michael Hyatt, and to his credit, Hyatt has responded. We will have to wait and see whether or not there is a genuine change of heart there. Dr. James Dobson has issued an apology on his radio show for his part in fanning the flames of fear. We feel that is evidence of personal integrity. It is not an easy thing to admit error.



A Need For Critical Thinking

We see the Y2K debacle as only one example (and, perhaps, not the best one) of a problem that plagues the church in our day. Pseudo-Christian groups outside the church and false teachings within rise due to a lack of discernment and sound biblical teaching.

Bill Gothard hasn't met a Scripture he can't twist and misuse, bringing his two-and-a-half-million followers into fear, bondage, and legalism. Word-Faith teachers profit in hundreds-of-millions of dollars each year. "Holy laughter" has become a standard spiritual "manifestation" in many churches, while new absurdities appear on a regular basis. "Glory dust" (gold dust) supposedly is now falling on the congregations; and allegedly, ordinary tooth fillings miraculously are being changed to gold and silver. Is God really into supernatural dentistry these days? Is He the one dropping gold-tone glitter on the folks in the pews? We think, perhaps, there is a better explanation.¹² But the people in these churches see the glitter as "Glory Dust" and do not want to hear a better explanation. They are just blindly following their leaders. That's not a good idea, friends.

Then there is the church's present love affair with psychology. One teacher at the "1998 Women of Faith Conference" (sponsored by New Life Clinics) taught the large group of women gathered there from many different denominations that "Jesus commanded us to love ourselves." He did? We must've missed that!

All of us have been wrong in our thinking at some point in our lives, and most of us have been deceived one way or another. That's part of being human—a despised part—but an inescapable part nonetheless. Jesus called us sheep, and sheep we are. And sheep are always only one misstep away from sheepish! ☺ We've been there—so have you. But, recognizing our unfortunate likeness to sheep, we can learn to examine our human shepherds and their teaching, realizing they are fallible human beings and could be deceived themselves.

So, those who are finding themselves not wanting to trust "Christian leaders" (as a result of the Y2K folly), again, are not necessarily in a bad place. We were never meant to follow leaders blindly anyway. That's what should separate the church from the cults. We are to critically examine what we are being fed.

Yes, leaders are given to the church to equip the saints for service—but we are not to be infants in high chairs playing airplane and hangar. We are to become *"... mature ... no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine ... by craftiness in deceitful scheming."* We are to *"... grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ"* (Ephesians 4:13-14).

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We thank God for the great majority of pastors and Christian leaders who did not succumb to Y2K hysteria but continued doing the work of the Lord they have been called to do.

If those who were taken in by the Y2K scare—leaders and layman alike—were to commit themselves to stressing sound biblical teaching and encouraging critical thinking in the church, this would go a long way toward guarding the flock from future problems like the Y2K debacle.

ENDNOTES:

1. www.michaelhyatt.com/
2. *Daily Herald*, January 4, 2000: section 4, p.1-2.
3. www.gospelcom.net/ccmag/y2k/michaeltosteve.html, Michael Hyatt's letter to Steve Hewitt, pps. 2-3.
4. Michael Hyatt ad from the *World Magazine*, dated June 19, 1999.
5. www.gospelcom.net/ccmag/y2k/michaeltosteve.html, Michael Hyatt's letter to Steve Hewitt, p.3.
6. The *Boston Globe* linked from Michael Hyatt's website.
7. Michael Hyatt's link to http://greenspun.com/bboard/q-and-a-fetch-msg.tcl?msg_id=002Hn5
8. Warren Bone, www.michaelhyatt.com/editorials/hoax.htm p.7.
9. Ibid. p. 7-8.
10. Ibid. p. 8.
11. Steve Hewitt, "Final Y2K Report – It's Time for Accountability, Repentance and Forgiveness!" *Christian Computing Magazine*, _____ www.gospel.net/ccmag/articles/0200/covr0200.html
12. Dr. Gregory Camp, who has been researching this phenomena, in an interview with Joy Veinot for an upcoming *CRI Journal* article said, "This is a con, a sham and it cheapens the faith." In his investigation of the "Gold Dust" phenomenon, Dr. Camp noticed the alleged "gold dust" refracted light as green. Knowing that real gold would not do that, he had some of the dust analyzed. "It tested as plastic," said Camp. "Glitter."

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"Backsliding" (Continued from page 5)
about?

First, it allows people to reason that they are only animals—a particularly bright species of primates. Some animals kill and devour other animals. Some animals abandon their young ... or devour them! Animals heed only their instinctive sexual drives when it comes to mating, no higher morality is involved. Why, then, should we be surprised if children kill other children, if parents abort their babies, if promiscuity and associated evils like pornography and the "sex industry" proliferate? Why marvel when one ethnic group asserts its supremacy over another? Perhaps, they reason they are entitled to do so, because they are the more highly evolved version of humanity!

The Church is called to be the preserving salt and the exposing light in this corrupt, dark world. When she believes the biblical truth that man was specially created in the Divine image, a rational and spiritual being as far above the animals as the heavens are above the earth, she can powerfully proclaim, "thus says the Lord" to them who knew themselves to be His creatures accountable to Him. What does the theologically liberal preacher say against adultery, abortion, and murder? "You shouldn't do those things because they are icky, Okay?" Or "Just say NO – because ... because ... well, just because!" Can he effectively oppose racism when his own doctrine provides an (erroneous) rationalization for its legitimacy?

Another fruit of liberalism is the way it changes people's view of the Bible. If the Bible is inaccurate about the nature of creation, the miraculous birth of Christ, the historicity of the Exodus, etc. how can we trust it on *anything*? At 1 Thessalonians 2:13 we read:

"For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed [it] not [as] the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe."

Instead of such a high view of Scripture, theological liberalism allows the (practical, if not confessional) position that says, "I'll take 7 out of the 10 Commandments that seem plausible to my ultimate judge—my own mind." Theological liberalism cuts out of Bible the parts that don't have what it considers the feel of authenticity. When subjective "inner light" usurps the place of objective revelation from on high, the "search for the historical Jesus" is underway. Although the Jesus of the Bible IS the historical Jesus, theological liberalism's false wisdom asserts that much of what the Gospels attribute to Him He could not possibly have said ... "Not MY Jesus ..."

God's Word is truth. Truth anchors the human soul. Without it, one is adrift in a sea of relativism—a shadowy realm where there is nothing to depend upon. The story of New Testament Scholar Eta Linnemann, as disclosed in her book *Historical Criticism of the Bible*, is revealing. (Historical criticism is a theologically liberal approach to Bible study which assumes that statements in Scripture regarding place, time, sequences of events, and persons are accepted only insofar as they fit in with established assumptions and theories.) Writing as a convert out of theological liberalism, in the introduction to her book Ms. Linnemann says:

"... God through His grace and Word has given me insight into the theoretical dimensions of this theology. Instead of being based on God's Word, it has its foundations in philosophies which made bold to define truth so that God's Word was excluded as the source of truth."

There is surely a place in Christian practice for a legitimate

version of the high ideals which come to mind when we remember our fine old family of English words: liberality, liberate, liberty, and even liberal. In fact, those ideals can only be "fleshed out" in the context of moral absolutes and bedrock truths. Among believers there must be loving tolerance, mutual acceptance, and respect when it comes to non-essentials. Some Christians kneel to pray, some do not. In the apostolic church, some ate meat sacrificed to idols, some did not. Some Christians are very animated and sanguine in worship, others are more reserved and quiet. Whether or not a Christian is theologically liberal, however, is not a matter among the "non-essentials." All should pray in faith, and worship in spirit and in truth, and all should stand against this form of idolatry ... for that is what theological liberalism is! The ancient Israelites forsook God and served man-made idols in the days of the judges. So God's people do today, when they despise His word and remake ***"the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints"*** (Jude 1:3) into "the faith that has the approval of modern man."

How can Christians fight this plague? Let's revisit the book of Judges. Like the intermittently besieged descendants of Jacob, the Church is under great oppression in our land in these days. Might this be on account of wholesale backsliding into complacency, compromise, and theological liberalism? Would God afflict us needlessly with a surrounding society that is perhaps, worse than Sodom? ***"For he does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men"*** (Lamentations 3:33). Is He not the Sovereign without Whose permission not even Satan can lift a finger (cf. Job 1)? ***"When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him"*** (Proverbs 16:7). The American Church's compromising ways have not pleased Him, thus He is allowing our enemies to chastise us.

Today, the battle is spiritual; we wrestle not against flesh and blood Canaanite oppressors. The Ashtoreth of theological liberalism has seduced us, and we have served Baal: theological liberalism dressed up as orthodoxy. Now is the time to cry out to the Lord! Cry out to the Lord of the Harvest. Implore Him that mighty deliverers be raised up. What is needed in America today is not another program for economic or educational aid run by the government, not a clever political solution, but loud, trumpeting blasts of the pure, unadulterated Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ!

ENDNOTES:

1. Eta Linnemann, *Historical Criticism of the Bible: Methodology or Ideology?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1990), introduction.

Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc. would like to thank Pastor Keith Graham for his second contribution to the Journal.



Keith was a 1978 graduate of what was then named the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Episcopal Church. His ministerial credentials are in the P.C.A. (Presbyterian Church in America). He is 47-years old and is happily married to his wife, Jeanette. They are living in New Jersey, where Keith is currently seeking a new pastoral call, most recently having been pastor of The Locktown Presbyterian Church, near

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"Worldview" (Continued from page 7)

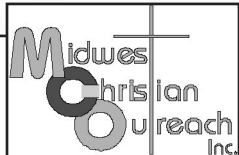
independence from God, he would accept Scripture in its entirety; and he does not do this. This is revealed in his belief that everyone is internally divine which ignores the commandment, "*You shall have no other gods before Me*" (Exodus 20:3).

The average reader might not even notice that Redfield has reduced the identity of this Angel—this deliverer from Daniel chapter 3—from the "Son of God" (NKJV) to the *son of God*. From "*His Angel*" (NKJV) to *his angel*. In fact, until one has read this book (or at least part of it), it is hard to know why he has placed this passage here at all, and it can leave the discerning reader perplexed. It appears that Redfield quotes the Bible as part of his objective to unify all religions despite their fundamental differences. One discovers this by what is stated regarding Redfield's identity of this angel. Who *does* he say the angel is? He identifies this angel to be a helper sent to deliver Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the flames. While not necessarily wrong, this is where he first introduces *dakini*, a term used by Buddhism, which refers to angel-like beings "... from the spiritual world" (47). He goes on to state that they "... usually appear as females, but they can take any form they wish" (47). They, too, seem to be in full control of their reality. "In the West, they are known as angels, but they are even more mysterious than most think" (47). But the text continues, "I'm afraid they are truly known only by those in Shambhala ... they move with the light of Shambhala" (47). In interpreting what Redfield is stating (understanding that Shambhala is metaphorical for spiritual awareness), he is declaring that only those who have what *he has defined* as spiritual awareness are the ones who can have true knowledge of these angels or dakini. And because of the divine energy within people, it is by their power that these angels are sent out to provide assistance. "Just maintain your visualization of a positive outcome. Fear will actually bring the dakini closer" (181).

This is where Redfield's view of religious *truth* enters in. He states that each

"... religion has a different name for them [dakini], just as each religion has a different way of describing God and how humans should live. But in every religion the experience of God, the energy of love, is exactly the same" (49).

And love makes the world go round, of course. Redfield proves here that he has little understanding of the meaning of truth, let alone biblically defined love. By means of "integration of all religious truth" (49), Redfield has brought down the God of the Bible to a love experience. The Triune God of the Bible whom Christians worship is not an "experience," but is the Sovereign Creator who does not guarantee warm fuzzy feelings of love to overwhelm our lives at every moment. What God has lovingly provided for us is eternal life, which is due to the most incredible gift ever to be given to anyone ... the forgiveness of our sins through the sacrifice of the Son of God Who is the second person of the Trinity. Through His death and resurrection, we are given the precious gift of eternal life with Him, not a meaningless existence on this planet. We are not guaranteed an easy, comfortable life where we have *feelings* of love from other people all the time. This distinction remains; we are His creation and He is our Creator. Asserting our own will only leads to destruction.



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- Galatians 4:16 -

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