

AMERICA AT WAR

— With Herself —

By Don and Joy Veinot

In the August 9, 2002 on-line edition of *World Net Daily*, in an article entitled *Why are Christians Losing America?*, David Kupelian writes:

Most Americans call themselves Christians.

Twice they chose as their supreme leader Bill Clinton – a sexual predator and pathological liar who regarded the “religious right” as enemies and radical homosexuals as friends, and who by any meaningful and historical measure was a traitor.

After that, millions of Christians came within a hair’s breadth of electing Clinton’s partner in crime, Al Gore – another pathological liar, a radical environmentalist who reveres “Gaia” but believes the internal-combustion engine should be outlawed (according to his book, *Earth in the Balance*).

Christians have stood on the sidelines during the breathtaking transformation of their once-great Judeo-Christian culture into today’s neo-pagan, Sodom-and-Gomorrah-style freak show.

Christians have lost the 30-year war to protect the unborn. Even easy victories – like partial-birth abortion, which virtually everyone opposes – have eluded them.

Christians have lost the war for America’s schools – which have been scrubbed antiseptically clean of the Christian principles and traditions that once guided those institutions, and are now filled instead with every conceivable form of propaganda and perversion.

Christians have lost their former influence in politics, in the press, in entertainment, in literature – in virtually every major area of life.

And now, Christians are losing the war for their very own institutions – their churches. The clergy sex scandal is the tip of the iceberg. Both the Catholic Church and most of the major Protestant denominations are literally

being ripped apart – from within – by double agents who pretend to be “faithful” but actually loathe Christianity’s historical precepts and values.’

Are things really that bad? Is America lost? Are most Americans *truly* Christians? And will genuine Christians be able to regain some of the ground they have lost in the past 25 years or so?

We agree our beloved country is in trouble and that the church has been largely ineffective in stemming the tide of cultural decay. We believe millions of people who consider themselves Christians (because they may attend church, or follow the golden rule, etc.) are not truly Christians. But, we disagree with Kupelian’s conclusion. He believes the major problem in the church today is that too many Christians hold to the idea “I’m saved, so it doesn’t matter how I live,” so they go right ahead and live like the Devil. Many Christians may abuse God’s grace and live contrary to their calling, but that certainly would not explain the millions of Catholics and others who do not hold to the “once saved,

always saved” belief and yet mirror the culture in their daily lives and attitudes. We believe a better explanation is the vast propagandizing power of the popular culture to mold the minds of the citizenry. Just imagine our grandparents and great-grandparents being dropped into our culture for a time. With their frame of reference being the cultural times in which they lived, they would be dumbfounded—shocked speechless—by the things we see every day. But our frame of reference, our context, is twenty-first-century America; and most people, especially those with no knowledge of history, are unaware of how absolutely *bizarre* and ungodly our culture (and the problem is global, not just American) has truly become. And even when Christians *do* realize how far society has sunk and understand what is going on, many are reluctant to swim against the current.



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Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.
P.O. Box 455, Lombard, IL 60148-0455
Phone: (630) 627-9028
Fax: (630) 627-6829
E-mail: Info@midwestoutreach.org

Don Veinot President
Joy Veinot Director
D. L. McGehee Editing
S. Todd McGehee Layout/Art
Christy Balbo Cover Art

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"War" (Continued from page 1)
The Counterculture

Back in the 60s, the "counterculture" was the vanguard of social change, made up of those seeking to radically remake a conservative society that was largely "Christianized" if not Christian. These radicals, seeking complete freedom from the sexual (and other) restraints of the past, were running counter to the mainstream American culture of the time. Make love not war! . . . Burn Baby burn! . . . and all that. The sexual revolution really took off.

Now, however, leftist radicals no longer comprise the counterculture—they *are* the culture today—right in the mainstream of society! They just don't seem that radical any more! Now it is discerning *Christians* who make up the counterculture—we are the ones out of the mainstream of "Middle America" today. Cool, huh? Far out, man! Psychedelic! Unfortunately, being counter to the culture today is *not* considered all that cool, like it was in the 60's; and Christians, for the most part, don't *want* to be on the fringe. Most of us yearn to "fit in" to "Middle America," but we cannot do so and remain faithful to our faith and our LORD.

The Leftward Drift

"Middle America" is called that because they are in the middle. ☺ "Middle America" is not overly committed to the ideology of the right or the left. They are busy working their jobs, providing for their families, saving for vacations, sending the kids to college, and trying to provide for their retirement years. When an anti-abortion radical blows up an abortion clinic or kills an abortion provider, "Middle America" shifts left. On the other hand, when a radical leftist takes some outlandish action like attacking flag displays or the Pledge of Allegiance, "Middle America" shifts right. They traditionally are not that comfortable with "activism" from either camp. Yet, their views have been subtly shaped over a span of years and decades by the media in ways which many of them do not fully comprehend. Since the vast majority of our mainstream media leans to the left, and since the majority of "Middle America" gets their news from these tainted sources, the country had been drifting further and further to the left of center in recent times. The media portrays their predominately leftist view as centrist and the "normal" view (and any opposing view) as radical rightwing extremism. As a result, many of our countrymen are quite confused in their thinking and influenced heavily by the liberal media which generally disguises its agenda by using the language of "per-

sonal liberty" or "civil rights," yet still holding onto many of the "values" (such as respect for life and the care of the weak) derived from our Judeo/Christian heritage. Our culture is rife with contradictions stemming from this clash of opposing worldviews. One clash involves the traditional American respect for life versus the "right" of a woman to choose to end her pregnancy on any grounds.

Americans, always big on personal freedom, generally believe people should be able to do pretty much as they please as long as "nobody gets hurt." Over the last quarter century or so, though, "Middle America" has been sold the bill of goods by the now-cultural elites that "personal liberty" encompasses even such things as the killing of the unwanted pre-born, while ignoring the inconvenient truth that someone *does* get hurt in such a case—namely the poor little one in the womb.

Truth Is Not Absolute, But Relative

After undergoing relentless indoctrination by popular culture—movies, popular music, sitcom television programs, and network news, etc.—most Americans (yes, even many Christians ☺) have become moral relativists, believing we ought not make any judgments at all on moral grounds. Adultery, living together without benefit of marriage, homosexuality, no-fault divorce—all of these things are either protected "personal choices" or issues a person is seen as having no control over—"they were born that way"—and who are we to judge? American sense of fairness has been exploited by "multicultural" moral relativists bent on brainwashing us to believe all personal choices are equal—that there are no truly right or wrong choices or lifestyles, just "different strokes for different folks."

The religious arena has likewise experienced a great sea of change in our times. The view of the elites, which has trickled down to a great number of the common folk, is that religion also is just a matter of personal choice or taste—there is no ultimate truth to know, no one to save us, and indeed, nothing to save us *from*. Sing it friends: "There ain't no good guys, there ain't no bad guys—there's only you and me, and we just disagree..." This love affair with religious pluralism—which is *the* religion of the cultural elites, the *only* religion that is believed to be really TRUE ☺—has brought considerable wrath down on Christianity with its core beliefs that there *is* a TRUTH to know, a Hell to shun, and Jesus is the only way to the Father. On any given night, you can find various television programs that cast doubt on the truth of the Bible and the claims of Christ. We are bombarded by shows purporting to expose the "myths"

of the Bible such as Noah's flood, the Bible "story" of Sodom and Gomorrah, and on, and on ad infinitum. One program defended the biblical Queen Jezebel as just a religiously oppressed woman defending her right to hold onto her foreign gods and beliefs amidst the "intolerant" culture of ancient Israel. Of course, it is not just the people of Israel, but the God of Israel Who is defamed by this characterization.

Recently, Peter Jennings hosted a program on primetime network television attacking the person of Christ and Christianity, which featured many of those liberal scholars of the type that David Kupelian fears (with good reason) are taking over our churches and Christian institutions. Of course, all of these attacks show the *hypocrisy* of the liberal left in claiming to believe in religious pluralism. Wouldn't you think, for example, if Jennings and his ilk *really* believed all religions are equal and all religious belief equally valid, that they would not persistently and continually portray *our* belief in the most negative possible light? It reminds us of Orwell's *Animal Farm*, where all the animals are equal, but some are more equal than others. ☺

Schizophrenic Nation

Those Neanderthals who refuse to bow down at the altar of religious pluralism and multiculturalism are arrogantly dismissed as "narrow minded," "judgmental," or "extremist," which are some of the worst things you can be called today. But what much of "Middle America" has not yet realized is that, because of religious pluralism, multiculturalism, and moral relativism, our culture *is at war with itself*. We have a truly schizophrenic society here in the States and the western world.

While Americans generally may no longer hold tightly to "morality" in the sense that it was understood 50 years ago—i.e. chastity outside of marriage, marital fidelity, etc., we struggle valiantly to hold to our "values." We believe the powerful should not exploit the average man—think Enron. The strong should not subjugate the weak—think rape and incest. Minorities and women should be protected from the presumably racist, sexist majority. The old should have their Medicare, the young should be provided with a good education. The handicapped should have special parking privileges, and slow learners should have Special Ed. And perhaps our strongest value: *All children* (those born at least) *should be protected*—from sexual predators to schoolyard bullies to low self-esteem. Yet, with Christianity discredited and Darwinian Evolution as the underpinning of our secular culture, we have no real *basis* for the "values" we hold dear based, as they were, on "old-fashioned" biblical morality. As the late, very popular evolutionist Stephen J. Gould pointed out in the PBS documentary *A Glorious Accident*, morals and values are about "oughts," and the evolutionary process is not about "oughts."² In Darwinian Evolution, the only thing that matters is surviving and reproducing. The strong subjugate the weak, and that's all there is to it. Nothing is right and nothing is wrong; nature knows only predator and prey. Yet, the majority of Americans accept as fact that we are mere products of evolution—that we clawed our way up the evolutionary chain by killing or subjugating the weak; but they also suppose we "ought" to behave in certain civilized ways that fly in the face of that belief!

Is Rape Natural?

Recently, Randy Thornhill (from the University of New Mexico) and Craig T. Palmer (from the University of Colorado—Colorado Springs) published a book that created consternation and caused quite a stir among the academic elites. The book was entitled *A Natural History of Rape*. These two scientists argue that rape is a natural mechanism that enables less-desirable males, who might otherwise be rejected by females, to successfully reproduce.

Now everyone knows it is a strongly held value in our society that

rape is a crime of violence and power against women, which should be severely punished. But this "value," though still widely held, is actually just a holdover from the Judeo/Christian era when God informed us of what was right and wrong. Violence and power are the mainstays of Darwinian Evolution. How could any species hope to survive without them? Thornhill and Palmer may have run afoul of our values, but they are merely exhibiting *consistency* in their thinking. In fact, if Darwinian Evolution is true, there is no such thing as racism, sexism, or all the other "isms." We may as well ask pigs to curtsy as to expect the "human animal" to respect these values if they are merely cultural taboos. Nature is not polite, sensitive to "feelings," or politically correct. The animal kingdom is driven by the desire to survive and procreate. Niceties like *asking permission* to take a mate are just not dreamed of in the jungle, field, or barn. *If* men are mere animals, and some women are convinced of it ☺, why should they behave any differently than stallions or bulls. Yet, we ignore these inconsistencies in our logic—to our peril—and plow ahead.

Who Are The True Bigots?

One area which shows the fuzzy thinking of the "politically corrected" is the issue of homosexuality. If a Christian even timidly asserts practicing homosexuality is a sin³—no different than adultery, lying, stealing, etc., we are excoriated as narrow-minded, bigoted "homophobes." But is judging sin really rejected by the PC crowd? No, they have merely chosen different "sins" to denounce. Are they not judging bigotry and homophobia are "sins" which should be condemned? Of course they are! Are they "tolerant" of opposing views? Are you kidding? No! "Tolerance" of the liberal stripe is only shown to other liberals.

Where Are We Headed Next?

We held an apologetics conference at a local area Bible Church just a few years ago. The last session was a question and answer forum where we and our guest speakers made up a panel and the audience asked us different cultural and apologetics questions.

One question we were asked was, "Where is our culture headed—what sort of changes do we see occurring on the cultural front in the next 25 years or so?" We answered the question by asking them to contemplate the changes that had been wrought in the *last* 25-30 years—the legalization and embrace of abortion, the blasé acceptance of "living together" as an alternative to marriage, the acceptance of the "gay" lifestyle, casual divorce, etc. All of these were considered **WRONG**, even **IMMORAL** (such an outdated word!) 25-30 years ago by the *overwhelming* majority of Americans—Christian *or* non-Christian. And since the radical left never rests but keeps pushing the boundaries ever further, we can sadly assume and expect that what "Middle America" generally holds as being **WRONG** today will be perfectly acceptable in another 25 or 30 years. So we suggested that we may expect pedophilia, now considered by "Middle Americans" to be an *unspeakable crime*, would someday in the not-too-distant future be "normalized"—and if you dare to speak out against it, you will be considered the worst kind of bigot just as you are now for rejecting the "normalcy" of homosexuality. The audience had a hard time accepting that seven years ago; but to our revulsion, we are seeing this prediction beginning to come true right before our eyes.

Clashing "Values"

Here's the problem with "values." Values, as opposed to morals, are based on popular opinion and so are as changeable as the wind. That is not to say that most of our commonly held "values" are bad, it's just they may not hold their *value* as time goes on. Another problem is that values often clash, which results in rather strange paradoxes. To

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illustrate one of our more vexing cultural inconsistencies, we need look no further than two stories that dominate the news today. The media is openly excoriating the Catholic Church (and rightfully so!) for admitting pedophiles IN to its priestly ranks where they have access to children, while condemning the Boy Scouts of America for trying to keep pedophiles OUT and away from their kids! Which “value” will prevail in the end—are we going to protect our precious children or protect the precious “rights” of child predators?

Is Pedophilia More Common Amongst Homosexuals?

Whistleblower magazine reports that despite the angry denial by Gay activists of any link between homosexuality and pedophilia,

“Research confirms that homosexuals molest children at a rate much higher than heterosexuals, and the mainstream homosexual culture commonly promotes sex with children. Homosexual leaders repeatedly argue for the freedom to engage in consensual sex with children, and blind surveys reveal a shockingly high number of homosexuals admit to contact with minors. Indeed, the homosexual community is driving the worldwide campaign to lower the legal age of consent.”⁴

NAMBLA (North America Man Boy Love Association) considers itself to be a homosexual group and makes common cause with Gay Rights activists. One of the missions of NAMBLA and other similar groups is to lower the age of consent so its members may *openly and legally* engage in sex with children! Lest we think only males are involved in this type of perversion, a website out of the Netherlands openly touts sexual relations between lesbian woman and prepubescent girls! The web site’s name is *Butterfly Kisses* (subtitled *celebrating love between women and girl*), and the introduction has this to say:

Hello and welcome to “*Butterfly Kisses*.” This web site is about and for women who are attracted to pre-teen and adolescent girls. Our primary goal is to give women and girls a tool for expressing their feelings and their love about this controversial topic, and to get people to open their minds to ideas about romantic and erotic attraction between women and girls that our society in the past has not been able to discuss openly and rationally. We also want to provide a place where women and girls can express themselves and can learn about their love in an atmosphere where they are encouraged to feel good about themselves and their sexuality.

Obviously, the information presented here is of an open and frank sexual nature and there is no “tap dancing” around sensitive topics. Hopefully, this will actually be a comfort to everyone because it will present the “touchy” subject of female childlove to people to think about, without having to be influenced by sex-oppressed media, religion and governments. The topics discussed, articles/essays posted and the stories/poetry written on this site are different from what society’s expectations of women and girls are, and as such this site strives to liberate women and girls from the oppression imposed on their sexuality.

Within the pages of *Butterfly Kisses* you will find sexual issues and topics of female, and particularly lesbian pedophilia, and some of them will probably make some people uncomfortable. . . . Many of these topics, if we will just stop overreacting to them and calmly, rationally think about them, may turn out to be less controversial than we thought.

If we just think rationally about these issues, they “may turn out to be less controversial than we thought...” THAT pretty much spells out the game plan of the radical left. This agenda has worked before like a charm with the normalization of homosexuality, so there is no

reason to think the same strategy will not work again—this time to normalize pedophilia.

Incidentally, the web site denounces the Boy Scouts of America for the stand they have taken against allowing known homosexuals to be Boy Scout leaders. The Girl Scouts of America, on the other hand, is praised as being far more “open” and “tolerant” of lesbians. The site even provides links to the web site of the Big Sisters and the Girl Scouts so these child predators can get involved with these organizations and influence and “mentor” young girls. It is truly sickening.

The Blueprint for Social Transformation

We do not believe most homosexuals condone pedophilia today; just as the vast majority of heterosexuals are very opposed to child molestation, yet, some heterosexuals are pedophiles. So we are not trying to single out homosexuals as worse sinners than the rest of us (ALL of us are sinners and all variety of sins are an affront to God’s holiness); but it is very instructive to look at how homosexuality was “normalized” and then accepted into the mainstream of our culture to see the blueprint for eventual acceptance of pedophilia and other perversions.

First of all, homosexuality underwent a transformation from a “sin” to a sickness—a mental illness. The common thinking among mental health professionals became homosexuality should not be condemned but *understood*. Within the span of a few short years, however, the APA decided it was not an illness after all—homosexuality was a *normal* variant of human sexuality. As long as the sexual experience was consensual, it was not harmful to anyone and no longer needed to be understood or cured but *accepted*. And it has been accepted—so accepted that to oppose the homosexual lifestyle is considered bigotry, hatred, or a result of irrational fear. In fact, protecting homosexuals from “hate crimes” has become the new cause celebre’ in American culture.

We believe the exact same path taken by “Gay Rights” advocates and activists will inevitably lead us to legalization and then widespread acceptance of pedophilia. Pedophilia today is outlawed; yet at the same time, therapists “treat” pedophiles for their “illness.” That confuses the issue, doesn’t it? Most people, it seems, think child molestation is so very awful that the pedophile *must* be sick rather than evil. After all, who could intentionally harm a child in this way? People have lost the ability to see evil *as* evil. And they are not taking into account the fact that pedophiles do not see what they are doing as harmful to children at all. Many, if not most, pedophiles truly believe they are not hurting anyone—that there is no trauma involved in child sexual abuse, and the child actually enjoys the experience!

The Radical Goes Mainstream

Although the idea pedophilia is harmless is currently a fringe idea in society, it is a concept gaining ground and going mainstream. In 1999, the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH) published a fact sheet warning that the American Psychological Association (APA) had published a study that was “opening the way to the normalization of Pedophilia.” Here is what NARTH reported:

This latest article appears in the A.P.A.’s own prestigious *Psychological Bulletin*.⁵ It provides an overview of all the research studying the harm resulting from childhood sexual abuse.

The author’s conclusion? That childhood sexual abuse is on average, only slightly associated with psychological harm—and that the harm may not be due to the sexual experience, but to the negative family factors in the children’s background. When the sexual contact is *not coerced*, especially when it is experienced by a boy and is enjoyed, it may not be harmful at all.

The article proposes that psychologists stop using judgmental terms like “child abuse,” “molestation,” and “victims,” using instead neutral, value-free terms like “adult child sex.”

...The authors conclude that behavior which psychotherapists commonly term "abuse" may only constitute a violation of social norms. Religion and society, these writers argue, are free to judge behavior as they wish...but psychiatry should evaluate behavior by its own set of standards.

In March of 1999, Dr. Laura Schlessinger brought this issue (of the APA's publication of the "study") to public attention on her popular nationally syndicated radio program. Schlessinger (who is a Jewish Conservative) rightly condemned the APA for their apparent sanction of pedophilia and very quickly had that organization on the defensive. While a spokeswoman for the APA, Rhea Farberman, admitted Schlessinger's criticism was valid, she contended the APA's position on pedophilia is that it is a mental disorder that is extremely harmful to children and should remain illegal. However, she then criticized Schlessinger for "making a big issue of the piece."⁶ One wonders how one should react when an organization as prestigious as the APA publishes a piece apparently sanctioning a practice that Farberman herself asserts is "extremely harmful" to children?

There are those who may want to dismiss NARTH and Dr. Laura as radical right-wingers who may have misinterpreted the study or ripped quotes from their context in order to make the APA look bad. We can assure you the APA needs no help in looking bad, and their published "study" indeed implies pedophilia is far less harmful than generally believed. We read the report ourselves, and it is still out there on the net for those who care to check it out for themselves.⁷ We found NARTH and Schlessinger were absolutely correct in their assessment of the report and not being "alarmist" at all. If anything, we found it to be even worse than expected.

But even with an organization as highly esteemed in our culture as the APA, seemingly endorsing these radical claims, is it possible "Middle America" will ever accept pedophilia as a normal human variant given the current loathing of the practice? We believe so. No matter how reviled and hated the practice is today, the day is probably coming when it will be normalized and accepted, and only "sexually suppressed and oppressive bigots" will oppose it. There will inevitably be a generational "changing of the guard" and younger and more heavily PC-indoctrinated (and even less biblically influenced) people will become the movers and shakers of our society. On what basis will they reject pedophilia as just another "alternative lifestyle?"

We hope to be proved wrong, but such a "tolerant" stance taken by an organization so prestigious and influential as the A.P.A. is like the distant hoof beats of approaching horsemen—we can watch the horizon and wait for their appearance—and it's not going to be Roy Rogers and Dale Evans! Furthermore, the article in the *Psychological Bulletin* is not the only sign the times they are a changin.' The repugnant philosophy—that "adult-child sex" is not always harmful to children and may be beneficial to some—is echoed in a new book recently published by University Press of Minnesota. The title of the book is *Harmful to Minors: The Perils of Protecting Children From Sex*. Newhouse News Service, who interviewed the author Judith Levine, quoted her as saying a sexual relationship between a priest and a youth could "conceivably" be positive.⁸ If it is a "conceivably" positive relationship, who except for bigots could be against it? Is this just a fringe book with no possible influence on the populace at large? The foreword of this book was written by Joycelyn Elders, former Surgeon General of the United States! While Elders is definitely considered a "fringe element" by a wide swath of Americans, she obviously does exert influence on many. We are a divided nation in many areas, and we forget that to our peril.

They Were Born That Way

One of the primary arguments for the acceptance of the "gay

lifestyle" is that "they were born that way" and cannot change even if they want to. The argument is already being made by psychologists that pedophilia is "a compelling desire that will not go away with medication, time or therapy." "Pedophilia," reports *The Seattle Times*, "is a sexual disorder" that "remains a mystery."

Psychologists struggle to treat it without even fully understanding its causes. It cannot be cured, even when an offender wants to change. "...The only thing we know for sure is that it is not a voluntary choice," said Fred Berlin, a psychologist and founder of the Sexual Disorders clinic at John Hopkins University in Baltimore. "No one decides that they want to be attracted to children." ...Psychologists say it's time for society to start treating pedophilia as a public-health issue, conducting the research that's needed to uncover its causes and develop other treatments. "One of the problems is that pedophilia has always been looked at as a moral issue, and it is a moral issue, but there are also legitimate questions of science and biology that need to be addressed."⁹

Pedophilia is a "disorder" that should be treated, even though no treatment, no medication—*nothing* can or will change the sexual orientation of a pedophile. If it becomes widely believed pedophiles, like homosexuals, were destined by nature or God with a certain sexual orientation and cannot change, can "normalization" and "acceptance" be far behind? How shall we deny the pedophile's "right" to sexual satisfaction?

Where Has All The Tolerance Gone?

We now have the spectacle of the Catholic Church caught in the crossfire of two contradicting "values," (protecting children versus protecting the "rights" of pedophiles) like a startled deer in the headlights, wondering just where they went wrong. They have been consistently castigated by the elites for being "regressive" and generally "intolerant." Well, weren't they being extremely "tolerant" and "progressive" in therapeutically "treating" pedophiles rather than expelling them from their positions? You would think they would get some credit for keeping up with the times! But they are getting no credit, only condemnation from the same elites who argue for the acceptance of homosexuality as just an alternative lifestyle. Why are they being so "intolerant" about the alternate lifestyle of the pedophile priests. If we must tolerate everyone's personal choices, wouldn't that include the personal choices of pedophiles? Sadly, given time, it probably will. It should be pointed out that the Catholic Church is not alone in exercising exceedingly poor judgment in their handling of this issue. Because of the late-twentieth-century's love affair with psychotherapy, many churches of all stripes have turned to therapy to "help" leaders and layman caught in homosexuality, incest and pedophilia.

Sick or Evil?

The *Chicago Tribune PARADE* magazine contained a very interesting lead article titled, "What We Must Do... To Protect Our Children" by Contributing Editor and Attorney Andrew Vachss. He is concerned and outraged about the sexual assaults on minors. Of course, we share his concerns. He bemoans the fact there seems to be such confusion in our society about whether pedophiles are sick or evil. He asserts the issue is not all that complex. In fact, he believes the complexity "is an illusion."¹⁰ He then goes on to give some working definitions to help the reader understand what he is talking about. Writes Vachss:

Sickness is a condition—evil is a behavior and is always a matter of choice. Evil is not thought; it is conduct. And conduct is always volitional. And just as evil is always a choice, sickness is the absence of choice. Sickness happens. Evil is inflicted.¹¹

These are not bad definitions—downright refreshing views to be found in a secular magazine! It is this confusion of action with thought

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(temptation to do evil) that has led people to believe a homosexual or a pedophile is someone who *desires* to engage in homosexual behavior or to molest children. This is completely untrue. Someone who is *tempted* to steal is not a thief—someone who *steals* is a thief! The person who is *tempted* to lie is not a liar—he has to actually lie first! A homosexual is not a person who is tempted—attracted to a person of the same sex—a homosexual is someone who indulges his desire and actually engages in the behavior. By the same token, as hard as this is to understand to a person who doesn’t battle this particular temptation, a pedophile is not someone who is attracted to children sexually and tempted to act on this evil desire, but someone who actually seduces or molests a child. Our society consistently (intentionally?) mislabels homosexuals as people who are attracted to persons of the same sex, who are *tempted* to engage in homosexual behavior. Case in point: A few years back, our newspaper had an article about the issue of whether or not a homosexual can change. One man was quoted as saying he tried the “straight life” but it didn’t “work.” How did he know it didn’t “work?” He knew it didn’t “work” *because the temptation was still with him.*

Hope For Sinners

Biblically speaking, we know homosexuals are not predestined to the behavior and *can* change, because the Apostle Paul refers to some of the Corinthians as *former* homosexuals.

“Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God”¹²

Some of the Corinthians WERE homosexuals, thieves, greedy, drunkards, etc.—past tense. Does this mean none of them were ever again tempted to engage in immoral behavior, thievery, drunkenness, or homosexuality after their justification? Certainly not. We are all tempted in various ways all of our lives!

God Made Me This Way?

Several of those interviewed for the aforementioned newspaper article claimed they had to accept the fact God had made them that way, as though God *designed* some people to be homosexuals and others to be “straight.” We do not deny that people seem prone (tempted) to different types of sin. And we are *universally* prone to sin in one way or another! That’s the human condition as a result of The Fall. People were not designed by God to have serial partners or to engage in same-sex sexual relations; nor was any child designed by God to be an object of sexual desire. Nor did God design people to steal, lie, cheat, murder, and slander. God didn’t make us this way, our sin nature makes us this way! We’re all battling something! Temptation alley is where we live. But it is not our temptations but our *behavior* that counts. Moreover, we are all going to be battling various temptations our whole lives. There is no magic bullet. We must just continue the struggle until we are delivered from these bodies “prone” to sin. The Bible does not consider homosexuality, any more than thievery, as a “condition” to be delivered from; but it is a behavior which must be forsaken no matter the cost or personal effort required. Therefore, we thoroughly agree with Vachss when he states,

...If the individual chooses to act upon those feelings, that conduct is evil. People are not what they think; they are what they do.¹³

But as much as we agree with Andrew Vachss in so much of what he said, he unwittingly sets up the refutation for the very foundation of his argument in the article itself when he asserts:

We, as a society, determine whether something is sick or evil.¹⁴

He certainly doesn’t realize it, but he is arguing for mob rule. What happens if the time comes when the “mob” decides pedophilia is perfectly

acceptable, as long as “no one gets hurt?” Or what if the “mob” further decides that it doesn’t even matter anymore if someone *does* get hurt? A thoroughly paganized society may very well return to behaviors that “worked” for pagan societies in the past—such as human sacrifice or gladiatorial contests. Under these systems, people certainly got hurt; but there was no legal sanction against such vile practices. By the way, don’t ever buy the argument that pagan societies of the past were peaceable, gentle, and civilized folks living in complete harmony with nature and each other. Nonsense! Just take a good honest look at the “civilized” Romans or the “peace-loving” Mayans where the blood freely flowed! When human opinion is the moral arbiter of a society, look out! Human opinion changes with the wind that blows, as is proved by our own rapid descent to debauchery.

And what about the fact our own society deemed it socially acceptable to hold slaves? Were the abolitionists wrong to fight the evil that society had determined was good? No, the abolitionists were right, society was wrong. The truth is, society cannot be trusted to determine what is good and evil. Morals are not determined by democratic rule or human opinion. Morals are based upon God’s opinion as spelled out in His Word—the Bible. As we, as a society, reject God’s Word to a greater and greater extent, and as our “Christian hangover” continues to wear off, we shall slide ever deeper into hedonism and barbarism. We can all find ways to justify any behavior we desire to engage in from murder to genocide. Even mass murderers don’t see themselves as evil people. To the Nazis, killing 6-million Jews was necessary. The Khmer Rouge believed slaughtering the Cambodian middle class—the “proletariat”—was crucial in order to establish a more just society. Kids are taught multiculturalism from grade-school—the lie that all cultures are basically equal and that one’s society determines right from wrong. Once these kids gain control of society’s institutions and the government, what will keep them from determining anything and everything is right if that is what the majority wants? And who can argue with these opinions *if all opinions are equal?*

What Can Christians Do?

As citizens of a republic with the right to vote, we have the responsibility to be informed on these issues and vote for candidates to elective office who most reflect Christian views and morals—we have to say “most reflect” because our choices are limited to fallible human beings—which means there are times when we are forced to vote for the lesser of two undesirables. ☺ That alone tells us politics will never be our “salvation.” Beyond that, however, what can we do?

We realize our culture may be too far gone to ever return to the days of *Ozzie and Harriet*. Lassie may never come home. And it is important to realize our job as Christians is to serve as God’s ambassadors in whatever culture we find ourselves—to try to persuade people to be reconciled to God. Our job is *not* to save our culture, and we may be just as unable to do that as the Prophet Jeremiah could turn the cultural tide in ancient Israel when the majority of the people were determined to reject God and His messenger. This doesn’t mean we should *abandon* our culture and head for the hills, but we should be realistic in our expectations and not get sidetracked from the goal of winning people one by one. Having said that, if all believers in Jesus Christ *thought* like Christians, *lived* like Christians, and *loved* like Christians, we would certainly be a force for good in our society.

Love Like Christians

How can we win people to Christ in a culture that grows more paganized with each passing year? It is instructive to take a look at how the early Christians turned their pagan culture upside down. Our day is more like the early days of Christianity than any other time in

between. “Civilized” paganism was *the* culture of the Roman Empire. In the Greco-Roman culture, homosexuality and pedophilia was common and quite acceptable. Something changed the attitudes and behavior of that civilization which lasted until 30 or so years ago. The early believers didn’t have money or political clout. They didn’t have television and radio stations or print media. They didn’t even have large buildings of their own to meet in. But they turned the world upside down. It is a matter of historical record that one way they impacted their culture was through charity. These early Christians truly cared for the pagans around them. Julian, the last pagan emperor of Rome (360-361 AD), attempted to resurrect the pagan religions in hopes of rebuilding the former grandeur of Rome. He poured money into pagan temples, education, and the priesthood. It didn’t seem to help. We get a glimpse into the reason why in a letter he wrote to the high priest in Galatia, Arcasuis:

Why do we not notice that it is their kindness to strangers, their care for the graves of the dead, and the pretended holiness of their lives that have done most to increase atheism [Christianity was considered “atheism” since it rejected the idea of multiple gods.]? I believe that we ought really and truly to practice every one of these virtues. And it is not enough for you alone to practice them, but so must all the priests in Galatia, without exception...In the second place admonish them that no priest may enter a theatre or trade that is base and not respectable...in every city establish hostels in order that strangers may profit by our generosity; I do not mean for our own people only, but for others also who are in need of money...for it is disgraceful that, when no Jew ever has to beg and the impious Galileans [Christians] support both their own poor and ours as well, all men see that our people lack aid from us.¹⁵

Jesus told His followers people would see their good works and glorify the Father in Heaven, and the early church seems to have really put that into practice. Yet, charity isn’t all that is involved in loving our fellow man. Loving our fellow man involves sharing the Gospel with him or her—meeting their most desperate need for forgiveness and reconciliation with God. What use is it to only meet the physical needs of people if they ultimately wind up in Hell? Francis A. Schaeffer spoke directly to this issue:

I have a question in my mind about us as Evangelicals. We fight the Liberals when they say there is no Hell. But do we really believe people are going to Hell?¹⁶

We can’t leave evangelism up to the “professional Christians,” pastors, and such. We are surrounded by lost people who matter to God and should matter to us also. All of us need to be involved in reaching the lost. We cannot influence the people God has put in your path, and only we can reach those in our circle.

This Is Scary

We know evangelism is scary, especially since the root of the Gospel is that human beings are lost in sin which, frankly, offends people who have come to believe “I’m okay, you’re okay.” Sharing the Gospel likewise involves asserting that Jesus is the only way to the Father, which flies in the face of the politically-correct, religious-pluralism fantasy. So courage will be needed for this task, although probably not as much courage as it took for first-century Christians to face the lions.

All of us can reach out to individuals who are struggling through this life and on their way to Hell. Jesus had great compassion on sinners, even the “untouchables,” and extended friendship to them. How can we help those whom we will not “touch” or associate with? There is a “Christian” group led by Fred Phelps that regularly shows up at gay events sporting large signs with such slogans as “God hates fags” and “No fags in Heaven.” How many hearts do you suppose are changed by such a

mean-spirited display? Hearts will only be further hardened to the Gospel and turned away from the God they perceive such people are serving. In fact, we can’t think of a more wrongheaded approach to “evangelism!” We don’t have to seek out gatherings of sinners—they’re everywhere! ☺ We all know individuals who need the loving touch of God in their life. Homosexuals, feminists, obviously lost hedonists and, for that matter, just-as-lost moralists, young and old, rich and poor, red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight, and should be precious *to us* if we have the mind of Christ. If we don’t care about lost people, something is dreadfully wrong!

Shouldn’t Christians Shun Immoral People?

Now wait just a minute, Veinots—aren’t Christians supposed to avoid immoral people like the plague? Are we really to associate with them? Maybe we should let the Apostle Paul answer that:

I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, and swindlers, or with idolators; for then you would have to go out of the world. But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolator, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler – not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? But those who are outside God judges. Remove the wicked man from among yourselves.¹⁷

It is the immoral people *inside* the church Paul says should be judged and removed. God will judge *outsiders*—we don’t have to!

But doesn’t James say “*friendship with the world is enmity with God?*” (James 4:4). Yes, but what does it mean to be friendly with the world? Does it mean (as some would have it) we cannot be friends with unbelievers? No. Friendship with the world involves taking on worldly attitudes and *living* like the world as evident from the context of the passage. Don’t open your *mind* to the world’s belief system, but do open your *heart* to your non-Christian neighbors. In order to extend God’s love and compassion to lost people, we are going to have to befriend the lost.

Wanted—Humility

We are not going to reach the lost if we don’t know any, and we can’t reach them if we go around with a “holier-than-thou” chip on our shoulder. We may not be homosexual, we may never have had an abortion, we may never have abused drugs, but we certainly are sinners! Have we categorized sins to such an extent that we feel superior to the “terrible sinners out there?” That kind of self-righteous attitude is a grievous terrible sin in and of itself, and add to that the fact we are yet full of “impurities” ourselves. Who among us can claim to have arrived at holiness? Look at the list of sins to be found in Romans 1:29-31 (NIV):

They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents, they are senseless, faithless, heartless and ruthless.

Notice *gossip, envy, and disobedience to parents* are right up there with the really “bad” sins! We are just sinners saved by grace; and if we keep this fact uppermost in our minds in our dealings with others, we won’t be tempted to “talk down” to those we hope to reach. We shouldn’t be out to set people straight, but throw them a lifeline. They, too, just like us, can find forgiveness and peace with God.

Live (And Think) Like Christians

It is not enough to love like Christians, we must live like Christians
(Continued on page 15)

HALLELUJAH!

Another Diet

Examining The Teachings of Goerge Malkmus

By Randall Birtell

In March of 1513, Juan Ponce de León launched an expedition to find the “fountain of youth.” Indians had told him of a miraculous spring that rejuvenated those who drank from it. Instead of finding a miraculous fountain, he discovered Florida. In 1521, he was killed by the arrow of an Indian. Death had found Juan.¹

The yearning in Juan to live eternally is not foreign to any of us. God created us with this desire. It is natural to want to live and to live a healthy life. The thought of death is, at least at some level, difficult to embrace. As the Apostle Paul said, *“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose”* (Phil. 1:21-22).

In the Garden of Eden, death was alien. It was a scene of complete perfection where God dwelt with His creation. But sin entered the world when Adam and Eve disobeyed God. The result was expulsion from the garden, toil in this world, and certain death. This is the world in which we now live.

The short life on earth God has given each of us should be cherished. Wisdom in our care for the physical body should be sought. We should have the same attitude as Paul who wanted to live to have *“fruitful labor”* for Christ. But the fact is: The physical body, as we know it, will die. It is then each and every one of us will give an account to God for what we did on this earth. The condition of our body or the length of our life will not be of importance. It is the heart of man that will be judged.

George Malkmus believes too little attention has been given by the church to the physical body. The diet he prescribes supposedly causes one to retain youth, stay healthy, and live a long life. This diet—called the Hallelujah Diet—is not merely a way to health, but according to Malkmus, it is *“God’s way to health.”*

The Birth of the Hallelujah Diet

George Malkmus was diagnosed with colon cancer in 1976.² His mother just died of cancer after following standard medical treatment. Malkmus decided to combat his cancer with a method *“...that did not contradict the teaching of the Bible, as did the administering of drugs.”*³ He changed his diet. This was the beginning of what he now calls the Hallelujah Diet.

The Hallelujah Diet entails eating certain foods at certain times. Breakfast consists of one tablespoon of Barleygreen* and a piece of fresh fruit later in the morning if you get hungry. At lunch, another tablespoon of Barleygreen and a freshly extracted 8 oz. glass of carrot juice; and 30 minutes later, some fresh fruit or vegetables.

Supper again begins with a tablespoon of Barleygreen and another 8 oz. glass of freshly extracted carrot juice. Thirty minutes later, you can eat a large green, leafy vegetable salad and, then, the only cooked food of the day. Some choices for this cooked food can be a baked potato, brown rice, whole-grain pasta, or steamed vegetables. The ideal diet will be 85% raw food and 15% cooked food.⁴

What can’t be eaten on the Hallelujah Diet is meat of any kind, dairy products, salt, sugar, white flour, and caffeine. Malkmus claims *“Eighteen years of research has revealed meat as it is produced today to be the single most dangerous food that we put into our body.”*⁵ The reason he believes meat is dangerous is because he claims it is the main cause of colon cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, and adult-onset diabetes.⁶ Dairy products are taboo because they, too, come from an animal source. Malkmus states that *“The only source of bad cholesterol (LDL) is animal products! **Animal products are not good food!!!**”* [emphasis in original]⁷ Salt is excluded from the diet because it *“is an inorganic sodium compound formed by the union of sodium and chlorine that is extremely toxic to the body, causing it to retain fluid in an effort to keep this protoplasmic poison in suspension and out of the cells.”*⁸ According to Malkmus white flour *“...clogs up your intestines, creates excess mucus in your sinus passages and white flour depletes your nutrient levels as your body works to digest it.”*⁹ Finally, he calls caffeine an *“extremely dangerous substance”* and something we should completely eliminate from our diet.¹⁰

These claims made by Malkmus are serious charges against the standard food groups with which most of us grew up. I would certainly agree with Malkmus that most Americans need more raw fruits and vegetables in our diet and less hamburgers and fries. However, Malkmus does not back up his dogmatic claims about the ills of such food with hard evidence. Rather, he uses the testimonies of himself and others as his field of research.

Several scientific and dietary responses have been given to the Hallelujah Diet. Dietary experts Ellen Coleman and Rebecca Long have this to say about the Hallelujah Diet: *“Although a vegetarian diet can be healthful, the extreme diet advocated by Malkmus may result in malnutrition, especially in children and adolescents. The National Council Against Health Fraud has received reports of individuals not suffering any particular illness who adopted this diet only to become thin and gaunt looking, lacking energy and vitality, but claiming that they feel the best they have at any time previously.”*¹¹

The Bible: God’s Manual for Diet

I have spoken personally with Malkmus on two occasions.¹² Our

conversations focused on his interpretation of certain passages of Scripture. As I expressed my concerns with his twisting of Scripture, his rebuttals would ultimately always turn pragmatic. He uses Scripture out of context and selects only the portions that seem to support his beliefs. Let us now investigate the failed attempt of Malkmus to use the authority of the Bible to advance the Hallelujah Diet.

Malkmus believes his Hallelujah Diet is *God's Way to Ultimate Health*.** He says that in Genesis 1:29 God prescribed the perfect diet for mankind. In this verse, Moses wrote: **"Then God said, 'Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you.'**" Malkmus teaches that "the only nourishment God ever intended to enter these body temples of ours is raw fruits and vegetables. Period! That's it!!!"¹³

The idea people did not eat meat prior to the flood is not without warrant. The Zondervan *NIV Study Bible* states that based on Genesis 1:29-30, "People and animals seem to be portrayed as originally vegetarian."¹⁴ Further boosting this idea is the specific declaration God gave to Noah after the flood. **"Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant"** (Gen. 9:3).

The meaning of Genesis 1:29 is clear. In the Garden of Eden, God commanded Adam and Eve to eat fruit and vegetables. The denotation of Genesis 9:3 is equally clear. God now gave them the opportunity to eat the meat of animals. It is in his interpretation of the latter passage where Malkmus goes seriously off course.

Malkmus understands the events of the first nine chapters in Genesis in a unique way. First, "When God created man, He placed him in a garden and told him his diet was to consist of raw fruits and vegetables."¹⁵ Second, man "lived an average of 912 years without any recorded sickness."¹⁶ Third, "Sickness did not begin at the fall. I was taught that all through my life. Sickness, my friend, didn't begin until almost two-thousand years after the fall."¹⁷

It is the contention of Malkmus that God purposely gave meat to people so their life would be shortened. The people had messed up, and God was going to wipe them out. But Noah found favor with God, so He changed His mind and decided not to let man live so long.¹⁸ Meat was the tool God chose to carry out this task.

The Bible: God's Manual for Faith and Practice

This understanding of Genesis 1-9 is an absolute torture of the text and an attack on the Gospel itself. The result of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). God created Adam and Eve and placed them in a pristine garden. He commanded them not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (Gen. 2:9) for if they did they would die (Gen. 3:3). God set before Adam and Eve the rules of this new world. However, they chose to attempt to define their own rules and ate of the fruit (Gen. 3:6). They immediately became aware of their own nakedness (Gen. 3:7), were not allowed to eat of the Tree of Life, and death became imminent (Gen. 3:22).

Death entered the world because of The Fall of Man. A necessary predecessor to death is sickness of one or more body systems. People do not die of old age. Before any death occurs (natural or accidental), at least one part of the body fails to function correctly—it is sick. Sickness is, therefore, a mandatory condition that befell mankind when Adam and Eve were displaced from the garden.

It is the very fact of the bodily resurrection of Christ that our

sins are covered. As Paul told the Corinthians, **"...if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins"** (1 Cor. 15:17). It was sin that brought death to mankind, and it was Christ who brought us life. In eternity, our soul will be reunited with our body. It will be for us as it was for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Malkmus, himself, cannot separate the ideas of sickness and death. "Sickness and disease and physical problems are not normal! They are the penalty one pays for violating God's natural laws!"¹⁹ Malkmus thus believes sickness and disease were not a result of spiritual disobedience as Genesis 3 explains. He asserts sickness only came into the world when God gave man meat to eat after the flood. He gives no cohesive explanation for why or how death was a part of the world before the flood. But the fact is, death comes only as the result of sickness. Thus, sickness was present before the flood because death was present before the flood.

According to Malkmus "one of the greatest tragedies in history is the change in diet man made from the original raw vegetarian/fruitarian diet God gave to mankind in the Garden of Eden in Genesis 1:29 to one of meat and cooked and artificial foods."²⁰ If this is true, then the "greatest tragedy" of all time must be credited to none other than God Almighty. It was God who made the dietary change in Genesis 9:3. However, the decree of Genesis 9:3 was not a tragedy.

The giving of meat in Genesis 9:3 is part of a larger pronouncement by God. The first four words of chapter nine are **"And God blessed Noah"** (Gen. 9:1a). God did not give meat to curse man. He gave the birds of the air and the creatures of the ground as a blessing to Noah.

Malkmus completely tortures Genesis 9:3 by reading his own meaning into the passage and then misappropriates Genesis 1:29 as God's diet for man. He boldly proclaims, "Yes, heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes and a host of other diseases can be eliminated if Christians will return to the Bible and observe the natural laws God gave man thousands of years ago!"²¹

As a pastor, Malkmus saw a steady dose of sickness, disease, and death. When he was cured of cancer, he felt the call of God to take his dietary information to the people of God so they might not suffer like those in his church. There is little doubt Malkmus is passionate about his message.²² However, his use of Hosea 4:6 to substantiate his ministry is completely without warrant.

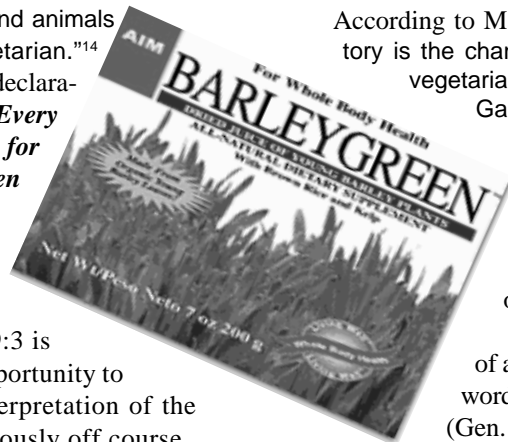
Malkmus chooses only to quote "my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."²³ The verse in its entirety is: **"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priests; since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children."**

Hosea was not speaking to Israel about the Hallelujah Diet. Israel was not following the law of Moses, and the Israelites were thus being destroyed. God was calling His people back to the knowledge of Him, specifically—the law of Moses.

One final example of his biblical ineptness is found in his interpretation of Mark 5:25-26. In this passage, a woman with a flow of blood for 12 years could not be healed by physicians. These are the verses Malkmus uses as a subtitle in the fifth chapter of his book *When Christians Get Sick*.²⁴ In this chapter, he warns his readers of the ineffectiveness of the medical community and the drugs they prescribe.

Whatever one thinks of the medical community, we can be as-

(Continued on next page)



“Diet” (Continued from page 9)

sured Mark 5:25-26 does not address this issue. The point of the story of the bleeding woman was to show the divine power of Jesus. Man could not heal the woman but Jesus miraculously did. Jesus was God, and the people should have heeded His words.

Barleygreen²⁵

Popeye the sailor man was birthed from the imagination of Elzie Segar in 1929. Popeye began his stellar career in a comic strip as a minor character. He hit the silver screen in 1933 and still can be seen in various places today. Most will remember the prominence spinach played in the stories. Popeye would be in a desperate situation with his nemesis Brutus and would say something like, “Tha’s all I can stands, and I can’t stands no more!” With that, Popeye would pop open a can of spinach and snarf it down. His body would be energized with strength, and he would finish off his foe.

Spinach became a symbol of strength for an entire generation. Consumption of spinach in the 1930’s rose 33 percent. If it was good enough for Popeye, it’s good enough for me! Popeye was seen as such an advocate for spinach that a statue was erected in his honor in the spinach-growing community of Crystal City, Texas.²⁶

For Malkmus, Barleygreen generates similar excitement as spinach did for Popeye. Of all the elements of the Hallelujah Diet Malkmus declares it is “the single, most important food I put into my body, and I always consume at least three tablespoons daily.”²⁷

The one component of the Hallelujah Diet that cannot be grown in your garden is Barleygreen. Barleygreen is a powder first created in the twentieth century by Yoshihide Hagiwara from barley grass juice.²⁸ According to American Image Marketing (AIM), it contains 18 amino acids, vitamins, minerals, and chlorophyll.²⁹ It should be noted that healthcare professionals and dieticians find the nutrients in Barleygreen are “insignificant.”³⁰

Barleygreen is a processed substance distributed by AIM. They explain the production process as follows: “The barley used for Barleygreen™ is organically grown and harvested when the leaves contain the widest spectrum of nutrients. The leaves are then juiced (not milled, as many other barley grass products are) and spray-dried, using a patented, low-temperature processing method. Brown rice and kelp are added, and the result is Barleygreen™.”³¹ While there are several other products³² based on Hagiwara’s process, Malkmus will only use the AIM product. In his words, “It is vitally important to me that the BARLEYGREEN powder I use comes from AMERICAN IMAGE MARKETING and that it contains kelp.”³³

So what does Barleygreen do for the body? Malkmus consumes Barleygreen because it builds “new, strong, healthy, vital, and vibrant cells.”³⁴ These claims are not validated by AIM. In an e-mail I received from the AIM On-Line Team, they state, “AIM does not make specific health claims for any of our products including Barleygreen.”³⁵ This denial of any health benefits seems to stem from an FDA order in 1988 ordering AIM “to stop making unproven claims for the product and to stop disparaging the American food supply.”³⁶

AIM is a multilevel marketing company of which Malkmus is a representative. Hallelujah Acres³⁷ sells a 7oz. canister of Barleygreen for \$34.34.³⁸ They also sell other AIM products, juicers, books, and a variety of health foods and literature.

The plea to return to a Genesis 1:29 diet consisting of raw fruits and vegetables is the constant message of Malkmus. Why, then, is Barleygreen a required element of the Hallelujah Diet? Since Barleygreen was only created in the late-twentieth century, it would have been impossible for anyone to follow God’s diet prior to that time. The hard facts are that Adam and Eve did not eat Barleygreen. The Hallelujah Diet is Malkmus’ way to ultimate health, not God’s.

It’s True Because it Works

In the introduction of his book *God’s Way to Ultimate Health*, Malkmus addresses his critics: “If you find something in the text of this book a little hard to swallow, then start paying closer attention to the testimonials of people who have actually put these teachings to practice. These are real people with real testimonials. Again, the bottom line is results.”³⁹

Personal testimonies are the foundation of the for-profit ministry of Hallelujah Acres. Testimonies are displayed on their web site, books, newsletters, and most everywhere the Hallelujah Diet is promoted. It is evident from the words of Malkmus that results are all that matter. Malkmus uses this pragmatic justification to deflect criticism of the Hallelujah Diet and his novel biblical interpretation.

Some of his claims seem astounding. For instance, he states when animal fat is removed from one’s diet “they reduce their chances of ever having a heart attack or stroke by over 96 percent” [emphasis in original].⁴⁰ His claims about how to avoid cancer are equally as dogmatic. “If a person doesn’t smoke or eat animal products or consume sugar, their chances of ever developing cancer are practically nil.”⁴¹

Malkmus gives little medical or scientific documentation to support his claims. Rather, he uses dogmatic assertions that certain foods are bad, and he reinforces these claims by the thousands of testimonies he has received. The lack of hard evidence supporting the benefits of the Hallelujah Diet lead health professionals like Stephen Barrett of Quackwatch⁴² to conclude the dietary methods of Malkmus are not trustworthy.⁴³

It is the strength of Malkmus’ assertions regarding the effectiveness of his Hallelujah Diet that is most disturbing. These kinds of allegations lead people away from sound medical treatment.

Most Americans should eat more raw fruits and vegetables and less food that is high in fat. Barrett notes, “It is well established that low-fat eating lowers blood cholesterol levels and that high intakes of fruits and vegetables are associated with lower incidence of cardiovascular disease and certain cancers. ...For these reasons, the risk of these conditions is lower for users of Hallelujah Diet than it is for the average American diet. However, the difference for most people is probably not great...”⁴⁴

The results of the Hallelujah Diet in the life of Malkmus have recently been challenged. On Thursday, July 12, 2001, he had a stroke.⁴⁵ Malkmus believes the stroke was caused by a hectic schedule and stress in his life.⁴⁶

Malkmus has strong words concerning the effectiveness of modern drugs. He writes, “People cannot be drugged (poisoned) into health! Drugs create problems, rather than solve them! To regain health, the sick person must cleanse the body of the drugs and toxic substances that have accumulated and then provide the body with the proper building materials and influences that will allow the body to purify, repair and rebuild itself!”⁴⁷

In the process of regaining his health after the stroke, Malkmus



chose to ignore such advice. In Health Tip #194 he writes: "I am currently working closely with a medical doctor, taking two low-dosage blood pressure medications, and have seen my blood pressure drop to normal levels."⁴⁸ So it appears, even in the life of Malkmus, at least *some* problems are solved with medicine.

Conclusion

Malkmus is an energetic and friendly man. I do not question his genuine concern for the people who come to him with health and diet concerns. What is alarming is the message he preaches. His gospel is perfect health for the physical body. This good news will not last for Malkmus or anyone else. The ultimate sickness of death finds each and every living being.

Contrast this with what the good news of Scripture says about this temporal world. ***"For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"*** (1 Cor. 15:53-57). Our hope is an eternal hope of which this world knows nothing of.

We will all get sick and die. Barring the imminent return of Christ, there are no exceptions. Yet, this does not give us license to abuse our body. The body is a creation of God and should be respected. There will be a one-to-one correspondence between the body that perishes on earth and the one that is ***"raised in glory"*** (1 Cor. 15:43).

To claim God has a specific diet we must follow is a serious declaration. This is precisely what Malkmus does. He attempts to lay a biblical foundation for his assertions by pouring his own meaning into Scripture. But mere scattered Bible references do not make a teaching biblical. When the words of Malkmus are tested in light of the Word of God, they fail miserably.

A look at the ministry of Jesus also presents an insurmountable attack on a God-ordained meatless diet. Jesus fed the multitudes fish (Matt. 15:36; John 6:11), helped the disciples catch fish (John 21:6), and ate fish (John 21:10, 15). Jesus, being God, could not contradict his own teaching. It seems clear that at least one form of meat—fish—was not prohibited by God.

Upon further examination of the New Testament, other evidence is found that meat is not prohibited from our diet. The Lord revealed to Peter while in Joppa even the animals that Jews formerly saw as unclean were clean and good for food (Acts 10:11-13). Paul even rebuked Cephas because he withdrew from eating with the Gentiles where they most certainly ate meat (Gal. 2:11-12).


Those who choose to eat only fruit and vegetables do so under the freedom of the Gospel. Those who eat meat and other foods do so under the same freedom. We do not find favor with God by what we put in our stomachs. Our relationship with God is sealed by the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

God's Word is the final authority. The letter to the Romans reads, ***"Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions. One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only. The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand"*** (Rom. 14:1-4).

The message of Malkmus is divisive. He claims his dietary method is superior to all others because it is God's way to eat. Those who do not follow his way are conforming to the world and are breaking the principles of God. He states, "As a result the Christian community lives in constant violation of almost every fundamental principal of life God established when it comes to the body/temple God gave us and how we should live here on earth. We violate God's principles by what we feed our bodies and minds, and then when they break down, we violate God's principles in how to get well. Yes, sadly the Christian community has conformed to the world to which God said ***"be not conformed."***" [emphasis in original]⁴⁹

So according to Malkmus, those who are not on the Hallelujah Diet are violating principles of God. The author of Romans encourages freedom in the area of diet. Malkmus draws a line in the sand separating the standard American diet as the diet of the world and the Hallelujah Diet as the diet of those following God's principles.

By proclaiming the Hallelujah Diet is God's way of eating, Malkmus leads people into the bondage of legalism. In contrast, Jesus brings broken and imperfect people into His eternal kingdom, where perfect health ultimately will be realized in Heaven.

There is not a specific dietary formula a Christian is bound to follow. God's ultimate way to health is through Jesus Christ and Him alone. It is only when the believer receives a glorified body that sickness and death are conquered. Then the words of John the Revelator will come to pass. ***"[A]nd He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away"*** (Rev. 21:4). 

All quotations are taken from the New American Standard Bible.

*Barleygreen is a registered trademark of AIM (American Image Marketing).

**Title of George Malkmus' 1995 book.

Endnotes

- 1.) Ponce de León, Juan." Britannica 2002 Deluxe Edition. Copyright © 1994-2002 Britannica.com Inc. July 26, 2002. 2.) George H. Malkmus, *Why Christians Get Sick*, 15th printing (1989; Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2001), 5. 3.) Ibid. 4.) George H. Malkmus, *God's Way to Ultimate Health*, 17th printing (1995; Shelby, NC: Hallelujah Acres Publishing, 2001), 92. 5.) Ibid., 88-89. 6.) Ibid., 88. 7.) Ibid., 89. 8.) Ibid. 9.) Ibid. 10.) Ibid. 11.) <http://www.hcrc.org/faqs/malkmus.html> on-line as of July 16, 2002. 12.) Randall Birtell, impromptu discussion with George Malkmus at a Health Seminar that was part of the 8th Annual Tulsa Prophecy Conference, April 6, 2002. Randall Birtell and Randy Ming, phone interview with George Malkmus, August 4, 2002. 13.) *God's Way to Ultimate Health*, 48. 14.) *The NIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 8. 15.) *God's Way to Ultimate Health*, 76. 16.) Ibid. 17.) *How to Eliminate Sickness* Video, Hallelujah Acres, 1999. 18.) Ibid. 19.) *Why Christians Get Sick*, 99. 20.) *God's Way to Ultimate Health*, 78. 21.) *Why Christians Get Sick*, xi. 22.) I personally listened to Dr. Malkmus in Tulsa, OK on April 6, 2002. He is a very charismatic individual who oozes with energy when he is on stage. 23.) *Why Christians Get Sick*, 1. 24.) Ibid., 37. 25.) Hallelujah Acres is currently preparing to also offer a product called Barleymax. Also, AIM is replacing their Barleygreen product with BarleyLife. 26.) "Segar, Elzie (Crisler)." Britannica 2002 Deluxe Edition. Copyright © 1994-2002 Britannica.com Inc. July 27, 2002. 27.) *God's Way to Ultimate Health*, 92. 28.) From the AIM Companies product flyer for Barleygreen, AIM International, 2000. 29.) Ibid. 30.) <http://www.hcrc.org/faqs/barleygreen.html> on-line as of April 1, 2002 and <http://www.ncahf.org/articles/a-b/barleygreen.html>. 31.) Ibid. 32.) eg. Green Magma and Just Barley 33.) *God's Way to Ultimate Health*, 92. 34.) Rev. George Malkmus, "The Hallelujah Diet," *Back to the Garden*, Summer/Fall 2002 issue, 5. 35.) Sharon from AIM On-Line Team, e-mail to Randall Birtell, received April 8, 2002. 36.) www.hcrc.org/faqs/barleygreen.html on-line as of April 1, 2002. 37.) Hallelujah Acres is the for-profit business of Malkmus. 38.) Catalog listing insert, *Back to the Garden*, Summer/Fall 2002 issue, 11. 39.) *God's Way to Ultimate Health*, iii. 40.) Ibid., 48. 41.) Ibid., 49. 42.) Quackwatch is a non-profit corporation whose purpose is to combat health-related frauds, myths, fads, and fallacies. Its primary focus is on quackery-related information that is difficult or impossible to get elsewhere. 43.) <http://www.quackwatch.com/11ind/malkmus.html> on-line as of June 14, 2002. 44.) Ibid. 45.) Health Tip #194: Rev. Malkmus Experiences Mild Stroke, Hallelujah Acres weekly e-mails to e-mail list, 2001. (Also available at www.hacres.com) 46.) Ibid. 47.) *Why Christians Get Sick*, 43. 48.) Health Tip #194: Rev. Malkmus Experiences Mild Stroke. 49.) *God's Way to Ultimate Health*, 81.

In The Shadow Of "God's Anointed" TRAPPED

Breaking Free From An Unbiblical Concept

By Ron Henzel

*As for you, the anointing which you
received from Him abides in you ...
and just as it has taught you, you
abide in Him.*

—The Apostle John—

1 John 2:27 [NASB]

You may have heard someone tell you God “anointed” him or her to be your leader. Or, perhaps, someone else pointed to another person and told you that person had a special “anointing” from God’s Spirit to be your teacher, shepherd, or whatever. That may have sounded pretty wonderful at the time, and if so, you undoubtedly began looking up to that individual, idealizing him or her, and marveling over the fact God would bless you so much by bringing such a person into your life.

Hey! — was that a beam of sunlight or did some kind of halo seem to be forming around his head when they called him the “anointed” man of God?

How those early days seemed so heavenly at times!

But after a while, the word “anointed” began to take on a different connotation. Maybe it started when you first heard a sermon on the text “**Touch not mine anointed!**” (1 Chr. 16:22; Psa. 105:15). Suddenly, to question the anointed leader was to question God!

In the beginning when followers spoke of the leader’s anointing, the stress was on his spiritual *gifts*; now the stress was on his supposed spiritual *authority*. How did this subtle shift occur? Was it because you missed something they explained earlier? Or did a new meaning sneak in through the back door?

If you even dared to let yourself entertain that last thought, it was only for a moment. You realized if any other followers had the slightest idea of what you were thinking it could mean big trouble. Were you *already* starting to question God’s anointed? You decided to “leave it in the Lord’s hands” for the time being, hoping He’d eventually help you better understand it all.

But over weeks and months, this teaching became more frequent, more emphatic, and more burdensome. Didn’t David refuse

to oppose the evil King Saul, even though he was out to kill David, because Saul was “the Lord’s anointed” (1 Sam. 24:6)? Therefore, how dare you disagree with your leader or call into question his moral judgments! He’s the *anointed of God!* Even if you think he’s morally wrong—even if he asks you to do something that goes against your conscience—to go against him is to go against God!

Then it dawned on you something like that was bound to happen. It seemed inevitable you would eventually run into some kind of conflict with the leadership. Even though you knew of no immediate problems, your common sense told you it would be just a matter of time.

Your leader had many in his flock, and to help manage them all, he declared (on his own authority) several of his assistants were “anointed” leaders over various sections of the congregation; and they, in turn, had “anointed” leaders under them. Eventually, you realized you could hardly do anything without going through one of “the anointed,” and each one had obvious shortcomings and noticeable personality quirks. So it had to happen, and one day it did. You did everything in your power to carefully and respectfully express your sincere convictions and do what you thought God wanted without making any waves, but you soon found yourself accused of harboring “rebellion” in your heart—rebellion against *God’s anointed*, no less! And that was only the beginning of one long, horrendous nightmare.

• • •

You’ve been out for some time now, but all the Scriptures they used and arguments they brought to bear against you still churn ferociously through your head, haunting you in the darkness through the echoes of sobs that were once your only company through many sleepless nights. You hope the worst of your despair is over. The empty, frightened shell of a person you were (and sometimes still are) when you escaped, occasionally senses a ray of sunshine. But recalling the trauma of that departure can still drain all color from the most beautiful of days and replace the happiest of moments with an aching hollowness.

You wonder: *Were they right? Have I sealed my fate by rebelling against God’s anointed? All those verses! Do I have any right to think I understand the Bible better than they?*

When your mind isn’t racing for answers, it’s stuck in a kind of cerebral mud, not even bothering to spin its wheels out of a sense of futility as the gloom of another hopeless day oozes down around you.

I know how it is. I’ve spent many a month trapped inside such spiritual bleakness.

God put me under that spiritual authority and I rebelled! What will become of me?

Thoughts like these can form a kind of emotional undertow that takes you away from your family and friends every bit as much as did your former leader. To the casual observer, you may appear liberated; but inside, you're still drowning in a tormented sea of unresolved questions.

For quite a while, I searched desperately for a quick fix. Each day renewed my quest for "the breakthrough" I hoped would rescue me from unrelenting spiritual torture. For quite some time, I wondered if I'd ever find my way back to a close walk with God. **"How long, O LORD? Will You hide Yourself forever?"** (Psalm 89:46, NASB).

And then it dawned on me: My ex-leader didn't mess up all my thinking in a single day. He did it methodically, and hence, slowly—over a long period of time. So, I shouldn't expect to be able to clean out all his mental garbage overnight. In fact, I realized the whole concept of "the breakthrough" was something he'd saddled me with as he rode me up and down his emotional roller coaster. Each time he won another battle to gain further control of my life, he credited me with having a "breakthrough" (which, in practical terms, simply meant he'd conquered yet another area of my Christian freedom)! He'd found a way to *break through* the proper boundaries between biblical fellowship and carnal control, and he encouraged me to keep letting him have more control by flattering me with talk of my "breakthroughs."

God doesn't work that way. Yes, He does give us flashes of spiritual insight, but not in order to fool us into surrendering to Him. Yes, He enlightens our minds (Lk. 24:45), but He doesn't *replace* our minds, nor do our thinking for us. He renews our minds, but not apart from our own efforts to think seriously about His truth.

So, I finally resigned myself to the fact the path back to sanity would be long, and that it led straight through God's Word. To ensure my dependence on him, my spiritual abuser had worked hard to destroy any confidence that I could understand Scripture without his help. God, on the other hand, tells us His Word is clear enough for anyone to understand it's primary message (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Would I believe God or my ex-leader?

On a purely intellectual level, it was an obviously simple choice, but I had to live it out on a spiritual battlefield where Satan took advantage of the fact I was badly out of practice in the use of my spiritual armor (Eph. 6:11-17). On some days, it was truly terrifying; but I lived to talk about it. I'm confident you will, too. Meanwhile, I wouldn't mind discussing a few things I learned about the whole business of "anointed" church leaders with you. It all boils down to a fundamental misunderstanding about how to interpret Scripture.



Perhaps you've noticed all the Scriptures those people used to support their "anointed" teaching came from the Old Testament. There's a good reason for that: no verse in the New Testament supports it.

Why is that? Is it because the Old Testament was wrong in this area, and the New Testament corrected the error? Is it because Christians can't learn anything from the Old Testament? Certainly not.

Instead, it's because of the relationship between the Old and New Testaments. You see, the Bible is a book of *progressive rev-*

elation—over the many centuries during which His Word was being written, God progressively revealed more of Himself, more of His purpose, and more of His plan to more of His people. And this progress meant change, because God was working toward a goal, and the realization of His goal was going to make a *huge* difference in human history. Christ and His cross would change everything. This is something so many Christians, including those who should know better, fail to take into account when trying to apply Scriptures from the Old Testament.

There were things practiced in the Old Testament that became obsolete in the New Testament, because they had fulfilled their purposes, and God said it was time to replace them with something better. A case in point: The Old Testament anointings have been replaced by something better. What, you ask, could be better than an anointing? The *fulfillment* of what the anointings symbolized!

You see, the relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament is much like the relationship between a prediction and its fulfillment. Once the fulfillment arrives, the prediction has served its purpose and has actually stopped *being* a prediction. It's now a *fulfilled* prediction and no longer points to the future because the future it foresaw is now in the past. Thus, the prediction should no longer command the center of our attention, and we should no longer cling to it, because the fulfillment was the whole *point* of the prediction. The fulfilled prediction now only serves to remind us of the reliability of the One Who made it.

So what did those Old Testament anointings symbolize? They were symbolic *predictions* (or figurative foreshadowings) of Christ. Now that we have Him, we don't *depend* on Old Testament predictions and foreshadowings; and, therefore, we no longer depend on Old Testament anointings. God doesn't have a whole lot of use for them, either, other than reminders to us of His faithfulness. They're also useful for apologetics purposes, but not for current Christian practice.

The Bible makes this same comparison in metaphorical form when it teaches the relationship between Old and New Testaments is like the relationship between a shadow and the person casting it (Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 8:4-6, 10:1). Before Christ came, the ancient Israelites only had predictions and foreshadowings of Him. All those centuries before He came can be compared to times when someone is coming our way, but all we can see is the person's shadow. While we may get excited if we recognize it as the shadow of someone we love, seeing the shadow doesn't excite us nearly as much as looking into our loved one's eyes when we finally have him or her in front of us.

Those who cling to "anointings" and "anointed leaders" are unwittingly clinging to mere shadows of Christ and losing sight of the substance of His Person. Instead of looking straight into His eyes, beholding Him, and honoring Him, they're crawling around in a vain effort to grasp His shadow, usually without even realizing that that's what they're doing. They certainly don't appreciate how much of Christ they're missing. And He's not at all happy about it.

How can you know what I'm saying is true, you ask? Please, bear with me as I explain.

The *only* people who were anointed in the Old Testament were prophets (1 Kgs. 19:16), priests (Ex. 28:41) and kings (1 Sam. 15:1). These three offices symbolically foreshadowed our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the *ultimate* and *final* Prophet, Priest and King.

In ancient Israel, the act of anointing (by pouring perfumed oil on the subject's head) was the standard way of declaring a person

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to be chosen by God as a prophet, a priest, or a king. It might be helpful to think of the anointing of kings, for instance, as comparable to the kind of coronation ceremony we still occasionally witness in countries that have monarchs. Every culture on earth has some kind of ceremony that effectively installs new leaders in their offices.

These days, we *inaugurate* presidents and prime ministers whom the electorate chooses. We *ordain* ministers whom churches choose. In ancient Israel, they *anointed* prophets, priests and kings whom God chose—and those three offices combined foreshadowed Christ Himself.

While God is free to send prophets whenever He chooses, it’s a simple fact that, in more than 2,000 years, other than Christ Himself, He hasn’t sent a real prophet since John the Baptist. That’s because He wants us to remember Christ is our Prophet!

We also no longer have priests who regularly offer sacrifices for sins, because Christ’s death on the cross was *the* perfect sacrifice, that covered all our sins, and put a complete end to any further need for that type of priest. Christ is now our great and sympathetic High Priest!

Furthermore, Christians don’t (or shouldn’t) go around anointing “kings” for believers to follow, because we *have* our anointed King — the *Lord* Jesus Christ!

But, someone might ask, can’t we talk about Christians being “anointed” in a more general sense? Maybe we can’t talk about anointing one Christian as the leader of *all* believers, but can’t we talk about Christians being “anointed” as leaders, say, over local churches or denominations?

That’s a fair question. Now, let me ask you a question: Is Christ the sufficient source for *all* of your spiritual life—both in this world and in the world to come? If so, why would you want to “anoint” someone besides Him? If He’s not that sufficient source, then you need to re-read your New Testament (especially Colossians 2)! I’m afraid the real reason so many clamor for “anointed ministry” these days is because they aren’t satisfied with Jesus. They act as though the “anointed” person they can see, hear, and potentially touch is somehow more “real” than *the* Anointed One Who sits at the right hand of the Father, when precisely the opposite is true. Any self-proclaimed, “anointed” minister is as phony as a lunar real estate agent.

But, I won’t dodge the question. Yes, it’s true many Christians talk about “anointings” today. They talk about everything from anointed leaders (for example, over local churches), to anointed TV preachers, to anointed singers, to anointed puppet ministries. They mean well. They’re simply trying to honor those whom they believe are truly gifted and called by God to their ministries, so I would never condemn them for this practice. I just wish they’d find a more appropriate word. The New Testament doesn’t support this use of “anointed,” and it plays straight into the hands of those who teach we must obey “anointed” human leaders the same way we obey Christ. Once the word becomes commonplace among a group of Christians, all cult leaders, false shepherds, and other spiritual abusers have to do is string together a few Old Testament verses to create massive confusion and enslave God’s children. We’ve seen this time and time again.

In sharp contrast to that authoritarianism, notice the only time the New Testament uses the word “anointed” — other than in reference to Christ — is when it discusses the anointing shared by *all* believers (2 Cor. 1:21-22; 1 Jn. 2:20-28). The New Testament

teaches there is no special class of “anointed” Christians. Instead, it teaches *all* believers receive a spiritual anointing from the Christ of Scripture that remains in us, reminding us to stick close to Him—*not* to some human leader (1 Jn. 2:27); and, thus, *He* will be our source of security and stability (2 Cor. 1:21-22).

All believers have the Holy Spirit’s anointing (1 Jn. 2:20-28). Therefore, just because someone is a “Christian leader,” it doesn’t automatically follow the “leader” has more of God’s Spirit than any other run-of-the-mill Christian. This being the case, true Christian leaders will *not* ask believers to do anything that violates their consciences (Ac. 5:29). True Christian leaders will *not* order others around like their own personal servants, but will serve *them* instead (Mk. 10:45). And true Christian leaders will *not* make accusations against other believers that cannot be proven in keeping with Scripture (Mat. 18:15-17). Under these criteria, does your former (or even current!) leader sound like a *true* Christian leader?

True Christian leaders will remind their followers that, in Christ, believers enjoy a relationship with the Father that is better than the one had by Old Testament believers. In Galatians 3:23-26, the Apostle Paul compares their position to that of spiritual children, in contrast to our position of spiritual adulthood. Through the transforming events recorded in the gospels—Christ’s life, death, resurrection, and ascension—God’s people came of age. We grew up, as it were; and, thus, we no longer need the things children need. We don’t need the Law to act as our spiritual babysitter (Gal. 3:25). We don’t need a human “king” to rule over us so we can live in his reflected glory. We don’t need “anointed” leaders in whom to take pride.

The problem is, however, that like so many children, we don’t want to grow up. Being adults means taking responsibility for ourselves, and that seems pretty scary at times. We’d rather pawn that responsibility off on somebody else, and let them take care of us. Just as Israel demanded a king so they could power posture like the other nations (1 Sam. 8), we want someone who will strut back-and-forth and say the things we’re too timid to say in public so that we’ll respect him enough to do whatever he says. We want to go backwards in God’s plan, and there are all-too-many preachers, gurus, and shepherds out there who’d be more than happy to take us there. True Christian leaders will get out of God’s way and let us grow up. Is that the kind of leader you have?



When God transitioned His people from the Old Testament to the New, things changed. The nature of anointing changed because Christ’s coming changed the role of human leadership among His people. In the Old Testament, anointing was *physical*; and the role of human leadership in Israel was to *foreshadow* the authority of Christ. In the New Testament, anointing is *spiritual*; and the role of human leadership in the Church is to *declare* and *defer* to the authority of Christ.

Therefore, your leader—whoever he or she is—does not *have* Christ’s authority. Only *Christ* has Christ’s authority (Mat. 28:18), and *He* *never* “delegates” it to anyone. Therefore, your leader cannot *exercise* Christ’s authority. He or she can only call upon you to submit to Christ’s authority.

Does this mean there is no such thing as church discipline? Of course not, but that’s a discussion for another time.

Just remember: Church leaders are *appointed* according to scriptural qualifications (Tit. 1:5), not anointed. This means believers don’t need any special “anointing” beyond what they

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already have as Christians to serve in church leadership. However, it also means leadership appointments are as fallible as those who do the appointing. There is no such thing in the Bible as “appointment for life” or “once an elder, always an elder.” So, if an appointed leader is subject to recall, how much more suspect are the credentials of a *self*-appointed leader? Such “leadership” is more than merely worthless—it’s downright *dangerous!*

Christ has come, and He remains with us each day even though He’s ascended into heaven (Mat. 28:20). The anointing He received is

“War” (Continued from page 7)

as well. The church today, rather than collectively influencing society for the better, has allowed herself to be influenced by the world and to reflect the culture in which we find ourselves.

Christian Pollster George Barna has been sounding a warning to the church for many years now. The latest issue of *Christianity Today* has a feature article on Barna. They quote him as saying:

“There was such a radical gap between what we heard Christians professing they believed and the values and the lifestyle that grew out of the values.”¹⁸

Christianity Today goes on to report Barna’s findings:

Marriages, for example, were as likely to come unglued for believers as for unbelievers. Churchgoers didn’t seem to have any real understanding of the Bible’s distinctive message; many practicing Christians believe that the Bible teaches that “God helps those who help themselves.” A morally relativistic American culture was shaping Christians more than Christians were shaping the culture.


More frustrating yet, churches seemed barely aware of the problem. “You go talk to pastors, and hear them talk about all the programs and all the numbers and the money and the buildings,” Barna says. “But you almost never hear them talk about how the lives of their people were so demonstrably different that people had to pay attention to the cause of Christ and take it seriously.”¹⁹

Sadly, we don’t live or think all that differently from the outside world. Why should they forsake their sin if we don’t forsake ours? It seems we’re more into “therapy” and “self esteem” than repentance and self control. We should be dealing with unrepentant sin within the church. It is way past time for us to clean house.

Moreover, we need to *think* differently than the culture. Many Christians are, themselves, moral relativists who do not believe in absolute truth. Why should our non-Christian friends believe in absolute truth if we don’t? We need to begin judging what we think *by the Bible* instead of *judging the Bible* by what *feels true* to us. We need to understand these issues and to be able to explain to others—starting with our children!—why we say relativism as a philosophy is bankrupt, and how we *know* Christianity is TRUE! We need to be able to answer the arguments posed by various factions within our culture—why do we reject Darwinian Evolution, multiculturalism, moral relativism, and the other falsehoods swamping our culture?

These issues go beyond the scope of this little Journal article, but there are some great resources out there to equip Christians to understand these issues and be able to make a defense for the Christian worldview. *Reason in the Balance* by Phillip Johnson, *The Death of Truth* by Dennis McCallum, *Legislating Morality* by Dr. Norman Geisler and Frank Turek, *Pagans in the Pews* by Peter Jones, and *Relativism—Feet Firmly Planted in Mid-air* by Francis Beckwith and Gregory Koukl are just a few of the well-reasoned books out there for


far superior to anything ever had by anyone else (Heb. 1:9; Psa. 45:7).

So, why be afraid of those who can’t harm your soul (Mat. 10:28)? Why waste another minute of your life wondering if you rebelled against God by having a difference of opinion with someone who can’t tell his own random thoughts from Scripture? Why worry about anointings that don’t exist, claimed by people whose cruelty renders their Christian testimonies suspect? Many of their kind will wake up one day to realize that blowing all that hot air during their lives was a rehearsal for their eternal occupations. Meanwhile, you’re heading in the opposite direction, and it’s time you started doing that joyfully! 

Christians who are willing to learn to defend the faith from the lies of our culture.

Further, we should practice biblical discernment to judge false teachings that have crept *into* the church and are devastating the flock. We should likewise be unafraid to judge false prophets and false teachers who exercise great influence within the church—Benny Hinn, TD Jakes, Bill Gothard, Kenneth Copeland, Gwen Shamblin, Joyce Meyers, Harold Camping—the list goes on and on. We should not be afraid to name names and give them the boot, no matter how much popularity they enjoy (c.f. 2Tim 2:15-17, 4:3-4).

In short, we need to begin living much more like the first-century believers. Befriend and help non-believers, and let God work on them. We must engage in real training in the home and churches. Young people need to be taught, not only the Scriptures, but how to think, reason, and ask questions—train them in logic—as well as reading, writing, and arithmetic. Equip them to interact with the culture—arts, politics, news, media, university professors, and other professions—without selling out to the culture or buying into its lies. Teach them compassion, humility, and charity. Show them—by example—that you do believe in Hell and care enough about the lost (even the “untouchables”) to pray for them and reach out to them, speaking the truth in love.

We may, indeed, lose the culture war, and our beloved land may go the way of past civilizations that rose and fell. However, when history wraps up, it won’t be as important that we lived in a great country, but that we served the LORD to the best of our ability for the time we were given. 

Endnotes

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Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.
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 Phone: (630) 627-9028
 E-Mail: info@midwestoutreach.org
 President: L.L. (Don) Veinot, Jr.
 Director: Joy A. Veinot

Spring Hill, Florida

Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.
 3338 Landover Blvd.
 Spring Hill, FL 34609-2619
 Phone: (352) 684-4448
 E-Mail: dgholson@atlantic.net
 Director: Diane Gholson

Salisbury, North Carolina

Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.
 1229 E. Council Street
 Salisbury, NC 28146
 Phone: (704) 630-9379
 E-mail: gadfly7@aol.com
 Director: Jonathan Miles

Lohrville, Iowa

Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.
 408 Main Street
 Lohrville, IA 51453-1004
 Phone: (712) 465-3010
 E-mail: mco@cal-net.net
 Director: Jeff Hauser

Scranton, Kansas

Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.
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