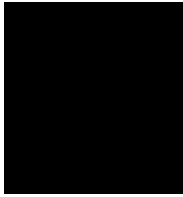


# CHRISTIAN ANSWERS

OF AUSTIN, TEXAS  
CHRISTIAN DEBATER GUIDE VOLUME 4. NUMBER 1

## THE AGONY OF DECEIT



**Dr. Michael Horton**

Editor of *The Agony of Deceit*, author, speaker, editor of *Modern Reformation*, host of *White Horse Inn* radio broadcasts.

Nobody likes a wise guy.

Critics often fall into that category. Artists-whether they be painter, writers, actors, directors, sculptors, or architects-depend on satisfactory critical reviews for their bread and butter. Unflattering reviews can end an artist's career. So nobody likes a critic who is just a wise guy. But a critic who protects the public from spending its money on "flops" - that's another function. The same goes for consumer advocates such as Ralph Nader and David Horowitz, and for the various sports commissions. The former help the public negotiate the promises and pitfalls of the marketplace; the latter serve as a check on the personal ambitions of celebrity athletes.

We have critics to help us identify false (or, at least, substandard) art, consumer advocates to help us recognize false advertising, and sports commissions to maintain the integrity of the game. But where are the "laity advocates" who help folks spot false prophets? Are we suggesting by our silence that our arts, and sports are worth more than our eternal souls?

As I said, nobody wants to sit next to the obnoxious fellow who finds his niche in the world by blowing the whistle on his brothers and sisters. After all, none of us has all the answers. But isn't there another extreme? One in which charlatans and outright heretics are allowed to pass for orthodox,

evangelical spokesmen?

Trinity Broadcasting Network's president, Paul Crouch, has repeatedly mocked those who would confront false teachers. During a "Praise-A-Thon," Crouch stated:

*"There are those who spend a lifetime-we call them apologists-they spend their whole lives apologizing for the Scripture. They spend their whole lifetime defending the orthodoxy of the doctrines of the church and, as I said a while ago, what is orthodox to them is what is in agreement with their opinion of what the Bible says.. You can spend a lifetime gazing at the orthodoxy of the church and let a world go straight to hell and never hear the message of Jesus Christ."*

It is worth arguing that the struggle for orthodoxy is the struggle for the authentic "message of Jesus Christ" that will, in fact, save those who placed their confidence in it. It is worth arguing that by ignoring the orthodoxy of the message being preached by those who call themselves Christians, we are, in fact, assisting in a delusion that results in the very loss about which Crouch and the "faith teachers" say they are concerned.

"But," says Earl Paulk, defending himself, "a prophet is not to be judged." And elsewhere one hears the warning "Touch not the Lord's anointed!"

Is that really what God commands? Consider the words of the book of Deuteronomy: "*If a prophet...appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder*" and through it leads the people astray, "*you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The lord your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul.*" As for the prophet?

*"That prophet or dreamer*

*must be put to death"* (Deuteronomy 13:1-5).

True, you might say, but we live in the New Covenant era and do not put people to death for heresy. Indeed we do not, but nevertheless the biblical evidence suggests that only an insecure prophet would try to claim that the prophets are beyond the judgment of the people of God. Throughout the Old Testament, and not just in the book of Deuteronomy, believers are called upon to test the prophets. And in the new testament Jesus warns, "watch out for false prophets" (Matthew 7:15). Elsewhere He cautions, "False Christs and false prophets will appear" (Matthew 24:24). John commands, "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). Whenever someone claiming to be a prophet announces, "A prophet cannot be judged," warning lights should flash!

Christians should be concerned ultimately not with air-conditioned dog houses or sexual dalliances but with the REAL scandal: heresy. Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "Tell me what a person believes and I'll tell you what he'll do." Theology and ethics are inextricably bound together. Yet under the supposed banner of unity, we have harbored enemy ships as long as they flew our flag. That policy must change. **Tolerating enemies of the historic Christian faith as though they were our brethren is not love, but adultery.** The substance of the faith (found only in the Bible) is the only basis for unity.

Those who embrace the apostolic

(continued on page 3)

*"exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict" (Titus 1:9)*

## Answers In This Issue

The Agony of Deceit.....	1
Ministry Update.....	6
Order Form.....	7
Letters From the Frontline.....	8

### CHRISTIAN DEBATER GUIDE

**Publisher**

CHRISTIAN ANSWERS OF AUSTIN, TX

P.O. Box 144441

Austin, TX 78714

Phone (512) 218-8022

Director/Editor

Larry Wessels

Director of Research

Steve Morrison

E-mail Address:

cdebater@aol.com

Websites:

www.biblequery.org

www.inerrancy.org

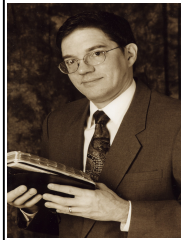
www.muslimhope.com

### THE GOSPEL IN BRIEF

There is one, and only one, eternal, true, holy God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Matt 28:19). He created everything by His word. God has told us the truth about Himself in the word He has given us, the Bible, which He commands us to obey. God is compassionate and just to all. God is pure and Holy; sin is destroyed in His presence (Numbers 14:18). However, we have all sinned, falling short in the evil we do, and the good we fail to do. Yet our problem is not just what we do, but also who we are; we are selfish, corrupt, and estranged from God. Because God is just, He will punish sin impartially, yet God still bestows his love to all men. So our Savior, Jesus, the only begotten Son of God (the God-man, John 1:1,14), was graciously sent to suffer and die on the cross for our sins and to purify us from all unrighteousness by the sacrifice of His body and blood. He was born of the virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, and was physically raised from the dead and ascended into heaven. Jesus will physically return to judge the world. God commands everyone to repent and to believe in Him. God's Spirit lives in each of us who believe in Him to guide us into truth, convict us of our sins, and to work in us to sanctify us to live a more holy life, pleasing our Lord. God's children will dwell forever with God, and those who reject Jesus will suffer eternal torment. There is no other way for anyone to come to God except through Jesus (Jn. 14:6). Please do not depend on anyone else, your own efforts, your religion, but simply put your faith in Christ our Master. So as Rom. 10:9 says, "That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart the God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." You are urged not to despise God's mercy but call out to the Lord and trust ONLY in Him.

(See also Acts 10:36-43)

### THOUGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR



Larry Wessels

It is usually easy for the average Christian to spot a false prophet or religionist because they are generally aware of cults such as Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormons. They also may have some limited knowledge that a Hindu, Buddhist, or Muslim is not a Christian. However, what do they do when the false prophet looks and talks like a real Christian? This is the danger the Apostle Paul warned about in Acts 20:29-30.

This particular newsletter deals with the amazing situation that the authentic Christian finds himself in today, namely, that the so-called visible Christian Church (of all denominations) is simply filled with false prophets (who have lots of money and lots of followers). These "wolves in sheep's clothing" (Matt. 7:15) look like real Christians but their heresies betray them. They are very successful because people do not really know the Bible well enough to catch them in their falsehoods. Proper knowledge of "sound doctrine" (I Tim. 1:10, 4:6, 13,16; II Tim. 3:16, 4:3; Titus 1:9) based on God's Word is the only standard to use in defending yourself and others from the "lying lips" (Prov. 12:22) of the seemingly "Christian" teachers and preachers who infest television and radio programming, conferences, conventions, churches, etc. Remember Ezekiel 13:2-9 & Ezekiel 14:10.

But just who are some of these guys? Who are they that preach a **Gospel of Greed** which leads to **God becoming a Divine Bellhop** to the selfish desires of those who want to be healthy and wealthy? How about Trinity Broadcasting Network's Paul and Jan Crouch, Kenneth and Gloria Copeland, Kenneth Hagin (now deceased), Peter Popoff, Benny Hinn, Robert Tilton (send for his "Be Rich and Wealthy" package with "Faith Triggers"), Fred Price, Casey Treat, Joyce Meyer, Rod Parsley, John Avanzini, Charles Capps, Earl Paulk, Marilyn Hickey, Jerry Savelle, Morris Cerullo, T.D. Jakes (his denial of orthodox Trinitarian theology is also documented), Paul Yonggi Cho, and others.

Let's not forget the "super prophets" and self-proclaimed "apostles" such as Tommy Tenney (author of *The God Chasers*), Rick Joyner (author of *A Prophetic Vision for the 21st Century*), Mike Bickle (author of *Growing in the Prophetic*), Francis Frangipane (author of *The Days of His Presence*), John Arnott, Juanita Bynum, Paul Cain, Peter Wagner, Cindy Jacobs, Rodney Howard-Browne ("Laughing Revival") and many others.

We need prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah & Jesus Christ, not these sensationalists!

### WHAT IS CHRISTIAN ANSWERS ?

Our ministry name is derived in part from Peter 3:15 which states, "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." (NIV). This is the goal of **Christian Answers** in an increasingly anti-Christian society here in America and throughout the world; giving answers and reasons why the Christian faith can be trusted and believed.

The Biblical commands to "fight the good fight of faith" (I Tim. 6:12), to be "set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17), to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), to "be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict" (Titus 1:9), to "put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not" (Rev. 2:2), to "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves." (Matt. 7:15), to "examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good" (I Thess. 5:21), "with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim. 2:25), to follow the example of Paul and Apollos who "vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ." (Acts 18:28). These are but a few of the marching orders for the call to ministry, discernment and evangelism.

The inerrant Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17) whereby the gospel is preached, which is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1:16), is the weapon of our evangelism. As Hebrews 4:12 states, "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow: it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." This is the evangelical missionary methodology of **Christian Answers**— to bring the Biblical perspective to a culture that is almost completely ignorant of it; to bring Christian truth, Christian answers to those who, as the prophet Isaiah said, have made "lies...and falsehood" their refuge (Isa. 28:15); to smash lies and falsehoods with the "hammer" of God's word (Jer. 23:29); see also Proverbs 30:5-6, Psalm 138:2b, Isaiah 40:8, John 5:39-47, I Cor. 14:37, and Acts 17:11.

**Christian Answers** utilizes all outreach that God allows us including television, radio, audio cassettes, video tapes, speaking engagements, and the printed page. The materials we have been able to produce have been used by churches, Bible teachers, Christian apologists, laymen and others as well as those seeking life in Christ.

We are not afraid to stand up for Jesus Christ in public forums or wherever the Lord leads. Of course this type of ministry is not for the faint of heart and very often leads to the same type of suffering and persecution that we find in the book of Acts. But as the old saying goes, "one life will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last," and as Paul said, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14), knowing this mortal life is short and God's eternity is only a moment away for all.

Our ministry is "exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501 (c) (3) by the Internal Revenue Service". Donations to our ministry are tax deductible, therefore those who contribute will receive a donation receipt good on your US income tax. This applies to donations only, not sales. We are legally registered in the state of Texas.

substance of Christianity (summarized in the Apostles', Nicene, and other ecumenical creeds) have a basis for unity. Similarly the fundamentals of Marxist-Leninist dogma hold factions within the Communist Party together. Communists might disagree over minor points, but they stick together because of the fundamentals. Essentials serve as the common denominators for a group. When those foundational affirmations are eroded, the group loses its essential identity. And when a group loses its identity, it ceases to offer a common core of commitment that inspires unity and brotherhood. Give up the defense of the fundamentals and you give up any hope of real unity.

How ironic it is, then, that only five decades after the "Modernist-Fundamentalist" controversy evangelical and fundamentalist churches find themselves in the position of harboring-or-tolerating-outright denial of orthodoxy. They are doing that because they have mistaken outward tokens for essential unity. So long as the preacher waves his Bible under the bright lights, or has an altar call, they do not object to what he says, even if he preaches doctrines as dangerous to the soul as those propagated by the "liberals" he so cheerfully mocks.

One consequence of this tolerance is to leave the way open for an inaccurate understanding of Christianity to be spread abroad. The world sees televangelists as the spokesmen for the evangelical movement. It does not distinguish between those who preach the gospel "once for all given to the saints" and those who preach a fraudulent gospel. So when the world examines televangelism-its programming, its triumphs, its failures-and concludes from looking at some, but not all, televangelists and concludes that televangelism is materialistic, exploitative, power-hungry, and success-and-number oriented-in short, is just as worldly as the world itself-it condemns the whole evangelical movement-and Christianity-not just fraudulent televangelists.

Does the world realize that televangelism does not necessarily represent the evangelical movement? Does it know that the evangelical movement is concerned with truth? Do those who occasionally view televangelistic programming know that evangelical Christianity

offers an intelligent interpretation of and hope for human existence? Does the average unbeliever come away from a telecast with a better grasp of the substance of the Christian faith?

Unless the ordinary evangelical is willing to stand up and be counted, the answer will be no. And if the answer is no, that may well mean that evangelical commentators, reflecting the movement generally, have not been as interested in truth as in success. After all, the incarnation is not as interesting as "Body-Builders for Jesus." Or is it? The celebrated mystery-novelist Dorothy Sayer once asserted, "**Doctrine is not boring! Dogma is the drama!**" She was right. The drama lies not in the crying and the shouting, but in the great truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The apostle Peter understood the responsibility an orthodox Christian has and addressed the subject of doctrine directly. He was well aware that his Master had given him the charge, "Feed my sheep"-and had emphasized it (John 21:15-18). That command weighed heavily on Peter's conscience as he reminded the member of the ancient church that though they had once been "like sheep going astray," they were now "returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls" (I Peter 2:25). They needed, Peter said, to "make every effort to be found spotless, blameless, and at peace with [Christ]" (II Peter 3:14)-and to pay attention to doctrine. Not to do so was to bring condemnation upon themselves. The letters of "our dear brother Paul," Peter said, "contain some things that are hard to understand," but the "ignorant and unstable" who distort them, "as they do the other Scriptures," do so "to their own destruction" (II Peter 3:15-16).

Notice the elements of Peter's warning. There is the recognition that the Bible contains a number of truths that are easily reshaped by the subtlest distortion. And there is the assertion that such distortions are caused by those who are "ignorant and unstable." That is an important clue as to the sort of person we must suspect. Ignorance among many associated with televangelism is no less prized than it was among the ranters who eschewed thought in favor of objectless fascination with feeling during the frontier revivals of the last century. It was in

that setting that many of the cults were born. "No creed but Christ," the evangelist cheered. And instability has been characteristic of many religious celebrities in the past and in the present.

Again, some today would say, "Well, sure, truth is important. But what's really essential is that we know the Person, not the propositions." Not so, the apostle James would say: "***My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, remember this: Whosoever turns a sinner away from his error will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins***" (James 5:19-20). There is no such thing as a personal relationship with Christ apart from an understanding and acceptance of the nature, character, and mission of Christ. Turning people from error is not a trivial concern. It is bound up with the severest of consequences: saving a soul from death.

Maybe we have the attitude we do because we no longer believe eternal questions are important. And perhaps that means that we-who should have been the last to do so have become so preoccupied with this world (success, power, fame, and fortune) that we have tolerated a creeping cynicism about eternity.

**The apostle Paul understood that souls are saved and lost in the struggle over truth and heresy.** Paul said he was "innocent of the blood of all men" because he had "not hesitated to proclaim to [the people] the whole will of God." Therefore, he issued his own warning to the leaders of the church at Ephesus: "Guard yourselves and all the flocks of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he [God] bought with His own blood." And then the apostle anticipated apostasy: "***I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears***" (Acts 20:26-31).

With as many as 500 million viewers worldwide, the televangelists under critical examination have until recently been protected from censure. After all, were they not successful evangelists? But eventually there came an end to their privileged status. What brought

about the downfall? Not that they were preaching “another gospel” though that was in fact what they were doing. No, they were brought down when news of lavish expense accounts and sexual deviance reached the public and shocked the church—shocked it more, apparently, than the televangelists’ unabashed disregard for Biblical truth. Only when some televangelists were found to be frauds were Christians brave enough to confront them on theological grounds.

More uncomfortably, the rise and fall of televangelism in our country points up a more general state of affairs in the evangelical movement. For, as Quentin Schulte points out, scandals rocked religious radio before television. And many of us have had experiences with local churches or para-church ministries that gave evidence of giving method priority over message, quantity over quality, volume over clarity, comfort over confrontation. “But they’re winning souls!” we are always told. “Isn’t that enough?” not really. If success and growth be always a sign of God’s favor, we should be elated with the spread of Mormonism, Islam, and Oriental mysticism. But, of course, we are not. We know that numerical growth can be caused by spectacular distortions of Scripture. It is not necessarily the outcome of the preaching of a theologically sound message. Put another way, an arena filled with persons shouting, “Praise the Lord!” is not necessarily a sign of God’s blessing.

“*In the last days,*” Paul warned, “*people will be lovers of themselves [so we tailor a self-esteem gospel...lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God]* [so we put together a gospel of health, wealth, and happiness].” Such people have “*a form of godliness but [deny] its power,*” and Paul’s command concerning them is urgent: “*Have nothing to do with them*” (II Tim. 3:1-5). But they are brothers! “*Have nothing to do with them!*” But they love Jesus! “*Have nothing to do with them!*”

Not only have we had a great deal to do with them, we have often been “them.” Though the Westminster Catechism asserted that man’s chief end was “to glorify God and enjoy Him forever,” the modern creed insists that we use God to glorify ourselves and enjoy ourselves forever. Christianity must be fun.

never demanding. It must sweep the believer from one experience of “victory” to another. Talk of discipleship’s rewards far outweighs talk of its cost. In short, the modern gospel is marketed to consumers, not proclaimed to sinners.

In spite of all the present dangers, Jesus promised, “I will build *My* church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it” (Matthew 16:18, italics added). Similarly, although Paul warns Timothy (and all believers) that “**the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine,**” he still challenges him to “keep [his] head.” For though men will “gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear” and will “turn aside to myths,” there is hope for those who pursue an accurate proclamation of the faith (II Tim. 4:3-5).



A heretic is “one who is self-willed in matters pertaining to God, a fellow who knows of something better and chooses his own way to heaven, a way the ordinary Christian does not travel.” Miraculous signs often accompany heretics but this is no proof of truth as even the Devil can do “signs and lying wonders” (II Thessalonians 2:9-12).

Christ’s own description of the coming Judgment Day deals with the many miracle working, faith healers as they make their way to Jesus, surprised that they have been excluded from the very kingdom they insisted they were building, they plead, “Did we not prophesy *in your name*, and in *your name* drive out demons and perform many miracles?” And Jesus says, “**I will tell them plainly, I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!**” (Matthew 7:22-23, italics added).

Clearly, we are in perilous times. We

have paid the price of ignorance and shallowness, and our fall has been great. Heretics have been tolerated as divinely appointed messengers; prophets have been stoned. Nevertheless, God has proved Himself faithful in the trials of our own unfaithfulness. Though we do not despair, we do call upon the Body of Christ to repair its own system of beliefs and to bring its faith and life into line with sound biblical teaching without delay. That reformation, as we see it, must take two forms: first, it must be defensive. Those who propagate heresy among us and refuse correction must be excommunicated by their local, regional, and national bodies. Denial of the Trinity is, after all, more damnable than pornography. Second, it must be offensive. We must put ourselves to the arduous-but exciting-task of feeding the sheep on the great themes of biblical faith. The laity are begging for substance. They are often more anxious to deepen their faith than their pastors are to help them deepen it.

We must heed a final caution from Peter: “False prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies.” “In their greed,” Peter said, “they will exploit you with false words” (II Peter 2:1-3). So, too, today, the “Word of Faith” movement in particular is a destructive heresy of “false words.” And it is a growing movement. Kenneth Copeland has a daily telecast and other “Word” ministries are also increasing in popularity [they get the big bucks].

These heretics, Peter continues, “indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord” (vv. 10-11, NASB). So, too, today, many of the leading televangelists rave about their power over Satan and make sport of taunting and teasing the devil concerning their alleged authority over him. “**But these,**” said Peter, “**like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed**” (v. 12, NASB).



Of course, the obnoxiousness of offering salvation for money is itself heretical, indeed, pagan. Nevertheless, the gospel heralded by some of the television preachers is even more perverted.

It is appropriate that a prosperity gospel be born in the hedonistic, self-centered, get-rich-quick milieu of modern American society. We are, by nature, pagan. Either our religion will transfer us or we will transform our religion to suit our sympathies.

For the faith teachers, sickness is "all in the head." Much like the Christian Science cult (whose origins are shared by the "faith teachers"), this philosophy denies the reality of negative things—sin, sickness, poverty, and depression. The supposed reality of their existence is blamed on the failure of the believer to speak the word of faith—a sort of "abracadabra" recited to decree health and prosperity.

The faith teachers such as Kenneth Copeland, Robert Tilton, Kenneth Hagin (deceased), Charles Capps, Fred Price, Marilyn Hickey, Earl Paulk ("little gods" teaching), Benny Hinn, and many others have their so-called "Christianity" rooted in the ancient heresy of Gnosticism. Gnosticism is marked by a dualism in which the world is divided sharply between "spiritual" (good) and "material" or "physical" (bad) realms. Thus, Gnosticism emphasizes the spiritual realm to the exclusion of the natural realm.

Copeland argues that when we become believers, we escape the natural realm, with its physical laws, and become engaged to spiritual laws. "You need to realize," Copeland says, "that you are not a spiritual schizophrenic—half-God and half-Satan—you are —all-God. The problem area is not in your spirit; it lies in your mind and body" (Kenneth Copeland, *Believer's Voice of Victory*, March 1982, p.2). Before one is born again, then according to Copeland, he is satanic (by virtue of his humanity) upon conversion he becomes a spirit-god inhabiting a physical body [with god-like powers].

God did not create man with a good (spiritual) and evil (physical) composition. **Man does not sin because he is human, but because he is a sinner.**

When Jimmy Swaggart defied the orders of the Assemblies of God to refrain from preaching for one year, he

assured the public that he was free of moral defect, for, he said, Oral Roberts had cast out the demons from his body over the phone. Oral Roberts confirmed Swaggart's report, insisting he saw the demons with their claws deeply embedded in Swaggart's flesh. Now that the rascals were gone, Swaggart and Roberts asserted, Swaggart could get on with preaching.

For these metaphysical evangelists, even personal sins can be attributed to the bad god, since he is, after all, sovereign over this earthly realm as the good god is relatively in charge of the spiritual domain. Here again, then, is the echo of the Gnostics of old.

Though it is fundamental to any presentation of the Biblical gospel, the doctrine of justification is virtually unknown in much of popular media evangelism. Jimmy Swaggart, in fact, says it is "a lie" to believe that "the believer's sins are already forgiven, past, present, and future," and that "his sins are not taken into account" (Jimmy Swaggart, *Ministries*, 1985, pp. 291-295). Yet the Apostle Paul joined David in singing, **Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account** (Romans 4:8, NASB).

Furthermore, Swaggart teaches that justification, rather than being once and for all declaration of righteousness in Christ, requires a constant renewing (Swaggart, *Ibid.*). Much of Paul's epistle to the Romans is devoted to the explanation of justification. God, says the apostle, is in the business of declaring wicked people guiltless and, in fact, righteous. He does that not by overlooking their sins, not by having them do penance or by having them write: "I will never do it again." a thousand times, not by giving folks an "A" for effort. Rather, God imputes, that is, charges or credits to the believer's account, the life-long obedience, death, resurrection, and victory of Christ. We are not saved by our "victorious Christian life, but by HIS! Of course that means that even though the believer will sin many times (in one day). God has nevertheless declared that person to be a perfectly law-abiding citizen. The basis for our relationship with God is Christ's track record, not our own.

That status does not change with our moral ups and downs. The believer continues to sin and "fall short of God's

glory," even though he stands in Christ's righteousness.

Faith teachers in the electronic church often "speak to" money, success, and health as though those things were personal gods. Similarly, they "speak to" Satan and demonic forces, "binding them" by their "word faith."

**Once gain, it seems that the object of faith for those teachers is not the God of Scripture, but the gods of health, wealth, and happiness.** Faith is seen as a matter of believing for things. Hagin speaks of decreeing his brother's salvation. Thus he makes God the absentee landlord who leaves the decreeing and application of salvation, as well as health and wealth, to the "authority of the believer." Hagen is wrong, salvation is God-centered, not human-centered.

Faith, according to such teachers, is not faith in God, but the faith of God. In other words, God is not the object of faith but is a model for the kind of force our faith can have. Just as He spoke things into being, so too can we. "Faith is a power force," says Copeland. "The force of faith is released through words. Faith-filled words put the law of the Spirit of life into operation. Thus faith is not "the gift of God" to trust God with one's eternal welfare (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Like other spiritualists, the faith teachers point adherents to their own inner spirit rather than to a Savior outside of them. But according to Scripture, God gives faith to whom he will (John 1:13, Acts 13:48, Rom. 9:18, Ephesians 1:5, Philippians 2:13). **Furthermore, the object of that faith is always God and His grace, not faith itself. We are saved, not by believing, but by believing in Christ. Faith in faith is idolatry.** We must admit that the crisis of truth we have seen in the televangelists is only a microcosm of the disarray present in Christendom generally. Paul never said, "If anyone visits a prostitute, let him be eternally condemned" Nor did he say, "if anyone steals millions of dollars from unwary victims and engages in immoral sexual activities, let him be eternally condemned." No indeed. Christ "came not to call the righteous, but sinners." A televangelist who preaches a false gospel can repent of his exploits, but that is not enough. He must repent of his heresy. For **Paul did say, "If anyone preach**

# MINISTRY UPDATE- 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF ACCESS PROGRAMMING!

## AUSTIN COMMUNITY TELEVISION (1985-2005)



### CHRISTIAN ANSWERS WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU FOR YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

The false prophets on television have lots of money to spread their heresies to the four corners of the earth. They promise their followers miracles and wealth to gain much support. We, on the other hand, preach the Bible as it is, not as our sinful desires and those who listen to us would want it to be. We will not try to get you to vow a thousand dollars to us so you can get \$10,000 from God. We simply seek to preach God's Gospel honestly and without profit, however, it does take money to pay for our ordinary expenses (printing and postage for newsletters, television production, etc.). If you could help us financially, however small, it would greatly be appreciated. All donations are tax deductible. Please help us fight the battle as life is short and only what's done for Christ will

any other gospel....let him be accursed"  
(Galatians 1:8, NKJV).

To contact Dr. Michael Horton write  
Modern Reformation, 1725 Bear Valley  
Parkway, Escondido, CA 92027.

#### A Different Gospel

Has "Name It and Claim It" gone  
and lost it? D.R. McConnell, the  
author of this book, thinks so.  
McConnell exposes the cultic nature  
of the "Word-Faith" movement, both  
historically and Biblically.  
BK-53, \$15 + S&H, 225 pages

#### Justification Through Faith- The Heart of the Gospel

Dr. Michael Horton is the guest on  
*Christian Answers Live!* radio.  
RP-12, Audio or CD, \$3.00 +  
S&H (Audio or CD)

#### "Word-Faith" Heresy Information Package

Numerous articles documenting  
heresies of popular television  
preachers and teachers.  
Pack-27, \$9.00 + S&H

#### The Confusing World of Benny Hinn

*"This penetrating analysis of Benny  
Hinn's teachings is highly  
recommended. The authors put  
Hinn and his teachings under the  
scrutiny of Scripture and provide  
thorough documentation regarding  
how this healing evangelist  
repeatedly departs from sound  
doctrine and practice."*

-Dr. Ron Rhodes, Reasoning from  
the Scriptures Ministries.

## TOPICAL VIDEOS

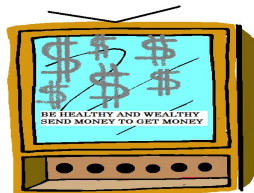
Hear experts and apologists analyze these topics (perfect for study groups or as a witnessing tool to share with others). You may choose any four of the 30 minute videos below for the single price of \$6.00. Catalog identification is CATV. For example, if you wish to order Bahaism, Church of Christ, Mormonism, and Islam, list on order form as CATV- 1, 13, 8, and 2. Four videos on one VHS tape for one low price of \$6.00. DVD copies of these topics are only available in increments of 4. #1-#4, #5-#8, #9-#12, #13-#16, #17-#20, #21-#24 only, with no variation, \$6.00 each.

1. Bahaism (Dr. Frank Beckwith)
2. Islam (Dr. Samuel Shahid)
3. Buddhism (Steve Morrison)
4. Hinduism/Reincarnation (Mark Cass)
5. Roman Catholicism (Richard Bennett)
6. Jehovah's Witnesses #1 (Larry Wessels)
7. Jehovah's Witnesses #2 (Larry Wessels)
8. Mormonism (Robert McKay)
9. Word-Faith Heresy #1 (Dr. Michael Horton)
10. Word-Faith Heresy #2 (Dr. Michael Horton)
11. Seventh-day Adventism #1 (Wallace Slattery)
12. Seventh-day Adventism #2 (Wallace Slattery)
13. The "Church of Christ" (Bob L. Ross)
14. Liberal Christianity #1 (Morrison & Wessels)
15. Liberal Christianity #2 (Morrison & Wessels)
16. Atheism (Larry Wessels)
17. Nation of Islam (Wilford Darden)
18. United Pentecostals (Steve Morrison)
19. Unification (Moonies) (Morrison & Wessels)
20. Demon Possession (Dr. Thomas Ice)
21. Roman Catholicism #1 (Rob Zins)
22. Roman Catholicism #2 (Rob Zins)
23. The Da Vinci Code (Morrison & Wessels)
24. Darwin's Evolution Religion (Dr. M. Girouard)

## WHAT ARE SOME TELEVISION AND RADIO "PREACHERS" REALLY TEACHING?

- \* Are Christians "little gods"?
- \* Was Jesus "born-again" in hell?
- \* Is the cross the "sign of Satan"?
- \* Can Christians "command" things into existence?
- \* Do Christians lack faith when they get sick?

This revealing series will analyze the shocking teachings of some of America's best-known "Christian" evangelists and television personalities, such as TBN's Paul and Jan Crouch, Kenneth Hagin, Robert Tilton, Kenneth Copeland, Benny Hinn, and others. The followers of these "Name It and Claim It" teachers are quick to say critics should not judge their "anointed" teachers yet they judge the critics harshly whenever "anointed" errors are pointed out.



- Program #1: Historical Roots of the Health and Wealth Gospel Movement
- Program #2: Touch Not The Lord's Anointed gods
- Program #3: Miracles for Money
- Program #4: Cult of the Televangelists
- Program #5: Negating Positive Confession
- Program #6: Impact Talk Interviews

**VT or DVD-8, \$18 + S & H, 6 Hours**

**Audio Soundtracks are also available: AC-92 -97, audio cassettes or CDs, (specify) \$18 + S & H, 6 Hours**

These two audio tapes (or CDs) are free with \$25 order or donation:

- Lordship Salvation -William Webster (RP-71)     Spirit-Wrought Revival-Pastor J.W. Baker (AC-288)

Larry Wessels and Dr. Michael Horton, editor of the book, The Agony of Deceit, in studio for this 6-hour video series.

# Christian Answers Order Form

Quantity	Description	Unit Price	Total

**CHRISTIAN ANSWERS  
OF AUSTIN, TX  
P.O. Box 144441  
Austin, TX 78714  
Phone (512) 218-8022  
www.biblequery.org  
Email: cdebater@aol.com**

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit #1149  
Austin, TX

Address Service Requested

**Inside This Issue:**  
**Topic: Agony of TV Preachers**

**page 1: The Agony of Deceit**  
**page 2: Thoughts from Director**  
**page 6: Ministry Update**  
**page 8: Letters from the Frontline**

*“exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict” (Titus1:9)*

## LETTERS FROM THE FRONTLINE



Dear Website Masters,

Great website (muslimhope.com)! On the Christian Forums, there are a number of Muslims who try to challenge and convert Christians. I have found your website to be a fountain of resources, full of answers to the very questions they pose to us. Now all I do is give out your website address for all Christians to use and Muslims to see and study. Good job! Blessings.

Valerie (from the web)

Dear Larry,

Hey what's up brother, how are you doing? I have only been a Christian for about 11 months and I've got to tell you it has been amazing and wonderful to walk in the Christian faith. I really like your show, "Christian Answers". I think you and Steve Morrison do a great job. I

my letter, and for keeping me on your list. I wish I could support your ministry in a more tangible way. I care for my ill father and it is demanding in financial ways as well as others. Please keep us in your prayers. Grace and Peace to you, in Christ.

K.P (Green River, WY)

Dear Larry,

Thanks for sending *Christian Answers*. What do you have available in videos or audio cassettes about Roman Catholicism? We should like to work on expanding the resources we are making available. We have the equipment to copy videos and audios if we order just one of each. Glad to see you are still active. May God grant you His blessing as you labor for Him.

B.J. (Louisville, KY)

### *Christian Debater Guide*

had money to give your wonderful ministry. I too am a working pastor who does not receive a wage, but God is so good to provide. May you continue to walk in His great grace & mercy. In Christ,

Pastor J.A. (Long Beach, CA)

P.S. I will be using the materials I ordered from you as a break from our regular Bible studies.

Dear Larry,

It was good to know more about you, your family (Vol.3. #1 newsletter) and the ministry. Thank you for what you are doing. B.B. (Birmingham, AL)

Dear Brother Larry,

Indeed, it was God's will that led me into these Bible studies under your guidance.

However, I have questions to ask, the answer of which would settle my onerous mood, as