

## **The False Religion Of Islam (No. 2)**

As the influence of Islam increases rapidly in our country it is a matter of great urgency that our brethren, and all who profess to believe in the Bible as God's word, give serious attention to what Islam really is and how our country would be affected if Islamic powers were in control.

In our discussion of **The False Religion Of Islam** in the [October issue of Banner of Truth](#) we dealt with the beginning of this false religion and its rapid spread early on, and its progress over the centuries until recent times. We gave considerable attention to **The Black Muslims** and the spread of Islam in our country among the black people, especially during the past fifty years or more.

In our present discussion we shall give attention to Islam as evidenced by recent activities, including terrorism. We are especially concerned about the influence of Islam here in our own country. We believe that a great many of our people are being misled as to the true nature of Islam and are unaware of the danger it does or can pose to our country.

There has been more said about Islam this year than perhaps has been said in several years combined. However, one aspect of Islam which has not received the attention we believe it deserves, is the basis of Islamic authority. Though some in Islam accept the *Sunna* as an authority for their practices, the Koran (Qur'an) is the basic authority for Islam. The *Sunna* is a compilation of the things that Mohammed was said to have said, but were not written down.

We believe it is in order to set forth some of the teachings of the Koran which are in conflict with God's word. These things are a matter of record that cannot be denied, though some defenders of Islam try to explain away these things which contradict God's word as recorded in the Bible. It should be noted, and we shall give more attention to this later, that a great many Muslims still put into practice those things plainly stated in the Koran. We now note several examples.

### **ERROR TAUGHT BY THE KORAN**

The following examples are by no means exhaustive. There are many, many passages in the Koran which are clearly in opposition to the word of God. The following quotations are from: *The meaning of The Glorious Qur'an, Text and Explanatory Translation by Marmaduke Pickthall*. This volume, printed by Taj Company Ltd., Karachi, Pakistan, is considered very reliable. The quotations are not given in any special order, but they do involve teachings with which Bible-believing people are quite familiar.

#### **The Deity of Jesus Christ**

"...The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only a messenger of Allah, and His word which he conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers, and say not 'Three' – Cease! (it is) better for you!—Allah is only One God..." (Surah 4:171).

**The Bible Teaches:** "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God" (Jno. 1:1-2). "...God was manifest in the flesh..." (I Tim. 3:16). "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9).

#### **Jesus the Son of God**

"And they say: The Beneficent hath taken unto Himself a son. Assuredly ye utter a disastrous thing. Whereby almost the heavens are torn, and the earth split asunder and the mountains fall in ruin, That ye

ascribe unto the Beneficent a son” (Surah 19:88-91).

**The Bible teaches:** “...Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee” (Heb. 5:5). “And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee...that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Lk. 1:35). “...Rabbi, thou art the Son of God...” (Jno. 1:49).

#### **Existence of Jesus Christ**

“Lo! the likeness of Jesus with Allah is as the likeness of Adam. He created him of dust, then He said unto him: Be! and he is” (Surah 3:59).

**The Bible teaches:** “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God” (Jno. 1:1-2). See *us* and *our* (Gen. 1:26; 3:22).

#### **Obtaining Salvation**

“And as for him who believeth not in Allah and His messenger—Lo! We have prepared a flame for disbelievers” (Surah 48:13).

**The Bible teaches:** “And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” (Heb. 5:9). “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Cf. Romans 1:16. Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38. The Islam “god” is not the true God.

#### **The Crucifixion of Jesus**

“And because of their saying: We slew the Messiah Jesus son of Mary, Allah’s messenger—They slew him not nor crucified, but it appeared unto them; and lo! those who disagree concerning it are in doubt thereof; they have no knowledge thereof save pursuit of a conjecture; they slew him not for certain” (Surah 4:157).

**The Bible teaches:** “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name” (Phil. 2:8-9).

#### **Murder and Other Violence**

“And slay them [disbelievers] wherever ye find them, and drive them out of the places where they drove you out, for persecution is worse than slaughter...” (Surah 2:191). “Then, when the sacred months have passed, slay the idolaters wherever ye find them, and take them (captive), and besiege them, and prepare for them each ambush...” (Surah 9:5). “O ye who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers who are near to you, and let them find harshness in you...” (Surah 9:123).

**The Bible teaches:** “...and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him” (I Jno. 3:15). “Envyings, murderers, drunkenness...shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:21). “But the fearful...and murderers...shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone...” (Rev. 21:8). “But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matt. 5:44).

**Note:** If it be suggested that God sanctioned the killing of people, such as the Amalekites (I Sam. 15), we must bear in that mind that the killing of unbelievers by Christians is not approved under the New Covenant. Muslims who murder the “infidel” the “unbeliever” today are clearly violating God’s will. To true Muslims, we are “infidels.”

#### **The Treatment of Women**

“Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend their property (for the support of women)...As for those from whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them...” (Surah 4:34). “Allah chargeth you concerning (the provision for) your children: to the male the equivalent of the portion of two females...” (Surah 4:11).

**The Bible teaches:** “If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel” (I Tim. 5:8). “Therefore as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Eph. 5:24-25).

#### **Marriage and Wives**

“...marry of the women, who seem good to you, two or three or four; and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many) then one (only) or (the captives) that your right hands possess...” (Surah 4:3).

**The Bible teaches:** “...Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh?” (Matt. 19:4-5). The New Testament no where authorizes a man to have a plurality of living wives.

#### **The Exercise of One’s Will**

“Lo! this is an Admonishment, that whosoever will may choose a way unto his Lord. Yet ye will not,

unless Allah willeth. Lo! Allah is Knower, Wise. He maketh whom He will to enter His mercy, and for evil-doers hath prepared a painful doom” (Surah 76-29-31).

**The Bible teaches:** “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). “...And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17).

#### **When The Judgment Comes**

“And the foremost in the race...Those are they who will be brought nigh In gardens of delight;...On lined couches, reclining there face to face, There wait on them immortal youths With bowls and ewers and a cup from a pure spring Wherefrom they get no aching of the head nor any madness, And fruit they prefer....And (there are) fair ones with wide, lovely eyes, Like unto hidden pearls. Reward for what they used to do. Lo! we have created them a (new) creation and made them virgins, Lovers, friends....(Surah 56:10-12, 15-20, 22-24, 35-37).

**The Bible teaches:** “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Rev. 21:4). God’s word promises no “fair ones with wide, lovely eyes” as a reward for what we used to do. God has made no “virgins” for the saved. There is much emphasis on sex in the Islam religion as the above passage indicates. Usama bin Laden is said to be the 17th of 52 children.

We have given only a few of the many examples where the Koran is in serious conflict with God’s word. Though the Koran is the basic source of authority with all Muslims, there is another source of authority with many, and we shall give some attention to that source.

### **THE ERROR OF ISLAMIC AUTHORITY**

The above examples of error in the Koran should be sufficient to convince any Bible believer that Islam is indeed a false religion, which can bring only eternal destruction and not salvation. It is often the case that we hear of errors of Islam which are said not to be upheld by the Koran. The reason for this should be understood if we are to get a clear picture of Islam.

The *Sunna* is a collection of things which were supposedly said by Mohammed, but were never written down and are not a part of the Koran. With some Muslims these “traditions” which vary, are as authoritative as the Koran. Just imagine what would happen to unrecorded things which were passed on by word of mouth for fourteen centuries! In the first place, if the “traditions” were actually spoken by Mohammed it would still be the words of a false prophet, which should be rejected as such.

When we think of “tradition” as a source of authority, we should be aware that just about anything can be authorized by tradition. There is no better example of this than the Catholic Church. It is the position of Catholicism that their “traditions” are equally authoritative as is the Bible. Anyone who knows anything about the Catholic Church and the Bible knows that the Catholics teach a great many things which could never be found as authorized in God’s word. They are upheld by “tradition.”

Another thing which should be considered with regard to religious authority, is that it is so often the case that people do not follow that which they claim as their authority. Just think of all the things which are now being taught in the name of God’s word here in our own country. Think how far people have gotten away from the Truth. The religion of Islam would be no different. That is, they claim the Koran is the actual word of God, and some claim the *Sunna* to also be inspired. Yet, many things are taught and practiced by Islam which could not be justified by either of their sources of false authority.

### **WHAT IS “RADICAL ISLAM” ?**

In recent times we have heard many references made to “Radical Islam.” This is an oft used description of the **Taliban**, which means “students of Islam.” This is the Islamic power which took over in Afghanistan about five years ago. The names of Usama bin Laden and Mullah Mohammed Omar have often stood out as the leaders of the Taliban. At this writing, both of these men are in hiding, and the Taliban has come to virtual defeat with the exception of pockets of resistance. Many of the Taliban have fled into Pakistan.

As one delves into the history of Islam and reflects on its methods in its early beginning, and in centuries since, and even in some countries today, to coin the Islam of the Taliban as “Radical Islam,” appears somewhat out of place. Islam has been known, and rightly so, as a religion of violence. While some Muslims are more moderate or secular than others, this doesn’t remove the facts of the core beliefs of this false religion. The true history of Islam is replete with examples of violence, including murder, against the “infidels,” and that includes all who are not Muslims. When the oppression of Afghanistan came to be under the Taliban, countless individuals were murdered and people’s rights were taken away, and women were treated in a most inhumane way. Just how far from the teaching of Islam was this? Just how radical was it when compared with other periods of Islamic history, and the way some are treated in other countries even today?

**Is the Taliban the epitome of true Islam?** When people speak of “Radical Islam” in our time, it is often evident that true Islam, as verified by true history, is not considered. Much of what has been seen at the hands of the Taliban, is in keeping with the teaching of the Koran, and the *Sunna* with all its “traditions.” A study of these sources of authority will reveal that much of what has been practiced by the Taliban under the leadership of Mullah Mohammed Omar and Usama bin Laden and their supporters, has been practiced before by true Islam.

In an article by Preston Mendenhall of MSNBC, entitled “A journey through Afghanistan,” a number of things imposed by the Taliban are things which have been imposed in the past by true Islam. In some cases these things are supported by the Koran, and just about anything can be upheld by the *Sunna*, that is, by Islamic tradition.

“In today’s Afghanistan, thieves routinely have their limbs amputated. Women, banned from pursuing most careers, are executed for adultery.” Women are restricted in many ways. They must cover themselves with *burquas* from head to toe. High heeled shoes are banned. Women are to have chaperones when leaving their houses. The making of photos is prohibited. Education for women is not allowed. Certain haircuts are off limits as is the playing of music, and many other things.

The above are only a few of the restrictions put in place by the Taliban. These things can be justified by the Koran, the *Sunna*, or by a perversion of these. These things can be called “Radical,” only from the standpoint that not all Muslims practice them. In various instances, as recorded by Islamic history and as is still practiced in some Muslim countries, such things would hardly be called “radical.” They were or are the norm.

**Evidence from the Usama bin Laden videotape.** In this tape an unidentified **Shaykh** speaks at length with Usama bin Laden. In the following paragraph (quoted in part) the Shaykh compares the terrorist’s acts of September 11, to what Islam used to be in the time of Muhammed and “the early years of Islam.”

“No doubt it is a clear victory. Allah has bestowed on us...honor on us...and he will give us blessing and more victory...And this is what everyone is hoping for...I live in happiness, happiness...I have not experienced, or felt, in a long time. I remember, the words of Al-Rabbani, he said they made a coalition against us in the winter with the infidels like the Turks, and others, and some other Arabs. And they surrounded us like the days...in the days of the prophet Muhammed. Exactly like what’s happening right now...And it is a mercy for us. And a blessing to us. And it will bring people back...And the day will come when the symbols of Islam will rise up and it will be similar to the early days of Al-Mujahedeen and Al-Ansar (similar to the early years of Islam)...Finally said, it is the same, like the old days, such as Abu Bakr and Othman and Ali and others. In these days, in our times, that it will be the greatest jihad in the history of Islam and the resistance of the wicked people.”

My point in the above quotation is the evidence that the Islam of the Taliban is not what would have been called “Radical” in the early years of Islam. The Taliban is trying to bring back true Islam and its evil, as the above clearly indicates.

True or pure Islam is a religion of violence of many forms. The idea that Islam is a religion of “peace” is not well founded by evidence. Islam means “submission,” not peace. The violence which has been demonstrated by the terrorism of September 11th and those acts in other countries in the past few years should stand out as examples. These acts have not been vastly different from acts committed by Islam in its past, with regard to the evil involved.

Another point to be made from the Usama bin Laden video is his expression of great joy that his evil plan has been carried out. When a person smirkingly laughs at the death of thousands of innocent people, that has to be evidence of wickedness at its greatest. To claim such evil is God’s will is only to make it worse. Usama bin Laden is not alone in this evil. He has hundreds of thousands of cohorts. Let us not forget that this is a sample of Islam. To attribute their evil to a handful of fanatics is greatly missing the mark of reality.

From the mountains of evidence, **The Taliban is the epitome of true Islam**, in my opinion.

### AS AMERICANS VIEW ISLAM

As Americans, we tend to forget things which should be remembered, and often fail to reflect on obvious signs of warning. Our view of Islam tends to confirm this. The history of Islam is available to everyone who cares to access it. As powerful evidence was ignored in the days leading up to the tragedy of Pearl Harbor in 1941, so has warnings of terrorism against America by Islam been ignored in the past few years. It seems that we have forgotten again! Will we ever awaken to reality?

The current view of Islam by Americans is a very dangerous one. Especially is this true since we suf-

ferred the horrific evil perpetrated by adherents of Islam in September, a case in point. If this is not an example of what we can expect from Islam, can there be such? Even so, more and more we are hearing people speak of the peaceful Muslims. Note the following relative to how Americans are thinking about Muslims. The favorable view of Muslims by Americans has even increased greatly since the September 11th attack, according to a recent poll!

*Murray Ledger & Times*, Dec. 12, 2001, carried an article by Rachel Zoll, AP Religion Writer, entitled: **Poll finds Americans' view of U.S. Muslims improving.** The article says in part:

The image of U.S. Muslims improved significantly in the eyes of their fellow Americans after the terrorist attacks, despite fears that the opposite would occur, according to a survey released Thursday.

Fifty-nine percent of Americans had a favorable view of U.S. Muslims in November compared to 45 percent in March, according to the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life.

Can you believe it! If we suffer another Islamic terrorist attack, will the image of the U.S. Muslims by Americans improve even more???

I would be among the first to say that we should do our best to convert Muslims to the truth of God, just as we should try to convert Catholics, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons and other cults. The gospel of Christ is the only thing which will save them. But at the same time, it is pure folly for us to overlook the danger posed by Islam. It is true that not all Muslims are as wicked as those who engage in the atrocious acts of terrorism. It is also just as true that those who have been engaged in terrorism cannot be divorced from Islam! They are a part of it. This cannot be denied. We must also bear in mind that these terrorist have multiplied thousands of supporters who are fellow Muslims.

**Political influence.** It is understandable that politically we need to have the support of some Muslim countries in the war against terrorism. But walking too soft a line could be dangerous. We hear the cry that this is not a war against Islam. Yet, it is a war against a part of Islam. If a great part of Islam didn't go along with terrorism to some degree, wouldn't they expell from their ranks the Muslim terrorists? Many Muslims were euphoric when they learned of the evil attack upon thousands innocent people on September 11.

Syndicated Columnist, Cal Thomas, had an article in *Murray Ledger & Times*, November 28, 2001, entitled **The Kindness Offensive.** He warns against going too far in trying to please the Muslims by kindness. In the following quotations we shall set forth some matters of concern stated by him.

President Bush on Manday (Nov. 19) invited 50 ambassadirs from Muslim countries to the White House for a traditional Iftar meal, breaking the sunrise-to-sunset daily fast of Ramadan. The ambassadors kenlt and touched their foreheads to the floor of the East Reception Room. It's unlikely they were praying Lee Greenwood's lyrics for "God Bless the USA." . . .

Last Thursday (Nov. 15), a Muslim cleric delivered the opening prayer before the U.S. House of Representatives.

Have Charlotte Beers and President Bush read the Koran? Do they know what the Islamic clerics and the Arab press say about the West?

In New York City, Islamic public school children are now allowed to pray during the school day, a practice denied to Jews and Christians.

...Muslims who take their faith seriously are prohibited from making alliances with "infidels" except as a means to the end of forcing them to submit to Allah.

We realize the need to have improved relations with Muslim countries, but we must not go so far as to make them believe we accept their religion and its support of terrorism against our country. All Muslims who take their religion seriously and submit to the teachings of Islam cannot be our true friends; to them we are "infidels," and Islam is to oppose us. Those who are killed in war against the "infidels," (that's us) are promised no less than heaven.

### GROWTH OF ISLAM IN AMERICA

Some say that there are now six million Muslims in our country. There are indications that this number is increasing rapidly. Dianne S. Dew says that "Over 80,000 U.S. foreign exchange students are Muslim." Worldwide, Islam is the fastest growing religion, and part of that growth is in the U.S. Islam is now said to number one billion.

There are a number of things in our present society which are conducive to the growth of Islam, one of those being the effort to win them by The Kindness Offensive, as discussed above. People are being influenced to accept Islam as a "peaceful" religion rather than the religion of violence which it is. The true nature of Islam is being overlooked, even in spite of recent acts of violence.

We are now in a time when denominational religion has become more liberal than ever. Whereas some of the denominations used to have things for which they stood with some tenacity, this has changed drastically. With an increasing number of them just about anything goes. It is largely a matter of what the people, not God, wants. This is an advantage to Muslims, in that their religion is not as opposed as it once was in our country.

From *Agape Press*, in an article by Chad Groening, Nov. 2, 2001, we learn of affiliation between denominations and Islam. "...the fact that Christian churches have shared their pulpit with Islamic clerics shows there is a real need for the American people to be educated on the true nature of Islam."

"The Traditional Values Coalition reported last week that one of the largest churches in the country, Willow Creek Community Church...recently invited a Muslim cleric to explain the religion of Islam to 17,000 churchgoers over four services.....Willow Creek pastor Bill Hybels defended the session, saying some Christians are spreading rumors and half-truths that the Koran encourages violence." Read it! It does!

The Willow Creek Community Church is where J. Wayne Kilpatrick visited a few years ago, and came back all enamored with it and tried to sell it to more of our brethren. If Wayne was so impressed with Bill Hybels, who knows but what he might be impressed by a Muslim cleric, as was Hybels?

Not only has liberalism and indifference swept the ranks of denominationalism, the same thing has happened to the Lords church in great measure. There is an increasing affinity for denominationalism by many of our liberal brethren. In other words, it doesn't make much difference to many as to what is taught and practiced. For example, if brethren, including preacher, elders and school board members uphold the fellowshiping of the Catholic Church, by what reason would they not fellowship the Muslims? Both represent error in its soul-condemning form.

**Terrorist support in America.** In the Dec. 24, 2001 issue of *Murray Ledger & Times*, there is a front page article entitled: **Some U.S. students lend support to terrorist affiliates.** The SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP), article says in part:

Muslim student organizations on college campuses around the country have openly raised money for groups whose assets have been frozen by the U. S. government because of alleged ties to terrorists. . .

One group that has raised money for groups targeted by the U. S. government is the Muslim Student Association, which has more than 100 campus chapters around the country and conducts fundraising by way of rallies, meetings and Web sites.

This is another bit of evidence as to what we may expect from some adherents of Islam. We must remember that to Muslims we are "infidels" and their "Holy Book" teaches that they should get rid of us.

### HOW WOULD ISLAM AFFECT US?

We all know how it affected us on September 11, when thousands were wantonly murdered. In other terrorist attacks, not thousands but hundreds, were killed in the same way. Why would anyone believe these things cannot happen again at the hands of the Islamics?

If Islam should ever gain control of our country, we could expect the same thing which has happened in other Islamic countries. We would be oppressed and our freedoms would be taken away. Our women would be treated virtually as slaves. We could suffer death if we did not convert to Islam.

**How would it affect the Lord's church?** Note the following from the article in *Agape Press*:

"We work in about fifty countries around the world, and many of these are Islamic nations," he says. "Your brothers and sisters in Christ are suffering terribly around the world, and since September 11 we've seen some cases where persecution has increased – in places like Nigeria and Indonesia."

"Lane says anyone who thinks Islam is a peaceful religion needs to visit the Sudan. "We've seen that Islam is not peaceful," he says. "It is a faith of submission, oppression, and persecution. Just ask the people in Sudan – they've been facing an Islamic jihad, a holy war against them, Christians in South Sudan, for eighteen years now."

Some of our own brethren have worked in Islamic countries, and they know the opposition which often exists. Islam would like to conquer the world, and who knows but that it could happen, if the present rate of Islamic growth continues in our country?

Under Islamic control, those of our country would not enjoy the religious freedom that we now have. To practice true Christianity it is necessary to "contend for the faith" (Jude 3). That is, we must fight for the faith in upholding God's truth. Islam would not allow this, as is being demonstrated in some Muslim countries even today. Today worldliness and indifference constitute a great threat to the Lord's church. Islam

would simply add to that threat in a great measure.

Brethren, if we love the Lord and His church we must come to realize the danger which the false religion of Islam poses. We can never win the battle we face as Christians by any measure of compromise. Only the truth will make men free and keep them free from the guilt of sin. When we consider the difficult times faced by the church in its early days, and in times since, we should be reminded that we could face times just as difficult in our time. The liberalism which has invaded the Lord's church only makes the opposition to the error which destroys the souls of men more difficult. This has been evidenced by the increased affinity for the man-made religions around us.

### CONCLUSION

In the foregoing discussion of **The False Religion Of Islam** I have by no means delved into every aspect of it. I have, however tried to hit the high points of it and the many errors which it holds and propagates. If what I have stated is not enough to make people aware of the dangers of Islam, perhaps no amount of information would do so.

In conclusion let me note a few important facts:

1. Islam is growing at a rapid rate in the U.S. In 50 years it has grown from the 7th place to the 5th place in religions worldwide.
2. The teaching of the *Sunna* and the Koran does uphold violence, even to the killing of non-Muslims, the "infidels" and "servants of Satan. Some try to explain away the true teaching of Islam.
3. The only way a Muslim can be our true friend is to be a liberal with respect to Islamic teaching, as our liberal brethren are with respect to God's word.
4. Muhammed Omar, Usama bin Laden, the Taliban and the al-Qadea network are examples of "pure Islam" in a great measure. How could a religion be more evil? The "shoe bomber" is the very latest in what can be expected from Islam.
5. In spite of the several demonstrations of the wickedness of "pure Islam," our people are said to be becoming more favorable toward Muslims. The growing indifference and lack of interest in the Christian religion in our country tends to make people less mindful of the danger which can be posed by false religions. There is no sure way to separate those of "pure Islam" from those who are moderate or liberal as Muslims.

As we face the future we should resolve as never before to serve the Lord at all costs. As our Lord told the church at Smyrna, "be thou faithful unto death" (to the point of dying for Christ) (Rev. 2:10), so should we be willing to do. Whatever the cost of serving the Lord, "Heaven will surely be worth it all." The great and precious promises and the terse warnings set forth in God's word are for a purpose.

- - *Walter W. Pigg*

## IF THERE IS A GOD, WHY IS THERE EVIL?

*Michael B. Willey*

President Franklin D. Roosevelt described December 7, 1941 as "a day that will live in infamy." In all the words that have been spoken in the days following the events of September 11, 2001, no one has come forward with a more appropriate description of that dark day. Tuesday, September 11, 2001, will indeed live in infamy and will be remembered as the Pearl Harbor of the 21st Century.

Tragic events such as we have experienced cause people to turn to God for strength and comfort. One need only look at the number of prayer vigils that were held in the days following the attacks on America for confirmation of this statement. For many people, however, tragic events cause them to question the existence of God. But God is and He is eternal. The very first verse of the Bible confirms the eternal nature of God. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). Before the creation, God was. He is eternal. When God spoke with Moses from the burning bush, Moses asked God what he should tell the children of Israel if they asked him for God's name. "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM" (Ex. 3:13-14). That is a statement of deity and eternity. God is, has always been, and always will be. The Psalmist phrased it this way, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hands formed the earth and

the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Ps. 90:2). Do not doubt, dear reader. God is on His throne, and that will never change.

But then the question is often asked, “If there is a loving God in Heaven why is there evil in the world?” That question implies that God is somehow responsible for the evil that men do. The responsibility for sin lies squarely with men and women and the choices they make, not with God. When God created mankind, He gave us free moral agency, the ability to choose between right and wrong, between good and evil. God told Adam and Eve not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:17; 3:3). Implicit in God’s instructions was a choice Adam and Eve had to make. They could choose to obey God or they could choose to disobey God. The free moral agency of mankind is also seen in Moses’ charge to the Israelites:

Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse, A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your GOD, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known (Deut. 11:26-28).

Joshua told the Israelites, “Choose you this day whom ye will serve, whether the gods which fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Ammorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Josh. 24:15). From the beginning of creation to the present day, mankind has been given a choice – obey the living God or turn from Him. Each person is a free moral agent and must choose to either obey God or not.

When a person exercises his free moral agency and rebels against God, there are often far reaching consequences. None of us live in a vacuum; we touch other lives by our choices and decisions. Adam and Eve chose to disobey God and the result of their choice was the entry of sin and death into the world (I Cor. 15:21). A man robs a bank and kills a security guard in the process. That man’s decision to sin against God impacts not only the life of his victim, but also the lives of the guard’s family, friends and coworkers. A group of terrorists decide to rebel against God, commandeer airplanes and attack and kill innocent people. Their decision touched the lives of every American and untold million around the world. The suffering that exists in this world is not God’s fault, nor is it proof that God does not exist.. It is the byproduct of a decision to live in rebellion against God.

A decision to live in rebellion against God also has eternal consequences. As one gospel preacher has phrased it, “What we go after here determines where we go in the hereafter.” The words of Jesus make it clear that only those who do the will of God in this life will enter the kingdom of Heaven in the life that is to come (Matt. 7:21). Everyone will stand before God in judgment and give account of their lives to God (Rom. 14:12). “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10). Those who live in rebellion against God “shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal (Matt. 25:46).

Evil exists in the world, not because there is no God, but because God gave mankind the ability to choose between good and evil. God is and He is a “rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb. 11:6), but He will take vengeance on those who do not know Him and have not obeyed the Gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:7-9). In the day of judgment, will you be rewarded or punished? It all depends on you and your actions.

586 Cottonwood Dr., Gallatin, TN 37066

## **Back Issues of *Banner of Truth***

We have some Back Issues of a great many issues of B.O.T. for the past seven or eight years. We try to fill requests for back issues, though it is possible for the request to get misplaced. If you request back issues and don’t receive them, please remind us!

Our cost for postage is less when it is by the pound, in multiples of 16 per pound. The first pound is \$1.24 and 43 cents for each additional pound. We send them “free” but we do accept any contributions made to *Banner of Truth*, since this is the means by which we carry on our work. - *Editor*



## Sound Preacher Wanted

The church in Sullivan, MO, is interested in finding a sound preacher, a lover of the truth, to work with them on a full-time basis. A preacher who uses the KJV is preferred. Their most recent preacher, Terry Frizell, left to become involved in mission work in a Pacific island.

Those who may be interested in this work may send a resume to the church at: 97 Florence, Sullivan, MO 63080. Tom Easter at (573) 468-4382, or Jerry Craft at (573) 732-4753, may be contacted for further information.

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## Second Annual Banner of Truth Lectures June 24 - 27, 2002

**Theme: Church Growth—  
As God Would Have It**

**Location: The Curris  
Center on the campus  
of Murray State University  
Murray, Kentucky**

**Sixteen speakers will present twenty four scriptural lessons, not just for preachers, but for all who love the truth of God. Plan now to attend. You'll be glad if you do.**

Article below from <http://www.tennessean.com>  
Saturday, 11/17/01

### **Minister Healing church's wounds; conflict over worship style causes confrontation**

by *Ray Waddle*  
Religion Editor

A veteran minister with skills in reconciliation has been hired to heal the wounds at one of the largest Churches of Christ in the world, Madison Church of Christ.

C. Bruce White, 62, has been named pulpit minister at the high-profile church, stepping into a congregation that has been in turmoil over the vast year and driven hundreds of members away.

The conflict has been worship style — tensions between traditional decorum and contemporary expressions such as hands raised in the air during singing and prayer. The divisive issue of tradition vs. innovation has preoccupied various religious bodies over the past generation.

“They’re ready to bury the hatchet — that’s what led me to say OK.” White said this week. Among some church members, the conflict led to shouting matches, confrontations in the worship assembly, threats of lawsuits, hurt feelings.

White, a former associate minister at Madison in the early 1980’s, was chosen by the church’s elders, who have been divided among themselves in recent months over the worship furor. For now, both sides are saying the drama has simmered down and stabilized. Coexistence has emerged in the 5,000-member congregation. A traditional-style Sunday service is at 8 a.m.; a contemporary-style service is at 10 a.m. “What’s hurting religion across the board is labels — I hate that stuff,” White said.

“God called us to war — not a civil war — but war against Satan and the warriors of evil. We’re all wearing the same uniform.”

White is the director of the Tennessee Children’s Home in Spring Hill. He has extensive preaching and counseling experience.

“We believe he will get us going forward,” said Charles Link, a church elder.

Over the past year, Madison’s conflict has unfolded without a senior minister in place. The last one, Jimmy Sites, left last year. Contemporary worship gestures started surfacing during his tenure, reportedly originating in a Sunday school class for young parents.

Opponents of the new style denounced the trend as unbiblical, saying it reflects emotional excesses and secular entertainment values that subvert the reverence of a worship service.

Defenders say the new style — the informality, the hands in the air — is a genuine expression of love of Christ, a common form of worship in contemporary America. Such a worship style has been adopted in a variety of Protestant and Catholic churches — some Jewish synagogues, too — as faith leaders endeavor to modify organized religion to make it more personal and attractive to the pop-influenced sensibilities of today.

“Being the pulpit minister of Madison church is one of the most demanding jobs in the city of Nashville,” said Sites, who continues to worship there. “Dr. White will need the prayers of all of us, and he will get them.”

Sites said the conflict was fueled by tradition-bound individuals who lack tolerance for opinions about worship styles other than their own.

One longtime member, Ben Jones, who sympathizes with the traditional, said innovations in worship can lead to division.

“We have to be careful that changes and innovations do not usurp the authority of Scripture,” he said.

Churches of Christ adhere to a conservative theology that looks strictly to Scripture for a blueprint for worship and belief. Churches of Christ allow no musical instruments for use in the worship assembly because leaders find no evidence of them in biblical Christianity. Some Churches of Christ have left the fold after embracing instrumental music.

White will continue his director’s job at Tennessee Children’s Home even after he assumes duties at pulpit minister at Madison church on Dec. 2. He’ll preach at both Sunday morning services — the same sermon, he said — despite the differences in the worship style. He’ll preach Sunday nights, too.

“We’re going to head into the future,” he said. “We will concentrate on helping the poor, preaching to the lost, raising children with biblical teachings. Worship will take care of itself...If you raise your hands in prayer, it doesn’t affect my prayer.”

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The above is from the Nashville newspaper, *The Tennessean*, the September 17, 2001 issue. The condition at Madison, as described in the article, must be a cause of jubilation to some church members, in that they have been quite successful in bringing about a compromise which allows them to have that which pleases them, that which they desire, rather than what God has shown He wants.

A sadder note is that those who were more concerned about staying with what God's word clearly authorizes have been put down and allowed to have only that which the compromising "Dr. White" is willing to offer them. The Madison church has been off course for many years, but in more recent times some had decided that they didn't want to go off course any more than what had already happened.

Those brethren who were in opposition to more innovations and further compromise of the truth have now been accused of causing the trouble. I, and others, for quite some time have tried to point out how that those who want to stand for what is right are going to be harshly criticized and blamed for the digression of those who have little love of the truth. The Madison situation is indeed a case in point. The quote attributed to Sites couldn't be any clearer: "Sites said the conflict was fueled by tradition-bound individuals who lack tolerance for opinions about worship styles other than their own." "Tradition-bound" and "lack of tolerance" are terms used to describe those who still want to walk in "the old paths" of Jeremiah 6:16. White is quoted as saying of "labels," "I hate that stuff."

It is understandable that White would hate the stuff he calls labels. One who is willing to compromise and be wishy-washy as to what he stands for and doesn't stand for, doesn't like for his hand to be called about virtually anything. It may be that many are wearing the "same uniform" in that they pretend to be soldiers of Christ, but the uniform does not reflect the loyalty of some. Some are even "enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phil. 3:18).

The article makes mention of "contemporary worship," and implies that it is acceptable to pattern worship after the "contemporary" style. Where does anyone get it, from the Bible, that we have the authority to change God-approved worship on the basis of what is "contemporary"? But this is being done in many cases within the church. The worship by religious people in America has never for the most part been in harmony with God's pattern for worship, as expressed in John 4:24, in spirit and in truth. But in more recent times people have gotten even farther away. The worship which is authorized in the Bible has never been based on what the worship of the day was.

Our brother White is quoted as saying, "Worship will take care of itself..." Worship left to take care of itself will not lead to the right way; divine instruction is necessary. I've seen Hindus, Taoist, and followers of Confucius engaged in "worship" which undoubtedly must have been left to "take care of itself" somewhere along the line. It certainly did not have any semblance of the worship which our heavenly Father approves. Some of what is being seen within the Lord's church today, which is supposed to be worship, has utterly failed to "take care of itself." It has become a matter of entertainment, with a county fair atmosphere. It is clearly seen by those who will open their eyes, that much of what is supposed to be worship has devolved into a matter of doing whatever pleases the people. This has never been God's way.

The author of the above article, *Religion Editor*, Ray Waddle, makes one interesting comment:

Churches of Christ adhere to a conservative theology that looks strictly to Scripture for a blueprint for worship and belief. Churches of Christ allow no musical instruments for use in the worship assembly because leaders find no evidence of them in biblical Christianity. Some Churches of Christ have left the fold after embracing instrumental music.

It would have been much more factual if Mr. Waddle would have said the New Testament teaches those things. As evidenced in the Madison church, more and more of the churches of Christ are not following the Scripture as a "blueprint." I think it is rather unwise to say the church of Christ "teaches" so and so. God's word teaches the truth, and churches should teach that truth (I Tim. 3:15) but many do not do so.

I've heard reports that five or six hundred have left the Madison church, including the relatives of the late Ira North. For years now, I couldn't see how one who loves the truth could continue to be a part of the congregation. Several months ago a member of the Madison church called me and discussed the problems they were having. He admitted that he had for years been "asleep." But, he said, I have finally awakened. When he told me that a number of them were trying to install a sound leadership, I told him I thought their chances were very slim. They were not in the majority. It's clear they didn't win.

On Feb. 6, 1966, I presented a lesson in which I gave the Madison church as an example of good planning. Madison's plans included a 3,000-seat auditorium; one additional missionary each year; new work with orphans and in benevolence. Many went to see, as some younger preachers called it, Madison's "Church Plant." I went to see their church building. Little did I know almost 37 years ago what Madison would be and stand for today. Being bigger didn't work out to be better. It is evident that they have been impoverished due to a lack of spiritual food. How sad! - - *Walter W. Pigg*

## FELLOWHELPERS

September and October 2001

Robert M. Price	400.00
Pine Ridge church of Christ	100.00
Green Plain church of Christ	100.00
South Middleton church of Christ	100.00
Lou Nell Elkins	50.00
Alhambra church of Christ	50.00
Jim and Jackie Patchell	50.00
Charlene Cain	20.00
Cloverdale ch. of Christ (In memory of Edward Tyler, husband of Muriel Tyler)	100.00
Anonymous	50.00
Oak Ridge church of Christ	50.00
Anonymous	200.00
Elizabeth Sublett	20.00
Mrs. Lotrell Dilbeck	20.00
Larry Pennington	50.00
Maple Hill church of Christ	200.00
Wards Chapel church of Christ	25.00
Richard Arnold	20.00
Mrs. John H. Brown	50.00
Mrs. Wayne Crow	25.00
Anonymous	66.00
Fred R. Bogle	25.00
Amerivision Comm.	27.32
Mrs. Kenneth McCoy	100.00
Jimmy L. Clark	<u>8.00</u>
Total Sept. & Oct. Contribution	1,906.32

*“That we might be fellowhelpers  
to the truth” (3 John 8)*

We sincerely thank those who make the *Banner of Truth* possible. You are indeed our fellow-helpers in getting the truth to thousands- *Editor*

### ***Banner of Truth Financial Report*** Sept. & Oct. 2001

Balance on hand Sept. 1, 2001	14,051.92
Sept. & Oct. contribution	<u>1,906.32</u>
Total funds available	15,958.24
September & October expenses:	
Mailing Banner of Truth	1,252.57
Labels	52.53
Plates and ink	374.20
Phone	13.41
Supplies	24.37
Stamps	<u>28.29</u>
Total Sept. Oct. expenses	1,745.47
Total funds available	15,958.24
Total Sept. & Oct. expenses	<u>1,745.47</u>
Balance on hand Oct. 31, 2001	14,212.77

We are most grateful for the generous way in which our brethren support what we are trying to do in behalf of the cause of Christ. It is most encouraging that we do not have to use our time in securing support. It takes just about all the time I have to do what I'm doing now. - *Editor*

## *Banner of Truth on the Web*

We have had some inquiries about putting *Banner of Truth* on websites. Bro. David Lemmons has carried BOT on his website for quite a long time. That address:

< <http://www.hcis.net/users/lemmons/BOTlist.htm> >

We would be glad for anyone else to put BOT on their website, since this would get it into the hands of more readers. I can send each issue by way of e-mail attachment, and that makes for much less effort. - - *Editor*

### **BUNDLES OF BANNER OF TRUTH**

We can send a bundle of up to 16 copies for the small cost of \$1.24. Additional pounds cost 43 cents each. Some of our readers receive a bundle and see that they are passed out to the congregation. This is a good way for individuals to have a great part in getting a needed message out to those who will benefit by receiving it. Contributors make it possible to send the bundles "free," but we are thankful for contributions. - - *Editor*

### **Blessings for You in 2002**

Perhaps we should sing much more often, "*Count your many blessings, Name them one by one; Count your blessings, See what God hath done.*" Most would agree that we take too many things for granted. Remember, just like in years gone by, there are manifold **Blessing for You in 2002**.

First, though by no means the greatest, is the country in which we live. We still have a great measure of freedom; the best of medical care; and a standard of living which is above any country in the world. How great is our potential to serve the Lord.

Second, the greatest of all available blessings are those spiritual blessings which we have "in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). They are the greatest of all in spite of the fact that their value has decreased greatly in our secularized society. These "unseen" blessings are "eternal" The "seen" are temporal (2 Cor. 4:18).

As children of God we have a continuing forgiveness of sins, on the condition that we "walk in the light as he is in the light" (I John 1:7). Without this blessing we would be without hope.

The necessities of life will be provided if we "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (Matt. 6:33).

What a great blessing that we can face the future with the knowledge that if our earthly sojourn ends in this New Year, we have a "crown of righteousness" awaiting us, if we can say with the beloved apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7). That crown of righteousness will entitle us to that abode where "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4). How can one reject such a blessing as this?

In this New Year of 2002, we are blessed with a complete, all-sufficient guide to follow God's way to heaven. That divine guide is "Every scripture inspired of God" which will furnish us "unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17 ASV). Our "faith" can bring us "victory" over the world (I John 5:4).

Can we afford not to avail ourselves of the above blessings? Surely not!

- - *Editor*

## **READERS' RESPONSE**

"Please make this change of address for Banner of Truth....Thanks for your good work - **Jon Gary Williams.**" - **TN.** (*Thanks Gary for informing us.* - *Editor*).

"Please send me Banner of Truth and put me on your mailing list. Start with the October issue, about the false religion of Islam. Enclosed is a check to help pay for mailing expense. Your help greatly appreciated - **Connie C. Jarrell.**" - **OH.** (*Glad to add you to our mailing list. Thanks for the check to help with B.O.T.* - *Editor*).

"I'm still enjoying B.O.T. and I want to keep getting it. But will you send the bundle to the O.B. church. I have moved my membership to Collerville - **Christian Coopwood.**" - **MS.** (*Thanks for informing us.* - *Editor*).

"Thank you so much for B.O.T. We appreciate it so much. So glad to know there are some that stand for the truth. So many don't any more. Use this help any way you need. Keep the good work going. Thanks again - **Jim Scott.**" - **MI.** (*It is sad that so many no longer seem to be love the truth of God. Thanks for your help.* - *Editor*).

"Thanking you for the Banner of Truth. Please continue sending it to us. We enjoy reading it and look forward to it regularly. Keep the good work and strong stand for the truth... - **J. C. & Evie Johnson.**" - AR.

"Please remove our name from your mailing list. Thank you - **Sandra Conley.**" - TX. *(Thank you for letting us know. We'll remove your name - Editor).*

"Take off mailing list. - **Robert Black.**" - CA.

"One of my friends...has wanted me to send and ask you for your bulletin for some time. She says that you have such good articles in it - **Dorothy Wilkinson.**" *(We trust that you will enjoy Banner of Truth. If so, pass it on to others who might also enjoy it - Editor).*

"You continue to do a great job with Banner of Truth. Your comprehensive articles are just what is needed in the brotherhood Alan Adams is also a very fine writer. The posting of Banner of Truth to the WEB auspices of David Lemmons is another splendid arrangement. We trust you continue to be in good health.....May God bless you, - **Virgil and Dorrace Poe.**" - TX. *(Thanks for your encouraging words. We get quite a few responses from the Web site of bro. David Lemmons. Some from foreign countries. For 76 yrs. I'm doing quite well. - Editor).*

"Please send us a copy of your publication 'Banner of Truth' for the elders here at Owl Hollow. May God bless your efforts - **Barry Green.**" - TN. *(Happy to reply with your request. If you deem B.O.T. to be worthwhile, we can send you a bundle for the members. We send about 120 bundles each month. Some to foreign countries =>*

"To the elders of the church. I have received two of your bulletins, June and July. I really agree with your writings. I think you are staying with the Bible. I would like to subscribe to your paper, and also a friend. ...Some of the churches are getting too liberal and trying to go off on the doctrines of men.... **Eileen Brooks.**" - MI. *(You are certainly right when you say some are getting too liberal and going off on the doctrines of men. There are a number of warnings in the New Testament about this very thing. As sad as it is, we shouldn't be surprised - Editor).*

"Just a note to express my appreciation for Banner of Truth, and your stand for the truth. Not many now preach the whole counsel of God. God bless you and keep up the good work. Hope this \$10 will help - **Leroy Clem.**" - AR. *(Thanks for your encouragement, and also for the \$10 to help. We are always grateful for those who have a part in supporting our work financially, regardless of the amount given. The thought behind it also means a great deal to us, that brethren want to have a part - Editor).*

"Enclosed is a check for \$50.00 to help with the expense of publishing and mailing Banner of Truth. I have been receiving and enjoying BOT for some time. You as editor and Bro. Adams as assistant editor do a wonderful job in presenting the truth and opposing individuals and colleges that are not in harmony with the 'the doctrine of Christ.' Keep up the good work - **Kenneth D. Pylant.**" - GA. *(Brethren like you keep our work going and we are never unmindful of that fact. It is sad indeed that there is such a need to oppose false teaching in our day. False teachers are a great hindrance to evangelism, but if the truth is not upheld, the mission work done will not be of any value. The truth, not error, is to be taken in 'all the world' and 'every nation.' - Editor).*

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## Changing your address???

Help us save \$ and help yourself by not missing a single issue of *Banner of Truth* - Editor

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**Editor's e-mail:** < [wpiggbot@apex.net](mailto:wpiggbot@apex.net) >

Visit BOT on David Lemmons' Web at:

< <http://www.hcis.net/users/lemmons/BOTlist.htm> >

Readers may get on David's LemmonsAid e-mail:

<[LemmonsAid-Subscribe@YahooGroups.com](mailto:LemmonsAid-Subscribe@YahooGroups.com)>

**We trust that you are off to a good start in 2002!  
Walter and Naomi**