

Church of the Nazarene: No Longer A Holiness Denomination

**A Continuing Documentation of The False Teachings
That Have Ruined A Denomination That Once Stood For The
Truth Of God's Word**

Promotion of Roman Catholic Ideas

Emergent Church

Mysticism

Roman Catholic Practices (Lent, Ashes)

Open Theism
(God cannot know all the future)

Promoting Evolution

Associating with Pagan And Interfaith Group

Prayer Stations

**Distorting the History of John Wesley
and Other Christian Leaders**

Prayer Labyrinths

Maunday Thursday

**Teaching of Occultism
at the Seminary**

**Retreats at Roman
Catholic Monasteries**

LGBT Groups in College Campuses

**Roman Catholic speakers
at the colleges**

Signs and Wonders and Fire Schools

Rejection of Biblical Inerrancy

Story-telling over preaching the Word

**Contemplative Spirituality
(aka Spiritual Formation)**

Ecumenicalism

Wildgoose Festival
(promoted by Nazarene leaders)

Process Theology

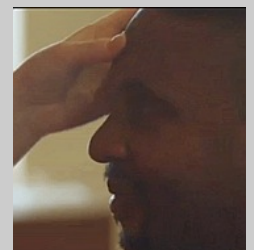
(God makes mistakes and learns from them)

Affirmation of Homosexuality

Social Justice takes precedence over the Gospel

Promoting of Ungodly Evolution

Master's Plan (G-12 Movement)



The Church of the Nazarene: General Assembly 2013 Report, And Various Papers Documenting The Heresies In The Church

[This document can be copied and distributed to others to alert them to the state of the Church of the Nazarene and its universities and colleges. This document has been compiled for the sake of the brothers and sisters in Christ in the Church of the Nazarene. It is solely driven by love for those who may be, or have been, deceived by the many false teachings and teachers that have invaded the church. I cannot explain exactly why such blatantly unbiblical and satanic teachings have fooled so many.

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[compiled by Manny Silva, www.reformednazarene.wordpress.com. For a free Concerned Nazarenes DVD that explains about the emergent church movement, send an email to:standfortruthministries@gmail.com]

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General Assembly Final Report: What Is The Future Of The Church of the Nazarene?

“Was our Lord shooting the first century churches in Revelation 2 and 3 when He walked in their midst and exposed their sins and failures, and commanded them to repent? The kindest and most biblical thing a faithful servant of God can do is expose unscriptural conduct to lead to repentance, lest God step in and judge severely and chasten in a most severe manner. I think the worst chastening that we could receive from the hand of God is if He would just leave us alone and let us go on in our compromise. We are so bent on exalting man and lightly esteeming the Word of God. One day, we will be like Samson when it is said, ‘he wist not that the Lord had departed from him’ (Judges 16:20). May God be gracious and wake us up to listen to the rebuke of those who see the error in our faith and practice. No man is above rebuke. May we come to see the love and grace in those who would be so kind as to rebuke us.” (Pastor Wilbert Unger)

Opening Observations:

The General Assembly of the Church of the Nazarene concluded June 29, 2013. There were no big surprises, other than a few “new” things added to the growing apostasy. **The denomination of which I have been a member all my life is a holiness church in word only.** The Church of the Nazarene is dying spiritually, is splitting up into two very different sides, and both cannot be simultaneously obeying God. It is a sad thing for me to report, and I can imagine friends with tears in their eyes, realizing that I am confirming what they already know. Except for a few local churches that remain strong biblically, there is no evidence of a sound denomination that is staying true to biblical principles. The Church of the Nazarene could not be compared to the church of Smyrna, or Philadelphia. What the Church of the Nazarene has become is a combination of the other five churches that the Lord had very little good to say about.

I do not regret reporting this, although it saddens me. Who relishes being a bearer of bad news? I did not ask for all this to happen. I did not ask to be forced out of a church because I stood up for the word of God, and neither did many other Nazarenes. I did not ask to see pastors fired for preaching against heresy. I did not ask for email upon email notifying me of heartbreak as faithful brothers and sisters were vilified and ostracized by pastors or district leaders. I wanted to live my life as faithfully as I could, and all I was worrying about was keeping the world’s influence from corrupting my children. Now our bigger concerns are for the children that are being corrupted- from within the Church of the Nazarene!

Like cancer cells, the emergent church disease has infected the major parts of the body of the denomination, and it is here to stay. It is a done deal, and there should be no delusions that it will go away. It would take a miracle of God to eradicate this disease. In four years, the General Superintendents of the church have not tried to stop it, have not even spoken out against it, and essentially, they have enabled it and therefore should take full responsibility for letting the foxes into the henhouse. **The greatest responsibility for the demise of this denomination lies with these men who are charged with protecting the church.**

The Failure of Our Leaders

General Superintendent Emeritus Jesse Middendorf has been a longtime promoter of emergent ideology along with his son Jon. Jerry Porter has been a strong advocate of the Master Plan (G12), a program that has torn apart many churches, particularly Hispanic congregations. The denomination has also embraced many elements of Roman Catholicism, a false religion that my father was saved from. As a Nazarene chaplain once told a student privately a few years ago, “we are becoming Roman Catholic.” This is true. Look at the emphasis now on Lent, on giving up something for Lent, on the “Eucharist”, on putting ashes on the forehead; a greater focus on Advent rituals, on Maundy Thursday, prayer labyrinths, prayer stations, and Roman Catholic speakers at the universities. Yet gullible Nazarenes are watching it unfold before their eyes, sitting in their pews taking in everything without question.

Silence is not an excuse. Some General Superintendents have been complicit by their silence, or by their participation in endeavors with organizations that have compromised with the world. Stan Toler and Jerry Porter are [advisory committee members](#) of a radical social justice group called the National Latino Evangelical Coalition, headed by a Nazarene pastor who every year promotes a paganistic and unholy festival called [Wildgoose](#). A third Nazarene leader, Pastor [Oliver R. Phillips](#), is also on this committee. And all six General Superintendents from the past four years were signatories to another radical program called The [Evangelical Immigration Table](#), a coalition which does nothing but divide Nazarenes who are on opposite sides of a serious political issue. These endeavors by our spiritual leaders is a total waste of time, instead of focusing on preaching the Gospel. Their complicity in allowing the Roman Catholicization of the church is also to be noted. Recently, Dr. Eugenio Duarte put his stamp of approval on the observation of Lent, a Roman Catholic rite that has become wildly popular in many churches and districts, and certainly all the other Generals must also approve of it.

Nevertheless, whether they are active promoters or silent bystanders, they have all failed in their duty to provide leadership to the church as outlined in the church Manual. **More seriously, they have failed in their duties as shepherds of the church as outlined in Scripture.** In the same manner, many of the college leaders (such as [Dan Boone](#) and [Dr. Karl Leth](#)) and many district superintendents have been active in their promotion or allowing of the heresies that have damaged the church, while other presidents have stood silently by, as if that would absolve them of any responsibility.

There are the currently uninfected parts (the few strong local churches) that are at times seen as detriments to the “progress” of the denomination, and will most likely be dealt with, one congregation at a time, until they either fall in line, are closed down, or are forced to leave. One of the most critical moments in these churches will be when a pastor retires, and a replacement is needed. If the people are not aware of the apostasy around them, they will be vulnerable, and the wrong choice for a pastor could mean the end of a Bible-believing church.

We are facing an onslaught of false teachings:

The Bible has been rejected as God’s inerrant word and our only true source of authority; evolution is being taught as fact, replacing God’s account of creation and denying the truth of Scripture; Genesis 1-11 is considered merely allegory and the existence of a literal Adam and Eve is denied; teaching of mystical practices connected to Eastern religions, and a movement towards a Christianity based on feelings, instead of clear truth expressed in Scripture; the promotion of the social “gospel” in place of the Gospel of salvation from sin; softening of the biblical stance on [homosexuality](#),

becoming one of “affirmation” and acceptance of homosexual “Christians”; false teachers such as [Brian McLaren](#), [Richard Foster](#), and [Rob Bell](#) are invited to speak to students and even pastors, or their books are used in theology courses as “good” resources; indoctrination and acceptance of Roman Catholic mysticism and rituals, and promotion of books by [Catholic mystics](#); environmentalism and “community” being emphasized to the detriment of the true Gospel message; [retreats to Roman catholic monasteries](#) to practice the silence; imitating the world with the Harlem Shake dance at [the colleges](#), and even at an [Easter church service](#); an ecumenical joining with radical and unbiblical religious and political groups; the teaching of [occultism](#) at Nazarene Theological Seminary; program after program such as [The Master’s Plan \(G-12\)](#) that is ripping apart congregations; and much more that is destroying the church from within.

The following assessments and conclusions are based on four years of research and reporting, and on gathering as much information from the events at General Assembly. There is much more that will not be covered here, so I have attempted to highlight the most critical issues. The sole motivation for this report is out of love for fellow believers. I call upon all Nazarenes and other Christians to not forsake their responsibility to preach the whole counsel of God, which includes warning the flock of false teaching. The church is dividing. However, what is happening should not be surprising, because our Lord Himself asked “*Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division.*” *Luke 12:51*

A. Two Significant developments from the General Assembly that have further weakened a once strong denomination:

Confirmed By The General Assembly: The Bible Contains Error And Is Not Fully Reliable

The most serious and damaging issue is that which affects the foundation of our doctrine and faith: how the Nazarene church views the Holy Scriptures. The 66 books of the Bible are God’s written revelation to us, and reveals to us not only the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ, but reveals Truth in **all** aspects of what is written. God’s infallible word says that “The entirety of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.” (Psalm 119:160).

Yet, the rejection of a simple and clear resolution on Scripture, which was set aside for “study” four years ago, is the most emphatic act a General Assembly and its leadership could do to make a clear statement to all on where it stands. The finality of their rejection of the resolution shows us that the Church of the Nazarene does not, and may never again, affirm that the Bible is true in all its parts. If you state that the Bible has errors, then that opens the door to anyone choosing to believe what they want to believe, and reject what they want to reject, and it is calling God a liar.

The Scripture Committee’s Report is appended at the end of this report and also attached as a pdf. (The text in red and in blue are comments by James Scullin and Allen Marsh). I will note to you one statement, found towards the end of the document, which perhaps reveals their most urgent reason to reject an affirmation of the inerrancy of the Bible:

“Not only is the detailed inerrancy view at variance with Wesleyan theology, and repudiated by leading Nazarene theologians, but if Article IV were to be amended to

restrict us to that particular view of Scripture, the present breadth which can comprehend both views would be replaced by this narrower fundamentalist view. Since Nazarene theologians and biblical scholars as a whole would be very strongly opposed to this narrowing of this Article of Faith, as would many leading pastors and lay people, such a move would threaten a very serious division in the denomination. The division and severe crisis and pain seen in other denominations indicate that this could have very serious results for our unity and could do serious damage to the Church of the Nazarene.”

Three bad pieces of rationale are in this statement alone. First, inerrancy of Scripture is not at variance with Wesleyan theology. That is a false statement. John Wesley himself said, **“Nay. if there be any mistakes in the Bible there may as well be a thousand. If there be one falsehood in that book it did not come from the God of truth.”** The ignoring of this, and much more that they ignore in the writings of Nazarene theologian H. Orton Wiley and others, betrays their shamelessly selective isolation of passages out of context to justify their faulty conclusions.

Secondly, the reliance on *“leading Nazarene theologians”* instead of relying on Scripture is a philosophy that is reflected throughout this document. This is done over and over again as they rely on man’s rationale, and refuse to accept God’s word as it is plainly written. This is a major error which contributes to the downfall of any denomination.

And thirdly, the concern of any kind of division in the denomination should never be an issue by itself, and I believe this rationale betrays the real reason for rejecting the inerrancy of God’s word. This I believe is the main reason that they refuse to confess a belief in the truthfulness of all Scripture. The irony is that this is already causing great division in the denomination, and Bible believers will not put up with this, and many of them will separate from the Church of the Nazarene on this basis alone. What will eventually be left are two camps: the Bible rejecters, and the Bible believers who will be marginalized by the apostates.

Conclusion: the leadership does not believe in the inerrancy of Scripture, and so as the leadership goes, so will the rest of the denomination. In spite of this final document and its attempt to “explain” how the Bible contains mistakes, you will most likely not see any of these folks go to the local churches and tell the congregations that they do not believe in the inerrancy of Scripture. I think a lot more people would simply stand up and walk away.

***Members of the Scripture Study Committee:** General Superintendent Jesse Middendorf, Thomas Noble , Gary Bennett, Stephen Dillman, Bradley Estep, Thomas King (chair), Joseph Knight, Melvin McCullough, Christian Sarmiento, Arthur Snijders, Alexander Varughese (secretary), and David Wilson; Stan Ingersol and Shirley Marvin also assisted.

Homosexuality: It's Just A Matter of Time Before A Complete Compromise

On top of the fatal error of sticking the proverbial thumb in the eye of God with the rejection of Scriptural inerrancy, is another fatal error. The question of homosexuality is one of the biggest issues not only in society but in the church as well. Countless denominations have succumbed to societal pressure, and have compromised God's plain teaching about the sin of homosexuality. The allowing of a workshop at General Assembly with the theme of an LGBT friendly church, but sorely lacking a clear Biblical solution, was bad. But the telling part was yet again another resolution set aside for four years of study, as if the issue of homosexual sin needs further study.

This will also contribute to the downfall of the Church of the Nazarene while leading many astray. After a very large majority voted in favor of a resolution strengthening the church's position on homosexual sin, a motion was made to refer the resolution to the General Board for further study (remember the Scriptural resolution that was tabled four years ago). The main excuse for this was that the church needed to make sure a comprehensive statement on all types of sexuality needed to be made. But why not strengthen the statement on homosexuality now, and then add to it four years later? Sadly, this motion was passed. In a brave attempt to bring it back for re-consideration, several pastors rose and made their case. One was a delegate of the Puerto Rico West District, Rev. Ramon Sierra, and another was the D.S. from North Florida, Dr. Orville Jenkins, Jr. North Florida was the district that originated this well-written and biblically solid statement on the sin of homosexuality. Speaking in opposition to their motion to reconsider was President Dan Boone of Trevecca Nazarene University. Upon voting, the motion to re-consider failed by a fairly close vote, and now the denomination will not have a clear, strong statement on homosexual sin for at least four more years.

This is an utterly sad failure on the part of the leadership, notwithstanding one of the Generals rising after the motion was rejected, and saying that the church still stands firm on this issue. In that case, could not have one or two of the Generals also stood with Dr. Jenkins in asking for a re-consideration? Lack of leadership again, and perhaps politics ruled the day, or perhaps the desire to not offend someone. They truly have forgotten that the Gospel is offensive to those who will not believe. How shameful, and how destructive this may turn out to be for the church in four more years.

With these two critical decisions, along with all the heresies being introduced into the denomination, I believe the Church of the Nazarene is on its way to be part of the ever growing group of apostate churches that are honoring men, rather than God. In spite of Nina Gunter's proclamation that the church is "not in crisis", the fact is that the church is in crisis, and perhaps on life support. What we are left with is leaders in denial, and other leaders in total collusion with the enemies of Christ.

B. Brief Summaries Of Other Assembly Issues:

1. **God Makes Mistakes, And Learns From His Mistakes?** A resolution that would have condemned Process Theology was defeated in committee easily. Instrumental in allowing this heretical teaching to continue was Dan Boone, one of the most dangerous leaders in the church today. He is president of Trevecca Nazarene University, and has helped introduce contemplative mysticism at the school, field trips to Roman catholic monasteries, error filled theology, ecumenicalism, as well as allowing a pro-

homosexual radical group to speak on campus. His very questionable arguments against the resolution sealed its fate. Tom Oord and others can now continue teaching this heresy to our students as if it was from the Bible itself.

2. **LGBT Church?** A disgraceful workshop was conducted by a church that says it is “seeking to make Christ-like disciples in the LGBT community. Not a mention of sin until I asked a question at the end: “have there been any instances at your church where people testified that they had been freed from the sin of homosexuality?” It is interesting that the pastor referred to my approach as similar to Exodus International’s approach, although I corrected him and stated that it was a biblical approach. The answer was never all too clear as far as I heard it. I stand by my conclusion that this is bad news, not good news for the church. A standing ovation was given to this group at the end.

This seems to be baby steps to eventual acceptance and affirmation of homosexual “Christians”. With the Eastern Nazarene College chaplain already having boasted of worshipping with an openly homosexual pastor and congregation, LGBT support groups, the welcoming of pro-homosexual groups to campuses, and a weak official Pastoral Perspectives document.... why not? The doors are opening wider for homosexuality becoming fully accepted in the Church of the Nazarene.

3. **Contemplative spirituality and Roman Catholicism** is getting into Nazarene blood, and its all okay with the leadership. In the workshop conducted by Mark Maddix of Northwest Nazarene University, he promoted lectio divina, and spiritual formation, and at the end, I challenged him and asked why is it the Nazarenes are bringing in all sorts of heresies and practices of the Roman Catholics. His co-speaker also erred when he stated that the Bible came from the Roman Catholics. He talked to us later, and when Tim Wirth asked him if he thought the Catholic gospel of salvation was the same as the Protestants he stated " Yes, they are the same gospel of grace." He did not have an answer to the question: That’s wrong they are two separate gospels, and if they are not why was there a split?" In other words, why was there a Reformation? Dr. Maddix apparently does not know much about the history of the Roman Catholic church and [what it teaches](#). Roman Catholics, as is taught by the magisterium and the Council of Trent, are not our brothers and sisters in Christ- yet, these “learned” professors and pastors have no idea what they are talking about- or are completely overwhelmed with a delusion that is very deadly.
4. **Experiencing Strange Things:** Another prayer room was there, complete with the Roman Catholic feel and the icons. The same oppressive feeling that three of us had as we approached the prayer room to enter it, and the hesitation, was a bit odd for us. I went in later after praying first, and wrote my message to the church on the table. There more indications that the church is helping to bring in new problems. Experientialism is becoming more pronounced, as people are looking to “feel” and “experience” the presence of God, whatever that means. Having rejected Pentecostalism and the Azusa Street movement years ago, especially from the founder Phineas Bresee, now it seems “strange fire” is being introduced to the church again, by way of the Fire School: Living The Supernatural, conducted by Rob McCorkle and Dan Bohi. Then there was the encounter we had with one of the young ladies at the Fire School booth. She insisted that the physical manifestations she had experienced were the mark of the Holy Spirit. I asked, how do you know it’s the Holy Spirit? And I asked again, is it possible that you could be deceived? And we were told we were not to touch God’s

anointed when we questioned Dan Bohi's teachings. We were finally asked to leave. If someone thinks that feeling heavy in their arms and not being able to get up is proof of the Holy Spirit working in them, then this person is in serious trouble. Get ready for a new wave of unsound doctrine similar to the very things Bresee warned about.

5. **Elections:** Two new General Superintendents were chosen. One, [David Busic](#), was president of the Nazarene Theological Seminary, and as far as I know, has done nothing to change the direction it is going: into contemplative spirituality and even the teaching of an occultic course. He has at minimum some connections to emergent ideology, including his liberal use of quotes by Phylis Tickle in his inaugural address. I'm afraid we will find out more in time. The second General Superintendent, [Gustavo Crocker](#), has quite a few connections with Leonard Sweet, an emergent leader who is connected to Rick Warren and also has some [strange ideas of spirituality](#). I don't know much about him, but again, time will tell as to how he will lead. I am not optimistic.
6. **The Board Of General Superintendents:** I have absolutely zero confidence in the Board of General Superintendents, nor should anyone else. These men have failed the church. I believe that all the evidence shows that those who were on the Board the last four years paid only lip service to the ideals and doctrines of the COTN, while allowing all sorts of heresies to damage the church, perhaps irreversibly. We must pray that they will repent of their lack of leadership, wake up to the destruction that is happening around them, and speak the truth to the people, even at the cost of losing membership. If not, **we must hold them accountable.**

I am asking every Nazarene who reads this, and is as concerned as we are, to write a letter to the General Superintendents, or email each of them directly, and ask for answers. Do not be satisfied with anything but direct and unambiguous answers to your questions. Ask for specifics as to what they believe. A good yes or no question to start with might be, "do you believe that Genesis 1-11 is allegory and not fact, and that Adam and Eve did not really exist? And, do you believe evolution to be true?" For a sample of possible questions, see "Questions For the Leadership."

7. **A few other notes.** There were debates regarding infant baptism and the atonement; arguments made for not using the Nazarene name for a church, out of fear that people would not come to a Nazarene-labeled church. We also cannot forget the terrible influence [Nazarenes Exploring Evolution](#) is having on the church, although I did not see any presentations by them. There was a pastor who abruptly walked away from me who would not back up anything with the word of God. His pastor friend then asked to pray for me, when he himself is under deception. I recalled the time when three of us could not for some reason enter into the prayer room, until I finally asked God for protection and then I went inside. There was the joy of speaking to a few pastors who told me that yes, they would hold the line, they would defend the word of God at all costs. And then meeting with fellow Nazarenes I had known for several years only through email and Facebook. Spending time with two friends who generously opened their home up to me was an enjoyable experience. There was some good at this Assembly.

Conclusion

“And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12

I believe there is a strong delusion setting into the minds of many Nazarenes today, and they are believing in many lies. What else can explain the inexplicable ignoring of so much false teaching by the leadership, and also the deliberate turning a blind eye from the truth of what is happening, by many people in the pews, and by pastors who do not seem to be interested in warning their flock? They are dangerously living in a bubble, keeping their congregation from knowing the dangers, and thus allowing them to be potentially exposed to error. The seminary is turning out pastors who are in turn introducing heretical teachings to their congregations. The pews in turn are being filled with people who are not even saved, or who are saved but are naïve and cannot or will not think for themselves.

Many Nazarenes have given their blood, sweat and tears to the Church of the Nazarene. I think of those who sacrificed much of their time and resources such as Don and Sue Butler, who with the help of Tim Wirth produced a DVD that has gone out to thousands of Nazarenes and helped many become aware of the emergent church and its dangers. Countless Nazarenes who for standing up for the truth have been disenfranchised and forced to leave their church, and when no other healthy Nazarene church is available, are forced to leave the denomination.

The Church of the Nazarene has become a denomination that has little interest in the truth of the Gospel and the well being of Bible believing Nazarenes, and instead as one former Nazarene said recently it is “a works-based religion with all sorts of rules and regulations, and the demand for increasing numbers of people, and increasing the bank account.” Even that is backfiring as the church seems to be in financial crisis, part of it precipitated by the sex scandal at Bethany First Church a few years ago, which cost the denomination an undisclosed amount of money. There is no interest in truth, because speaking the truth will often turn away people. If the truth is hidden under the cover of “love” while ignoring the righteous judgment of God, surely more people might be added to the church daily- but how many will actually be saved?

A Message To Those Who Have Been Hurt By The Church

It is difficult to see so many years of enjoyment and pure joy at being a part of a holiness church, turn into times of anguish. I have received many of your stories, and it is absolutely heartbreaking. I do not cry too many tears outside, but the sorrow I feel inside is more than I had felt in all my years before four years ago. But God has promised He will never leave you, in spite of persecution, which He says you would face. And to the churches that are standing firmly in opposition to the apostasy, we will pray for you.

A friend wrote recently in response to a Christian who was sharing a burden for the church:

“If these are the end times, I only see a further falling away. But God has said His Word will not go out void. Where the Word is still faithfully preached and lived, there will be hope, there will be growth, there will be revival.... Instead of being humbled by the punishment of God, "Christians" are only going farther from God. Rejecting God's discipline will lead to a seared conscience and a darker walk. But continue working while there is daylight because there is

still some harvesting possible, even if these are the end times. I share your broken heart over the state of the church today. May God be with you.”

A Message To The Silent Pastors

You must tell your congregation about these things. You may be against all these false teachings, but that is not enough. You **MUST** tell your congregation the truth about it too. They must be equipped with the knowledge of what is going on, or they will be in danger someday. You will retire someday, and then a false teacher comes in to replace you, and soon he will bring devastation upon the church with the revisionist lies of the emergent church and other false movements. Are you willing to take responsibility for that happening? You are an undershepherd to the Great Shepherd, and you are charged with a much greater responsibility, and Scripture says that you will be held more accountable by God for what you teach, or what you fail to teach.

A Message To Those Who Say We Should Not Criticize the Church And Its Leaders

We are to look out for those who preach another gospel. Paul warned about those who preached "another Jesus ... another spirit ... or another gospel" (II Cor. 11:4). How can we know them unless we judge their Jesus, their spirit, and their gospel by the Word of God? Paul called such preachers "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ" (II Cor. II: 13). He explains in v. 14-15 that these preachers are the ministers of Satan. The God-called man must be just as faithful today in exposing the ministers of Satan.

Paul warned the Galatians about those who "pervert the gospel of Christ." He also said, "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (See Gal. 1:6-9). Multitudes today are preaching a perverted gospel. Those who teach salvation by baptism, or by works, are teaching a perverted gospel. The charismatics who add signs and wonders to the gospel, Catholics, many evangelicals, and many fundamentalists (?) are preaching a perverted gospel. Yet, we are supposed to cooperate with them in evangelism and Christian work, according to many today. If we fail to expose these false prophets, then we have betrayed Christ and His gospel.” (Tim Wirth)

Resources:

www.reformednazarene.wordpress.com (a blog with articles on what is going on in the churches and universities)

www.concernednazarenes.org (our official website with some basic information and links to discernment ministries)

For a free DVD about the Emergent Church: standfortruthministries@gmail.com

On Facebook:

Concerned Nazarenes (a support and information group for Nazarenes and other Christians; this group will soon be re-named to reflect its diverse mix of Nazarenes, former Nazarenes, and other Christians of like mind. The new name will be “Nazarenes And Other Concerned Christians United”)

Thanks: a great thank you goes to so many people who have endured the difficulties: Sue and Don Butler and Tim Wirth for producing the Emergent Church DVD that has helped many Nazarenes; the speakers on the DVD; the pastors who have endured hardship and even firings and church closings; the laypeople who have suffered much. Your reward is in heaven.

SCRIPTURE COMMITTEE'S FINAL RESPONSE TO THE 2009 GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION JUD-805, REGARDING ARTICLE IV (THE HOLY SCRIPTURES)

(Including several responses by two Nazarenes)

[The text of the Scripture Committee report is in black text;
[Responses: by James Scullin in *red italics*;
by Allen Marsh in *blue italics*]

Resolution JUD-805: regarding Article IV. The Holy Scriptures; to remove the phrase “inerrantly revealing the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation,” and replace it with the phrase, “inerrant throughout, and the supreme authority on everything the Scriptures teach.”

RECOMMENDATION

Reject Resolution JUD-805 which seeks to alter the wording of Article IV. The Holy Scriptures. This committee recommends leaving this Article of Faith as it currently stands.

RATIONALE

The proposals at the 2009 General Assembly to amend Article IV of the Nazarene Articles of Faith in order to assert the complete inerrancy of Scripture clearly come from a concern that the Bible be given its rightful place in our life and theology. Having been asked to evaluate these proposals, the committee begins by expressing our appreciation for this concern and wish to make clear our solidarity with all those who have a high view of the place of the Bible in the life of the Church and of each Christian. John Wesley declared himself to be homo unius libri, ‘a man of one book,’ and described the Methodists as ‘Bible-Christians’ determined to preach ‘plain, old Bible-Christianity.’

There is no place below to appropriately insert this, so I'll do it here. The Nazarene church schools teach that Genesis 1 is some type of fiction allowing our schools to teach millions of years of evolution. . In giving Moses the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20, God (Jehovah) said to keep the Sabbath holy “for in six day Jehovah made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day.” In Exodus 31:17 He repeated that: “For in six days Jehovah made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He abstained from work and rested.” Therefore the Nazarene Church teaches that God lied. If God lied about that, we can't trust anything the Bible says that God said—or about anything else.

1. THE STRENGTH OF ARTICLE IV

We wish to begin by drawing attention to the strength of the present Article IV as a declaration of our commitment to the authority of the Bible.

(a) Plenary, divine inspiration

First, the article clearly states the inspiration of Holy Scripture as ‘divine’ and ‘plenary’: that means that the whole Bible is inspired and that it is inspired, not just in the sense that a work of art may be said to be ‘inspired’, but by God. To say that the Bible as a whole is inspired is to say that we cannot take texts out of context and quote them arbitrarily as ‘the word of God.’

Where do inerrantists do that? We have to understand biblical theology as a whole.

The Bible as a whole is inspired, NOT the Bible in whole. Theologians determine what the context means. The text IS the Word of God and should be stated as such. That said, an interpretation that denies context is not the Word of God.

Nor do we believe that divine inspiration cancels out the human authorship. Each book has a distinct style, vocabulary, and idiom reflecting the quite different human authors and contexts, whether of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Luke, Paul, or even writers unknown. We do not believe in a mechanical idea of inspiration in which their minds were blotted out and they became mere puppets. Rather their mental powers were heightened and their free wills guided by the subtle and sensitive Spirit of God. Whether they were gathering information to write a narrative, or editing what had previously been written, or were putting into writing speech directly inspired by the Holy Spirit, the result was a collection of documents fit for the purpose of revealing God's will and way, God's acts, and supremely God's revelation in his Incarnate Son. We agree therefore with the Cape Town Commitment of the Third Lausanne Congress when they say in their confession of faith:

We receive the whole Bible as the Word of God, inspired by God's Spirit, spoken and written through human authors. We submit to it as supremely and uniquely authoritative, governing our belief and behavior. We testify to the power of God's Word to accomplish his purpose of salvation. We affirm that the whole Bible is the final written word of God, not surpassed by any further revelation, but we also rejoice that the Holy Spirit illumines the minds of God's people so that the Bible continues to speak God's truth in fresh ways to people in every culture.²

"We receive the whole Bible as the Word of God." "The whole Bible is the final written word of God." This includes Genesis 1-11 and other historical narratives not accepted by many as truly historic.

We strongly endorse the emphasis in this Cape Town Commitment that we love God's Word because we love God, love his world, love the gospel, love the people of God, and love the mission of God.

Nothing in the Cape Town Commitment says anything about loving God, His world, etc. That statement brings in unrelated ideas that sound good.

*I find this troubling in light of James 1:17, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from **the Father of lights, with whom is no variability, neither shadow of turning.**" What God has revealed has been revealed and His methods established; why are we looking for new ways?*

(b) Inerrantly revealing the will of God

Secondly, Article IV clearly states that the Holy Scriptures reveal the will of God inerrantly. *True, but it reveals more than the WILL of God. It also reveals truth in every area of creation about which it speaks.* That means that what Holy Scripture tells us about God and his saving acts and purpose cannot be set aside by any merely human philosophy, metaphysics, or ethics. Human reason and culture are all fallen and therefore suspect when it comes to discerning the will of God, but we each may trust the word of God given to us in Holy Scripture as 'a lamp to my feet and a light to my path' (Psalm 119:105). Human reason and experience may guide us in many things, but when it comes to the things of God (which shapes all of life), they must bow to what he has revealed to us in the inspired Scriptures. *So why does the church accept the ideas of modern secular science over the clear words of Scripture? This belief is what is usually known as the 'infallibility' of Scripture, that it 'inerrantly reveals the will of God in all things necessary to salvation' as distinct from absolute 'inerrancy' in every factual detail. This is why Bible believers wanted the change.* This implies that, while the Holy Spirit guides us as we listen for the voice of God speaking to us through Scripture, no claims to private revelations of the truth of God which are additional to Scripture are acceptable.

The black highlighting in the previous paragraph is mine. I felt its only intent was to weaken absolute inerrancy. Obviously true! The proper scope of the paragraph should be to establish the Holy Spirit illumines our understanding of Scripture, not our private interpretation. The degree of inspiration deserves its own paragraph. And Scripture goes far beyond implication as to the Holy Spirit guiding us, as John 16:13 plainly states. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of

truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come.”

This does not imply however that we are infallible in our interpretation of the Bible. Some Christians think that they are merely stating what the Bible says, but that is naïve. Whether we like it or not, every Christian is actually engaged in interpreting the Bible. Accordingly, we must interpret each word in its sentence, each sentence in its paragraph, each paragraph within the argument of the book as a whole, and each biblical book within the Scriptures as a whole. We interpret the New Testament against the background of the Old Testament, and the Old Testament in the light of the New Testament and particularly as progressive revelation leads up to the final revelation of God in Jesus Christ. We follow the guidance of the ancient creeds of the Church as we interpret the Scriptures together. All of this calls not only for careful scholarship, but also for dependence on the Holy Spirit. We expect all preachers and teachers particularly to be committed to the interpretation of the Scriptures given in the ancient creeds and the Articles of Faith, but on other matters we affirm freedom of interpretation provided it is in a spirit of loyalty to the Church. As we interpret Scripture together within the fellowship of the Church, we look to the Holy Spirit to guide us in the future into ‘the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect’ (Romans 12:2).

(c) All things necessary to our salvation

Thirdly, that brings us to the point that Article IV makes clear the purpose of Holy Scripture: that it reveals the will of God “...in all things necessary to our salvation...” John Wesley was very clear that the purpose of being a person ‘of one book’ was to find ‘the way to heaven.’

*One book surely means Wesley would have rejected the volumes by theologians saying the one book he relied on was not totally inerrant. Wesley’s words on the subject: **"Nay. If there be any mistakes in the Bible there may as well be a thousand. If there be one falsehood in that book it did not come from the God of truth."** *Journal for 24 July 1776**

The Bible is not to be treated as an almanac or a magic book or a text book of history or science. Its truth is expressed in the thought forms of the ancient world, in their culture, context, geography, cosmology, and language. But on the other hand, God’s action in the history of Israel and supremely in the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ was ‘necessary to our salvation.’ Accordingly, it is part of our faith that the Bible is the God-given account of God’s action in space-time history and therefore an integral part of God’s revelation in history and uniquely in the Lord Jesus Christ. And while science progresses by studying ‘the book of nature’ rather than by biblical study, nonetheless modern science arose in a Christian culture out of Christian convictions, and ultimately we believe that everything we know through science will be seen to be more than compatible with all that has been revealed to us through Holy Scripture. *That is, when both science and Scripture are correctly known and understood.*

Other than our technology, humanity is the same. The truths expressed are timeless. Man is still sinful and in need of a Savior. The culture dictating what is relevant in Scripture is being used to bless homosexuality in today’s culture. Refer back to James 1:17, God has not changed His mind on what He has revealed in Scripture.

Faith in the word of the gospel of salvation also implies obedience to the law of God. To live intentionally violating the law of God as interpreted by Jesus and the apostles is the antinomian denial of the faith. Christian ethics are formulated as the Church interprets Holy Scripture guided by the Holy Spirit and taking note of the wisdom of the Church through the ages.

Again with implication, what happened to Nazarenes who could proclaim the Word of God? I John 2:2-3 “And hereby we do know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

(d) What is not from Holy Scripture cannot be a doctrine of the Church

Fourthly, the final compound clause of Article IV is perhaps the strongest of all. Its wording derives (via Wesley's Twenty-five Articles) from Article VI of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England:

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man [sic] that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite necessary to salvation.

This asserts one of the cardinal principles of the Reformation, the sola scriptura, that Holy Scripture is the only source of Christian doctrine. It says that only what is read in Scripture or proved from Scripture is to be required as an article of faith or is necessary to salvation. Of course, as Wesleyans we know (as do the other major theological traditions in the one Church) that Scripture has to be interpreted. We interpret Scripture, guided by the traditions of the Church, in the light of our experience as the people of God, and using sanctified reason. But according to this sentence none of these can be in itself the source or basis for Christian doctrine, and as we look at the other Nazarene Articles of Faith, we see that this is in fact true. They are all derived from Scripture. Christian tradition helps us today to interpret Scripture, and human reason and experience are engaged in this interpretation and in articulating our doctrines. Reason and experience have shaped the way these Articles of Faith were formed and they still shape the way we express our doctrines and they may even corroborate them. But every doctrine we profess together as a denomination in our Articles of Faith is in fact based upon and derived from Holy Scripture.

Sometimes interpretation is based on incorrect translation. Two examples: "Thou shalt not kill." Hindus don't kill animals, so they are better than we are. Error: it should read, "Thou shalt not murder." Also God told Adam, "When you eat it you will surely die." Some say God lied because they didn't die. The correct translation is, "When you eat it, dying you will die." Solomon said the same thing to Shimei about leaving Jerusalem. Shimei didn't die instantly when he left, but he was ultimately going to die. Adam & Eve began to die and ultimately died. So, it is implied the Holy Spirit will guide our interpretation, but in practice we rely on church tradition, experience, and reason.

Such is the strength of Article IV therefore, that as a committee we believe that when it is fully understood, it is a good and sufficient guard against any theology that departs from Holy Scripture. Its strength and clarity needs to be understood and appreciated by all who preach in Nazarene pulpits and teach in Nazarene colleges/universities. The committee therefore believes that it is not only unnecessary, but that it would be untrue to the Wesleyan tradition, incompatible with Wesleyan theology, and unwarranted by the Scriptures themselves, to add any assertion that the Scriptures are 'inerrant throughout' not only in revealing the will of God for our salvation, but in determining the truth of any statement whatsoever. That would be to turn the Bible from the saving word of God into an almanac or encyclopedia. To say that the Scriptures are 'the supreme authority on everything the Scriptures teach' merely raises the question of what exactly the Scriptures teach, and there are numerous unsettled disputes among Christians (and even among Nazarenes) about that. To assert the complete detailed factual literal accuracy of every part of Scripture ('inerrant throughout') raises more problems than it solves and diverts people into unnecessary, distracting and futile disputes.

This is truly disturbing. This says we can't say Scripture is the final authority, because we really don't know what Scripture teaches. Nowhere do conservatives make the claim that Scripture gives detailed information on each and every bit of minutia of life. Indeed, we would claim the opposite; there are things unknown; we must live by faith where we do not know. What can be known, we are commanded to find. II Tim. 2:15 "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Rejection of Scriptural authority only serves the desire to live outside of Scriptural authority.

To support this conclusion, we need to expand on this key-note paragraph. We need to understand where this demand for complete detailed 'inerrancy' comes from, why it is unnecessary and misleading, and what the view of Nazarene theologians has been.

2. THE CALVINIST ORIGIN OF THE ASSERTION OF DETAILED INERRANCY

The debate over 'inerrancy' has been particularly strong in North America over the last few decades, sparked off in 1974 by the book written by Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible*, and at first it might appear that the assertion of this kind of inerrancy is commendable.

However, it is necessary to understand that this assertion of the complete inerrancy of Scripture in every detail ('inerrancy throughout') comes out of one particular Calvinist tradition. *It is also Wesleyan tradition, and most, if not all, Wesleyan churches except post-1960 Nazarenes continue to believe in total inerrancy. Since this is true, the following argument falls apart.*

It is part of a particular Calvinist theological method, and it cannot be understood apart from its place in the rationalism which too often characterizes that theology. The Calvinist theologians who taught at Princeton in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Charles Hodge (1797-1878) and B. B. Warfield (1851-1921), inherited this assertion from previous Calvinists such as the Swiss-Italian theologian, Francis Turretin (1623-1687), and it comes directly from their Calvinist concerns. In their battle with the Roman Catholics, the Calvinist theologians of the century after John Calvin held to the authority of the Bible in order to oppose the authority of the pope and the cardinals. Their apologetic strategy prompted them to assert the authority of the Bible as a basis for faith in Christ rather than as something which was implied by faith in Christ.

This is an ad hominem attack, first on Lindsell, then on Calvin. Calvin believed this, so we can't. No doubt Calvin believed the sky was above his head, and the earth was beneath his feet. Hmmm, I suppose we have to forget those silly notions. Show me, Scripturally, why Calvin was wrong.

And placing the Bible in the place of authority instead of the pope, why is that a bad thing? Why tell people not all the Bible is factually inerrant? Why tell them a theologian is required to determine what it says? Why claim entire inerrancy makes it impossible to understand? Intentional, or not, such an approach only places theologians as the real authority and undermines Scripture. Calvin objected to these tactics by the pope. I object to these tactics by theologians.

Their method became to establish first the truth and authority of the Bible, and then build faith in Christ on that. Intellectual persuasion and apologetics therefore came first. Some Lutherans departed from Martin Luther by taking a similar position. Accordingly many of the Reformed Confessions in the post-Reformation period began with the Article of Faith on the Bible. It was in that context that they began to assert the inerrancy of the Bible. In keeping with their deductive method in theology, they argued that since God was perfect, and since the Bible came from him, the Bible must be 'perfect' in the sense of being without any error in the smallest detail.

I fail to see a problem here. God's prophets were held to 100% reliability. If God revealed it, it was true.

It was a presupposition they brought to the Bible rather than a conclusion from the study of the biblical text itself. Not all Calvinists took this position. The Dutch and Scottish Calvinist traditions (Hermann Bavinck, Abraham Kuyper, and James Orr) are different and closer to John Calvin and the Reformers. The insistence on inerrancy was particularly strong among American Calvinists, perhaps helping to explain why Fundamentalism is a predominantly American phenomenon.

The continental Reformers themselves, John Calvin, Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli and the others, made no such claim, and no such claim is made in Article VI of the Thirty-nine Articles

of the Church of England. This was a new claim in the post-Reformation period. For the Reformers themselves, it was faith in Christ which led to trust in the Bible. Martin Luther first proclaimed justification by faith (*sola fide*) and it was only when he realized that the pope rejected this that he saw the necessity that the Church be subject to the Bible (*sola scriptura*). For these later theologians in the Calvinist tradition, faith in the inerrancy of the Bible became the foundation for faith in Christ. It was from this Calvinist tradition, passed on through the nineteenth-century Calvinist theologians at Princeton, that the Fundamentalists of the 1920s took their belief in the total, detailed inerrancy of Scripture. Harold Lindsell tried to hold all evangelical Christians to this particular Calvinist belief in the 1970s and seriously divided evangelical Christianity, at least in the United States if not elsewhere. This whole development with its concern with detailed inerrant facts, demonstrates how much the Calvinist tradition was shaped by rationalistic modernity.

Wesleyans are truer to the original Reformation. We know that we are not brought to faith by having the inerrancy of the Bible proved to us, but that our faith in Christ is what leads us to trust his messengers, the prophets and apostles, and all who wrote the Holy Scriptures. It is not that we are committed as a denomination to the opposite view that the Scriptures are unreliable or that they are historically untrustworthy. No: we are committed to the belief that the Scriptures give us a sufficiently (*omit the word "sufficiently"*) accurate account of God's action in the history of Israel and particularly in the birth, life, death, and bodily resurrection of the Lord.

Sufficiency. Used in this sense, good enough, adequate. Seems a tad inadequate.

It is rather that we do not think that highlighting the issue of detailed factual inerrancy is helpful or necessary to insisting on the full authority and trustworthiness of Holy Scripture. Article VI of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England is therefore entitled, 'Of the Sufficiency of Holy Scripture', and this concept of 'sufficiency' also appears in the title of Article Five of the Twenty-five Articles John Wesley gave to American Methodism.³

3. WHY THIS CALVINIST BELIEF IS THE WRONG WAY TO ASSERT THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

There are two severe disadvantages in asserting the authority of Scripture by claiming the detailed factual inerrancy of Scripture instead of its 'sufficiency.' First, the concept of 'error' is not a helpful one since it is impossible to define what constitutes an 'error.'

Anything that's not correct.

The word seems to imply the need for absolute accuracy, but what degree of accuracy is appropriate? Do we insist on the kind of accuracy of modern scientific language which is foreign to all ancient literature? Are round figures acceptable? Must every narrative observe strict chronological accuracy? Are metaphors and parables disallowed? Are we going to insist that the stories Jesus told must be factually accurate? Even if we accept that the Scriptures are full of metaphor and parable and other figures of speech, are we going to decree where everyone must draw the line—what is literal fact and what is metaphor and parable, poetry and vision? The concept of 'error' is an absolutist word applied to something which is necessarily a matter of degree, and it is consequently a nightmare since it leads us straight into frankly silly and futile questions. That is the second point here: this misguided concept of detailed 'inerrancy' diverts attention to unprofitable debates about unimportant details. Was it Abiathar or Abimelech who was high priest when David ate the showbread? Were there two angels at the tomb, or was there only one? Were there several women at the tomb on Easter morning or was there only one? Did Judas hang himself or did he die some other way? There are innumerable debates on points which have no bearing on the truth of the gospel and which are a waste of time. Because we are dealing with ancient literature, we frequently do not have enough information to determine whether an apparent contradiction is truly a contradiction or not. To assert complete inerrancy therefore is to be diverted into petty and unprofitable

arguments like those at Ephesus who debated ‘myths and genealogies which promote vain speculations’ and had ‘wandered away into vain discussion’ (1 Timothy 1:4-6).

If there were two angels, there was certainly one. Why one account only mentions the one is unknown. Simply stating the one establishes angelic presence. In keeping with the human will not being overtaken, each author gave his perspective. What if one angel were not in the one’s field of vision? It is wiser to fault our understanding than to claim Scripture is untrustworthy. As these authors insist, if it doesn’t affect your salvation, why the furor? It’s okay to say you don’t have the answer instead of placing Scripture as in error, such that you claim to understand it all.

Men more intelligent than any of us have declared the Bible inerrant—men such as Dr. John Warwick Montgomery, Dr. Gleason L. Archer, and Dr. Robert Dick Wilson. Check them out. Dr. Archer expressed the view of all when he said, “I candidly believe I have been confronted with just about all the biblical difficulties under suspicion in theological circles today...as I have dealt with one apparent discrepancy after another....My confidence in the trustworthiness of the Scripture has been repeatedly verified and strengthened by the discovery that almost every problem in Scripture that has been discovered by man, from ancient times until now, has been dealt with in a completely satisfactory manner by the biblical text itself.”

What persuades us of the truth of Scripture is that when it is preached in the power of the Spirit we come face to face with the Lord. We not only know ‘that he died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve’ (1 Corinthians 15:3-5). Paul gives us these as the central facts of the gospel, and we believe that there is no good reason to doubt their historicity. But it is not merely a matter of being given accurate facts. It is rather that through this narrative, we come to meet and know and trust and place our faith in the Risen Lord himself. That is how the narrative of the gospel carries conviction when we evangelize—not by persuading the seeker that we can determine accurately how many angels were at the tomb. The authority of Scripture is validated by the Holy Spirit as we tell ‘the old, old story.’

On what grounds can Peter and Paul be trusted other than the opinion of theologians, if not all Scripture is factually correct? The conclusion is certainly suspect; salvation comes through good narrative (story-telling) that the Holy Spirit can use; it’s an emotional, touchy-feely, experience the “force” encounter with God.

We respect our brothers and sisters who love Scripture and want to defend its authority, but as Wesleyans it is our conviction that trying to do so in this Calvinist way is the wrong way to do it.

4. THE UNITED VIEW OF NAZARENE THEOLOGIANS

The following three web sites are academic reviews showing that Wesley and the Nazarene Church believed in total biblical inerrancy:

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/biblical-inerrancy/>

<http://www.fwponline.cc/v16n2/v16n2reasonera.html>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/inerrancy-and-wesleyanism/>

It is true that at the height of the Fundamentalist-Modernist battle in the 1920s, Nazarene leaders expressed their solidarity with the Fundamentalists. Given the alternative, a Modernist/Liberal theology in which (as H. Richard Niebuhr put it), ‘A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ

without a cross,' that is hardly surprising! But the denomination's premier theologian, H. Orton Wiley, had a deeper understanding of the issues.

Wesleyans were committed to asserting the authority of the Bible against Modernism, but not in the simplistic way in which Fundamentalists tried to do it. Paul M. Bassett writes that, following in the tradition of the Wesleyan theologians, Richard Watson, W.B. Pope, and John Miley, "Wiley clearly enters the lists against American theological liberalism on the one hand and against fundamentalism on the other."⁵ In his *Christian Theology*, he criticizes the Protestant scholastics in the century after the Reformation in that they began "to substitute the written Word for Christ the Living Word." In the context in which he was writing, it is clear (as Paul Bassett argues) that H. Orton Wiley was also criticizing the Fundamentalists of his day who had inherited their view of the Bible's detailed inerrancy from scholastic Calvinism.⁶ He goes so far as to warn against three 'worthy monarchs' to whom we can mistakenly give a false position in place of Christ, the Living Word: the church, the Bible, and reason.

Okay, interesting point here, earlier, we are told interpretation is done through church tradition, experience, and reason. Two of the three things Wiley warns about. Were there multiple authors involved in this response, or was it done in two phases that were not compared to one another?

There is good reason to conclude that it was H. Orton Wiley who drafted Article IV at the 1928 General Assembly, which is good reason in itself why Article IV should not be amended.

We don't know for sure, but we are sufficiently sure, but, true or not, Scriptural soundness should be the driving force behind the decision on Article IV, not who the human author was.

Timothy L. Smith, in a letter to the editor of *Christianity Today* published on March 10, 1978 similarly maintained that Wesleyans reject both the 'liberal' or 'modernist' stance and also the narrow inerrantist view of Scripture associated with B. B. Warfield and Harold Lindsell.

Timothy Smith wrote: '...we Wesleyans stand in an older and much broader evangelical tradition than that represented by modern neo-Calvinist scholasticism.' In a letter to the editor of *The Christian Century*, he maintained that 'the roots of the nonfundamentalist view of scriptural authority accepted by many evangelicals' lay in the writings of the Reformers, and that the Hodge-Warfield view of inerrancy was never held by evangelical leaders such as William Booth, Adoniram J. Gordon, Dwight L. Moody, or the leaders of the National Holiness Association. He rejected the contemporary efforts of the inerrantists, Harold Lindsell and Francis Schaeffer, 'to impose upon modern evangelicals a view of Scripture which Jesus and Paul renounced in rabbinical Judaism.' Holiness Association. He rejected the contemporary efforts of the inerrantists, Harold Lindsell and Francis Schaeffer, 'to impose upon modern evangelicals a view of Scripture which Jesus and Paul renounced in rabbinical Judaism.'

Really? Jesus and Paul denied Scriptural inerrancy? Show me that chapter and verse! It's a shame you have to pick and choose which theologian to believe and quote from because you can't or won't make a Scriptural decision based on what Scripture says, because you don't believe it is totally trustworthy. And after admitting to potential human fallibility!

Similarly, Ralph Earle quotes the early Nazarene theologian A. M. Hills, that the Bible is infallible in what it tells us about God and salvation, not in detailed inerrancy: *Hills was the first Nazarene to present this heresy. As late as 1948 Ross Price wrote in the Herald of Holiness, "Our Lord...assumed the absolute truth of the Scripture.... The Bible is correct astronomically, geologically, historically, medically, botanically, zoologically, meterologically, prophetically, and spiritually." (29 Nov. 1948).*

What is the infallibility we claim for the Bible? It is infallible as regards the purpose for which it was written. It is infallible as a revelation of God's saving love in Christ to a wicked world. It infallibly guides all honest and willing and seeking souls to Christ, to holiness, to heaven.⁸ *This is presupposition. The Bible is presumed to not be factual throughout. It is presumed to only be reliable in matters of salvation. It is then merely stated to be true in those matters because we are told it is. Again, if not totally reliable, we are left with the statement of men as to what parts to trust.*

Ralph Earle then goes on to defend a fellow evangelical scholar who accepted that there are errors in the Bible in rhetoric, history and science. At the same time he thought that this colleague had made more concessions than he needed to and had accepted that there were factual contradictions where the historical accounts could be harmonized by careful hermeneutics.⁹

J. Kenneth Grider similarly rejected detailed inerrancy. He takes note of one sentence from Wesley quoted by Harold Lindsell which seems to teach detailed inerrancy, but argues that when that sentence is taken in the context of Wesley's whole theology, he did not teach inerrancy as part of his theological method in the way of scholastic Calvinism. J. Kenneth Grider argues: "...Scripture itself is not interested in inerrancy. It makes a claim for inspiration, but not for inerrancy—at least, not for total inerrancy."

And Deuteronomy 18:21 – 22 says, "And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him."

J. Kenneth Grider examines that claim to inspiration in 2 Timothy 3:16, and points out that according to the text it is inspiration specifically for teaching (doctrine) and practice.¹⁰

Then why does the verse begin with "All scripture is given by inspiration" instead of for inspiration?

Rob L. Staples contrasts Wesleyanism with Fundamentalism, which arose in Calvinistic soil and insists on 'epistemological inerrancy.' Wesleyanism works differently and takes a view which he calls 'soteriological inerrancy.' *See both of my comments above under "THE UNITED VIEW OF NAZARENE THEOLOGIANS."*

Epistemology deals with truth, I'm fine with insisting the Bible be without lies. What is the other choice? If the Bible is from God, but not totally accurate, then isn't that calling God a liar? From Romans 3:4 "...let God be true, but every man a liar;..."

The point of Martin Luther's analogy is that Christ, who is the Living Word, is to be found in the Bible, which is the written Word. But the latter is an instrument directing us to the former, and thus not an end in itself.¹²

Paul M. Bassett argued in an article on the understanding of the Bible in the holiness movement, that its history and inner logic would lead it to conclude 'that a call like Lindsell's [for detailed inerrancy] is theologically and spiritually irrelevant.' Paul Bassett continues:

A fully true Bible is irrelevant, really?

Its history and inner logic would lead it to conclude that, if the term inerrancy be used, as it is, it refers to the Bible's service as the unique creation of the Holy Spirit, intended by that Spirit to carry conviction for sin, the news of full salvation in Christ, and sure instruction in how to relate to God and neighbor in righteousness and true holiness. In these things the Bible is to be understood as wholly inerrant.

Paul Bassett proceeds to rule out the more detailed inerrancy ('inerrancy throughout'):

The movement has concluded that, since empirical or scientific exactitudes certainly are not soteriologically ultimate and are not even metaphysically ultimate, they must be accounted for in terms of something other than scientific exactitude itself.... Most holiness people would insist that all such questions must submit to the question of the ultimate purpose of Scripture itself, which is not absolutely accurate knowledge of all things in heaven and earth but

soteriological sufficiency.¹³ *Nobody says the Bible gives full knowledge of all things, but we do say the Bible is completely accurate in the facts it does give.*

H. Ray Dunning notes that some evangelicals base the Bible's authority on its inerrancy, but concludes that 'such rationalistic defenses are less than compelling.'¹⁴ H. Ray Dunning goes on to quote A. M. Hills, Clark H. Pinnock, Richard S. Taylor, H. Orton Wiley, and even John Calvin to support the alternative view of the Bible's authority, that we are persuaded of it by the testimonium internum Spiritus sancti, the internal witness of the Holy Spirit. This he sees as an aspect of the doctrine of prevenient grace.

We have to conclude then that *current* Nazarene theologians (*the intelligencia of the church—academicians*) as a whole, with few if any exceptions, are totally opposed to the idea that we need to assert the complete detailed factual inerrancy of Holy Scripture in order to defend its authority. As a body, they are totally committed to its authority in matters of faith and practice, doctrine and ethics. The question of whether the Bible is totally accurate in every statement is not therefore something on which the Church needs to pronounce one way or the other in its official Articles of Faith, for it is quite irrelevant.

In the 1800's many things in the Bible were thought to be errors including the idea that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch (writing didn't exist then) and the Hittites didn't exist. Science has time and again found the Bible to be correct. Things many think to be errors now have already been answered (Demolishing Supposed Bible Contradictions Volumes 1 and 2 by Ken Ham).

Two editors of the Herald of Holiness made the very good point that the present Article of Faith IV is a broad one. W. E. McCumber commented in 'The Answer Corner' that Article IV "does not commit us for or against total inerrancy, and, as one would expect, there are proponents of both concepts of 'plenary inspiration' to be found among us." He himself concluded, 'It is not errorless, but it will infallibly achieve its purpose when the Holy Spirit uses it to convict of sin and draw to Christ, making possible our salvation.'¹⁶ Wesley Tracy, in 'The Question Box,' made clear his view that the inerrancy view "has become the trademark and battle cry of rigid, right wing, Calvinist fundamentalists" and does not belong in the Wesleyan tradition. Nonetheless, he comments that Article IV is a "roomy one": and that both the rigid fundamentalist who believes in inerrancy can assent to the article, while those "who take a less rigid view... also have elbow room."¹⁷ *All this has been rebutted earlier.*

Creeds should be ambiguous enough to maximize membership.

That brings us to a final thought. Not only is the detailed inerrancy view at variance with Wesleyan theology, and repudiated by leading Nazarene theologians, but if Article IV were to be amended to restrict us to that particular view of Scripture, the present breadth which can comprehend both views would be replaced by this narrower fundamentalist view. Since Nazarene theologians and biblical scholars as a whole would be very strongly opposed to this narrowing of this Article of Faith, as would many leading pastors and lay people, such a move would threaten a very serious division in the denomination. The division and severe crisis and pain seen in other denominations indicate that this could have very serious results for our unity and could do serious damage to the Church of the Nazarene.

Keeping the denomination united is more important than taking a modified stance on inerrancy. I would think that advertising to the general populace of the church that the church does not believe the Bible is inerrant in its entirety would cause many to leave the church, as a number of those of us who know it have already done.

For all these reasons, the committee strongly advises that these amendments should be rejected. Nazarenes are committed by the present Article IV to the sufficiency of Holy Scripture, its final authority in all matters of Christian faith and living, in doctrine and ethics. That is all we need to say.

*** Thanks to James Scullin and Allen Marsh for their comments on this document**

Nazarenes ~ Standing Firm

On September 10th, 2010 we composed a letter voicing our concerns to our Pastors, District Superintendents, General Superintendents, and the General Church of the Nazarene. We implore our brothers and sisters in Christ to Stand Firm against the heresies being introduced into our denomination. Do your own research - take every thought and belief you discover captive to Jesus Christ and His Word. We are praying for you! We humbly ask for your prayers as we stand together, so that when the day of evil comes we may be able to stand our ground. Stand firm then, with the belt of Truth buckled around your waist.

Important Note: We do not question or judge whether individuals we have named have a personal relationship with the Jesus of Scripture. Our intent is to point out where the stated views, speeches and teaching of these individuals fail, in our view, to align with the Articles of Faith of the Church of the Nazarene. We have resisted characterizing any of these individuals but have let their own words speak for them. We have linked to original source references in our summary to assure readers that quotes have been given in context.

~ The Take-A-Stand Letter ~

We are a group of concerned believers, alumni of NNC/NNU, lay members of the Church of the Nazarene, who hold fast to the Articles of Faith of our denomination that are firmly grounded in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and we are gravely concerned about what we see happening in our denomination. We affirm that the Church of the Nazarene is a mission-minded church whose goal is to reach the lost around the globe for Jesus Christ. We also affirm that the Church of the Nazarene was founded within Wesleyan, orthodox Christianity under the parameters of foundational American principles of individual liberty and freedom. We believe this spiritual and historical heritage is in danger.

We have identified four main areas of concern:

1. Unorthodox teaching in our colleges, universities and seminaries

We are troubled that part of our tithe money and our monetary gifts as alumni are going to support Nazarene higher education institutions where emergent* church heresies are being taught by staff. Controversial speakers have been invited to our campuses and encouraged to present their unorthodox, emergent church and progressive political beliefs to our students without being challenged by those staff members who still hold to our core beliefs. Societies and institutions that drift from their core beliefs always seem to drift to the left, and this is a departure from our historical, conservative stance. As more and more students pass through our higher education systems, learning to tolerate and embrace heresies, they will fill our pews and pulpits worldwide, bringing along their unorthodox beliefs and preaching. This will transform the Church of the Nazarene into an entity we do not recognize, that has drifted afar from its stated Articles of Faith and ceased to be an evangelical, redemptive Body of Christ.

*The concern is not necessarily emergent or anti-emergent (some indicate the emergent movement is dead concluding then that there is no cause for concern),

rather, it is the philosophies, ideologies and theologies of those who are or were influential in the emergent movement, “Big Tent” movement, social justice movement, environmentalism movement, progressive movement, purpose-driven movement, liberal movement, and even new-age movement are still influential in our denomination. It does not matter what title is given - a new name will derive when the current title becomes disdainful.

2. Left-wing progressive influence on our church

The Church of the Nazarene is becoming a tangible, unapologetic arm of the Federal Government of the United States. The Emergent/Emerging Church movement is one vehicle that is insidiously bringing about this transformation, as many of this mindset diverge from our Articles of Faith and conform to the postmodern, progressive ways of this world. Contrary to our denominational mission “to make disciples of the nations,” Nazarene Compassionate Ministries has accepted millions of dollars from the U. S. Federal Government, and in doing so, it has partnered with the government and contracted to use the money for “compassion but not for conversion.” (NCM Received \$4.1 million Federal Tax Dollars for Capacity Building; NCN News Holiness Today Article) So, instead of going in the name of the LORD, NCM goes in the name of the U. S. Federal Government. (“USAID Partnership 101” and “Capacity Building Resources”)

3. Radical message of environmentalism and socialism

The 2005 publication, **Creation Care**, was drafted by individuals not affiliated with the Nazarene Church, yet presumes to speak to and for Nazarenes, with no apparent official endorsement by the denominational headquarters. Creation Care uses the phrase, “environmental stewardship,” which has found its way into our 2009-13 Manual of the Church of the Nazarene (Article 903.10). Nazarene Compassionate Ministries dedicated a magazine issue to Holistic Creation Care. We believe much of the Creation Care mantra is based on outrageously false science (e.g. the debacle of climate change/global warming—Baker, Marcia. “A Chronology of the Global Warming Swindle; A Genocidal Hoax,” EIR 3/30/2007) and belief in a one-world government.

We object to Creation Care’s demand that American Nazarenes “repent of our social and ecological sins”(p. 56) and redistribute our wealth (morally, our “sin” is questionable; politically, redistribution would be instituted through cap and trade). Creation Care states that the “central moral imperative of our time is the care for Earth as God’s creation”(p. 59). We reject this “moral imperative” in favor of Jesus’ commission to “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you...” (Matthew 28:19-20)

We are particularly troubled by the large number of Nazarene pastors and university presidents who endorsed “**Climate Change: An Evangelical Call to Action**,” which unabashedly declares, “climate change is a moral problem” and states: “The most important immediate step that can be taken at the federal level is to pass and implement national legislation requiring sufficient economy-wide reductions in carbon dioxide emissions through cost-effective, market-based mechanisms such as a cap-and-trade program” (socialist, Marxist redistribution of wealth; divisive U.S. political issue). If we continue to promote these socialist, Marxist directives, American Nazarenes will lose their personal freedoms and diminish the wealth that allows them to

individually respond to the urging of the Holy Spirit to give from their hearts to others.

4. Deception in use of language

Language has been presented to our district assemblies and then introduced into our Manual without the specific terms being defined. Terminology used is historically familiar, but word meanings have been intentionally changed. This deceptive practice of using words whose meanings have changed, without clarifying the new emergent definitions, questions intent. For example, from Article 33.3 of the 2009-13 Manual (this language first appeared in the appendix in 1989): "... We believe Christian holiness to be inseparable from ministry to the poor in that it drives the Christian beyond their (sic) own individual perfection and toward the creation of a more just and equitable society and world. Holiness, far from distancing believers from the desperate economic needs of people in this world, motivates us to place our means in the service of alleviating such need and to adjust our wants in accordance with the needs of others."

Christian holiness, to us, means heart perfection through the in-filling of the Holy Spirit that leads a believer to individual acts of charity from the heart, because of his or her relationship to Christ. The emergent definition—Christian holiness mandates ministry to the poor, redistribution of one’s wealth to the poor to “alleviate their need” (social justice). Christian holiness, to us, means heart perfection by the work of the Holy Spirit that leads a believer to witness about Jesus and His gift of salvation, leading others to Him. The emergent goal of Christian holiness is to drive the believer to a “just and equitable society and world” (an economic goal; redistribution of wealth; Marxism). We also see a problem with the emphasis on works displayed in the Creation Care message.

The following summary highlights only a few of the individuals and issues which trouble us but are not limited to those listed here.

Individuals, Organizations, and Messages of Concern To Us

(representative of dozens; randomly listed):

Jim Wallis ~ former pastor, spiritual advisor to Barack Obama, one of the founders of Sojourners Fellowship in D.C.; editor of Sojourners Magazine, activist; author, *God’s Politics, Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn’t Get It*; Harvard professor; proclaims Jesus to be a socialist; chapel speaker at PLNU February 23, 2005; speaker at the “Writers’ Symposium,” on campus of PLNU 2008.

Quotes: Answer to interview question, “Are you then calling for the redistribution of wealth in society?” Wallis answered: “Absolutely, without any hesitation; that’s what the gospel is all about. (Interfaith Voices, conference, Jan. 2006) ”When it comes to economics, I’m a liberal; I’m a radical. I want to see some real fairness and justice here. We can’t use the word redistribution anymore, even though that’s what’s been happening—redistributing wealth from the bottom and the middle to the top. So, I talk about the ‘Jubilee Tradition’ in our Scriptures, where there’s a leveling of things.” (Tavis Smiley show on PBS, Jan. 2010)

Matthew Sleeth ~ physician, head of Blessed Earth Foundation (motto--“serving God, saving the planet”), author of *The Gospel According to Earth and The Green Bible*; chapel speaker for third annual “Stewardship of the Earth Conference” March 2008 (Earth Day) at Trevecca Nazarene University - podcast download here: <http://www.trevecca.edu/campus-life/spiritual-life/chapel-podcasts/2008/03/13/as-our-3rd-annual-stewardship-of-the-earth-speaker-dr-j-matthew-sleeth-shared-with-the-trevecca-community-the-call-of-god-to-christian-to-be-caretakers-of-the-environment-in-all-of-the-ways-that-we-live-our-lives.7215>

Quotes: “When you talk to a church and you want to get a church to do something, you have to talk to the heart, and you have to use the Bible. You have to speak the language of the church... humans don’t change their behavior based on statistics. We change our behavior based upon our hearts.”
(<http://www.grist.org/article/sleeth>)

“Evangelicals, on the other hand, must recognize the fact that the most pressing problem facing the world is overcrowding... When we accepted the life prolonging fruits of science, we unbalanced the natural human population equation. Yet we want to oppose the use of science to control the number of lives created on this planet... The choice is simple: We either need birth control or to forgo the use of medicine to prolong life. It is up to the individual, society, or religion to choose one or the other.”
(population control; euthanasia; Truthout Article 'The Future of Eco-Evangelism' April 2005)

Brian McLaren ~ founding pastor of Cedar Ridge Community Church in MD; universalist; radical activist; described as founder of the emergent church; speaker at the “Wesleyan Conference,” at NNU 2008; co-founder of “Big Tent.”

Quotes: “The Jesus of one reading of the Apocalypse brings us to a grim resignation: the world will get worse and worse, and finally this jihadist Jesus will return to use force, domination, violence, and even torture—the ultimate imperial tools—to vanquish evil and bring peace.” (McLaren, Everything Must Change, 2007)

Jim Ball ~ reverend; friend of Jim Wallis, executive vice-president of the Evangelical Environmental Network (source of facts for Creation Care document); chapel speaker for second annual “Stewardship of the Earth Conference” at TNU 2007:

(<http://www.trevecca.edu/campus-life/spiritual-life/chapel-podcasts/2007/04/10/trevecca-celebrated-its-second-annual-stewardship-of-the-earth-day-with-environmentalist-speaker-jim-ball-who-spoke-on-the-risen-lord-and-global-warming.7286>

led “What Would Jesus Drive? Campaign”; led over 200 evangelical pastors, theologians and leaders to sign an “Evangelical Call to Action on Climate Change”
(<http://www.christiansandclimate.org>)

Quotes: “ I am testifying before this committee as a signatory of the Evangelical Climate Initiative, a group of more than 100 senior evangelical leaders who believe that a vigorous response to global warming is a spiritual and moral imperative -” (Jim Ball's Testimony before the U.S. Senate, June 2007)
“Pollution that causes the threat of global warming violates Jesus’ Great Commandments to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength” and “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Jim Ball's Testimony before the U.S. Senate, September 2008); “I’m asking all of us to pray to the Lord to ask for forgiveness for this stain on our Stewardship” (Gulf Spill Prayer Walk June 2010: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUSAvOkO8z8>)

Oliver Phillips ~ ordained minister; formerly director of Mission Support USA/Canada (<http://www.missionstrategy.org> an official site of Church of the Nazarene, Lenexa, KS); was saved from homelessness and discipled by Tom Nees; editor of Cultural Expressions; author of Starting Strong Churches in the Black Community; The 12 Step Program: Steps to Starting a Compassionate Ministry Center; Who Moved My Church?; wrote the forward to The Urban Imperative; authored How to Reach the Black Male (includes Jeremiah Wright among positive, black leaders); writes blog, “Think on These Things”; chapel speaker ONU March 16-18, 2010; chapel speaker at NNU Oct. 2008.

Quotes: “To integrate education and compassionate mission would require the integration of the present compassionate ministries and our educational institutions worldwide. It is now clear that if the Church of the Nazarene pretends to be an international body, such as I believe it is, it must include the issues the social issues of poverty, hunger and justice and the world, as well as a [sic]become a critic toward the

economic models that oppress our world. Theological education should be education for the compassionate of the church... ” (this is liberation theology; “Doing Theology from the Context of Poverty: Towards a New Paradigm for the Church of the Nazarene from Latin America”)

“If Easter is no longer the celebration of an eschatological event it would inevitably make sense of life here and now. In the strategy for mission we would be empowered to face the powers of death. These powers can be seen in the realities of racism, economic deprivation, drug addiction, inadequate education, and reduced public support of women and children. Easter must, and should speak to these forces! Consequently, strategy for mission would be practiced with the constant awareness that we cannot believe in resurrection for some and not for others. It must be integrated with an all-inclusive symbol of life for everyone, a kind of life that defeats death and claims holistic victory for all God's creation... For if indeed the Gospel message is no respecter of persons, to deny ministry to those in the city is to obfuscate what otherwise is a clear imperative to care and nurture those for whom the Gospel is intended... How do we respond to the imperative? I would like to suggest a new manifesto for responding to the Urban Imperative: We need to view city residents as God sees them, the guaranteed inheritors of the Kingdom of God.” (Mission Strategy Magazine, Summer 2005, Towards A Strategic Resurrection Motif);

“What is most telling [about Social Values and Attitudes in the Nazarene Church] is the lack of knowledge about Jim Wallis and Ron Sider. These (sic) two have been on the cutting edge for compassion and social justice for many years. Ron Sider has spoken at our Compassionate Ministry conferences. On the other hand, 80% of Nazarenes agree with the views of James Dobson.?????” (Think on These Things, Oliver Phillips' blog (January 2009);

“In an unpublished document prepared by Tom Nees, he states, '...as corporations make strategic appointments to achieve marketing goals, so executive church leaders must be willing to change and create organizational structures, appointing minorities to visible places of leadership if the normal election processes don't achieve the desired results.’” (Q & A with Oliver Phillips, Holiness Today March/April 2007)

Fletcher Tink ~ Adjunct Professor of Urban/Compassionate Ministries, NTS; cofounder and Exec. Dir. of the Bresee Institute for Metro-Ministries; Academic Dean of City Vision College; conducts faith promise missionary conferences, writes curriculum, develops academic programs, teaches in the area of urban, compassionate ministries, leadership development, cross-cultural communication; required book for NTS Ethics class: *Rediscovering Values: On Wall Street, Main Street and Your Street* by Jim Wallis [the same book where Jim Wallis discusses the ‘Jubilee Tradition’]; invites guest speaker to speak on “Liberation Theology” in one of his NTS seminar classes; co-editor on the Creation Care Task Force for compiling *Creation Care: Environmental Stewardship for the Church of the Nazarene* (indicated as the official Nazarene statement on the NCM website).

Quotes: “We are reassessing our own theological tradition. We now recognize that the Church of the Nazarene should have remained outside of the liberal-fundamentalist debate, more properly laying claim to our Wesleyan heritage which took seriously social engagement”; “For Nazarene purposes we would also suggest the inclusion of seminars in the area of 'Wesleyan or Jubilee Economics' and 'Social Justice Advocacy’”; “there needs to be a combined efforts [sic] of our institutions, academic and ecclesial, to screen and credentialize personnel for service in both fields, and to communicate clearly the opportunities generically and specifically that are available. There also needs to be a “seamlessness” of academic programming that will reduce the guessing game of what qualifies, in what sequence, best produces Christian urban and compassionate ministry leader”; “We shy away from terms such as social justice and advocacy, in part, because of our conservative bent. Yet it seems that some dedication of our curriculum must be given to issues of structural change and transformation.” (“Have Compassion on our Campuses! Developing Curricula for Ministry in an Urban and Needy World,” May 2009)

“E. Stanley Jones, one of my preacher heroes, wrote in the heat of the Second World War: 'In Nazism, the kingdom of Race is supreme and absolute. But not alone in Nazism. Many of us have the religion of

being white. Where there is a clash between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Being White, we choose and act upon the fact of race. It is our god. We cannot live abundantly unless we offer our race on the altar of God.. How can the white race be supreme? Only in one way: Let white people become the servant of all... Some are willing to be the servant of some—their friends, their families their class, their race—but they pull back from being the servant of all' (Abundant Living, p. 221, 2002, NPH)'

How can we serve all? Unfortunately, our pulpit jargon, stories, and mannerisms sport our cultural preferences on our sleeves as publicly as the Nazis wore their swastikas"; "Explore literature from other cultures and splice their allusions into your messages"; "Dare to tenderly expose those precious nontraditional life stories of your newer parishioners to your congregation. Often awkward, these may reflect the slights and hostilities where you and cultural patrons may be to blame. Resist offense, seek forgiveness for collective sin. Most of all, wade[sic] it out with empathetic tears until you hear the glorious cadence of deliverance, redemption, and courage in the face of adversity. Weave their micro-stories into the epic of the gospel"; "The Gospel Addresses Social Justice: Both the Hebrew and Greek words for 'righteousness' and 'justice' stem from one word only; God rectifying what is wrong both internally in individual human nature and externally in collective human systems. Justice is a national issue: 'he will proclaim justice to the nations' (Mt 12:18-21). Justice is a social issue: 'do what is right and fair' (Col 4:1). Justice is a religious issue: 'you neglect... justice' (Mt 23:23)." ("Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally: Clergy Development," 2002)

Tom Nees ~ C.E.O. Nazarene Compassionate Ministries; aligns himself to Jim Wallis; has written articles dating back to the early 1980's for Sojourners, the liberal "progressive Christian commentary on faith, politics and culture which seeks to build a movement of spirituality and social change"; signed "Evangelical Leaders Voice Support for Health Care Reform - Call on Senate to Make Affordability a Moral Priority" November 2009 (along with Jim Wallis, Ron Sider, Gabriel Salguero, Brian McLaren, Tony Campolo, etc.); endorsed "From Poverty to Opportunity, A Covenant for a New America - Overcoming Poverty with Religious Commitment and Political Leadership" (Jim Wallis document - also signed by Ron Benefiel); endorsed the Sojourners Toolkit for Christian Education and Comprehensive Immigration Reform along with Jim Wallis, Ron Sider, Tony Campolo and many, many other liberal and politically progressive-minded evangelicals; lectured on Social Justice at Nazarene Theological Seminary in March of 2008.

Quotes: "What are we to say and how are we to be involved in the great issues of our times: war, global poverty, and the environment: And what does our understanding of the kingdom of God say about the divisive and defining U. S. political issues of abortion and gay rights? On these and other controversial issues, church leaders are seeking a middle way as well as unapologetically advocating justice..."; "Perhaps our biggest struggle is restoring social Christianity or social holiness to a proper balance with individual faith." (NTS Social Justice Lecture, March 2008)

"The planet needs you millennial leaders to find new ways to preserve and protect what's left of this incredibly beautiful and fragile ecosphere. We can't go on this way. If you believe, as I hope you do, that we are stewards of the earth, all of us must lead and work to reverse our excessive, if not sinful consumption and the destruction of nonrenewable resources" (Commencement speech at ENC May 2010)

Jay McDaniel ~ professor of religion/department chair at Hendrix College in Arkansas; director for Steel Center for the Study of Religion & Philosophy; co-signer of Creation Care document; Whitehead/Budda follower, Panentheist; influenced by Thomas Merton, Catholic monk; author of *With Roots and Wings: Christianity in an Age of Ecology and Dialogue*; *Ghandi's Hope: Learning from Other Religions as a Path to Peace*; guest speaker at NNU

Quotes: "Maybe my Buddhist friend can help me think about God in a fresh way"; "Could it not be that the God who is revealed in Jesus is revealed elsewhere, too?" "Some Christians, and I am among them, use 'Christ' not simply as a name for Jesus but also as a name for the Spirit of God at present throughout the world...I see Christ outside of Christianity...I don't think the living Spirit of Christ is

reducible to historical Christianity... I think the Spirit of Christ is found throughout the world... [my Hindu sister] may be saved through 'Christ', even if that means she does not believe in Jesus"(pantheism; pluralism, collective & cultural salvation; see the entire video of his NNU appearance here, which includes his lauding introduction by NNU staff):
<http://sureynot.com/v/999/dr.-jay-mcdaniel.html>

A 10 minute highlight of his lecture can be viewed here:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9GgRy741A8>

Ron Benefiel ~ Trained as a sociologist, ordained minister who has pastored churches in a variety of urban settings; president of Nazarene Theological Seminary, signer of the Evangelical Climate Initiative, endorsed "From Poverty to Opportunity, A Covenant for a New America - Overcoming Poverty with Religious Commitment and Political Leadership" (Jim Wallis document also signed by Ron Sider & Tom Nees), Teaches Course on Biblical Perspectives on Social Justice with Ron Sider's Book, Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: A Biblical Study, as part of the required reading; affiliated with and teaches Sunday School discipleship classes at KC Trinity Nazarene Church; member of 'thesimplechurch.com' – online forum; emcee for "Nurturing the Prophetic Imagination Conference," March 2010; quotes liberal Desmond Tutu in *Fundamentalism in the Church of the Nazarene*, 2004; (Tutu recently stated his preference to be in hell rather than serving a "homophobic god.")

Quotes: "To begin building a foundation for our case [regarding fundamentalism in the Nazarene Church]...rapid social change was responsible for social disintegration'...What we especially want to point out is the natural human tendency to respond to such destabilization by resisting the changes, reacting against those thought to be responsible and seeking to protect oneself, one's way of life, and especially, one's family, from the effects of those changes. We would like to suggest that this is the 'fundamental' basis for fundamentalism. As such, fundamentalism is a natural psychosocial response to rapid social change, social complexity and diversity. It is based on the normal human response of self-protection against the perception that the world is changing in such a way as to make it less predictable, less controllable and far less secure. This spirit of resistance to change (often expressed in idealizing the past) and anger toward those perceived to be responsible for creating such instability is the essence of fundamentalism. It is ironic that much of what many American fundamentalists would highly value may be largely responsible for the social changes that serve to threaten their control and security. Specifically, capitalism fuels rapid social change and social complexity. Democracy and freedom of religion foster pluralism. As rapid social change, complexity and pluralism pose threats, we would expect fundamentalists to have a natural tendency or instinct toward 'fight and/or flight'...

"In this [Fundamentalism in the Nazarene Church Research] project, we are interested in the degree to which pastors and members in the Church of the Nazarene might be considered fundamentalist. And further, we are interested in the degree to which there is movement toward greater or lesser fundamentalism among pastors and members over time... In this study, the measures of world view will include the degree to which respondents: 1) view the culture as evil; 2) view the world as getting worse; and 3) understand evil in the world to be satanic, personal or systemic.

The measures of political conservatism will include the degree to which respondents: 1) favor traditional moral values over against social change; 2) believe the church should make a difference in the social problems of the world; and 3) are favorable toward assistance programs for the poor ." (this is a new definition of fundamentalism; "Fundamentalism in the Church of the Nazarene: A Longitudinal Analysis of Social And Political Values," March 2004 Evangelical Environmental Network (Creation Care) ~ passion and ministry focus on saving this earth; goal--to unite everyone in the goal of saving the planet, resulting in a one-world jurisdiction and government; source of "factual" information on NCM website.

Cultural Christianity ~ Believed by the masses to represent genuine Christianity; A religion based on humanist logic, "feel good" experiences, and popular interpretations of Scriptures; faith that our own

good works and intentions are good enough; Bible is a collection of guidelines, allegories, myths and stories useful for good living—offensive verses must be ignored; people's approval – to please, not offend, the world and its communities; our human abilities plus God's help when 'needed'; we are strong and capable if we have confidence in Self; sin is a normal part of life – ignore it or you might offend someone – or enjoy it, for God understands your needs and inclinations; bring people to the church or group but don't tolerate uncompromising Christians who might offend people (Do to others as you would have others do to you); trust and follow feelings and human logic; compromise essential to avoid offending the world; adapt the church to the 'community' so that everyone will feel at home.

Liberation Theology ~ is a movement in Christian theology which interprets the teachings of Jesus Christ in terms of a liberation from unjust economic, political or social conditions. It has been described by proponents as "an interpretation of Christian faith through the poor's suffering, their struggle and hope, and a critique of society and the Catholic faith and Christianity through the eyes of the poor"; and by detractors as Christianity influenced by Marxism and Communism.

Jubilee Economics ~ seeks personal and collective conversion from the tempting economics of empire to the larger life-giving economic story taught by Earth. This is, as cosmologist Thomas Berry called it, "the great work of our time." Jubilee refers to economic practices in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, sacred texts whose best economic wisdom both invites us to and makes imperative sustainable practices in the institutions, businesses, congregations, and governments of our time. These sacred texts and religious traditions are not, however, the source of jubilee economics, but an impressive and creative expression of how spiritual perspectives and practice are also economic and vice versa. The oldest and deepest origins of a jubilee economy are in the cosmos herself, not from what human civilization has constructed. From the cosmos, indigenous peoples worldwide learned sustainable economics, and so lived within Earth's interrelationships of abundant life. The mystery and sacredness of those interrelationships made indigenous economics spiritually rooted; redistribution of wealth by whatever means possible; goal is to economically equalize all peoples of the world (socialism; Marxism)

Collective Salvation ~ Analogous to the ecumenical movement in that many mainline Protestant churches are willing to embrace Catholicism, Islam, Buddhism, Eastern mystic religions, and the cults, in order to achieve social and moral goals. Their thinking is that if enough godly people band together, they can win the war against godless paganism and evil in societies that have abandoned all sense of morality. The belief is that with all individuals cooperating and sacrificing for the common good, all societal ills will be eradicated. "I can't be saved on my own. I have to do my part by cooperating with the group, even sacrificing, to ensure everyone else's salvation. It is then that we're all saved together." (This video provides a description 'in his own words'.)

Multiculturalism/Pluralism ~ many ways to God; all religions/beliefs are equally good; Jesus may be added to aberrant beliefs Contextual Christianity ~ The act of a Christian choosing which parts of the Bible to believe and honor while disregarding other passages.

Panentheism ~ is a belief system which posits that God exists and interpenetrates every part of nature, and timelessly extends beyond as well. Panentheism is distinguished from pantheism, which holds that God is synonymous with the material universe. Briefly put, in pantheism, "God is the whole"; in panentheism, "The whole is in God." This means that the Universe in the first formulation is practically the Whole itself, but in the second the universe and God are not ontologically equivalent. In panentheism, God is not necessarily viewed as the creator or demiurge, but the eternal animating force behind the universe, some versions positing the universe as nothing more than the manifest part of God. In some forms of panentheism, the cosmos exists within God, who in turn "pervades" or is "in" the cosmos. While pantheism asserts that God and the universe are coextensive, panentheism claims that God is greater than the universe and some forms hold that the universe is contained within God. Hinduism is highly characterized by Panentheism and Pantheism.

Redistribution of Wealth ~ is a political policy with the basic premise of belief being that money

should be more equally distributed so it favors all members of society, and that the rich should be obligated to assist the poor. Thus, money should be redistributed from the rich to the poor, creating a more financially egalitarian society. Often, proponents of redistribution argue that the rich are exploiting the poor or otherwise gaining unfair benefits, and therefore redistributive practices are necessary in order to redress the balance.

Marxist/Marxism ~ the political, economic, and social principles and policies advocated by Karl Marx, especially; a theory and practice of socialism including the labor theory of value, dialectical materialism, the class struggle, and dictatorship of the proletariat until the establishment of a classless society.

Social Justice ~ generally refers to the idea of creating an egalitarian society or institution that is based on the principles of equality [not to be confused with equal opportunity] and solidarity, that understands and values human rights and that recognizes the dignity of every human being [may include but is more often not limited to the self-evident, God-given rights that we as Christians are called to value for all of humanity]. The term and modern concept of "social justice" was coined by the Jesuit Luigi Taparelli in 1840 based on the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas and given further exposure in 1848 by Antonio Rosmini-Serbati. The idea was elaborated by the moral theologian John A. Ryan, who initiated the concept of a living wage. Father Coughlin also used the term in his publications in the 1930s and the 1940s. It is a part of Catholic social teaching, Social Gospel from Episcopalians and is one of the Four Pillars of the Green Party upheld by green parties worldwide. Social justice as a secular concept, distinct from religious teachings, emerged mainly in the late twentieth century, influenced primarily by philosopher John Rawls. Some tenets of social justice have been adopted by those on the left of the political spectrum.

Socialist/Socialism ~ Economically, socialism denotes an economic system of either state ownership and/or worker ownership and administration of the means of production, and management over the allocation of producer goods and the means of production. Public or worker ownership can refer to nationalization, municipalization, the establishment of cooperative enterprises or in some cases direct-worker ownership. The fundamental feature of a socialist economy is that publicly owned, state or worker-run institutions produce goods and services in at least the commanding heights of the economy.

Conclusion

Unlike some emergent Christians, we do not believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross so that we humans could work to recycle, restore and rehabilitate this fallen world. Actually, we believe the meek are eventually going to inherit this earth, and question whether the meek are among the left-leaning environmentalists of this age. We eagerly anticipate Jesus Christ's return, when He will establish His own Kingdom and we will reign with Him in true justice. We vow to be faithful to tell pre-Christians of Jesus and His gift of salvation until He comes. Until that event, we choose the path that is narrow, that leads to eternal life. Our heartfelt prayer is that this choice will not require us to abandon our beloved Church of the Nazarene because she departs from her orthodox Wesleyan core beliefs.

While we appreciate the statement made by our Board of General Superintendents in August of this year, we believe action is needed. Our Articles of Faith are clearly defined, but some words in the Articles have acquired new, emergent meanings. Perhaps clearly defining in our Manual the words used to express our core beliefs, as well as what it means to be the Church would be places to begin the work needed (e.g. holiness, gospel, justice, mission, righteousness, world/earth, kingdom of God, stewardship, fundamentalism, etc.). We covenant to continue to be in prayer for discernment among our college/seminary students, for unity in our churches and bold leadership by our

college trustees and denominational elders.

We respectfully ask that you use whatever credibility and authority you have with other leaders of our denomination to effect the changes necessary to eradicate heresy of all kinds from the Church of the Nazarene and its colleges, universities and seminaries.

Ephesians 6:13-18 ~ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. (NIV)

A Return to Azusa Street: The Message of Dan Bohi

(by Jeremy Aiello)

Introduction

These are more or less people whose experience is unsatisfactory, who have never been sanctified wholly, or have lost the precious work out of their hearts, who will run after the hope of exceptional or marvelous things, to their own further undoing. People who have the precious, satisfactory experience of Christ revealed in the heart by the Holy Spirit, do not hanker after strange fire, nor run after every suppositional gift, nor are they blown about by every wind of doctrine. There is rest only in the old paths where the Holy Spirit Himself imparts to the soul directly the witness of His cleansing and indwelling.¹

On April 9th in 1906, a group of what would be now considered charismatic Christians gathered into a building located at 312 Azusa Street in the city of Los Angeles, California. Led by William Seymour, a holiness pastor who studied under the Pentecostal minister Charles Parham, this group claimed to have come under the active and miraculous influence of the Holy Spirit, citing as evidence the return of signs and wonders in their midst, as well as the professed evidence of speaking in tongues. That day, the Azusa Street Revival, the movement which ultimately gave way to the modern Pentecostal/charismatic movement within American evangelicalism, was born, and the movement would continue for the better part of the next nine years.

The movement did not escape the notice of ministers on the outside, and a number of these clergymen took the time to investigate the phenomenon, to see whether or not the things happening at Azusa Street could be considered true works of the Holy Spirit. One of those ministers who examined the happenings in this newly formed congregation was Phineas Bresee, the founder of the Church of the Nazarene denomination, and a staunch adherent to the Wesleyan doctrine of holiness. When the movement was introduced to outsiders such as Bresee, there was no doubt that Seymour and other congregants of the church which claimed signs and wonders for itself hoped that such "manifestations of the Spirit" would become a contagious force that would spread itself throughout the other churches and spread like wildfire throughout the land. They hoped for acceptance, all the while exalting what they perceived to be the divine work of God in their midst.

But while some ministers may have given ear to Seymour's pleas for legitimate recognition and participation in the work of the Holy Spirit, Bresee rejected it instead, and he took to print in order to state his opposition to the Azusa Street revival. In December of 1906, Bresee published in the Nazarene Messenger a summary of the happenings at Azusa Street, and gave a negative evaluation of the movement. In the eyes of Bresee, Azusa was a distraction to the things of God:

Anything that is out of the good old way of entire sanctification, by the truth, through the blood, by the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire, which entirely separates and burns up the chaff of carnality, and then abides to teach, lead, and empower, may well be halted and carefully examined before being admitted to confidence, or given the semi-endorsement of publication.²

Breese saw the Pentecostal movement as nothing more than a diversion from biblical Christianity. As a result, he wanted no part of the movement, and wanted his beloved Church of the Nazarene (then only a fledgling denomination) to abstain from Azusa's corrupting influence. For as long as he pastored, Breese held fast to his conviction that Azusa Street was "fanaticism... fostered with heretical teaching."³ He saw the holiness doctrine of the Nazarene church incompatible with the pursuit of miracles and the seeking after of strange tongues.

By no means was Breese the only minister to condemn the happenings at the Los Angeles location. Other renowned and scholarly ministers, such as R.A. Torrey, G. Campbell Morgan, and H. A. Ironside responded with similar disdain concerning the Azusa Street movement, and it has been cited by authors that, by the time of the movement's end in 1916, the initially Christianized Azusa Street Revival had degenerated into a spiritist movement, as occultists had begun to join in with the congregation, doing so without any signs of repentance from dabbling in magic and witchcraft. Whatever else William Seymour had intended for Azusa Street to be in the beginning, the evidence suggests that it had become something very different and very distant from orthodox Christianity at its end.⁴

The modern church and Pentecostalism

However, this was not the end. While Azusa Street itself fizzled and died, the movement succeeded in planting the seeds of the modern Pentecostal and charismatic movement into American evangelicalism. Crossing boundaries of social, racial, and denominational sorts, and fueled by recent church innovations such as the altar call (an invention of the nineteenth century pragmatic evangelist Charles Finney), Pentecostalism in part or whole began to pervade the Sunday morning pews and pulpits of a great many churches. The attraction came to parishioners in the forms of the attesting of signs and wonders such as miraculous healing and prophetic visions, the speaking of tongues (and in particular the "prayer tongue" used in services) and the exuberant, extroverted lifestyles of those who participated in the movement, both in and out of church.

Along with this came an influx of "faith-healers," ministers who claimed for themselves the ability given by God to supernaturally heal those who came forward in services and requested healing, such as William Branham, Oral Roberts, Aimee Semple McPherson, and Kathryn Kuhlman. Meetings scheduled for these evangelistic miracle workers often brought in massive audiences filled with those hopeful to experience the healing touch from God, with a great many of them claiming to have their petitions fulfilled through prayer, laying on of hands, or in being "slain in the Spirit."⁵

As a result of these things, people either began to flock to Pentecostal services in droves, leaving their "dead" churches for what they considered to be a vibrant and Spirit-filled body of believers, or they began to incorporate things seen in Pentecostalism (such as a more emotion-driven approach to service time, or a heavier emphasis on "listening for God's voice" rather than seeking God through the Scriptures) into their own congregations. More and more, the measure of spirituality came not in the form of correct doctrine, but in the form of experience evaluated by hearing "personal words from God," being "in the Spirit" during singing time via visible movement, or the exercise of speaking in tongues, even if such activities disrupted the normal flow of a church service.

Of course, not all of this "new direction in the Holy Spirit" was accepted across the board without question. Concern was raised over the fact that many of the earliest leaders of the Pentecostal movement taught questionable doctrines, such as a denial of the Trinity and that Cain was the product of a sexual union between the serpent and Eve. The movement also suffered as the result of failed prophetic predictions, such as William Seymour's prediction of Christ's return in 1977, among others.⁶ Doubts over the legitimacy of the healing ministries arose, as critics cited the fact that the professing healers performed their "miracles" in a church or a tent meeting rather than in a hospital. Nor did it help the movement when it was revealed that some of the healers (such as Ms. Kuhlman) were raking in rather lucrative amounts of money.

Still, despite this, the movement enjoyed an overall measure of success, a success that continues today, as the modern evangelical church overall has opened its doors to a good measure of Pentecostalism. Popular evangelical figures such as Joel Osteen and Joyce Meyer identify themselves with the charismatic/Pentecostal movement, even though not all of their audience has membership in Pentecostal churches. The modern style of contemporary worship accepted by many churches (both Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal) is a style that only a generation or two ago was found almost exclusively in charismatic/Pentecostal circles. A greater emphasis on listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit in a manner separate from the study of the Scriptures can be found in a wide array of sermons, articles, and books, even if the authors do not immediately identify with the Pentecostal movement. In short, a significant portion of the American evangelical church has become, to a greater or lesser degree, "Pentecostalized."

With regard to the above matters, the Nazarene denomination is no exception to this rule, as many parishioners have seen their pews changed into folding seats, their organs and pianos replaced by rhythm sections and praise leaders, and their pastors emphasize a relationship with God that at times can come across as an almost mystical and existential experience. But perhaps the most immediate and egregious change in this area can be seen with the arrival of a speaker who openly and eagerly embraces most tenets, if not all, of the pentecostal/charismatic movement and is undertaking an aggressive campaign to see such manifestations in the Nazarene denomination. This speaker has been welcomed with open arms in many Nazarene churches in America, and his message makes its way into the ears of multiple congregations across the nation. This speaker is a man by the name of Dan Bohi.

Who is Dan Bohi? ⁷

The son of a Nazarene evangelist who traveled extensively in his ministerial work, Dan Bohi was raised in Olathe, Kansas, and (based upon the information gathered) grew up in a strong Nazarene home. When it came time for college, Dan enrolled in Mid-America Nazarene University, where he played college basketball and also met his future wife Debbie Owens. Upon graduation, Dan ventured into the construction business with his father-in-law, which apparently brought about for him a solid financial base so that he could take care of himself and his family.

In June of 1995, Bohi was involved in an accident. Severely injured due to a collision with a heavy construction truck, Dan was laid up in the hospital for a considerable amount of time, with little to do besides read the Bible, an exercise which he engaged in daily and for many hours. As a result, Dan claimed to have a "personal encounter with Jesus that was truly life-changing," and not long after his recovery from his accident, Dan Bohi decided to leave the world of construction and venture into the work of evangelism.

Since then, Bohi has been at work full-time as an evangelist, and is sought after by many in the Nazarene church. His schedule does not seem to include many empty Sundays, and it is not unheard of for him to spend more than one day in any given location for the purpose of revival meetings (or, as it was referred to in one church, "Spiritual Renewal"). Though he does not profess to have any sort of formal ministerial training and has been referred to by other Nazarenes as a layman, Dan Bohi believes that he is called by God to do what he does, and that his work is God's work in the Nazarene church.

In addition to the claim of evangelism, Dan Bohi is considered to be a continuationist, which means that he advocates what he believes to be the apostolic-era gifts of the Spirit, and declares that these signs and wonders are to accompany the preaching of the Word of God today. To bolster this assertion, Bohi has repeatedly testified that healings accompany his ministry, and his claims are supported by many who have attended his meetings and believed that a manifestation of the Spirit was present in one form or another, either through miraculous events or through the transformation of lives. Echoing the messages heard in the charismatic and Pentecostal churches like the Assemblies of God and The Vineyard Church, as well as topics spoken about by prominent "signs and wonders" advocates such as Benny Hinn and Kenneth Copeland, Dan Bohi invites the Church of the Nazarene to join in with these movements and to experience what he believes to be the work of the Holy Spirit in supernatural ways.

The Nazarene Reaction

The general mood of those who have been introduced to Dan Bohi has been one of enthusiasm and favor. Many have testified to what they believe was a working of God in some way while Dan was preaching. Some have claimed healing for issues such as alcoholism and broken relationships. Others say they have experienced a renewed relationship with the Lord and a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit on their lives. A cursory perusal of the Internet will reveal written testimonies by people from the Nazarene church who attended a Bohi event and came away from it relating a strong and powerful story.⁸

However, not all Nazarenes are pleased with the work of Dan Bohi.⁹ Some have expressed concern for what they believe is Dan's overemphasis on spiritual experiences while downplaying Scriptural focus. Others have taken issue with some of Bohi's statements that seem to indicate questionable doctrine, including an apparently passive endorsement of prominent people in more controversial charismatic movements. Still others express great concern that, at a time when the Nazarene denomination is undergoing an internal struggle between liberal and conservative factions, Dan Bohi's presence and teaching only serves to add another element of uncertainty and confusion to the church, making it even more difficult for the church as a whole to remain on the correct path.

Of course, perception on either side can be a purely subjective matter. What is perceived by one person to be good can be understood by somebody else to be bad, as an individual's perception by itself is one possible point of view and nothing more. The more crucial question that needs to be asked and answered concerning Dan Bohi is this: Is the totality of Dan Bohi's ministry, both in doctrine and in practice, in alignment with the Word of God?

Rightly dividing the words...

As mentioned above, it is not the opinion of one person or another on either side of the debate that matters in this discussion. What is important is that the things asserted by Dan Bohi in his sermons be held under scrutiny to the words of Holy Scripture. In order to do that, it is necessary to take what Mr. Bohi himself has stated while preaching from the platform and hold it next to the doctrines and truths asserted in the Bible. Like the Bereans in the book of Acts, Christians ought not to simply accept every single word coming from the mouth of a speaker as the truth, but have a duty to scrutinize what is said by comparing it with Scripture (I John 4:1).

Before delving into this section, a word of reminder needs to be spoken here: When a minister speaks from the pulpit, the things he says become a matter of public record, and he is responsible for those words. He should therefore expect to be held accountable for the things said publicly to his congregation (to say nothing of his accountability to God), as this is a matter of examining words spoken in a public gathering, and not extracted through illegal surveillance of a closed-door meeting. Any person taking upon themselves the right to make a public statement by default also takes upon themselves the responsibility to answer for that statement, particularly if he is proven to be wrong about any assertion said before the public, and a pastor is certainly no exception to this rule. When a pastor's statement is found to be inaccurate, whether by mistake or by deliberate deception, that pastor has no right to be offended should his statement is scrutinized by somebody else. Furthermore, contrary to the common objection raised that such examination are "witch hunts" or "heresy hunts" by some Christian leaders, holding a minister to such accountability is a good thing, something expected of us by God, and is a healthy exercise for the church to engage in, so as to help keep false teaching at bay.

Therefore, in exploring the things said by Dan Bohi, it needs to be remembered that the following are words that he has indeed said in public, and are available for others to hear. These were not statements taken from secretive gatherings, nor are they taken out of context from their messages.

The "Logos/Rhema" Teaching

In late February of 2011, Dan Bohi was asked to speak at the M11 conference, a gathering sponsored by the Church of the Nazarene which took place in Louisville, Kentucky. In the first ten minutes of his talk, Bohi makes reference to his belief that better preaching is not going to be the answer for the church, implying that what is needed is "to flow in the spirit."¹⁰ Later, during the same message, he references the Biblical account of Jesus' time of temptation in the wilderness, making the following statement concerning the actual words of Christ, and specifically with regard to the third time He speaks to Satan: "The third time He doesn't state 'It is written;' He states 'It says.'" After this remark, Bohi goes on to say the following:

I think when the written word and the Spirit come together, it no longer remains logos, it becomes rhema. It becomes revelation. And see, without revelation we perish.¹¹

The words *logos* and *rhema* are the words ascribed to Jesus' verbal response to Satan during the three times Jesus was tempted. In the Biblical account, the first two instances in which Jesus replies to Satan involve the use of the Greek word *logos*, which translate into the English for "word" in the sense of something written down, hence the translation "It is written" for the beginning of Christ's rebukes against the devil. However, in the third response, a different Greek word is used: not *logos* but *rhema*, which in its strictest form translates to "word" in the

sense of something said, implying a spoken rather than written word, even though most English translations with regard to this passage (such as the King James Version) render it as "It is written" rather than "It is said" for the purpose of continuity.

What Dan Bohi is doing with this passage is making an implication that there is a significant difference of spiritual proportion in Jesus' switching from *logos* to *rhema*. The meaning suggested by his rhetoric is that *logos* is somehow an incomplete usage of the Word of God, and that the Holy Spirit must be combined with the written word in order for the Word to become effective (thus producing *rhema*). In the thinking of Bohi, the written Word alone is insufficient, but must have a sort of infusion of the Spirit in order for anything transformational to occur in the life of a Christian. As such, Bohi extracts from this passage a significant difference in meaning between *logos* and *rhema*, and builds a doctrinal point upon this perceived difference, as seen in the quote above.

But is there such a difference in the two words? Is the passage referring to Christ's temptation all about the superiority of *rhema* over *logos*? While there is little disagreement with regard to the necessity of the Holy Spirit as an active Agent in tandem with the Scriptures, is there any indication from the Bible that the term *rhema* truly implies some sort of spiritual superiority over and above the usage of *logos*?

A good number of evangelical Christians with a solid background in the Greek language would take serious issue with Dan Bohi's doctrinal assertion that *logos* and *rhema* possess any significant difference in the sense he maintains. Lars Loever, a missionary to India, contends that the two words, contrary to Dan Bohi's claim, are not on different spiritual levels from each other, but instead are found to be interchangeable in many passages of Scripture:

First example: the term "word of God" as it is compared to a sword, is described both with *rhema* and with *logos*. In Ephesians 6:17 "*rhema*" is used: "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word (RHEMA) of God."

But in Hebrews 4:12 "*logos*" is used: "For the Word (LOGOS) of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

If we were to rephrase these two verses according to the *rhema/logos* doctrine, it would be described something like this: "Using the Word that God speaks especially to you (*rhema*) become a sword of the Spirit. Using the Written word of God (*logos*) will discern your thoughts and intents of the heart." It doesn't make much sense, does it? If it really was such a difference between *logos* and *rhema* as the doctrine claims, only the word "*rhema*" should be consistently used in BOTH verses, since both times the word of God is compared to the "sword."¹²

Mr. Loever continues on, documenting the uses of the forms of *logos* and *rhema* with regard to Paul's preaching of the Word (Acts 13:42-44) and in reference to Peter's usage of both terms in a manner suggesting equivalence of meaning (I Peter 1:23-25).¹³ Clearly, such interchanging of the Greek terms in the Bible does not suggest any type of superiority of the *rhema* over and above the *logos*.

Damon Whitsell, who runs the group blog "The Word on the Word of Faith" has this to say concerning the *logos/rhema* discussion: "In the Septuagint (Greek Old Testament) and in the Greek New Testament *rhema* and *logos* are used interchangeably. They are used synonymously and there is no difference between *logos* and *rhema* at all."¹⁴

The website biblestudying.net also contains an article which documents the usage of these words in Scripture. Using three parallel passages concerning Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial of Him on the night of His arrest (Matthew 26:75, Mark 14:72, and Luke 22:61), the article goes states that:

The Matthew and Mark accounts refer to Jesus' word that Peter would deny him three times before the rooster crowed using the Greek word "*rhema*" for Jesus' "word." The Luke account, however, refers to Jesus' "word" that Peter would deny him three times before the rooster crowed using the Greek word "*logos*" for Jesus' "word." By comparing these 3 accounts side by side we can see that both "*rhema*" and "*logos*" can refer to a prophetic spoken word.¹⁵

That the two words are used in Scripture without any apparent preference for one over the other in any significant way is directly at odds with Bohi's claim that the use of *rhema* is somehow inherently superior to the use of *logos*. This is even more alarming when looking at John 1:1, where Jesus is referred to as the Word (*logos*). Surely one would think that *rhema* would be preferred here since the text refers to God Incarnate and not simply written words on a page!

If there were nothing more to this matter, one could simply rebuke Dan Bohi for a careless mishandling of the Greek and move on. After all, while mishandling Greek is something that should not be overlooked, it is not as serious a charge as a complete denial of a core Christian doctrine such as Original Sin or the penal substitution atonement.

Unfortunately, this is not the end of the matter, nor can this be dismissed as a minor error to be ignored. The false *logos/rhema* comparison which Dan Bohi has propagated did not originate with him. On the contrary, this error has its roots in an evangelical movement which has taken the Scriptures and turned them into a sort of "wax nose" for applying unscriptural doctrine from the pulpit.

The *logos/rhema* comparison can be traced back to the Word of Faith movement, a subdivision of the Pentecostal/charismatic movement. Claiming to continue the work started at the Azusa Street Revival, and spearheaded by leaders such as William Branham, Oral Roberts, Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Aimee Semple McPherson, Benny Hinn, and others, the Word of Faith movement places a strong emphasis on signs and wonders.¹⁶ As with the rest of Pentecostalism/charismaticism, the Word of Faith movement believes in regular manifestations of the Holy Spirit regarding healings, personal words and revelations given directly from God, the use of speaking in tongues in both the personal and corporate prayer times, and even such extreme forms of claimed manifestations such as hysterical "laughing in the Spirit" (such as with Rodney Howard-Browne and the Toronto Blessing movement). Core to the beliefs of the Word of Faith movement is the tenant that one can receive anything desired from God provided that one exercise enough faith to receive it, thus giving it the nickname of "Prosperity Teaching" or "Name-it-and-claim-it" theology. Failure to obtain what one has asked for (such as divine healing from disease or receiving financial funds) is often attributed to a lack of faith on the part of the hopeful believer or a failure to positively and verbally confess aloud that which one claims in the name of Jesus for his own (*rhema*), rather than considering the possibility that it is God's will for the request to be answered in a way different than expected.

The principle of *logos/rhema* differentiation runs rampant throughout the Word of Faith camp, and could be considered one of the foundational teachings of the movement. John

MacArthur, pastor at Grace Community Church in California, expounds upon the use of *logos* and *rhema* in the Word of Faith movement by referencing the late Charles Farah, once a professor of theological and historical studies at Oral Roberts University, and a major proponent of this teaching as early as the 1970's:

Noting that there are two Greek words translated "word" he [Farah] devised the theory that *logos* is the objective, historic Word and *rhema* is the personal, subjective Word. The problem with that idea is that neither the Greek meaning nor the New Testament usage make any such distinction. The *logos*, said Farah, becomes *rhema* when it speaks to you. The *logos* is forensic while the *rhema* is experiential. Farah wrote, "The *logos* doesn't always become the *rhema*, God's Word to you." In other words, the *logos* becomes *rhema* when it speaks to you. The historic, objective *logos* in Farah's system, has no transforming impact until it becomes *rhema*-your own personal word from God.¹⁷

Even in this brief summary, one can see the similarities between Farah's doctrine and the teaching given by Dan Bohi at the M11 conference in which he downplayed the necessity of preaching while extolling *rhema* over and above *logos*. But MacArthur does not stop there with his analysis. He goes on to issue a stern warning concerning this doctrine:

That [referring to Farah's *logos/rhema* doctrine] sounds dangerously close to what neo-orthodox theologians have been saying for years: that the Bible becomes God's Word only when it speaks to you. But God's Word is God's Word whether someone experiences its power or not. The Bible doesn't depend on the experience of its readers to become the inspired word of God.¹⁸

In other words, according to MacArthur, those espousing the *logos/rhema* doctrine are at the very least flirting with the same sort of thinking that ultimately undermines the objective authority of the Bible itself.

At the very least, this information about the *logos/rhema* doctrine concerning what it is and the persons and movements with which it is associated should make one wonder why Dan Bohi would use this same sort of rhetoric in his message. As has been shown, there is neither Scriptural nor rational ground for attributing such a radical difference in meaning to the two words, and this alone raises questions concerning Dan Bohi's competence with regard to his knowledge of the original Greek languages. And even if Bohi does not mean to imply the same things as those in the more radical wing of Christianity, why would he chance such a wrong impression by proceeding with his chosen phrasing, a phrasing utilized by individuals associated with a far more radical understanding of the Bible, one that is radically different from traditional Nazarene doctrine?

Resurrections from the dead

I prayed for a man. My brother and I were in revival in Coffeerville, Kansas... and we prayed for a man who was dead... and he came back to life. I prayed for a man when I did a revival at the Roy Clark Theatre in Branson... and he came back to life. I prayed for a man in Olathe, Kansas at a Tuesday night revival service at 9:04 pm... and he came back to life. I haven't raised 600, like Heidi and Rolland.. but I've done three because I'm a Nazarene and a Nazarene always has three points. We prayed three times in our services for people that had been raised from the dead. I don't feel comfortable about that, 'cause I'm a Nazarene. And I don't like to disrupt people and I probably wouldn't pray for them if I knew they were dead but these people were dead and they came back alive.¹⁹

The two paragraphs above are direct quotations from Dan Bohi given during his message "Walking in the Spirit Part 1." In both of these quoted portions, Bohi gives an apparent testimony to something that can only be considered supernaturally miraculous: the resurrection of people from the dead through prayer. According to Dan's own testimony, he has brought back three people from the dead while giving a nod of acknowledgement toward a couple by

the name of Heidi and Rolland who have "raised 600" (These two people referenced by Bohi will be addressed later). Dan himself admits that he is uncomfortable with it, although this does not seem to deter him from engaging in the practice, which he believes has successfully raised people from the dead.

Obviously this is not a point which can be treated in a cavalier manner. To profess that people have been raised from the dead through ministry is no small detail; on the contrary, it is essentially claiming for oneself the same sort of miraculous workings that took place in the first century during the ministry of Jesus Christ and the apostles. Without any question, that a minister of God can claim resurrections occurring in their ministry would be at the very least a strong persuasion in favor of the legitimacy of signs and wonders, not to mention the fact that such miracles, accompanied by verified documentation, would be a strong factor in turning people to believe the gospel.

But the converse point is just as true, and just as significant: if a minister's claims to have raised people from the dead turn out to be false, that minister is engaged in gross and heinous sin. Such a man ought to step down immediately from his position as a minister and repent before God and the church of bearing false witness in the name of Jesus Christ.

Before continuing, it needs to be established that the first and obvious impression given by Mr. Bohi in the above quotes is that he is speaking of literal, bodily resurrections from the dead. More elaboration will come concerning this, but for now it needs to be made clear that nothing in those paragraphs nor in the remainder of the message suggests that Bohi is speaking spiritually or metaphorically about resurrecting people from the dead, and it is highly encouraged that the reader check the source for the quotes above and hear the words in their entire context to verify this.

So how should this be dealt with? How should Bohi's claims that at least three dead people have been brought back to life as a result of his prayers be treated? Is he speaking the truth concerning these resurrections, or is he sensationalizing his ministry for his own purposes? Before coming to this conclusion, two important matters must be brought to light.

First, no verifiable documentation can be found to confirm his claims of three literal resurrections. There has been no known verification of these resurrections through the presentation of medical reports which would provide documentation for date, time, and cause of death, which would in turn verify Bohi's claims of resurrection. Nothing about such resurrections or correlating documentation can be found on Dan Bohi's website, which is rather surprising considering that the magnificence of such evidence presented publicly would confirm the occurrence of the miracles and dispel any doubts.

To add to the puzzlement, attempts have been made to contact Bohi's ministry requesting more information concerning these resurrections. Bohi's ministry, for whatever reason, has not responded to these requests. At the very least, this lack of verifiable evidence concerning the claims of resurrection does not cast Bohi's assertions in a positive light.²⁰

Second, history does not side with Dan Bohi concerning the resurrection of dead people in the post-apostolic church era. There are no verifiable reports of the raising of people from the dead in any sort of legitimate ministry. On the contrary, the most notable name associated with any sort of resurrections is that of self-proclaimed healer and evangelist Smith Wigglesworth (1859-1947), who also claimed to bring people back from the dead. This, however, is a most

unfortunate association, as not one of Wigglesworth's claims regarding resurrections is accompanied by any sort of official evidence giving credence to his alleged resurrections.²¹

As such, this puts Dan Bohi in poor company with regard to his credibility concerning the dead returning to life. The two factors listed above combine to raise serious doubts concerning the legitimacy of the claims of resurrection. That Dan Bohi, 1.) has not produced any sort of verifiable facts or documentation concerning his claimed resurrections and, 2.) is not supported by historical evidence of resurrections happening in the church (or at least none verified by credible evidence) is troubling, and does nothing to support his assertions stated above. As referenced earlier: this is not a light matter to be dismissed out of hand. Any sort of false assertion made from the pulpit is sinful, but far more heinous in nature is making unsubstantiated claims of the miraculous sort. For Dan Bohi to say that he has resurrected three people from the dead through prayer yet provide no reliable sources of confirmation to verify his declarations is irresponsible proclamation at the very least, and duplicitous rhetoric at very worst.

In response to this, some Nazarenes have defended Bohi's statements as referring to people who are spiritually dead rather than physically dead. They believe that Dan is not referring to literal resurrection in these statements, but instead is using a figurative depiction of death to describe the spiritual regeneration of people.²² However, the response of attributing a non-literal meaning to Bohi's words falls short of its intent for the following reasons:

1.) By Dan Bohi's own admission in relation to his prayer for dead people, he states that he didn't "feel comfortable with that," and that he "probably wouldn't pray for them if I knew they were dead." If by his words he is referring to spiritually unregenerate people who are dead in their trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2), why would such a thing be uncomfortable for him to do? What would be so troublesome for a Christian (and a Christian evangelist at that!) concerning prayer for spiritually dead people? Christians pray all the time for unbelieving friends and relatives, asking God to regenerate hearts and open eyes toward the gospel. Why would Dan Bohi have a reluctance to engage in an activity in which Christians from many different denominations (including the Nazarene denomination) participate on a regular basis?

2.) In his quote, Bohi mentions that he has not raised six hundred like "Heidi and Rolland." This is a reference to Heidi and Rolland Baker, a missionary couple in Africa who have claimed to literally—not spiritually, but literally—raised the dead during their mission work. Heidi and Rolland Baker are affiliated with the New Apostolic Reformation,²³ as well as the Toronto Blessing movement, a charismatic movement spearheaded by John Arnott (head pastor of the Toronto Airport Vineyard Church) and associated with controversial speakers such as Rodney Howard-Browne, propagator of the unscriptural "laughing revival."²⁴

If Dan Bohi is speaking about spiritual rather than physical resurrection, why would he bring up the names of two people prominently known for their proclamations of physically raising the dead in their ministry? If Bohi wanted to compare "spiritual resurrections" with anybody, wouldn't it be more proper to refer to John Wesley? Or George Whitefield? Or Billy Graham? Why reach for an obscure reference to people known for a controversial claim to literal resurrections when Bohi's aim is to give testimony to spiritual ones?

3.) Frankly, the context of the above statements does not even suggest that Dan Bohi might be referring to anything other than actual, physical resurrection of dead people. Putting aside for a moment the lack of language suggesting anything other than real resurrection from the dead, the fact that Bohi claimed to have raised "only three" if he were talking about spiritual

resurrections would imply that only three people have been spiritually regenerated during his evangelistic ministry. In light of testimonies given from Nazarenes claiming to be changed for the better during Bohi's ministry (which surely must include spiritual regeneration), does that even make sense?

In light of these factors used to examine Dan Bohi's words, the plain point made is inescapable: regardless of how some wish to spin or reinterpret the quotes given above, Dan Bohi gives the very clear impression that he has literally raised people from the dead. That he does so without putting forth any sort of verifiable documentation to justify his claims, and compares his work with that of a missionary couple affiliated with a controversial charismatic movement, sends up a red flag suggesting either careless wording concerning his assertions, duplicitous speech for the sake of sensationalism, or an outright propagation of a charismatic tenet unsupported by the facts.

Personal Words from God

Even when giving his messages only superficial attention, it is obvious to any listener that Dan Bohi emphasizes an immediacy of miraculous divine intervention in his messages. In fact, it does not stretch the emphasis too far to state that, at the core of many of his messages, Bohi has a strong desire for the Nazarene church to embrace a full-fledged continuationist understanding of Christianity much like that of the charismatic and Pentecostal circles of evangelicalism, with a focus upon an infilling of the Holy Spirit. After listening to some of his sermons, one might begin to wonder whether or not Bohi has established the pursuit of signs and wonders as the foundational doctrine upon which he builds all of his other teachings.

One of the continuationist tenets put forth by Bohi is the seeking of personal words from God, the idea that God is supposed to speak to believers directly; not only through His Word, but also through a real voice either "to the heart" or sometimes in a voice as audible as that of one person directly speaking to another. Around the first eight and a half minutes into his sermon "Walking in the Spirit Part 1," he claims that God healed him of his diabetes by telling him to drink water.²⁵ In his message at the M11 conference, Bohi admits to asking for a direct word from God, Who responded by telling him to get a Bible.²⁶ Later in the same message, he claimed that God told him directly through the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel "til you die."²⁷ He then goes on to say this:

I was doing this revival in Springfield and I was preaching on Elijah.. and about three-fourths of the way through the Lord interrupted me and said, "Tell someone over here they're being healed." And, you see, that's not comfortable for a guy who's been raised Nazarene, because that's what they do in the Spirit church.... And so when the Lord tells me, "Hey, I want you to say someone over here's being healed, I'm a little nervous and I'm thinking maybe He's confused. And I'm trying to tell him, "Hey God, you got the wrong guy. My name is Danny Bohi, not Benny."²⁸

That Dan Bohi believes he hears directly from God in personal words is not in question. Nor is it overreaching to suggest, based upon the supernatural emphasis in his messages, that he would like to see more of these "Personal Words from God" occur in the Nazarene church in general. His overall thrust for signs and wonders to occupy a prevalent place in the present day Nazarene congregations seems to be underscored by his claims of hearing direct revelation from God.

However, the encouragement of the practice of seeking after such direct communication with the Holy Spirit runs at odds with the whole of Scripture. There is, in fact, no passage in the Bible, either in the Old or New Testament, which remotely suggests that Christians are to be

seeking after such Personal Words from God. To the contrary, when we read the Bible, we see a continual reference back to the established words of Scripture rather than the pursuit of supernatural voices (John 5:39, I Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12). When Jesus was tempted by Satan, his response was the written Word (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10). The apostle Paul warned the church of the Galatians against compromising the word of the gospel, going so far as to state that any false gospel should be rejected even if it were presented by an angelic being (Galatians 1:8). Furthermore, when Paul gave Timothy instructions regarding his ministry, he said nothing about looking for Personal Words from God, but rather turned his focus back to the written Word (II Timothy 2:15). The apostle John warns his readers to not believe every spirit, but to test the spirits to see whether or not they are from God: something that is obviously done by knowing and applying Scriptural doctrine (I John 4:1).

In fact, pursuing after direct divine revelations is a dangerous road for the Christian to follow. Consider the words of the Welsh preacher Martin Lloyd-Jones on the matter:

Let us imagine I follow the mystic way. I begin to have experiences; I think God is speaking to me; how do I know it is God who is speaking to me? How can I know I am not speaking to man; how can I be sure that I am not the victim of hallucinations, since this has happened to many of the mystics? If I believe in mysticism as such without the Bible, how do I know I am not being de-luded by Satan as an angel of light in order to keep me from the true and living God? I have no standard... The evangelical doctrine tells me not to look into myself but to look into the Word of God; not to examine my self, but to look at the revelation that has been given to me. It tells me that God can only be known in His own way, the way which has been revealed in the Scriptures themselves.²⁹

Dr. Lloyd-Jones points out an obvious truth that many in the continuationist movement either do not stop to consider or do not care to consider: the very real possibility that these "direct words from God" in fact may be delusional imaginations; or worse yet, influence from the devil. Unlike the written Word, which has an objective standard and reference point for the believer to return to and anchor himself, the claims of divine revelations are rooted in the subjective and the experiential, and have as a basis in truth only the pragmatic outcome regarding what is said. For example, if a man receives a divine message that the next day his boss will give him a thousand dollar raise, and that raise comes to pass, he may conclude that his message came directly from God. But in truth there is no way of knowing that for sure, as a demon could have given him this same message just as easily. That the "revelation" turned out to be true does not necessarily mean that the source of the divine revelation was God.

Throughout history, a great many movements that were questionable at best and heretical at worst have been started by people claiming to receive Personal Words from God and other such direct divine revelations. Muhammed, the founder of Islam, claimed to have direct revelation from the angel Gabriel concerning the truth of Allah's religion. In the thirteenth century, a twelve-year-old boy by the name of Stephen of Cloyes claimed to have a direct message from Jesus that he was to take a "Children's Crusade" to Israel for the purpose of converting the Muslims: a crusade that was ultimately deemed a failure.³⁰ Joseph Smith, the founder of the heretical Mormon church, claimed visitation not only from an angel named Moroni, but also directly from Jesus Christ and God the Father, informing him that all of the contemporary Christian denominations "had turned aside from the gospel," and it is through these revelations as well that Smith began teaching that God the Father was a being of physical nature rather than spiritual.³¹ Ellen G. White, founder of the Seventh Day Adventist group (which demands of its members an Old Testament adherence to Saturday and emphasizes a nearly legalistic attitude concerning vegetarianism), claimed to receive visions from God.³² William Seymour, the preacher responsible for the Azusa Street revival, believed that the Holy Spirit had revealed to him that the Church would be raptured by the date 1977.³³ In more recent history, John

Hinkle, a man associated with the charismatic movement, proclaimed that on June 9th, 1994 the Lord would "rip the evil out of this world," a prophecy that, to this date, has had no verification of fulfillment.³⁴

At the very least, such accounts should give others such as Dan Bohi concern as to what they think they may be hearing (assuming they are telling the truth when they say so) when they believe God is giving them direct revelation. That so many others in history have espoused heretical doctrines and sinful practices because "God told them" ought to give pause to anybody who believes they have received a personal Word from God.³⁵ Pastor Bob DeWaay of CIC Ministries has this to say about direct revelations:

It is abusive to make (Personal Words from God) to be special revelations of God's will either to an individual or to a church. These "words" never have the quality of being "certainly from God." When we take them to be that when they are not, then we have become false prophets to our own selves or to the church.³⁶

John MacArthur agrees with this assessment as well:

The only trustworthy source of divine truth, guidance for your own spiritual growth, and instruction for the church is the written Word of God. No emotional urging or mystical experience can trump the concrete, fundamental truth God has given us in Scripture. Does God still speak? Yes, but not in an audible voice. He speaks through the pages of Scripture.³⁷

Signs and Wonders?

As mentioned earlier, with regard to the actual matter of signs and wonders themselves, Dan Bohi puts them front and center in his ministry. His messages are filled with testimonies of those who claim to have received divine healing through his prayers and laying on of hands, and he anxiously believes that such miraculous events are still available for the church at large and are to be exercised for the purpose of making an evangelical impact upon the world.³⁸ So zealous and fanatical is Dan Bohi for this manifestation of gifts that one has to wonder why he has not openly referred to himself as a charismatic, since his general message concerning the gifts of the Spirit contains very little that differs from charismatics such as Benny Hinn, Kenneth Copeland, or any other prominent charismatic preacher when speaking on the same subject .

But as with the Personal Words from God, is this something that the church should be actively pursuing? Is the seeking of signs and wonders as a regular part of a believer's life supported by Scripture? Are we to embrace the doctrine of any speaker solely on the basis of their claims that miracles have happened during their ministry?

Before we answer that, there is a misconception of Scripture that must be settled. When one listens to Dan Bohi and others advocating the continuationist position, the impression is sometimes given that each and every page of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation is full of accounts involving divine miracles. But this is far from the truth. The fact of the matter is that, when the entire time span of thousands of years of Biblical history from Creation to the closing of the canon in Revelation is taken into account, miracles are truly few and far between. With occasional exceptions found here and there, the majority of Biblical miracles can be found in only three places: 1.) the time of Moses and the exodus, 2.) the time of Elijah and Elisha, and 3.) the time of Jesus and the apostles. The fact of the matter is that the Bible does not record

direct, miraculous intervention by God as often as is perceived by those seeking signs and wonders.

And when the Bible does address signs and wonders, it does not exalt them to the extent that many do in the modern charismatic movement. On the contrary, the Bible always places miracles on a lower level of importance than the written Word of God and the sound doctrine it contains. For example, in Deuteronomy 13:1-4, Moses warns of the danger of heeding the voice of a false prophet who would tempt the Israelites to serve other gods. But note the first part of this passage regarding what it says about signs and wonders:

If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder, and *if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place*, and he says, "Let us follow other gods" (gods you have not known) "and let us worship them," 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. It is the LORD your God you must follow. (Deut 13:1-4, NIV)

Do not miss the significance of that italicized phrase. This passage is quite clear concerning the superiority of Scriptural doctrine (in this case, the forbidding of idolatry) over the working of any sort of miraculous event. The Israelites were not to violate any of God's commands, even if the false prophet propagating the violation performed a sign or wonder to confirm his unscriptural view. The working of miracles was never to be used as the primary test of truth for the people of God.

Doctrine was always to be placed above signs and wonders in importance. This needs to be remembered in light of the fact that cultic movements such as the Mormons and the Christian Science movement (both of whom deny core Christian doctrines) affirm what they believe to be the real working of miracles in their congregations.³⁹

Related to this point is that a minister's gift of performing signs and wonders did not make that minister infallible. In Galatians 2:11-16, Paul writes to the church about an incident occurring between him and Peter, during which he had to publicly rebuke his fellow apostle for falling prey to the influence of the Judaizers, a group attempting to place Christians under the law as a condition for salvation. This is the same Peter who brought Tabitha back to life (Acts 9:40-43), who received a divine vision from God three times concerning the clean and the unclean (Acts 10:9-16), and from whom people hoped to receive a miracle from even the passing over of his shadow (Acts 5:15). This same Peter had to be rebuked by Paul for giving in to the pressure of a false group. The lesson from this for us is clear: even if a minister's claims concerning signs and wonders are true, it does not necessarily follow that every word or action of that minister is to be received without question or examination. The miracles are not to be exalted in such a way as to overshadow any incorrect doctrine uttered from the pulpit.

Furthermore, the impression by Dan Bohi often given concerning these gifts is that the church is unable to effectively function without them. Frankly, this is a foolish thing to say since it is the gospel, and not miracles, that brings people to saving faith in Jesus Christ. God is not so helpless that He cannot change hearts and lives without the sensational accompaniment of signs and wonders in ministry; to imply otherwise is to rob the Holy Spirit of His efficacious power in conversion. In addition, a great many men of God through church history have been used by God to bring salvation to multitudes without the benefit of miracles, such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, and Bohi's own John Wesley (who, as far as is known, did not perform any such signs and wonders as Bohi advocates, yet successfully brought the gospel to many hearts and saw many conversions in his time preaching in England).⁴⁰ Neither God nor His people are so dependent upon the immediate displays of the

visibly supernatural that the gospel would be fruitless. On the contrary, the miracle of salvation is that it is the Holy Spirit who changes the heart, transforming it not by virtue of any healing or other miracle on the outside, but by the regeneration of one's very heart and soul on the inside.

Finally, there is a warning in Scripture that should be considered by all Christians, but especially by those leaning toward the charismatic gifts. In Matthew 7:21-23, Jesus gives a grim reminder to us that not everybody calling Him "Lord" will enter the kingdom of heaven. He goes on to give the defense offered by many of those who will not see eternal life ("Did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?"). Note the reason given by those expelled from the kingdom for their appeal to entrance in these verses: their works, and in particular their miraculous works. They counter against Christ's command to depart from him by pointing to their works as the reason for entrance, rather than running to the cross and trusting in the finished work of Jesus Christ alone for their eternal life. This passage serves to remind all Christians that a person's works, even works that appear to be on the level of miraculous, are not the basis for entrance into eternal life.

As a fitting conclusion to this passage, the Nazarene Church would be wise to heed the words spoken by Presbyterian Pastor Harold Polk which were said in passing with regard to chapter seven of Matthew:

Just because a man wears the collar, or bears the title of Christian clergy, whether in this church or any other, and just because a person claims to be acting in the name, or to be led by the spirit of Jesus Christ; this does not alone entitle that person to the respect, and to the obedience, of believing people.⁴¹

Conclusion

So with all of this information, what is to be concluded concerning Dan Bohi? How should his ministry, with its exaltation of the miraculous above the mundane, be viewed? How should the things he has spoken from the pulpit concerning both teaching and testimony be treated and evaluated? After examining all of the evidence, considering what Dan Bohi has said in light of teachings and doctrines espoused in the charismatic community, and after examining prominent points made in his messages via words on those same topics from respected authorities in the evangelical world, and finally after subjecting his statements to the scrutiny of the Scriptures, one of two conclusions have been reached from which a final verdict must be established. And regardless of the conclusion taken, neither option is good; whether a man misleads by ignorance or misleads by deceit, it does not change the fact that he still misleads.⁴²

The first conclusion is the most gracious and least concerning position which can be reached without ascribing a duplicitous motive: that Dan Bohi is misled in significant ways. His statements with regard to the *logos/rhema* discussion denote ignorance in relation to the understanding and usage of biblical Greek, which has in turn caused him to reach an unscriptural position concerning the words. His testimony concerning raising people from the dead is not backed by verifiable evidence, which at best is a terrible oversight on the part of his ministry for failing to produce any such documentation; and if by his words regarding resurrections he means the regeneration of spiritually dead people, his choice of wording for the initial topic is poor and ought to be publicly retracted. His emphasis on signs, wonders, and personal words from God come across as an exaltation of what he believes to be the Holy Spirit over and above the written Word, thus drawing people towards spiritual experiences rather than directing them to the concrete foundation of the Scriptures. And even if this is the correct conclusion pertaining to Mr. Bohi, which grants him the benefit of the doubt by ascribing

neglect and ignorance to his assertions, it still requires Nazarene leadership to approach him, to point out to him the error of his ways, and to lead him back into a more surefooted and biblically grounded manner of ministry.

However, the other possible conclusion to reach based upon the evidence is far more troubling: that Dan Bohi is intentionally attempting to bring the Nazarene denomination into the sphere of the charismatic movement. The possibility here is that Dan Bohi knows full well what he is promoting, and the fact that he has referenced the charismatic church more than once in his messages, including controversial people such as Heidi and Rolland Baker, suggests that this second position is a very real possibility. Of equal plainness and apprehension is that much of his talk smacks of the rhetoric used by extreme charismatic preachers, notably those in the Word of Faith movement such as the late Oral Roberts and Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, and Benny Hinn; men who have espoused theology that at the very least flirts with heresy and turns the gospel into a theology that demands signs and wonders done for the service of the believer, making God in effect a cosmic bellhop bound to the whim of His people. Even if Dan Bohi does not subscribe to the most extreme excesses of the charismatic movement, his teaching is without a doubt a step in that direction, and at times he seems more than willing to push the Nazarene church into the camp of charismaticism, and doing so at the expense of falling prey to the fringe elements of that movement.

When charismaticism reared its head in Azusa Street, Phineas Bresee rightly wanted to preserve the Church of the Nazarene, and kept his distance from the movement. Now, Dan Bohi with his charismatic theology is attempting to reverse the course established by Bresee, trying to bring "strange fire" into the congregation. The Church of the Nazarene needs to remember its roots, to hold fast to the written Word of God in steadfast faith without becoming distracted by teachers such as Dan Bohi who sacrifice what God has put forth in the Bible for perceived miracles and a faith dependent upon experience rather than upon the promises and truths God has given in His Word. In short, the Church of the Nazarene needs to walk by faith, and not by sight.

Endnotes

- 1 "Phineas Bresee" retrieved March 30th, 2013 from <http://www.azusastreet.org/AzusaStreetBresee.htm>
- 2 Ibid
- 3 Ibid
- 4 For an in-depth treatment of the Azusa Street Revival, go to <http://lavistachurchofchrist.org/LVanswers/2004/2004-08-24a.htm> and <http://letusreason.org/Pent57.htm>
- 5 A history of many of the Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders can be found at "The Strange History of Pentecostalism" (<http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/strange1.htm>)
- 6 Ibid
- 7 Dan Bohi Bio info retrieved March 30th, 2013 from <http://godfreyNazarene.org/PDF/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20Dan'sMinistryBio2.pdf>
- 8 Ibid
- 9 Two Nazarenes who have been at the forefront of concern with regard to Dan Bohi are Manny Silva (<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/>) and Tim Wirth (<http://simplyagape.blogspot.com/>), both of whom have posted information concerning Mr. Bohi on their respective websites.
- 10 "M11 Plenary Service-Dan Bohi" retrieved April 2nd, 2013 from <http://vimeo.com/20791878>
- 11 Ibid
- 12 Loefer, Lars, "Too much Greek? a challenge to the rhema/logos doctrine" Retrieved April 2nd, 2013 from <http://figministries.wordpress.com/2012/09/20/too-much-greek-a-challenge-to-the-rhemalogos-doctrine/>
- 13 Ibid
- 14 "Rhema and Logos: There is No Difference!!!" Retrieved March 31st, 2013 from <http://thewordonthewordoffaithinfoblog.com/2010/04/16/rhema-and-logos-there-is-no-difference/>
- 15 "The 'Rhema' and 'Logos' Word (Part 2)" Retrieved March 31st, 2013 from <http://www.biblestudying.net/charismatic37.html>

16 For more detailed information concerning leaders of the Word of Faith movement, please see the well-written articles found on the website

of Personal Freedom Outreach at <http://pfo.org/res2a.htm>

17 MacArthur, John, Charismatic Chaos, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, pp45-46.

18 Ibid., p 46

19 Bohi, Dan, "Walking in the Spirit Part 1," Retrieved April 2nd, 2013 from

<http://www.graceandpeacemagazine.org/louisville-m11/180-walking-in-the-spirit-part-one>

20 This Author is among those who has attempted to contact Dan Bohi's ministry. Twice, private messages were sent to Bohi's Facebook ministry page requesting information concerning these resurrections. To this date, there has been no response of any type, not even an acknowledgement that the sent request was received.

21 For more detail concerning Smith Wigglesworth and his alleged healing ministry, go to

<http://taministries.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Smith-Wigglesworth-The-Facts-v3.5.pdf>

22 A Nazarene named Mark who runs a blog entitled Holiness Unto the Lord was at one time among those attempting to defend Dan Bohi on this point. Since then, it needs to be pointed out that Mark has retracted this position. (for more information, see <http://holinessuntothelord.wordpress.com/2013/06/26/a-re-consideration-of-dan-bohis-ministry-one-year-later/>)

23 See "Christianity Today Should Retract or Correct Cover Article on New Apostolic Leader Heidi Baker,"

Retrieved April 2nd, 2013 from <http://www.talk2action.org/story/2012/5/7/6228/64684>

24 Hannegraaf, Hank, "The Counterfeit Revival," Retrieved April 1st from <http://www.equip.org/articles/the-counterfeit-revival/> Also

recommended is John MacArthur's "The Modern Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit"

(<http://www.gty.org/resources/sermons/90-415/the-modernblasphemy-of-the-holy-spirit>)

25 Bohi, "Walking in the Spirit, Part 1." It is interesting to note that, immediately after stating this, Dan implies that his diabetes returned, as he references the need to get insulin shots. He attributes this to the devil. However, Dan's recorded "self-healing" stands in stark contrast to the healing work done by Jesus and the apostles in Scripture, which gives no indication that any healings were partial or temporary

26 Bohi, "M11 Plenary Service"

27 Ibid

28 Ibid, "Benny" is undoubtedly a reference to Benny Hinn, a prominent member of the Word of Faith movement.

29 Lloyd-Jones, Martin, quoted in "The Lord Told Me-I Think!" emphasis added, Retrieved April 1st, 2013 from

<http://www.svchapel.org/resources/articles/20-christian-living/66-the-lord-told-me-i-think>

30 "Children's Crusade," Retrieved April 2nd, 2013 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Children's_Crusade

31 "Joseph Smith," Retrieved April 2nd, 2013 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Smith

32 "Ellen G. White," Retrieved April 2nd, 2013 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellen_G._White

33 "The Strange History of Pentecostalism," Retrieved April 2nd, 2013 from

<http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/strange1.htm>

34 "The Prophets continue to prophesy..." Retrieved April 2nd, 2013 from <http://www.letusreason.org/Pent64.htm>

35 Even if what is said via divine revelation is true, it does not necessarily validate the seeking after messages in the spirit. Christian talk radio host Bob Larson once related a story in which a woman called in and told him that the "ghost of Elvis" talked to her and told her to worship Jesus. While the woman did not claim that this voice was the Holy Ghost, the point here is the same for those who claim to be looking for and receiving direct words from God: that the statement may be true does not mean that God is the one saying it. One only needs to look at the possessed woman following Paul and Silas in Acts 16:16-18 to see an example of this. Furthermore, not all people who claim direct revelation from God do so with honest intent. Peter Popoff, a popular faith healer, was caught using a radio device in order to manipulate "healings" by which he would receive via radio information about certain audience members and give the false impression of working miracles (for more information, go to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Popoff).

36 DeWaay, Bob, "The Problem with Personal Words from God" Retrieved April 2nd, 2013 from

<http://cieministry.org/commentary/issue98.htm>

37 MacArthur, "On hearing God's voice, the Dangers of this way of thinking, and the sufficiency of Scripture," Retrieved April 2nd, 2013 from <http://forthe loveofhistruth.com/2012/06/25/on-hearing-gods-voice-the-dangers-of-this-way-of-thinking-and-the-sufficiency-of-scripture/>

38 One has to wonder why Dan Bohi, if he is so confident in his ability to heal as given by God, does not travel to a hospital and exercise his gift there.

39 While having its headquarters located in Kirtland, Ohio, the Mormon church claimed to experience charismatic gifts not unlike those reported by modern charismatics and Pentecostals (see

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Latter_Day_Saint_movement). And this says nothing of the religions steeped in the occult, composed of many practitioners who maintain that they too have experienced supernatural phenomena

40 A comprehensive list of well-known and fruitful Christian ministers who believed that the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit are no longer in effect today can be found in the article "What Cessationism is Not,"

(http://thecripplegate.com/what_cessationism_is_not/). This article also correctly explains the position of cessationism in contrast to continuationism in order to present the proper understanding that, while cessationists do not believe that the Holy Spirit works in the same way He did during the apostolic era, the Spirit nevertheless is active and works today.

41 Polk, Harold "Render unto Caesar... and unto God (pt 1)", sermon given on 4/18/2010, retrieved April 2nd, 2013 from <http://calvarypresbyterianchurch.com/media.php?pageID=41>

42 See "I've Got a Feeling!" History of the Modern Gospel, session 4

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ly15dPJPQ5M>). About eight minutes into the video, a segment is featured depicting a phony evangelist who by his own admission at the end of the segment is an atheist. Yet the video of his services looks no different in appearance than that of a modern faith healer or other charismatic preacher. While this is not meant to suggest that Dan Bohi or other charismatics are not sincere in their beliefs, it does serve to question whether or not what is seen in charismatic, "Spirit-led" services such as this are truly manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

All quoted Scripture is taken from the New International Version Classic Reference Bible. Copyright 1989, Zondervan Publishing House

Open Letter #1 To The Board of General Superintendents

October 5, 2010

Dear Board of General Superintendents,

As many more Nazarenes are aware of by now, there have been things happening in the Nazarene denomination in the last ten, perhaps even 20 and 30 years, that have gradually changed the fabric of our denomination, both in the churches, and in the universities. In this post-modern era, apparently many of our churches and universities have clearly jumped on the emergent church bandwagon. Is that a good thing, or a bad thing? Or perhaps it is both. I am not trying to make trouble for its own sake, but I am raising questions that many believe are vital and need to be answered. One of my biggest concerns is this: our college kids walking away from the real Jesus, into the arms of a fake Christ and a phony gospel. It hurts just to think that even one might walk away from the Lord, because of what our schools are allowing.

One of the problems that have arisen is the bleeding that is occurring in our churches and universities. Nazarenes, both young and old, have been deciding to leave their church, and sometimes the denomination. Students and parents are opting out of the usual automatic decision to go to a Nazarene school, and instead are searching for alternatives. Surely, that is a common thing that happens all the time in all denominations, as people shift and move around, or make personal decisions based on their own circumstances. However, the reasons of departure that I am aware of are much different than the random comings and goings that occur. It is much more serious, and there is a pattern that is most disturbing. I don't have statistics nailed down, but the many reports I have received, as well as others, shows that there is a commonly shared reason. That reason can be summarized as **“an erosion of solid biblical principles, in exchange for a humanistic, mystical, ecumenical, and relativistic approach to our Christian faith and practice.”** In other words: many Nazarenes are absolutely fed up with what is going on in our churches and universities, and have decided they are not going to stand for it anymore. I don't even have time here to go into the extreme social gospel and environmental gospel that is being pushed to the detriment of preaching the true gospel message.

I believe that is one of the reasons we are seeing some churches dropping precipitously in membership, sometimes within just a year's time, as emergent ideology creeps into their congregation. Former members have sat in utter amazement and dismay in their pews, as a pastor introduces new rituals that were never part of the Nazarene tradition, but were more reflective of the Roman Catholic Church. That same pastor, who perhaps when he was interviewed for the job spoke clearly of his respect for God's word, now preaches sermons that are more out of his personal opinion and philosophy, with an occasional scripture passage thrown in as an after thought. Less is mentioned of true repentance and sin, and instead, sermons are filled with social justice themes and an over-emphasis on “fellowship”, to the detriment of studying God's word. And more and more, these post-modern pastors, (some who are fresh out of seminary, but others have been around a long time), are frequently heard quoting heretics and false teachers from the pulpit, such as Henri Nouwen, Thomas Merton, Richard Foster, Rob Bell, and Brian McLaren. So much for the Wesleyan holiness heritage of our fathers! Now we are looking more and more to Desert Fathers instead, and mystics who promote emptying the mind in order to “listen to the voice of God.”

These Nazarenes were also hearing new phrases like “missional”, or “spiritual formation”, and

gradually realized that they don't necessarily mean what they thought it meant. We now have people leaving in groups, forming their own fellowship because they can no longer stand sitting in a church that is looking more and more like the Roman Catholic church with its rituals and traditions. No wonder people are walking away. I am sure you are also aware of at least one church whose membership voted to completely separate themselves from the denomination, rather than compromise their biblical principles. Sure, perhaps that is only one church out of thousands, but were they all mad (as in crazy?), or were they justified biblically to "divorce" themselves from the denomination? Perhaps the Nazarene church is not just bleeding, but close to hemorrhaging. It is heartbreaking to me, the many emails I have received from former Nazarenes who have been pushed out of their churches, many of them being called hateful and troublemakers and dividers, all because of asking questions of their leadership as to what is happening to their church.

And then there are the universities. Spiritual formation programs throughout the schools are pushing what is essentially contemplative spirituality. It's just another word for it. This is not Nazarene, this is not Christian. This is simply a Christianized version of transcendental meditation, and false teachers such as Richard Foster, [Leonard Sweet](#), and [Tony Campolo](#) are being embraced, and even being given a platform for mentoring pastors or future pastors! Even a universalist like Jay McDaniel was allowed to speak at NNU, as [summarized in this video](#). Can you tell me what is going on, when a university allows this kind of foolishness to be given a platform at our "Christian" schools?

One college chaplain enjoys reading *The Shack* (a heresy filled book), and praises [Brennan Manning](#), a mystic and false teacher. Another chaplain recently told the students in a [chapel service on Sept. 22](#) that "I consider myself a mystic", and quotes Brian McLaren, a false teacher. This same chaplain is an unabashed promoter of lectio divina, and claims one of his heroes to be Brother Roger, the late founder of a contemplative, [interspiritual community called Taize in France](#). Why Nazarene chaplains promote this kind of stuff, and name this kind of "hero", is beyond me as a Nazarene, and as just a Christian. But this is probably becoming the norm amongst college chaplains, and that's my fear.

Many of our universities are sold out to this contemplative movement. [Prayer labyrinths](#) perhaps will soon become the norm in more of them. Prayer labyrinths are a practice borrowed from pagan religions, and these are okay now in the Nazarene schools and churches? Many are also coming together and embracing Roman Catholic practices, or are [recommending RCC churches to our students](#), or selling Roman Catholic Bibles in the bookstores. Evolution is supplanting the Genesis account, and it's okay now if students are taught that Adam and Eve were not real, or that the worldwide flood did not occur. Instead, they were most likely just allegorical stories or myths. Thus they are teaching our students to doubt the veracity of the word of God. It's no wonder that at this point, I would not even consider sending my son to a Nazarene university, or recommending anyone to send their own child. It's too dangerous!

You see, right now, I am still a Nazarene. Perhaps the main reason that I remain is that I am still able to attend and worship at a Nazarene church whose pastor does not believe in this nonsense that is being promoted and passed off as something good for us. Many of us refuse to be under the leadership of any pastor who does not believe in the inerrancy and authority of scripture, and so I am thankful I can still attend a church whose leadership is committed to the word of God, not committed to silly programs, mystical rituals and even secular music played in worship services. Another reason I have stayed is that I have taken on a responsibility I never really thought I would have or even am the best qualified for, but I welcome, out of love for my new friends, who often call me or email me with requests for advice on what to do. Because of

what I have gone through myself, I am able to help others (in some small way) deal with the serious disruption and broken fellowship that this movement has brought into their lives.

I don't believe that the Nazarene denomination's health should be measured by numbers of people, or how healthy the budget is, or even how many churches have been built in the last year. Rather, it is measured in the steadfast, faithful obedience to Christ in ALL that He commands, and thus is also measured by the rejection of anything that contradicts the gospel "once for all delivered to the saints." (Jude 3) If any one preaches another gospel, Paul said that person should be accursed. Is the Nazarene church starting to preach another gospel?

I could go on, but I have written to you before with my concerns in the past year. Ever since General Assembly, when a group of us passed out 6,000 DVDs, yet were rebuffed by some of the leadership there, we have continued to ask questions and make others aware of the problem. Many others have written to you with their concerns. I cannot speak for them, but I am still waiting for answers. I am asking you to please give a clear and unambiguous answer to the many questions that have been raised in the past several years.

Is lectio divina really a biblical practice? Are prayer labyrinths okay? Should pastors and teachers promote books by heretical mystics and pastor such as Rob Bell, who deny the infallibility of scripture? Should Nazarene congregations worship inside a Roman Catholic Church, which teaches a false doctrine? We know that you have denounced false teachers as unacceptable, but many are preying on our youth right now. I think Nazarenes deserve to know which ones are they specifically that you think are false teachers, so we can "mark them" and "avoid them" as scripture commands.

"Where do you stand on these issues?" It is a fair question that I believe deserves a fair answer.

Blessings and peace, Manny Silva

October 30, 2010 Response to the General Superintendents

Dear General Superintendents

Thank you for your response to my open letter. I realize that you each have many responsibilities in the Church of the Nazarene. I want to share my thoughts with you on what you wrote to me. If you don't mind me sharing your letter publicly on my blog and email list along with this response, please let me know.

As I think of my heritage in the church, I think of my father, who was a great example to us, as well as my mother who worked tirelessly alongside him, supporting him and ministering along with him. I continue to think of his example as one of the things that gives me motivation and encouragement along the way. He always wanted me to be a pastor; perhaps this now is my calling, to be a watchman on the wall to Christians. As my late father-in-law, Rev. Eudo Tavares de Almeida, was opposed to the many false teachings coming in to our denomination, and gave many warnings before he ever heard of the word emergent; so I believe my father would have opposed these things also.

I need to clarify a few things that you have either assumed about us (Concerned Nazarenes), or perhaps the information you have received is inaccurate.

Clarification on inspiration: We do not necessarily hold to a “dictation” theory of inspiration. Even if some of us do, that is not a bone of contention for us. We are not arguing that at all. What we are arguing for, is that **the Church of the Nazarene needs to clarify without doubt, whether we as a church believe and teach that the Holy Scripture- all of it- is fully inspired by God, and is inerrant in the original writings- otherwise it cannot be the word of God.** Furthermore, **we reject the idea that we as a church can authoritatively say that the scriptures are inerrant ONLY in matters of salvation.** If that is true, where did we find the authority in the Bible to state this? And who determines which part of the Bible pertains to salvation, and which part does not? Who determines what is fable and what is historical fact?

That is what we are objecting to, that certain theologians and professors are picking and choosing what they think is true, and not true, and are defying the belief that scripture is God’s infallible word in all it teaches. This is very dangerous territory in our opinion, when Nazarene professors are teaching that Adam and Eve were probably not real. **Do you believe that?** If so, please show us where we are wrong. I recall the attempts made by two districts, unsuccessfully, to even have a vote on the matter of inerrancy at the General Assembly. Why?

We also object to teachers such as Thomas Oord teaching open theism, the heresy that God does not know the future; or process theology, that God learns from His mistakes. **Do you believe that also? If so, please show us where we are wrong.** On the other hand, if Dr. Oord and others are wrong, and are teaching false doctrines to our students, why are they allowed to continue teaching these things in our universities and churches? 1

Following are my thoughts on some of your statements:

“unwavering commitment to the 16 Articles of Faith, our Core Values, and our Agreed Statement of Belief.”

I agree, we want to uphold all those things also. But we want to know if that is all there is to it. I hope you are not saying that if we only uphold these three things, that anything else is “fair game” in our churches and universities. That argument has been given to us by many emergent Nazarenes, that all we need to do is affirm the Articles of Faith, and if so, everything else is a “non-essential.” This would be a flawed argument, because we are commanded in scripture by Jesus and the apostles to obey ALL that He taught.

Therefore our argument is not necessarily that these emergent Nazarenes are violating the Manual’s statements. **Our argument is that they are violating Scripture, which trumps our church manual and any other Christian manual.** If we are violating Scripture in anything we do, that takes precedence over our Articles of Faith. We are grieved at the many things that have come into the church and universities that go against Scripture, so that is what we are concerned about.

“we have also received encouraging letters from Nazarenes...” ...“it seems that God is granting favor to the church...”

I ask you then, what about the letters from Nazarenes who are hurting terribly from the damage caused by emergent church pastors who are treating them like Rick Warren recommended in the Purpose Driven Church? What have you done about all these people who are being driven out of their churches because their church no longer looks like a Nazarene church, but more like a Catholic church? As some of you may know, my family is one of those casualties, and I have received many emails from Nazarenes who have suffered as I have from the persecution of their own leaders, because they dared to ask questions. As some of you know, one of my

good friends was fired from his pastoral duties, and then his license taken away, for daring to speak the truth. **Why would a pastor be fired, for simply speaking the truth? Why would he be fired for speaking against a movement which so many other Nazarenes oppose, and which at this time is not even officially sanctioned by the Church of the Nazarene?**

Will I be next, if I continue to voice my opposition to heresy in the church? Will my pastor be removed for preaching the word of God without compromise, and for rejecting emergent church ideology? Are you planning to do anything to address this serious bleeding that I mentioned in my open letter? These kinds of things that are happening cannot be a result of God granting His favor to the church!

“Spiritual Formation is not alien to Wesleyan-Arminian Holiness theology.”

Perhaps we need have an understanding of what is spiritual formation, because of varying definitions today. I am not against growing in maturity in Christ, I am all for it! **The spiritual formation we are opposing has nothing whatsoever to do with what we are taught in the Holy Scripture.** I and others have addressed this to you, but to clarify, practices that incorporate prayer labyrinths, lectio divina, and other forms of prayer that are derived from pagan practices, or are superficial man-made inventions on how to commune with God- are not biblical spiritual formation! They are unbiblical, and that is what we are fighting against. So even though you understand spiritual formation to be “growth in Christlikeness”, we object to the things that are being taught in the universities and schools under that banner- because they are wholly inventions of man- and were not written about, or even implied, by the authors of the Bible or by Jesus.

Psalm 46:10 was never an excuse to practice the silence. I am not even a Bible scholar, yet I understand that from reading it in context. But learned men in our universities seem biblically ignorant compared to me in some of these areas, and twist the scriptures to justify their doctrinal errors. How can a simple person like me understand these things, and they cannot?

“The emphasis on the early church fathers is not alien to our Wesleyan theology.”

If you are talking about certain church fathers of the Reformation, or our early Nazarene leaders, please specify which early church fathers you are talking about, as examples. But the church fathers of the Roman Catholic Church- that’s another thing. John Wesley roundly condemned the false gospel of the RCC, yet here we are looking for inspiration from the very heretics that Wesley pointed out. If we stand firmly on the Bible as the one “secure source of truth”, as you said, then we must stay away from those who have espoused a false gospel, and could lead others astray by the implied condoning of their books and teachings! **I beg you to please do something to stop this movement down the road to Rome that many of us believe the Nazarene church is heading.** Can we truly call someone a brother in Christ, if he sincerely believes in all the heretical teachings of the RCC? They teach another gospel, so how could that be? We don’t hate Roman Catholic people. We do however oppose the RCC teachings, and I believe most Nazarenes would agree too. Roman Catholics should be a mission field, not a group to fellowship with as if we share the same gospel. We do not share the same gospel, instead, they clearly teach a false gospel. **Do you disagree? If so, please show us where we are wrong.**

James 1:27 says: “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and **to keep himself unspotted from the world.**” In Galatians 1, Paul warns us that **anyone who preaches another gospel is “eternally condemned!”**

“There are many other matters on which we may agree to disagree,...”

I don’t know about this unless you are specific as to what we can disagree on. I believe the only

things that we can disagree on and still maintain fellowship, are those things that we cannot be fully certain of (exact meanings of the prophesies in Revelation, etc.) or those things that the Bible specifically says can go different ways (to eat or not eat meat, or to drink wine, etc.).

Otherwise, we ought to be unified in all other clear teachings of scripture, no matter if someone thinks they are “minor” or not. There is no basis in scripture for us to ignore “minor” teachings, and that is exactly what many emergent Nazarenes are arguing for today. I quote for you John Wesley from Sermon 97, in a point he makes about whether we can disobey a “little thing”:
“Perhaps you will say, “This is only a little thing: it is a mere trifle.” I answer, If it be, you are the more inexcusable before God and man. What! Will you disobey a plain 3 commandment of God for a mere trifle? God forbid! Is it a trifle to sin against God, -- to set his authority at nought? Is this a little thing? Nay, remember, there can be no little sin, till we can find a little God!”

“but we are convinced that the most important thing is that we do so in holy love, with respect, and with an eye toward reconciliation and not division.”

Division was never and is not part of our agenda as some have characterized. However, when speaking truth, division inevitably will come- and Jesus Himself spoke to that issue clearly. And I agree that we should work with as much love and respect as possible. I am for reconciliation as well, but never at the price of faithfulness to God’s word. That is why our family is where we are today. We counted the cost, and stood firm and faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ, and not to any man or church, for the sake of a false unity. Yet I find it ironic that the good advice you just gave me was not followed by one of the most visible leaders in our denomination, Rev. Felter, who has now accused many concerned Nazarenes of being false accusers, without one bit of proof (because there is none).

“God is honoring the Church of the Nazarene around the world.”

I believe God is honoring many Nazarenes, but I truly am not so sure about our denomination as a whole. God honors only those individuals who stay true to Him, and to His word. We have pastors who are abusing their authority, “lording it over others”, and destroying years of relationships that faithful Nazarenes have built up. We have professors sowing seeds of doubt into our student’s minds, all in the name of liberal arts. That does not honor God, and it is a growing problem, and I believe as our leaders, you need to address forcefully and clearly this if God is going to honor the Church of the Nazarene.

You suggested reading *Christian Theology*, or *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*. Perhaps I will at some point, but reading these books will not change my mind a bit about what I have discerned in my spirit, through prayer, research, and the guidance of God’s Holy Scripture. The Bible is my sole source of infallible authority, so there would be nothing in these books to change my mind. They may affirm the truth of the Scriptures, but they will never refute what I have learned from God’s word. And that is, that there is something terrible going on in our denomination, and as our leaders, I am pleading with you to seek God in prayer, and ask for His guidance in dealing with these issues head on and without delay.

I would recommend that you each read two books that we have passed out to many: *Faith Undone*, by Roger Oakland, and *A Time of Departing*, by Ray Yungen. They will give you well documented and scripturally sound information that refutes the emergent church movement, and the New Age like practices coming into all denominations today.

In Sermon #97 “On Obedience To Pastors”, John Wesley said this, in regards to the question of obeying pastors: *“But what are they supposed to do in order to entitle them to the obedience here prescribed? They are supposed to go before the flock (as is the manner of the eastern shepherds to this day) and to guide them in all the ways of truth and holiness; they are to*

"nourish them with the words of eternal life;" to feed them with "the pure milk of the word:" Applying it continually "for doctrine," teaching them all the essential doctrines contained therein; "for reproof," warning them if they turn aside from the way, to the right hand or to the left; -- "for correction;" showing them how to amend what is amiss, and guiding them back into the way of peace; -- and "for instruction in righteousness;" training them up in inward and outward holiness, "until they come to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." 5. They are supposed to "watch over your souls, as those that shall give account." "As those that shall give account!" How unspeakably solemn and awful are those words! May God write them upon the heart of every guide of souls! "They watch," waking while others sleep, over the flock of Christ; over the souls that he has bought with a price, that he has purchased with his own blood. They have them in their hearts both by day and by night; regarding neither sleep nor food in comparison of them. Even while they sleep their heart is waking, full of concern for their beloved children. "They watch" with deep earnestness, with uninterrupted seriousness, with unwearied care, patience, and diligence, as they that are about to give an account of every particular soul to him that standeth at the door, -- to the Judge of quick and dead." (End quote)

Are our pastors and leaders in the church following the directive of scripture to watch over the flock? For all those who have such a great responsibility, it is a dangerous thing to ignore that responsibility.

Paul told Titus: "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine" (Tit. 2:1) Sound doctrine is doctrine that is true, true to God's word! It cannot be anything that we as humans add or subtract from His word. Are we preaching and teaching sound doctrine in the Nazarene denomination and in our universities?

We are to "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2). I am not a preacher, but by the authority of the word of God, I and other Nazarenes are doing what we can to speak the truth in its entirety, and reprove and rebuke those who are in positions of authority who are defying the word of God. **Most of all, I am disappointed in your letter to me, after all these months.**

I cannot consider your response to me as an answer, because you did not truly answer any of the questions I had written, which are questions that many other Nazarenes are asking. Is it possible that you, as our top leaders, our under-shepherds in the church- is it possible that you I can give us all some guidance, some clear answers, on the many questions we have been asking for months and months. Yet, I honestly can say, we are not getting a clear answer. Here are some of the many questions that we have had for a long time that we are asking you as our leaders, to answer:

1. What is your biblical view on prayer labyrinths, and practicing the silence?
2. Are Brian McLaren, Rob Bell, Richard Foster, Leonard Sweet, Tony Campolo false teachers, based on what they have written and taught, and still believe?
3. What do you think of books by heretics such as Thomas Merton, Henri Nouwen and others, being used as good resources for seminary and theology degree programs?
4. Why is Thomas Oord and others being allowed to teach the heresy of open theism as if it is true? Or do you not accept the fact that it is heresy?
5. Why are so many churches and universities incorporating more and more of a Roman Catholic flavor to their worship and practice? Are you approving of that?
6. Have you viewed the Emergent Church DVD that we passed out at General Assembly last year. If so, what do you think of it? If not, did you not think this was important enough to consider?

7. If any of you on the board are full supporters of everything or most of what we oppose, why can't you just come out and stand by what you believe, and let us know?

There are many of us Nazarenes watching and waiting to see what you will say about these matters. Please remember that many others could no longer wait, because of what was done to them, and they have left the church, perhaps forever. As much as it hurt my family, I can't imagine the pain that those who have been in the church even longer than we have experienced. This pattern will continue, until I am afraid, sooner rather than later, there will come a major split in the church. Those who are passionately seeking answers, and are interested in biblical truth, will get tired of waiting, and will move on, and separate from what I see as a slowly apostasizing church. We are bringing in false teachers without any kind of discernment whatsoever. We are bringing in a heavy emphasis on the social gospel, the environmental gospel, ecumenism, and other man-made programs that are straying from biblical truth, and that are quenching the pure power of the gospel and the Holy Spirit to change people's lives. If you as our leadership cannot or will not do something that stops this movement in its tracks, then the bleeding will continue, as Bible believing Nazarenes will not put up with this emergent nonsense. If not, then there will also be some bleeding as well, because the emergents will not like it, and will leave. But the priority for us all, should be a stand for truth, and nothing else. Regardless of the cost, I exhort you to stand for the unblemished truth of God's word. You cannot lose if you do that.

I ask you one more time if you will give me specific answers to the questions I raised in my open letter to you. If you cannot give me specific answers, please let me know why you cannot give me or anyone else specific answers to those questions. Sincerely in Christ, and seeking to obey Him alone, Grace be with you. Amen. Manny Silva On behalf of many Concerned Nazarenes

1 Tim. 6:20-21 O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge— 21 by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith.

1

Open Letter #2 To General Superintendents

April 11, 2011 Dear General Superintendents:

This is my second open letter that I am writing to you. I pray all is well with you. I am writing this in a spirit of great concern and love for our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. I believe, with all humility, that I speak on behalf of a good number of Nazarenes as well.

The Church of the Nazarene manual states that your duties include:

317.1.1 "To provide supervision of the International Church of the Nazarene. The Board of General Superintendents shall provide **appropriate attention to leadership, guidance, motivation...** "

318. "The Board of General Superintendents shall be the **authority for the interpretation of the law and doctrine of the Church of the Nazarene...**"

Many are still seeking guidance and clear answers in these very troubling times within the church. The influence of the emerging church movement is growing, and is causing an ever widening theological rift, as many Nazarenes see it as an apostate movement. It has torn apart

fellowship amongst many church families, including mine. It has resulted in the departure from the Nazarene denomination by many who have been watching a holiness church turn to teachings and traditions that years ago would have been unthinkable, teachings and practices that were rejected by the very people who started the Reformation. Instead, we are reverting back to before the Reformation and incorporating teachings and practices that were rejected by Martin Luther, and those who gave their very lives in defense of the true gospel. We have lost more than 10,000 Nazarenes in the last four years in the U.S. and Canada. Although I cannot tell you how much of that is due to emergent ideology or the embrace of Romanism and mysticism, I do have personal stories from dozens of people who have related to me that these movements have been the cause of their departure, or the cause of their current state of distress in their own church.

There are many things going on that are dividing our denomination and creating chaos among the believers, who are either unsure or afraid of the direction we are headed. Many have become anxious because our leaders have not provided them with clear and unambiguous explanations of various concerns. **I believe that the main problem that is unfolding is a great separation between Bible believing Christians, and those who do not believe in the full authority and inerrancy of God's word.** If this continues, there will be a permanent separation of many from the church, who will not abide with a continuing further erosion in trusting all of the Bible's teachings.

I would like to submit just a few questions to you and ask for some absolute clarity as to what you each believe about the following issues, because unless we get complete clarity on where our leaders stand, the bleeding will continue anyway, and you will see more and more Nazarenes leaving. Sure, some will leave no matter how you answer, but at least you will fulfill the mandate that the church manual has given to you, to be the **authority for the interpretation of the law and doctrine of the Church of the Nazarene.** Here are my questions:

1. **Celtic Spirituality class taught at Nazarene Theological Seminary** For the life of me, I cannot understand the purpose of this course at a Christian seminary! If you have no information on this subject, I wrote a post about this subject. Is this teaching appropriate and within the bounds of Christian orthodoxy? If yes, please explain it, because this is occultism being taught here, and we are very concerned with this kind of teaching to those who are going to be our future pastors. I have attached a syllabus from the class, and it is not just a study of the topic- it is for future pastors to **fully participate** in this pagan discipline.
2. **The teaching of Open Theism and Process Theology at our Christian colleges.** Is it scripturally sound to teach that God does not know the future? Is it within the bounds of orthodox Christianity and Nazarene doctrine to teach that God makes mistakes and learns from them? Is this the new Nazarene teaching about the nature of God?
3. **Is the use of the prayer labyrinths, the placing of ashes to the forehead and other Roman Catholic rituals** in Nazarene churches now acceptable and within the bounds of orthodox Christianity and Nazarene doctrine, in your opinion?
4. **What do each of you believe regarding the inerrancy of scripture?** With all the troubles within the Nazarene denomination, I believe it can be traced to the lessening of the authority and infallibility of God's word. My question is simple and straight for each of you: **do you believe that the Bible- all of it- is fully inspired by God, and IS actually God's word?**

Furthermore, do you agree or disagree with those who are promoting the teaching that the first 11 chapters of Genesis are not necessarily true, and that much of the Bible is not necessarily true? Do you believe Christians can actually reject the literal account of creation, and accept the idea that man evolved, including Adam and Eve? If so, what is the biblical justification to arrive at these conclusions, and how can we trust the Bible if parts of it are not true? Does that not make God a liar? This is the most important area I wish to get clarification on, and I pray that you will take the time to write a clear response, not just for me, but for many Nazarenes who are wondering about this.

That last question, by the way, is important for many reasons. One was the astounding fact that a licensed minister in the New England District was told last year that he would probably not be approved for ordination. For what reason, you may ask? Was it for incompetence? Did they tell him he just did not seem to have a genuine calling from God? Did he have some kind of serious moral failure that discredited him?

No, it was none of that. They simply told him that his view on the Bible- that it is the inspired and inerrant word of God- was not acceptable. To his credit and courage, he has told the licensing board that he would not seek renewal of a District license, because of the lack of confidence within the denomination in the very word of God. How shameful is it that this kind of thing can happen? How many more young pastors will be rejected unless they fit into the mold that is being formed, a mold that apparently rejects scripture as fully divinely inspired. Instead, pastors are being ordained if they believe in open theism, process theology, or that we came from apes. Does that sound like the Christian world turned upside down to you? And let me remind you of the pastors who have been faithful to God's word, but have been summarily dismissed for preaching against the emergent church movement.

It is my prayer that you will provide clear answers to these questions and finally help many Nazarenes understand where our leadership stands on these issues. The church looks to you for guidance, yet those of us who see the scriptures as the only true authority for our faith and practice, must be Bereans and even hold you up to the standard of scripture. It is not personal, it is only obedience to the Lord's teachings that compels us to ask these questions. May God bless you and I look forward to your response. Sincerely in Christ, Manny Silva

Response by The Generals To Open Letter #2

Board of General Superintendents Church of the Nazarene, Global Ministry Center
17001 Prairie Star Parkway, Lenexa, KS66220 Phone: 913-577-0510 • Fax: 913-577-0840

May 18, 2011
Dear Brother Silva:

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on behalf of the Board of General Superintendents. Thank you for your recent open letter to us.

Please know that your love and concerns are very much appreciated. We are living in some of the most special days in the history of our denomination. We believe that the challenges we face today will make us an even greater church. We thank the Lord for keeping us focused on the mission He has given us.

While we anticipate a wonderful tomorrow, we also celebrate today's exciting achievements

and give all glory to the Lord Who promised such great blessings to His Church if we would just lift up His name. May He help us faithfully do this!

We welcome your prayers, and we promise to continue praying for you.

In Jesus, Eugénio R. Duarte, Secretary Board of General Superintendents

ERD:rr

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A Series of Conversations With A General Superintendent and Two Nazarene University Presidents

January and February, 2010

From: Manny Silva
Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2010 11:19 PM
To: Board of General Superintendents Subject: A Lecture at NNU

I humbly ask you as our leadership... Please watch this lecture and tell me if this is acceptable to you. It is by Jay McDaniel at Northwest Nazarene University Entire lecture:
<http://surenot.com/v/999/dr.-jay-mcdaniel.html> Summary:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9GgRy741A8>

From: General Superintendent Jerry Porter
Re: FW: A Lecture at NNU
Sent: Mon 1/25/10 4:48 AM
To: Manny Silva

Dear Brother Manny:

Greetings from Yogyakarta, Indonesia, in the majestic name of our liberating Lord. Thank you for your email. I forwarded your email to Northwest Nazarene University President, Dr. David Alexander. I am asking him to respond to your concerns with a copy to me. I am serving as General Superintendent in Jurisdiction for NNU at this time. His email to you will allow you to communicate directly with him. * The University is a forum in which ideas are discussed openly and sincerely. * NNU is fully supportive of the Church of the Nazarene Articles of Faith and Agreed Statement of Belief. * The burden lies with the University to embrace the denominational Core Values and Articles of Faith and to inculcate them into the minds and hearts of students even as they learn wise discernment. That is why you need to continue to share your concerns with NNU. God bless you. Grace and peace, Jerry D. Porter Making Christlike Disciples in the Nations

From: Manny Silva Re:
FW: A Lecture at NNU
Sent: Mon 1/25/10 4:48 AM
To: General Superintendent Jerry Porter

Greetings Dr. Porter, Thank you very much for your response. I do appreciate it, considering that you most likely have a very heavy schedule of things to do. I have received the response from Pres. Alexander, but have not had a chance to really read it all yet until later. What I and many others are also concerned about is the influx of emergent church ideology into other universities as well as our churches. Many of us have been trying to get answers as to how far these things are going, much of which we believe is unbiblical and certainly not typical of Nazarene tradition. One glaring example is the prayer labyrinths at Trevecca, and many Nazarene churches across the country; a pagan practice being incorporated into Nazarene churches! And then there are all the other contemplative prayer practices that are also not biblically grounded. I and others have been writing much about those, and we have also sent much of the information to the general Board. I have attached the major article I wrote in

December, which was delivered to over 400 churches and 200 businesses in New England. You may not have known my dad, Rev. Ilidio Silva, but he was a true Nazarene preacher in the Nazarene holiness tradition, and spent his last 12 years of active pastorship in Rumford, RI. In that time, the church grew in numbers, and he was faithful to the scriptures in all he preached. He was a faithful example to me and all the folks at that church, and many are still there. But sadly, I have been forced to leave my church because of this emergent ideology. I may never be able to worship there again, because of a pastor and church board who refused to even give me, a board member at the time, a voice to express my concerns. I was a member of Rumford for 36 years, and to see my relationships there broken in such a way is heartbreaking to me and my family. My son is especially suffering because of his separation from friends. The day I sent my farewell letter to the board, my wife ended up in the hospital for three days from the stress, and could not move her arms and legs for several hours before the ambulance took her in.

This is typical of what has happened to many Nazarenes across the country, and yet, their pleas for help, their pleas for leadership to listen to their concerns, go unheeded up until now. Many have had no choice but to leave the Nazarene denomination, not having another Bible-believing Nazarene church nearby, and I have received many of these sad stories via email from these folks, disenfranchised because they dared to question their pastors, just to get answers of where they stand.

We too want answers, and yet, we do not get them. I want to know where leadership stands on the emergent church also, so I can make an informed decision. We were promised by the General Secretary at General Assembly that the BOG would make a statement after the Assembly about the emergent church, yet we still wait for it.

I have been fighting so hard to warn people as much as possible to what is coming into our beloved denomination. Throughout this fight, I have lost much. Friends from church do not talk to me anymore, thinking I am a troublemaker, yet all I wanted was answers- straight answers from the leadership at the church. I was not given the respect of a longtime member, to even have the opportunity to speak to my leadership at church. I have siblings now who oppose me, and think I am doing wrong, just for asking questions and trying to get the truth.

Many of us across the country are not sure of what will happen this year, or what we will do. I do know that at some point, the lack of getting an answer from the General Superintendents will force me and others to make some hard decisions that we do not want to make. We believe we deserve to know what is the direction of our denomination. Will we finally declare that God's word can be completely trusted in all it teaches, or only in parts of what it teaches. My former pastor does not believe the Bible is true in all things, and that trend continues in many churches.

Rest assured, I plan to continue warning as many people as possible. Sadly, there are some churches I would not recommend anyone to go to now. Certainly there are some universities that I would not recommend now, because of what they teach, including the heresy of Open Theism and Process Theology. I cannot believe that professors would teach our students that God does not know the future, or learns from His mistakes!

In spite of all the "losses" I have suffered in the past year, all the broken friendships, God has been good to us. he has sustained us, he has strengthened us, and we have come to know some really true warriors across the country who are willing to stand up for the truth, no matter what the cost. I can do no less, for to compromise anything at all, is to betray the Lord Jesus Christ. I

will not do that, whether it is for a pastor, a church, or even a denomination.

I will continue to send you and the other General Superintendents information, and asking for an answer to these questions. I pray you will consider it seriously. I truly believe that this must be addressed very soon. Respectfully, it is my belief that if silence continues for too much longer, I will have to assume that it means an affirmative support of the emergent church ideology, one which I cannot continue to tolerate within our denomination, and many others will also not tolerate. The consequences of that conclusion will be much worse than even I can imagine.

Please feel free to pass this on to your fellow General Superintendents. I am praying daily, along with others, that the future of our denomination will not continue to slide downwards as we believe it is. I pray that God will give you all the strength and resolve to handle this in the best way possible- in light of what scriptures teaches us, and nothing else. Sorry this went a little long. I tend to go on and on, but it is a serious perhaps the most serious in the denomination's history. I pray that God's wisdom will be with you and your colleagues.
Sincerely in Christ, Jesus is Lord, Manny Silva

From: President David Alexander, Northwest Nazarene University

Sent: To: Cc: Mon 1/25/10 3:10 PM Manny Silva; Marilee Shively Jerry Porter

Dear Brother Silva:

Greetings from the campus of Northwest Nazarene University. I am writing to follow-up on an email you sent to General Superintendent Porter regarding the appearance of a guest on the NNU campus several years ago. Please allow me to speak to that, as well as make a couple general observations and finally update you on the present work of NNU for the Kingdom. You wrote asking about the appearance of Jay McDaniel on our campus. He was a guest speaker at NNU in the Fall of 2006. Unfortunately, the video clip that you are referencing omits an NNU faculty member's introduction of Dr. McDaniel. In effect, the introduction was a "disclaimer" regarding the fact that while we welcome him to speak, not all his views may align with our institutional views on matters of orthodoxy, theology and creedal statements.

Therefore, let me state explicitly so you know exactly where NNU stands as an institution. NNU believes and affirms the Articles of Faith and Covenants of Christian Character and Conduct that are the bedrock of the Church of the Nazarene. Furthermore, we espouse the centrality of Christ in all we are and all we do. To that end, I'm inserting a paragraph from the Hallmarks of an NNU Education, that underscore this fact:

Northwest Nazarene University is built upon belief in and relationship with the One Triune God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In Him and His Son all things live and move and have their being. He is the way, the truth and the life. Therefore, we gather and organize ourselves around our relationship with God in Christ, made available to us through the Holy Spirit. We exist to seek God. He is the centerpiece around all we plan, do and are. We seek His rule, righteousness and relationship in our lives and in the life of the institution.

Here is a link to the entire Hallmarks of an NNU Education document:

<http://www.nnu.edu/offices/office-of-the-president/hallmarks-of-an-nnu-education/>

Let there be no doubt. We organize and act from our belief that Jesus is the way, the truth and

the life. I understand that in viewing the remarks of our campus guest that some may mistakenly assume that what he said is what we believe. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Having said that, I want to explain the nature of his invitation. (Please recall that this occurred in Fall of 2006, I became President of NNU in Summer of 2008.) The university as a whole and our School of Theology & Christian Ministry in particular realize that the world is shrinking. Culture and belief systems that were once a world away, are now as near as an immigrant student, a next door neighbor or a link to a website. Consequently, it is the duty and responsibility of the university to make ourselves and our students aware of the world's religions, sects and quests for God. This is necessary if we are to appropriately know how we as Christians, are to proclaim the gospel to Muslims, pantheists, or Buddhists (an area where Dr. McDaniel has done research).

It is our privilege and duty to assess and guide in this process, so that we and our students become adept at highlighting the good intentions and fallacies of various religions in order to then preach Christ and Him crucified. This is in keeping with the same posture that the Apostle Paul used on his missionary travels, when he spoke directly to the belief systems of a particular town or region (e.g. Athens, Corinth) and then connected the hunger for a god, with the path to God in Jesus Christ.

To this end, we, as a missional expression of the Church of the Nazarene, promote the exercise of faith and reason, so that we might better observe the hand of God and His grace, conveniently at work in the world, so that we might be a part of the Holy Spirit's moving. In fact, my recent address to the campus community in our first Spring Semester Chapel, explores how to deal with the healthy tension that God has placed within us, His children, as we learn to exercise our minds in harmony with our faith. Here's a link to the text of that chapel message: <http://www.nnu.edu/offices/office-of-the-president/presidents-messages/spring-2010-chapel-january-13th/>

I'm sorry if this video of one of our guests, which you have encountered, has caused you to think poorly of our work. I wanted to be quick respond and encourage you to stay in dialog. For NNU has, is and always will be committed to proclaiming the good news of the gospel, saturating all we teach and do with His perspective, as we continually seek to provide transformative experiences for our students as they grow up into the full measure and stature of Jesus Christ.

Thank you again for your interest and concern. I take it to mean that you have a heart for our beloved Church and the work the university does as the Church at work in higher education. May God bless you, may God bless NNU, David Alexander, President Northwest Nazarene University

***** END LETTER FROM DR. ALEXANDER -----**

**** I shared this response with some trusted friends. Here are some comments by them:**

Comments: Pastor J: This is very disappointing. It is a washing of hands! It seems that Dr. Porter is permitting the inclusion of this speaker, Jay McDaniels, at NNU on the grounds that they allow for an open forum in which both sides are present. #1 I did not see the Biblical view presented. #2 We are commanded not to teach or listen to any such doctrine, as it only "causes disputes. Are our universities above such commandments?

"As I urged you when I went into Macedonia--remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they

teach no other doctrine, 4 nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith." (I Timothy 1"3-4) "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle." (II Thes. 3:6)

Pastor R: Porter has no back bone! He put it right back in NNU's lap.

Brenda: A very weak response, indeed, however, he does want to know how the university president replies to you.

Mike: I am not sure exactly what is going on at the other Nazarene Universities, however I can assure you that this idea of an open forum where both sides are presented is the most ridiculous comment I have heard. There are NO BOTH SIDES PRESENTED!! NNU has consistently presented only one side for several years. Their side is the side of Jay McDaniels. You can here one of my son's former youth pastors who was at the McDaniel lecture being so excited about what he had to say. No Nazarene leader took her aside and said this is not how we believe. She was encouraged to agree with what he said. Tom Oord goes way back with McDaniel. Go back and look at the list of speakers at the Wesleyan conferences or guest speakers list for the last 5- 10 years. You will be hard pressed to find a conservative Christian speaker. This school is consistently barraging the students with extreme left wing speakers.

They consistently choose people who come out of common think tanks where the religious/philosophy department resides. Tom Oord is a graduate of Claremont University, one of the most liberal schools in the world. You can read his personal testimony where he tells how he went from a fundamental Christian to a very liberal Christian. He was trained by professors who are part of a conspiracy, who believe that George Bush is personally responsible for blowing up the Twin Towers. Cobb and Griffin are all over the internet with this stuff. These are Tom's personal mentors who he keeps in close contact with and goes to conferences with every year. The Jay McDaniels DVD is old stuff. Tom and his department have a very clear agenda as to what they want to do with the Nazarene denomination. They have complete support from the other universities and NTS. I have printed out volumes of information on what is going on and it has been presented and given to the new president and leaders of NNU and Dr. Borger the DS. They do not care. Nothing ever changes. They are proud of these people and what they are doing. They love their Templeton money.

Our group went to the home of Dr. Alexander and expressed our concerns with open theism, process theology, theistic evolution, sanctity of life, etc. The answer we got was we will look into this. He mailed out a ridiculous letter that supported these people and did not even address our concerns. They are looking into this means, " we will continue to bring extreme liberal speakers who do not get vetted" like Brian McLaren and now Sister Prejean who is a liberation theology catholic nun. There will be no both sides for her. She will spew her left wing garbage this week without incident and I guarantee she will get a standing ovation without question. The kids on the campus are so excited even though they know nothing about her and the lies she has perpetuated all these years. The families of the victims of the murderers who are also Catholic are outraged at what she is doing and the outright lies and misrepresentations in her book and the movie. Read what the detectives and families have to say about this woman and her campaign against the death penalty. I personally have mixed views about the death penalty because of the DNA evidence that has come forward over the last few years and has helped release people from death row, however you do not build your case with lies to fulfill some agenda. Follow the money trail on these speakers. See how much money NNU and the universities pay these people to come and spread there trash. I guess I am a little upset today because my son is still there and he knows what is going on with these people and what is happening to conservative kids in the classrooms as far as how they are graded and how they are talked down to when it comes to topics like gay marriage, other homosexual issues, sanctity of life, creationism, referring to God as he too much instead of she, etc., etc.

Brenda: Oh, (smack head with palm of hand) I get it! It's good to have apostates have a platform at our schools, because as long as there is a short disclaimer, the students who are ALL equally strong in their faith, will not succumb to their teachings. Oh, silly concerned Nazarenes! Well, in THAT case, since paganism and humanism are among the fastest growing philosophical systems in America currently, they might want to reach into their budget and invite Anton LaVey, the founder of the Satanic Church to speak to the students. I'm sure he has some interesting things to say that will help the very strong in their faith

students have a missional attitude towards satanists. Hmmm.....Tom Oord might want to bring him in because I'm sure God had no idea that that ornery wayward angel, Lucifer, was going to turn out to be such a stinker! I'm sure God is still wringing His hands over THAT oops!

Beverly: This man has convinced himself of a lie or else he is a flat out liar. Over twenty Concerned Nazarenes from Idaho has reported to him of heresy after heresy coming from that school. I had personally signed one of their petitions to have something done only to get a letter saying much that he said in this email, about his loving dedicated staff and their dedication to our holiness doctrine. Sorry but he is more dangerous than McDaniel.

Email To Dr Alexander Jan, 26, 2010

From: Manny Silva

To: Pres. David Alexander; Marilee Shively CC: Jerry Porter

Subject: RE: Jesus Is the Way at NNU

Date: Tue, 26 Jan 2010 14:38:08 -0500

Dear President Alexander,

Thank you for your response to me and for your thoughts. I have looked at the links that you sent me. I enjoyed reading your chapel message- most of it resonated very well with me and I'm sure I would have enjoyed it in person. I read the Hallmarks page also, and again it looks to me like a great statement for the university to make.

I truly do have a heart for our Nazarene denomination and have its best interests in all that I am doing, so I can reassure you on that. Much of that I learned from my father, Rev. Ilidio Silva, who was a Nazarene minister for over 50 years. Whether I remain in our denomination beyond the next year or so, largely depends on many of the questions I and others have been asking over the last several years, regarding our universities and churches, which have largely gone unanswered.

Please understand that I tend to be completely blunt about these issues, as I have pretty much moved towards doing that in the past year- it saves me time. I do not purposely intend to get anyone upset, but I do want to speak as straight as I can. Regarding Dr. McDaniel, I understand he spoke a few years before you arrived at NNU, but the trend at NNU seems to be one of allowing speakers like Brian McLaren and others who are very liberal or emergent in their views, to speak unchallenged to students who look to these people as reliable and credible authority figures.

Philip Yancey does not even come close to reflecting true biblical standards, or Wesleyan thinking, yet he is scheduled to be the main speaker at the Wesley Center Conference in February. This man apparently favors ecumenism, seems to waver in his belief on gay marriage or gay ordination, spoke at a pro-homosexual Baptist convention, and I could go on and on. He also has supported the contemplative spirituality movement, which I believe is a big threat to true Christianity.

I also understand that Sister Helen Prejean, a very liberal Catholic, who supports the gay lifestyle and gay ordained ministers as compatible with Christianity, will be speaking at NNU soon. Will someone be there to vigorously object to her philosophy and some of her public positions that contradict our Nazarene views? Why does it seem that many of our universities and churches are becoming more at ease with speakers from Roman Catholicism, which has many doctrines filled with heresies? Do we not have enough holiness speakers in the Nazarene tradition? But at the very least, if they are to appear at our universities, why not always make sure you have a strong biblical Christian ready to openly refute what these liberals teach? So from a Christian worldview, including traditional Nazarene doctrine, why should a false teacher ever be given a platform to speak unchallenged at a Nazarene university? If we are truly following biblical principles at our schools, and to a lesser degree of importance, following Nazarene guidelines, should we not do the opposite and not allow any of this kind of teaching? Any discerning Christian viewing this lecture will immediately identify Dr. McDaniel as a false teacher, based on his many statements that run completely contrary to scripture. I refer you to scriptural authority on such an issue:

"As I urged you when I went into Macedonia--remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, 4 nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith." (I Timothy 1"3-4)

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle." (II Thess. 3:6)

Three points or questions I would make about this lecture:

1. The biblical view opposed to this was not presented that night, to rebut Dr. McDaniel's views. 2. As a pastor friend commented to me, "We are commanded not to teach or listen to any such doctrine, as it only "causes disputes". Are our universities above such commandments?" 3. Is there a video recording of the disclaimer at the start of the lecture that I could see?

I was particularly saddened at the Q&A, when a young lady, perhaps a student, asked a question in regard to what Dr. McDaniel had been teaching: "How do we merge our faith... how do we gather these truths and make it available to our congregations, to our people without making people nervous?" This truly breaks my heart, that someone is asking Dr. McDaniel, in essence, how can I take back to my church your false teachings of universalism and panentheism, etc, and introduce them without making the people nervous?

I understand, again, this is just one lecture, four years ago. The same thing happened with Brian McLaren in 2008, a three day seminar with what I understand was a total lack of opposition to his views, including teaching that John 3:16 meant that God sent Jesus to save the planet- and not the people.

I have done research on some of the teachings of Dr. Tom Oord. He seems to be a nice guy, I met him at ENC last year at a lecture. Yet he is allowed to teach such heresies- and they are heresies- as Open Theism and Process Theology. He teaches also that evolution is compatible with the Bible, when it clearly contradicts the biblical account of creation. How can a student ever have confidence in the scriptures, when Open Theists teach that God does not know the future, and God learns from His mistakes? If I pray to God about a concern, should I be confident that he will answer my prayers according to His sovereign, infinite knowledge, or should I hope for the best and pray that He gets it right?

So I continue to be concerned about this, as well as many other folks who are even more closely connected with NNU and what is going on there. I understand that many letters have been written in regards to what is being taught there, but very little satisfactory responses. I cannot verify that for myself at this time, but it is disturbing if that is the case.

Well, just some things that were on my mind. I pray that folks like Dr. McDaniel never set foot in any Nazarene university again, unless it is to give a clear example to students of what false teaching is, and to thoroughly refute him in front of all to see.

I pray that all our Nazarene universities return to upholding biblical principles and reinforcing those principles in our students, helping them to be on solid doctrinal ground and not fall prey to the enemy's deceptive teachings through people like Jay McDaniel. I pray that NNU will match what is said on the Hallmarks page, and in your message, with who they allow to speak at your university.

I thank you for considering my thoughts on this.

Finally, if it is okay to use your first email to me in an opinion post on my blog, please let me know, otherwise, I will not make it public without your permission.

Sincerely in Christ, Manny Silva

Email Response from Dr. Alexander Jan. 27, 2010

From: President Alexander, NNU

Sent: To: Cc: Wed 1/27/10 1:51 PM Manny Silva Jerry Porter

Dear Manny:

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I read with interest your reply to my email. It covered many things and I have obviously come into the middle of a lengthy series of exchanges, conversations and perceptions.

Since I don't know all the specifics, I don't think it appropriate I respond to the various comments you make about people within and without the Nazarene circle. You had asked if you could place my reply in your blog. If you think that's of value to this discussion, and if you would be so kind as to post the entire letter, then "yes", you may do so. I don't think I want to have the whole of my response become just a portion of my response. To add further access to you in understanding my primary belief and vision for NNU I'm including a link to the speeches and messages I have given in my 20 month tenure as President of NNU. Here is the link for your perusal: <http://www.nnu.edu/offices/office-of-the-president/presidents-messages/> Lastly, one observation. On several occasions early in my life of ministry in Christian higher ed, I heard Rev. Earle Lee say, as Christians, "we don't need to protect Jesus; we need to project Jesus!"

I believe in those words quite strongly. I want to spend my time and the energy and talent of this university to spread the gospel and increase the Kingdom of God, as God sees fit to use us. We have in place our orthodox beliefs, of scripture, of the creeds and of the Articles of Faith of the Church of the Nazarene. I don't need to argue for or protect them with fellow believers. On occasion, we seek to understand the kingdom of this world so that we can be used of Him to

establish the Kingdom of our Lord. I hope this makes sense and provides you the understanding of why I won't be in constant dialog (I don't blog well). I pray for you as you sort through your faith in Christ. I assure you I/we are not doing anything to undermine the orthodox, Wesleyan faith this is who we are and always will be. May God give us all ears to hear and eyes to see! Seeking His truth in love, David Alexander, President Northwest Nazarene University

From: Mike in Idaho

Sent: Thu 1/28/10 12:28 PM

To: Manny Silva Manny, You are awesome for trying to get through to Dr. Alexander. The people you have running the universities are what the Bible calls "hired men." They are not shepherds. They are concerned about their status, their incomes, their benefits, their trips/vacations and their retirement programs. I don't know if you have had time to read Tom Oord's personal testimony that I sent you regarding his conversion from a Nazarene fundamentalist to a full on liberal in his own words. That testimony came right off the internet and is not secret information. Feel free to post it. He proudly displays that and what happened to him is clearly what he is doing to the students at NNU and all of the places he visits. He spends his summers going to Africa, Italy and a variety of other Nazarene places teaching process/open/theistic evolution. That is all documented. Tom has a pretty amazing life at the expense of people like us sending our students to these places. He is sponsored by the John Templeton organization and travels the world without personal expense. He often takes his wife and kids on these exotic trips. Life is good for them in this economy. He believes he is an evangelist to turn around this horrible fundamentalist based denomination to higher knowledge. If you look at the early heresies of the church when Polycarp and John the Apostle were confronting Marcion and the Gnostics, you will find the world of Tom Oord and the liberal teachers at our universities. They are Gnostics with the true truth as my seminary professor used to say. Tom and his cohorts have a clear agenda to take this denomination out of the dark ages.

From: editors at Lighthouse Trails Publishing

Date: Thu, Jan 28, 2010 at 10:36 AM Subject: Dr. Alexander

I have received a letter today that was sent by President Dr. Alexander from NNU. A concerned man had contacted the school and received this letter back. Once I can confirm that Dr. Alexander has sent this out to at least one other person, I will consider it public information and will post it. I have written a response that I would like to share with you. And as soon as I hear of his letter being sent out to someone else, I will forward it to you. If you hear of such a case, would you let me know? Thank you. Here is my response.

Thank you for sharing this. This is a case of a university president who does not appear to understand the nature of the current spiritual deception sweeping through the church, and very much so the Nazarene denomination. By his own admission, Dr. McDaniel was there to instruct the students, as Dr. Alexander points out (end of paragraph 6) when he says "make ourselves and our students aware of the world's religions ... an area where Dr. McDaniel has done research." I think many parents would disagree with NNU's idea that New Age Christians who dangerously teach another gospel should be the ones to teach their students about world religions. That's a ridiculous argument by Dr. Alexander. There are many excellent books and resources that teach on world religions, written by fine Christian men and women. So when Dr. Alexander says that "it is the duty and responsibility of the university to make ourselves and our students aware of the world's religions," how that is done is up for dispute.

Secondly, if the school is indeed "committed to proclaiming the good news of the gospel" and if something has changed since Dr. Alexander began as President, which he points out in his letter that he began AFTER McDaniel's visit, then why was Brian McLaren invited to speak in 2008, Philip Yancey

this year and why do they presently have a Spiritual Formation program, in which heretical authors such as Richard Foster, Rob Bell, Henri Nouwen, Brian McLaren, Dallas Willard, Steve Chalke, David Benner, Brother Lawrence, Eugene Peterson, and Donald Miller are being used to teach the students? http://www.nnu.edu/academics/graduate_programs/graduate-theological-online-education/master-of-arts-tracks/wwwnnuedumasf/textbooks/

At the risk of sounding disrespectful, I will tell you why this is happening at NNU – it is because Dr. Alexander and the other teachers and leaders at the school think they understand, but they do not. Incidentally, the use of heretical teachers (ones who promote mysticism and panentheism) does not stop at their Spiritual Formation program. In their Missional Leadership program, the same thing is happening. Part of that list includes Brian McLaren (clearly a favorite of NNU, though McLaren calls the doctrine of the Cross and Hell “false advertising” for God), Eddie Gibbs, Leonard Sweet, Dan Kimball, and a number of others. Dr. Alexander needs to understand that he is president of a university that has become an institution that is promoting the new emerging spirituality, a spirituality that by its very nature denies the tenets of the Christian faith, of which he says the school believes.

For Dr. Alexander to single out McDaniel as if this was some rare exception is erroneous, because the names I have mentioned above are following the same spirituality as McDaniel. In his case, he was just more candid than some of the others. But for those who have studied McLaren, Sweet, and Foster, we have learned that the spirituality is the same. I would like to post this letter you sent me from Dr. Alexander, but because you are the first person who sent it to me, I will wait until I can confirm that he is sending it out to others who have contacted him about this situation. When I do confirm this, we will not in any way use your name. But I wanted to let you know so that when you see it posted, you will know that this is why we did so. Once we confirm it has been sent out in a public fashion, we will consider it public information. It is not for Lighthouse Trails to decide whether NNU is right. We are presenting the information so that others can make informed decisions and conclusions.
Deborah Dombrowski, Lighthouse Trails Publishing

Email From: General Superintendent Jerry Porter

Sent: Tue 2/02/10 2:23 AM

To: Manny Silva Attachments: 1 attachment BGS State...doc (30.5 KB)

Dear Brother Manny: Greetings from Hong Kong in the majestic name of our liberating Lord. We CELEBRATE your dear Father and his ministry for Christ! I understand your passion for the Church of the Nazarene Core Values and doctrines. I appreciate your willingness to contact leaders at NNU and other institutions and offices to hold us accountable. I am attaching a document (see below) that responds to the "emergent church" conversation. Thank you for continuing this respectful conversation to the glory of God.
Grace and peace, Jerry D. Porter Making Christlike Disciples in the Nations

STATEMENT OF THE BOARD OF GENERAL SUPERINTENDENTS:

Affirming God's Work in an Age of Change

Mention the terms, “Emergent,” or “emerging” and pair them with the word “church,” and many questions are bound to follow. While there is no shortage of opinion surrounding these words, we offer the following as a resource for our people.

Emergent vs. Emerging

We believe there is a key difference between the Emergent Church and emerging churches. Sadly, some in the Emergent Church have messed with the message. They have started

down the road of compromise, eliminating the “useless” baggage of specific, scripturally-based, religious convictions. Such misguided attempts to eliminate critical, theological content may lighten the load of such churches. It may even create a temporary euphoria of false freedom. In the end, however, these choices will prove to be liabilities.

Some in the Emergent Church have substituted the solid rock of biblical authority for the shifting sands of human reasoning. Dismissing the supernatural attributes of God as mere holdovers from older times, leaves the church with an impoverished understanding of God. The subtle seduction of other narratives infiltrates the very heart of the Gospel message, leaving it weakened in the face of great challenge.

Emerging churches, on the other hand, can recognize the non-negotiable elements of our historic faith, preserving them, internalizing them, and living them out in the world we serve. Emerging churches can adapt their methodologies for a changing culture without tossing Scriptural truths to the winds of change. The poverty of unexamined practices is not an acceptable standard of living for the New Testament church. The Church can remain steadfastly committed to the faith of the Bible and the theological statements of the Church while redemptively speaking to the culture. We can remain anchored to the bedrock of scriptural Christianity while creatively exploring fresh ways of being the Church in the 21st century world.

Faithful in a time of change

The preservation of orthodoxy does not militate against the options of new and innovative methodologies. Every congregation faces the challenge of change. Every congregation will ultimately have to examine its style. The substance can remain unchanged, for it is founded upon the authority of Scripture, not the changing winds of culture. Experimentation can reveal new strengths and strategies for making Christlike disciples. No congregation is exempt from the challenge social change. Change can be embraced simultaneously while remaining firmly committed to the foundations of faith.

Going forward

The Church of the Nazarene revealed a level of genius a century ago when it expressed the non-negotiable elements of biblical faith in eight (8) simple yet profound statements found in our MANUAL paragraphs 26-26.8:

Agreed Statement of Belief

26. Recognizing that the right and privilege of persons to church membership rest upon the fact of their being regenerate, we would require only such avowals of belief as are essential to Christian experience. We, therefore, deem belief in the following brief statements to be sufficient. We believe: 26.1. In one God—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. 26.2. That the Old and New Testament Scriptures, given by plenary inspiration, contain all truth necessary to faith and Christian living. 26.3. That man is born with a fallen nature, and is, therefore, inclined to evil, and that continually. 26.4.

That the finally impenitent are hopelessly and eternally lost. 26.5. That the atonement through Jesus Christ is for the whole human race; and that whosoever repents and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is justified and regenerated and saved from the dominion of sin. 26.6. That believers are to be sanctified wholly, subsequent to regeneration, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. 26.7. That the Holy Spirit bears witness to the new birth, and also to the entire sanctification of believers. 26.8. That our Lord will return, the dead will be raised, and the final judgment will take place. We believe Nazarene pastors and congregations will recognize these statements for what they are. These are not millstones that inhibit innovation and creativity. They encourage exploration of the opportunities presented in a changing environment. Compassion, social justice, and holiness were common components of Bresee’s ministry and many of our earliest Nazarene ministries. Tapping the interest of the young in giving back to their communities and working for God’s justice offers the Spirit-led congregation favorable venues for preaching and teaching Scriptural truths so beautifully and economically stated in our Agreed Statement of Belief.

Our Commitment

We shall steadfastly resist any and all attempts to undermine these beliefs. We shall resist those efforts that seek to retain the vocabulary while stripping away the biblical meaning and essence of these beliefs. At the same time, we shall acknowledge the courageous work of new Nazarene pioneers who embody our Core Values: Christian, Missional, and Holiness. They are engaging a virtual world, energizing a justice-seeking generation, making Christlike disciples in the nations, and encouraging continuance in the faith, "once delivered to the saints."

COMMENTS:

Pastor R: Hi, It was encouraging to hear Porter make some good statements such as, "We shall steadfastly resist any and all attempts to undermine these beliefs. We shall resist those efforts that seek to retain the vocabulary while stripping away the biblical meaning and essence of these beliefs." (end of Quote) That gives me some comfort! However, I think he is oblivious to what's going on in our church (or perhaps he does) and he's just turning a blind eye to the whole emergent thing. Evidently he needs "FACTS" so let get him some. Let's prove to him that our doctrine and the Bible is being compromised by "Emergent Ideology." Just my two cents worth!

Brenda: To differentiate that there is a vast difference between terms of emergent and emerging is "smoke and mirrors". Emerging and emergent fit hand in glove with a variety of individual interpretations in which these philosophies are implemented. The fact is the Nazarene has a very real infiltration of liberal/emergent congregations who have been influenced by the teachings of emergent proponents. These philosophies have been welcomed into the universities through workshops, chapel schedules, required reading for classes by professors who hold to a liberal/emergent mindset. The doctrines are changing incrementally through all these avenues. The church is under assault and this is not the time to get distracted with a play on terms. This is not a matter of whether an organ should be played in a church. As much as emergent supporters like to say they are being orthodox in their teachings, and accuse those who criticize as having a preference problem, the results speak for themselves. Emergent philosophies are leading people away from the full counsel of God and into a psuedo-gospel of good works, sans repentance of sins.

The term and mission of social justice is not the same as in Bresee's day but has morphed into an avenue in which liberal politics and policies are given a platform. Why are Nazarene Churches aligning themselves with Catholics, Unitarian Universalists, and other liberal denominations to feed the poor via the Interfaith Hospitality Network? When did we replace the foundations of our beliefs on the altar of pragmatism? Why would a Nazarene Church align itself with the Industrial Areas Foundation, an organization whose founder was a Socialist and had Communist sympathies, to partner in their social justice mission?

These concerns are not just a confusion of terms like emerging and emergent. These are very real concerns that are chipping away at the foundations of the Nazarene faith and Biblical integrity and is steering the denomination off course.

Mike: Dear friends, Once again, you have a Nazarene leader who has either shown up from the past through some kind of time machine or is completely and ridiculously oblivious to what is going on. Has he been trapped in Hong Kong since the 1950's? The letter is simply amazing and I wish all of the leadership felt this way and it were true. I have been watching for years what is going on at NNU and the church I used to attend. I cannot speak for the other schools other than information that has been sent to me. Dr. Porter speaks of the differences between the emergent and the emerging belief systems or churches. I sent a letter to my DS (Dr. Borger) which also went to NNU explaining the differences three years ago. I asked why they were bringing only the most extreme of the emergent left like Brian McLaren, Leonard Sweet, etc., and not bringing conservative emerging leaders who had

more in common with Nazarene theology and Orthodox Christianity. This is when I got my first big tent speech and what was allowed to be believed and still remain in the Nazarene Church and how wonderful a theologian Dr. Tom Oord is. Everything I have witnessed at NNU for the last few years has been a complete immersion and acceptance of liberal emergent beliefs. All of you are aware of the speakers who have been coming to the NNU campus.

About fifteen years ago at Southern Seminary under the direction of Dr. Albert Mohler there was a confrontation of beliefs. That is the battle we are in. I spoke with Dr. Mohler about how he was able to rid the university of liberal thinkers who had been watering down the Gospel message for years and confusing the students like what is being done at the Nazarene schools. It took awhile to complete the process but he sat down and forced each Bible teacher and Theologian to write out what they truly believed. He forced the issue. What he found was that many of these teachers would go to churches and give sermons that were orthodox but teach neo-orthodoxy in the class room. Many of the NNU professors do the same thing in our area.

That is why when you tell people about this they do not believe you. After the Southern Seminary teachers were exposed, many of them went to teach at a liberal Baptist school and are still there to this day. Since that time Southern Seminary has become the largest seminary in the country because people are hungry for the "Word of God" and what God has to say, not what philosophers have to say. If what Dr. Porter is saying is the truth then my suggestion would be to give him a side by side comparison of the Nazarene core values and doctrines to what is really being taught and what is being said by certain professors when it comes to the following:

1. Atonement
2. Virgin birth
3. Christ's death and resurrection
4. Inerrancy of the original autograph's. How far do we get to stray on this with plenary inspiration and how it applies to salvation only? Most of the teachers at the NNU religion department teach the OT is filled with myths. (This is documented.)
5. Christ coming again.
6. Sanctity of life. Why do ordained ministers/professors in the church get to believe in embryonic stem cell research without question or debate? (This is documented)
7. How much Catholic teaching is the Nazarene church going to embrace with their formational training?
8. Since when did Catholic and Quaker scholars and philosophers become the driving force for Nazarene educational systems?
9. Show him Tom Oord's testimony of what he believes and his mentor list. How does that work with the core values and doctrines?
10. How many versions of reimagining Wesley, Jesus, the atonement, the virgin birth do we get to do?
11. It seems the only people who are questioned or asked to leave the Nazarene church these days are conservatives or people who question or take a stand.
12. How big of tent is the Nazarene Church? Are there any boundaries except for conservative thinkers?
13. Why is there so much protection for these leaders who profess these extreme liberal heretical views? The only thing that I can really suggest is to force the issue and make these "hired men" do their job and become shepherds who protect the sheep instead of their careers, health plans and pensions. I hope this helps in some way.

From: Manny Silva to General Superintendent Jerry Porter

Sent: Tue 2/02/10 2:23 AM To: General Superintendent Jerry Porter

Dear Brother Porter,

Thanks very much for the document and keeping in touch. I would imagine you get many emails per day, so thanks for getting back to me. (For your reading when you get caught up... I attached my latest posting which has concerns regarding Trevecca and some issues there- I realize you may not be the GS for that school, but perhaps you can forward it to whoever might be.) May I share this statement you sent me with a few of my other Concerned Nazarene colleagues? Blessings,

From: General Superintendent Jerry Porter

Tue 2/02/10 9:04 PM

Sent: To: Manny Silva

Cc: Dr. Boone Dan Alice Smith; Dr. Warrick J. K.

Dear Brother Manny Greetings in the majestic name of our liberating Lord! Yes, feel free to forward the BGS document that I sent you. I know your intentions are good as you attempt to hold certain church leaders accountable. At times the confrontation has been so direct that some have been wounded by the tone of the communication. Thanks for continuing to follow the Lord's instruction to First direct your communication privately to the responsible person Second, if needed, include one witness and repeat your concerns Thirdly include several witnesses Fourth time go public I invite you and other concerned Nazarenes to continue the dialog but to do so following our Lord's guidelines Would you mind sending your TNU comments to Dr Dan Boone, then if needed send comments again with a copy to the President of the Bd of Trustees, then include some other trustees, if you feel the response was not appropriate and then go Public with the long list of emails. I know your concerns will be heard and your comments will influence future decisions. Thank you for loving the Lord by loving and respecting your brothers and sisters in the Lord

From: Dr. Dan Boone, Trevecca Nazarene University

Tue 2/02/10 10:04 PM

Sent: To: Manny Silva

Cc: AE Smith; JK Warrick; Jerry Porter

Dear Manny,

Greetings friend. I just got home from a campus revival service. Over 500 students gathered for great worship. The song Be Thou My Vision captivated us in worship and praise. The preacher has been walking us through the Lord's Prayer. (Monday night) - Hallowed name = the sanctification of the name of God in his people remaking us in the image and likeness of God. (Tuesday morning) – Kingdom come/will be done = the deliverance from self-rule and self-sovereignty for a life of obedience to God and his mission in the world. (Tonight) Give us bread = to be human is to be needy before the provision of God and humble enough to receive it. About 100 were at the altar praying tonight.

Leading up to revival, we always create a prayer room where our students can prepare themselves for revival. There are 5 prayer stations. At the first one, students read and meditate

on the Psalm, “search me and know my heart, try me and know my ways....” At the second station, they pray for the entire campus to be open to the preaching of the word. At the third station, they pray for lost friends on the campus to be saved during the meeting. At the fourth station, they pray for our chaplain, the musicians, and the evangelist. And at the fifth station, they pray for their family and church back home. Two years ago we called this a prayer labyrinth. This identification bothered some people because of the association with pagan labyrinths. So we stopped calling it that. But the Concerned Nazarenes have never explained what we were doing, nor stopped hammering us about being pagan/emergent/liberal/and any other bad names they can come up with. I have answered this hundreds of times. I wish they would stop taking one word, filling it with deceptive suggestion, and labeling us. It is beneath the dignity of holiness folk.

You’ve probably also seen the accusation that we force students to take yoga as a way of introducing them to Hindu spirituality. For the record, in 110 years, Trevecca has never had a yoga class. A campus visitor saw an ad for a yoga class on our intercampus TV network. It was sponsored by Trevecca Towers, an independent HUD housing project for the elderly. They have a yoga class to increase the mobility of their residents. Most of the folk in the class are over 65 and many of them are retired Nazarene pastors and missionaries. We haven’t lost any to Hinduism that I know of. I regret the pain you have experienced in your church and I wish you God’s healing. I can assure you that those who are targeting Trevecca as anti-Christian will not bring you much peace. They are full of fear and anxiety. I pray for them and stand ready to forgive. Blessings, Dan Boone

From: Manny Silva To Dan Boone

Sent: To: Cc: Thu 2/04/10 8:52 AM Dr. Dan Boone Alice Smith; Dr. Warrick J. K.

Dear Dr. Boone,

Thanks for getting in touch with me, although I should have sent the article to you right away. I appreciate the response, as many of us have been seeking answers from leadership to questions about the emerging/emergent church, contemplative spirituality practices, Roman Catholic works-based rituals, Open Theism, and other teachings that have caused us to be concerned, and not just simply a few of us who are “officially” connected to Concerned Nazarenes. Please understand that I and others are equal opportunity critics, and have been also raising questions about practices and teachings at such schools as Northwest Nazarene, Point Loma, and Eastern Nazarene College, where I attended for several years.

Thank you for the thought regarding my experience at my church, but sadly, it is but one of many similar stories of faithful Nazarenes being forced out of their churches because of this emergent ideology. It is not an isolated incident, and I keep receiving more and more of these stories from folks around the country. Did you know that many people are leaving the Nazarene denomination, sometimes starting their own church instead of putting up with pastors who don't completely trust the Bible? Much of it is due to the contemplative spirituality, emergent philosophy, and introduction of Roman Catholic practices and rituals to students and churches. Why are these things being welcomed into our holiness denomination? To be holy is to be set apart, yet we seem to be going the other way.

Regarding the prayer stations you mentioned, I object to those and see them as inappropriate for Christians. Nowhere is something like it found in the Bible, and they are simply a man made ritual originating from old Roman Catholic traditions similar to the Stations of the Cross.

The same goes for prayer labyrinths, of which the school prominently displays on the website. Prayer labyrinths are in use now in Nazarene churches as well, and it is a practice borrowed from pagan religions which has absolutely no biblical justification for its use, and certainly is not part of our wonderful Nazarene heritage. If I am wrong on both of these, I still wait for men much more learned than me, to justify the use of these with the scriptures.

I also believe that the trip to the Abbey at Gethsemani is wrong and should not be allowed to happen. Students all over the country seem to be getting introduced to Roman Catholic practices and monastic rituals on a regular basis, and I ask again, why? Why are Nazarene students going to this monastery to “fellowship” with those whose basis for salvation is works based, and not by faith alone in Jesus alone. Why is it that your university, along with others, is increasingly promoting these events, as well as promoting the use of books by such authors as Thomas Merton, a man who equated Buddhism with Christianity, and Henri Nouwen, who was a universalist. Do you embrace the official teachings of Roman Catholicism as being par with our Wesleyan heritage? I have a love for Roman Catholics, but I want to present the true gospel to them, not fellowship with them and thereby give our tacit approval to their heretical teachings by associating with them in such a manner. I have sen the agenda for this retreat, and it is disturbing.

I was not really aware of the yoga story you mentioned, but (with all due respect) I question the discernment of Nazarene pastors and missionaries who would participate in yoga, of which there is nothing Christian about it. It is again, the incorporation of a pagan religious practice, and that cannot be separated from it.

Dr. Boone, there are many of us who will not let up in asking for answers and for accountability. All we are doing is really... to try to warn you about a serious danger to the church. We love our denomination too much to ignore what is spreading throughout the Christian world like cancer. We are in no way hateful Nazarenes, or mean-spirited, although admitting we are not perfect. I would disagree with one of your comments, and would say that it would be beneath our dignity, not to say anything and speak out. We are dedicated to one thing right now, and that is to preserve the purity of the gospel, which was “once for all entrusted to the saints.”

What we are seeking is answers to questions such as these, and perhaps you or someone from the theology department can answer these questions:

1. Is the use of prayer labyrinths justified by scripture? If so, please show me.
2. Are prayer stations biblically justified?
3. If it's okay to fellowship with Roman Catholic monks at a monastery, is it also okay to fellowship with Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons, who also say they believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior?
4. Is practicing the silence (as advertised for in the retreat) a spiritual discipline, and if so, where is that taught in the Bible?
5. Is there such a thing as Christian yoga, and should Christians incorporate this into their lives as a good thing?
6. So if I listen long enough, I can hear the voice of God? How do I know that what I hear is really the voice of God?

I have so many other questions to all of the universities and even to our General Superintendents, for example: how can I trust God if I believe that God makes mistakes? (Open Theism). But that can be another day I guess. There are many Nazarenes who truly believe that there has be a serious correction, a repentance, throughout our universities and churches, by those who are pushing the emergent/contemplative/Roman Catholic practices in the Nazarene

denomination, or serious judgment will come because of a failure to recognize and respond to this crisis. We love our church. Why would we otherwise pay such a price that we have paid, for what we have stood for? Either we are confused and are disobeying God, or it is the result of faithfulness to God, and an indication of what was promised in 1 Tim 3:12: "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

I sincerely am praying that this event will be cancelled. I understand that many were at the altar praying at that revival, but I would rather see one contrite person who has responded to the true gospel, than see 100 people praying, of which some perhaps are putting their trust in man made practices and rituals that have no basis in scripture.

Sincerely in Christ, Manny Silva

From: General Superintendent Jerry Porter

Tue 2/02/10 9:04 PM

Sent: To: Dan Boo

Cc: Manny Silva; Alice Smith; Dr. Warrick J. K.

Dear Dan: Greetings in the majestic name of our liberating Lord. You have tried to be candid and gracious with Manny Silva. Thanks for taking the time to attempt to communicate with him. I fear he is *convinced* and not very open to dialog. Thanks for your kind and patient spirit! Have a blessed day!

Grace and peace, Jerry D. Porter

A Response By Manny Silva to “Considering Tony Campolo”, An Article Written By Dr. Karl Leth of Olivet Nazarene University (My comments are in **red italics**)

Considering Tony Campolo

This brief overview is an attempt to make a considered assessment of Tony Campolo as a resource for the church, generally, and for Olivet Nazarene University, specifically. It is not a comprehensive and thorough study of his writings. But it is a reasonable assessment based on a review of several of his pertinent works. The persistence of themes in these writings suggest that it is reasonable to assume that the same themes would be found in further readings. So, while any specific critiques might be challenged or corrected by a broader study, the general character of this assessment should be fairly accurate.

*Who is Dr. Tony Campolo. What is he really about? We do find that he is very popular, and speaks at many schools every year. He has a “tell-it-like-it-is” style which is interesting, although at times seems out of place, especially at a Christian school. Having only heard the first few minutes of one of the messages at ONU, I heard him tell a sex joke which at least to me and maybe a few other folks, was not appropriate at such a setting. I will be listening to these two messages soon and will post reviews of them. When he tells stories involving someone who is homosexual, it is always one of affirmation or support form them, but **never** involves talking about how God can free them from the bondage of sin. Isn’t that strange to you? He told at least one of those stories during one of his messages.*

*From many of his messages I have heard, including at ENC last year, he has a very strong emphasis on Kingdom Now theology. Kingdom Now is a very dangerous teaching which seems prevalent amongst the emergent church crowd, including many Nazarenes who have been influenced by such as Campolo, Brian McLaren and others. It is an emphasis on man’s attempts to somehow right the wrongs of the world through efforts of sometimes very ecumenical programs and plans in order to someday bring about God’s kingdom here on earth. It is a misplaced effort which rejects the teaching that God’s Kingdom on earth will be finally established when Christ returns to establish His Kingdom. A big example is Rick Warren’s misguided P.E.A.C.E. Plan. Man is **not** going to save the planet through his efforts; it is the Lord who will do that when He returns.*

He wants to change America’s churches with radical new ideas that don’t seem to be based on biblical principles. He is on Renovare’s “Board of Reference.” Renovare is Richard Foster’s New Age-ish ecumenical organization that promotes all sorts of contemplative spirituality practices that are undeniably unbiblical. Why is he associated with such a group? (Of course, which leads to another question: why is the Nazarene denomination and many of the schools associating with Richard Foster, another false teacher? That is another whole new can of worms for sure). The Bible says “Do not be misled; bad company corrupts good morals.” 1 Cor. 15:33

- In one of his books, he writes the following: “If the Shalom of God and the peaceable kingdom of Isaiah 11 are to become real, then new ways of thinking must be established. With some help from St. Francis and Teilhard de Chardin, we just might make it”. (How to Rescue the Earth Without Worshiping Nature p. 89, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1992). Who is Teilhard de Chardin? Well, he’s a New Ager, whose Christ is

not the Christ of the Bible, but a cosmic Christ of the New Age spirituality movement. Is this not dangerous and irresponsible for Tony Campolo to cite these kinds of writers who promote unbiblical ideas? Would you ever want to quote a New Ager to the students at ONU as a good example for them?

Jesus living in non-Christians

Campolo often uses language affirming the presence and work of Christ in every person, including non-Christians. There are times when it seems clear that he is speaking of what we would call “prevenient grace.” This important affirmation of the Wesleyan tradition affirms the universal work of the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Christ). So, we would say, “The Muslim does not realize that the Spirit of God is at work in him – awakening his spiritual awareness, enlivening his hunger for God, diminishing his satisfaction at life as it is apart from Christ.” We approach world evangelism in the confidence that God, the Holy Spirit, is already at work in the heart and life of every person. Used in this sense, Campolo is speaking in ways that are consistent with the Wesleyan-holiness tradition.

Campolo also uses the language of the divine, resident in us. Sometimes when he uses this language it sounds like he is affirming God’s presence in a way that might be compatible with the doctrine of prevenient grace or the basic notion that we are all created in God’s image (which we still retain, though damaged by sin). However, there are other times when his language is clearly expressing the idea that we, as humans, have an inherent divinity within us. Here his language of divinity in us moves beyond what our tradition or, I think, the classic Christian tradition affirms. Human beings are not inherently divine, this belongs to God, alone. It may be that Campolo is simply careless with his language here, but this is a notion I would clearly reject.

Your understanding of how God works in Muslims or anyone else does not come close to what Dr. Campolo believes. I have previously pointed out how he has suggested that the God we have encountered in Christianity is the same as the Muslim god. Why would any discerning Christian support a man who says this?

In his book, Partly Right, Campolo says this: “We affirm our divinity by doing what is worthy of gods, and we affirm our humanity by taking risks only available to mortals. God had to become one of us before He could become heroic ... Robert Schuller affirms our divinity, yet does not deny our humanity ... isn't that what the gospel is? Isn't God's message to sinful humanity that He sees in each of us a divine nature of such worth that He sacrificed His own Son so that our divine potentialities might be realized? ... The hymn writer who taught us to sing “Amazing Grace” was all too ready to call himself a “wretch” ... Forgetting our divinity and over-identifying with our [Freudian] anal humanity [Freud is responsible for a host of maladies that plague our contemporary society] ... Erich Fromm, one of the most popular psychoanalysts of our time, recognized the diabolical social consequences that can come about when a person loses sight of his/her own divinity ...”

This is promotion of pantheism! *If any Nazarene claimed that man has an inner divinity as Dr. Campolo suggests here, they would be in serious need of correction and reproof. We do NOT have an inner divinity as he is saying here. This is heretical thinking. Just because he does not say these things on campuses to our students, does not mean that they will never get exposed to his books which has these dangerous and unbiblical teachings. It is crazy to think otherwise. And he also quotes Robert Schuller, who has a heretical view of sin, which to him is a lack of self-esteem, and who also entertains all sorts of New Age ideas. Our inner divinity is NOWHERE affirmed in scripture- nowhere. Instead our real inner*

nature is described by the apostle Paul: “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am the chief” (I Timothy 1:15) We are sinners, and we cannot and do not have any inner divinity in us as Dr. Campolo believes. This is pure heresy!

And is there any doubt what he believes about that when he said this: “We want to convince the whole human race that there is a God who established the infinite value of every person, who mystically dwells in each person....” (Tony Campolo, A Reasonable Faith responding to secularism, p.59). Each person? Even if they are not Christian? This is heresy for sure, don’t you agree? If you do, why is he speaking to our youth? If not, why not?

Here is more that shows us what he believes:

“What I am trying to say is that Jesus who incarnated God 2,000 years ago is mystically present and waiting to be discovered in EVERY person you and I encounter” (A Reasonable Faith p. 171)

“I do not mean that others represent Jesus for us. I mean that Jesus actually is present in each other person” (p. 192)

One more: “That a new humanity will be brought forth from this Christ consciousness in each person” (p. 65)

Your assessment of this is too kind, lets him off the hook, and frankly concerns me. He does more than “move beyond what our tradition affirms; he moves into heresy! This very philosophy which he believes in, should be enough to expel him from any Christian campus- and we have not touched everything yet! He is not careless, he believes it, it is part of his philosophy, he is too smart to be careless. And if somehow it is carelessness on his part, let him clarify this to the world and repent of what are very misleading and deceptive beliefs that do NOT need to be taught to our youth or any other Christian. You say you would clearly reject his notion of the inner divinity as he explains it, yet you do not call that out as a heresy. I am astonished. What is heresy then if not that? Since you allow him to speak to your youth, would you allow him to ever say these things from the pulpit, and how could you stop him anyway? He’s a free-spirited guy who “tells it like it is.”

Christian Mysticism

The topic of mysticism seems to be largely distinguishable by its confusion. Both Campolo and Concerned Nazarene critiques use the term loosely and without careful qualification. There is, in fact, quite a bit of scholarly discussion concerning how best to define mysticism. In a basic sense the evangelical and revivalist traditions are essentially mystical. That is, mysticism (fundamentally) affirms the possibility and preferred value of a personal experiential encounter with God. Our tradition affirms and seeks experiential relationship with Christ through the Holy Spirit. “You ask me how I know he lives? He lives within my heart!” This is a kind of Christianity that is not merely behavioral or rational. It isn’t only a matter of some things that we do or truths that we assent to. We have a personal, intimate relationship with God. The Holy Spirit lives “in” us and we communicate immediately with Him and we sense His presence experientially. This form of “mysticism” is a key part of our understanding and experience. So, when a critic says we don’t believe in mysticism, we have the Holy Spirit, they are not making

clear sense.

This extends to the broad question of the appropriateness of spiritual disciplines or practices. It is one of the particular emphases of Wesley that he calls for the active and orderly practice of “means of grace.” This includes for him all manner of spiritual practices which serve to form the Christian in the patterns of Christian faith and life or, more properly, place us where the grace of God can form us as a work of grace. Practices of spiritual formation such as meditative prayer and lectio divina are not contrary to Wesleyan spiritual practice as long as they are practiced in ways that are compatible with our faith.

Campolo’s enthusiasm for mysticism, however, moves through and beyond a moderated view. I would identify two aspects of his discussion of mysticism that I find problematic. The first concerns his enthusiastic advocacy for “centering” prayer. “Centering prayer” is a recent development of contemplative prayer largely associated with Thomas Keating. This form of contemplative prayer is, at least, controversial in both Protestant and Roman Catholic communities. The Eastern influences are evident when Campolo identifies “Jesus” as his “koan,” a Buddhist term for a chosen meditative mantra. While the advocates of “centering prayer” emphasize their Christian intent and rootedness in Christ, it is still unclear how specifically Christian this practice is. The essential movement of “centering prayer” is to withdrawal and emptying for the sake of an unobstructed, immediate experience of God. But it is not clear at all why this practice could not as readily serve a non-Christian spirituality or simply as a psychological practice. It moves in a different “direction” from meditating day and night on God’s law and character (Psalm 1). The formative role of Scripture and patterns of faith are replaced by a largely unconditioned mystical experience.

These practices are contrary to biblical teaching. Lectio divina, centering prayer, visualized prayer, mantras, practicing the silence, none of these have anything to do with Christian practice, or Wesleyan teaching for that matter. Odd that all this is surfacing in the Nazarene church only in the last 10-20 years. Is that what the emergents call “The New Christianity?”

This connects directly to a more serious critique of Campolo – his proposal of mysticism as the basis for our fraternity with mystical Muslims or other mystically spiritual persons. Considered in one way this might be acceptable, that is, on the basis of prevenient grace at work in every human life. We might say that when a non-Christian experiences the presence of God by the ministry of the Holy Spirit that person is, in fact, encountering the Spirit of Christ. However, that is not the same thing as affirming that mystical experience, per se, is universal in its validity. Spiritual encounter is true (in Christ) when – and only when – it is an encounter with the Spirit revealing the Christ who is revealed in His incarnation and whose presence works primarily by the Holy Spirit working through the historic Christian community. The impression Campolo leaves is that immediate mystical experience is the ultimate goal and standard for the spiritual life, which may be attained through the Christian community of faith or, just as readily, through any process of mystical experience. He proposes common mystical experience (without qualification) as the best basis for shared faith experience between Christians and Muslims (or, whoever). He doesn’t want this “common ground” restrained by theology or church tradition. But this assumes that all mystical experience is, in fact, common ground. If so, the incarnational Christian tradition, including Scripture and Church, is transcended by direct mystical experience of the Transcendent. This effectively reduces Christianity to an option among pluralist options (on the way to higher, universal transcendent spiritual experience). This is certainly not what Campolo intends. It is, however, the extension of his arguments. Again, perhaps he is just being careless with his language. But it is, at the

least, a problematic unclarity.

- What you find “problematic”, is more than that; it is clearly unbiblical. Centering prayer is not rooted in Christ or the Bible; it is rooted in Eastern mysticism and pagan practices. This is the problem today with contemplative spirituality (spiritual formation, in Nazarene terms), because now we are adding on more and more “ways” to get closer to God. These are ways that are not Biblically based, and add more to what is sufficient for us as taught in scripture, on how to pray, and how to meditate. We are NEVER taught in scripture to meditate in a way that brings us to a mindless state, where we empty all thought so that “God” can visit us more deeply and closely. That is not scriptural; that is simply inviting demonic activity. That is not the Nazarene way, or more importantly, not the Christian way, yet this is the very practice that is being introduced to us today.

*- When Dr. Campolo talks about his mantra, and how he repeats the word Jesus over and over again for 20 minutes in the morning, is this the kind of practice we are to start teaching to our youth? Don't you know scripture speaks against this? He blatantly promoted it to the students at ENC, as well as promoting the unbiblical philosophy of Celtic spirituality! So he is dangerous, because he will promote his “unorthodox” ways at any time, without regard for right doctrine! I have said it before, and will say it again, his promotion of Celtic spirituality is either of God, or of demons! The kind of mysticism Dr. Campolo and other false teachers promote (Mike King, etc) is nowhere near any comparison of how Nazarenes traditionally believe in how God interacts with us. Let's define the difference: **Christian meditation is to fill one's mind; Eastern meditation (contemplative spirituality Campolo-style) is to empty the mind.***

Distinguishing Wesleyan holiness and Fundamental Baptism Critiques

The primary document provided to me outlining Campolo's false teachings was written by David Cloud. He writes for “Fundamental Baptist Information Service.” After reviewing his extensive critique it is clear that a significant portion of Campolo's problem is that he is not a very good Fundamental Baptist. Since I am not a Fundamental Baptist, however, this does not necessarily concern me. On many issues Cloud critiques Campolo for failing to hold theological positions that are also not held by the Wesleyan holiness tradition. Cloud's notions of soteriology (including his understanding of conversion), eschatology, biblical inerrancy, and women in ministry reflect the commitments of his own tradition, not ours. And while a case might be made that Nazarene's ought to be more like Fundamental Baptists, that is an argument to abandon our tradition, not to protect it.

- I will say again, this is more than problematic or carelessness. It is heresy, and it is what he believes to the core. How would anyone know anyway if it is simply problematic, that “this is not what Campolo intends”, unless he told you, and if so, he needs to tell the world!

- In an interview with Charlie Rose, he made this incredible statement, in response to a Buddhist monk's claim to know Christ: “I am saying that there is no salvation apart from Jesus, that's my evangelical mindset. However, I'm not convinced that Jesus only lives in Christians.” Is there any doubt what he is saying here? This is more than problematic.

- Here is more: “Mysticism [contemplative prayer] provides some hope for common ground between Christianity and Islam” (p.149 of Reasonable Faith). I call this unreasonable. Are we supposed to seek a common ground, or are we to evangelize? Does scripture teach anything close to this? It seems Tony Campolo wants so badly that

we can get along with everyone, regardless of religion, and that we have something in common with Islam that we can share. That is utter nonsense.

- What David Cloud is proving is that Tony Campolo is not a good fundamental Christian. This has nothing to do with whether Cloud is a Baptist or not. Tony Campolo is a Baptist also. Perhaps we need to have a David Cloud come to ONU and debate a fellow Baptist like Tony Campolo in front of the students. Some equal time perhaps. If not, I am willing to come on campus next time and debate Tony Campolo myself. And I don't even have a theology degree, but I'll do it. I'll ask him the hard questions, since no one else is doing it on the campus.

*The points that David Cloud specifically brings out, even if you exclude certain issues, are clearly things that are absolute violations of scripture. Take the view on homosexuality that Dr. Campolo has. I would hope you would not want any ONU student to accept his view on it, but that is what may very well happen if they read some of his writings. Are you and the rest of the leadership at ONU willing to risk one student's mind being corrupted by his **obvious** unbiblical views? For instance:*

- Campolo says he believes that homosexual behavior is contrary to the will of God, yet he believes also that it is inbred- that homosexuals are born with it. Does that mean then that God deliberately allowed homosexuals to be born with something they cannot change? How cruel is that? And how unscriptural, to tell homosexuals that their "orientation" is something that cannot be changed by the power of God, through salvation through Jesus Christ. He is saying that God does not have the power to help them stop their sinfulness.

- He says: "Actually, Jesus never alludes to homosexuality in his teachings. The fact that homosexuality has become such an overriding concern for many contemporary preachers may be more a reflection of homophobia in the church than it is the result of the emphasis of Scripture." (20 Hot Potatoes Christians are Afraid to Touch). Jesus may not have, but read this: Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders (1 Cor. 6:9). So Christians are homophobic for pointing out that homosexuality is a sin? Not just the act, but also the thought?

- Did you know he has spoken out against Exodus International? This a wonderful group that has successfully worked with homosexuals in bringing them out of their struggle with their sin, yet why would he denounce such a group?

- From an interview posted at Beliefnet: "the overwhelming proportion of the gay community that love Jesus, that go to church, that are deeply committed in spiritual things, try to change and can't change. And the Church acts as though they are just stubborn and unwilling, when in reality they can't change." Is this statement compatible with what the Church of the Nazarene teaches? Better yet, is it compatible with biblical teaching?

- His wife also affirms what he thinks about this: "We both believe that homosexual orientations are not chosen any more than heterosexual orientations are chosen. ... homosexuals are entitled to the same rights and privileges I claim for myself, including being able to marry legally and in the sight of the church ..."

The idea of God's transformative work in the world – the in-breaking Kingdom of God – is not an invention of the Emerging church. It energized the early holiness movement around social

ministries of compassion and justice, including the place of women and the problem of slavery. The holiness folks believed the transforming power of God was sweeping into the world and would transform it through God's people. Women were first ordained in ministry in the holiness movement and affirmation of women clergy has been a commitment of the Church of the Nazarene since its inception. A vision of God's intended transformative that moves far beyond individual spiritual experience has deep roots in our tradition and, I would contend, in the classic Christian tradition.

His Kingdom Now philosophy is unbiblical. Mike Oppenheimer of Let Us Reason Ministries has commented on that, and says it well here:

"Campolo's most obvious base for errors is The "Kingdom Now" theology he upholds and many charismatics hold to. According to his thinking, Campolo places the Bible promises for a future earthly kingdom right now in this world. Campolo challenges Christians to go into the world and to transform society. While this may come from the result of a changed life, to change the surroundings of where one works is not the mandate for Christians. "The kingdom of God is Party" is the title of one of his books and a theme in many of his messages. Campolo refers to the Old Testament Jewish festivals and wrongly applies them to our time, espousing kingdom now dominionism.

Campolo writes about the "Noosphere" in his book How to Rescue the Earth. This Noosphere was believed to result in the formation of a global network of thought, a collective consciousness on the planet. John Mabry in Creation Spirituality magazine recently stated it this way:

"Chardin's universe is one of continuous and interwoven evolutionary threads, incorporating plants, animals, the planet, the cosmos, and most peculiar to him, not merely the physical and mental evolution of humankind, but our spiritual ascent as well" (Tony Campolo, How to Rescue the Earth Without Worshiping Nature p. 85, 94 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1992).

Campolo in his book Its Friday but Sundays Coming writes the reason Jesus saved us. Some of it is correct some is not: "When Jesus saved us, He saved us for a high and holy purpose. He saved us in order that He might use us to meet the needs of others. He saved us in order that He might begin to transform His world into the kind of world that He willed for it to be when He created it. When Jesus saved us, He saved us to be agents of a great revolution, the end of which will come when the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our God" (Tony Campolo, Its Friday but Sundays Coming, p.106)

We can never bring the world back to the way it was made, only Christ at his second coming can do this. We are not change agents in society but ambassadors, priests who bring the gospel to people and reconcile them with God. This may have them change the things they are participating in at work, politics or home because of this spiritual change in their life but our mandate, our commission is the Gospel. (stated in Mt.28:19-20, Mk.16:15; Lk.24:47) Campolo is definitely adhering to a dominionist mandate where the kingdoms of the world are changed and christianized to be in God's possession."

Tony Campolo may, in fact, be a poor Baptist. I'll let the Baptist's determine that on their own. But we should not allow our conversation to be co-opted by another tradition. We are not trying to be Fundamental Baptists. We're trying to be faithful Nazarenes. And those are two different

projects.

Evaluation

Tony Campolo has always been a controversial voice. His role is provocative, not normative. He is not (should not be seen to be) offering a balanced vision of the Christian faith. He is trying to “press the margins.” He says things that are excessive. He advocates ideas and perspectives that are extreme. If we simply adopt them, they will be destructive to us. If, however, they prod our thinking and challenge our comfortable patterns of living, they may help us to move in some directions we wouldn’t normally move – even if they are right. He is an activist by disposition.

Tony Campolo has also always been incautious about his language and the positions he enthusiastically advocates. He is not always careful to get the theology accurate or balanced. He finds that work tedious and restraining.

He welcomes the affirmation of voices that encourage him – and largely ignores the voices of those who don’t. It is good to remember that he is a sociologist by training.

Campolo is sometimes problematic, but also catalytic. His thought is not without some significant problems.

- First and foremost, ought we not to be faithful Christians, above being a Nazarene? I’m making the point that we need to look at our “Nazarene” theology through the light of scripture, and correct it if necessary. What most comes to mind is our badly worded statement on inerrancy (“only in matters of salvation”). I have already written to the Generals about that problem, as have many others.

- Then why in the world is he being invited to speak?

- Again, why in the world is he being invited to speak? You would risk our students who may possibly adopt his heretical, destructive views? For what reason? Because he is dynamic, or tells great stories or jokes? Or because he fires up students into helping the poor? This is very irresponsible if you or anyone else is aware that his views can be destructive. What is the value of just one soul that might be deceived by his teachings?

- Campolo is in the wrong vocation. He needs to stop doing what he is doing immediately. And I have read his own words that says that he admits that himself, that he goes beyond what is considered orthodox. He condemns himself with his words.

- Then perhaps he is not well qualified to speak to students about things spiritual? And certainly, any false teacher will ignore the voices that don’t encourage him. Why should he listen to those who are pointing out his falsehoods?

But Campolo does what few can do. He stirs the pot. He shakes the foundations. He calls for reconsideration of the comfortable and offers the possibility of the extraordinary. He’s like a strong spice. A little bit goes a long way to flavorfully seasoning the dish. But if you swallow too much, it may undo the good already done.

- Then why in the world is he being invited to speak? If you acknowledge that someone may swallow too much of what he teaches, and it will undo the good done, is that not a dangerous place to be for our students? Would you gamble with the spiritual health of our students?

- Clearly! Then why in the world was he invited to speak?

But he also prompts some valuable Kingdom reconsideration. He is not always our friend, but he is surely not the enemy.

- Dr. Leth, he may not be the enemy, but... he is being used by the enemy to deceive a lot of students, and a whole lot of adults as well. He is a false teacher. Why do you not see that? Why do not any of you leaders at ONU see that? Or at ENC? Or at any of the other Nazarene schools

that have invited him, as well as Brian McLaren, and Rob Bell, and Jay McDaniel, and Tony Jones, and Richard Foster, and Leonard Sweet. And then we have Tom Oord who promotes the heresy that God cannot know the future. You see, we have our own Nazarene false teachers as well, and he is one of them for sure. And they are destroying, or attempting to destroy, the fabric of good and sound Nazarene theology. Why are you all so blind to this?

CONCLUSION:

It is difficult to write words, as opposed to a personal conversation, which is sometimes better. I do not mean to sound like I am mean and harsh in my conclusions.

But we are commanded in scripture to “mark and avoid” false teachers. It is clear Tony Campolo is a false teacher. God has revealed that fact to me and many others who have written your school and other schools, and we do not need to continue in dialogue about this, as if God is going to suddenly reveal to me that He was mistaken in showing me the truth the first time. I know it to be a fact not through some mystical experience, or some revelation that appeared to me while meditating. I know it through knowing God’s inerrant word, and comparing the teachings and beliefs of Tony Campolo to Holy Scripture’s teachings. And I found that they do not match up, therefore, one is a liar, and the other is truthful. I have provided mountains of evidence, including additional evidence here, in his own words mostly, and if that does not help you see, then we must pray and wait upon God’s Holy Spirit to open the eyes of the leadership at ONU. But until then, it looks like we will have to continue exposing these terrible decisions to as many Nazarenes and other Christians as possible, in order to protect them.

I would urge you to prayerfully consider what I have said here. I commend you for stating your positions on Tony Campolo, and I would not be surprised that it reflects the position of any other Nazarene academic who has welcomed him on to their school’s campus and into the chapels to speak. I am afraid that what you are doing is protecting a false teacher, and the only question left is: are you yourself a false teacher, or just simply tolerating a false teacher? It’s either one or the other. Whatever the answer is, that is most dangerous ground to be in, and I’m afraid that you and many of your colleagues throughout all our universities are in the same position you are in.

That’s all many of us are asking for, answers that will at least give us the option of deciding what is best for our children, what is best for the Church of the Nazarene, and to voice our acceptance or rejection of the reasons for allowing speakers such as Tony Campolo onto the campus to speak to our youth. We deserve to know where people stand on this, and I appreciate you letting us know; other schools and individuals have refused to give clear answers.

I will urge all concerned Nazarenes to continue being vigilant, to continue watching and asking questions, to continue being militant in our defense of the gospel. We believe that to defend the faith, we must give no quarter, we cannot allow a few wolves here and there to slip in to the sheep pen, even if 99 out of 100 speakers are solid and doctrinally sound. One of out 100 is one too many to allow in, where they can do untold harm to our children, perhaps your very own someday. Therefore, I will also urge parents to strongly consider not sending any money to support ONU or any other Nazarene university unless that school clearly and publicly rejects the false teachings that are coming into our denomination.

Yes, I should not necessarily judge ONU for just one speaker. Let me point out that Tony Jones was a speaker at Olivet in 2007. This is another false teacher who denies the doctrine of original sin, and who believes (in his words) that practicing homosexuals can be considered

Christians in good standing with the Lord . See this link here:

<http://apprising.org/2011/08/10/tony-jones-argues-for-open-marriage-and-polyamory/>

Can you tell me what was good about having him speak to your students then? It seems to me that these are indications that Olivet is embracing the emergent church movement with no problem, because I cannot believe that no one at Olivet knew of the ideology of Tony Jones as well.

If the facts and evidence clearly has shown you that Dr. Campolo is a false teacher, a wolf to be avoided, and you or any other leader at ONU continue defending him, then that is inexcusable. One too many is enough, when you have been given the knowledge of who this man is, and you cannot see what he is promoting is as I have said before, doctrines of demons.

May God protect the students at your school from any further deception from these wolves.

Sincerely in Christ,

Manny Silva

The Universities

[Northwest Nazarene University](#)

March 7, 2011

In the last several years, there has been a growing body of members in the Church of the Nazarene who are very concerned about the direction of the denomination. In the United States and Canada, 10,000 Nazarenes have left the denomination in the last four years. Our research in the past few years has shown that the influence of the emergent church and other unbiblical ideologies is widespread, with its various forms including Roman Catholic monastic mysticism, liberal social justice and environmental programs, and post-modern philosophy promoted by emergent leaders such as Brian McLaren. All this, with a very low view of scripture and denial of biblical inerrancy has brought a once great holiness church into crisis, right alongside most evangelical denominations today. And this crisis includes universities such as Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa, Idaho.

One of the warning signs about NNU was in early 2008 when Brian McLaren was at the school for his “Everything Must Change” Tour. In a video excerpt (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5n2PQ94Gh18>) of Christian apologist Eric Barger’s visit to the three day event, Eric describes some of the thinking of McLaren that goes against the teachings of orthodox Christianity. One of his basic premises is that after 2,000 years, we just have not gotten it right, and we need to re-discover Christianity all over again. McLaren truly means it when he says, “**everything** must change.” He decries those of a fundamentalist persuasion and believes they are intolerant. He wavers on the issue of homosexuality, and has likened the Cross to “false advertising for God.” He supports the contemplative spirituality movement, and recently joined his Muslim friends to participate in Ramadan with them. <http://www.brianmclaren.net/archives/blog/ramadan-2009-part-1-whats-going.html>

Yet NNU and other Nazarene schools have celebrated this man as a visionary in Christian teaching. Instead of solid Bible based teachers, Nazarene universities like NNU are bringing more and more emergent teachers who reject the authority of God’s word and deny its inerrancy.

The school has at least one professor who teaches or promotes open theism and process theology. Open theism says that God cannot know the future, thereby rejecting biblical prophesy as something we can trust. Process theology teaches that God makes mistakes and learns from them, refuting what scripture teaches about God’s nature. The theistic evolutionist believes in: (a) an old Earth; (b) wholly natural processes responsible for life as we see it, once the initial matter was brought into existence by God, and; (c) a figurative (non-literal) interpretation of the Genesis account of creation. But do these ideas fall in line with what scripture teaches about the nature of God?

There have been other very dubious speakers at the school. [Brennan Manning](#) was a guest speaker on the college campus church.

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/category/nazarene/northwest-nazarene-university/page/2010/12/28/brennan-manning-false-teacher-or-solid-christian/>

He was quoted favorably at a chapel service in 2008 by the college president. Yet he is a big promoter of contemplative mysticism, practicing “the silence”, mantras, centering prayer and other forms of New Age occultism and Eastern meditation. In his book *Abba’s Child*, he refutes the Cross of Christ as the only way to salvation. He mocks Bible-believers and calls them bibliolaters. He believes that homosexuality is acceptable. He is ecumenical and embraces other religions as valid. So why would a Christian school invite such a speaker who promotes unbiblical practices?

Another recent speaker was Dr. Jay McDaniel, an ordained Methodist who is a self-professing panentheist (God is in all). In his one hour presentation (<http://sureynot.com/v/999/dr.-jay-mcdaniel.html>) to students and faculty, he promoted a universalistic gospel, making the argument that his Buddhist friend would be welcome in heaven without ever accepting Jesus Christ, and that Christians can learn and apply truth from other religions. He was well received by the faculty who were present. I have listened to the entire presentation, and was shocked at the kind of heretical teaching that was being allowed to go unchallenged.

Another popular leader in the post-modern movement is Leonard Sweet, and he was a featured speaker at the PALCON (pastors’ conference) in 2010.

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/category/nazarene/northwest-nazarene-university/page/2010/06/29/leonard-sweet-good-choice-for-pastors/>.

He has been described as a New Age sympathizer and written several books that heavily promote that kind of thinking, and endorses authors who promote contemplative spirituality. Although he has recently denied his New Age leanings, his book *Quantum Spirituality* still remains available on his website. He continues his influence, appearing at a leadership conference in January at European Nazarene College.

(<http://www.eunc.edu/pages/leadership-conference.php>).

Northwest Nazarene has been on a path of emergent ideology, contemplative spirituality and secularization for some time now. In June of 2009, along with Nazarene Theological Seminary, the school sponsored a spiritual formation retreat at the Nazarene General Assembly in Orlando. This term sounds nice enough to the unawares, but it is the catchall term used today that now means the teaching of contemplative spirituality practices. And recently, the Wesleyan (The Bible Tells Me So) conference was just held at NNU, resulting in the end with very weak statements on scriptural authority.

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/category/nazarene/northwest-nazarene-university/page/2009/03/18/nazarene-church-welcoming-contemplative-spirituality/>

In NNU’s theology courses, you will find emergent leaders, Roman Catholic mystics, and modern day mystics such as Richard Foster in the textbooks used. The Master’s in Spiritual Formation program uses books by Henri Nouwen, Richard Foster, Donald Miller, Rob Bell, Steve Chalke, Brother Lawrence, Eugene Peterson, Brian McLaren, and Dallas Willard. There are two Nazarenes on the list, but they both support open theism, process theology, and do not believe in biblical inerrancy. The M.A. in Missional Leadership, and M.A. in Pastoral Leadership, also are stacked with books from the same kind of writers. It makes one wonder, is there a severe shortage of textbooks by Bible believing teachers? Even the M.A. in Christian Education is filled with textbooks from emergent authors such as McLaren, Sweet, and Phylis Tickle.

<http://www.nnu.edu/academics/graduate-programs/graduate-theological-online-education/master-of-arts-tracks/ma-spiritual-formation/textbooks/>

<http://www.nnu.edu/academics/graduate-programs/graduate-theological-online-education/master-of-arts-tracks/ma-missional-leadership/textbooks/>

But not all professors or students at the school are happy with what is going on, and NNU is not the only school in trouble. The school is just one example of the retreat from biblical principles that many of our Nazarenes schools have taken. Our very own seminary, Nazarene Theological Seminary, has a course called Celtic Spirituality, which is giving pastors-to-be the opportunity to practice what amounts to an occultic type of Christianity that is not based on scripture. Point Loma Nazarene University has been going the way of contemplative spirituality for quite a while, and also has brought false teachers consistently to the school, most recently an appearance by Rob Bell, where he spoke on Pastor's Day. Trevecca Nazarene University still has a prayer labyrinth on campus, and sends its students on retreats to a monastery to practice the silence. Even Nazarene Bible College has brought in spiritual formation. And Eastern Nazarene College has a prominent professor who believes in evolution and open theism, and the school is helping to introduce Roman Catholic ideology to the students.

We have only scratched the surface here. At some of these schools you will find professors teaching a view of God as being gender neutral, or even describing God as having a feminine side. You will find more and more emphasis on environmentalism, and social activism or social justice, to the exclusion of strong, biblically sound preparation of students. You will even see the "psycho-babble" that is prevalent at so many Christian schools and churches, where licensing with secular agencies is encouraged in their counselor education programs (unholy alliances) and given more weight and importance than solid Christian counseling for those who want to go into counseling ministries.

All this amounts to what is a serious problem that is resulting in schools losing students, as more and more parents and students are turning to biblically sound schools, instead of the slowly deteriorating schools in the Nazarene denomination. Will even more than 10,000 leave the denomination in the next four years? Will there be more and more pastors graduating from seminary who do not believe and trust all of scripture? Will the denomination recover from this damaging trend away from Biblical soundness? Will the leadership in the church speak out boldly, clearly, without ambiguity?

Only time will answer these questions. True revival- and the fruits that bear witness of true revival- will only come through much prayer, and the work of God's Holy Spirit to move the hearts and minds of leaders at the schools and in the churches.

Other NNU Articles:

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2012/01/10/the-road-to-catholicism-in-the-nazarene-church-mindless-retreats/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/11/17/taize-interspiritual-worship-promoted-at-northwest-nazarene-university/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/07/27/author-of-heretical-book-proudly-welcomed-at-northwest-nazarene/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2010/08/05/prominent-nazarene-theologian-embraces-big-tent-christianity/>

Point Loma Summer Retreat Encourages Interfaith Worship With Unbelievers

February 4, 2013

Spiritual formation in the Nazarene churches, universities and seminaries is NOT a biblical endeavor. It is merely a nice sounding way of introducing contemplative mysticism to the masses without using terminology that might scare some people. It is a cancer on the church that will continue to cause great damage unless it is cleaned up. Yet, you will find spiritual formation, including occultism, being taught at Nazarene Theological Seminary and practically all the Nazarene universities. Lessons are not being learned; warnings are not being heeded; administrators have bought into it; and national leaders continue ignoring the many signs of spiritual decay.

We have seen it trickle in by way of seemingly harmless practices and rituals that used to be solely the purview of Roman Catholic tradition. It sneaks in under the umbrella of celebrating the Lenten season; it sneaks in through the use of Sunday School quarterlies and such programs as Ashes To Fire. It is evident through the programs being used for the youth, primarily promoted through the extremely dangerous Barefoot Ministries as well as Nazarene Publishing House. But the warnings fall on mainly deaf ears, and most likely the following issue will also. It all points to the severe compromise of church leaders today.

What am I talking about? **Point Loma Nazarene University, along with San Diego First Church of the Nazarene, is encouraging mysticism, ecumenicalism and interfaith worship with unbelievers to its college students.**

A summer retreat called Taize 2013 is being offered to students.

The website states the following:

A unique trip is being offered through San Diego First Church (the church on campus) during the summer of 2013. A cross-generational group will be taking a pilgrimage to Taizé, France to spend a week in community, in worship and in spiritual reflection. This will be followed by a week of service in a nearby location.

Students will be spending a week Taize (pronounced Ta-zay), a monastery in France, and the stated purpose is that it is a

“spiritual formation trip, aimed at those seeking intentional devotional time, Sabbath, fellowship, and space to seek and listen for God in a cross-cultural setting. Taize is a community made up of over a hundred brothers, Catholics and from various Protestant backgrounds, coming from around thirty nations. From its beginning the community has been inspired by two aims: to live in communion with God through prayer and to be a leaven of peace and trust in the midst of the human family. A stay at Taizé is an opportunity to seek communion with God in prayer, singing, silence and reflection.”

I have previously written about Point Loma’s fascination with Taize, and Northwest Nazarene University’s embrace of Taize worship. Their explanation at best waters down what Taize

stands for, although please note that there is no emphasis mentioned about the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That's because Taize does not stand for, and never has stood for, the spreading of the Gospel. Not the true Gospel anyway.

The following is excerpted from [LightHouse Trails Research](#):

“Taize is a form of contemplative worship that incorporates mystical practices and interspiritual beliefs” [an odd term? Probably means, “all roads lead to the same Heaven,” or something similar.]

“‘Short chants, repeated again and again, give it a meditative character,’ the brothers explain in a brief introduction printed in the paperback songbook. ‘Using just a few words, [the chants] express a basic reality of faith, quickly grasped by the mind. As the words are sung over many times, this reality gradually penetrates the whole being.’”

The entire matter is “just another indication that contemplative spirituality is no respecter of denominations. Nearly all are affected and influenced.”

Taize Worshipers: *“Practicing the silence with icons, candles, incense and prayer stations, this very contemplative community is attracting young people from around the world.”*

In John Henderson's post on my blog on Nov. 11, 2011, he states the following:

“I find it enormously puzzling as to why Nazarenes, especially in a Nazarene university or a Nazarene church, would have so easily abandoned the simple faith in Christ for this satanic form of the worship of strange gods and evil spirits—and then call them by God's names. An even greater wonder is how they unabashedly resort to mauling the Word of God to force-fit those precious words of life to this spiritual sludge. They seem to sense no shame in it but, rather, boast in it and lie that God is pleased with it. It is worse than Sodom and Gomorrah and I fear that God's judgment will not tarry much longer. I had rather be in Heaven when it breaks open but He might keep me here to witness it and I just do not look forward to that.”

It's more than Taize that is going on here, in spite of the school's recent rejection of an on campus LGBTQ group, which most likely they had no choice. This school is being corrupted daily and is rotting from the inside out, taking students with it down the road of apostasy. And once again, while “Rome burns”, our irresponsible leaders at all levels do nothing.

A Host of Problems

It is the promotion of contemplative spirituality by way of other retreats, such as the Jesus Prayer Retreat at Point Loma Nazarene University, conducted by Frederica Matthewes-Greene of the Orthodox Church. What Matthewes-Greene promotes is nothing more than Roman Catholic style mysticism, including praying to icons, as I noted in the post *Blind Guides*. She also spoke at a student chapel the week of the retreat, where she promoted these false teachings, with the approval of college leaders.

In a post on May 9, 2011 entitled *Would Jesus Attend PLNU?*, problems were addressed such as: false teacher Brian McLaren speaking in a chapel service; universalist Rob Bell speaking at a pastor's retreat; a biology professor promoting Darwinism and evolution; the failure to

immediately as a gay activist student chaplain to step down from his position; the retreat sponsored by Richard Foster's Renovare organization, which promotes mysticism.

And in his article on spiritual formation, (<http://www.svchapel.org/resources/articles/133-spiritual-formation-movement/783-spiritual-formation-at-worship>), Dr. Gary Gilley concludes:

“The “face” of the Spiritual Formation Movement, as well as contemplative spirituality and emergent Christianity, is often first noticed within evangelical churches by the incorporation of traditional Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox practices and liturgies. Many of these practices are being introduced at special events and eventually find their way into the regular services of the church. Worshippers are often confused by what they are experiencing and do not understand what is taking place. It should be understood that when traditions borrowed from errant groups such as Catholics and Orthodoxy are taken into evangelical worship and life, and are done so without a careful examination of Scripture, what is being adopted is more than just methods. There is a comprehensive, and in many ways wrong, theology upon which these practices rest. Methods do matter, and we are naïve to think that we can take techniques from false religions and not eventually embrace their theology.”

I cannot explain to you exactly why all this is happening. I do know that these things are not of God, and yet it is being condoned over and over again by our supposedly mature spiritual leaders.

More Point Loma Articles:

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/10/20/blind-guides/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/09/13/extreme-wacky-nonsensical-liberalism-once-again-at-plnu/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/05/09/would-jesus-attend-plnu/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/02/23/report-on-rob-bell%E2%80%99s-pastor%E2%80%99s-day-appearance-at-plnu/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2010/11/18/point-lomas-mystical-renovare-experience/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2010/07/26/with-richard-fosters-renovare-conference-point-loma-continues-on-a-downward-slide/>

Trevecca Nazarene University

Trevecca Nazarene University Promoting Mysticism and Pagan Practices

February 1, 2010

On its website promoting yet another retreat to a monastery, Trevecca Nazarene University states the following:

“In order to help students strengthen their Christian faith and establish spiritual disciplines, the school year at Trevecca includes times and events that focus on **spiritual formation**.”

(source: [Trevecca website](#))

Sounds good. You might think it's just another way of expressing how we ought to grow as Christians, and for me when I first heard of it, things came to mind such as regular prayer, Bible study, worship, and fasting, as ways to grow as a Christian, as prescribed to us in the Bible. But beware, this is not what it means now in many Nazarene universities, or many other Christian schools for that matter.

Alarm bells should go off when you hear the term **spiritual formation**. If you hear “spiritual formation” mentioned by your pastor, a preacher, or a professor, it would be advisable to ask them to explain what they mean, and to explain it completely and honestly. However, it is clear to me that spiritual formation as practiced at Trevecca is not coming from a healthy biblical foundation. In fact, this university seems to be the one that is most outrageous in its display of the “new spirituality” that is being promoted and touted as a must-have part of our lives if we are to grow as Christians and get closer to God. **Yet, is it helping students get closer to God, or it is helping them stray further away from the Bible as sole authority for our Christian faith and practice?**

You see, Trevecca has a prayer labyrinth right on campus. There is absolutely nothing scripturally warranted in the use of this clearly pagan practice, so why does a Nazarene university use this tool? Thinking of sending your kids there? You may want to write to President Dan Boone, or the theology department, and ask them if they can justify the use of labyrinths, and ask them to make sure that they can justify it according to scripture. Otherwise, why is this being used on a Nazarene campus?

But let's get to the upcoming issue at hand. Yet again, Trevecca has scheduled another Spiritual Formation Retreat at the Abbey of Gethsemani in Trappist, Kentucky. It's called “Silence and Listening For the Voice of God”. One of their comments regarding this retreat is the following:

“Union with God in prayer requires us to learn to quiet ourselves—yes, from the noises which surround us, but also from inward noises (restlessness, fears, our agenda's, etc.) It is this **stillness and emptiness** which allows us to be open to hearing the voice of God.” (Emphasis in red mine)

This stuff, if you are a discerning Christian, is right out of contemplative mysticism. It is often justified by the misuse of Psalm 46:10, a sorry out of context reading of what is a passage that clearly teaches us not to go into any silence, but to relax and stop worrying so much about the turmoil in our life, because God is in control).

It is the seeking of silence, and worst still, of **emptiness**, that warning bells should be ringing for every Christian who reads this. It is nothing more than a call to empty your mind, albeit masquerading as Christian spirituality. Emptying the mind is the exact goal of transcendental meditation, and this is the very thing that spiritual formation subtly tries to promote. Friends, if you empty your mind in some type of altered state of consciousness, can you guarantee that it is God's voice you are hearing? And where in the Bible are we ever directed to get into a state of "emptiness" and "silence" in the manner directed by mystics? This is really just a resurrection of traditions created by the Desert Fathers. However, tradition, as we should understand, does not necessarily equate to being biblically grounded.

They also categorize **silence** as one of the spiritual disciplines. Really, where does the Bible teach us that? This is nothing but adding to the word of God, which we are forbidden to do. This is nothing more than Oprah Winfrey spirituality!

Sure, prayer and fasting, studying the scriptures, those can be called spiritual disciplines. But not silence. And certainly not labyrinths and prayer stations (a form of Stations of the Cross). And not even things like journaling, which has become popular and often suggested as necessary for Christian growth. **When did we begin to forget that all that is sufficient for our daily Christian growth is faith in Christ, and trusting in His word which he has given to us?** Anything else, and you are dangerously adding to the word of God, which according to scripture is a very serious offense! And what about **listening to God's voice?** If I told you the voice of God spoke to me last night (other than through His Word), how would I convince you that it was God's voice, and not the voice of some other spirit that was not of God?

You also need to know that the Abbey of Gethsemani is a Roman Catholic monastery that is dedicated to Mary. It is famously known as the spiritual home of Thomas Merton. Their website has a page dedicated to him. Remember this name, because it is becoming very popular amongst Nazarenes, along with such other monks as Henri Nouwen, who learned much from Merton and who believed that there are many paths to God, not just Jesus! Spiritual formation programs and books rarely omit Thomas Merton as a resource, but instead he is looked at as a great spiritual source of wisdom for Christians. There is no avoiding the influence of his teachings if you are going to a retreat at this monastery.

Merton was a Roman Catholic monk who was a mystic, and he experimented with Eastern religions mixed with Christianity, as many other monks such as Henri Nouwen did. (Henri Nouwen has also become popular with Nazarene pastors as a "Christian" resource, which is unbelievably irresponsible and reckless). But as a professed Christian, Merton was a serious promoter of interspirituality. He saw no problem between Christianity and Buddhism:

"I see no contradiction between Buddhism and Christianity ... I intend to become as good a Buddhist as I can." (David Steindl-Rast, "Recollection of Thomas Merton's Last Days in the West" (Monastic Studies, 7:10, 1969)

In the final year of his life, he spent time in various Eastern countries in search of the answers to spirituality (he could have searched the Bible). He later visited a Buddhist shrine in Sri Lanka, and described his visit as an experience of great illumination, a vision of "inner clearness."

Six days later, he was accidentally electrocuted in a cottage in Bangkok by a faulty fan switch. (*Contemplative Mysticism*, David Cloud, p.315).

This kind of relationship Trevecca has with the teachings of folks such as Merton is unbiblical. Will the prayer by Father Damien on opening night at the retreat involve praying to Mary or other saints as they normally do? Do Trevecca's leaders realize that praying to Mary, and participating in the Catholic Mass, is unbiblical and equates to idolatry? Or do they think this is typical reflection of Nazarene doctrine and practice?

We are called to "have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them" (Eph. 5:11). It would seem to me that associations with folks who adhere to Merton's philosophy qualifies for the category of fruitless deeds of darkness! Or am I missing something here? If someone could correct me with the scriptures, I will apologize for my error. I doubt if that will happen, because this is not the first time I have asked these folks in leadership to correct me or those who are questioning these practices. By the way, their recommended resources for spiritual formation reads like a who's who of teachers such as Henri Nouwen, Richard Foster, Ruth Haley Barton, and several other usual suspects of the spiritual formation movement.

So Trevecca Nazarene University needs to openly explain clearly to all prospective students, and their parents, what is the biblical authority for participating in retreats such as this, and for participating in pagan rituals such as prayer labyrinths. If not, perhaps feeling the pinch of the pocketbook, from less enrollments, and less donations, will draw their attention. Just follow the money, it seems to be the order of the day, and if that is what will get some answers, perhaps we should do it.



Spiritual Formation Retreat
"Silence & Listening for the Voice of God"

When? February 15th-17th
Where? Loretto Motherhouse (Nerinx, KY)
Cost? \$60 (2 nights, 7 meals & transportation included)
Contact? Brent Tallman (btallman@trevecca.edu)

Details & Registration?
www.trevecca.edu/spiritualformation/retreat
Only 25 spots available

For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him. Ps. 62:5

Additional Trevecca Articles:

<http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=618&more=1&c=1>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2012/10/11/dan-boone-goes-after-bible-believers-again/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/11/14/trevecca-leaders-continue-indoctrination-of-heresy/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/08/30/a-charitable-discourse-or-compromise/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2010/02/08/conversation-with-a-university-president/>

[Nazarene Theological Seminary](#)

Would You Believe... The Occult Coming To Nazarene Theological Seminary?

November 29, 2010

Nazarene Theological Seminary promotes occultism and Roman Catholic mysticism. I'll say it again. Nazarene Theological Seminary promotes occultism and Roman Catholic mysticism. At least that's what it seems to me. Maybe I'm wrong, but man, what can one say when it's not even done secretly now? Let me explain.

I nearly went apoplectic last night as I was wandering though the Nazarene Theological Seminary's website and the various course offerings! Now the pieces of the puzzle continue to be put together, and there is less doubt in my mind- if any- about where our Nazarene Theological Seminary is heading. And there are many more course examples to give, including the many mystical books that are part of the required or suggested readings for the various pastoral degree programs. To me, this is truly sad and so pathetic to see unfolding.

When I recently did several posts about Tony Campolo and his appearance at Eastern Nazarene College (False Prophet Tony Campolo Promotes Doctrines of Demons), I talked about his blatant promotion of contemplative prayer practices, and his reference to what the Celts called that "thin place", meaning the occultic Celtic spirituality that tries to equate it with true genuine Christian worship (Tony Campolo's Thin Places: Occultic Christianity). I said to myself, how can this man and his contemplative heresies be tolerated so much by a denomination that talks and preaches holiness? Well, I think I know now. **Because it is tolerated and taught by our very own seminary that prepares the future pastors of a holiness denomination!**

So, here is a course being offered for next spring by Professor Doug Hardy. It's called **Celtic Spirituality**.

Here is the course description:

Course Description, Narrative, & Rationale

The renewal of interest in and even fascination with all things Celtic in recent decades begs the question: What do so many find compelling about these peoples and their culture? Embedded within the more well-known expressions of Celtic art, music, dance, and story are references to lesser-known spiritual traditions, both pre-Christian and Christian. What characterizes Celtic spirituality and what is its relevance for Christian spirituality today? In this course, these and other questions will be explored from the perspective of the Christian Celtic tradition.

Knowing Doug Hardy's background and what he is involved in, and what he recommends for good reading over at Windsor Hills Camp in New Hampshire, is enough to know that this is a bad thing- not a good thing. This is not a question of studying false ideologies to get to know about them and refute them. No, my friends, this is indoctrination of perhaps your future pastor with occultic practices. This would be laughable, if not for the fact that souls are at stake here, and I stand by my statement from the Campolo article that this is nothing but doctrines of demons being taught.

To further prove that point that this is not a simple study of a false ideology, here are some of the goals of the course for the students:

Before even starting the course, students are required to: *Incorporate into your prayer practice at least two offices (morning, midday, night) from the Fitzgerald Celtic Prayer Book, daily for a minimum of 5 of the 6 pre-module weeks.*

The course will supposedly provide opportunities for the following:

1. ***Practice prayer and meditation using Celtic Christian resources.***
2. ***Learn the basic history of Celtic peoples, places, and especially the saints.***
3. ***Articulate a Celtic-informed theology of creation, asceticism, and/or mission.***
4. ***Contextualize Celtic perspectives and practices into current life and ministry.***

The required texts are:

*Balzer, Tracy. **Thin Places: An Evangelical Journey into Celtic Christianity.***
*Davies, Oliver (Trans. & Intro). **Celtic Spirituality (Classics of Western Spirituality).***
*de Waal, Esther. **Every Earthly Blessing: Rediscovering the Celtic Tradition.***
*Fitzgerald, William John. **A Contemporary Celtic Prayer Book.***
*Newell, J. Philip. **Listening for the Heartbeat of God: A Celtic Spirituality.***
*Newell, J. Philip. **Christ of the Celts: The Healing of Creation.***

After Classes End, here are some requirements:

Read Balzer's Thin Places and incorporate into your prayer practice the Celtic Blessing / Meditation / Reflection Questions

Write a Theology Paper (minimum 10 pages) articulating your Celtic-informed understanding of a specific topic in one or more of the following areas: theology of creation; theology of asceticism; theology or mission.

In another class taught by Dr. Doug Hardy, called Christian Spiritual Practices: Sacraments and Asceticism, what you see is practically a Roman Catholic flavor. One book is ***The Desert Fathers: Sayings of the Early Christian Monks.***

Wait a minute, we are now interested in the sayings of the heretical Desert Fathers as required reading at a Nazarene seminary? For what purpose, and to what end? If its to point out the fact that these people were unbiblical in their ascetic approach to Christian living, that's one thing. But I doubt that is what this book is being used for. Then the seemingly obligatory use of a Richard Foster book in practically every Nazarene university. This one is called ***Freedom of Simplicity: Finding Harmony in a Complex World.*** Don't know what he has to offer with this, but I am again reminded how the some of the Bible doubters at NazNet complain that we concerned Nazarenes use resources that are not part of the Wesleyan tradition, yet they have no problem citing and use false teachers such as Foster. At least my non-Nazarene resources actually believe in the truth and complete reliability of the entire Bible!

Another course, Seminar in Spiritual Formation, taught again by Doug Hardy, gives instruction on how to do pilgrimages. One book is ***A Pilgrim's Journey: The Autobiography of Ignatius of Loyola.*** Does Dr. Hardy have any idea of the history of Ignatius? If he does, then I am even

more concerned. Here are just a few facts about Ignatius, excerpted from David Cloud's book, *Contemplative Mysticism*: "Loyola's asceticism was very extreme. He lived for a year in a cave, wearing rags, never bathing, and begging for his food. All of this was an effort to do penance for his sins. He scourged and starved himself and slept very little. He taught that "penance" for sin requires "chastising the body by inflicting sensible pain on it" through "wearing hairshirts, cords, or iron chains on the body, or by scourging or wounding oneself, and by other kinds of austerities" (*The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, First Week, Vintage Spiritual Classics, p. 31)." And this book is a good resource... how? Loyola also dedicated himself to Mary, taught visualization prayer, promoted breath prayers, the use of spiritual directors, and his aforementioned book is growing in popularity **amongst evangelicals**. You can read the entire excerpt from Cloud's book at his Way of Life website.

So again, this is yet another Roman Catholic resource. And I have written previously about the dozens of Roman Catholic and mystical books recommended by Dr. Hardy for the Windsor Hills Camp library, and his involvement with the Spiritual Directors International, an interspiritual group that is ecumenical and promotes contemplative spirituality amongst all religions.

Finally, in *Christian Spiritual Practices: Connection and Service*, taught by Dr. Hardy also, you find books such as: *The Way of Friendship: Selected Spiritual Writings*, by Basil Pennington. Pennington is a heavy promoter of contemplative spirituality practices such as centering prayer (the focusing on a word and silently repeating it over and over again), which are unbiblical. Why use him as a resource? To show an example of what is not good? I think not. And then there is *Flirting with Monasticism: Finding God on Ancient Paths*, by Karen Sloan. Sloan is a graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary, which is no longer a sound Christian institution. In the description at Amazon books, part of it says "*The book, which reads like a blog, explores areas where evangelicals may feel at home with monasticism (community life) as well as with practices that feel foreign (praying to the saints and the Virgin Mary).*" Okay, let's explore that area, shall we? Praying to the virgin Mary! I never thought I would see the day this would be happening across practically all of our Bible schools. It's amazing and disheartening to see, yet, does anyone care?

There is no doubt left in my mind that at the very least, the leadership at Nazarene Theological Seminary have no problem with doctrines of demons being taught to future pastors. I will not insult their intelligence and assume they don't know what's going on. I have already given you some serious connection problems that Professor Dean Blevins has with promoting contemplative spirituality via his support and involvement with YouthFront and Barefoot Ministries. And Doug Hardy's involvement with mystical practices his work with Spiritual Directors International, http://www.sdiworld.org/index.pl/review_panel.html leads me to conclude that at the very least, NTS is negligently allowing false doctrines to be promoted and taught there.

This makes me sad to see, but then it also makes me angry, when the thought comes to mind that for every semester that goes by, for every year that a new class comes in, the deception of our future pastors is continuing. When will it be stopped, and who really cares about this? Or have I gone mad, and should I just get with the program? Brothers and sisters, what will it take to stop this madness? If I reported next week that Santeria was being practiced at NTS, and chickens heads were being cut off as offerings to God, would that raise an eyebrow? What will it take for as many Nazarenes as possible to call or write our seminary, and our general Superintendents to say, enough is enough? For the love of our students, and the love of God, please stop this and speak out now.

This is just a taste of it all. There will be more posts on this, highlighting more of the things that are pointing ever consistently towards a move of our Christian universities and seminaries to becoming Roman Catholic; if not in name, certainly in practice.

Additional Articles:

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/11/28/phylis-tickle-and-the-new-seminary-president/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/12/13/does-nazarene-theological-seminary-support-the-interfaith-movement/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/06/29/mike-king-and-friends-leading-youth-to-spiritual-death/>

False Prophet Tony Campolo Promotes Doctrines of Demons To ENC Students

October 31, 2010

If any ordained elder in the Nazarene church, and especially those who were at the chapel service on Friday, can show me through scripture that the practices promoted by Tony Campolo are biblical, I will recant my position on Tony Campolo and accept these practices myself. Anyone responding to this challenge would need to send me a copy and allow their work to be posted publicly for all to read. (I will not accept explanations using Psalm 46:10. See the following for an explanation: [Does Psalm 46:10 teaches Contemplative?](#)).

Anger

This is the angriest I have been since I stepped into this mess called the emergent church movement. I have been researching books and articles by and about emergent church leaders and mystics for the past two years; I have watched some of their videos and gotten upset at the false teachings and the disrespect of scripture. But there is something about hearing this stuff firsthand, something about being there in person. And that is probably why my blood is boiling even more now. To hear a tool of satan trying to peddle his demonic doctrines to students at a holiness based Protestant school was just too much for me. And to know that the leaders of that school are complicit in giving this man a platform is doubly maddening. Yes, a tool and servant of satan was given a warm welcome at Eastern Nazarene College Friday morning.

As I pondered on Reformation weekend, which is a time to celebrate and think on what Martin Luther and others sacrificed for the sake of preserving the sole authority of scripture and true biblical doctrine, I thought of the perverse way that Tony Campolo used the reference to the Reformation to introduce his mystical practices whose source is not of God, but from satan. What an insult to the memory of those who died for the sake of printing the Bible in defiance of Rome and its unbiblical papal authority that tried to deny the people the word of God in their own hands. And now, it seems as if we are in need of yet another reformation, as apparently ENC and other Nazarene universities are returning to Rome and everything that the reformers fought against so many years ago.

So a pretending evangelical “Christian” pastor comes to a Christian chapel service for students, again, with the blessing of the leadership- which I had met with and warned! They excused him as someone who has a lot of good things to offer, and perhaps if he had stuck with his beginning script, my outrage would be at a lower level. And they had reassured me that they typically allow the opportunity later in some kind of session or other, for questions and debate. If so, not this time! I was told that Dr. Campolo was going to be too busy for questions. So my question is this: **when will there be an opportunity to correct the lies that he promulgated last Friday, and set the record straight with the students at ENC?** Will the leadership extend an invitation to me or someone else, if we promise to only preach on the word of God alone, and nothing else? Sola scriptura is one of the five great statements that came out of the Reformation, and that I can guarantee the President of ENC is what I will speak on, the word of God. I offer to them now, the only chance for them to correct the big mistake that happened on Friday, to set the record straight on the mysticism that Campolo promoted

that day. If not me, then someone else. If not someone else, then they are just as guilty in spreading his falsehoods as if they did it themselves! And any discerning Christian who was there and recognized his falsehoods, and decide to stay silent, will have blood on their hands for not saying a word. ([Ezekiel 33](#)) As I have written before, I'll take that millstone and hang it around my neck, than be silent and let one of these young kids be deceived by satan and his servants.

Here are my final thoughts before I give you the details of what happened:

1. **Tony Campolo is still a false prophet, and the most dangerous kind: a very good and effective false prophet who is apparently fooling ordained elders in the church.**
2. **Tony Campolo was allowed, unchallenged, to promote his doctrines of demons to several hundred students in a chapel service at a Christian school.**
3. **The leadership at ENC, and perhaps the board of trustees, needs to answer and explain as to why he and others like him should be allowed to speak there, or to explain why he should never appear there again.**
4. **To any Christian parents considering sending your child to ENC in the near future: please do not do it at this time, because you might be risking your child's eternal destiny by doing so. (The same goes for Northwest Nazarene, Trevecca, Point Loma, Nazarene Theological Seminary, and Nazarene Bible College. These are just the ones I personally have documented as being in crisis).**
5. **If you are a strong Bible believer opposed to unbiblical doctrines, do not send a dime to any of these schools until there is a return to biblically sound leadership that uses discernment in selecting its teachers and speakers.**
6. **Are there any "Martin Luthers" out there, who are willing to go to the leadership of each of these schools, and "nail another 95 Theses" to their door?**
7. **If it becomes clear that the leadership of any of these schools persists in allowing unbiblical teachings to continue, I will urge all Bible believing Christians to begin daily prayer for that school to be shut down, for the safety of our students.**

That is my opinion. Campolo gave his Friday morning, and so did the leaders at my alma mater. Will anyone else stand for truth, speak out, and challenge the leadership?

My Report on Friday's Chapel Service

I attended the student chapel, along with my brother John, to hear Campolo speak. He was there promoting his Compassion Ministry and encouraged everyone to sponsor a child in need. His main scriptural theme was based on Matthew 13 and the parable of the seeds. He spoke eloquently about the tragedy of what happened in Haiti, and how so many children need our help. He challenged the students to do more than be a believer, but also be a believer who can respond to needs such as this. He was impressive, and obviously is a passionate and accomplished speaker.

David Cloud ([Way of Life](#)) says of Campolo:

“Campolo is a master entertainer. No doubt about it. Of course, that is the kind of speaker who is popular in this confused, carnal hour. Campolo is dynamic, interesting, and personable. He appeals to the young and to the old. He can make you laugh, and he can make you cry. He is full of zeal. He can move people. But Campolo is a dangerous man because of his aberrant theology.”

So here's the problem, in spite of the good words said, and the random quoting of scripture. **Tony Campolo is still a false prophet.** A false prophet who managed to get our ire up about five times greater than it was before we heard him speak. Ironically, there we were, a few days before Reformation Sunday, and I thought that right there, in a Protestant Bible believing church building, it was going to be a very safe message. And he sure sprinkled enough scripture in there that day! But I remind you that satan used scripture as he tried to offer an easy life to the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you know that the mark of a good false teacher is the leaven he inserts in the middle of all that good sounding message he seems to be bringing? Are you one of those who can only recognize the Benny Hinns of the world, because they are so obvious, yet cannot recognize the real professional spiritual shysters and PHd's in con artistry such as Tony Campolo?

And so Tony Campolo could not help himself on Friday, and managed to sow some seeds of his own. Funny, I said to myself- at least he does not hide what he believes! Not so those who I have confronted for the last two years and did not have the courage to admit what they truly believe, but instead couched their words in mystery so you never know what they profess for sure. Unfortunately, some of the seeds he sowed are not the kind of seed that Jesus Christ and His apostles ever sowed.

Let's get to what he said that disturbed me, and ought to disturb every Bible believing Christian reading this. What is most upsetting is not Campolo speaking at ENC, but the leadership allowing him to speak, and letting the students and even some adults there walk away singing his praises, oblivious to the heresy he just spewed out. Was there any discernment amongst those who were “mature” Christians? I saw a good number of pastors there, and I am amazed how some of them did not think that anything wrong was said that morning! I know, because some of them have told me they don't agree with me on the same issues that Campolo brought up.

Campolo quoted St. Francis of Assisi early on. He stated also that the best Christian songs often come from Broadway shows, such as *Les Misérables!* An example he said was “The Impossible Dream.” (We thought that was a bit silly, but he did get a couple of approving chuckes from the listeners). He talked about being a ‘red letter’ Christian. However, these supposed red letter Christians end up picking and choosing which words of Jesus they wish to obey, and which to ignore- particularly the hard words about sin, repentance, Jesus being the only way, future judgment, and hell. They overlook certain red letters, because they are hypocrites fashioning their own man made gospel and picking only the scriptures that make them feel good about themselves.

He called himself a “follower of Jesus.” That's code for “I hate the word ‘Christian’, and saying that I'm a ‘follower of Jesus’ shows that I am part of the hip, post-modern culture that whispers to everyone... “you can follow Jesus, but not necessarily be a Christian”. That's exactly what some of these people believe when they use that phrase. A Buddhist or a Hindu can be a follower of Jesus, and stay in their religion, as Brian McLaren has said.

The Reformation was Good... And Bad

So now he's got them where he wants them, soon after tugging at their hearts about the kids who lost their limbs in Haiti. So now he mentions the Reformation, how we can thank the Reformation for weeding out many horrible doctrines that were taught in that day. But... here comes the but.... he also says that we also **"lost a lot of good things from the Reformation."** Like the following, which he shamelessly promoted and encouraged everyone to practice:

1. Centering Prayer (or contemplative prayer)
2. Lectio Divina
3. The Jesus Prayer (a mantra, a repetitive use of a word, usually Jesus, over and over).
4. The Prayer of Examen (St. Ignatius) **"I'm into St. Ignatius these days"**

He said **"I say the name of Jesus over and over again"**, and suggested that we try it, that we should do it for 15 minutes, until this ritual **"drives away the dark forces around us."** Magical formula? A "Christian" incantation to drive away the demons? Pastors, do you practice this, or would you allow Tony Campolo to teach this to your congregation? Any pastors out there who can testify to the effectiveness and biblical soundness of this kind of prayer? Is this one of those "non-essentials" that we can disagree on?

In describing Centering Prayer, he said **"it takes only 15 minutes to be inwardly still."** He asked, **"when was the last time you were still for 20 minutes- so that you can come alive in Christ?"** Which chapters and verses, Tony, are you referring to, that teach us this mindless way of "coming alive in Christ?" Perhaps some of the pastors who attended can explain this one to me, since no question and answer session was on the schedule for the day.

Where is the biblical justification for any of this? And if there is none at all, why do so many tolerate this? Campolo also said, **"be still, and let the spirit of God teach you."** This man is promoting mindless, Christianized transcendental meditation- and nobody cares?? It is NOT Christian! And the only thing I may have done wrong, was perhaps I should have stood up and challenged this messenger of satan's lies, right in front of all those students and pastors in that chapel.

Finally, he talked about doing these practices so that we can find ourselves in **that "thin place" that the Celtic Christians used to talk about"**. This alone, if nothing else was said, made me want to jump up and interrupt him- and perhaps I should have. What's a thin place, you ask? You won't find it in scripture, because its roots are from the occult, and its described as:

"In simple terms a 'thin place' is a place where the veil between this world and the Other world is *thin*, the Other world is more near. This meaning assumes the perceiver senses the existence of a world beyond what we know through our five senses."

Here is what he says from one of his books:

"The constant repetition of his name clears my head of everything but the awareness of his presence. By driving back all other concerns, I am able to create what the ancient Celtic Christians called 'THE THIN PLACE.' The thin place is that spiritual condition wherein the separation between the self and God becomes so thin that God is able to break through and envelop the soul. ... Like most Catholic mystics, [Loyola] developed an intense desire to experience A 'ONENESS' WITH GOD" (*Letters to a Young Evangelical*, pp. 26, 30).

Roger Oakland explains in his book about this terminology:

“This term ‘thin place’ originated with Celtic spirituality (i.e., contemplative) and is in line with panentheism. ... Thin places imply that God is in all things, and the gap between God, evil, man, everything thins out and ultimately disappears in mediation” (*Faith Undone*, pp. 114, 115).

So Tony Campolo is recommending to students at a holiness based college, with Nazarene pastors sitting right there listening to him, to practice occultic, mantra-like rituals and pagan contemplative prayer, which has nothing- nothing to do with the Bible. As I looked around at the pastors who were there, I wondered to myself: do they have any idea that this man is spouting heresies to hundreds of students? Do they care? Or worst still, do they agree with him? Would there be one pastor who was there that day, who will now speak to the leadership at ENC and ask, what are you exposing our students to?

Several times, as I listened to this man speak, I prayed as I looked around at these young people, all young enough to be my children. I prayed to God that not one would remember what he suggested for them to try and do; that not one would fall under the spell of this deceiver; that not one would soon start sitting in a circle with his friends, and practice mind-emptying silence in an expectation of “coming alive in Christ.” If I could weep tears on the outside, they would have flowed nonstop that morning. I wanted to stand up and yell, “this is wrong!” I even pictured myself running down the aisle to confront this man in front of everyone. I wept inside, as I asked myself, what is the Nazarene denomination doing to itself? Where has the obedience to God’s word gone, that leaders will put up with anyone and anything now? Why are the people of God sitting idly by, while our leaders are throwing our students to the wolves?

As my brother and I stood outside sometime after it was all over, a friend we knew came up to us and said: “wasn’t that a powerful message?” I hesitated for a second, and then I had to tell this person the truth. I told her the truth about Tony Campolo, and I spoke the truth about our denomination, and what happened to me as I counted the cost of standing for truth. Clearly when this friend left us, she was a bit uncomfortable, not having expected to hear the kind of response I gave her. I pray that she will start looking into these things herself. A young man also asked us how we liked the service, and I had to tell him the truth, giving him a card and asking him to go my blog to read what I am writing now. It was not a comfortable time for him as he heard my opinion about Tony Campolo, but I had to tell the truth. I pray that he will keep an open mind to what I have to say.

Maybe for some of you, it’s not a comfortable time right now as you read this. Did I make you uncomfortable? Did I make you dislike me, or think of me as a hater, a divider, a troublemaker? Do you think Jesus or the apostles would tolerate for one minute what Tony Campolo promoted Friday? If not, then why should you or I tolerate it? And why would you be angry at me, if I spoke the truth? Or maybe I am I telling lies. How do you discern who is telling the truth, and who is telling lies? You look to the word of God, not your feelings, not not personal loyalties, nothing but the word of God.

The truth must be told, whether anyone likes to hear it or not, and the light must be shone on these false teachers so they can be exposed to the whole world. And let the truth be clearly understood: the real dividers in the church are those who are allowing false doctrines to creep in through false prophets like Campolo and the others. Not Manny Silva. Not Concerned Nazarenes. Not any discernment ministry out there today. And if there is to be any division,

let it be a division of those who obey the word of God, from those who do not. Tony Campolo used the parable of the seeds for his message. Ironically, here is the parable that follows:

Mat. 13:24-30 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; 25 but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. 26 But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. 27 So the servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ 28 He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said to him, ‘Do you want us then to go and gather them up?’ 29 But he said, ‘No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, “First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.”

The enemy used Tony Campolo to sow the seeds of apostasy at Eastern Nazarene College. It is time to separate the tares from the wheat, just as Jesus commanded. It is time for repentance. It is time for the sleeping Christians to wake up.

Additional Articles:

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2009/05/04/open-theism-and-christian-evolution-at-eastern-nazarene-college/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2013/04/09/%E2%80%8B-eastern-nazarene-college-rejects-the-bible-moves-towards-affirmation-of-homosexuality%E2%80%8B/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/10/24/arrogance-intellectual-elitism-rejection-of-scripture-karl-giberson/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/04/14/nazarene-professor-giberson-says-jesus-is-an-evolutionist/>

Nazarene Schools Drifting Away From Biblical Soundness

October 26, 2010

Nazarene Theological Seminary and Nazarene Bible College are two schools responsible for preparing future pastors in the Nazarene church. What are they teaching or promoting which is different from many years ago? More importantly, is there anything they are teaching that is reflecting a compromise with the emergent church, contemplative spirituality movements, and other man-centered ideologies?

Nazarene Bible College is teaching the practice of lectio divina and embracing Roman Catholic resources. This alone is a serious problem, if there were no other! This seems par for the course now, as you will also note the same trend at NTS. It is disturbing to me that our Nazarene universities and Bible schools show signs of ecumenism, specifically in the Roman Catholic resources and books. In the Spiritual Formation course at NBC, *Practicing Wesleyan-Holiness Spiritual Formation*, one of the books used is “*Accepting the Embrace of God: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina*“. The book is described as “an introduction to the discipline of praying the scriptures (spiritual reading) **written by a Benedictine priest**. He explains the four steps in the process and discusses how it can be used by a group.”

Since when have Benedictine monks become a standard source of guidance for a school that carries the banner of a Wesleyan holiness denomination? Has the leadership at NBC shrugged their shoulders to the biblical admonitions to avoid those who preach another gospel? Is it not inevitable that when Christians start compromising with practically any denomination regardless of serious doctrinal differences, that eventually they will themselves be compromised, and be weakened in their faith and practice? Romans 12 commands us (does not suggest) to “not be conformed to the world.” Galatians 1:8 warns that if anyone brings to you another gospel, that they should be accursed! Are not the major teachings of the Roman Catholic church another gospel? Or has the Nazarene leadership given its blessings for the acceptance of Roman Catholicism as being as sound doctrinally as traditional Protestantism? What do our General Superintendents think about this trend?

Nazarene Bible College, whether through ignorance, or through deliberate planning, is embracing contemplative spirituality practices. It would seem to me that the natural steps will be a further addition of contemplative prayer techniques as lectio divina becomes accepted by default as something biblically sound. Perhaps lectio divina has been perceived as the safest practice that can be accepted by Christians as something good and seemingly in line with biblical doctrine. So once we can safely move from there, others are sure to follow, for why stop with that? If the “ancient Christian practices” are sound, it’s a matter of time that they will be introduced also, and they are. Prayer labyrinths will most likely soon be introduced at our seminaries. Would others accept it as something within the bounds of Christian orthodoxy? I’m afraid so.

[Olivet Nazarene University](#)

Olivet Nazarene University Promoting Contemplative Spirituality

February 27, 2012

*“It is not surprising to us that Olivet Nazarene University promotes Spiritual Formation.
(Lighthouse Trails Research)*

It appears all the Nazarene universities are involved in promoting contemplative spirituality; however, if any university president would like to disavow that they promote Spiritual Formation programs (aka contemplative spirituality), and that they do not endorse any of these types of contemplative authors in their programs, I will post that here publicly.

The following specific facts are extracted from a post at Lighthouse Trails Research regarding Olivet Nazarene University:

- Richard Foster’s book, Celebration of Discipline, is used in a required freshman course.
- Spiritual Formation is part of the school’s major theology curriculums
- Henri Nouwen’s books are used in at least 4 courses
- The Vice President of Spiritual Life lists Nouwen as one of his favorite authors

This is troubling news, and if we dig deeper and get closer, I’m sure we would find that there is no denying that these sources are used because those at the school who use them, have no problem with them. No professor or school leader is going to use or recommend any of these books I mentioned, unless they have no problem with what these authors teach! These books are not being used as examples of what to avoid, but examples of what can supposedly help us grow spiritually. Nothing could be further from the truth. That Olivet is considered by many to be one of the more conservative Christian colleges is not a very good sign.

As the writers mention below, practically all Nazarene colleges and the seminaries are promoting spiritual formation (aka contemplative spirituality), and these kinds of writers. Foster has appeared at seminars in some Nazarene universities, such as at Point Loma. He is considered the leading promoter of contemplative mysticism today within the “evangelical” community. Nouwen was a universalist Catholic monk who mixed Christianity with Buddhism. Tony Campolo has spoken at Olivet, even just recently, and apparently no one there has any problem with him. Campolo is a big promoter of centering prayer, the mantra like Jesus Prayer, and also promotes the occultic practices of Celtic Spirituality. I sent my concerns about him to Dr. Carl Leth, dean of the School of Theology, but apparently he has no problem in having Dr. Campolo speak there.

I agree with the conclusions of Lighthouse Trails, and again I commend ministries like them who are consistently exposing what is going on in not only the Nazarene denomination, but in practically all denominations. The only question that remains on the table is this: why are some of you okay with it, and if you are not, why are some of you so silent?

This post is being forwarded to Olivet president Dr. Bowling, and to Dr. Leth. I would like to get a reasonable, biblically supported explanation of why these kinds of authors are used in a

required freshman course, and in other theology courses. Perhaps they are using these authors as examples of bad theology? But if not, and Olivet claims to be “theologically grounded in the Wesleyan tradition”, what does that have to do with Richard Foster and Henri Nouwen’s promotion of unbiblical contemplative spirituality?

I am also sending this to the Board of General Superintendents for comment. What they think about these issues is still unknown to me and many others who have asked them to comment.

[Olivet Nazarene University 105th School Added to Lighthouse Trails Contemplative School List](#)

February 11th, 2012 | Author: Lighthouse Trails Editors

On Saturday morning, Lighthouse Trails received an e-mail from a concerned parent whose child is attending Olivet Nazarene University. The parent told us that Richard Foster’s book *Celebration of Discipline* is part of a required Freshman course. We have also discovered that Spiritual Formation (i.e., contemplative spirituality) is integrated in various aspects of the school including their Christian Education program, Practical Ministries, Youth Ministry, and the School of Theology. Thus we have added Olivet Nazarene University to our list of Christian schools that promote Spiritual Formation.

In addition to Richard Foster’s book, Henri Nouwen’s books are used in at least 4 courses. In two of those (CMIN 116, COMM 300), his contemplative promoting book *In the Name of Jesus* is used. This is the book that Kay Warren, Rick Warren’s wife, recommends saying it “hits at the heart of the minister . . . I highlighted almost every word.”¹ It is in that book of Nouwen’s that he says:

Through the discipline of contemplative prayer, Christian leaders have to learn to listen to the voice of love . . . For Christian leadership to be truly fruitful in the future, a *movement from the moral to the mystical is required*.² (emphasis added)

In almost every school that promotes Spiritual Formation, Henri Nouwen is used. This is because the spirituality that Nouwen advocated for is the same spirituality that Spiritual Formation (contemplative) inhabits. When you think of where Spiritual Formation took Nouwen before the end of his life (after years of practicing mysticism), it is sobering to see the majority of Christian colleges and seminaries embrace him. In the last book he wrote, he stated:

*Today I personally believe that while Jesus came to open the door to God’s house, all human beings can walk through that door, whether they know about Jesus or not. Today I see it as my call to help every person claim his or her own way to God.*³

What Nouwen says here illustrates the “fruit” of contemplative spirituality. It is not surprising to us that Olivet Nazarene University promotes Spiritual Formation. It appears all the Nazarene universities are involved in promoting contemplative spirituality; however, if any university president would like to disavow that they promote Spiritual Formation programs (aka contemplative spirituality), and that they do not endorse any of these types of contemplative authors in their programs, I will post that here publicly. We have documented this for years. If you want to see one of the most shocking signs of where evangelical Christian schools will end up, read our article [Buddhist/Universalist Sympathizer Woos Nazarene Students at NNU](#) and watch the video we link to of [Dr. Jay McDaniel’s](#) visit to Northwest Nazarene University in Idaho.

Nouwen's influence is obvious at Olivet. The [VP of Spiritual Life](#) lists Nouwen as one of his favorite authors. This of course could have a profound influence on many students. Parents, please remember, when you are looking for a college or university for your son or daughter to attend this coming fall, please check that school out carefully beforehand, and make sure your child understands what the underlying roots of contemplative and emerging spirituality are before they leave your home. It is by no means just Nazarene Universities that are being affected. This is happening in virtually every denomination to one degree or another.

Original link: <http://www.lighthouse-trails-research.com/blog/?p=8761>

Additional Articles:

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2013/03/12/why-is-ian-morgan-cron-speaking-at-olivet-nazarene-university/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2012/03/10/responding-to-dr-leths-open-letter-to-manny-silva/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2011/09/08/olivet-nazarene-lets-false-teacher-campolo-speak-in-chapel/>

[Southern Nazarene University](#)

Irresponsible Christian College Leaders Allowing Normalization of Homosexuality

January 27, 2012

It would be no surprise to find examples of the normalization and even glorification of homosexuality (a sin like any other sin) at almost any secular college campus today. It would also not be in our place as Christians, in some ways, to criticize the leaders at these schools and call them irresponsible, from a Christian worldview. That's because they don't operate from a Christian worldview, and we cannot expect them to hold to biblical standards. However, that is a much different matter when it comes to universities that call themselves "Christian." We are responsible as Christians to hold accountable those who profess to be Christians who are going astray and watering down the Gospel message. We are to judge those in the church. *"For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?" 1 Cor. 5:12*

Southern Nazarene University

The first example of what I call "biblical negligence and malpractice" from Christian leadership is at Southern Nazarene University. An article in the student newsletter, called "[Reevaluation is needed for SNU and Church policies on Homosexuality](#)", spoke favorably of the new view of homosexuality which is so popular in the secular world now, and is now permeating the Christian world. Here are some sample quotes from the article, which can be read at their website (<http://echo.snu.edu/?p=719>), or downloaded as well:

"The SNU lifestyle covenant states that students will "abstain from pornography, premarital or extramarital sex, immoral heterosexual activity and homosexual behavior.".... This leaves homosexual students here, and in the larger Christian community, two choices: to act on their sexual orientation and hide those actions from SNU, or to remain, for all intents and purposes, asexual."

"The idea of encouraging gay students at SNU to live without those relational intimacies makes me very sad. When I imagine a life in which I would have to deny, hide, or feel ashamed about the loving relationship I share with my fiancé, I can't help but feel dismal, to say the least. Needless to say, forcing homosexual students to abstain from intimate relationships not only seems unnatural, but also cruel and morbid."

"However, many Christians are beginning to change their beliefs that homosexuality is indeed a sin..... One professor has told me that she has no problem with homosexual relationships, so long as they abide by the same commitments to marriage, monogamy, and respect as other Christian relationships do."

"Christian circles are too quick to call homosexuality a sin, without ever having talked to someone who identifies as gay."

Here is a comment from a friend who is in leadership at a Christian university:

“This is so predictable but yet so sad. The problem starts with a total disregard for the authority of the Scripture.

The author could never come to his/her conclusions without first setting aside the accuracy of the Bible as a pretext. This is why I make such a big deal about holding fast to inerrancy!! And what terrible logic to claim that abstaining from sexual activity is akin to being “asexual!” Should we assume that everyone who refrains from premarital sex is “asexual?”

The fact that they let this be printed in their student newspaper is also evidence of the bigger problem.

Would they let an article be printed about every other aberrant behavior? One about pedophilia? One about incest? How about polygamy? Bestiality?

If denying one’s biological urges concerning homosexuality makes one asexual then wouldn’t the same logic hold true for these other behaviors?? If the Bible does not speak accurately and definitively on the matter of homosexuality then how can the Church or SNU claim it speaks with authority on ANY sexual behavior?

I would never permit this stuff to be printed on our campus. And if I ever found a professor agreeing with or encouraging this moral drivel they would be gone immediately. When the Nazarene schools started inviting McLaren, Pagitt, Jones, and Campolo to speak on their campuses they set the stage for this stuff.”

I agree with this assessment, and it certainly pertains as well to Point Loma in their latest poor decision. The SNU example brings back memories of the debacle that occurred at Point Loma Nazarene University last year, and at San Diego First Church of the Nazarene, which is on the campus grounds. You can read about that here in this eyewitness account ([Homosexuality At Point Loma Nazarene University](#)). Now the student newspaper has put out an article with an interview of Todd Clayton: ([Q@A With Todd Clayton](#)). Todd is now an alumnus and former ASB Director of Spiritual Life at Point Loma, and the main subject matter of that eyewitness account of the goings on at the school and the local church. It was an example of how worldly acceptance of homosexuality has permeated the church and resulted in re-defining the seriousness of sin.

Here are a few quotes from the interview:

“I don’t have to be worried that someone might see me on a date or at a bar and try to get me fired—or worse—tell the newspaper.”

After months of searching, however, I’ve landed back at a place of comfort in my Christian identity. It looks admittedly different than many at Loma, I’m sure: I don’t believe in hell, I don’t think Muslims are wrong, I don’t raise my hands in the air when I sing, I think we should be sexual before we’re married.”
PW: What advice would you give to PLNU students who are coming to terms with their sexuality?

TC: You’re not alone. This is the shrewdest, loudest lie I remember fighting before I was out. (Hint: there are tons of gays at Loma). Be patient with yourself—and with the people you care about. Understanding an orientation that isn’t heterosexual can take time, and you’re not crazy if it does. Find people who will affirm and love you, and—when you’re ready—honestly share

with them so you don't have to journey by yourself. Know that being gay is fun. Go on dates. Don't be afraid to kiss"

I can see no biblical rationale for the leaders at both of these schools to allow this kind of writing under the banner of the university. It smacks of approval, it smacks of "tolerance" of **anything** that is written by the students, and it only leads one to believe that these leaders are okay with this new kind of "Christian" re-definition of sin. At the very least, they seem to be okay with allowing the open view of homosexuality to be **promoted**, and that is clearly wrong. This is their responsibility, and for what its worth, this post is being sent to the university presidents at both schools. When "academic freedom", or "freedom of expression", is used as the basis for allowing the spreading of error filled views of what is or is not sin, then that becomes reckless and irresponsible, and the buck stops at the leadership's desk.

I received a note on my blog from Todd Clayton, to go and see how he is progressing, as he has a blog now. I declined to publicize it. We must pray for Todd Clayton, and all the other students and alumni from Point Loma and Southern Nazarene, who have been misled to think that homosexuality is okay within a Christian context. This is not so much about Todd Clayton, as it is about the reckless and irresponsible leadership at these schools, and they must be held accountable. And believe me, the extent of this problem is not just at these two schools, and is a symptom of the overall apostasy occurring in our Nazarene and other Christian universities and seminaries today.

Additional Articles:

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2012/11/15/false-teacher-campolo-to-speak-at-southern-nazarene-university/>

Mid-America Nazarene University

What's Missing Here?

March 15, 2012

by John Henderson

[Note: SoulForce just recently visited Trevecca Nazarene University on March 11 and March 12, 2012, for an afternoon of discussion, fellowship and learning. It was open only to Trevecca faculty and students. No reports of the meetings are available at the moment. Soulforce is scheduled to visit Southern Nazarene University on March 26, 2012]

The following article appeared in the Church of the Nazarene's official organ, "Holiness Today:"[\[1\]](#)

Gay-rights activists target MNU; university responds by respectfully sharing its message

Olathe, Kansas: During a day and a half of meetings with a group of gay-rights activists traveling the country to battle discrimination on college campuses, MidAmerica Nazarene University (MNU) accomplished **its goal of communicating the love of Christ to its visitors without approving of the lifestyle they have chosen**. Soulforce, a national gay-rights organization, initiated a program last spring called Equality Ride in which young adults travel by bus to Christian campuses to confront administrators, faculty, and students with policies and practices that Soulforce considers to be discriminatory against gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students.

Soulforce Equality Ride was not invited to the campuses, but did give prior notice that they were coming. This year MNU and Northwest Nazarene University (NNU) are among the Christian universities targeted by the organization. The Ride is scheduled to visit NNU on April 13.

Many targeted colleges ban the activists from campus, and in most cases, the Riders have been arrested for trespassing on campus property. Before arriving at MNU on March 15, the Riders were arrested at the University of Notre Dame and Wisconsin Lutheran University.

In contrast, MidAmerica chose to welcome the activists, hosting them for a dinner with student leaders on Thursday night and six classroom presentations on Friday.

"We viewed this as an opportunity **to listen to where they're coming from and share the love of God with them,**" said April Hansen, MNU's director of public information and on-site coordinator for the visit. "We disagree, but there's no reason to be afraid **to talk to each other, to dialogue, and express Christ's love, even in our disagreement.**"

At an exit meeting, several Equality Riders expressed their appreciation for the kindness and openness with which they had been received by members of the university. One Rider tearfully expressed her thanks.

"When you told us you were offering Christ's love to us and that you wanted to listen to us, we kept waiting for you to say, 'but...' and then share your condemnation," the Rider said. "You didn't do that. Thank you."

For some of the Riders, it was their first experience with Christians being **willing to love and listen to them.**

“[The Riders] expressed how life-changing this has been,” Hansen said. “Those comments were very affirming and meaningful to all of us who helped plan the university’s approach to the visit.”

MNU President Ed Robinson said the visit and the campus’ preparations actually strengthened MNU’s commitment **to its policy on homosexuality**.

“Our position on the prohibition of homosexual **behaviors** from biblical and theological foundations was strengthened in the hearts and minds of the administration and, more importantly, students,” Robinson said in an e-mail report to MNU’s Board of Trustees. “You would be very proud of their spiritual discernment. The preparation we invested in students was beneficial and **yielded the outcomes we intended**.”

One of the Equality Riders wrote in his blog after the visit, “I know many, if not most, of the students differ with us in their views on homosexuality, **but we were able to share fellowship**. They truly modeled a Christlike response.”

MNU wishes to express its gratitude for the prayers offered around the world by churches and constituents during the visit. Most of all, thanks be to God!

[So... What Is Missing Here?]

On the surface, this would appear to be something that Jesus might do, but it stops short of what the Master would have actually done and has so demonstrated in the Scriptures. Where they stopped short is what is missing, but apparently that was their goal as stated in the article: ““The preparation we invested in students was beneficial and yielded the outcomes we intended.”” Their intended outcome is clearly defined in the article:

“...communicating the love of Christ to its visitors without approving of the lifestyle they have chosen.”

“...to listen to where they’re coming from and share the love of God with them.”

“...to talk to each other, to dialogue, and express Christ’s love, even in our disagreement.”

To strengthen “MNU’s commitment to its policy on homosexuality...” their “... position on the prohibition of homosexual behaviors from biblical and theological foundations.”

The Board of General Superintendents recently issued a statement that essentially affirms a denominational position on the concept that while homosexual “orientation” is “amoral,” it is not the same as immoral homosexual behavior.

“Sexual orientation is not usually a willful choice. ... It is amoral, neither moral nor immoral. Scripture clearly ... does not address homosexual orientation. ... the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene and the official statement of the Board of General Superintendents make a clear distinction between behavior and orientation. One is sinful, the other is not.”

[NOTE: The Bible makes no such distinction between “orientation” and “behavior.” It rather says that behavior emits from “orientation”—out of the wickedness of the heart.]

That error in logic and biblical doctrine has been addressed sufficiently by many who see it as the unscriptural compromise that it is, so I will move on with this matter at hand while keeping in mind that position by the General Superintendents as contributing to this response.

The important question about this incident is, “What is missing?” They expressed Christ’s “love.” What love? Was it the love of God who gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish? That was not mentioned. Was there a call to repentance, to accept Christ as personal Savior? That was not mentioned in the article as well as there was no mention of prayer at all.

The missing essential element was not brought up at all. Instead, we see something akin to the message of television’s “Touched by an Angel” that requires no repentance but rather tells sinners that God still loves you; or a Mr. Rogers approach that says, “God loves you just the way you are.” Well, of course He does but He loves us enough to save us and has shown us the way through His Son as told to us in the Bible. He will save us FROM our sins, not in them. He loves us more than we can love or understand but He commands repentance:

2 Peter 3:9: “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

Acts 17:29-31: “Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

The only response to all of that effort was someone’s tearfully telling a Nazarene host his or her appreciation for the non-condemning hosting. What a squandered opportunity to win that soul to Christ! He or she went away thinking that Nazarenes support them in their sin and the Nazarene went away empty handed.

I can go only on what I have read in this article, but the thought that comes to mind is a verse from the Bible:

James 4:4: “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”

If that encounter amounted to no more than being pals and no personal evangelism, I would say that the verse applies to tragic proportions.

[Mount Vernon Nazarene University](#)

Mount Vernon Nazarene University Bringing Contemplative/Emergent Speakers

March 2nd, 2008 | Author: [Lighthouse Trails Editors](#)

On March 4th, Mount Vernon Nazarene University will bring Walter Brueggemann (Professor Emeritus at Columbia Theological Seminary) to speak as part of their year long **Lecture/Artist series**. (1) Brueggemann is a proponent of contemplative/emergent spirituality as are other speakers that have been brought to MVNU in the past. Two weeks ago, the **university invited Shane Claiborne** to speak after he was disinvited by Cedarville University because of Claiborne's emerging spirituality proclivities. (2) In Brueggemann's case, he could be considered a pioneer of the emerging church, someone who has been promoting the new spirituality for a long time.

Many people may not be familiar with Brueggemann, but his influence has been strong within the contemplative/emergent camp. One of the projects he participated in was Richard Foster's ***Renovare Spiritual Formation Study Bible***, in which Brueggemann was one of the editors. The Renovare "Bible" focuses on Richard Foster's six disciplines (from his book *Streams of Living Waters*), one of which is the contemplative practice. Among the other editors of Foster's book are Catholics, universalists, and contemplatives; in addition, there are quotes by many mystics of the past.

Perhaps one of the more telling indicators of Brueggemann's spiritual affinities is his endorsement of Alan Jones book *Reimagining Christianity*. In Jones' book, he calls the doctrine of the Cross a vile doctrine, yet Brueggeman says of the book (on the back cover): "His vision of faith and ministry for the time to come will be a gift for many readers." (3) A few quotes from Jones' book, however, will show that *Reimagining Christianity* is not a gift, at least not for those searching for biblical truth:

The Church's fixation on the death of Jesus as the universal saving act must end, and the place of the cross must be reimagined in Christian faith. Why? Because of the cult of suffering and the vindictive God behind it. p. 132

The other thread of just criticism addresses the suggestion implicit in the cross that Jesus' sacrifice was to appease an angry god. Penal substitution [the Cross] was the name of this vile doctrine. p. 168

The image of the child Jesus sitting on the Buddha's lap appeals to me and captures the spirit of this book. It is an image of the Kingdom. "The Kingdom" is a sort of shorthand signifying an inclusive community of faith, love and justice. p. 12

Christianity as a set of beliefs doesn't work for me. At the same time, I acknowledge the need for ritual and celebration in my life and find fulfillment and joy in many traditional practices. I light candles and ask for the prayers of the saints.... These disciplines ... do not require me to believe literally in angels and the Virgin Birth. p. 31

Later Jones suggests that the doctrine of the Cross is a myth made up by man. (p. 133) It should be painfully clear to biblical Christians that someone who is endorsing Alan Jones should not be speaking to Christian university students at all, and Mount Vernon University will be putting their students in harm's way by bringing Brueggemann. We cannot help but wonder why the leaders of the Nazarene denomination are allowing this to happen.

A revealing critique of Brueggemann's beliefs states the following:

With the facet of interpretation, Brueggemann argues that the Bible requires and insists upon "human interpretation that is inescapably subjective, necessarily provisional, and as [we] are living witnesses, inevitably disputatious." Beyond the baseline of main claims or affirmations of Apostolic faith, we must attach only "tentative authority" to interpretations on almost *all* questions.

This is perhaps the crux of the matter – Brueggemann, along with many other contemplative/emerging leaders, considers the validity and reliability of the Bible "subjective," "provisional," and "**disputatious.**"

Brueggemann is no stranger to emerging spirituality. In his 1993 book, *Texts Under Negotiation: The Bible and Postmodern Imagination*, he lays the foundation of current emerging thinking to some degree. In fact, emerging leader Tony Jones' new release, *The New Christians*, has some resemblance to Brueggemann's 1993 book. Brueggemann explains what he means when he calls the Bible "compost." He says: "I use it [the term compost] to suggest that the Bible itself is not the actual place of new growth ... it does not tell us about the specificity of our life (pp. 61-62). For Brueggemann, "imagination" means that the interpretations of the Bible and its doctrines are up for grabs and cannot be set in concrete. And like so many of the other emerging pioneers (such as Leith Anderson – see page 28, 55 of *Faith Undone*), Brueggemann emphasizes the importance of our experience to interpret God's word. Experience molds the Word as opposed to the other way around. Basically, Brueggemann proposes that since our world is always changing, our interpretation of Scripture should always be changing too. Thus, the term "imagination."

Another pro-emerging speaker at Mount Vernon was Dr. Christian Scharen, who spoke in September (on staff at the Yale Center for Faith and Culture). He is the author of a **U2Eucharist-type book** titled *One Step Closer: Why U2 Matters to Those Seeking God* which he touted when he came to MVNU. He is also a signer of (in Yale's own words) "the recent historic open letter signed by 138 leading Muslim scholars, clerics, and intellectuals from around the world. 'A Common Word Between Us and You' identifies some core common ground between Christianity and Islam." ⁴ Another MVNU speaker that falls in the emerging camp was **Eddie Gibbs**, (see pp. 181-185, *Faith Undone*)

Mount Vernon Nazarene University is doing a disservice to students who are paying them for a Christian and biblical education. We hope that MVNU students can see this and request the president and administration of the school to reverse its present course.

Source: <http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=1903>

Homosexuality At Point Loma Nazarene University

March 24, 2011

*The following is an eyewitness account of what transpired on Sunday, March 20, 2011, at the San Diego First Church of the Nazarene, located on the campus of Point Loma Nazarene University. It is longer than the usual post, but extremely important, and I ask you to please read it all. **Especially to those parents, friends, and alumni of Point Loma, please forward this to as many as possible who may need to know.***

“THANKS BE TO GOD THAT HE MADE ME GAY... THIS IS MY PROCLAMATION: I AM GAY. I AM CHRISTIAN. AND I WILL CONTINUE TO LIVE IN THAT MANNER.”

These words, spoken by Todd Clayton, the current 2010-2011 ASB Director of Spiritual Life (also called the “student chaplain”) at Point Loma Nazarene University, ended a talk given at a meeting of All God’s Children held at San Diego First Church of the Nazarene on the campus of Point Loma Nazarene University **on March 20, 2011. Over two hundred** PLNU students sat in rapt silence as this well-spoken, respectful, wounded young man shared the pain of coming to terms with his same-sex attraction and his decision to “come out” four months ago. He then openly stated his intention to date same-sex partners, attend Princeton Divinity School and become a pastor after graduation. **NO ONE** in attendance, including some PLNU faculty members and **Reverend Dee Kelley**, who serves as the current lead pastor of the Nazarene church where the meeting was held, sought to clarify the issue of homosexual activity from a biblical perspective or to promote and defend the position of the Church of the Nazarene as stated in the manual:

“Homosexuality is one means by which human sexuality is perverted. We recognize the depth of the perversion that leads to homosexual acts but affirm the biblical position that such acts are sinful and subject to the wrath of god. We believe the grace of god sufficient to overcome the practice of homosexuality (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). We deplore any action or statement that would seem to imply compatibility between Christian morality and the practice of homosexuality. We urge clear preaching and teaching concerning Bible standards of sexual morality. (1 Timothy 1:8-10) — [2005-2009 manual of the Church of the Nazarene](#)

According to **Dr. Phil Bowles**, PLNU Professor of Literature, he and his wife, Sharon, began All God’s Children meetings in 2007 as a way to foster an “open dialogue about discussion of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) issues and faith.” However, it is widely known that the only views represented by All God’s Children leaders at these meetings are those which promote a “gay is good” stance.

THE DVD, “FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO”

The group has repeatedly viewed a DVD during meetings called “**For the Bible Tells Me So,**” which seeks to reconcile the biblical passages regarding homosexuality with living a gay lifestyle. Here is one Christian writer’s review of this DVD, from [ChristianAnswers.net](#):

For the Bible Tells Me So

MPAA Rating: Not Rated

Reviewed by: Jennifer Constantine

CONTRIBUTOR

When I submitted a request to review this movie, I did so primarily because I have a dear friend that no longer speaks to me because he identifies himself as a homosexual and knows that I identify myself as a Bible-believing Christian who views [homosexual activity](#) as [sinful](#). I wanted to see this movie because I know that, as a whole, there is an entire community that we as the Church have failed to love as Jesus does. There are exceptions, of course, but we have largely treated this group with, at best, painful uncomfortability, and at worst, well, hate.

I don't think that I am alone in my reasons for wanting to watch this movie, but, having seen it, I want to warn well-meaning Christians to use extreme discernment and [pray](#) about whether God wants you to watch. It is a subversive movie that attempts to distort [Scripture](#) to say something it [doesn't](#). I had to go back into Scripture and reaffirm what I believed, after seeing this movie, because it is VERY effective at manipulating emotions and quoting Scripture out of context.

This movie is marketed as a "must see for everyone," so it targets our youth as well as adults. I don't recommend it for anyone.

This documentary follows a few families that have a homosexual member and shows how the families have shown various degrees of acceptance, most notably the Robinsons, who's son was recently ordained by the Episcopal church as the first openly gay [bishop](#), and politician Richard Gephardt, whose daughter Chrissy identifies herself as a lesbian.

But, this movie doesn't just present a defense of homosexuality; it goes on the offensive to attack Dr. James Dobson as a dangerous hate-monger, as well as Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell as capitalists. It also states that most people who break free from the chains of homosexuality are only changed outwardly and experience only a temporary victory. (To know the REAL truth, go to [exodus-international.org](#) and [Cross Ministry](#)).

The makers of the documentary then go on to interview doctors and psychologists who give us their "scientific" view on homosexuality. But they can't have it both ways—first they misquote Scripture as the justification for homosexuality, then they want science to be the basis for justification. Which one is it?

The music used in the documentary should also give us a clue as to what influences are being subtly inserted in the background: in the opening we hear Enya, a New Age musician, and later lyrics from a song that says that just because something is in the Bible it "ain't necessarily so."

On a final note, besides showing how the Church has fallen short of loving homosexuals, the documentary makes another great point: many Christians don't know why they believe homosexuality is wrong. They can quote a few Scriptures but can't go beyond that. Here is a direct quote from the film: "Most Christians haven't read the Bible, so do they really know what it says and what the true intent is? Probably not. So how do they know? What do they base their Bible beliefs on? Someone else tells them."

While I think that quote is an exaggeration, it is not too far off the mark. We as Christians need to know why we believe what we believe. It is imperative, for [Paul](#) says we will be swept away with "every wind of doctrine" ([Eph. 4:14](#)).

Another review of "For the Bible Tells Me So" found at <http://ex-gaytruth.com/for-the-bible-tells-me-so-critical-movie-review/> states, "Besides the deception and lies presented as truths, the gay theology espoused in the film claiming that the Bible does not condemn homosexual behavior is considered by many a self-serving concoction..."

INVOLVEMENT OF SOME PLNU PROFESSORS

In 2009, **Dr. Michael Lodahl**, PLNU Professor of Theology and World Religions, spoke to All God's Children attendees. Here is one father's story regarding that particular meeting:

"I gained familiarity with SSA (same-sex attraction) in January 2009 when our daughter informed my wife and I that she was in a same-sex relationship. She told us that while attending Point Loma she nurtured her SSA ideas, which culminated after she graduated. She wanted us to meet the theology professors who helped her scripturally understand why her SSA was acceptable. She invited us to a group (All God's Children) she had been attending at the Point Loma campus Nazarene church, to give us a chance to be enlightened.

*In February 2009 we drove to San Diego for this Sunday afternoon meeting at the campus church. During the presentation **I heard no balance and only predetermined pro-gay conclusions presented.** The session was 2 hours, including a variety of discussion, with my comments being the only non-pro gay advocacy. At the conclusion of the presentation I talked to Lodahl and told him it was amazing how the course of a vehicle can be guided if you loosen the lug nuts sufficiently. His dismissive arrogance was oozing and my anger was seething. I could not believe this was happening! The knowledge of our daughter is a month old, and now crumbling before my eyes is the highly trusted educational institution of our family. It felt like I got hit in the face with a baseball bat, a second time! This can't be happening. The religious institution I thought would be there, to whom we entrusted the spiritual development of our children, was a co-conspirator for confusion and deception.*

Two years have gone by and my understanding is now deep, but the pain can still be on the surface. What I want now is for there to be a balancing voice at Point Loma and the Nazarene church. Let Lodahl and company spew their confusion, but also announce with a strong voice the loving truth of scripture that is core to the Nazarene beliefs. And if the Nazarene church has abandoned the issue, that is understandable. But say so. Announce Point Loma has a non-position on Gay Theology. Then it can be taken into account by parents when they are deciding where to send their children. Know what you are going to get for your \$40,000 yearly educational investment."

Five weeks ago, on Feb. 7, **Dr. Bettina Tate Pedersen**, PLNU Professor of Literature, attended a meeting of All God's Children where she spoke to the group, which, on that day, included another PLNU student who had decided to embrace a gay identity. Dr. Pedersen, like other PLNU faculty members before her, trotted out the litany of reasons as to why and how the scriptures condemning homosexual practice actually meant something different and that engaging in gay sexual activity could be completely compatible with being a Christian.

Although it meets on the campus of PLNU, All God's Children is not sanctioned or sponsored by the university. It falls solely under the ministry umbrella of San Diego First Church of the Nazarene, Pastor Dee Kelley and Pastor Marc Otto, who frequently attend the meetings. PLNU administrators turned down Bowles' request for permission to meet on campus. However, the group found safe haven at First Church, even though Bowles and his wife attend a United Methodist church elsewhere. The campus location enables the group to more easily indoctrinate students with their pro-gay message.

REACTIONS FROM GROUP MEMBERS AT THE MEETING

After yesterday's meeting, jubilant group members celebrated Todd's talk. One of them wrote this email to everyone listed as an All God's Children Facebook "friend":

Todd Clayton was great!

It is impossible to overstate the importance of today's event. For PLNU to have had such a popular elected officer, student chaplain, for two years, and to come out of the closet, is stunning.

This will be felt throughout the Church of the Nazarene, and on all of their campuses.

Both of Todd's parents are ordained Nazarene pastors. His mother is on the board of trustees of the university.

Keep Todd in your prayers. Pray also for Phil and Sharon Bowles, and for Pastor Dee Kelley of S.D. First Church of the Nazarene.

Oh, check out the school's online paper, The Point Weekly, tomorrow morning.

Tomorrow! <http://www.pointweekly.com/>

Ron Goetz

Here are some other quotes from the meeting:

Todd Clayton: "This question is 'Why do you not choose celibacy?' and this would go back to the way in which I read scripture..."

Audience Member: "What would you say to gay young people who have developed a deep fear of God's wrath as a result of their sexuality, as a result of the church's teachings and intolerance?"

Todd's answer: "I would say that God is abundantly loving and that you are abundantly clean and that there is space for you in God's gracious and large church."

Phil Bowles (in response to a question about why All God's Children doesn't meet on campus): "I was in conversation with leaders on the campus five, six years ago asking for permission and did not receive permission to host the "conversation" on campus, so we started at another denomination, a church in Mission Valley, and after a semester moved here (1st Church) because the pastoral staff was amenable, and so far, even though there has been an unpleasant person now and then, so far we have been allowed to continue meeting here next to the university campus. This is not the university campus. So, you would have to ask maybe administrators why not. I keep asking them why not... I don't really get an answer..."

Audience Member (regarding a man she knew who had struggled with same sex attraction but who had married and had children and grandchildren): "He never got to experience true love and true happiness. God is love, and everybody should be able to experience that!" (thunderous applause)

Todd Clayton: "I feel indebted to the student body because you elected me, and you deserve to know at least part of the story because you entrusted me with your voice, and my hope is that I continue to hold that trust and that I can witness to the fact that I still represent you..."

Phil Bowles: "I would like to thank Todd for his wonderful gift to us..."

Pastor Dee Kelley: “Thank you, Todd, for sharing your story... and though you’ve heard it before, I simply want to say that one of the reasons this is happening is because we believe beside you that the church needs to be a safe place where we can engage in difficult conversations on difficult topics and engage our faith in that process... I so appreciate Todd’s comments that his journey in scripture and understanding of the voice of scripture in our lives is central to the discussion... There needs to be places where the scripture is engaged in conversation and where we dig into the passages to understand what has both been church history and biblical criticism and faith traditions and to do it in ways that move us closer to the reality of Christ in our lives... My prayer is for all of us that we have many more of these, and not just on this topic but the other difficult questions of sexuality and church polity and biblical questions of what it means to be a holiness witness in whatever place Christ sends us...”

Dee Kelley’s closing prayer: “Father, this has been set aside from those who have invested deeply in this local church body as sacred space. This particular room has been set aside as a sanctuary of worship. My prayer, Lord, is that somehow we leave this place challenged to worship through our conversations, through our search of The Word, through telling our story and being there as a listening ear when someone else desperately, desperately needs to tell their story...”

Audience Member to Todd Clayton: “You’ve really opened up a lot of doors, and I just want to, like, thank you and applaud you for your courage.” (applause)

WHAT NOW FOR BIBLE-BELIEVING CHRISTIANS?

If you have ever had any affiliation with PLNU and/or are a member of a Nazarene church we hope you will make your voice heard about All God’s Children. Why has this group, with their obvious agenda, been allowed to meet at a Nazarene church for over three years? Why have Phil Bowles, Dee Kelley, Michael Lodahl, Bettina Tate Pedersen and others been allowed to influence PLNU students in this manner and to this extent? What will be done by administrators and church leaders to rid Point Loma Nazarene University of these toxic influences and to inform students of the truth of God’s Word on this matter? Where is the outrage? Keep in mind, PLNU students being thus indoctrinated are our pastors and Nazarene leaders of the not-too-distant future. Just a couple of sentences from several concerned people can have a big impact. NOW is the time to speak out!

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[Homosexuality: What Does God Think? \(Corey McPherson at ENC Chapel\)](#)

The following is a transcript of Chaplain Corey McPherson's message titled "[Homosexuality: What Does God Think?](#)" Highlighted quotes in red are followed by comments (blue text) from a Nazarene pastor in response. This is not a biblical message on the sin of homosexuality.

Corey McPherson's Message, April, 2012, at Eastern Nazarene College Chapel

Corey MacPherson: Well it is good to be worshipping with you this morning. Thank you for coming all this way to our guests coming all the way to Boston and cheering on the Bruins on to victory last night as they begin their march to another Stanley Cup, and the Celtics, another NBA championship. And of course, the Yankees to another World Series. Thank you for-

Here at ENC, we have a Let's Talk About Sex Forums, a Let's Talk About Sex Committee and we even have a theme song which is kind of exciting, Salt-n-Pepa. But the committee consists of students, faculty, staff and over a three-year period, we cover certain topics addressing issues of sex and sexuality. And we try in a three-year time frame to get through the 12 topics so we can start again because new students come through. And at the beginning of the school year, we had decided it was time for me to preach another message that I had preached actually six years ago even before I was chaplain, I came to speak and preach. And I was asked to give that message again. I wasn't originally planning to do it for NSLC but as the NSLC Committee was preparing and had asked me to speak, I had told them that we needed to fit this subject in. They said maybe it is one that should be preached at NSLC and it is on the topic of homosexuality.

Now I want to begin by saying this. If you are gay, bisexual or questioning your sexual identity, there are two things I'd like to say at the outset. And these very well could be the most important things I say today for you so please listen closely. Please know that you are loved, cared for and highly valued by this community. We are thankful for you in that you are part of this community. We recognize that we still have much to learn on how to best demonstrate and express our love for you but please know it is our hearts' desire and prayer to love you as Christ loved the church. He gave his life for the church. And we trust that God will lead us to a deeper and better understanding of how to love one another. And second and most importantly, know that you are loved and deeply valued by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Please never forget these two truths. *(Where is the call to repentance to anyone who is living in any of the above sins? What if the sin was drunkardness, lying or theft? Would we soft touch our standard of holiness with the same type of response?)*

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we come before you as communities, communities of faith that seek to love like you and care like you, that seek to be faithful to what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. And there are times that we are confused and questioned on what that looks like. I know I will be sharing some of those questions that I have today. But we pray that you lead us not only in this time of worship. We pray you lead us in all of our discussions that may follow. Be glorified. We pray. Now may the words of our mouths, the meditations of our hearts be pleasing in your sight O Lord, our strength and our Redeemer. Amen.

What if I was wrong? That is the question that I began wrestling with when I was a student here at ENC. What if I was wrong? What if what the church was teaching me all these years about homosexuality? What if it was wrong? *(He never really verifies this doubt he created.*

He brings a cloud of doubt upon the very church he is ordained to represent that it might be wrong and he is not sure and creates Doubt and confusion throughout the remainder of his message.)

It was over 15 years ago that I was a student here at ENC and a good friend who eventually become one of my closest friends had a younger brother who was very, very sick. In church one Sunday morning, we were told that his brother was hospitalized with pneumonia, that he would not make it through the week. My friend actually sang in church that Sunday. He stood right here. And praise the Lord for God's grace and peace in such trying times with his brother being so sick. We wanted to be there for him. We wanted to support him. For later that week, his brother did pass away. And we went to be with him as he buried his brother.

Several months later, the two of us went to see a movie together at Braintree Cinema and I will never forget driving back from the cinema. We had just gotten off of 95 and we're passing to Quincy Adams T Station on our right when he asked me, "Did you ever see the movie Philadelphia?" I told him that I did and he asked, "Well what did you think of it?" I responded by saying something to the effect, "Why, I thought it was good." There were a few seconds of silence and then he said, "Yeah... that's how my brother died." It wasn't registering with me right way what he was saying. "What? What do you mean that's how your brother died? I thought he died of pneumonia." "Well I didn't lie to you or the church by saying that but my brother died of AIDS. His body could not fight that because of AIDS. He could not fight anymore.

Looking back on it now, I realized that it was there exiting 95, passing the Quincy Adams T Station on our right when my journey began in wrestling with God and what does God think about homosexuality. (*The bible is very clear on this subject*) This friend was becoming one of my closest friends and he did not feel comfortable. He did not feel safe and letting me know and most of his friends know that his brother was gay and that he had died of AIDS. And maybe even worse, he did not feel comfortable. He was afraid. He did not feel safe and letting the church know about his brother's life and the truth behind his death. Yes it was then I slowly began to realize when I was your age, I started to realize something was radically wrong [in the church] and something was radically wrong in my life and understanding. (*he implies the churches doctrine is wrong and that is wrong*)

A few years later, this same friend, same one whose brother had passed, my friend had grown up in a Nazarene church, attended ENC and he told me he was bisexual. It wasn't too long after that that he categorized himself as strictly homosexual. There were a group of friends that he shared this with and gradually over time it became quite clear that some of us almost outright began to affirm him in his gay lifestyle. He so desperately wanted us to approve of him as a gay man and he so desperately wanted God to approve of him. He was friend and I loved him and wanted him to be happy. (*if this friend of Corey had never been born again and forgiven then of course he was yearning for acceptance among people and God. However, the reality of homosexuality stands as an immoral behavior no matter what we think, feel or how we try to rationalize it*)

The issue of homosexuality and what does God think now took on a whole new perspective for me. And I could not help but continue to think, what if I'm wrong? (*he could help to control what he thought about and stuck to the scriptural truth regardless of his emotional connections with lost sinners whom he cared for.*) What if what the church has been teaching me has been wrong? He wants to be happy. He wants to be in a loving relationship. What is wrong with that? He wants companionship. Maybe my beliefs on the issue of homosexuality

and what I was taught growing up in the church was wrong. *(This is an indictment on the church itself as being biblically wrong in our stand for the past 100 years and all of church history. Corey here clearly is creating doubt to impressionable minds and also giving enough support for those students who are or who know someone caught in such sin to justify it to themselves based on the authority of this Elder not taking a clear stand against the immoral sin of homosexuality)*

Several of us were now out of college and had friends in seminaries and many of those seminaries and the denomination they come from support and affirm a homosexual lifestyle. Meaning, they would say that it's not a sin to live a sexually active gay lifestyle in a committed, loving, monogamous relationship. And that was new for me here.

And we soon begin meeting people and having gay friends who were in committed, long-term, monogamous relationships. I couldn't help but think what if we're wrong? What if I've been wrong? You can't help but take on a whole new perspective when someone you love is gay.

I was gradually coming to the point where I was affirming of the gay and lesbian lifestyle. By affirming, I mean encouraging him and believing that an active gay lifestyle in a committed, monogamous relationship is acceptable by God. *(it is not acceptable and this again is false teaching)* It wasn't the Bible that led me to this as much as my experience with these friends and loved ones. Although it was not difficult to find respected biblical scholars and pastors who were also gay. *(these comments to a student body at any of our colleges or in any of our churches is so wrong. He has not justification at all for his comments as an Elder in the COTN. Not only should a minister not affirm the lifestyle, but God's word actually condemns the lifestyle and its sexual acts as immoral. This statement is nothing less or more than complete confusion in the ears of those who are not solid in the faith or who are not yet in the faith and therefore a false teaching)*

In 1998, January of 1998, Eddie and I were married and this friend of mine sang three songs on our wedding. Though I was attending Nazarene seminary at the time, I was still moving more and more and more in the direction of affirming him in his lifestyle and homosexuality in general. Just because I was attending a Nazarene seminary did not mean I would have to become a Nazarene pastor. For if I was not in agreement with such a foundational point to Christian living, I knew I should not be a pastor in the Nazarene church.

It was a Sunday morning after, about six weeks after our wedding. We got home from church on a late- early Sunday evening and I got a friend, a call from a friend from Boston. She said, "Corey, I have bad news." She went on to say that this very dear friend of mine who lost his brother only a few years ago, who sang three songs in our wedding just six weeks earlier had suddenly passed away. He checked into the hospital after having flu-like symptoms but the autopsy confirmed that it was not the flu that took his life. It was meningitis. It was completely unrelated to his lifestyle. My response was cold and awkward. It was a shocking statement and my wife of six weeks was standing there and I know it sounds terrible but I didn't want to cry in front of her who my response was like, "You're kidding me." But it was not a joke. He's gone.

That was a busy week flying back to the east coast for a funeral and memorial service in two different cities. The memorial service is in this sanctuary. A group from the Midwest were flying back to Missouri very early Monday morning after the Sunday afternoon memorial service. And my friend's belongings were stored in another friend's basement. So Sunday night, I went into the basement and for hours, I just kind of rummaged through his belongings

which several friends had already done. I found some of his journals, his poetry which reminded me of what an incredibly gifted writer he was, and also reminded me of the eternal struggle he had been battling for years.

And the question that I was wrestling with the last two or three years was the same question that was going through my mind that night, but my perspective had changed again. What if I was wrong? What if I was wrong in my affirmation of a lifestyle that may be viewed by God as sinful? What if I was wrong?

So this journey took on a whole new perspective, a sense of urgency and frustration and yet the same question. It was a month or two later when I sat in one of our largest churches in our denomination hearing a guest evangelist preach a message on- I'm not actually sure what he was preaching on to be honest. But I know that in the middle of the message, out of nowhere, he made a "joke," the highly [Indiscernible] [0:11:17]. He said and you know as it says in the Bible, God made Adam and Even, not Adam and Steve. It had nothing to do with the message and even if it did, a comment like that is not only not Christian, it is sinful. For any time we demean, belittle or degrade another person or group, it is sin for it's not a [Indiscernible] [0:11:38] Christ.

And then as I was already shell-shocked by this statement, a large percentage of the congregation began to applaud. They began to applaud. And all I could think about, were my gay friends and loved ones thinking, what if this was the one time they decided to come to church with me? What if this was the one day they decided to give church a chance and walked in to hear that statement and that response? I immediately thought of the parents of gay children sitting in that sanctuary who may feel like they have to keep their son's or daughter's sexuality a secret, what must be going through their hearts and their minds? I sat in a Nazarene church on a Sunday morning in the midst of wrestling with this question of whether I was wrong in affirming my friend and his lifestyle, and I sat there thinking, "Well this joke is certainly not of God. That I am sure."

Just to jump ahead a little bit for a moment, I do appreciate a few years ago, someone from headquarters called me and asked for my perspective on this issue of homosexuality as they were preparing a booklet by the generals on the church's stance, and I shared that story, that experience, and I appreciate that they put that story in the book that went to all pastors in the Church of the Nazarene.

How do you respond in ways that are Christian when you see other Christians not living as Christ? How do you live when you are not 100% certain of what God thinks on issues of life? How do you respond when a family member or close friend tells you that they are gay and that they believe they were born that way because ever since they can remember, they have the desire of intimacy of someone of the same sex? How do you respond when someone you love says, as someone very dear to my life said recently, "If being gay is a sin then I do not want to spend eternity with God who made me this way and considered it a sin."

See the issues change when it is someone we love and care for. Our thoughts and feelings change over the issue when it hits close to home, when it involves someone you love. So I found myself looking at the issue from so many different perspectives and angles trying to find [Inaudible] [0:13:51] And I could give you a detailed bibliography of scholars and pastors from respected universities and names you would know who are affirming of the gay and lesbian lifestyle, who are Christian seminaries and universities. And I could do the same thing, give you a detailed bibliography of respected pastors, of respected scholars who are not affirming.

Wherever we are on this journey, we can find people in the Christian church to support what we're thinking and feeling, and so all this did was confuse it. And this is the place I found myself asking "God what do you think?" And that is why the title of the message this morning, Is Homosexuality, What Does God Think? Not because I feel I can give you the answer this morning but because that is the question that has been driving me since my friend's death.

And I wanted to answer this question as best I could without the influence of someone else's opinion and agenda. I simply wanted to try to wrestle through the issue as objectively as possible. So I went back to something I learned here at Eastern Nazarene College. When we look to issues of life and faith, we looked at scripture, tradition, reason and experience. We look to these four, these quadrilateral to try to see how God is calling us to live and be.

In the United Methodist Church Book of Discipline asserts that Wesley believed that the living core of the Christian faith was revealed in scripture, illuminated by tradition, vivified in personal experience and confirmed by reason. Scripture however is primary, revealing the word of God so far as it is necessary for our salvation.

And I am so desperately wanting to take a drink of water as you maybe to tell but don't know when to do that. So we are going to pause at this moment while I untap this bottle. Excuse me momentarily.

The Bible has been misused and abused on so many, many issues and agendas of those in positions of power in the church throughout her history. Scripture taken and being used out of context to try to justify a point-of-view or lifestyle is not new in the history of the church. Peter Gomes, Professor of Christian Morals at Harvard University in a New York Times article writes, "The same Bible that the advocates of slavery used to protect their wicked self interests is the same Bible that inspired slaves to revolts and their liberators to action." Let us never forget how the American Christian church used to justify slavery on the "authority of scripture." If the church finally came to a better Christian understanding on issues like slavery, maybe it's about time the church came to a better understanding of homosexuality. The oppression of women in the church and society was also justified by the use of the Bible or misuse. More and more denominations are now affirming of women in leadership positions ordaining them to preach and to lead. Maybe it's time the church came to a better understanding on homosexuality. At least this is what I was thinking and feeling and wrestling with.

When I look to the Bible, I understand it to be the foundation of authority in my life and living whereas the Book of Discipline said which I just read primary revealing the word of God so far as it is necessary for our salvation even though it is at times challenging to understand.

Many of you already know the passages of scripture that address or seem to address the issue of homosexuality. They are used as weapons to attack and abuse others so even if at times the passages quoted in the right text, it is done so in a manner that is demeaning and abusive. So I would not look to these tests. In fact, I will not quote them at all this morning.

So here is where I find myself. What does scripture and its entirety say? Instead of taking verses out of the Bible, what does the story of God reveal to us? What does it say about God and His people, this unfolding revelation of God, the story of God and his people? What does it say?

And here's what I come to recognize and understand. When we look to the whole of scripture, all 66 books from beginning to end, at no point in 5,000 years of biblical history do we have even one gay relationship mentioned in the scriptures in a positive or affirming light. A homosexual lifestyle in scripture from beginning to end is always viewed and always referred as sin.

(granted it affirms scripture here, but many of the previous statements created doubt about this very statement above- Confusing to say the least.)

A book that was helpful to me at some of these questions when we also look at issues of slavery and women and church leadership, was a book called Slaves, Women and Homosexuals in the Bible by William Webb. In that book, the author helps guide the reader in seeing that though it is true that slavery and the oppression of women seems to be affirmed in scripture, there is a redemptive movement taking place or as he calls it a redemptive hermeneutic. In other words, you can see God working and moving and unfolding his plan, redeeming the culture and its understanding of slavery and women in society. Think of Paul in the Book of Philemon when he tells the slave to return home and he says, "Whatever this slave owes you, charge it to me. Not only that, I want you to receive him as a brother." Now that may not seem like a radical statement to us but in that day, that was turning the issue of slavery completely upside down to have kingdom values. It was just not cutting at the root of slavery and the evil that it was. It was turning it upside down and redeeming it. And that is what Webb is saying. We see this redemptive movement when it comes to issues of slavery in scripture.

We see the same thing with women in society. We just celebrated Easter and as you know, the first ones to proclaim the Easter message were women. Jesus' closest disciples were women. And over and over again, we see this redemptive movement taking place with women and scripture not only in the New Testament but also in the Old Testament, the Hebrew scriptures whether we're looking to Ruth or Naomi or others throughout the Old Testament text.

Robert Gagnen and his book writes, simply put "Scripture nowhere expresses a vested interest in preserving slavery. Whereas scripture does express a vested interest in requiring a male, female dynamic in sexual relationships." He goes on to say "There are a number of positive precedents and scripture for putting women in leadership roles. There are no precedents for endorsing homosexual behavior in the Bible."

Ooh, and yet Jesus never spoke about homosexuality. And no you cannot assume a person's point-of-view based on something they haven't spoken about. It is a valid point to consider. Jesus never spoke about homosexuality. He did however speak of marriage. *(this statement again creates confusion and doubt. Jesus also came to fulfill the law and not abolish it and the laws of God prohibit homosexuality and therefore even if Jesus did say it, he also did not contradict it either. This is just more emotional verbage that creates confusion.)*

Matthew 19 verses 4 through 6. "Haven't you read the scriptures? Jesus replied." Jesus himself going back to the foundation of the word. They record that from the beginning God made them male and female. And he explain this and he said this explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one. Since they are no longer two but one, let no one separate them forth. God has joined them together. It's interesting in verse 4 that Jesus does two things. At least this is the way it stood out to me and it still does. He goes back to the authority of scripture and then He said they record it from the beginning. God made them male and female. He goes back to creation, to the created order of things. And God's created order leads to this reasoning. Granted due to the fact we are born

into sin and brokenness, not everyone will be able to have children, not everyone will get married. But the created order does create life. It leads to life. And again, though not everyone will be able to have children, not everyone will get married which Paul refers to as a higher calling because you can have undivided devotion to the Lord, it still means that God's created order does have authority. It's primary. It speaks to us. It's not perfect. It's in a broken world but it does speak to this issue. We must look to God's created order and we must allow it to speak.

I look to the history of the church not just the Church of the Nazarene, the Orthodox Christian Church, the history of our Christian faith, and throughout the history of all the major world religions even not just Christianity, none of them were affirming of homosexual practice or gay marriage. And it is not as if this is a new issue the Church is wrestling with. They have wrestled with it before. And it has never- It was never affirmed down a large scale, and if we are to have the history of the Orthodox Christian Church be our guide and issues of life and faith, it is important for us to understand that through history and even today, a gay lifestyle is not affirmed.

So we have scripture, tradition of the church, and reason, God's created order. All of these were eye-opening to me. But then we come to experience. And here's where I struggled. It is when thinking about and listening to the experience, desires, and pain of those who are gay or questioning their sexual orientation that I do struggle especially for those who have grown up in the church. *(Our students need chaplains with authority, conviction and victory. I'm not knocking transparency here, but honestly with everything already said this is drawing in confusion again. It's a back and forth message without a clear concise deep seated scriptural conviction.)*

Eight years ago when I was pastor in New York, I was on a panel discussion at Stony Brook University discussing same sex marriages. The student president of the LGBT group called me just a week earlier and asked if I would sit on the panel for the conservative point-of-view when it comes to same sex marriages. Now I was- We were pastors at a small house church at the time so I asked him what made him decide to invite me. How did he hear about me? I was kind of excited that my reputation as a pastor was being made known. And he said, "Actually, I've just been going down the phonebook to every evangelical church and everyone else is declining and I've come to North Shore Church of the Nazarene." I told him "Thank you for making me feel so loved and valued. I appreciate that."

On one side of the table to my left there were eight people that were affirming of same sex marriage. On the right, there was me and one other guy, and he was abusive. He was brutal and I was ashamed to be sitting next to him. At one point in the forum and it was in a large auditorium at Stony Brook University, every member of the panel discussion which involved parents who had children that are gay. They belong to an organization called PFLAG, Parent and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. They shared their stories and their hurt and their pain often at the hand of the church. Then others did. A mom with two children, she's a lawyer and she talked about the challenges of being a mother and having a wife and the challenges that come and how they're especially hurt in the church. There was a conservative gay Republican. Who knew really? Honestly? I was shocked. And he shared his story. And all of them were so pained. And as my, whatever this guy was, not my friend, not my colleague, whatever this fool is doing, I turned and said, "I'm a pastor of a church of like 20 people. I'm only here because they couldn't get anyone else to come. I have real, no authority. You've never heard of my church. But on behalf of the Christian church, I apologize." And something happened that I didn't expect. Well I started to cry.

(again here is more examples of him lining up with approval of homosexual acts and lifestyle that leads to acts of immorality)

When the church community has been so vicious toward the LGBT community, people will naturally turn to community that accept and love them. And the depression I see in friends go through, loved ones go through, not because they're being bullied as much though that's something that I'm going to talk about in just a moment. But because the internal struggle that is going on in them of what they've been taught or what their family has taught them, of what the church has taught them, that internal struggle fighting against their desires and their hopes and their plans for life and this overwhelming feeling that I'm going to be alone forever, at least the depression and it's sometimes for many, it leads to suicidal tendencies. And I struggle with it.

You may remember last year here at ENC, Dr. Stevenson wrote an article called Homophobia Kills. It's in our school newspaper. And in one portion of the article, he even mentioned how our denomination, the Church of the Nazarene has statements in it that can come across and actually do come across as hateful. And the manual of the Church of the Nazarene on the issue of homosexuality, Eric writes, Dr. Stevenson writes, "Search the word wrath as in the wrath of God, one hit, one time in the entire Nazarene manual, the dreadful phrase wrath of God is evoked. Is it reserved for murderers, rapists, child abusers, heretics, [Indiscernible] [0:27:59]? No. That special phrase is reserved for just one group, those who practice homosexuality. I am concerned about both the overt and covert impact of this language and the deeper attitudes of which it is just [Indiscernible] [0:28:14]. How can God's "wrath" be so specifically and narrowly applied? And should we be surprised to hear that people on Nazarene campuses and can I add, churches, expressing the spirit and force of this "wrath," your homophobia and hate speech."

This afternoon, the chaplains from the Nazarene schools will be gathering together for our development sessions and we will be working on a proposal to submit to the General Assembly of the Church of Nazarene next year to change the wording and statement of the wrath of God and other changes in the statement in our manual. We're not changing the theological stance but the wording behind it must change. We will submit it to the church and hopefully it will it to vote next year.

(it's very clear in God's Word that wrath is the end result of unrepented sin of immorality and other sins.)

But I see the pain. I see the depression. I see the way they they've been hurt by the church. And here in this experience piece is where I struggle. I think the scripture is clear. I think the history of the church is clear. I think God's created order is clear. But it's this experience piece that I struggle.

On the other side of the table, one of the gentlemen was a gay pastor, Pastor Shane Hibbs who founded and pastored the only lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender evangelical church on Long Island which he started about the same time I started North Shore Church of the Nazarene. Shane grew up in a very conservative church in Ohio. In fact, his family and church considered him a liberal when he was a teenager and started attending a Nazarene youth group. Shane said he always knew that he was gay but fought it for so many years because as he preach in a message on a night I attended his church, I believe the lie he preached. I believed the lie we were told that homosexuality was sin. And fighting who he believes God created him to be, he really did fight. He decided to go to God's Bible College in Ohio, a very, very conservative Bible college. And an act of defiant rebellion, one night when he was all fed

up, he ended up doing something that was so rebellious they kicked him out immediately. He went to see to movie Sister Act.

The first service I attended at Change Church was a service of forgiveness. It was a few months after we met at the panel discussion. His church members are all from the LGBTQ community together gathered for a worship. They gathered together for worship to corporately forgive the person or people that attempted to burn down their offices or their enemy. I read about it in New York Newsday and was sure to attend to this service. And I was glad that I did.

Our friendship became a strong one. My wife and I quickly became good friends with Shane and his partner Mon. Edie and I and our two children Catherine and Logan had been in their home for dinner, and they have been in our home for dinner.

In 2005, in a bold step for both congregations, we had a combined worship service at Change Church where Shane suggested and organized, and he asked me to preach. We were both nervous but it was a wonderful evening of worship. Shane called it a day of solidarity, focusing on what unites us in Christ and not what separates us. We had a second day of solidarity in 2006.

Shane and his community understood that I was a pastor who is not affirming of the gay and lesbian lifestyle yet they still welcomed me and the members of our church. And visiting Shane's church's website this week, they mentioned those days of solidarity in their history statement as an important piece to their history. I was blessed to read it from their website.

In April 2005, the Long Island Community Fellowship hosted the first joint service between the evangelical community and GLBT community. The evangelical community was represented by the Church of the Nazarene. Our denominational magazine, Holiness Today must have missed that press release. It goes on to say "This was a landmark event as two groups that have often been perceived as incompatible set aside their differences to focus on the similarities that made each of them Christian. The day of solidarity was marked as a success as persons from both groups packed the sanctuary to see history in the making. (this was an abomination to be in agreement with professing Christians living who were in direct sin according to the scriptures)

To ENC students, we're going to go just a little bit longer. I'm wrapping up soon. The shuttle will wait if you have to go over to Old Colony so please if you could just give me a few more moments of your time.

For the first two or three years as chaplain as ENC, I had wanted to bring Shane to campus and he wanted to visit. We envisioned an evening dialogue where both of us would share a little bit about our Christian journey, our faith and our friendship. I thought and still think it would have been a good idea for the purpose of modeling friendship where our love and respect for each other was not in question. He was a good friend, a dear friend. It was our hope and prayer that we could model that here. But it was not to be. (this is all clearly an endorsement to being a Homosexual Christian and homosexual pastor and we are to accept them as such. This is scriptural wrong again.)

Last year, the same week that Dr. Stevenson's article came out, Shane while attending a conference with several of his church members passed away suddenly in his sleep at the age of 37. I do not regret trying- I do regret not trying harder in arranging to have Shane visit our campus.

You may have noticed, I have not circled back around to the question I raised just a few moments ago. Experience. How culture is so formative, how society is so powerful, how the pain and depression of many gay and questioning people I have met is so great, so great to the point they're becoming suicidal, it terrifies me. I did not circle back around to answer those questions I have raised because I do not have the answers. I'm still wrestling, still trying to understand. God, why can't you help and do more?

So where do we go from here? The picture on the screen before you is the only place I knew where to go. The table of [indiscernible] [0:35:19]. And this picture has cost me some friends but that's okay. I made a lot more at Long Island Community Fellowship when they came forward and I said, "The blood of our Lord [indiscernible] [0:35:37]. *(again this is a disgrace and clearly not biblical and forbidden in Corinthians by Paul himself.)*

I have no agenda with my gay friends and loved ones other than to love them. We're friends. We're family. I am not seeking to change them. *(why not? If they do not repent they will go to hell)*

That is not for me to change anyway. God is the only one who can change any of us whatever our issues or struggles maybe. So we all must live in a way where we trust that the Holy Spirit will give us wisdom and discernment in our conversations and our relationships in our lives

William Webb summarizes well where I am on this journey, where I hope the Church of the Nazarene is, and where I hope ENC is in all of our Nazarene institutions. Webb writes, "We need to live redemptively in our relationships with gay men and lesbian women. Creating a redemptive focus to our lives means that we love homosexual people as ourselves. It means that we treat our homosexual brothers and sisters with the same kind of grace, respect, care and compassion with which we want to be treated.

(First of all the bible is clear that if we walk in sin we do not have fellowship with the Father and are backslidden if we had known the Lord. Second of all Corey calls them brothers and sisters. Unless someone is biologically one's sibling then only those who are redeemed by the Blood of the lamb are given the status as our brothers and sisters in the Lord. Corey implies that homosexual people are our brothers and sisters because they believe in Jesus even though they are still walking in the sin of immorality. This is wrong , unbiblical and a false teaching according to 1 Corinthians 5 :9-11)

It means that we fight alongside of them against hateful actions aimed at their community. It means all of the above even if we do not agree with their sexual ethics.

(the bible says we should not associate with them let alone fight alongside with them if they are those who once professed Christ and now are immoral) .

In the final analysis, each will determine whatever course of action he or she deems best for his or her life. However a difference of perspective does not mean that the Christian community should be silent about their sexual ethic. Caring for people includes seeking their very best whatever that may entail. The Christian community needs to lovingly persuade all people towards a sexual ethic that is in their best interest even if those with whom we dialogue never comes to our conclusions. Of course, such dialogue is of little or no value unless it takes place in a context of genuine friendships where the matter of love and respect is not in question. My prayer is that I, that we all live with this redemptive focus. Maybe if more Christians on all sides of the issue live with a redemptive focus, the love of the Father and the grace of the Son and the power of the Holy Spirit would be made more manifest in our lives in churches and schools and ways we never imagined. May we live with that redemptive focus."

So allow me to conclude with the way that I began. If you're sitting here at ENC who is gay, bisexual or questioning your sexual orientation, there are two things I'd like to share with you. Please know that you are loved, cared for, and highly valued by this community. We are thankful for you and that you are part of our community. We recognize that we still have much to learn on how to best demonstrate and express our love for you and everyone else. Please know it's our heart's desire and prayer to love you as Christ loved the church where He gave His life for the church. And we trust that God will lead us to a deeper and better understanding of how to love one another. And though this may be difficult to hear and understand, I have come to the place in my journey though still with many questions, that because of my love for you, I cannot affirm or decide for you any direction. I do not believe I've got-

If you allow my friend Shane to be my advocate, please know that we could still have a deep, loving friendship and relationship if you wish to do so. Second and most importantly, know that you are loved and deeply valued by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May we all live with this Christ-like redemptive focus. Please never forget these two truths. Let us pray.

Show us how to love Lord. Show us how to love more like you through the questions and through the confusion, through the doubts and through the struggles, through the pain and sorrow and grief and heartbreak, through the depression, through the frustration. Show us how to love like you. May the prayer of our lives be more. Take our lives and let them be consecrated, Lord to be. We pray these things now in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name, amen. And amen. We love you.

[applause]
[0:44:41]
[Audio Ends]

Links to Reports On Homosexuality Trends In The Nazarene Church

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2012/01/27/irresponsible-christian-college-leaders-allowing-normalization-of-homosexuality/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2012/03/26/a-response-to-dan-boones-report-on-soulforce/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2013/04/09/%E2%80%8B-eastern-nazarene-college-rejects-the-bible-moves-towards-affirmation-of-homosexuality%E2%80%8B/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2012/03/15/whats-missing-here/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2013/05/13/compromise-with-the-radical-homosexual-agenda-by-pastors/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2013/04/11/deceptive-confusion-about-orientation/>

<http://reformednazarene.wordpress.com/2013/04/09/%E2%80%8B-eastern-nazarene-college-rejects-the-bible-moves-towards-affirmation-of-homosexuality%E2%80%8B/>

The Crux of the Matter: Concerning Inerrancy of Scripture

(John Henderson)

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.- II Corinthians 11:3-4

2 Thessalonians 2:7a,10-12: *“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work ...And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”*

2 Peter 3:16 *“As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.”*

2 Peter 3:3: *“Above all, understand this: In the last days blatant scoffers will come, being propelled by their own evil urges...”* 3:5: *“For they deliberately suppress this fact, that by the word of God heavens existed long ago and an earth was formed out of water and by means of water.”* 3:17-18: *“Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard that you do not get led astray by the error of these unprincipled men and fall from your firm grasp on the truth. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the honor both now and on that eternal day.”* (NET)

Romans 1:24-26: *“Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: **Who changed the truth of God into a lie**, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature....”*

Under good advice, I am struggling with how to put things in a simpler manner so that the average person who does not spend as much time as I on these things can grasp what is happening. ***Several of us have discussed these things back and forth and have come to the conclusion that all emergent error is based in one thing: a denial of the full (total) and complete inspiration of the Scriptures in every detail. Everything else feeds off of that intentional delusion.***

An email correspondent wrote:

Having just finished reading one of Dave Hunt’s Berean Calls, I wanted to send along some of his quotes that align completely with what I have seen in my former [large Nazarene] church.

“The Bible allows for no compromise, no discussion, no dialogue with the world’s religions (emergent) in search for common ground. Remember, Christianity is not a religion but distinct from all of them.”

“Jesus didn’t say, ‘Go into all the world and dialogue about faith.’ He said, ‘Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel.’”

“A reasonable and genuine faith must take very seriously what Jesus said – not what somebody says about what Jesus said, but His very words as recorded in the Bible.”

These quotes are what I try to explain to those who believe because they hear ‘gospel words,’ the name of Jesus, and all kinds of key Christian terms....that it does not mean the emergent agenda speaker is ‘preaching the Gospel’. Why? Because he does not believe in the inerrancy of scripture and has been brainwashed into believing only parts of the Bible. He often is doing the above-mentioned...dialoguing, debating, explaining, arguing, speculating, scrutinizing, telling stories in essence, making excuses, and of course having conversations. This is not preaching the anointed power of Christ’s message that compels sinners to come to the cross...and reminds believers that they daily must make their lives right with God.

From what the writer is saying, it is not possible to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ unless you unequivocally embrace the total inerrancy of the Scriptures. Otherwise, you will be preaching “another Jesus,” a false “Jesus”. You will end up doing just as she indicates and that is talking all around the Word of God instead of correctly preaching the Word of God. You will throw yourself wide open for the infiltration of all sorts of detestable heresies such as substituting the creation account for a modified atheistic viewpoint, lying that God is limited in any way, denying miracles (Jonah, the Virgin birth, dead raised, etc.), and end up nit-picking passages—in essence placing the wisdom of man above the revelation of the omniscient God. Theoretical meandering such as this seeks to overrule revelation even when passages of the Bible are referenced—but not actually observed.

An important point being made in the writer’s statement has everything to do with how the emergent heresy is slathered (spread thickly) with a pretense of gospel preaching, a look-alike “gospel”. The method works for a period but becomes apparent as the lavish counterfeit eventually wears thin and even the least perceptive observer starts to notice things are not as they seem. I’ll not belabor that point, having talked about it often in previous articles. It is becoming increasingly clear that the entire emergent structure will instantly crumble if the errancy of the entire Bible is not firmly established, if the cover-up is not maintained, with those they try to persuade. In fact, everything they say that is part of their system of teachings can be traced right back to their denial and misuse of the Scriptures in some manner. An idea of limited inerrancy or total errancy is the hinge-pin[1] for all they embrace. It is what holds them together and makes them operate. They have no message apart from it. If they should accept the full authority of Scriptures, their many arguments that go against plain Scripture are immediately refuted by those Scriptures.

I mentioned in the previous article the paper written by Jason Bjerke[2] in which the writer addresses the controversy surrounding the Bible’s inspiration, inerrancy, and authority. He acknowledges the historical attacks from the outside but brings sharply-focused attention to the attacks from within. He makes ample references to statements by some of the modern leadership of the Church of the Nazarene as examples of attacks from within. It should be noted that the Church of the Nazarene is not alone in this because there is evidence that similar or identical attacks come also from other denominational leaders, including Southern Baptists, the Evangelical Friends, the Wesleyan Church, and Pentecostals; as well as from publishers, para-church organizations, and missionary organizations that once were solidly Biblical. Neither Bjerke nor I intend to besmirch the Church of the Nazarene, their leaders, or those other groups but it is important to inform the main body of those groups of what is actually being taught them to an extent they at least can make an informed decision about what they want to do about it one way or the other.

No lies. No cover-ups. No looking the other way. No making excuses. No denials in the face of evidence. No ducking for cover. No hit-and-runs, as so many of them so often do to those who question them.

I remain willing to be publically corrected by the Scriptures if I am wrong about anything. I am willing to have my rationale publically examined and challenged according to the common rules of rational logic. I ask the same of them—but do not expect they will ever rise to that challenge. They have not risen to that challenge so far. Perhaps there I still a chance they will. Among Bjerke’s opening statements is this: “This attack [on the inerrancy of the Scriptures] is not blatant or overt but rather subtle in its nature as it begins with the compromising of orthodox Christian beliefs.”[3] He defines orthodox as theological views that are affirmed by the Bible and have been held to since the New Testament Church.

Modern new liberalism leaders have taken orthodox content and subtly shifted it into a neo-orthodoxy. Neo-orthodoxy is a form of liberalism that, at its root, departs from the traditional understanding of inspiration of Scriptures. “Neo-orthodoxy denies [the] orthodox approach of inerrancy and inspiration, saying that inspiration was not given...[by a method of divine inspiration apart from the will and design of man], but that the author interpreted the events or word of God, thus writing his own interpretation. This denies what God has revealed to us in the [Scriptures].”[4]

“Neo-orthodox ‘truth’ is therefore defined as that which is relevant to my experience, compared to the orthodox approach which states that truth is concretely stated in the word of God and is not dependent on anyone’s experience to verify it. Neo-orthodox ‘truth,’ therefore, becomes relative and not a concrete fact by which true Christianity can be measured. Neo-orthodoxy further teaches that Scripture is not the only form of revelation, but that revelation can be directly obtained from God, for God is still speaking / revealing at present....If the church has come to a point where it believes that truth is relative to the interpretation of each individual or minister and that God is still declaring new revelation, then it is sure to lose the truth.”[5] The “new” revelation idea, “new things” as variously expressed in emergent practices, is not limited to far-out charismatic and “prophetic” elements, such as kundalini. It can be seen in an almost over-the-top reference to the “leadership” of the Holy Spirit in ordinary functions of otherwise normal Christian service. It is in the same category of: “He doth protest too much.” Neo-orthodox “theologians” will try to go beyond the idea of the Bible writers’ writing through their own personalities but will also attempt to claim that the inspired authors functioned under the limitations of human knowledge and human conditions and that those limitations are revealed in their writings to the extent that errors occurred in the original manuscripts. Thus they will say that the Bible BECOMES (not IS) the infallible Word of God as a rule of faith (pertaining to our salvation). All else (in those 66 books) are not Scripture by default. 2 Peter 1:21 is not written in that context. The verse right before it plainly says: “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.”

New liberals may try to deconstruct words like “prophecy” and say it applies only to foretelling. That incomplete statement might work some until they have to deal with another of their denials that God is omniscient.

Actually, the *foretelling* meaning of that word is critical to inspiration. Only God knows with absolute certainty all events that will unfold from before creation and into eternity beyond this existence. No man could ever do that with 100 percent accuracy. As we know, the Bible is not a history or current events book. That is not its purpose. It always looks to God’s future and must necessarily be completely accurate, even when speaking of ordinary things in the present tense. That is only possible through full inspiration.

Emergent liberals try to smooth it over by talking about “the story of salvation” and “the Scriptural message” so that you might think they are referring to every part of the Bible. They are not and they eventually tell you so. They are being seductively selective as to which passages they say are inspired—thus are *Scripture* according to them; and which they say are not inspired—thus *not Scripture* according to them.

They exert neither the intellectual honesty nor the necessary courage to go so far as to tell you which passages are and which are not inspired. That is why you have something like that pretentious decision tree to lead you into further delusions. You will even hear them say it is a Wesleyan position but that very assertion is subjectively developed according to their own whims to get you to think they are speaking from a perspective John Wesley would endorse. There is little chance, from his writings, that Wesley would recognize the “Wesleyanism” touted about these days.

The decision tree I just referenced and wrote about in the previous article is an illustration of that very error whereby the reader is left to his or her own biases, prejudices, understanding, and interpretation to determine inerrancy. That doesn’t sound like being moved by the Holy Spirit unless, of course, you are making a wild claim as mentioned above about being extra-biblically guided by the Holy Spirit—something that He would never do. One would easily hear from seducing spirits in that fashion but never from the Holy Spirit!

I listened to a television news program where a prosecuting attorney and a defense attorney were discussing with the moderator the two views of the same case. The prosecuting attorney made a very important comment: **“The truth doesn’t change. The truth remains what it is.”** When that idea is applied here, we see that we are discussing the problem of promiscuously trying to change the truth into what it is not because it has never been and never will anything but the truth is and always has been.

[1] A hinge-pin A short cylindrical rod of hardened steel running laterally near the front of the bar of a break-open gun’s action around which the barrel hook revolves when the gun is opened.

[2] Jason R. Bjerke. “[Limited Inerrancy and its Theological Issues](#)“. (Gospel of Christ Ministries, [www.gcmin.org](#)). April 11, 2011. (See the attached chart that is in his article)

[3] Ibid. 4.

[4] “[What Is Neo-Orthodoxy?](#)” [www.GotQuestions.org](#). (clarifications added in the brackets).

[5] Ibid.

Lord, Did We Not Do Many Wonderful Things In Your Name?

(By John Henderson)

Matthew 7:21-23” *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” “...I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works” (Revelation 2:23b).*

I shared through email an article by Terry Ivy[1] in which he discussed the failure of churches that focus largely on programs at the expense of conversions, as evangelical believers understand conversions. He was not decrying programs as such but the fact that vigorous conversions were conspicuously missing and all that was left were programs and events.

It has become a sickness of the soul of the church and these activities seem to be all they have left that makes them think of real church. It is their substitution for commitment to the call of Jesus to go into the world and win souls, then nourish them in the things of Christ. It is their abandonment of the New Testament Church principle of adding to the church daily such as will be saved.

In fact, when they say they want to return to the practices of the early church that is not the early church they mean. They never go back past AD 200, but rather dawdle about in the budding heresies of the centuries after that, seeking to resurrect those old errors, many of which even the modern Catholic Church is abandoning. They eagerly run after their accommodating teachers, “having itching ears,”[2] and miss the call of God altogether.

They must somehow know that deep inside, but choose rather to close the eyes and ears of their spiritual understanding against the Spirit’s warnings and arrive at a place where they actually think they are serving Christ. Once fully self-deceived, they move forward in haughty self-reliance all the way to the Judgment Bar of Christ. Even then, they still think they have served the Lord until the Lord Himself has to tell them differently. What an irreversible tragedy!

If you read the entire account in Matthew, you will see there were two groups. One group, the saved, was so focused on loving the Lord that they completely overlooked the value of their service to Him. The lost group was so focused on their “service” to Him that they completely overlooked loving Him. Both groups called Him Lord, but He was Lord only of those who had “lost” themselves only to find it again in Him. The other group only saw themselves as pushing self to the front for Him to notice and lost it all in the end.

One of my active email recipients on the west coast, a Nazarene who often responds in significant ways, wrote me the following about the Terry Ivy blog:

“Again, these ‘things’ in themselves are not wrong or even sin. But on the other hand, anything that pre-empt, distracts, plays on one’s feelings, and especially ‘mixes in’ with the Gospel needs to be evaluated...Believers continually seem to be coming up with all kinds of ways and

means to entertain....instead of coming up with prayer meetings and focusing all the messages in the church on the saving grace and the price Christ paid for me on the cross. Anything at all in life and especially in the church can become a stumbling block, discount, discredit and demean the Gospel – therefore; it should compel us to judge all in light of Christ’s redemptive work on the cross. The cross is no longer held in high esteem when all these ‘things’ come into the church. Anytime these venues are used to ‘draw’ people, I always notice that the simple clear message of the Gospel which compels sinners to come to the cross, becomes diluted and often not even mentioned.

That same person then followed with a response to my question that has become the topic of this article:

“Yes, very possibly this could pertain to the verse, ‘Lord, did we not do many wonderful things in your name?’ but...unfortunately due to the fact that the doors have been opened to the enemy – this verse is lost on those being entertained.”

Another Nazarene correspondent in the eastern U.S., responding to the same Ivy article, sent me this message:

“I believe this was also true in the (earlier) days (my childhood years) in the COTN[3]. There was spirited singing, and solid preaching, and that was about it. We went out ‘calling’ and witnessing – and that’s what brought people in. Strong preaching, always ending in an either/or – heaven or hell - confrontation, resulted in real conversions at the altar (mourner’s bench) – and many times it took more than the 2 or 3 minutes it takes to pray the ‘sinner’s prayer’. And the church grew.”

I am not a pessimist. Although I know there is to be a great falling away just prior to Christ’s Second Coming and that many will be led astray, I also believe that Jesus will not be coming for a Church hunkering down from the world’s attacks. He will be coming for a busy Church, a Church that is attending to its mission while keeping an eye on the sky.

Luke 12:37-38: *“Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.”*

[1] Terry Ivy. ReThinking Church, Part 5 – Biblical Conversions (<http://blogs.christianpost.com/guest-views/rethinking-church-part-5-biblical-conversions-9823/>).

[2] Having an itching in regard to hearing things that glut their own carnal desires “because they have an insatiable curiosity to hear new things” (from 2 Timothy 4:3, NET). For this reason, they will not tolerate sound doctrine.

[3] COTN is a common abbreviation for Church of the Nazarene



Brannon Hancock

If you can get over the provocative title, this reflection from a UM pastor on the erotics of the Eucharist is pretty exceptional (in my opinion). Thoughts?

<http://morganguyton.wordpress.com/2013/07/23/eucharist-is-how-jesus-makes-love-to-his-church/>



Eucharist is how Jesus makes love to His church

morganguyton.wordpress.com

Hear me out; I'm not trying to be offensive. Several weeks ago, I listened to a podcast from Bruxy Cavey in which he said that we need to reclaim the phrase making love. We shouldn't be offended by...

Share · Tuesday at 9:16pm via mobile

3 people like this.



Chris Bean I listened to that message by Bruxy Cavey today...he closed the message with something like this: "If our understanding of love is correct, we need to be people who are committed to go and make love...more often and in more places with more people. Tweet that!"

Tuesday at 9:36pm · 5



Padraic Glenn Ingle "There's something a little bit queer about the Eucharist." I want to meet this man. But seriously this post was a unique take that I believe effectively communicates the intimate act of the Eucharist. It was mature, but I'm alright with that.

Tuesday at 10:18pm via mobile · 2



Billie Goodson There is a guy named Christopher West I heard several years ago that spoke along the same lines. He really helped me see sex and the Eucharist in a different light that somehow intertwined mysteriously.

Tuesday at 10:21pm via mobile · 1



Bradley Hays I must say, the whole THING is provocative, but that doesn't mean it's wrong. I just experienced a rather passionate Eucharist myself, this past Sunday, reflecting on the same text.

Yesterday at 12:07am · 1



Craig Keen I don't like this piece. I understand that we are sexual all the way down, so much so, that I can't type "all the way down" without evoking a response from Beavis and Butthead. I understand that a sexless theology or liturgy or whatever is inadequately humane. I understand that it is important to address publicly a whole host of issues related to sex. However, I think there is way too much confusion and nervousness in this piece to be of much help.

Yesterday at 5:52am · 3



Brannon Hancock Craig Keen - is the confusion and nervousness us or the piece? Is it at least a good kick starter for better/different ways of connecting our bodies and sex to our theology and sacraments?

Yesterday at 9:03am via mobile · 1



Padraic Glenn Ingle Craig Keen I see the confusion, especially between the mixed metaphors, I am not sure about the nervousness you speak of?

Yesterday at 10:44am



Craig Keen I think the piece looks bold, but is actually really timid. It looks bold, because we are typically terrified even to say the word "sex" in public, let alone in public in church. It may be that even a nervous attempt to say something about sex and worship will be helpful, i.e., in getting people out into the open. Eucharist is in fact to be sexual, it seems to me, but because nobody can do anything that isn't sexual, not even (if *I* may be so bold) cuddle a newborn baby. I think it is a mistake, however, to focus on sexual "desire." (I'm not even sure the word "desire" or "eros" is adequate to get at the energy of sex.) It is probably symptomatic of the terrible social fragmentation that is characteristic of our world that we look to desire to understand sex. But that's an abstraction. Sex has everything to do with the way we engage one another in all the ways we do that. I suspect that we will better understand sex if we think of working and eating bodies. That means that eucharist is not as good as sex (or whatever), but that it is in the liturgy of the eucharist that sex becomes sacramental.

Yesterday at 1:50pm · 🍷 1



Brannon Hancock Craig Keen – I buy that. I'm trying to decide if you will really love or really hate one chapter of my book.



21 hours ago · 🍷 1



Eric Askren Interesting take on things. I dig his comments on desiring Christ in the Eucharist.

19 hours ago via mobile



Steve Zahm I like the sometime substitute/euphemism for sexual eros "intimacy." To me this captures the remarkable fact of eros' vulnerability, trust, physical indwelling (oh my), and bonding togetherness. Viewing the Eucharist in this way takes a level of maturity that is not widely found in the church.

19 hours ago via mobile · 🍷 2



Eric Askren Or perhaps Steve Zahm, wild abandon?

19 hours ago via mobile · 🍷 1



Brannon Hancock ecstasy, even?

18 hours ago



Craig Keen I'm actually much happier with "wild abandon" than "eros" or "desire." "Ecstasy" is a really good choice, though it might be helpful to approach it etymologically. The problem with the word "desire," it seems to me, is that it is forever infected by the Greek usage of the word "eros." I am thinking of Plato in particular, but he is by no means the only contributor to the way the term functions. Eros/desire is a movement forward that may well be drawn by its object, but which is powered by its own engines and fuel. It is a need looking to be filled, an itch looking to be scratched, a drive for wholeness/fullness. For whatever its worth, the word "yearning" has a completely different etymology and usage, I believe. It is related etymologically to "chara," "charis," and "eucharist." It is, it seems to me, much easier to think "grace" when one thinks "yearning" than to think it when one thinks "desire."

17 hours ago · 🍷 1

Mike King and Friends: Leading Youth To Spiritual Death At Wildgoose Festival

June 29, 2011

I am asking Bible believing Nazarenes to join me to:

1. Call for the immediate resignation of Mike King (and any other Nazarene involved with the Wild Goose Festival) from any association with the Nazarene denomination, and to remove himself as a speaker at the upcoming Nazarene Youth Congress;
2. Ask Nazarene Publishing House to stop distributing IMMERSE Youth Journal, of which King is executive director;
3. To write our General Superintendents (bgs@nazarene.org), who are charged with interpreting the Nazarene doctrines, and ask for an opinion as to why such associations are being allowed in the Church of the Nazarene, and to approve or disapprove of this type of festival. How far will things get out of hand before our leaders say something- anything?
4. Ask the new incoming president of Nazarene Theological Seminary, Dr. David Busic, to do a thorough review of what is taught at the seminary, to determine whether courses such as Celtic Spirituality are in line with scripture and our Nazarene tradition, and to determine whether Mike King is fit to remain as an adjunct professor at the seminary.
5. Ask our leaders why was an ordained Nazarene elder from New York, Gabriel Salguerro, on the schedule of speakers at the Wildgoose Festival this past weekend? Rev. Salguerro is on the board of Jim Wallis's radical social justice organization, Sojourners. At the least, it was a very serious error in judgment for Rev. Salguerro to speak at this event.
6. Plead with our national leadership to clean house and remove all who are promoting a false gospel to our youth and to our congregations. If they don't have the power to remove anyone, they can at the very least speak against what is going on, unless they themselves are complicit in all this.

The following is what led to my conclusion:



Mike King is an adjunct professor at Nazarene Theological Seminary, executive editor of IMMERSE Youth Journal which is published by Nazarene Publishing House, and president of YouthFront, a group that promotes contemplative mysticism and emergent ideas. Mike King proudly promoted this “Christian” festival for youth. He is also scheduled to be a presenter in a few weeks at the Nazarene Youth Congress. **Are any of your youth going?** Here is a post by ex-Nazarene about King and his work with IMMERSE:

<http://exnazarene.wordpress.com/2010/10/28/immerse-another-tool-by-barefoot-ministries-to-promote-the-leftistliberalemergent-agenda/>.

Here is how the festival is described on the website:

“The Wild Goose is a Celtic metaphor for the Holy Spirit. We are followers of Jesus creating a festival of justice, spirituality, music and the arts. The festival is rooted in the Christian tradition and therefore open to all regardless of belief, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, denomination or religious affiliation.”

They are promoting Celtic spirituality- occultism really- as taught by Karla Yaconelli. Tony Campolo, who was there also, promotes the same spirituality to our youth. They are intentionally bringing in only secular music groups, who claim to be Christians. Some promote yoga and other contemplative practices. Many of their speakers approve of homosexuality as being okay with “Christians.” According to National Catholic Reporter, “Wild Goose founder Gareth Higgins wants the festival to bring together **people of faith** to celebrate their diversity and their love of God in a **non-judgmental setting.**” People of faith. Not Christians, but people of faith- anything goes, ecumenism, tolerance of anything or anyone but Bible believing Christians.

Pastor Ken Silva of Apprising Ministries says: *“The wise Christian will have nothing to do with these neo-Gnostic fools who’ve unbuckled themselves from the Word of God and have embarked upon their Wild Goose Chase of subjective experience.”*

The late Dr. Walter Martin said this over 20 years ago: *“What is the great danger in the Christian church today? ... The danger to the church today, whatever the denomination, from within, is the person who wears the cloth of Christ... and who stands behind the sacred desk, and who is unfaithful to the word of God. That is the ultimate danger to the church. The **corrupt and apostate shepherds** who infest our theological seminaries and our colleges, and fill our pulpits throughout the United States and Canada, and who know not God, do not believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, and will stand in the way of anybody that wants to preach it. The cancer is within, and it eats away, and we don’t recognize it.”*

Pastor Silva and Dr. Martin are so right. Our leaders are either asleep, or have bought into the worst kind of apostasy, otherwise this kind of stuff would not be happening. This was truly a Big Tent collection of radicals who pervert the gospel. Is the future of our Nazarene youth found in places like this now? If you do nothing, then get used to it. Few seem to care what is going on, so let’s just get out of the way and let it all in. Be pragmatic, be ecumenical, it’s all good. To those who embrace this, be happy. To those who have covered their eyes to this stuff and ignored my continued warnings, do you get upset at me when I tell you the truth? **Do you have a child who is going to Nazarene Youth Congress, or do you know a child in your church who is?**

Mike King is the avenue in which unsound doctrine is being disseminated throughout the church to our youth. It is evident in his promotion and leadership in The Wild Goose Festival and in his publishing privileges via the NPH. Paul warned Timothy of this in 2 Timothy 4:3-4. Paul wrote: “For the time will come when **they will not endure sound doctrine**, but according to their **own desires**, because they have itching ears, they will **heap up for themselves teachers**; and they will **turn their ears away from the truth**, and be **turned aside to fables.**”

Mike King is a false teacher, and he is directly associating himself and giving his approval to other false teachers who reject the truth of Scripture, who promote Celtic spirituality, contemplative mysticism, social justice in place of the true gospel, and homosexuality as acceptable within Christianity. Therefore he is not representative of Christian or Nazarene ideals, and needs to leave, for the sake of our youth. (However, let me make it clear, Mike King is far from the only problem in the denomination, he is only one example of why the church is heading fast towards apostasy).

I would not be surprised to find that every single participant shares the same “anything goes ecumenical spirit” of today’s heretical movement of the emergent church and social justice crowd. And please understand that “feelings” and “personal experience” are important to these people, such as Jay Bakker, who ignores the teaching of scripture and goes with how he feels. “I feel” that it’s the right thing to do”, they say. I “feel” that God would never let someone go to hell. I “feel” that God spoke to me when I “experienced” the labyrinth. I “felt” so good yesterday as I swayed to the music. I feel that God is just a God of love (leaving out the justice aspect). I feel, I feel, I feel. Don’t you know that’s why we are in this mess now??

This Festival is more evidence that chances are good that your child or grandchild could be indoctrinated by one or more of these people, at one or more of these types of events. They will then come home to you someday and laugh in your face as you try to explain to them that you believe and trust the Bible completely. They will laugh and say, “where were you when all this was happening?” You never said a word, mom, dad, and now you are trying to tell me that you failed to teach me the truth?” Only then might you realize that your child has just been led down the road to hell by the professors and cultural icons you so blindly trusted.

If you love someone you will tell them the truth, no matter how much it hurts. It’s for their own good. Because the truth that hurts will lead to life; the falsehoods and the cover-ups and ignoring the truth, could lead to death.

Spiritual death. These people are doing just that, leading our youth to spiritual death. Embrace it, or clearly reject it.

It will do you well to listen to this by the late Walter Martin, a great defender of the faith and of God’s word: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qduSN8G7-Xw&feature=player_embedded

SOME OF THE APOSTATES FEATURED AT THE FESTIVAL.

Maybe these are the future role models for someone's Nazarene child; but rest assured, not for my child.

Tony Campolo: Emergent leader, promotes social justice and ecumenism, [Celtic spirituality](#).



Quote: “It seems to me that when we listen to the Muslim mystics as they talk about Jesus and their love for Jesus, I must say, it’s a lot closer to New Testament Christianity than a lot of the Christians that I hear. In other words if we are looking for common ground, can we find it in mystical spirituality, even if we cannot theologically agree, Can we pray together in such a way that we connect with a God that transcends our theological differences?”

Source: Evangelicals and Interfaith Cooperation, an interview with Shane Claiborne

Tony Campolo’s wife, Peggy will be there also. Peggy Campolo is even more radical in her view on homosexuality, and sees nothing wrong with [homosexual relationships](#).

Shane Claiborne: Emergent leader, promotes [contemplative mysticism](#).



Quote: “The time has come for a new kind of conversation, a new kind of Christianity, a new kind of revolution.”

Book: by Shane Claibourne entitled: Irresistible Revolution p. 29 Published: February 2006.

Jim Wallis: Liberal political activist, radical social justice proponent, uses religion to sell his agenda in the political arena.



Quote: “Being born again was not meant to be a private religious experience that is hard to communicate to others, but rather the prerequisite for joining a new and very public movement—the Jesus and kingdom of God movement. It is an invitation to a whole new form and way of living, a transformation as radical as a caterpillar becoming a butterfly. It is far more than a call to a new inner life, or a rescue operation for heaven.”

Source: The Great Awakening: Seven Ways To Change The World [New York: Harper Collins, 2008] p56 Published: .

Richard Rohr: Franciscan friar, promotes contemplative prayer. Holds to a pantheistic, universalistic doctrine. Believes that much of the Bible is myth (like the Garden of Eden). Promotes contemplative mysticism and liberal social justice work.



Quote: “The people who know God well—the mystics, the hermits, those who risk everything to find God—always meet a lover, not a dictator. God is never found to be an abusive father or a tyrannical mother, but always a lover who is more than we dared hope for. How different than the “account manager” that most people seem to worship. **God is a lover who receives and forgives everything.**”

Book: by Richard Rohr entitled: Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer [New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2003] p131. Published: 2003.

Phyllis Tickle: [Emergent leader](#).



Quote: “The new Christianity of the Great Emergence must discover some authority base or delivery system and/or governing agency of its own. It must formulate—and soon—something other than Luther’s Sola Scriptura which, although used so well by the Great Reformation originally, is now seen as **hopelessly outmoded or insufficient ...**”

Book: by Phyllis Tickle entitled: The Great Emergence, pg 151 Published: 2008.

If you can stomach it, listen to her lengthy [dialogue with Tony Jones and Lauren Winter](#) (who has appeared at several Nazarene universities, including [MVNU chapel](#) this past March). I will be compiling a short video highlight of this in the near future. It is outrageous.

Brian McLaren: Pastor, and godfather of the emergent movement; likens the Cross to [false advertising for God](#), is confused as to whether [homosexuality is a sin or not](#), promotes contemplative mysticism, rejects biblical inerrancy.



Quote: “The Bible is not considered an accurate, absolute, authoritative, or authoritarian source but a book to be experienced and one experience can be as valid as any other can. Experience, dialogue, feelings, and conversations are equated with Scripture while certitude, authority, and doctrine are to be eschewed! No doctrines are to be absolute and truth or doctrine must be considered only with personal experiences, traditions, historical leaders, etc. **The Bible is not an answer book.**”

Source: A New Kind of Christianity, p. 52 Published: 2001.

Pete Rollins: Emergent leader.



Quote: “the bible is kind of crazy coherent mess. it kind of doesn’t make sense.”

Source: <http://apprising.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/Chisham.png> (Oct 18, 2010). And in the following video, he has this nonsensical conversation with Phylis Tickle, who coined the phrase Emergence Christianity: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9sRsOhy_WWA

Nadia Bolz-Weber: Emergent leader, “[pastor](#)” of [House For All Sinners and Saints](#).



Quote: “Last Sunday I had the honor of preaching at the rite of reception/re-installation of 7 GLBTQ Lutheran clergy in San Francisco. My denomination [ELCA] changed its policy in August, now allowing GLBTQ clergy to be in life-long, monogamous, publicly accountable same-sex relationships. We’ve taken the closets out of the church.”

Source was on a blog that has since been taken down. Dated: 26th August 2010.



Peterson Toscano: from his [website](#): “ A Theatrical Performance Activist , Thoughtfully and humorously exploring queer issues”

Jay Bakker: Gay affirming emergent leader, “outlaw preacher.”



Quote: “The more I follow grace, the more I’m drawn to him (God), the more I’m willing to stand up for people being persecuted ... This sounds so churchy, **but I felt like God spoke to my heart and said ‘(homosexuality) is not a sin’.**”

Source: <http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/Story?id=2711472&page=2> Dated: April 2009.

Andrew Marin: Activist for LGBT Causes.



Founder of The Marin Foundation, “a non-profit organization that works to build bridges between the LGBT community and the Church through scientific research, biblical and social education, and diverse community gatherings.” **What this group really does is advocate for the homosexual lifestyle and to integrate this lifestyle into the body of Christ.**

Marin spoke at MVNU’s chapel, March 18, 2011. You can listen to the chapel podcast at this link: <http://www.mvnu.edu/podcast/podlist.asp?StartItem=10>. Mr. Marin has a blog called [Love Is An Orientation](#). And, his site is linked from [Mike King’s IMMERSE Journal](#), a magazine for Nazarene youth.

For a Christian refutation of Marin’s agenda, view this report; [Michael Brown Corrects Andrew Marin](#)

Samir Selmanovic: Author, key emergent leader, ordained Seventh Day Adventist pastor, AND promotes occultism.



This man blends [Wiccan worship](#) with Christianity! Critique: [God Is Father of All Religion](#)

Doug Pagitt: Emergent leader, “pastor” of Solomon’s Porch in Minnesota.



Pagitt does not believe in original sin, [denies the doctrine of hell](#), promotes “Christian” yoga in his church, and is practically a declared universalist.

In the following video, he debates with John MacArthur on the use of yoga: [Christians and Yoga](#).

Tony Jones: Emergent Leader, resident theologian at Solomon’s Porch.



Jones does not believe the scriptures are God's inspired word, [approves of homosexuality for Christians](#), promotes contemplative mysticism, and has spoken at Nazarene universities, including teaching a one week course at Mount Vernon Nazarene. He also spoke in 2007 at [Nazarene Theological Seminary](#), and [Mid-America Nazarene University](#).

In the following video, Jones and Doug Pagitt deliver their emergent propaganda: [An Emergent Manifesto of Hope](#).

After the festival ended, Jones tweeted the following blasphemous statement:



jonestony Tony Jones

#wgf11 Yes, there will be a #wgf12. (I don't have insider knowledge, but the Holy Spirit told me, and she's always right.)

26 Jun

If all of this information I just gave you is not enough to wake up genuine Bible believing Christians, I don't know what else to say.

The entire schedule of speakers can be seen here at their website:
<http://www.wildgoosefestival.org/festival-info/festival-schedule/>

NazNet Unbelief

(NazNet is an unofficial Nazarene discussion forum, although its members include many Nazarene pastors, District Superintendents, college professors, and even at least one General Superintendent. We have called this group a breeding ground for emergent heresy).

The following are quotes from a NazNet thread called "[The Search For Adam and Eve.](#)" Some of these comments are from ordained pastors. I still am surprised that my jaw still drops when I occasionally visit this site and read what they are writing. If I am the only one disturbed by their discussion, perhaps I'm in serious need of re-visiting what I have learned from Scripture. When I read Genesis, God tells us how He created the world, and how He created the first man and woman. He tells us it was Adam and Eve. Jesus Himself referenced Adam and Eve as historical figures, and Jesus spoke of Noah as historical, and many others. Paul plainly wrote that sin came onto the world, and death, through one man: Adam. I have no reason to doubt what God said in His word. If I did, why would that not lead me eventually to doubt other things He has said in Scripture as being true and historical? Yet, these people at NazNet write as if they are members of the Jesus Seminar, who got together and voted one at a time as to what words Jesus said were really His words, or not.

Having read much of what these folks have written in the past, they seem to have the mindset of those from the modernist movement, whose claim was that we can know the truth, but that we would find the truth by way of man's intellectual endeavors and reasoning, not by simply believing the truth of the Bible as plainly written. They have a hard time believing in the supernatural power of God to do what He wants, in the way He says He did, if it does not fit their pet theories. They reject Jesus Himself when he made a clear statement of Adam's actual existence. Yet they have no problem accepting the absurd, poorly devised explanation of our origins, the theory (really a hypothesis at best) called evolution. They will readily embrace the big-bang, but will also quickly and selectively reject the Bible. They readily accept the elitist musings of evolutionary high priest Karl Giberson, who rejects Holy Scripture's teaching, including the fact that it plainly tells us that homosexuality is a sin (see [recent post](#)). And they then proceed to call him a man of strong faith! Yes, strong faith in his science and his intellect, but not in the Bible.

So here are some highlighted quotes, including from a couple of prominent professors from Nazarene universities. Should you read the original thread, you will know who they are. They have been causing much damage in our Christian institutions, but few seem to care. But those who do care will continue to warn others, and expose them, as Scripture requires us to do. I've said in the past that NazNet is a breeding ground for emergent heresy and false teaching, and this proves it again.

Quotes from NazNet Discussion:

"I welcome what Karl Giberson and others in the Church of the Nazarene are doing in the area of life science."

“Giberson is a person of strong faith, and I am grateful for his involvement in the discussion. He is not "the enemy.”

“I still think its important we focus people on what scripture intends to teach us with these stories (**which has little, if anything, to do with historical details**).”

“Archaeology tells us there's no evidence for anything in the biblical timeline before the Sinai wanderings.”

“I am still comfortable with the idea that God's word isn't resistant to truth.”

“Yea... as far as I know, all signs point to no Sinai wondering, no Exodus...”

“somehow it would strengthen my faith in the creator were we to learn that when he made man in His Own image, **He did it many places, times and cases, rather than what I have understood as a one time, one case, one pile of dust only.**”

“As for 'Adam' being one man or **representative of all humankind** or even both, my hope is that people who desire to grow spiritually will **leave room for these interpretations.**”

“I can live with Adam and Eve being **idealised representations** of something that really happened beyond the reach of human awareness...”

“I fully believe there was a first sin - **I just don't think we can believe the writers of Genesis knew exactly how it came about any more than we do.** Maybe they did, I just haven't seen any evidence yet to support it.”

“Thankfully, I do believe that God inspired the Bible, so although it's a cultural mythology, **it is the cultural mythology which God selected** to tell humans about the relationship between them and God.”

“I didn't say they don't exist. [Adam and Eve] I don't know.... **I just said there's no evidence to support the claim.**”

“**I don't think there were two people named Adam and Eve**, but there were people who first understood their relationship to God and those people sinned in a way that has real consequences for the world hereafter. There's a real difference between the theological position of "first people" and the biological/historical consequences of Adam and Eve.”

“I have come to the place where I find it spiritual strengthening to allow God to have created man however He wanted, and to have described it to man also **however He felt it was best for man to hear/discover it.** It's miraculous, however one looks at it.”

“How does the genealogies given to us in the Bible give us a *real* connection. They are not exactly verified by empirical data. They have to be taken on some measure of faith.”... I think it is safer to say that Luke is writing that Jesus is in fact a human being, rather than making any statement about Adam.”

“Why does it have to be factually consistent? It was written in a time frame that facts are not really considered the same as facts are today. **They would mix in political as well as mythological aspects into their historical writings** so to look at something that traces a genealogy of a historic person in this time period you might run into some very complicated problems...”

Response to ‘so Adam was not the first man?’

“I do not know, I was not there. My position in regards to this question is that I simply hold no stock in it. If God reveals to me that there was some guy named Adam who was the very first person I doubt it would change my understanding of Christian Theology.”

This is from a prominent ordained pastor/professor:

“... I think some of you will be interested in Michael Ruse's June 10 Huffington Post essay, "Adam and Eve Didn't Exist. Get Over It!" He wrote it in light of the Christianity Today article.

Although his rhetoric can be a bit harsh, I agree with the main point Michael is making...

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael_ruse/874982.html

“I'm not buying the theory that in order for Jesus to fulfill the role of the Second Adam, we'd need an historical first one.”

“So my point was that though the story is about individuals, we might very well interpret it more broadly since it doesn't appear to be historical.”

From another prominent Nazarene professor:

“...this narrative [Adam and Eve] is **not an historical account** about ultimate origins (in spite of the Greek name of the book, Genesis). Rather it focuses on a representative couple as a way to talk about humanity in general, and the story of God and humanity.... to try to read this story as a historical account leaves us with questions for which the only answers are speculation and guesses, some of which drift into the ludicrous.”

“According to the scientific evidence, the genre of the story, and the worldview of the Ancient Near East, Adam doesn't appear to be the first man.”

Doug Hardy and Windsor Hills Camp Promotes Error Filled Books To Nazarenes

Posted on November 12, 2009 by reformednazarene

1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

I was not sure exactly where to start with this, and it might take you about 10 minutes to read it all, but this is important. After you finish this, please come back and ponder these questions: Are these books the kind of reading material and teaching that I want to have as a Nazarene? Do these books reflect the holiness tradition of the Nazarene Church? Why in the world would anyone in the Nazarene church want to use books about Roman Catholic figures whose practices and teachings are clearly heretical and false? Is the Nazarene denomination proclaiming traditional holiness teaching "on paper", while going in a totally different direction under the radar of most Nazarenes? Will I as a Nazarene just close my eyes to this since it's not "affecting me" anyway? Do I care about what just might be happening in my local church, or do I care about all Christians who may be touched by false teaching? What is going on with our seminary that at least one professor is recommending this kind of reading material? What would our General Superintendents have to say about these books? If the practices of all these Roman Catholic mystics are so good, why are they not openly promoted at District Assemblies, or widely announced in places like our Holiness Today magazine, as something good for ALL Nazarenes? **When did all this start coming into the Nazarene denomination, and why?**

With that in mind, I have stumbled onto some really disturbing information that comes right out of the Windsor Hills Camp and Retreat Center in New Hampshire, in our New England District. On their website, the Neilson Renewal Center is asking people to donate books to the The Hardy Library for Spiritual Formation. These books are being suggested by Dr. Doug Hardy, a graduate of ENC and currently professor of spiritual formation at our Nazarene Theological Seminary.

I downloaded the pdf file at the website with a list of books they are looking for, and when I opened the file, that is where my jaw figuratively dropped to the floor. I have already written two articles asking whether Roman Catholicism is being taught to Nazarene youth. I will now ask the same question here for adults: are Roman Catholicism mystical practices and ideology being promoted openly now to our pastors and adults? Apparently, it is at Windsor Hills Camp!

From reading the list of books that are being requested, a great majority of them are books written about or by Roman Catholic monks and mystics, or they are books written by modern day proponents of "spiritual formation", which many Nazarenes are still not aware of what that term really means. Spiritual formation as it is being used now by the emergent and New Age crowd, is nothing more than the use of unbiblical contemplative spirituality practices and ancient Roman Catholic practices and rituals in order to supposedly experience God and become one with God.

So what books are being asked for, and why are they so bad? As a quick summary, a great many of the titles are books about such Roman Catholic monks, saints, and mystics as: St. John of the Cross; St. Theresa of Avila; Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity; St. Therese of Lisieux; Madeline de St. Joseph; Aelred of Riveulx; Catherine of Sienna; Richard Foster (the modern day father of spiritual formation), George Fox, founder of the Quaker movement; Bernard of Clairvaux; Ignatius of Loyola; Meister Eckhart; Julian of Norwich; Mother Teresa.

There are some Wesleyan related books as well, but not much compared to these others. **It is interesting to note that one of the goals for the library is for “the increased understanding of the scriptures”, but ironically, many of these mystics are the very people who have twisted the scriptures, or substituted their own warped thinking in place of the scriptures! The other goal is for “the spiritual encouragement/formation of God’s servants”. How?**

I have a followup page (Mystics Who Are Being Promoted To Nazarenes) where I give some brief biographical data and highlight the false teachings and heresies of many of these mystics. Granted, there are some good books listed here, but there is no excuse for mixing in the bad ones! Ironically, the only Bible asked for here is the Spiritual Formation Bible, which came out of the Renovare project affiliated with... Richard Foster of course.

1

Let me just give two short descriptions of some of the mystics promoted by these books. Are these appealing to you as a Christian?:

Nouwen, Henri (1932-1996)

Roman Catholic monk who believed that there are many paths to God and each individual can claim their way to God. Was deeply into contemplative prayer, lectio divina. Has a vast influence within the emerging church and evangelicalism. He claimed that contemplative meditation is necessary for an intimacy with God. He taught that the use of a mantra could take the practitioner into God’s presence. He said that mysticism and contemplative prayer can create ecumenical unity because Christian leaders learn to hear “the voice of love”. He combined the teaching of eastern gurus with ancient Catholic practices. He taught a form of universalism and panentheism (God is in all things). He claimed that every person who believes in a higher power and follows his vision of the future is of God and is building God’s kingdom. He also taught that God is only love, unconditional love (of course that also is contradictory to scripture) (*Contemplative Mysticism*, by David Cloud, pg. 317-321)

St. Teresa of Avila

She was part of the Carmelite order, which was devoted to Mary. She hated Protestants, and believed that they brought damnation to themselves by rejecting Rome and the Mass. She was greatly influenced by books on mystical asceticism. She believed in works salvation. She was devoted to Mary, other saints, and especially to Joseph. She believed that the consecrated wafer in the Mass is Christ. She believed in purgatory. She inflicted tortures on herself and practiced extreme asceticism. She practiced mindless meditation and often went into ecstatic “raptures.” She often feared that she was possessed or influenced by the devil. She alleged to have seen Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father. She also claimed to have seen many demons, and that the most effective thing against them was holy water. She claimed to have seen and talked with many dead people. (*Contemplative Mysticism*, by David Cloud, pg. 374-384)

Following is the original list as published at the Camp website. I highlighted the more troublesome authors and titles in **red**, that I know of. My comments are in **green**. There are a couple of links you can go to to see what some of these are about, but I will have a more complete summary of most of these people on my blog... go to Lack of Discernment From Our Seminary. The Wesleyan resources were listed last.

From the website of Windsor Hills:

Send us a book! Buy us a periodical subscription! Here's how and why . . .

The Nielson Renewal Center will include the Hardy Library for Spiritual Formation. It is our dream to create a library that will encourage and support pastors, while providing resources for the tasks that are theirs. We also want this library to resource spiritual formation events that take place on the campground.

While we do have some money set aside for book purchases, we can maximize our funds if we also receive donations to the library. All material in this library must meet an important test. These books are for (1) the spiritual encouragement/formation of God's servants or (2) for increased understanding of the scriptures.

If you would like to donate any of the works listed below, please mail them to Dan Whitney. If you decide to purchase any of these books at Amazon.com, please access Amazon through the Reynolds Institute (www.reynoldsinstitute.org) website, so that the district can get credit for these purchases.

In addition to the books listed below, we would love to receive donations of any biblical commentaries published after 1980. We will keep a list of books received. You may want to call ahead to make sure you are not purchasing a duplicate. We thank you for this investment in the life of our ministers and their families.

Suggestions for a Spiritual Formation Library Windsor Hills Renewal Center New England District Church of the Nazarene Compiled by Dr. Doug Hardy, Nazarene Theological Seminary

Periodicals

Spiritual Life: A Journal of Contemporary Spirituality. Published by the Discalced Carmelites. www.spiritual-life.org A publication of the Carmelite Friars. Among other pursuits, it focuses on "examining the meaning of the lives and writings of St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa of Avila, St. Therese of Lisieux, Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity, and St. Edith Stein.

Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality. Published by The Johns Hopkins University Press.

<http://muse.jhu.edu/journal/scs> (This link seems to be missing) Weavings: A Journal of the Christian Spiritual Life.

Published by Upper Room Ministries. www.weavings.org

Prayer/Devotional Books

Benson Sr., Bob & Michael W. Benson. Disciplines for the Inner Life. Henderson, TN: Deeper Life, 1989. deSilva, David A. Praying with John Wesley. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2001. Job, Ruben P. A Wesleyan Spiritual Reader. Nashville: Abingdon, 1998. Job, Rueben P. & Norman Shawchuck. A Guide to Prayer for All God's People. Nashville: Upper Room, 1990. **The Book of Common Prayer (Episcopal Church). New York: Seabury, 1979.**

The Book of Common Prayer is the common title of a number of prayer books of the Church of England and of other Anglican churches, used throughout the Anglican Communion.

Basic Reference Works

The Spiritual Formation Bible. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. Isn't this something? The one Bible recommended, and it is the Renovare version of the Bible, right out of Richard Foster's Renovare Institute. Not KJV or NKJV, but Foster.

Series: Christian Spirituality, Vols. 1-3 (Volumes 16-18 of the series, World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest). New York: Crossroad, 1987-1990. Beasley-Topliffe, Keith. The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation. Nashville: Upper Room, 2003. Cunningham, Lawrence S. & Keith J. Egan. Christian Spirituality: Themes from the Tradition. New York: Paulist Press, 1996. Downey, Michael. Understanding Christian Spirituality. New York: Paulist Press, 1997. Holmes, Urban T. A History of Christian Spirituality. Seabury Press, 1980. Holt, Bradley P. Thirsty for God: A Brief History of Christian Spirituality. Augsburg, 1993. Wicks, Robert J. (ed.). Handbook of Spirituality for Ministers (vol. 1 and 2). Paulist Press, 1995.

Classic Spiritual Readings

Series: The Classics of Western Spirituality: A Library of the Great Spiritual Masters. New York: Paulist Press.

Includes writings by the Catholic mystic Madeleine de Saint-Joseph

Series: Upper Room Spiritual Classics. Nashville: Upper Room

Includes John Wesley, but also has writings by Theresa of Avila- Catholic mystic! and John Cassian also!

Aelred of Riveaulx. Spiritual Friendship, tr. by Mary Eugenia Laker. Cistercian Publications, 1974. He was Abbot of Riveaulx in England, homilist and historian (1109-66), became a Cistercian monk. This is a link related to Aelred:

<http://www.glbtc.com/literature/aelred.html>

Asbury, Francis. Journals and Letters, ed. by Elmer E. Clark, J. Manning Potts, and Jacob S. Payton. (3 vols.) Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958. (1821) Augustine. Confessions. New York: Penguin, 1961. (387) _____. The Enchiridion on Faith, Hope, and Love. Chicago, IL: Regnery Gateway, 1961. (d. 430) Baillie, John. A Diary of Private Prayer. New York: Scribner's Sons, 1949. (1936)

Barclay, William. William Barclay: A Spiritual Autobiography. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975. (1971) Baxter, Richard. A Call to the Unconverted to Turn and Live. Baker Book House, 1976. (d. 1691)

Bernard of Clairvaux. The Steps of Humility. tr. by George B. Burch. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1940. (d. 1153) Another Roman Catholic monk and mystic.

Bonaventure. The Soul's Journey Into God, The Tree of Life, and The Life of St. Francis, tr. by Ewert Cousins. New

York: Paulist Press, 1978. (1259) **A Franciscan Friar, venerated Mary, promoted mysticism.**

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. Letters and Papers from Prison. New York: Macmillan, 1972. (1951) Calvin, John. A Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1982. (1550)

Catania da Genova. Purgation and Purgatory: The Spiritual Dialogue. tr. by Serge Hughes. New York: Paulist Press, 1979 (Classics of Western Spirituality). (1551) **A Roman Catholic saint.**

Catherine of Siena. The Dialogue, tr. by Suzanne Noffke. New York: Paulist Press, 1980 (Classics of Western Spirituality). (1377-1378) **Another Roman Catholic mystic!**

Gregory of Nyssa. From Glory to Glory, tr. & ed. by Henry Musurillo. New York: Scribner's, 1961. (d. 394) **A Roman Catholic saint from around 400 A.D.**

Fenelon, Francois de Salignac de La Mothe. Let Go, Springdale, PA: Whitaker House, 1973. (c. 1600's) **French Roman Catholic theologian. One of the main advocates of quietism, a philosophy with much influence on many mystics.**

Foster, Richard J. and Smith, James Bryan (eds.) Devotional Classics: Selected Readings for Individuals and Groups, Harper San Francisco, 1993. Foster, Richard J. and Griffin, Emilie (eds.) Spiritual Classics: Selected Readings for Individuals and Groups on the Twelve Spiritual Disciplines, Harper San Francisco, 2000.

The "godfather" of spiritual formation. Some quotes from his book Prayer:

"Contemplatives sometimes speak of their union with God by the analogy of a log in a fire: the glowing log is so united with the fire that it is fire ..."

"What is the goal of Contemplative Prayer? ... union with God.... our final goal is union with God, which is a pure relationship where we see nothing."

"Christians ... have developed two fundamental expressions of Unceasing Prayer. The first ... is usually called aspiratory prayer or breath prayer. The most famous of the breath prayers is the Jesus Prayer. It is also possible to discover your own individual breath prayer.... Begin praying your breath prayer as often as possible."

Fox, George. Journal of George Fox. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, LTD, 1924. (d. 1691) **Founder of the Quaker movement. A universalist, here are a few statements by him to illustrate how he thought:**

"Walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone." "The Light shines through all." "There is that of divinity in all things."

Hugh of St. Victor. Selected Spiritual Writings. New York: Harper & Row, 1962. (d. 1141) **Mystic philosopher from around 1000 A.D.**

John of the Cross. Dark Night of the Soul, tr. by Allison Peers. Doubleday, 1959. (d. 1591)

Again, another Catholic mystic!

Julian of Norwich. Showings, tr. by Edmund Colledge and James Walsh. New York: Paulist Press, 1978, (Classics of Western Spirituality). (d. 1443) **Again, another Catholic mystic from England, thought to be one of the greatest!**

Kempis, Thomas A. The Imitation of Christ, paraphrased by Donald E. Demaray. Grand Rapids MI: Baker Book House, 1982. (1471) **German Augustinian monk. This book is filled with Roman Catholic heresies.**

Kierkegaard, Soren. Purity of Heart, tr. by Douglas V. Steere. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1938. (d. 1855)

Law, William. A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life and The Spirit of Love, ed. by Paul G. Standwood. New York: Paulist Press, 1978 (Classics of Western Spirituality). (1728) Leech, Kenneth. Experiencing God: Theology as Spirituality. San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row Publishing, 1985.

Loyola, Ignatius. The Spiritual Exercises, tr. by Louis J. Puhl. Loyola, 1981. (1521) **Another Catholic mystic! He wrote mystical heresy which can be found in the Barefoot Ministries book! This same book is actually recommended and quoted in one of the Barefoot books.**

Luther, Martin. Letters of Spiritual Counsel, ed. by Theodore G. Tappert. Westminster, 1955. (d. 1546) **Meister,**

Eckhart. A Modern Translation, tr. by Raymond B. Bla. New York: Harper, 1941. (d. 1328) **A German Dominican priest. Taught that man at his highest level is one with God.**

Murray, Andrew. The Inner Life. Whitaker House, 1984. (d. 1917) Muto, Susan Annette. **John of The Cross For**

Today: The Dark Night. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1994. _____. **John of The Cross For Today: The Ascent.**

Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1991. Pascal, Blaise. Thoughts, ed. by Thomas S. Kepler. Cleveland: World Pub. Co., 1955. (d. 1662) Philo of Alexandria. The Contemplative Life, tr. by David Winston. New York: Paulist Press, 1981 (Classics of Western Spirituality). (c. 50)

Rahner, Karl. Theological Investigations, Vol 3: The Theology of the Spiritual Life. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1967. **Sales, Francis de.** Introduction to the Devout Life, tr. by John K. Ryan. Harper, 1950. (1608)

Scupoli, Lorenzo. The Spiritual Combat, tr. & rev. by William Lester and Robert Mohan. Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1945. (1589)

Roman Catholic priest and writer

Steere, Douglas V. Doors Into Life: Through Five Devotional Classics. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948. _____. (ed) Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings. New York: Paulist Press, 1984 (Classics of Western Spirituality). **Steere is a Quaker. Among other things, Quakers teach that all Christians have a special "Inner Light". Also, that God is IN ALL human beings. Many of them believe in universalism.**

Here is a quote from their UK website:

"Quakers share a way of life, not a set of beliefs. We base our faith on silent worship, and our own experiences of the divine."

Teresa of Avila. The Interior Castle, tr. by Kieran Kavanaugh and Otiho Rodriguez. New York: Paulist Press (Classics of Western Spirituality). (1577) **Roman Catholic mystic, practiced a lot of heresy including scourging herself daily.**

Mother Teresa. A Simple Path: Compiled by Lucina Vardey. New York: Ballantine Books, 1995. **Roman Catholic nun,**

who led many astray by mixing Christianity with all religions as being equal.

Walsh, James (ed). **The Cloud of Unknowing**. New York: Paulist Press, 1981 (Classics of Western Spirituality). This contemplative mysticism book is by an unknown Catholic mystic from medieval times, but is popular with emergents and pastors alike. It is considered a classic in contemplative mysticism.

The Way of a Pilgrim, tr. by R. M. French. Harper, 1952. Weil, Simone. Waiting for God, tr. by Emma Crawford.

Harper Torchbooks. (d. 1943) Wesley, Charles. The Journal of Charles Wesley. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of

Kansas City (1980), 2 vols. (1736-1756) Wesley, John. The Journal of Rev. John Wesley, ed. by Nehemiah Curnock.

London: Epworth Press, 1938. (1790) Whaling, Frank (ed.) John and Charles Wesley: Selected Writings and Hymns.

New York: Paulist Press, 1981 (Classics of Western Spirituality). Woolman, John. The Journal of John Woolman.

Seacaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1972. (d. 1772)

Resources for Guided Retreats

Job, Rueben P. A Guide to Retreat for All God's Shepherds. Abingdon Press, 1994. Payne, Joseph A. Befriending: A

Self-Guided Retreat for Busy People. New York: Paulist, 1993. **Rupp, Joyce**. Meeting God in our Transition Times: A

Five-Part Group or Person Guided Retreat (Audio tape & book). Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria, 1995. **You can check out**

her homepage here: [Rupp, Joyce](#)

Spiritual Formation of the Pastor

Harbaugh, Gary L. Pastor as Person. Augsburg, 1984. Hinson, Glenn E. Spiritual Preparation for Christian Leaders.

Nashville: Upper Room, 1999. Holmes, Urban T. Spirituality for Ministry. Seabury Press, 1982. Job, Rueben P. A Guide

to Retreat for All God's Shepherds. Abingdon Press, 1994.

Nouwen, Henri. The Wounded Healer. Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1972. **Roman Catholic monk who believed that there are many paths to God. Was deeply into contemplative prayer, lectio divina. Very popular with Nazarene pastors.**

Peterson, Eugene H. Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity. William B. Eerdmans, 1987. **Author of The Message- a very corrupted "paraphrase of the Bible even Peterson does not consider it a true translation. He has lots of New Age / occultic ties and influences. A sample corrupted version from the Lord's Prayer: instead of "on earth as it is in heaven", he writes "as above, so below", an exact quote of an occultic phrase!**

_____. Subversive Spirituality. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994. _____. A Long Obedience

in the Same Direction, 2nd Ed. Downers Grove, IL : InterVarsity Press, 2000. Rice, Howard. The Pastor as Spiritual

Guide. Nashville: Upper Room, 1998.

Wesleyan Resources

Series: The Works of John Wesley. Nashville: Abingdon. Chilcote, Paul. Praying in the Wesleyan Spirit: 52 Prayers for

Today. Nashville: Upper Room, 2001. Clapper, Gregory S. As if the Heart Mattered: A Wesleyan Spirituality. Nashville:

Upper Room, 1997. deSilva, David A. Praying with John Wesley. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2001. Dunnam,

Maxie. The Christian Way: A Wesleyan View of our Spiritual Journey. Zondervan, 1987. Dunning, H. Ray. Grace, Faith,

and Holiness. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1988. Greathouse, William M. Wholeness in Christ: Toward a Biblical

Theology of Holiness. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1998. Harper, Steve. Devotional Life in the Wesleyan

Tradition. Nashville, TN: The Upper Room, 1983. Harper, Steve. Devotional Life in the Wesleyan Tradition: A

Workbook. Nashville, TN: The Upper Room, 1995.

Harmon, Mark A. The Warmed Heart : 30 Days In The Company Of John Wesley. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press,

1995. Job, Ruben P. A Wesleyan Spiritual Reader. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998. Langford, Thomas. Practical

Divinity: Theology in the Wesleyan Tradition. Abingdon, 1983.

Maas, Robin. Crucified Love: The Practice of Christian Perfection. Abingdon Press, 1989. Matthaei, Sondra H. Faith

Formation in the Wesleyan Tradition. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2000. Tracy, Wesley D., E. Dee Freeborn, Janine

Tartaglia, and Morris A. Weigelt The Upward Call. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1994. Wynkoop, Mildred A

Theology of Love. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1972.

END OF LIST -----

May God help the Nazarene denomination. Sincerely in Christ, Manny

DIVORCED FROM THE CHURCH

Note: The following story is just one example of the many men and women of principle, including college students, who have said that they will not bow down their knees to Baal. We will be adding more accounts of these Nazarenes and ex-Nazarenes who risked their reputation, and in many instances, their very jobs, in order to stand for biblical truth.

Nazarene Pastor Fired For Fighting Emergent Ideology

Posted on February 19, 2010

Dear brothers and sisters,

Disturbing trends continue to develop in our denomination. Recently, I sent out a prayer request for a pastor and his church that decided to leave the Nazarene denomination, rather than stay and bow to emergent ideology and priorities. Soon, I will be posting some information regarding those who have been forced to leave their churches (“Divorced From The Church”). More and more Bible believing Nazarenes are finding themselves ostracized and are even being labeled as cult members, hateful, dividers, “used by the devil”...etc. On and on it goes, with no biblical justification! Students are subject to ridicule or harassment for standing up against unbiblical teachings at their universities.

The following story is also another scenario, that of a pastor being fired for daring to speak out against a movement which has not even been officially welcomed into the Nazarene denomination. Please understand that it is the desire of this pastor not to target leadership, but to make you aware of the magnitude of this problem. Hopefully, some of you will begin to look at this, and not be overcome by it.

Below is a statement written by a Christian journalist who has actively supported the work of Lighthouse Ministries on the border. We would like to thank you all for your faithful support!

The Statement

As many of you know, Pastor Joe Staniforth joined Concerned Nazarenes – a group of Nazarenes troubled by false teachings in our academic institutions and many of our churches in the Western world. These teachings can be summed up as “emergent ideology.”

For more information on the emergent church movement and the mission of Concerned Nazarenes, please visit www.concernednazarenes.org.

In September 2008, Pastor Joe and his wife Claudia answered God’s call to work as missionaries, evangelists and church planters on the Texas-Mexico border. Although they’ve witnessed the Lord at work – especially in ministries in Matamoros, Mexico – Pastor Joe became increasingly concerned about emergent teachings in the Nazarene denomination. In obedience to the Lord’s leading, he began preaching against the ideology and practices of the emergent movement.

As a result of his stand, Pastor Joe met heavy opposition. He was rebuked by Nazarene pastors who promote emergent teachings, had certain preaching dates cancelled, and was cautioned not to speak out against the emergent church.

In September 2009, the district leadership of the Church of the Nazarene removed Pastor Joe from his missionary position because of his stance, but allowed him to remain as pastor of the new church plant in Brownsville, Texas.

Although he knew his pastoral position was on the line, Pastor Joe still strongly sensed God's leading to speak out against the emergent movement. He sent information to local pastors, warning them of the dangers of the emergent church. Three days before Christmas, the Nazarene district leadership dismissed him from his pastoral position on the grounds of "insubordination."

Pastor Joe says: "The Lord placed a passage on my heart before I met with certain authorities. It was about Balaam's insubordinate donkey. Remember? Balaam's donkey was considered insubordinate by his owner, because he would not budge. However, his donkey could see the danger ahead (Numbers 22:22-40). I'm just a vessel that the Lord has chosen to speak through. But He has shown me there is great danger ahead for this denomination, if we continue on the emergent path."

Pastor Joe would be happy to send you one of two excellent books – "*Faith Undone*" (also available in Spanish) and "*A Time of Departing*." We'd also be happy to send you a free copy of "*The Emerging Church*" DVD produced by Concerned Nazarenes.

If you would like Pastor Joe to share his heart with your church, he would be happy to do so. He remains an ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene and an evangelist, and is eager to help people and churches learn more about the emergent movement so they can make informed decisions. Also, he is available for revivals. Please contact us if you are interested in having Pastor Joe speak at your church.

Finally, Pastor Joe and Claudia believe this is a time to rejoice. We rejoice because our Lord has brought us into the light. The Lord is gathering His remnant! (Psalm 14:7).

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please get in touch if you have any questions or would like to discuss the emergent matter with us. May our Lord guard your hearts and minds in these testing times. "**Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.**" - Psalm 14:7 -

Appendix

COMMITTEE		ASSEMBLY	
Action: <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted	Vote: <input type="checkbox"/> For	Action: <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted	
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CA-703

THE COVENANT OF CHRISTIAN CONDUCT—HUMAN SEXUALITY
Reference Committee and North Florida District Advisory Board
Manual 37

RESOLVED that *Manual* paragraph 37 be amended as follows:

37. The Church of the Nazarene views human sexuality as one expression of the holiness and beauty that God the Creator intended for His creation. It is one of the ways by which the covenant between a husband and a wife is sealed and expressed. Christians are to understand that in marriage human sexuality can and ought to be sanctified by God[.], for [H]human sexuality achieves fulfillment only as a sign of comprehensive love and loyalty. Christian husbands and wives should view sexuality as a part of their much larger commitment to one another and to Christ from whom the meaning of life and love is drawn.

The Christian home should serve as a setting for teaching children the sacred character of human sexuality and for showing them how its meaning is fulfilled in the context of love, fidelity, and patience.

Our ministers and Christian educators should [state] clearly enunciate the Christian understanding of human sexuality, urging [Christians] believers to celebrate its rightful excellence, and rigorously [to] guard against its [betrayal] misuse and distortion.

Sexuality misses its purpose when treated as an end in itself or when cheapened by using another person to satisfy [pornographic and perverted] selfish and prurient sexual interests. We view all forms of sexual intimacy that occur outside the covenant of heterosexual marriage as sinful distortions of the holiness and beauty God intended for it.

Homosexuality [is one means by which human sexuality is perverted. We recognize the depth of the perversion that leads to homosexual acts but affirm the biblical position that such acts are sinful and subject to the wrath of God.], in its different forms and societal and cultural terms (including gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender), is an immoral perversion of God’s intended use of human sexuality. We recognize that different factors may contribute to homosexual behavior, but affirm the authority of Scripture that such acts, without exception, are contrary to the laws and nature of God, and are therefore sinful and subject to His judgment. [We believe the grace of God sufficient to overcome the practice of homosexuality (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).] We deplore any [action or statement] effort that would seem to imply compatibility between Christian morality and the practice of [homosexuality] homosexual behavior. [We urge clear preaching and teaching concerning Bible standards of sexual morality.] But equally important, we believe the grace of God sufficient to

COMMITTEE		ASSEMBLY	
Action: <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted	Vote: <input type="checkbox"/> For	Action: <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted	
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CA-712

THE ENCROACHMENT OF PROCESS THEOLOGY
Kentucky District Assembly
Manual 903.20 (new paragraph)

RESOLVED that a new paragraph be added to the *Manual* as follows:

903.20. Process Theology. Based upon the philosophical system of Alfred North Whitehead and further developed by Charles Hartshorne, argues that reality is a process of becoming, and it reconceptualizes the Christian faith as a dynamic, relational, contingent, and relative vision of existence. In process theology, evolution is the foundation for all reality, and God himself undergoes the evolutionary process. Process theology rejects the classical view of the transcendence of God without distinguishing between finite creation and an infinite creator.

As a result of the encroachment of process theology into its thought life, the Church of the Nazarene reaffirms its belief in "one eternally existent, infinite God" (*Manual* paragraph 1, Article I. The Triune God) and questions any attempt to deny the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* and the divine power to lead creation to its final destiny in Christ.

Members of Nazarenes Exploring Evolution Who Are Promoting The Ungodly And Anti-Biblical Teaching of Evolution

Thomas Jay Oord, Professor of Theology and Philosophy at Northwest Nazarene University
Scott Daniels, Sr. pastor of Pasadena First Church of the Nazarene, dean of Azusa Pacific University's
Jon Middendorf, Oklahoma City First Church of the Nazarene, Senior Pastor
Dan Boone, President of Trevecca Nazarene University
Carl Leth, Olivet Nazarene University, Dean of the School of Theology and Christian Ministry School of Theology
Rob L. Staples, Nazarene Theological Seminary, Professor of Theology Emeritus
Al Truesdale, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Christian Ethics, Nazarene Theological Seminary
Henry Spaulding, Mount Vernon Nazarene University, University President
Michael Lodahl, Point Loma Nazarene University, Professor of Theology & World Religions
Stephen Borger, Intermountain District Church of the Nazarene, District Superintendent
Bob Branson, Ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene
Jennifer Chase, PH.d, Northwest Nazarene University
Mark Winslow, Dean of the College of Natural, Social, and Health Sciences at Southern Nazarene University
Sherri Walker, Northwest Nazarene University, currently working as a strategy developer
Phil Hamner, elder in the Church of the Nazarene
Dianne Anderson, Point Loma Nazarene University, Professor of Biology
Joseph Bankard, Northwest Nazarene University, Associate Professor of Philosophy
Kyle Borger, Cody Church of the Nazarene, Associate Pastor
Bob Branson, Olivet Nazarene University, Professor of Biblical Literature Emeritus
Jennifer Chase, Northwest Nazarene University, Associate Professor of Biology
John Cossel, Northwest Nazarene University, Professor of Biology
Tim Crutcher, Southern Nazarene University, Professor of Church History and Theology
John W. Dally, Pikes Peak Hospice and Palliative Care, Chaplain
Steve Estep, Grace Church of the Nazarene, Senior Pastor
Kerry Fulcher, Point Loma Nazarene University, Provost and Chief Academic Officer
Lowell Hall, Eastern Nazarene College, Professor of Chemistry
Nancy Halliday, University of Oklahoma College of Medicine, Associate Professor of Cell Biology
Bethany Hull Somers, Skagit Valley Hospital, Chaplain
Dee Kelley, San Diego First Church of the Nazarene, Senior Pastor
Thomas J. King, Nazarene Bible College, Professor of Old Testament
Mark Mann, Point Loma Nazarene University, Associate Professor of Theology
Marty Michelson, Ordained Elder in the Church of the Nazarene, Professor and Peacemaker
Mark Quanstrom, Olivet Nazarene University, Professor of Theology and Philosophy
Mike Schutz, Avon Grove Church of the Nazarene, Senior Pastor
Steven M. Smith, Geologist
Brent Strawn, Chandler School of Theology, Emory University, Associate Professor of Old Testament
Randie Timpe, Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Assistant to the Provost for Administration
Eric Vail, Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Professor of Theology
Alex Varughese, Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Professor of Biblical Literature
Burton Webb, Northwest Nazarene University, Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dennis Williams, Southern Nazarene University, Professor of History and Geography
Donald Yerxa, Eastern Nazarene College, Professor of History Emeritus
Shea Zellweger, Overland Park Church of the Nazarene, Ministerial Intern

<http://exploringevolution.com/leadership.html>

Resources For You To Inform Yourself And Be A Berean!

Nazarene-Related:

www.reformednazarene.wordpress.com

Portuguese: <http://nazarenoportugues.wordpress.com/>

Spanish: <http://nazarenoespanol.wordpress.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/concernednazarenes/>

<http://simplyagape.blogspot.com/>

<http://sadrnazarene.wordpress.com/>

<http://exnazarene.wordpress.com/>

<http://themastersplannazarene.blogspot.com/>

www.concernednazarenes.org

Other Recommended Discernment Ministries:

Lighthouse Trails Research Project - <http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/index.html>

Deception In The Church - Sandy Simpson - <http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/>

Let Us Reason Ministries - Mike Oppenheimer - <http://www.letusreason.org/Default.htm>

Dave Mosher – Christians United Against Apostasy

<http://davemosher.wordpress.com/>

Dr. Gary Gilley – Christian Book Reviews - <http://www.svchapel.org/resources/book-reviews>

Deceived on Purpose – Warren Smith - <http://www.deceivedonpurpose.com/index.html>

Kjos Ministries – Berit Kjos – [http://www.crossroad.to./](http://www.crossroad.to/)

A Time Of Departing Ministries – Ray Yungen - <http://www.atimeofdeparting.com/index.html>

The Berean Call- Dave Hunt - <http://www.thebereancall.org/node/6029>

Critical Issues Commentary - BobDeWaay

http://cicministry.org/commentary/articles_topic.htm

Answers In Genesis – Ken Ham - <http://www.answersingenesis.org/>

Understand The Times–Roger Oakland- <http://www.understandthetimes.org/>

Proclaiming The Gospel Ministries – Mike Gendron - <http://pro-gospel.org/x2/>

Berean Beacon – Richard Bennett - <http://www.bereanbeacon.org/>

Got Questions?org - <http://www.gotquestions.org/>

Gospel of Christ Ministries - <http://www.gcmin.org/>