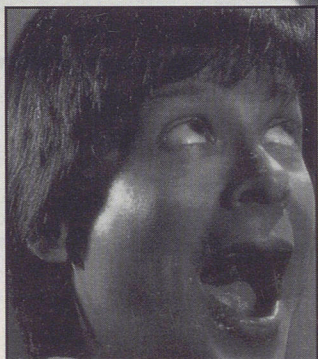


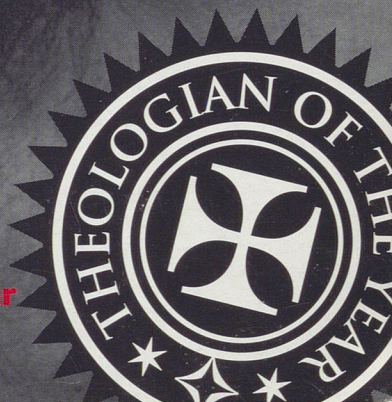
The Door

September/October 1993, #131 \$4.50

THE IN YOUR FACE ISSUE



Interviews with
Dave Barry and Tony Campolo
Also: the Theologian Of The Year



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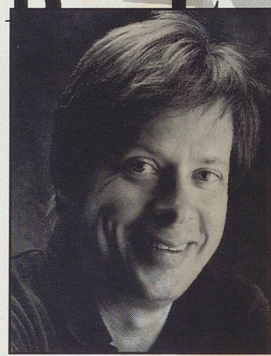
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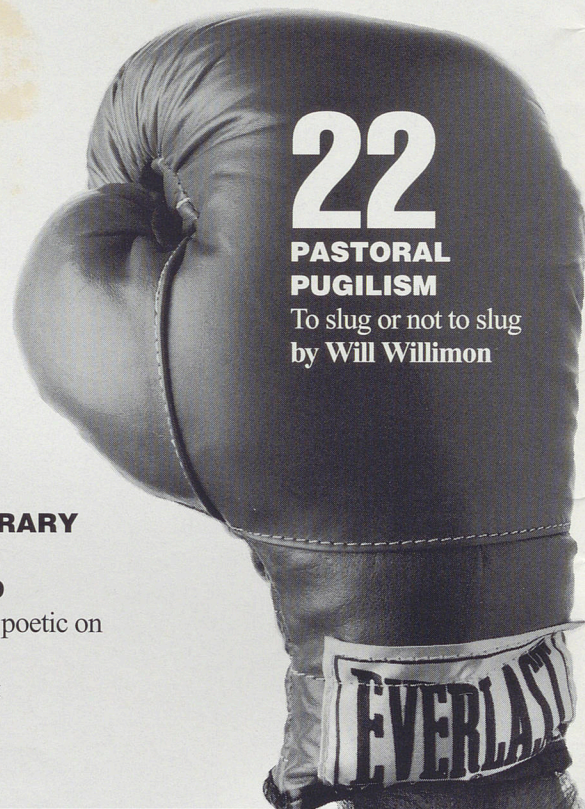
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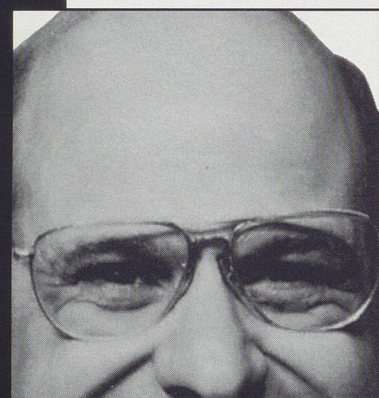
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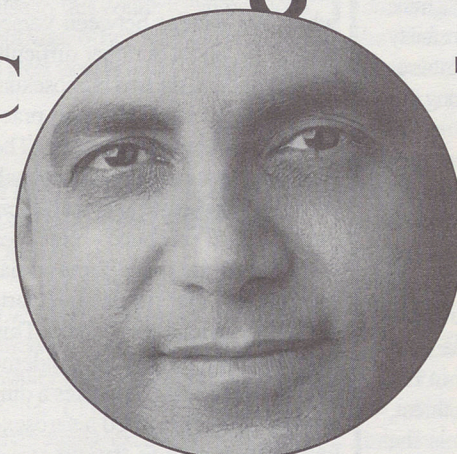
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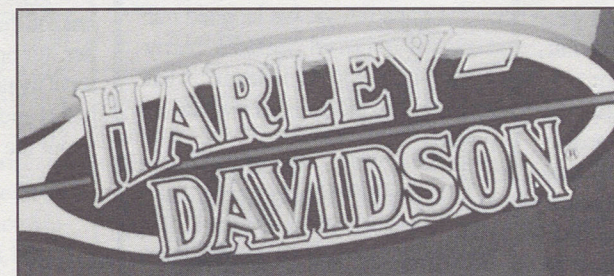
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NIGHTMARE OF THE LIBIDO

Dear Door,

First, let me join the legions who ought to write and thank you every month for a magazine that consistently pulls the carpet out from underneath our pretense and pseudo-spirituality, and yet most frequently has the sensitivity to cushion our fall with some sense of grace. *The Door* is an invaluable part of my journey, and the current issue's "Back Door" and interviews with Hauerwas/Willimon and Willard are prime examples of why: both offered challenge far beyond the intellectual; the chord struck was one that draws the reader, not to an idea, but to the One of whom they speak. Thank you for your commitment to edify and offend.

But I would be remiss if I failed to comment on the Darrel Spent piece ("Amy Grant In My Powder Heaven") that aimed (and missed miserably) at exposing the wanton sensuality of the Contemporary Christian Music industry, and all evangelicalism by association as well. While the target of the satire was dead-on (the industry is hopelessly corrupt and worldly), the elements used, I am afraid, did more harm than good. By playing on the charm and beauty of Amy Grant, and making her sex appeal the hinge on which his barb hangs, Spent (unwittingly?) perpetuates several mythologies while trying to derail one.

First (and we needn't take too much time on this, given Yaconelli's comparison of Miss Grant to Mother Teresa), Amy has taken more than her fair share of abuse from the "Christian" community, simply because she happens to be "fine." *The Door* should be more careful and sensitive to this one woman who, from every account, is both deeply sincere and thoughtful about her faith and "art." Don't punish her for being attractive and talented — it's very unbecoming.

Moreover, in allowing Grant's attractiveness to be the main object of the piece, you perpetuate two co-existing notions: First, that men are

victims of the wiles of women. The gist of it, it seems, is that Amy (and those other temptresses like her) makes us men lose control, that we are defenseless when faced with beauty, charm, and sensuality. C'mon guys, we know better. If a woman is fine, good. If I then turn that beauty into simply an extension of my sexuality, the problem is not hers, it's mine alone. Yes, we all have a responsibility to be sensitive to our weaknesses and to be modest. But for too long this has meant that women must be demure, quiet, and ornamental. Beautiful, but never real. Attractive, but not in control. An object to be sold, but always virginal. It's the marketing equivalent of "just lie there, dear, it will be over in a moment." The moment a woman, like Amy, becomes self-assured in her womanliness, she becomes a threat, a temptress, a whore. This is the same mentality that drove Leslie/Sam Phillips from CCM — if she was attractive and a man objectified her, it was somehow her fault.

We men need to grow up and repent from our self-absorbed self-distraction and let women be free to serve the Church as they feel called. In the meantime, however, we'd do better to satirize our own libidinal preoccupations or expose the way preachers use their sex appeal to gather converts to their own personality-cult gospels.

—W. Dwight Ozard
Philadelphia, PA

Dear Door,

I gotta tell ya, we laughed our butts off at Darrel Spent's "Amy Grant In My Powder Heaven." That was some of the best fun I've had in a while!

—Mark Rider
Nashville, TN

THE NIGHTMARE OF EXEGESES

Dear Door,

Great issue #130. I'm afraid I have some disturbing news for Dr. Kopp and many others among your readers. There is no Scripture text against lesbianism. None. There are several texts against male homosexuality, but none against female homosexuality. Not even Romans 1:26. Read it again, carefully. Ancient

Greeks and Jews had no common category for the two types of homosexuality. What is similar between verses 26 and 27? It is the practices which are similar between verses 26 and 27, and it is rather difficult, if not pointless, for two homosexual women to attempt the same practices as two homosexual men. The female in verse 26 is heterosexual, bored, and experimenting with alternative sexual practices — practices common in the male homosexual community. Her unspecified partner is the obvious one, a man. This is worse than having no condemnation of lesbians; Paul takes a dim view of happily married heterosexuals who decide to try out some alternative sexual activities! Yowza.

The question remains, how will the conservative Christian community continue to exclude female homosexuals without a scriptural basis? For this much is certain, conservatives consider "them" as perverts, Scripture or no Scripture (it's a cultural thing). Will they encase themselves in cultural prejudice? Probably. Will they twist Scripture? You bet, they always do until it speaks their mind. Really using the Bible as the basis of a church's faith and practice is laudable, correct, and rare as snowballs in the Florida Keys in July.

By the way, I have no personal stake in this issue. I'm the wrong gender, for one thing, and have no personal friends who fit the category. I'm just a stickler for detail, especially about the Bible in church faith and practice.

—Jim Miller
Madison, WI

THE NIGHTMARE OF DOGS

Hello Friends,

Just a note to let you know what I think of *The Door*. Generally, I love it! To tell the truth, though, I am not at all unhappy to see "Dogs" go the way of the *Jurassic Park* stars.

Speaking of those who live in CA (how about that sharp turn), how in the world can you folks live with all

those whacked-out, dope-snorting, coke-smoking, leftist weirdos who live out there? You should come visit us in Pound, WI (yes, this is that famed place in the SlimFast commercials), where the air is clean ... with the exception of those times when the farmers spread their liquid manure. Where else in this country can you look out your office window and have a great view of a John Deere dealer?

—Greg P. Tice
Pound, WI

THE NIGHTMARE OF DUKE UNIVERSITY

Dear Door,

As with most interviews in *The Door*, I very much enjoyed the interview with Will Willimon and Stanley Hauerwas in your May/June issue. I found it stimulating and challenging, except for Willimon's confused diatribe about the first trial of the four L.A. policemen accused of using too much force when subduing Rodney King. I see little difference between the mob mentality that led to summary lynchings of both blacks and whites for many years in this country and the current mob mentality that says a grainy video (which was not generally shown in its entirety) is enough to convict those cops of attempted murder. The convictions of Koon and Powell in the second trial (ever heard of double jeopardy?) seem to me more the result of the jury fearing riots than being convinced by the evidence of the defendants' guilt. Willimon might do well to read Roger Parloff's article in the *American Lawyer*. Parloff is a political liberal who actually watched much of the first trial and found the case to be quite complicated. Racism and police brutality are terrible problems, but so is the practice of sacrificing police officers (or anyone else) from time to time to satisfy the angry mob. Perhaps this is one area where Willimon has been "converted" to a worldly attitude and needs to reapply his otherwise excellent analysis.

—Stephen Salisbury
Redmond, WA

Dear Door,

The Willimon/Hauerwas interview was the best.

—Wayne Walden
Murray, KY

Dear Door,

The interviews with Willard and Hauerwas/Willimon were challenging — boy, do these guys have something to say to the Church! We are in desperate need of some honest prophets today — not those who cry "peace, peace" when there is none.

—David Martin
Ringgold, GA

THE NIGHTMARE OF THE DOOR

Dear Door,

Six or eight years ago, I was introduced to *The Door*. I loved it. For whatever reason, I neglected to subscribe and eventually lost any contact with the magazine.

In January, I miraculously (I thought) ran across a seven-year-old copy with a subscription order form still inside.

I'm just as cynical as ever, but I really think *The Door* "crossed the line" somewhere in the last five or six years. In my opinion, the magazine slipped from really funny to really tacky.

Please drop my name from your subscriber records.

—Bruce LaMaster
Rancho Cordova, CA

Dear Door,

You know what I really like about you guys? You take risks. Your editorial philosophy is consistent with my relationship with God. Without risk there is no growth. Without growth there is no life. Sometimes the things you publish, frankly, worry me — and sometimes I want to pump my fist in the air with a resounding Yes!

I appreciate your refusal to play it safe. Sometimes you fail, miserably but, when you're on,

it's well worth the risks you take. An issue of *The Door* always makes me feel ... ALIVE!

—David Kelling
Elliot City, MD

Dear Door,

Are you sure that's not Jimmy Carter on the cover of #130?

—Wayne Walden
Murray, KY

THE NIGHTMARE OF UNBELIEF

Dear Door,

I've been a *Door* subscriber for many years (off and on) and, most of the time, I experience a mixture of feelings toward its content. On the one hand, I am usually annoyed by at least one or two articles where some marginally articulate young cynic vents his/her spleen on a faith that has cost him/her nothing. On the other hand, I am always cheered by what, in my opinion, is the much-needed, tongue-in-cheek humor of "Truth is Stranger ...," "Door Dare," "Green Weenie Award," and others.

It's a fine balance, but it's never motivated me enough one way or another to actually talk back to you. Until now. In the "Back Door" of the July/Aug. '93 issue, you shared one of the most touching and helpful stories of personal doubt and faith that I have ever read. All I really want to say is thank you.

Although we all maintain that our relationship with God is something that began and continues at His initiative and is a function of His faithfulness, on a cognitive level I think most of us operate as if "the faith" is something whose substance and reality is a function of "our faith." Of course, "our faith" is generally an unstable admixture of hope; imagination; a willing suspension of disbelief, which allows us to endorse someone else's theological interpretation of history; and a small dose of genuine wonder and trust in those

tiny glimpses life has given us into the truth about ourselves and God. "Our faith" is by no means despicable, nor is it useless most of the time. The only thing wrong with it is that we are the source of it. This is the kind of faith of which God is the result. We have made it (and, consequently, the god of it) in our image, and ultimately it is no stronger than we are at our weakest point.

Such events as you shared are indeed terrifying and devastating. But, as you pointed out, if they never occurred, we might never come face-to-face again with "the faith" — the reality of God's presence and love that has been there all along. Real doubt, as you described in your article, brings us into terrifying proximity with the horrible weakness and frailty of our own human strength, but it is probably the surest way to reencounter God — not our god, but the real one: the God who is the cause of faith, not its result.

—Wyn Bryant
Knoxville, TN

Dear Door,

As a 39-year old who recently left ministry among Southern Baptists after 15 years, I really resonated (my therapist's word) with Mike Yaconelli's "Back Door" — "The Nightmare of Unbelief."

Let me pass along a quote from Kierkegaard that I discovered while studying for a systematic theology exam during my self-imposed incarceration at The World's Largest Seminary:

"Where there is no doubt, there is no faith."

These words have helped keep soul and spirit together during more than one dark, lonely, tear-flooded night while I struggled with my faith and the churches I have tried to serve. After all, doubt is a natural part of faith, is it not?

—David Simmons
Chattanooga, TN ■

Dave Barry was born in Armonk, NY. That pretty much explains why he is so strange. He does not

subscribe to *The Door*. He'd never heard of *The Door* ... and he never wants to hear of it again. That is why he gave us 10 minutes to interview him. We took that time — after all, we're not *Playboy* (he would have given us all day if we were).

Dave is a real journalist. He works for the *Miami Herald* — and has since 1983, although he never answers the phone. In 1988, Dave Barry won the Pulitzer Prize for commentary ... pending a recount. His column appears in several hundred newspapers — yet another indication of the worsening drug crisis.

Barry has written a number of short but harmful books, including *Babies and Other Hazards of Sex* and *Dave Barry Slept Here: A Sort of History of the United States*. His most recent books, *Dave Barry Does Japan*; *Dave Barry's Only Travel Guide You'll Ever Need*; *Dave Barry Talks Back*; and *Dave Barry Turns 40* have been hailed by critics as "containing a tremendous amount of white space."

The Door's John Carney caught up with Dave Barry in an elevator after following him for months. He agreed to the interview with the help of Snookums ... John's pet Doberman.

continued on page 8

The Door Interview

Dave Barry

continued from page 7

DOOR: You write a very humorous column, but on occasion there seems to be some anger showing through the humor.

BARRY: ANGRY?! ANGRY?! I suppose that's true, that there's a certain anger. A lot of columns that I write, originate in anger. I write some things about rudeness — people being thoughtless and stupid — and it will usually start when somebody does something that just really ticks me off. And I'm not in a good mood; I'm not seeing this as funny or anything. But then later on, when I write about it, I sort of turn that anger into humor. I'm convinced that anger and fear are major bases for humor.

DOOR: Another regular part of your column lately has been clippings and suggestions that people send you.

BARRY: There's a worldwide network of people who send me things. It's pretty impressive that they do that, because a great many of them are probably in institutions under restraint. Nevertheless, they manage to get sharp implements and write me letters and send me newspaper articles that they encounter. I've given up on the idea that anything I can make up would be weirder than the things that people send me. Every time I think I've written about something that could never possibly happen, like a cow exploding, then people will send me dozens of articles about a pig exploding, a toilet exploding — any

"A lot of columns that I write originate in anger ... I'm convinced that anger and fear are major bases for humor."

number of things exploding. I just sort of give up now.

DOOR: You've even heard from a Supreme Court justice.

BARRY: John Paul Stevens sent me, on official Supreme Court — or, at least, official John Paul Stevens — stationery, a magazine advertisement for a product called "Beano," which is an anti-flatulence product. Naturally, I did a column on that because I'd probably be thrown in jail if I didn't — I mean, it was suggested by a Supreme Court justice.

So, I field-tested it; it's good to test that kind of thing in a field, as opposed to an enclosed room. It worked. I

thought it worked pretty well, so I wrote a column about that. A couple of papers (I'm not naming names, but the *Portland Oregonian* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* were two) refused to run that column, feeling that it was too tasteless for their readers. Here we have a Supreme Court justice — one of the very people in charge of wearing robes and determining what's smut and what's not — who proposes this column for me. So, you go figure.

DOOR: Luckily, none of our readers know what "flatulence" is. Uh ... do you have an address for "Beano"? We have a friend who might be able to use it.

Why do you think your 1992 presidential campaign was unsuccessful?

BARRY: Probably because the American voting public has more intelligence than oatmeal. If people were really as stupid as they are generally assumed to be by people running for office, they probably would have voted for me in larger numbers. I'll be honest — I didn't do real well. I, for one, would never have voted for me. But it's beginning to seem like maybe it would have been a good idea to vote for me and that everyone's expectations would have been a lot lower to start with out than the way it's working out for the Clinton administration (or, as we've now officially changed its name to, "The Failed Clinton Administration" — one of the few administrations ever to fail before taking the oath of office). Probably in about three months or so, they're just

going to say, "OK, George Bush is president again. Never mind." I suppose there's a constitutional loophole for that.

DOOR: We were shocked to see that you've criticized TV evangelists in your column from time to time.

BARRY: I used to. I really haven't in a while, and I'm bitterly disappointed at the sort of decline and fall of TV evangelists. I want to say I was way out in front on Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker. When they were nobody — I mean, when very few people were watching them — I was a regular viewer. I'd drag my wife into the bedroom to watch them. I could always tell when Tammy was about to start crying — which is not really a great skill; usually when the camera was on, Tammy was about to start crying. I just loved them. My favorite all-timer was when it was Jim's birthday, and Tammy told Jim that she had gotten him a giraffe. And all the people clapped; these were people who had given them money, Jim and Tammy Faye, you know, to advance the Gospel by buying Jim a giraffe. Isn't there, in the Gospel according to Mark, something about "and thou shalt buy him a giraffe to show thine love"?

I loved Jimmy Swaggart. I loved Oral Roberts. They were just wondrous entertainment.

DOOR: Speaking of entertainment, what do you think of Rush Limbaugh? *The Door* has an interview with him in the next issue.

BARRY: How are you going to be able to mail that sucker? Isn't there some kind of weight limit on the — no, that's cheap physical humor, and I certainly regret anything I've just said that might suggest that ol' Rush is larger than a lot of southern states. Just kidding. I love the guy. Really. He's a major personal idol and a close friend, and we do lots of stuff together. We hunt together, we fish together, late at night we put on party dresses together — we're just two peas in a pod, Rush and me, and I'm not going to say anything that would ever reflect badly on him or his eight to ten lovers. I'm kidding! Just kidding! Fifteen to twenty lovers. Kidding. Just kidding. Gosh, I'm glad we have these laws about, you know, who you can sue and who you can't. In this case, Rush, you'd be wanting to sue this magazine.



What caused the American Revolution? This is indeed a rhetorical question that for many years historians have begun chapters with. As well they should. For the American Revolution is without a doubt the single most important historical event to occur in this nation except of course for Super

Bowl III.¹

One big causal factor in the Revolution was that England operated under what political scientists describe as "The Insane Venerably Diseased Hunchbacked Homicidal King" system of government. This basically means that for some reason, again possibly the food, the English king always turned out to be a syphilitic hunchbacked lunatic whose basic solution to virtually all problems, including humidity, was to have somebody's head cut off. There was one king, Henry "Henry the Eighth" VIII, who could barely get through a day without beheading a wife. It reached the point, with Henry, where the clergyman had difficulty completing the wedding ceremony:



CLERGYMAN: I now pronounce you man and ... WATCH OUT! (SLICE)

This style of government was extremely expensive, especially in terms of dry-cleaning costs, and as a result the kings were always trying to raise money from the colonies by means of taxation. This was bad enough without representation, but what really ticked the colonists off were the tax forms, which were extremely complicated, as is shown by this actual example:

To determineth the amounteth that thou canst claimeth for depreciation to thine cow, deducteth the amount showneth on Line XLIIICX-A of Schedule XIV, from the amount showneth on Line CVXIIIVMM of Schedule SVVII ... No, waiteth, we meaneth Line XCII of Schedule CXVILMM ... No, holdeth it, we meaneth ...



And so on. In 1762 the king attempted to respond to the colonists' concerns by setting up a special Taxpayer Assistance Service, under which colonists with questions about their tax returns could get on a special toll-free ship and sail to England, where specially trained Tax Assistors would beat them to death with sticks. But even that failed to satisfy the more radical colonists, and it soon became clear that within a short time — possibly even in the next page — the situation would turn ugly.

¹Jets 16, Colts 7. This historian won \$35.

excerpt from *Dave Barry Slept Here* (Ballantine Books, Random House, Inc., New York, 1989)

I'm on record here: I didn't say any of these things I'm being quoted as saying here today.

DOOR: How would you describe your own religious beliefs?

BARRY: I used to wonder, for years and years, what I was. And then, some friends of mine told me about this denomination, and I decided that that's what I was. It's called "Frisbeeterian."

DOOR: We've heard that one, Dave. When you die, your soul goes up on the roof and—

BARRY: —you can't get it down again.

DOOR: Your father was a pastor.

BARRY: He was a Presbyterian minister, but he worked almost all of his adult professional life in inner-city New York, setting up and trying to get funding for youth programs, summer camps, anti-gang programs, housing, that kind of thing. He never had a parish. In fact, when we were kids, he was very — he wasn't big on fiercely defending any particular denomination. So, when we were kids, we lived in a town called Armonk, NY, and there was no Presbyterian church there. My dad was good friends with Ken Morris, who was the pastor of the Episcopal church there: St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. So as kids, we attended St. Stephen's, and I was — I don't know whether I was baptized, but I went through communion and all that as an Episcopalian. I even was not only a shepherd but also one of the three wise men for the pageants in the Episcopal church, in spite of the fact that my Dad was a Presbyterian minister. But then, a lot of Sundays we'd go up to New York and watch Dad preach and go around to various churches in Harlem and the South Bronx. So it was sort of a non-denominational upbringing. He wasn't a Scripture quoter.

He was what I think of as a Christian, in the sense that he was not a judgmental person, and he just never cared — it's not that he didn't care, I guess, but he didn't ever — it would make no difference to him what the religion was of the people he was dealing

with, nor whether they first agreed with him philosophically. It was a question to him of what could he do to help.

All through my childhood until my dad died in 1984 — as long as I knew him, whenever anybody we knew had a problem, people of any faith — Jews, Catholics, atheists — they called my dad. There were always people calling or coming to the house to talk to him, because he would talk to them about their problem, and he was just a good person — a good, caring, intelligent person. You knew that if you went to him with a problem, he wasn't going to say, "Well, let's read the Bible now." I guess that works for some people, but it would never have worked for me.

DOOR: Your brother is in seminary, isn't he?

BARRY: My brother Sam, who is 10 years younger than I, is finishing up; he's going to be a Presbyterian minister also, like my dad — which I think is pretty funny, still. Well, I guess, if you knew him then ...

DOOR: Was it rough growing up as a preacher's kid?

BARRY: No, it wasn't. I mean, I've met and known a lot of "PKs" who had a hard time because a lot of things were assumed about them because of who their parents were. But when I was growing up, my dad worked in New York City. Most of my friends weren't in contact with him much. When they were in contact with him, he was just a regular guy. He didn't wear his collar backward or anything like that. You would not have known that he was ... people didn't call him "Reverend Barry," they called him "Dave." He was just a regular guy. He himself put zero pressure on me to be better or different because of what he did. He was just the most nonjudgmental person I've ever known. He was very nonauthoritarian.

So, it wasn't a hassle for me, except for brief periods in my own mind. You know, when you're a teenager you need to rebel, and I would think I was rebelling against him, but I came to realize that I wasn't rebelling against him because he wasn't demanding that I conform to any image of his, particularly.

I myself, really truly am an atheist. I sort of came to that realization pretty

young — that I just didn't believe it. I used to sort of try to get into arguments with my father, and he — he wouldn't say, well, you know, "You're wrong," and "You're stupid." He just said, "Look; this is what I believe and why I believe it. You don't have to believe what I believe." I didn't have to fight that particular battle — the "preacher's kid" battle.

DOOR: What's your next book? What are you working on now?

BARRY: I'm writing a book about guys. Not about men, but about guys.

DOOR: The difference being ... ?

BARRY: "Men" is what we like to think of as the serious aspect of maleness. Deep emotions in conflict. "Guys" is the actual, real, day-to-day part of what it is to be male — all the things you really think, you know, even though you have to sometimes pretend that you're a man. I guess I'm not being too articulate about it — which is too bad, too, because I'm writing the book. I guess it's like the trivial aspects of being a male. That's what I think it will be: guns and sports; an incredible fondness for stupid jokes, to the point where you will drop everything to tell them to people on the other side of the world using advanced technology, as opposed to working — that kind of thing.

DOOR: You mention a lot in the column about male/female differences.

BARRY: Basically, what I say is that women are better than men ... which always seems like an obvious point to me, kind of like saying "dogs are stupid." But you can write the column that says "women are better than men" or "dogs are stupid" over and over; there's many different facets of it. People really enjoy that — especially women. It's a form of pandering, really. No, I seriously believe that — like in the evening, when I talk to my wife, how deep and thoughtful she is about so many things. I think, "Gosh! What am I doing wrong?"

Contemporary American Attitudes About God

by Tom Willett

If there is a God, give me a sign! ... See, I told you that the knlpt smflrt glpptnrr ... *Steve Martin*

Not only is there no God, but try getting a plumber on weekends. *Woody Allen*

Millions long for immortality who do not know what to do with themselves on a rainy Sunday afternoon. *Susan Ertz*

I do not believe in God. I believe in cashmere. *Fran Lebowitz*

She had once been a Catholic, but discovering that priests were infinitely more attentive when she was in the process of losing or regaining faith in Mother Church, she maintained an enchantingly wavering attitude. *F. Scott Fitzgerald*

The trouble with born-again Christians is that they are an even bigger pain the second time around. *Herb Caen*

Most people past college age are not atheists. It's too hard to be one in society, for one thing, because you don't get any days off. And if you're an agnostic, you don't know whether you get them off or not. *Mort Sahl*

Heck is a place where God sends people when they say things like "Aw, shoot" instead of "shit." Visionaries see it as a warm cloakroom, or perhaps a bus terminal at 3:00 AM in August. *Michael McCormic, P.J. O'Rourke, Michael Civitello*

© 1993 Tom Willett. Taken from his forthcoming book, *Omniodoxy: Apocryphal Wisdom for Expatriate Saints*



T

I N T E R V I E W



NY CAMPOLLO

Tony Campolo is not very well known ... other than the fact that he is married to Peggy Campolo. Peggy has distinguished herself as a wife, mother, real estate agent, lecturer, winner of *The Door Trip To Yreka Sweepstakes*, and person who is the brains behind her obscure husband, Anthony Campolo. Peggy lives in St. David's, PA, a lovely suburb on Philadelphia's Mainline, just a stone's throw from Eastern College, where her husband used to teach, but still hangs out, trying to look professorial.

Sadly, teaching isn't the only thing Tony Campolo used to do. He used to have hair, he used to be the President of Evangelicals Association for the Promotion of Education, and he used to be a heretic. Tony's written a bunch of books. His book on the environment (*How To Rescue The Earth Without Worshipping Nature*) used to be available in bookstores, but is rumored to be out of print soon. We called Peggy Campolo to interview her but, unfortunately, Tony answered the phone and we didn't want to hurt his feelings, so we interviewed him instead. Actually, the interview turned out quite good ... considering the fact that his wife is a lot smarter. We hope you'll enjoy it.

continued on page 14

DOOR: The fact that your book on the environment is being discontinued by Thomas Nelson tells us that environmentalism is not a burning concern for conservative religious folk.

CAMPOLO: Interestingly enough, sociological studies have indicated that as you move along the theological spectrum from liberal to evangelical, interest in the environment decreases.

DOOR: What a surprise. One must be careful of the demon of recycling.

CAMPOLO: You are not that far off. Many conservative Christians are convinced the New Age Movement is a conspiracy and that environmentalism is a primary part of the New Age agenda. But there is more to it than just an over-reaction to New Age thinking. There are a number of Christians on the right side of the theology spectrum who believe that Jesus is coming again soon, and there will be a brand new earth, so why bother with this one?

DOOR: Light up those cigarettes cause we'll be with Jesus sooner.

CAMPOLO: I call it Titanic Theology. It goes like this: If the world as we know it is a sinking ship and is going to go under any minute now, then we shouldn't worry about the ship. We should be getting people off the ship and into lifeboats (churches). The task of Christianity, according to this theology, is to rescue people from this place called the ship (earth) and into the safety of the community of faith so that when the ship goes down, they will not go down with it.

DOOR: Anything wrong with trying to rescue people off a sinking ship?

CAMPOLO: What's wrong is that that has been the philosophy of Christianity for the last 2,000 years and the world hasn't come to an end. The apostle Paul himself argues that even though the Lord might return any minute, we should go on about life as though He might not return for another 10,000 years. In the first book of Thessalonians, Paul argues that if people don't want to work, they shouldn't eat. He was responding to certain Christians who were saying that there was no point in planting crops, no point in developing business or building

"MANY CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIANS ARE CONVINCED THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT IS A CONSPIRACY AND THAT ENVIRONMENTALISM IS A

PRIMARY PART OF THE NEW AGE AGENDA."

houses because Jesus was going to return any minute. Paul condemned those who were living expectantly of Jesus' return and not living responsibly on earth. Any theology that does not live with a sense of the immediate return of Christ is a theology that takes the edge off the urgency of faith. But any theology that does not cause us to live as though the world will be here for thousands of years is a theology that leads us into social irresponsibility.

DOOR: You mention in your book that Eastern religions are more comfortable with the environment, which doesn't exactly win over the hearts of those you were just talking about.

CAMPOLO: The Eastern Orthodox Christians put a great emphasis on worship — that the whole purpose of salvation is to create a universe that worships God. In Protestant Christianity in particular, the salvation of God is primarily designed to rescue people from hell and get them into heaven. The emphasis in Western Christianity is very humanistic.

DOOR: You are calling the enemies of the dreaded secular humanism humanistic?

CAMPOLO: In Eastern thought, the center of action is God, not human beings. What happened because of sin is that human beings — as well as the

rest of nature — have lost their capacity to worship God. The purpose of salvation within the Eastern tradition tends to rescue human beings from sin, rescue the physical universe from sin, and rescue nature from sin, in order that all of creation can worship and glorify the Lord.

DOOR: We fail to see how rescuing whales worships God.

CAMPOLO: Oh, I'm so glad you mentioned whales. A lot of jokes have been made about those who are concerned about saving the whales. After all, who needs whales, right? They're big. They bump into boats. Who needs whale blubber in 1993? Who needs their oil? Maybe at one time whales were an economic necessity to certain groups of people, but not now. In terms of economics we have to say that whales are dysfunctional.

However, if the primary reason for whales to exist is to sing hymns of wor-

ship to God, then to silence a species of whales through extinction is to silence a voice that glorifies our Lord. If you begin to look at whales that way, then destroying whales is a blasphemous act that interferes with the worship of God.

DOOR: Have you listened to a tape of whales singing lately?

CAMPOLO: A lot of the old hymns we sing pick up this theme:

*O tell of His might,
O sing of His grace,
Whose robe is the light—*

DOOR: —Uh ... Tony—

CAMPOLO: —*Whose canopy space.
His chariots of wrath
the deep thunderclouds form,
And dark is His path on the
wings of the stor—*

DOOR: That's okay, Tony, we ge—

CAMPOLO: —*Thy bountiful care
what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air,
it shines in the light;
It—*

DOOR: —Um ... Tony, we—

CAMPOLO: —*It streams from the
hills, it descends to the plain,
And sweetly distills in the dew
and the rain.*

DOOR: Well ... thank you, Tony, for singing. Can we say something?

"ANY THEOLOGY THAT DOES NOT LIVE WITH A SENSE OF THE IMMEDIATE RETURN OF CHRIST IS A THEOLOGY THAT TAKES THE EDGE OFF THE URGENCY OF FAITH. BUT ANY THEOLOGY THAT DOES NOT CAUSE US TO LIVE AS THOUGH THE WORLD WILL BE HERE FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS IS A THEOLOGY THAT LEADS US INTO SOCIAL IRRESPONSIBILITY."

CAMPOLO: Sure.

DOOR: Don't give up your day job. OK, one reason, you say, to be concerned about the environment is worship. What other reasons?

CAMPOLO: The poor. As the environmental disaster is increasing, the capacity of the earth to produce food is diminishing at an astounding rate. How many fish have to have mercury poisoning before we admit we have a problem? How much soil must be washed into the ocean? How many species of animals must die out?

The environmental disaster is a problem that affects the poor more than it affects the rich. It is not the rich who are going to suffer. We who have money are going to be able to buy food. But as the capacity of the planet to produce food gets less and less, the poor will be the first to be cut off. If we do not solve the problem of the environment, the poverty which comes will bring about wars on a frightening scale. We are already beginning to see it. When you see the continuing desertification of the continent of Africa, it's frightening. More and more people are being born with less and less food. Those conditions will bring about tribal warfare that will go beyond anything we could imagine. The coming years may bring about a holocaust of tribal wars as various groups of people try to gain control over the limited resources available.

DOOR: A lot of the environmental concern centers around animals. So are you against hunting and killing animals?

CAMPOLO: I do not argue against killing or hunting animals. I argue

about the attitude with which animals are killed. Sometimes it is necessary to kill animals. Currently in this country, we are having trouble with deer because they are becoming a threat to the well-being of forms of agriculture. In that instance, killing deer is necessary for the maintenance of the balance of nature.

But when you take the killing of animals and turn it into a sport, then I have problems. Some animals must be killed. Their skins must be used. Their meat must be consumed. But I argue that there must be a reverence for animal life, so what when we kill, we do it with a degree of regret and look forward to the day when life can be sustained without killing animals.

DOOR: You don't have trouble with eating meat?

CAMPOLO: No, it is not sinful to eat meat. I think it is quite obvious that we are all eating too much meat. Eating some meat is probably a good thing, but eating meat in increasing quantities is not good for us. The consumption of red meat by affluent people, because they're the only ones who can afford it, has soared in recent years. The Japanese, the Western Europeans, and the people in the Asian crescent (Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan) all have become great meat eaters along with us. The result is that we are having to destroy large amounts of land that should be growing grain, in order to provide grazing space for animals.

DOOR: What about killing minks for their fur coats?

CAMPOLO: The unnecessary killing of animals is a sick thing. We live in a fallen universe where some forms of animal life live off other forms of animal life. It is clear in the 51st chapter of Isaiah that all of that will come to an end in the Kingdom — that some animals will not live off other animals.

DOOR: The lion will lay down with the lamb and all that stuff?

CAMPOLO: That's right. And what I am saying is, at this stage of the universe, it is necessary for certain animals to be killed — but when the killing does happen, it should happen with reluc-

tance and regret. Remember in the film *Dances With Wolves*, it was not the killing of the buffalo that was the problem (the Native Americans were going on a buffalo hunt), the problem was the slaughtering of buffalo for sport, without any sense of reverence for these creatures, for God's creation. In the film, when the Native Americans discovered the slaughtered buffalo, there was a gasp that came across the movie audience. There was a sense that this kind of unnecessary killing of animals is wrong. That is why fur coats are a problem for me.



CAMPOLO: Including cats.

DOOR: Now really, isn't this reducing the great truths of the Gospel to absurdity? Aren't you doing a slight bit of intellectual game playing?

CAMPOLO: I talked to a lady in Wilmington, Delaware, the other day. An older lady. She comes to church every Sunday; a lovely lady — everybody in the church said so. But she's old. Her husband's gone. Her friends have died. The young people in the church are nice to her, but basically she is alone ... except for her cat. Her cat plays a very special role in her life. She

feels an affection for her cat and she feels an affection from her cat. I believe that cat is a special gift of God to that woman. That cat gives her a special sense of importance. That cat has brought joy into that woman's life. That cat is

mals for testing is right when it is absolutely necessary and it is wrong when it is not absolutely necessary.

There was an interesting case where an operation was performed whereby an organ of a baboon was transplanted into a man in order to save his life. It had to be a baboon because the baboon develops an enzyme that kills off the particular disease that was killing the man. There was no other answer. It was a matter of a baboon dying or a human dying. The animal rights advocates say that all life is of equal value. I disagree strongly. There is a hierarchy of creatures in nature and, in that hierarchy, human beings are just a little lower than the angels. The animals are beneath us. The vegetable kingdom is beneath them. It is permissible to sacrifice one form of life to support and sustain a higher form of life. I believe that will continue until the peaceable kingdom arrives.

DOOR: OK, you made a gallant try

"I AM CONTINUALLY HAVING TO CLARIFY TO PEOPLE THAT I HAVE NOT EMBRACED SOME KIND OF EASTERN MYSTICISM THAT WORSHIPS NATURE. THERE

IS A BIG DIFFERENCE IN HAVING A REVERENCE FOR NATURE AND WORSHIPPING NATURE AS THOUGH NATURE ITSELF WAS GOD."

to convince the apparently unconvinced about the need for environmental concern in the Church. It has fallen on mostly deaf ears. The question is, what

can the Church do and, secondly, what should the Church do regarding the environment?

CAMPOLO: First of all, the Church has to begin to do some intriguing preaching. The Church needs to redefine what it does on Stewardship Sunday. When we talk about stewardship, we almost always talk about giving one-tenth of your earnings to the Church in order to sustain certain church programs. Stewardship is also the care of God's creation. Stewardship is being responsible for all God has entrusted us with. The Church also needs to teach its people how to love animals.

DOOR: Oh please, tell us you are not suggesting something like a service to bless animals.

CAMPOLO: That's exactly what I am suggesting. All I can say is that St. Francis would not have thought such a service was off the wall.

DOOR: St. Francis was a tad weird, but if you want to bless a cat in church—

CAMPOLO: —I just think that churches need to develop a theology of nature which definitely includes animals. I think every church should sponsor a "re-leaf" campaign. One of the most important ways to save the environment is to plant trees. I am not suggesting that planting trees takes the place of evangelism and discipleship, I just believe it ought to have a place. The church's newsletters and stationary should be on recycled paper. The church needs to recycle its waste and use reusable cups, plates, and cutlery. What cleaning products are being used? Are they environmentally sound? Check the insulation. Are the buildings used efficiently? Is the building just sitting there being warmed or cooled without being used? Again, I am not suggesting an obsession or preoccupation, I am suggesting a sensible, thoughtful response from the Church to the serious environmental problems the world is facing.

DOOR: There is a kind of paranoia out there among a lot of ordinary people — church and unchurched — that the concern over the environment has attracted kind of a weird bunch of New Age, leftover '60s, liberal, do-gooder, anticorporate, anticapitalism socialists

who spend their days blowing up animal research centers and their nights humming to crystals.

CAMPOLO: Believe me, I know. I am continually having to clarify to people that I have not embraced some kind of Eastern mysticism that worships nature. There is a big difference in having a reverence for nature and worshipping nature as though nature itself was God.

DOOR: We take it you and Matthew Fox are not going to be doing a rain dance together soon?

CAMPOLO: I know he's a hero of the environmentalist movement, but he scares me. His deep respect for Native Americans has caused him to suggest that we enter into worship with nature as the Native Americans have done. He suggests that somehow we must take on the spiritual qualities of animals and of nature itself to feel a union with nature. That scares me. There is a big difference between appreciating nature and being in oneness with nature. There is a qualitative difference between human

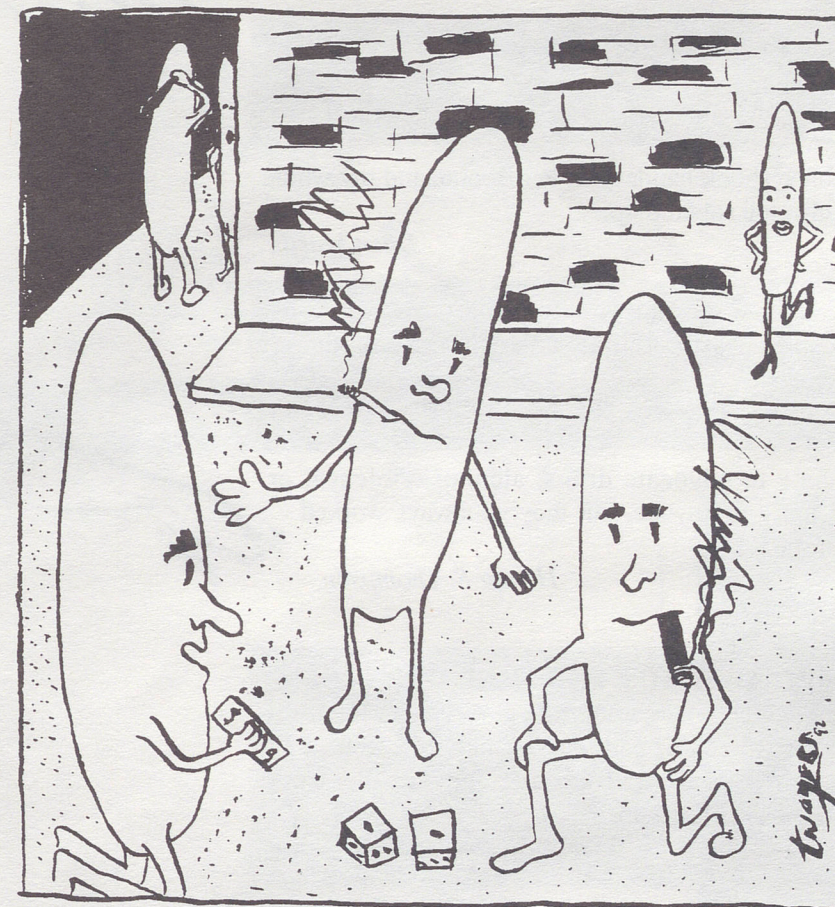
spirituality and the spirituality of nature. Matthew Fox crosses the line. He feels that entering into union with nature is entering into union with God. I don't believe that.

DOOR: Sometimes, when you listen to ecologists, they leave you with a sense that if we are not careful, we will desolate the planet and destroy all of life. It's as though the destiny of life is in our hands.

CAMPOLO: I guess I'm enough of an old time Calvinist to believe that, in the end, God controls the future of the planet. We must recognize that God, not humanity, controls the future of the planet Earth. The end of history will not be an ecological disaster, but will be the triumph of God and the restoration and renewal of all things.

I believe in a God who says, "Behold, I will make all things new," and I believe He will.

That will be the way the world will end — not with a boom, not with a whimper, and not with an ecological disaster. 1



unconverted rice

DOOR: So you're not one of these people that believes God is in your cat?

CAMPOLO: Hmmm ... let's just say, if you want to be biblical, that God is in everything.

DOOR: New Age alert!

CAMPOLO: Pantheism says that God is my cat and my cat is God. Christianity says that God is knowingly aware of everything that goes on in the universe — that He is in touch with everything. We are not deists. In the Scriptures, God is a presence that holds every atom, every electron in place. He didn't just create animals and walk away from them. He's there, holding everything together.

DOOR: Uh ... including cats?

there — as blasphemous as this may sound to some — that cat is a gift from God to alleviate the loneliness of that woman.

DOOR: What about using animals for research?

CAMPOLO: It is no more wrong to use animals in research than to eat them as hamburgers. I am sure there are instances where the scientific community has used animals for research when it was unnecessary. For example, in my book, I use the example of cosmetic companies that have used animals to test whether some eyelash formulas were dangerous to human beings. After pressure, these companies found other ways to test their products. The use of ani-

Morality is simply the attitude we adopt toward people we personally dislike.

Oscar Wilde

Lead me not into temptation; I can find the way myself.

Rita Mae Brown

God is in my mind, but the devil's in my pants.

Jonathan Winters

The girl speaks 18 languages and can't say "no" in any of them.

Dorothy Parker (Attributed)

I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

Luke 14:20

Don't knock masturbation — it's sex with someone I love.

Woody Allen

My lesbianism is an act of Christian charity. All those women out there are praying for a man, and I'm giving them my share.

Rita Mae Brown

I tried phone sex and got an ear infection.

Richard Lewis

You're not drunk if you can lie on the floor without holding on.

Joe E. Lewis

I once shook hands with Pat Boone, and my whole right side sobered up.

Dean Martin

After four martinis, my husband turns into a disgusting beast. And after the fifth, I pass out all together.

Anonymous

I hate to advocate drugs, alcohol, violence, or insanity to anyone, but they've always worked for me.

Hunter S. Thompson

SPECIAL QUOTE FOR MIKE WARNKE:

Let us begin by committing ourselves to the truth, to see it like it is and to tell it like it is, to find the truth, to speak the truth and live with the truth. That's what we'll do.

Richard Milhous Nixon

If
by Tom Willett
someone
didn't say it,
they should
have



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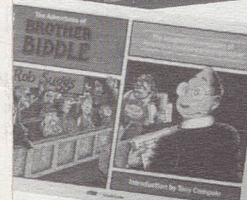
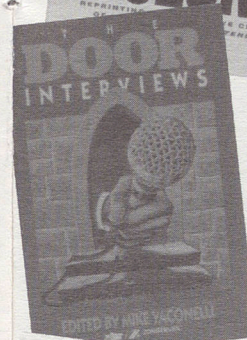
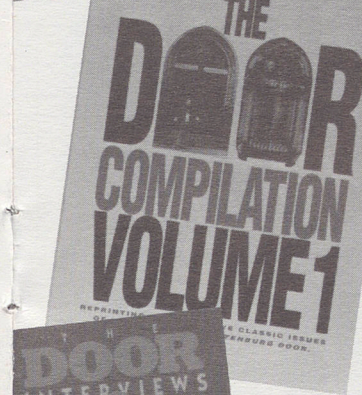
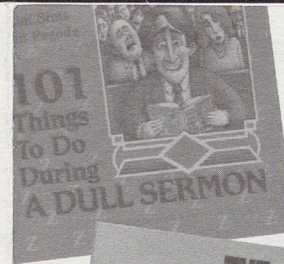
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He is Franz Bibfeldt, ecclesiastical chameleon.

He is *The Door's* 1994 Theologian of the Year.

Bibfeldt is the ideal theologian for the Inoffensive '90s — a
truly sensitive decade in which the cardinal sin is offending
people. He is the maestro of wishy-washiness — an expert in
the fine art of pleasing people, staying relevant, and playing
both sides of the fence.

As the esteemed church historian Martin Marty once put it,
"Bibfeldt is the complete theologian because he is capable of
engaging in complete reversals of positions, depending upon
the Zeitgeist."

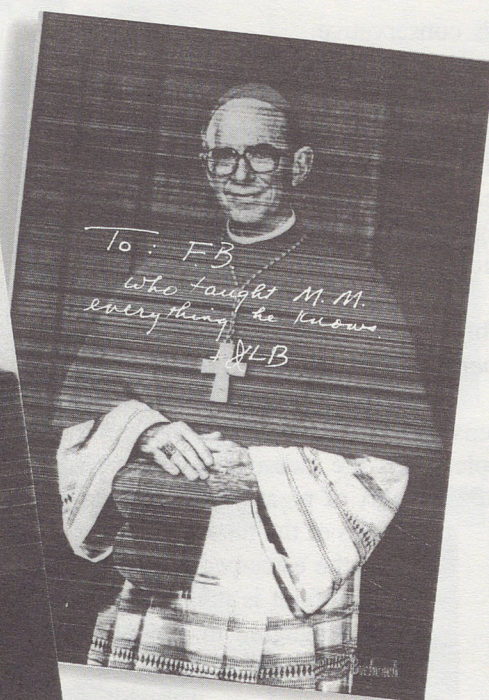
Bibfeldt is also something of a legend at the University of
Chicago, where theological heavyweights gather each year to
celebrate Bibfeldt Day with sausage, sauerkraut, and beer. The
Donnelley printing family, which has established numerous
Chairs for faculty positions, has even made possible a Bibfeldt
Stool. The Stool is endowed for \$29.95 — a generous fee that

**FRANZ
BIBFELDT**

He came, he saw, he compromised

by Doug Peterson





in a dueling match was making a thrust. The resulting scar, which he has never been able to show to anyone but his wife, led to his landmark essay, "Empathy With The Circumcised."

Family Coat of Arms: It features Proteus standing on a weather vane. Proteus, the herdsman of the gods, was terrified of prophesying; and to avoid it, he would keep changing shapes. The Bibfeldt Coat Of Arms also includes the family slogan written in Spanish: "I dance to the tune that is

played." Unfortunately, the slogan created a major diplomatic crisis in Japan when it was mistranslated as "Sushi makes me hurl."

Bibfeldt's Most Talked-About Writing: His dissertation, "The Problem With The Year Zero," which noted that no year exists between 1 B.C. and 1 A.D. Disturbed that the cal-

goes to the person who has the nerve to deliver the annual Bibfeldt lecture.

Bibfeldt's first exposure in the United States was a humble one, coming in 1947 when he was mentioned in the footnote of a student's paper at Concordia Seminary. Not many Americans have had the honor of meeting the great Bibfeldt in person, but he has regularly shown up in bookstore catalogs, Chicago White Sox programs, television credits, and motel marquees. He is also registered with the American Kennel Club as owning an invisible white-haired terrier.

Over the years, Bibfeldt has been showered with accolades, including signed photos from the late Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago, former Vice President Spiro Agnew, and former Senator Charles Percy.

But why all of the attention for this humble theologian, born in 1897 in Sage-Hast bei Groszenkneten, Oldenburg, Niedersachsen, Germany?

Because Bibfeldt is a genius ... or so they say.

Marty once pointed out a truth expressed by F. Scott Fitzgerald: "The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time

and still retain the ability to function."

"On those terms," Marty said, "Franz Bibfeldt is the genius of our time, the proper theologian for tomorrow."

So here is the lowdown on this 20th Century master, drawn from numerous sources — Bibfeldt lectures, press clippings, archival materials, graffiti, etc:

He is conservative. He is liberal. He is fundamentalist. He is politically correct. He is patriarchal. He is feminist, hear him roar. When he is in England, he is an evangelical Anglican. When he is in Rome, he is a Catholic. When he is in Switzerland, he is Reformed. He is Franz Bibfeldt, ecclesiastical chameleon.

Date Of Baptism: Nov. 1, 1897 — All Saints Day. Bibfeldt's parents chose All Saints Day because they did not want to offend any of the saints.

Boyhood Dream: To be an athlete. Bibfeldt's ability to walk down the middle on all sensitive issues made him a talented gymnast on the balance beam. But when he flunked Indian clubs in disgrace, Bibfeldt gave up sports for theology.

Bibfeldt's Most Regrettable Mistake: Jumping when his opponent

endar had moved two years when only one year had passed, Bibfeldt spent the rest of his life showing up for events either one year early or one year late.

Bibfeldt's Most Significant Contribution To Social Activism: His efforts to help our country's most oppressed group — the truly silent majority — the dead. Bibfeldt fought against housing discrimination for the dead, noting that they invariably end up in low, one-room dark chambers in ghettoized sections of town. He also tackled the potentially divisive issue of

ordination of the dead, and he did much to encourage the evangelical dead, who practice inert healing and live by the slogan, "died again."

Most of his thoughts on this issue can be found in the ground-breaking essay, "I'm OK, You're DOA."

Bibfeldt's Most Perceptive Statement About Soren Kierkegaard's Angst-Filled Theology: "It's nothing that a month in Acapulco wouldn't cure."

Bibfeldt's Best Response To Kierkegaard's Book, *Either/Or*: Bibfeldt responded by writing *Both/And*, which argued that contemporary theologians can be "relevant to everything and adapt to anything." When *Both/And* was criticized for not taking a firm stand, Bibfeldt countered with *Both/And And/Or Either/Or*.

Bibfeldt's Favorite Game Shows: "Leap of Faith," in which contestants climb up Jacob's Ladder by means of empirical evidence for design in the natural world before making the "Leap of Faith" across the chasm of despair to the postulation of a beneficent divine Creator for major cash prizes. Also: "Zen Master," a quiz in which the winner is the first contestant to stop attempting to answer the questions.

Favorite Books By Or About Bibfeldt: *Calvinistic Existentialism: Predestined To Eternal Insecurity* (Decree Publishing, 1971); *Staying On Your Toes: Religious Podiatry In The Soul Of John Bunyan* (Cuticle Press, 1988); and *How Many Pinheads Can Dance On An Angel? Scholastic Metaphysics In A Post-Bibfeldtian World* (Reductio Ad Absurdum Press, 1989).

Bibfeldt's Best Attempt At Proving That White European Males Have Been Victimized By Society, Too: He introduced a measure before the German Bundestag titled "A Declaration Of Human Rights For The Ethnically Impaired," a manifesto for the melanin-deprived. Said one observer: "When the mea-

sure failed, although not by much, Bibfeldt was shaken, not stirred."

If this is not enough evidence of the tremendous influence of this singular theologian, then consider Bibfeldt's impact on the field of church history. When a much younger Martin Marty published a review of Bibfeldt's work in a 1951 seminary newspaper, his assignment to London was canceled because of "a lack of maturity." As a result, Marty wound

up in Chicago, where he went on to author close to forty books and thousands of articles, and became a leading authority on the contemporary Church.

Bibfeldt has a way of doing that — changing careers and altering the course of history. But what else do you expect from a theologian of his stature? After all, Bibfeldt is truly a genius. Or, as one Bibfeldt scholar put it, "On the surface he is profound. Deep down he is shallow." **I**

The Faces of Bibfeldt



"... every pastor I know who has enjoyed more than a decade in the pastoral ministry, will recall a

PASTORAL PUGILISM

by William H. Willimon

lay person who, on one ecclesial occasion or another, has to be slugged in the jaw."

Teaching, as I do, at a mainline Protestant seminary, I am often asked, particularly by young seminarians, to enunciate hard and fast rules for pastoral work. Impressed as they are by the complex demands of the pastoral ministry, seminarians are always seeking some means of simplification. They persist in asking, "Do you think it is always wrong to perform a marriage at a nudist colony?" Others will demand, "Professor, wouldn't it always be a bad idea to use tape-recorded sound effects in a sermon?"

Alas for these meager ministerial minds, pastoral work is complex, requiring the constant exercise of mature, theologically informed pastoral judgment. After 20 years of being a pastor, I can tell you that there are few things that I would never, always, or habitually do or not do. While I cannot defend situational ethics theologically, I can certainly defend it experientially and pastorally. As a pastor, one simply must take things, and people, as they come.

For instance, I have met pastors — generally conservative traditionalists, but not always — who doggedly maintain that it is "always wrong to strike a parishioner."

These tend to be the same people who feel that it is always wrong to use a comma splice within a sentence, or to begin or end a homily with the phrase, "You idiots."

Even though such sentimental and archaic notions die slowly, every pastor I know who has enjoyed more than a decade in the pastoral ministry will recall a lay person who, on one ecclesial occasion or another, has to be slugged in the jaw.

I recall, for instance, a layman of my acquaintance, a leader in one of my early congregations who, during formal worship services, had an inclination to hum. Perhaps one hymn would remind him of another. Or perhaps, some said, he hummed as a protest against the "high church" hymn which the organist and I had selected for the occasion. The hymns he hummed tended always to be evangelical ditties. A helpful layperson, seeing the dilemma that this man put me in, would nudge him with his elbow. When this failed, a particularly supportive older woman pinched him. Still, he hummed.

I was forced, as conscientious pastors often are, to take matters in hand during a Christmas Eve service last year. I

found that a sharp downward blow upon his neck, smartly given, would render him into a sort of happy stupor. We had no problem with him for the remainder of the service. When he came forward for communion, he had a rather beatific smile upon his face and was most placid and receptive. He was really quite charming after that.

I know what you are thinking: A pastor who is unaware of his or her own strength could deliver a blow to a parishioner with a bit too much enthusiasm, thus helping the sluggish parishioner beyond the beatific vision into lying out cold under the pew. This result is likely to prove offensive to other worshippers and, of course, ought to be avoided if at all possible. It is important not to hinder the free flow of traffic in and out of pews during a service.

Now I have known pastors — usually those of a somewhat delicate disposition — who, to avoid overshooting the mark in striking a parishioner, would sometimes — say, during a discussion at a board meeting — merely shove the parishioner backward. They hoped thereby to achieve the needed result of silencing the offending parishioner. While restraint of force has its benefits, one of my friends, during a debate related to the annual church budget, shoved a particularly difficult man backwards over a folding chair, landing him in the lap of a woman who, prior to that moment, had been one of the pastor's most ardent supporters. Sometimes direct, swift force is much more effective than the timid shove.

On the other hand, though a swift blow to the head — or even to the back of the neck — can be extremely effective in the long run, sometimes the affected person has a tendency to shout. While this is moderately disruptive in services of worship, it can be disastrous in church business meetings when the shout elicited thereby only serves to increase the emotional temperature of the meeting. As I have found, shouting at meetings sometimes leads to people throwing things, to others jumping on tables, and similar unfortunate side effects.

I hate to see church meetings end in a brawl as much as the next person. However, I find it surprising how even the most staid congregation will degenerate into hysterics when something is thrown during a service of worship — say, a piece of furniture, a fixture of altarware, a hymnal, or a purse. What is there about the human species that infects it with a seemingly overwhelming desire to join in the fray once something is thrown? Undoubtedly, Calvin discussed this propensity somewhere in his *Institutes*, though I have been unable, by the date of this publication, to locate it.

Of course, everybody has, during some worship service, had the urge to throw a hymnal at someone. In my experience, this tendency is evoked most frequently by church musicians. However, speakers from the Gideons, those giving testimonials on "Youth Sunday," as well as representatives of the presiding bishop, also appear to have this affect upon me. While many laypersons, apathetic lot that they are, can be made to resist such a tendency, even the most jaded and morose congregation can be moved into action with a hymnal or attendance registration pad being thrown at the right moment in a service. Even the most apathetic

church member or the most casual and sporadic church attendee finds it difficult to sit by and do nothing, once a few hymnals are thrown at an offensive organist. This sudden burst of enthusiasm appears to be engendered not only by the excitement of sailing objects and their attendant crashes, but also by the gleeful shouts of "Gotcha!" and "How do you like that?"

Eventually, someone is bound to be knocked out cold by a poorly aimed hymnal, or a folding metal church chair improperly tossed. These things happen. It is impossible for a pastor to please everybody. My advice on these occasions is to offer apologies. Let there be consideration of whether or not the cold-cooked parishioner deserved to be knocked out cold. Then continue with the service, the meeting, or the discussion after the wounded party has been discretely dragged away.

Those who quote paragraph numbers from the *United Methodist Book Of Discipline* in response to a pastor's proposal — people who, in an argument, quote from obscure passages of Scripture saying, "That may be true, pastor, but of course you also know the advice in Obadiah 1:4," — earn themselves the right to be hit with a folding metal church chair. No one ever quotes Scripture to a pastor without a desire to embarrass and belittle.

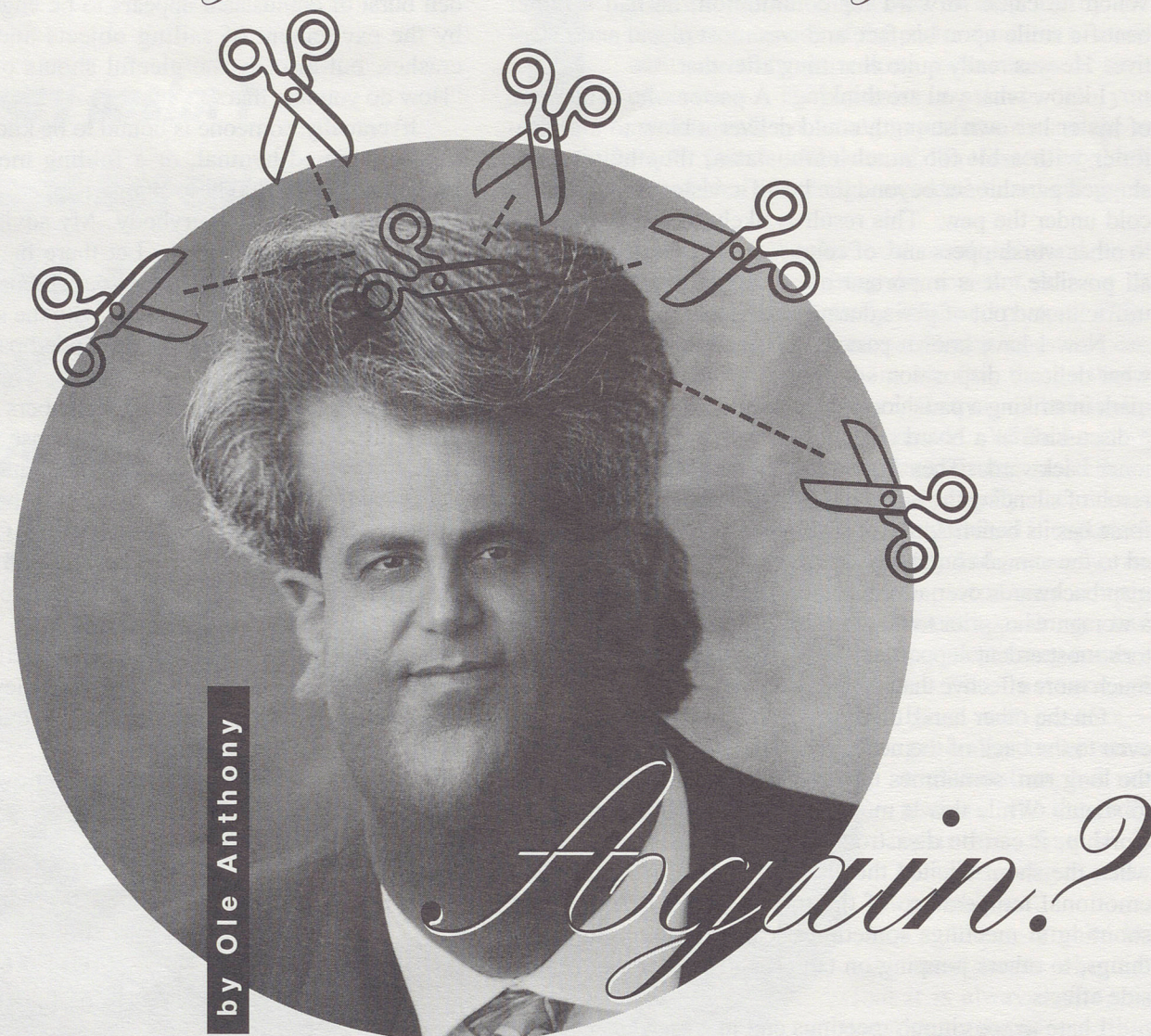
I also recall the man who, in a particularly difficult meeting, asked me the question, "Did they teach you stuff like this in seminary?" Naturally, this query begged for a sharp right thrust to the side of his jaw.

Against such pastoral care, I know of no biblical prohibition. **I**



Dogs have been known to have as many as 23 puppies in a litter.

Has benny hinn been born again...



THE \$2.5 BILLION PER YEAR WORLD OF RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING IS ABOUT TO BE SHAKEN TO ITS CORE. ✠ WELL, EITHER THAT, OR WE ARE ABOUT TO EXPERIENCE A NEW LOW IN SELF-SERVING HYPOCRISY THAT WILL SHOCK EVEN THE MOST CYNICAL. BUT ALL THE SIGNS ARE POINTING TO THE FIRST OPTION. ✠ WHY? BECAUSE BENNY HINN, THE FLAMBOYANT, FAITH-HEALING TELEVANGELIST AND STAR PLAYER ON THE TRINITY BROADCASTING NETWORK (TBN), HAS RECANTED THE "PROSPERITY GOSPEL," THE NAME-IT-AND-CLAIM-IT THEOLOGY THAT HAS BECOME THE STAPLE OF THE INDUSTRY AND, SPECIFICALLY, OF TBN. HAIRSTYLES SIGNAL THESE KINDS OF CHANGES ... BUT MORE ON THAT LATER. ✠

Benny Hinn is a recent phenomenon with an unforgettable flair. His swirling coiffure had been described by a *Chicago Tribune* reporter as the "baked Alaska of evangelical scalpdome." Televangelists seem to draw strength from their hair, like Samson or, perhaps, more like Absalom.

The main attraction of his crusades, besides the hope of being healed, is the chance to be "slain in the Spirit," which Hinn sometimes accomplishes by waving his expensive coat jacket at those who approach the stage — or simply by blowing on them — "poof!" This gives the proceedings the look of a bad Listerine commercial. Sometimes he blows and almost everyone on the stage falls over at once. (This has its downside, too. One woman died, as a result, at an Oklahoma crusade.)

Hinn's showmanship has made him the fastest-rising televangelist ever, and it brings his organization, conservatively, \$15 million per year. He receives an annual salary of \$116,000 ... plus \$500,000 in royalties from his best-selling books.

But now, Hinn has promised to abandon his extravagant lifestyle. He's traded his Mercedes Benz for a Lincoln (OK, I know what you're thinking ... but it's a big step for him). He's stripped himself of his Rolex watch and diamond tie pin. He's even told his church they will begin "doing" the Gospel by giving food and clothing to the poor.

Hinn now admits he's been wrong even about some of his teachings on healing, and that there are some things about God's sovereignty in healing that he just doesn't understand.

This kind of public mea culpa is remarkable coming from anyone, but especially from a televangelist who DIDN'T HAVE TO DO IT. Sure, Jimmy Swaggart repented, with many tears, but he really had no other option. Jim Bakker also recanted his prosperity theology, but not until he found that it was useless in a prison cell.

So what's different about Benny Hinn?

It's most easily seen in comparison with the response of another televangelist who found himself in Benny's situation — i.e., at the wrong end of a hidden camera — Robert Tilton. But first,

let's examine their domain — the weird landscape of tele-reality.

If there's a lesson televangelists have learned in the past decade, it's that those who live by media manipulation may die by the same. But they didn't know that at first. Christian broadcasters charged into television in a new way in the 1970s but,

the sum of their doctrines or theology ... or, maybe you could say, less — there is usually very little theology involved. A televangelist is mostly a persona, an act, a projection. Their followers can forgive them doctrinal errors, but not a lack of sincerity, not a disturbance of the tele-reality that they have built up — an

Benny Hinn is a recent phenomenon with an unforgettable flair. His swirling coiffure had been described by a *Chicago Tribune* reporter as the "baked Alaska of evangelical scalpdome."

like Alice in *Through The Looking Glass*, they didn't understand that it turned everything inside out. All the worst characteristics of the modern church were grossly exaggerated and overblown when transmitted through a cathode ray tube — the focus on a single "minister," the passivity of an "audience," the reduction of worship to entertainment, the lack of community.

The Word of God became jabberwocky.

Soon, heresy had a new and powerful vector to infect the believing population, and almost no one was even checking the symptoms.

When Pat Robertson launched his Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN), he published a book called *Shout It from the Houseltops*. The cover showed the roofs of houses bristling with television antennas. He was putting a clever twist on the passage in Matthew 10:27 that says, "What ye hear in the ear, that preach upon the housetops." In other words, he saw it as a prophesy of the new technology in service to the Gospel. But the previous verse says, "... there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; and hidden, that shall not be known."

The technology would be a two-edged sword.

Televangelists are much more than

environment that the viewer can safely enter into from his or her living room, without fear of becoming too involved or being touched ... except by pressing a hand against the TV screen. (Of course, spiritually, it is about as satisfying as being married to a rubber dolly.)

To fence with televangelists through the print medium does no good. Their followers live in that other tele-reality universe. But the very fact that televangelists have sold their viewers on believing what they see on TV (in spite of their venom about secular media) means they are vulnerable to messages inside that medium — from programs like *Prime Time Live*, for instance.

The technology that is causing the latest upheaval is an instrument no bigger than a thumbnail — a hidden camera. Hidden cameras have a way of getting past the projected illusion.

On *Inside Edition's* hidden camera interview with Tilton on a plane back to Dallas, Tilton revealed an anti-semitism that wasn't part of his projected persona, talking about the "Jews in New York" who control the media.

Another hidden camera, concealed by an ABC undercover reporter, recorded Tilton's direct mail flack, Jim Moore, boasting how Tilton had been "nothing" until Moore's company showed him how to take advantage of

direct mail by tying it to the continual flow of new names coming from his television program.

And a hidden camera caught W. V. Grant faking a leg-extension healing and gathering information before the service to use in his bogus "words of knowledge" later.

The tiny, ubiquitous cameras, the mobility of new satellite television technology, and the fact that almost the whole world can now watch the images, has revolutionized society already — just ask Rodney King ... or Saddam Hussein, who got to watch the Gulf War on CNN from his bunker, while his country blew up around him.

We used to fear "Big Brother" — government using technology to impose thought control on society. But government TV produces a big yawn. Instead, government and all other institutions haven't been able to keep up with the news media using television as a can opener to expose frauds who think they are invulnerable.

The latest and most important can to be opened was Benny Hinn.

In what they described as the "mother of all ambush interviews," Steve Wilson and the *Inside Edition* crew found Hinn as he got off a plane in Philadelphia, surrounded by an entourage that included several bodyguards. As Wilson tried to ask Hinn questions, the bodyguards tried to hustle him out through a door onto the tarmac. That set off the airport alarms, and everyone was temporarily taken into custody by airport security. Steve Wilson got pushed and shoved around by one of Hinn's bodyguards and threatened to sue. The whole thing was on camera. But a strange thing happened a few days later ...

Hinn, who had refused an interview previously, called Wilson to say he would be glad to talk and provide any documents that would be helpful. Christopher Hinn, Benny's brother, was primarily responsible for the turnaround. Chris was the lone voice against the 20 other Hinn advisors who recommended Hinn not to cooperate with *Inside Edition*. Fortunately, Benny listened to his brother. He apologized for the reaction of his bodyguards and invited Wilson (and his TV crew) to his

Admittedly, Hinn has renounced some of his teachings before under fire, like he did two years ago in a *Christianity Today* interview. But this time, we know it's going to stick. Why?

Benny got a normal haircut.

[Hinn's] Orlando Christian Center for an on-camera interview.

We [Ole Anthony and members of the Trinity Foundation] accompanied Wilson as consultants on the interview and, frankly, we were expecting the worst. Instead, we found that rarest of species — a humble televangelist.

Benny Hinn, in contrast to Tilton's legal tap-dancing, simply admitted he had not verified all the "miracle" claims on his telecasts and promised to have medical verification in the future before televising the testimonials. When we told Hinn that a woman he had declared healed of brain cancer on his television program was, in fact, dying and was given only two months to live, he immediately called her to give her some comfort.

Contrast that with Tilton's treatment of a woman with rectal-colon cancer. The poor woman had given Tilton several thousand dollars and believed she would be healed through his prayers. When it became apparent that she was going to die, she filed suit against Tilton, claiming fraud and infliction of emotional distress. Tilton's people

called her — as well as the other victims filing suit — "morons crawling out of the woodwork" and "ignorance gone to seed." The woman recently died.

Yes, there was definitely a different spirit in Orlando.

Wilson asked Hinn, "What about those prayer requests *Inside Edition* found dropped on the floor of the Houston crusade, unread?" Hinn said he would fire the person responsible.

What about Hinn's crazy theological claims that women were originally designed to give birth from their sides and that Adam could fly? Hinn admitted that he was wrong; he had listened to some bad teachers.

No one expected this. There was no resistance, nothing to draw the sharks, no blood in the water. It was weird. Could God really be doing something here?

That's why what Benny Hinn did next was so ... dangerous. A couple of months or so after the *Inside Edition* programs aired, Hinn, in a broadcast of his church service at Orlando Christian Center, admitted to his congregation that he had been rethinking his whole theology, but hadn't been ready to talk about it until then.

"The Lord has had to shake me. Some of my friends will not like what I am going to say on television," he told the church.

Some representative statements: **THE CROSS** — "At one time I thought that Jesus died spiritually after He descended to hell and was actually overcome by Satan there and had to be reborn (a favorite theory of a certain school of faith teachers). I no longer believe it. It was finished on the Cross," Hinn said.

FAITH — "Stop seeking faith, and start seeking the Lord." Real faith is a person — Jesus Christ.

POSITIVE CONFESSION — If you try to speak something into reality without the Holy Spirit, "it's all flesh, it does nothing, and it is useless and damaging to God's Kingdom."

HEALING — "I think it's cruel to tell people they lack faith" when they don't get healed. "I think I'm going to stop preaching healing and start preaching Jesus." He even apol-

continued on page 33

BIBLE VERSUS®

by Tom Willett

BLESSED ARE THE MEEK, FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH. <i>Matthew 5:5</i>	THE MEEK SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH, BUT NOT THE MINERAL RIGHTS. <i>J. Paul Getty</i>
A LIE IS AN ABOMINATION UNTO THE LORD. <i>Proverbs 8:7</i>	A LIE IS AN ABOMINATION UNTO THE LORD AND A VERY PRESENT HELP IN TROUBLE. <i>Adlai Stevenson</i>
I KNOW HOW TO GET ALONG WITH HUMBLE MEANS, AND I KNOW HOW TO LIVE IN PROSPERITY. <i>Philippians 4:12</i>	I'VE BEEN RICH AND I'VE BEEN POOR: RICH IS BETTER. <i>Sophie Tucker</i>
THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH. <i>Romans 6:23</i>	THE WAGES OF SPEND IS DEBT. <i>Mark Heard</i>
A SOFT WORD TURNETH AWAY WRATH. <i>Proverbs 15:1</i>	A SOFT DRINK TURNETH AWAY COMPANY. <i>Oliver Herford</i>
FOR THE DEVIL IS THE FATHER OF LIES. <i>John 8:44</i>	THE DEVIL IS THE FATHER OF LIES, BUT HE NEGLECTED TO PATENT THE IDEA, AND THE BUSINESS NOW SUFFERS FROM COMPETITION. <i>Josh Billings</i>
GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS, THAT HE LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS. <i>John 15:13</i>	GREATER LUCK HATH NO MAN THAN THIS, THAT HE LAY DOWN HIS WIFE AT THE RIGHT MOMENT. <i>Samuel Butler</i>

© 1993 Tom Willett. Taken from his forthcoming book *Omnidox: Apocryphal Wisdom for Expatriate Saints*

NIGHTMARE ON A TRAIL BIKE

(Evangelizing bikers is not for everyone)

by Wendy Green

Every year, Beach Christian Church spent Motorcycle Week in siege mode. All valuables were removed from the sanctuary, the parking lot was barricaded to protect the pristine asphalt from kickstands, and the church grounds were roped off to keep rally-pin traders and tattooed leather-goods sellers from setting up shop on the landscaping. The elders even rented a Knights of Columbus hall across town for services during that dreaded week.

Motorcycle Week approached again, and the Committee in Charge of Preparation sat to discuss who would weld the chains across the driveway, who would board the windows, and who would weave the barbed wire through the ligustrum hedge.

A new member of the committee, Bob Skyler, spoke up. "You know, I was reading about Christian motorcyclists —"

Loud guffaws cut him off.

"No, really! They go to the biker rallies and witness. A bunch of them are even coming here."

Five sets of eyes stared disbelief at him. Bob dug down into his faith and tried again.

"I think, maybe, instead of spending all this time and effort on hiding, we might try reaching out to these people."

The seed was planted. It sprouted at the next meeting.

"OK, if we are going to do this, I guess first we need a motorcycle."

One of the elders admitted having owned a scooter in high school. He was sent to buy a safe, nonthreatening, preferably made-in-the-USA cycle, to be reimbursed out of his future contributions. Another elder volunteered to print tracts containing a message in accordance with the tenets and belief

statement of Beach Christian Church. A third agreed to devise a security plan that left a small, unprotected area for a booth in front of the church property. A consensus of the leaders named the project "Doctrine on Wheels."

The project was presented to the congregation the Monday before Motorcycle Week. The president of the elders had found an article discussing the weaknesses of Christian motorcycle groups in a back issue of the denominational "Pure True Newsletter" and had drawn up guidelines for Beach Christian Church's outreach. He passed around the following statement:

Beach Christian Church's Doctrine on Wheels is a strictly Bible-based Christian witness tool, the purpose of which is to counteract the erroneous beliefs and practices of the evangelical Christian motorcycle groups. The truth is that newsletters and meetings do not save; Christian fellowship ice cream rides do not save; and, most certainly, airbrushed crosses and praying hands on gas tanks and saddlebags do not save. Pure Doctrine saves, as it has been expressed in God's Inerrant Word.

To further this, Beach Christian Church will send out a team of two devout, Bible-believing members to witness about our faith at Motorcycle Week. The team will not, however, hand out pins or free cups of water with the four steps to salvation imprinted upon them for, as every true believer knows, we have been saved by

grace, not by works. The team will not witness to or attempt to lead any long-haired tattooed unwashed biker to Christ, for "if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ" (Rom. 8:9 — NIV).

After careful research and prayer, Beach Christian Church has also taken a position on three critical lay issues affecting motorcycle riders. We are in support of helmet laws (2 Tim. 4:5a — "But you, keep your head in all situations" — NIV), we discourage loud muffler pipes (1 Thes. 4:11 — "Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life" — NIV), and we deplore the lack of protective clothing on bikers (Gen. 3:21 — "He made them coverings of animal skins" — NIV).

The statement and the witness team passed with overwhelming support.

The first day of Motorcycle Week, the witness team set up in the narrow space left between the booby-trapped ligustrum hedge and the chain-barricaded driveway. A small sign announcing "Beach Christian Church — Doctrine on Wheels" hung from their card table below the neat stack of tracts declaring God's love to believers. The two chosen elders sat safely behind the table on folding chairs. Their seated forms blocked any view of the 50cc dirt bike that the former scooter rider had bought.

Across the street in a former souvenir and seashell shop, a Christian evangelical group set up their own displays. Gaudy banners proclaimed God's forgiveness to all, free water and

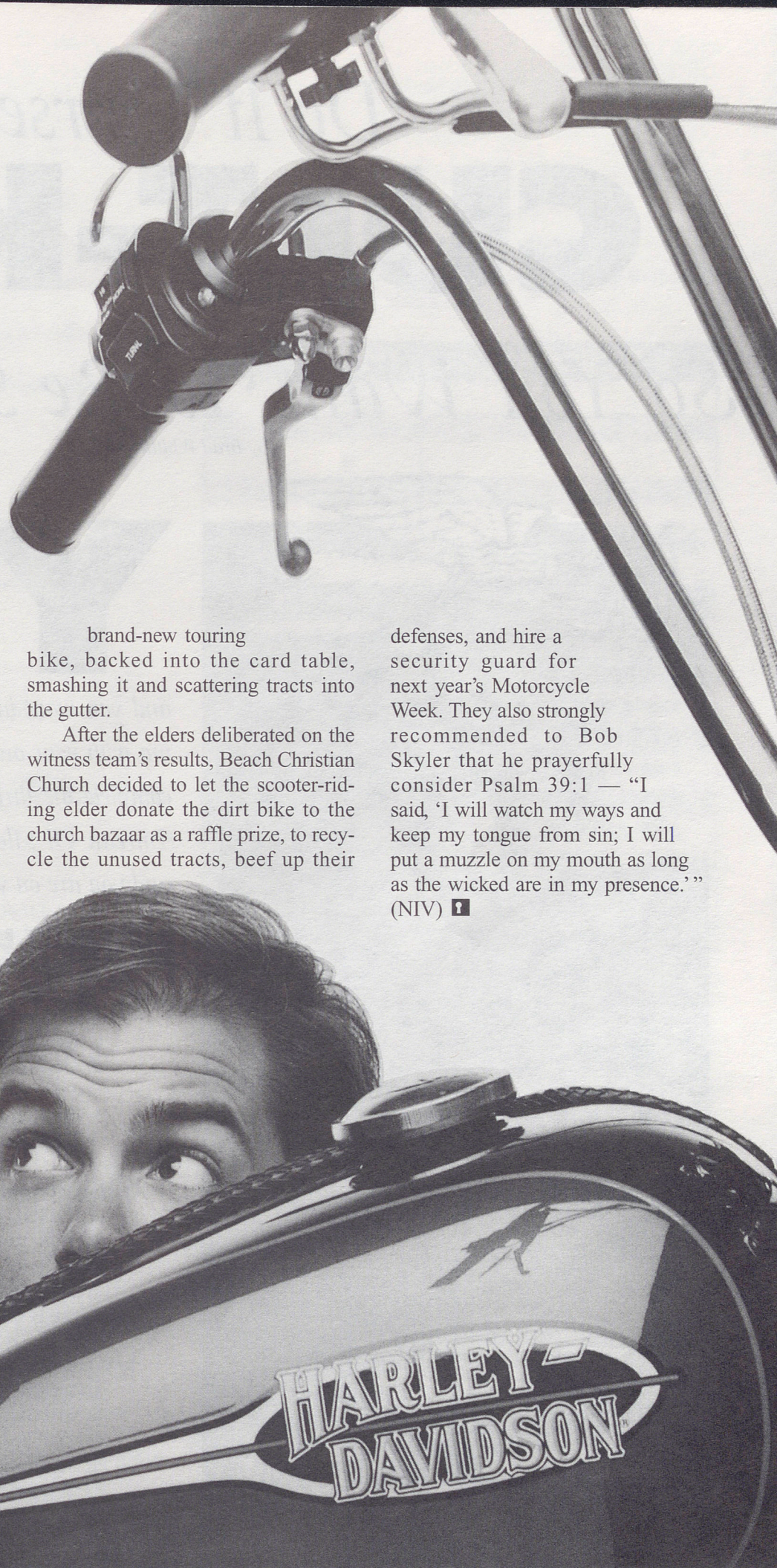
fresh coffee were available day and night; they even had vocal men and women prowling the sidewalk and accosting bikers as they strolled from the bar next door to their parked bikes. The elders shuddered at the tawdriness and silently thanked God that none of those people — either the evangelicals or the bikers — crossed the street to talk to them.

At the end of Motorcycle Week, the witness team reported back to the elders, who had spent their time meticulously preparing the Knights of Columbus hall for Sunday worship.

Three tracts had been handed out; all three were later found with some trash in the ligustrum hedge by those removing the barbed wire.

Two people had asked questions of the team. The first man's breath was so offensively beery that the elder refused to waste his time on such a sinful man. The second spoke with an unintelligible accent. Several minutes passed before the team members understood and directed him to the facilities at the gas station a block away.

The last night of Motorcycle Week, Bob Skyler had suggested moving the table out between the sidewalk and the street for better visibility. An older gentleman, unused to the reverse gear on his



brand-new touring bike, backed into the card table, smashing it and scattering tracts into the gutter.

After the elders deliberated on the witness team's results, Beach Christian Church decided to let the scooter-riding elder donate the dirt bike to the church bazaar as a raffle prize, to recycle the unused tracts, beef up their

defenses, and hire a security guard for next year's Motorcycle Week. They also strongly recommended to Bob Skyler that he prayerfully consider Psalm 39:1 — "I said, 'I will watch my ways and keep my tongue from sin; I will put a muzzle on my mouth as long as the wicked are in my presence.'" (NIV) ■

Do It Yourself CULT-KIT

or

So You Want To Be A Messiah

by Brad Whittington



You see all the big bucks, hot chicks, smokin' guns, and great publicity that cult leaders are getting these days, and you want in on the action. Well, now starting with your own cult is as easy as A-B-C. Just complete the three steps below, register with the Bureau Of Alchohol, Tabacco & Firearms, and you are on your way to infamy.

A. SELECT BELIEFS

1. Divinity Options:

- I am God
- You are God
- The table is God
- God is elected annually by a majority vote and gets executive washroom privileges
- There is no God, but if He shows up at a party, He doesn't have to chip in for the beer

2. Holy Scripture Options:

- The KJV Bible
- Every word you utter
- Every third word from Lewis Grizzard columns
- Automatic writings by Cyndi Lauper
- The B side of Tony Orlando and Dawn singles

3. What Defines Sin:

- Conscience enlightened by Holy Spirit
- Miss Manners columns
- Miss October's list of favorite things
- Democratic Party platform
- Merriam-Webster

4. Eschatological Options:

- Christ will return on specified date
- Christ will usher in the New Age
- Christ returned during first commercial break in the 777th M*A*S*H rerun
- Christ will return and force your brother-in-law to return your power drill
- The 1,000-year reign will be leased out on a time-share basis

5. Membership Criteria:

- Conversion and baptism
- Letter of endorsement from God (see #1 - Divinity Options)
- Pastel aura (earth tones optional)
- Prison record (three felonies or more)
- Frontal lobotomy

6. Armament Options:

- The sword of the Word
- A slingshot and five smooth stones
- Conventional weapons
- Nuclear arsenal
- a 25-lb. bag of pinto beans and a flatulent teenager

7. Money Options:

- Vow of poverty
- Vow of opulence
- All members share from common fund
- Leader shares; members watch
- Print your own

8. Diet Options:

- Herbivorous
- Carnivorous
- Fried-liverous
- Sticks, dirt, and small pebbles
- Endangered species list

9. Attire Options:

- Circa 1820
- Circa 2100
- The Sharper Image catalogue
- Frederick's of Hollywood catalogue
- Sans

10. Sex Options:

- Abstinence
- Abstinence ... except for you
- Polygamy
- Monogamy with an adultery option on weekends
- Acts between consenting species

B. CALCULATE MEDIA POINTS

Assign media points to your new cult according to the following table and calculate a total.

OPTION	MEDIA POINTS
a	0
b	3
c	5
d	7
e	10

TOTAL POINTS	MEDIA EXPOSURE
00-10.....	THE DOOR
11-20.....	BAPTIST STANDARD
21-30.....	Local shopping paper
31-40	GOOD MORNING, AMERICA
41-50	Network news
51-60	NIGHTLINE
61-70	60 MINUTES
71-80.....	A Current Affair
81-90.....	NATIONAL ENQUIRER
91-100	THE DOOR

C. SELECT NAME

Choose one or more words from column A and one word from column B to create a name for your new cult.

A	B
UNIVERSAL	ELECT
GOODIE	TWO-SHOES
OFFICIAL	CHOSEN SEVERAL
REFORMED	NIT PICKERS
ELECTED	(YOUR NAME) -IANS
HARMONIC	FAIRY-SEES
GLASSY-EYED	WAY
ENLIGHTENED	PATH
RECESSIVE	REMNANT
ROCKIN'	SIN SLAPPERS

The Door DARE

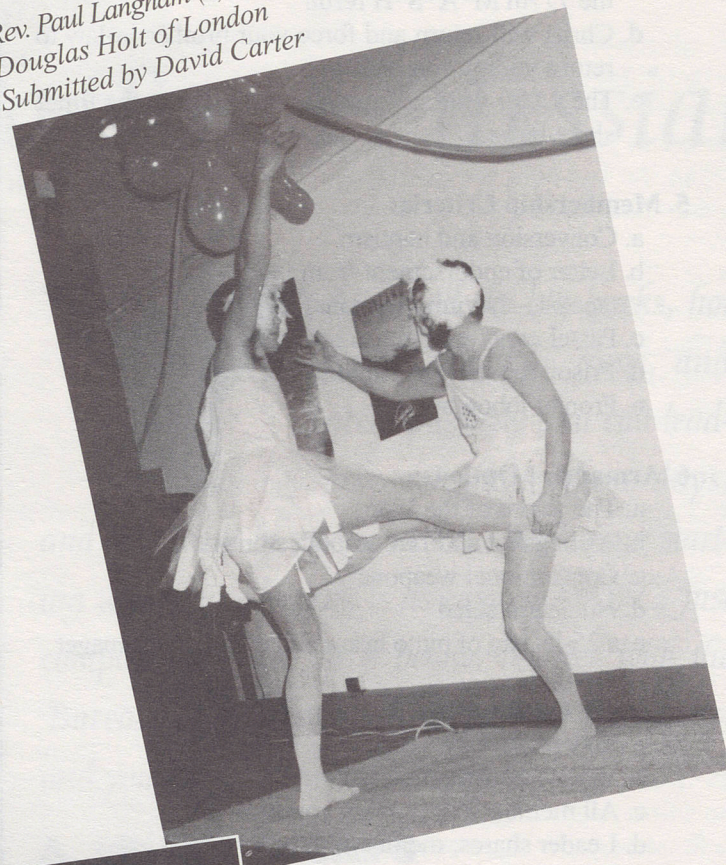
Now, we want everyone to get involved with *Door DARE #42*, which promises to be interesting. We all doodle, right? On the phone we doodle, at work or school we doodle, taking notes we doodle, at church or Bible studies we doodle, all the doodle-day-long-a-doodling ... right? OK, not quite. But nonetheless, we have a vision. A doodle vision. We want to see this page filled — the whole kit and caboodle — with doodles. Oodles. But not just any doodles, mind you. Oh, no. We're looking for God-related doodles, either by content: hearts, crosses, fishes, whatever — or by location: doodles on church bulletins, in the margins of Bible-study notes, or even in your Bible. Give us whatever you've got. If you're not sure, photocopy it and send it anyway. The winning T-shirt will go to the most interesting (not necessarily the most artistic) doodle, but we'll print even the most mundane. So please, don't be shy. We dare you. Also, include any brief explanatory notation you'd like.

Thanks. Go doodle it. Send your entries to *Door "The Doodle" DARE #42*, Box 530, Yreka, CA 96097, or fax them to (916) 842-7729. The deadline is two weeks from the time you receive this issue.

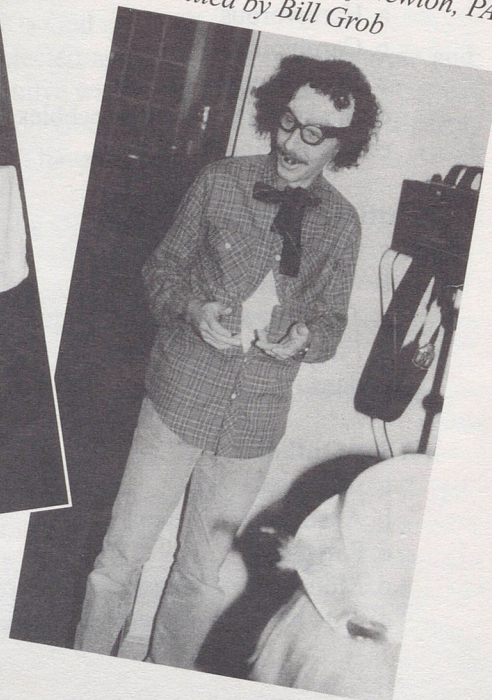
Look at these guys!

The last we checked, *Door DARE #40* was intended to be "The Ugly Pastor DARE," whereby we would get photos in the mail of, well, ugly pastors ... or at least, pastors looking ugly. But somehow, magically, overnight — or, magically over a few days, we can't be sure — somehow *DARE #40* turned into "The Silly Costumed and/or Situated (involving one or more of the following: drag clothing, fright wigs, camels) Pastor DARE." Here, see what we mean?

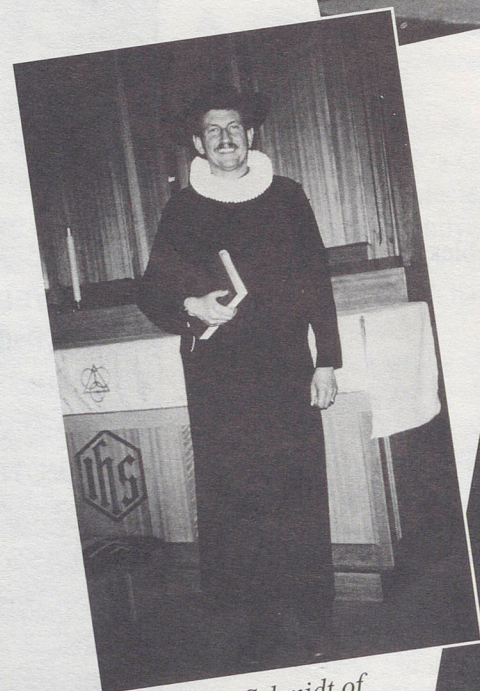
Rev. Paul Langham (L) of Cambridge, UK and Rev. Douglas Holt of London
Submitted by David Carter



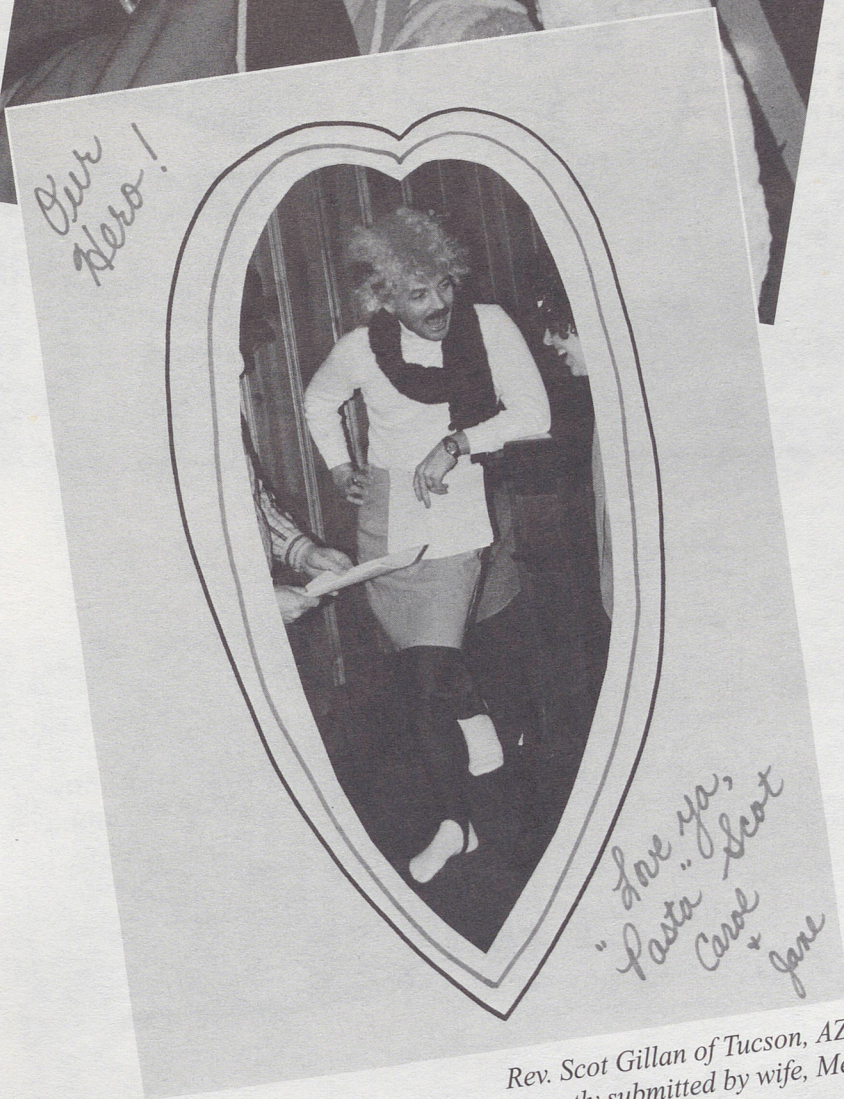
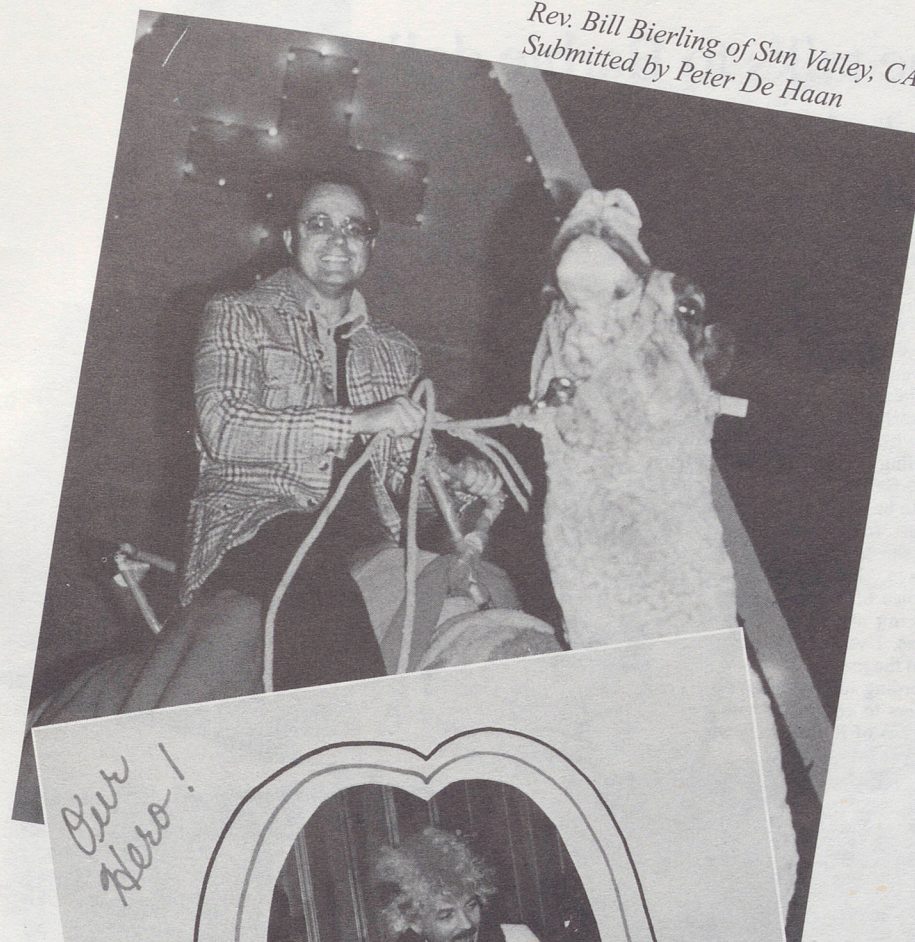
Rev. Robert Jones of Newton, PA
Submitted by Bill Grob



Pastor Alex Schmidt of Spokane, WA
Secretly submitted by himself



Rev. Bill Bierling of Sun Valley, CA
Submitted by Peter De Haan



Rev. Scot Gillan of Tucson, AZ
Secretly submitted by wife, Meagan

OK We're flexible. A bit confused, maybe, but flexible. Oh sure, we could've insisted on the ugly thing out of spite and given the prize to the camel — but to what end? (Besides, we're fresh out of our X-X-XL hump-friendly T-shirts*). So hey, we'll play your game and, with the new parameters in mind, the winning *Door* T-shirt goes to Rev. Bob of Newton, PA (Bill gets one, too) for being just plain silly. **1**

*Can we say that?

Benny Hinn continued from page 26

ogized to the biblical sufferer, Job, whom he had characterized as lacking faith.

PROSPERITY GOSPEL

"Money, money, money, money! I'm sick of it! It's become a major business in the ministry. People are giving to get something out of it. It's like a machine — you push a button and money comes out. It's not what you have that matters, it's what you give. Preachers who live in big houses and drive big cars have to reexamine their calling. Some of God's saints lived in caves!"

Uh ... Benny ... people don't want to think about living in caves while they're watching TV.

But that's just the point.

Benny Hinn didn't have to take it this far, but now there's no turning back. He's broken the tele-reality of his followers. Their comfort zone has been breached.

Admittedly, Hinn has renounced some of his teachings before under fire, like he did two years ago in a *Christianity Today* interview.

But this time, we know it's going to stick. Why?

Benny got a normal haircut.

If he retains his popularity, then TBN will have to either embrace him or attack him. If they embrace him, it could herald a different attitude toward the medium itself. I mean, surely there's a right way for the Church to do television. Imagine television as a tool of God that doesn't usurp the local congregation and defraud the viewers. It's hard because, for some reason, we haven't been able to conceive the "touch of the Master's hand" on this instrument. But the potential is there, at least, to show the vanity and futility of life, to "bring forth fruit necessary for repentance," to challenge and shatter illusions instead of creating them.

If Benny Hinn is reworking his whole theology because of an ambush interview by *Inside Edition*, maybe the Church can move toward using TV creatively without becoming addicted to it. Maybe we can correct its direction without becoming self-righteous or paranoid. Maybe if we admit we "see through a glass darkly," like Benny Hinn has, we can find our way out of the looking glass in one piece. **1**

The Door

TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION

The Unitarian Church of Arlington, 4444 Arlington Blvd., Arlington, is sponsoring adult education classes this spring. Classes include "The Book of Job," "Parents as Resident Theologians," "Homo sexuality" and "Twenty-five cent Poker for Beginners." For more information, call the Religious Education Office, 892-2565.



INTEGRITY MUSIC GIVES BIRTH TO TWINS

COMING TO NURSERIES EVERYWHERE MARCH 15
CALL NANNY ANNIE AT (205) 633-9000 FOR MORE INFO

Yup, you got it folks, Integrity Music has brought beautiful boy and girl twins into the world and we're just tickled pink about the whole production! Born on March 15, "Bless My Little Girl," sung by mom Kelly Willard and "Bless My Little Boy," sung by mom Rita Baloch, came out with a healthy smile and song -- a whopping 20 songs long, to be exact!

Right now, they're being pampered in warm, affectionate melodies of love and nurturing, waiting to fill new nurseries everywhere with precious musical collections celebrating the individuality and unexplored world of their new lives. Each bundle of joy is just gurgling, goo-gooing, and giving God the thanks for making them who they are: a boy and girl.

While Amy Grant may have her father's eyes, our beautiful bouncing babies have their mother's heart. They simply exude with all the love, hopes, dreams and prayers a mom could muster.

Since "Bless My Little Girl" and "Bless My Little Boy" are twins, it's natural they'd share some of the same unmistakable features, like:

Peek-a-Boo Baby Drip Drop
-more-

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She talks to Barbie dolls and claims they talk back

Knight-Ridder News Service

Plumbing the depths of spiritual matters may involve a priest, minister, rabbi, shaman or other religious guru.

Now there's a new spiritual guide on the block. She's blonde, svelte and loved by millions.

It's the ubiquitous Barbie doll. Actually, it's dozens of Barbie dolls who communicate through channeling with their owner Barbara Bell of San Anselmo, Calif. seems to be serious.

"Look, for \$3 nobody hurt," she told the San Chronicle. "I don't claim to be the only voice of Barbie. And not taking any other channeling business. I've carved out a niche in the market."

According to the Chronicle, 44, offers to commune with her dozens of Barbie dolls who

says, will advise people on everything from questions about God to career advancement. The cost is \$3. And people are actually paying for Bell's — or is it Barbie's? — answers.

"Barbie asks you to look deep within your hearts," says Bell. "Barbie's voice shall not be stilled even when her smile seems on. That is all."

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Rev. K. Koole — 457-5848

9:30 A.M.
"God The Father Not Forgetting His Sucking Children"
Isaiah 49:15
Baptism

7:00 P.M.
"Breaking Up The Fallow Ground"
Hosea 10:12
(Preparatory)

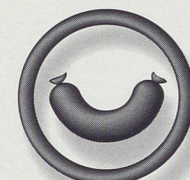
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Call Birthright 962-6707, 421 N. Pearl. 284-tfk

The United Pentecostal Church, 403 S. Water is having a Holy Ghost, Tongue Talking, Healing and Delivering Service on Sunday nights, 5 p.m.. You are welcome. 44-tfd

The Door

LOSER OF THE MONTH



Heavenly license plates break earthly law

By Mandy Baucum
The Statesman Journal

A Sublimity pastor says his Embassy of Heaven Church has authority from on high to issue license plates.

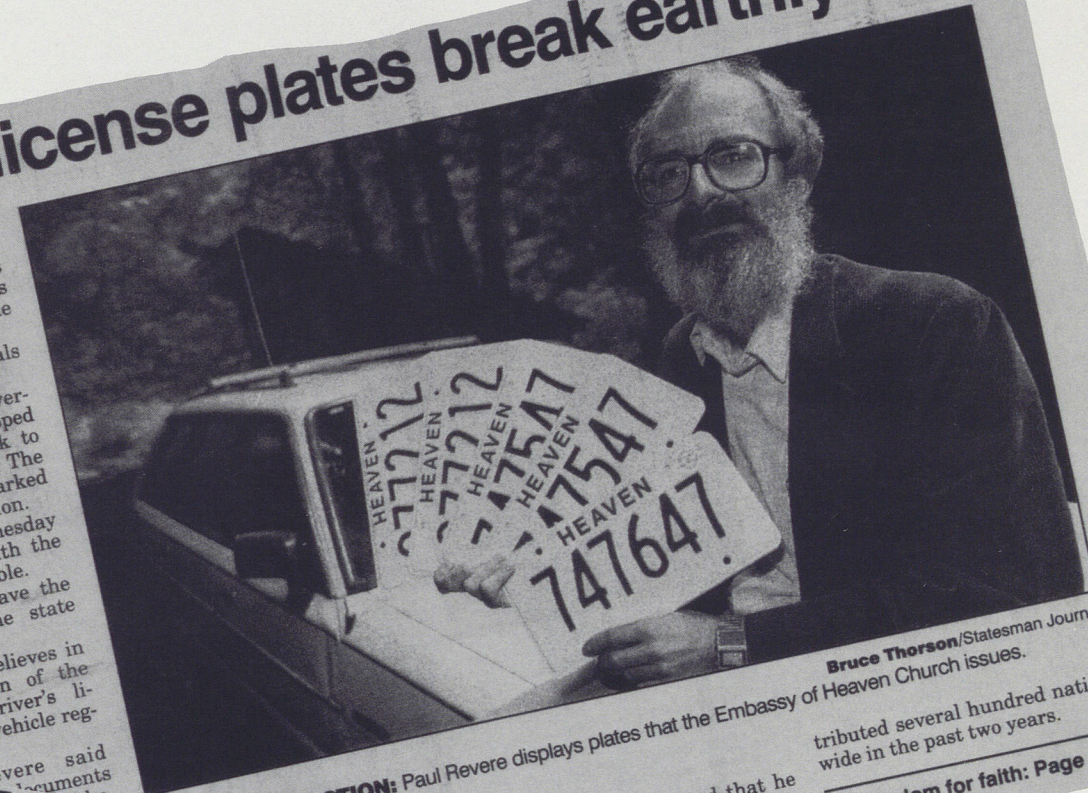
But law enforcement officials say no way.

Police in Seattle, where several heavenly plates have cropped up, were directed this week to ticket cars bearing them. The fine is \$24 if the car is parked and \$47 for a moving violation.

Authorities said Wednesday that Oregon motorists with the plates also could face trouble.

The church's plates have the word *heaven* where the state name normally appears.

The church, which believes in a literal interpretation of the Bible, also issues driver's license, car titles and vehicle reg-



Bruce Thorson/Statesman Journal
Pastor Paul Revere displays plates that the Embassy of Heaven Church issues.

Sublimity family wants to serve faith

Heavenly plates: Page 1A

By Mandy Baucum
The Statesman Journal

Freedom to serve the kingdom of God is all a Sublimity pastor and his family say they want.

When their Embassy of Heaven Church began producing license plates without state authorization, they said their only intent was to declare allegiance to God.

"We are not citizens of the kingdom of the world. Our citizenship is in heaven," Pastor Paul Revere said.

He said that even his name was given to him by God.

Revere's wife, Rachel, said the

idea for the license plates originated about five years ago when she and her two children were witnessing to their faith in Mount Angel and were stopped by police for having no license plates.

She said she did not have plates on her car because their church does not accept earthly government.

"We do not vote or participate in the courts or take money from the government," she said. "We remain separate."

The police officer told Rachel Revere that he had to pull over cars without license plates. He asked whether she could get some kind of identification for

her car.

That question prompted the Embassy church, which circulates a newsletter to about 1,000 members nationwide, to begin silkscreening the word *heaven* onto manufactured plates.

Local and state officials, however, say the church has no authority to issue license plates or similar legal devices and documents.

Rachel Revere said that although church members contribute to be cited for using the plates on their cars, they have no intention of filing lawsuits against police.

"That wouldn't be loving to our neighbor," she said.

You probably have "godless" license plates on your car right now. But luckily, Pastor Paul Revere from the Great City of Salem, Oregon, has received authority from the Great Department of Heavenly Vehicles to establish heavenly license plates (and driver's licenses and titles and registration), authorized by Jesus Christ Himself. Pastor Paul and his Embassy of Heaven Church have distributed over 1,000 of these license plates with "Heaven" right there in bold print to tell the world just Who *does* hold the registration on their car: Jesus, that's who. The Embassy of Heaven Church does not accept earthly government ... but it appears it does accept earthly money, earthly food, earthly gasoline, earthly cars ... and, apparently, earthly traffic tickets if someone doesn't have an earthly license.

We at *The Door* are proud to present Pastor Paul Revere with a heavenly Green Weenie to go along with his heavenly license plates. In so doing, we bestow upon Pastor Paul and his flock our "Loser Of The Month" award (complete with title and registration) for somehow missing the point about what's "earthly" and what isn't. ■

tributed several hundred nationwide in the past two years.

Freedom for faith: Page 2A

The Safety of Fear

The tragedy of modern faith is that we no longer are capable of being terrified. We aren't afraid of God, we aren't afraid of Jesus, we aren't afraid of the Holy Spirit. As a result, we have ended up with a need-centered gospel that attracts thousands ... but transforms no one.

What happened to the bone-chilling, earth-shattering, gut-wrenching, knee-knocking, heart-stopping, life-changing fear that left us speechless, paralyzed, and helpless? What happened to those moments when you and I would open our Bibles and our hands started shaking because we were afraid of the Truth we might find there? Barclay tells us that the word used in the Bible for "Truth" has three meanings — a word used to describe a wrestler grabbing an opponent by the throat; a word meaning to flay an animal; and a word used to describe the humiliation of a criminal who was paraded in front of a crowd with a dagger tied to his neck, its point under his chin so he could not put his head down. That is what the Truth is really like! It grabs us by the throat, it flays us wide open, it forces us to look into the face of God. When is the last time you and I heard God's Truth and were grabbed by the throat?

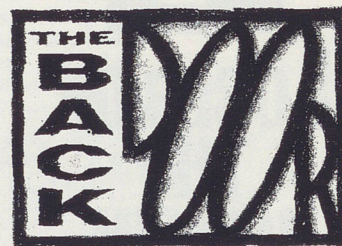
Unfortunately, those of us who have been entrusted with the terrifying, fright-

ening, Good News have become obsessed with making Christianity safe. We have defanged the tiger of Truth. We have tamed the Lion, and now Christianity is so sensible, so accepted, so palatable.

Who is afraid of God anymore?

We are afraid of unemployment, we are afraid of our cities, we are afraid of the collapse of our government, we are afraid of not being fulfilled, we are afraid of AIDS, but we are not afraid of God.

I would like to suggest that the Church become a place of terror again; a place where God continually has to tell us, "Fear not"; a place where our relationship with God is not a simple belief or doctrine or theology, it is God's burning presence in our lives. I am suggesting that the tame God of relevance be replaced by the God whose very presence shatters our egos into dust, burns our sin into ashes, and strips us naked to reveal the real person within. The Church needs to become a gloriously dangerous place where nothing is safe in God's



By Mike Yaconelli

presence except us. Nothing — including our plans, our agendas, our priorities, our politics, our money, our security, our comfort, our possessions, our needs.

The two men on the road to Emmaus knew they had been with Jesus because their "hearts burned from within." The impotence of today's Church, the weakness of Christ's followers, and the irrelevance of most parachurch organizations is directly related to the lack of being in the presence of an awesome, holy God, who continually demands allegiance only to Him — not to our churches, our organizations, or our theology.

We believe in a God who wants all of us — every bit of us — and He wants us all the time. He wants our worship and our love, but most of all He wants us to trust Him. We have to be more in awe of God than we are of our government, more in awe of God than we are of our problems, more in awe of God than we are of our beliefs about abortion, more in awe of God than we are of our doctrines and agendas. Our God is perfectly capable of calming the storm or putting us into the middle of one. Either way, if it's God, we will be speechless and trembling.

Our world is tired of people whose God is tame. It is longing to see people whose God is big and holy and frightening and gentle and tender ... and ours; a God whose love frightens us into His strong and powerful arms where He longs to whisper those terrifying words, "I love you." 