

THE BEREAN CALL **WEEKLY NEWS LETTER**

April 16, 2004

MEL'S PASSION

A small item of controversy that hovered over "The Passion of the Christ" was the supposed comment of Pope John Paul II after viewing the movie. It is alleged that he said, "It is as it was!" Although that is a terrific line for the promotion of the movie (thereby inciting skeptics) there is solid evidence that he indeed made that statement. Why didn't he simply confirm what he said? Speculation has it that it was denied by those close to the Pope for two reasons: 1) Given the objections to the film by many Jewish leaders, they might take offense at his taking a favorable view of the film; 2) Mel Gibson's anti-Vatican II beliefs as a Tridentine Catholic might cause the Pope some embarrassment. To that, I would add a third point as to why the Pope's cohorts should have wanted to draw back his comment: Because it's rather silly! How could he know that "It is as it was," unless he was there?"

T.A. McMahon

CAN'T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?

The Rev. Greg Johnson of Lehi, Utah, and Robert Millet, a professor of religion at Brigham Young University, have shared a close friendship for seven years and are traveling about the United States to teach others how to communicate effectively with people who believe differently from them.... "An Evangelical and Latter-day Saint in Dialogue" is not a debate event, said Tom Sherry, the adviser to the LDS student group and a coordinator of activities sponsored by the Oregon State University Religious Advisers Association and Student Affairs Division.

Johnson, an ordained Baptist minister, and Millet, a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, will describe the basic beliefs of their own churches and point out some of the central theological differences between evangelical Christians and Mormons. Then they will model how they approach doctrinal discussions with each other without compromising their own religious convictions. "There's no intent for people to become 'more Baptist' or 'more Mormon,'" Sherry said. "We want them to learn how people can have a credible, productive conversation in a friendly way when they come from two starkly different viewpoints."

[TBC: In Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, he exhorts them to "prove all things; hold fast [to] that which is good" (5:21). His encouragement to the believers in Thessalonica is to make sure that their beliefs -- and the resulting practices -- are consistent with what the Word of God teaches. To Timothy, he writes: ³Take heed unto thyself, and unto thy doctrine² (1 Timothy 4:16). Paul exhorts believers in Corinth to examine themselves to see ³whether ye be in the faith² (2 Corinthians 13:5). -- T.A. McMahon]

OUTTA OUR ARCHIVES

I will seek the will of the Spirit of God through, or in connection with, the Word of God. The Spirit and the Word must be combined. If I look to the Spirit alone without the Word, I

lay myself open to great delusions also. If the Holy Ghost guides us at all, He will do it according to the Scriptures and never contrary to them.

George Müller, quoted in "The Berean Call," February 1994

SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN

Understanding Evolution is a website set up as a tool to aid teachers in the proclaiming of evolution in the public school system. Here is a sample of what the site has to offer:

"Misconception: "Evolution and religion are incompatible."

Response: Religion and science (evolution) are very different things. In science (as in science class), only natural causes are used to explain natural phenomena, while religion deals with beliefs that are beyond the natural world.

The misconception that one has to choose between science and religion is divisive. Most Christian and Jewish religious groups have no conflict with the theory of evolution or other scientific findings. In fact, many religious people, including theologians, feel that a deeper understanding of nature actually enriches their faith. Moreover, in the scientific community there are thousands of scientists who are devoutly religious and also accept evolution."

[TBC: Evolution has nothing to do with true science. It is in fact a religion diametrically opposed to biblical Christianity.]

MAKING IT UP AS THEY GO ALONG

"What do you need? Start creating it. Start speaking about it. Start speaking it into being. Speak to your billfold. Say, 'You big, thick billfold full of money.' Speak to your checkbook. Say, 'You, checkbook, you. You've never been so prosperous since I owned you. You're just jammed full of money' " (Marilyn Hickey, tape #186, "Claim Your Miracles").

In the preceding statement, the speaker has either knowingly or unknowingly appropriated an occult technique, garbed it with pseudo-biblical sounding words, and simultaneously appealed to the greed of man. Consider the following comments:

"The Bible claims that God is a personal Being of infinite love, wisdom, and power who made man in His moral and spiritual image and to whom man is accountable. Occultism, in contrast, holds out the promise that each person can acquire godlike powers and thus become his own god. Of course, some occultists believe they must look to the spirit entities who allegedly control these forces. From this concept developed complex rules for obtaining favors from the gods, which were passed on from initiate to initiate in the form of occult rituals.

"It is easy to see that the teaching of Positive Mental Attitude in the worlds of business, academia, and psychology is an appeal to call upon the "light" side and avoid the "dark" side of the Force. So it is with Positive/Possibility Thinking, popularized within the church by Norman Vincent Peale and his chief disciple, Robert Schuller. And the same can be said of the Positive Confession (speaking forth the Æ word of faith¹) of today's charismatic leaders. Each person's mind (or tongue) can become the channel for this Force so that what one thinks or speaks aloud ('positive' or 'negative') will come to pass' (Dave Hunt, *Occult Invasion*, Harvest House, 1998).

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