

Good News for Israel

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He will raise a flag among the nations and assemble the exiles of Israel.
 He will gather his scattered people from the ends of the earth. Isaiah 11:12

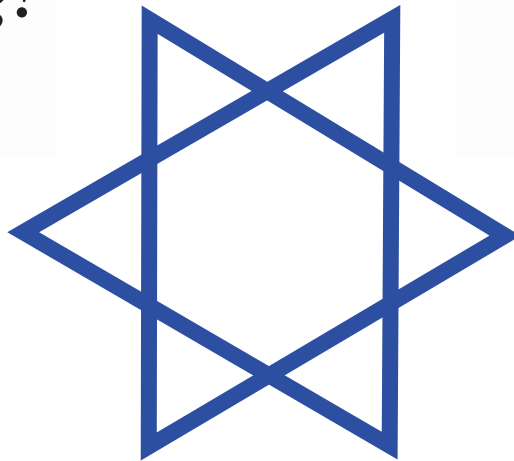
Happy 60th "Resurrected" Birthday, Israel!

May 14th, 2008

*Who has heard
 of such a thing?*

*Can a nation
 be delivered
 in an instant?*

*Who has seen
 such things?*



*Yet as soon
 as Zion was
 in labor,
 she gave birth
 to her sons.*

*Can a land be
 born in one day?*

Isaiah 61:8

May 14th, 1948

My Two Shekels

Dear Friends,

I've been reading a fair amount of the new atheist propaganda on the web and bookstore shelves. They all have in common the charge that medieval Christianity and modern medieval Islam have a lot in common (namely killing in the name of their god). Unfortunately, there is a lot of truth to that. The difference is that the Old or New Testament does not condone in any way of killing your neighbor for conversion. The Koran does condone these actions for this and many other things. What the atheists fail to mention is that Nazism, Marxism and secular humanism, are all godless philosophies that have brought about the deaths of a hundred million people over the past hundred years. I was just reading an article from a major newspaper about a so called "educator" who said she is raising "questioning children" rather than



"religious ones", because of all the superstitions and baggage in the three monotheistic faiths. She used the illustration that most young children believe their parents, whether it's about Santa Claus or Jesus Christ. "Excuse me", Santa Claus is almost a totally fictional composite character verses Jesus Christ, the most attested to and written about "being" in history. Whether you except Jesus as God or not is another issue. She couldn't have written down Moses or Mohammed and gotten away with it. We live in very confusing times. The so called academics are given a free pass on everything traditional, conservative or Christian. We are towards the end of the great culture war and we will lose this inning, but we know who will have the final word.

*Shalom,
Chris Heeb*

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-Henry & Muriel Gimble
Dick Feider, husband of Elaine Feider
-Henry & Muriel Gimble
William F Buckley – Chris Heeb
Florence Tedesco – Henry & Muriel Gimble
Peter Heeb- Ed Rothman
Peter Heeb -- Chris Heeb

What We Believe...

We are not a church, denomination nor synagogue. We are the oldest evangelical outreach in the nation to the Jewish and Christian communities (129 years!). We come alongside everyone who desires to have a penetrating understanding of their Biblical heritage in our Lord and Savior, Yeshua/Jesus, the Jewish Messiah.

We strongly believe in the Scriptural mandate of Romans 1:16, spoken by the apostle Paul, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to the Jew first, then the Gentile (everyone else)." That's why, "Good News for Israel means good news for everyone!"

We also believe in the heart of Ruth 1:16, which says, "Your people shall be my people and your God my God." Your people refers to Jesus' physical family of Israel, the Jews and your God refers to the Father God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Jesus. Ruth 1:16 and Romans 1:16 are Scriptural bookends the Author of the Bible, Yeshua wants you to know!

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Notes to GNFI

It's fun listening to you on KKMS!
Love to hear about the covenant
People- Jews & Israel!
Ken and Verniz J.

Chris, Ed and Tom
Thanks for your ministry and bible teaching. Our family numbering 10 plus 7 grand children will be celebrating our 4th Passover this year, having been informed by your radio program that our belief in Jesus has grafted us onto the vine and that our roots are Jewish! God Bless,
Tom & Nancy

Thank you for the message and information about the "Abrahamic Roots" of Christianity. As a Christian I'm finding out how little I know about our Jewish heritage, and I appreciate your knowledge and background. Thanks again and may God continue to bless your important ministry
Phillip L.

Thank you for the contents of your last newsletter, especially the news we don't get from our local newspapers such as what Benjamin Netanyahu told Pres. Bush, and the between the lines article by Joseph Farah and the articles that Followed.
Bernadine P.

25th Annual
Spring Banquet

With special guest speaker **SHELLY VOLK**
Celebrating 130 years of Good News for Israel!

Also Special Exodus Movie Preview

Saturday, May 3rd, 2008, 5:30 p.m. Schmooze / 6:15 Dinner

At North Heights Lutheran Church

\$25 each or \$200 per table of eight / Menu: Chicken Dinner

Reserve your seats by Friday, April 25th

Questions? 952.926.7369 or admin@gnfi.org

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Reserve your seats by Friday, April 25th

North Heights Lutheran Church is located at
1700 W. Hwy. 96 in Arden Hills

Directions: From 694 go north on 35-W
to the first exit Hwy 96

go east/right approx. a half mile, thru 2 lights ,
turn right into parking lot and go left
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Happy 60th “Resurrected birthday” Israel

By Chris Heeb

On November 29, 1947 the United Nations voted to terminate the British control after WW I of Palestine by August 1st 1948 and, to resolve the Arab-Israeli land conflict. The plan came to be called the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine /Resolution 181. The plan was approved by the U.N. General assembly by 33 votes to 13, with 10 abstentions. It is important to note that resolutions passed by the UN General Assembly are regarded as recommendations and are not legally binding. It's also interesting to note in my opinion, if resolutions go against Israel they are expected by the world to be binding, if for Israel, not binding.

Theodore Herzl, the father of modern Zionism (the return of the Jews to the biblical promised land of Israel) said in 1897 at the 1st Zionist Congress meeting in Basel Switzerland that a Jewish state would exist within 50 years of this meeting taking place. The British in 1903 offered them Uganda in Africa for their promised land. It was rejected as non-biblical. Well low and behold on May 14th 1948; the reborn nation of Israel was reestablished. Herzl was supernaturally accurate with his prediction. In his diary he mentions having a recurring dream where the Messiah would pick him up in his sleep and carry him in the clouds over Europe to the land of Israel. This is from a non-religious Jewish man. President Harry Truman also had a significant part to play in that rebirth. Many people credit his seeming miraculous Presidential win against Dewey as divine intervention for recognizing the state of Israel. Also the banner /flag of Israel was flown as the official

emblem of the young nation. It was to resemble the prayer garment of the Jews with the star of King David in the middle. This was to represent the Great physical Davidic Kingdom promised throughout scripture. This brings me to the great scripture

The Great Prophet Isaiah, whose name means the “Salvation (Yeshua/Jesus) of God” Wrote “He (God) will raise a banner (flag) for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth.” Isaiah 11:12

God can and will use people that are totally clueless to HIS plans to achieve HIS Goals. The world has been in shock ever since 1948 that the dispersed people of the bible, the Jews are actually back in the land and are just as controversial as they were in biblical times. Most Catholic and Protestant seminaries along with most clergy have a big problem with the nation of Israel. Even Jews have a problem with this issue. Well God is not impressed with PhD's of any kind that disagree with his plan or secular humanist dribble denying their right to exist. No matter how much the Muslims complain he is going to have it HIS way. He emphatically makes his case throughout the older testament. He promised a physical descendant of David to rule from their capital (of over 3000 years) Jerusalem mentioned over 800 times in the bible and never once in the Koran. God won't make it any plainer than what he says in HIS word in Jeremiah 30:1-3

The LORD gave another message to Jeremiah. He said, “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Write down for the record everything I have said to you, Jeremiah. For the time is coming when I will restore the fortunes of my people of Israel and Judah. I will bring them home to this land that I gave to their ancestors, and they will possess it again. I, the LORD, have spoken!”

My last sobering thoughts are from Jeremiah 30 vs. 11. For I am with you (Israel) and will save you, says the LORD.

“I will completely destroy the nations where I have scattered you, but I will not completely destroy you.”

As you can see every government is going to be made null and void except for HIS!

Answering 'The Bible Answer Man'

By Joseph Farah 2007

Hank Hanegraaff, also known as "The Bible Answer Man," may know more about theology than me.



Hank Hanegraaff

He may have memorized more Scripture than me.

He may have a deeper understanding of some Bible passages than me.

But he sure doesn't know much about the Middle East.

Therefore, today, I am going to address some issues being raised by "The Bible Answer Man," especially insofar as they apply to the suicidal policies he is advocating with regard to this explosive area of the world.

In a new novel he has written with fiction writer Sigmund Brouwer, *Fuse of Armageddon*, Hanegraaff makes the amazingly false case America's support of Israel causes, at least in part, terrorism directed against Americans.

It is fitting such a preposterous and wholly unsupportable thesis could only be marketed to the American people as a work of fiction, because that's what it is.

"Much of American Middle East policy is influenced by a huge voting bloc of evangelicals who are taught not to question Israel's divine right to the land," says Hanegraaff.

"God is not pro-Jew. He is pro-justice. He is not pro-Palestinian. He is pro-peace. Only a Gospel of peace and justice is potent enough to break the stranglehold of anti-Semitism and racism fueled in part by bad theology."

Let's talk about justice and peace. Who is it in the Middle East who genuinely wants peace? Who is it in the Middle East who genuinely works toward justice?

There is only one nation in the Middle East that has bent over backward for peace to the point of being counterproductive and risking its own survival. That nation is Israel.

There is only one nation in the Middle East that has worked for justice, offering Arabs and all other people civil and human rights. That nation is Israel.

As an Arab-American who had the opportunity to serve as a Middle East correspondent and study the region for more than 30 years, I can make that statement without any equivocation or hesitation.

For instance, in Israel, Arabs participate fully in the political process. They vote. They elect representatives to the Knesset. They publish newspapers, more newspapers, by the way, than are published in most Arab countries and published without fear of censorship or reprisal for the opinions they express and they are free to practice their religions, which is not always the case in Arab countries.

In other words, Arabs in Israel have more freedom than in any Arab country.

On the other hand, what is the Jewish experience in Hanegraaff's fantasyland of "Palestine?"

Quite simply, Jews are not welcome to live there. That's why we recently witnessed the wholesale forced removal of Jews from Gaza and are seeing similar moves in Judea and Samaria, the historic and Biblical names of the lands on the West Bank.

No Jews are allowed in the Palestinian Authority. Precious few Christians are welcome there either, as demonstrated by the mass exodus of Hanegraaff's spiritual brothers and sisters from towns like Bethlehem and Nazareth. Christian Arabs lived happily and prosperously in these lands while they were under the control of Israel and before, while under the control of the British and for hundreds of years prior during the Ottoman Empire.

The idea Israel and the Jews are perpetrating injustice against the Arabs in their midst stands the very word on its head.

But the most outrageous allegation from Hanegraaff and Brouwer is America's support of Israel has provided justification for Islamo-fascists to terrorize America.

"An entirely new lost generation of Palestinian children is growing up with a hatred for Americans that will fuel more terrorism when they become adults," Brouwer said. "By assisting them now in-stead of ignoring them, we can help break the cycle."

It's a lie from the pit of hell.

In fact, if it were true, there would be no Islamo-fascist terrorism against the U.S., because the very policy being advocated here, the promotion of an independent Palestinian state, is exactly the policy America has been following for the last 18 years.

Since President George H.W. Bush's term in office, it has been America's foreign policy to move toward the establishment of such a state. The only thing which has hampered the objective is the inability of Israel and the U.S. to find any reasonable people with whom to negotiate such a goal.

U.S. taxpayers have poured billions of dollars into this initiative, trying to create a state of Palestine where none has existed in the history of the world.

And all the while, despite this largesse, support for the U.S., justice and peace in the region has only decreased.

What Hanegraaff and Brouwer are saying and writing is dangerous. It is untrue. It defies history. It defies logic. It defies common sense. And it makes both Americans and all of the people of the Middle East less safe and less free.



Joseph Farah, Founder Worldnet Daily
An excellent news source

Mike Natt - From Woodstock

I was sought by those who did not ask for Me; I was found by those who did not seek Me. (Isaiah 65: 1)

Ironically, Isaiah spoke this prophetic word not to the Jewish people who were God's chosen, but to the gentiles, who were outside of the commonwealth of Israel and the covenants of God. Fast forward to 1967 - I as a natural descendant of Abraham was estranged from God. I sought fulfillment in the Eastern religions of the gentiles rather than in the God of my fathers. Although I completed my bar mitzvah and was trained in the heritage of the Jewish people, I found no fulfillment in these things. The music of Sergeant Pepper was the song of my life rather than the Psalms of King David.

Unbeknownst to me at the time, 1967 was a pivotal year in God's dealings with the Jewish people. As the City of Jerusalem returned to its rightful owners, God was drawing a generation of young Jewish people back to Himself, their rightful owner. However like many of my generation, I did not seek a direct path to my God, but I pursued a circuitous path through the hippy culture. As I strayed further from my Jewish heritage and embraced this new American youth culture, I became increasingly aware of my emptiness and the grip of a sinister influence in my life.

After graduating high school, I went not to Israel, but to Woodstock, the Mecca of all that the hippy culture represented to me. Surely being around my element and grooving with the music in an atmosphere of free love I would find what I was searching for! Yet I left Woodstock emptier and lonelier than when I arrived. The God of Israel was watching over me and waiting until I came to the end of my search outside of His kingdom to discover what truly satisfies a hungry Jewish soul.



After a semester of college, I was restless and unsatisfied, so I dropped out and headed for Berkeley. Perhaps in Berkeley, a more permanent Woodstock like culture, I would find my spiritual home. At this point in my life I had never heard the gospel message; much less that it was a story about a Jewish Messiah. When I first arrived in Berkeley I noticed that there were a lot of people "into Jesus"; a phenomenon that was foreign to me as a New Yorker reared in a

predominantly Jewish culture. God used two people to make an indefinable, yet indelible impression on me.

A Christian man gave me my first gospel tract several days after I arrived in Berkeley. However, I was so excited about the prospects of a new start in Berkeley, that I wasn't open to what he tried to share with me. Several hours later, a large group the Hari Krishna followers paraded down the center of the city chanting and carrying idols. In the midst of the festivities, I caught sight of the Christian man, and noticed a grief and expression that was foreign to me. I was observing the Spirit of God working and expressing Himself through this man's life. This was in stark contrast to the other people who had given themselves to a heathen religion.

Several days later while walking on the Berkeley College campus, I saw a group of people congregating around a strange preacher. Although I did not have the Spirit of God in my life at the time, I discerned a spirit of hate operating within the crowd as hecklers hurled verbal stones at this preacher. Out of a spirit filled heart of love, his response was, "Jesus loves you." I felt as Saul of Tarsus must have felt witnessing the stoning of Stephen. Stephen's face was shining with the glory of God as he asked God to forgive his persecutors.

Stock To Berkeley, To Jesus

I staggered out of this encounter with another sense of the reality of God in the countenance of a believer. I did not know how to process what I had observed.

As time went on I became more spiritually restless, searching for answers that could only be found in a God who was actively pursuing me. My best friend from New York came to California and we hitchhiked to Eugene, Oregon where we were planning to spend a few days with some people he knew. However, for some unknown reason, these people told us we could not stay with them. They directed us to a Christian commune down the street. Although I felt a satanic resistance, I felt a stronger hand directing me to this Christian commune.



As soon as we entered the house, several people shared with us how Jesus changed their lives. My friend was freaked out and under conviction by the presence of God and ran out of the house, but I hung in and listened to what they had to say. My last line of defense was, "but I am Jewish." At that point they shared with me some Old Testament Scriptures that spoke of the Messiah.

However, what really convinced me was the light I saw in their countenances. I knew that I was in darkness, and yearned for the Light of the World. I received Jesus as my Messiah that night and knew that I had been translated from the kingdom of darkness into His marvelous light.

From my early days in the faith until this present time I have been drawn to the Scriptures and to live a life empowered by the Holy Spirit. The Jewish people are called to know God and bless the peoples of the earth as a chosen nation called to spread the knowledge of God. However, we have by and large given ourselves to worldly pursuits rather than to our priestly calling. Yet God's gifts and calling upon this people are irrevocable. As God brought me through a personal journey of dissatisfaction and discovery, He is preparing the Jewish people through worldly and demonic opposition for the day when they will embrace Jesus as their Messiah.

It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for

his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.
(Zechariah 12:9-10)

Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days. (Hosea 3:5)

Mike Natt is a Jewish believer who grew up in New York City. Mike came to faith and was filled with the Holy Spirit in 1970. He served as an elder at City Hill Fellowship in Minneapolis for 12 years and ministered the Word in various churches. He pioneered a Messianic work in the Twin Cities and led a church plant in New York for two years. Mike has taught the Word of God for 35 years.



Mike is a Prophetic Minister and serves as an elder at All Nations Church in Phoenix. His ministry passions are prayer and the ministry of the Word.



Are you ready for the marriage supper of the Lamb?

God's Salvation menu: 3 courses of lamb

You see, our God, the God of Israel has 3 meals on HIS Salvation menu. Most of us know about and have seen the famous 10 commandments movie, with Charlton Heston as Moses and Yul Brenner as Pharaoh of Egypt. Well, I love to tell people that God is the inventor of fast food, that's right, fast food. He tells the Hebrews in Exodus 12 to make flame broiled lamb, and he specifically tells them to how to eat it, (verse 11,) to be fully dressed and to eat it in haste. That's right haste, for it is the **Lords Passover. (1st Course)**

God was about to deliver the Hebrews, with a peculiar ritual of painting lambs blood on the doorposts of their physical house. And by showing faith in this ritual they would be physically saved and delivered. Wow! What a miracle!

Well, we know the children of Israel became a nation like God had promised Abraham, 430 years earlier. We also know that they still had plenty of problems like we have: greed, envy, strife, and unbelief to name a few.

Moving ahead, approximately 1500 years, the "**Lamb of God**" man, as Jesus cousin John the Baptist put it, would be initiating a new meal on the Lords salvation menu, and it would eventually be known as the **Lord's Passover/ Last Supper. (2nd Course)** He wanted to give them a spiritual deliverance from sin and he would be using the same Passover meal, they thought they understood in Egypt.

Well, I love to say that God is a mystery writer and curve ball pitcher. He threw them a big curve by having HIS Son become the sacrificial

"Lamb/Man" by putting spiritual blood by faith, from Yeshua/Jesus on the doorposts of their heart, I know that was a mouthful

In Luke 22:19-20 Jesus said "take this bread and drink this cup in remembrance of me". Can you imagine them thinking, what is he talking about and how is this bread and wine a symbol of Him. Here's the mystery writer part of God coming out and amazing them and amazing us, his creation 2000 years later. In the midst of this world changing salvation meal he says, I will not eat another **Passover meal** with you until we eat it again in the Kingdom. In their minds they were thinking the Great Jewish Kingdom promised to King David.

Wow, he is telling them that there will be another **Passover meal** in Heaven, the **Marriage Supper of the Lamb (3rd Course)**,

Revelation 19:9. Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!' And he added, "These are the true words of God."

Let's pause a moment and consider what is going on here is an outline of a 1st century Jewish wedding engagement process. That's right; the great groom of God, Jesus the Christ is using Jewish wedding imagery with his disciples and later with us as the bride of Christ. This is great stuff!

The Father and His Son Yeshua, are betrothed to his bride, the church! Hopefully now you can see that when He asks us to share the Good News, he asking us to invite them to the Greatest wedding dinner of all time, the **Passover/Marriage supper of the Lamb** in Heaven, with Him as host no less!

Think about it, we love to have our friends and family with us at the important events of our lives and nothing is more important than this event!

We need to invite all our friends and family to the greatest wedding of all time! The apostle Paul says His ways are not our ways and that we should be praising God for wanting to have us as HIS bride.



Let's be busy inviting everyone we can to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb!!!

by Chris Heeb

Why Evangelize Jews?

God's chosen people need Jesus as much as we do.

LARRY KING is not known as a tough interviewer. Yet with smooth-talking pastor Joel Osteen, he went for the jugular, asking whether Jews and Muslims must believe in Christ to go to heaven. And Osteen blinked: "I'm very careful about saying who would and who wouldn't go to heaven. I don't know."

While Osteen later apologized for seemingly downplaying the necessity of faith in Christ for salvation, the pluralistic pressure to waffle on this issue is intense. Several mainline denominations support a two-covenant theology, which holds that Judaism and Christianity are parallel, divinely guided paths to God. In addition, in 2002 the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops released a document, "Reflections on Covenant and Mission," affirming that "Jews already dwell in a saving covenant with God."

Noting that many church leaders and theologians have "retreated from embracing the task of evangelizing Jews," in 1989 a global group of evangelical theologians (including Vernon Grounds, Kenneth Kantze, J.I. Packer, and Tokunboh Adeyemo) drafted the Willowbank Declaration on the Christian Gospel and the Jewish People. They denied that "any non-Christian faith, as such, will mediate eternal life with God."

Such a statement, attacked when it was released, remains politically incorrect. Voices both inside and outside the church say that evangelizing Jewish people—calling them to repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord, Savior, and Messiah—is inappropriate. Rabbi David Rosen recently told CT that if someone relates to him "as someone who's going to burn in hell, then I can't really see that as genuine love toward my people and my faith"

I love and respect the Jewish people and their faith. After all, Jesus was a Jew, and Christianity is firmly rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures. Certainly the Holocaust and the church's horrific

anti-Semitism have changed the context for evangelism. We have much for which to apologize. But we can't apologize for the gospel, which is Good News for Jewish people precisely because they—like all human beings—need Jesus. Paul, a Hebrew of Hebrews, said plainly, "What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For... all, both Jews and Greeks are under the power of sin."



Some believe that Romans, which states emphatically that "all Israel will be saved," Teaches that Jews do not need to hear the Good news from us. (Along those lines, Rosen asks evangelicals to "suspend your proselytizing and allow the Almighty to do whatever the Almighty thinks is the thing to do in his own time.") Such interpretations remind me of the apocryphal story of the misguided churchman who condescendingly told budding missionary William Carey, "Young man, sit down; when God pleases to convert the heathen, he will do it without your aid or mine." If Carey had sat down, the modern missionary movement might have died stillborn.

Ordinarily God uses people to spread his message. Good news is no news at all if it is not communicated. And it must be shared first with the Jews (Rom, 1:16). Their calling as God's covenant people makes our evangelistic obligation to them greater, not less. "The biblical hope for Jewish people," Willowbank says, "centers on their being restored through faith in Christ to their proper place as branches of God's olive tree, from which they are at present broke off."

Some people denigrate the methods and motives of people who evangelize Jews. They claim that focusing ministry on-or "targeting"—Jews is just plain wrong "Billy Graham didn't target," Pastor John Hagee says. "Bill Bright refused to target the Jews. I'm not targeting the Jews."

Others charge that those who evangelize Jewish people are deceptive or are attempting to snare the vulnerable in the Jewish community. These include students, the aged, Russian Jews, the impoverished, those from dysfunctional or interfaith families, and the uneducated.

Strangely, other types of focused evangelism—such as among students or the homeless—seems to be acceptable. As Willowbank correctly notes, "The existence of separate churchly organizations for evangelizing Jews... as an appropriate means of fulfilling the church's mandate to take the gospel to the whole human race."

Of course, deception and manipulation are always wrong. The ends do not justify the means when it comes to evangelism. Rick Warren of Saddleback Church has rightly told Jewish audiences that he doesn't believe in coercion—though he does believe in persuasion.

So must we. As we continue the good works of dialogue and practical ministries among our Jewish neighbors, let's renew our commitment to also sensitively but forthrightly persuade them to receive the Good News.

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Willow Creek Repents?

Why the most influential church in America now says: "We made a mistake."



Bill Hybels, Head Pastor

Few would disagree that Willow Creek Community Church has been one of the most influential churches in America over the last thirty years. Willow, through its association, has promoted a vision of church that is big, program-matic, and comprehensive. This vision has been heavily influenced by the methods of secular business. James Twitchell, in his new book *Shopping for God*, reports that outside Bill Hybels' office hangs a poster that says: "What is our business? Who is our customer? What does the customer consider value?" Directly or indirectly, this philosophy of ministry—church should be a big box with programs for people at every level of spiritual maturity to consume and engage—has impacted every evangelical church in the country.

So what happens when leaders of Willow Creek stand up and say, **"We made a mistake"**?

Not long ago Willow released its findings from a multiple year qualitative study of its ministry. Basically, they wanted to know what programs and activities of the church were actually helping people mature spiritually and which were not. The results were published in a book, *Reveal: Where Are You?*, co-authored by Greg Hawkins, executive pastor of Willow Creek.

Hybels called the findings "earth shaking," "ground breaking," and "mind blowing."

Hawkins says, "Participation is a big deal. We believe the more people participating in these sets of activities, with higher levels of frequency, it will produce disciples of Christ." This has been Willow's philosophy of ministry in a nutshell. The church creates programs/activities. People participate in these activities. The outcome is spiritual maturity. In a moment of stinging honesty Hawkins says, "I know it might sound crazy but that's how we do it in churches. We measure levels of participation."

Having put all of their eggs into the program-driven church basket you can understand their shock when the research revealed that **"Increasing levels of participation in these sets of activities does NOT predict whether someone's becoming more of a disciple of Christ. It does NOT predict whether they love God more or they love people more."**

Speaking at the Leadership Summit, Hybels summarized the findings this way:

Some of the stuff that we have put millions of dollars into thinking it

would really help our people grow and develop spiritually, when the data actually came back it wasn't helping people that much. Other things that we didn't put that much money into and didn't put much staff against is stuff our people are crying out for.

Having spent thirty years creating and promoting a multi-million dollar organization driven by programs and measuring participation, and convincing other church leaders to do the same, you can see why Hybels called this research "the wake up call" of his adult life.

Hybels confesses:

We made a mistake. What we should have done when people crossed the line of faith and became Christians, we should have started telling people and teaching people that they have to take responsibility to become 'self feeders.' We should have gotten people, taught people, how to read their bible between service, how to do the spiritual practices much more aggressively on their own.

In other words, spiritual growth doesn't happen best by becoming dependent on elaborate church programs but through the age old spiritual practices of prayer, bible reading, and relationships. And, ironically, these basic disciplines do not require multi-million dollar facilities and hundreds of staff to manage.

Does this mark the end of Willow's thirty years of influence over the American church? Not according to Hawkins:

Our dream is that we fundamentally change the way we do church. That we take out a clean sheet of paper and we rethink all of our old assumptions. Replace it with new insights. Insights that are informed by research and rooted in Scripture. Our dream is really to discover what God is doing and how he's asking us to transform this planet.

A Jew Goes To Jail For Jesus The Saul Selby Story

My mother, like most good Jewish mothers, hoped many things for her son. In her "ideal world" she would have liked me to become a Dr., or perhaps a lawyer, or maybe an orthodontist.



Saul Selby

Boy, was she disappointed. Not only did I forgo the academic requirements to achieve such things, but I ultimately choose (or was chosen for) Christian ministry. But not just any ministry -- Jesus has sent me to jail to minister for Him.

Jail ministry was not just a far cry from my mothers plan for me; it was a farther cry for my plans for myself. In my twenties I could be best described as a New York, Jewish, drug-addicted atheist, largely interested in living for pleasure.

The bible tells us that God can not be mocked and that we "reap what we sow" and if we sow to the flesh we reap destruction. That's what I got -- destruction. I couldn't hold a job, or sustain a relationship or muster hope for the future. At the age of 27, in complete despair, I checked myself into a drug rehab in NYC. While there I was deeply offended by "programatic" references to God as a "potential" resource for my recovery. I arrogantly believed that God was a myth for weak-minded fools -- and initially I would have none of it! Fortunately I was desperate, so desperate that I began to ask myself perhaps the best question I ever asked, "what if I'm wrong". What if God

really does exist, and I just haven't had any experiences to convince me otherwise? Armed with that tiny bit of logic I decided to do something radical. I prayed to a God I didn't believe existed and I asked Him, "if you exist --- show me". Show me He did. Within moments following that prayer I began to experience an indescribable sensation that I will try to describe. I felt surrounded by a warm, soothing Presence. I couldn't see it, but I could feel it. It was peaceful, comforting and this experience lasted for hours into the evening.

Immediately I realized that my prayer had been answered and that the God I arrogantly denied --- actually existed! But not just existed, He actually cared about me, a drug addicted atheist who belittled His followers at any opportunity. I was overwhelmed with a sense of gratitude that quickly led to a contract. I told God I would try to live my life based on His will and not my own ---- no matter what His will was. Boy, was I in for a surprise.



Within a month I was told about Jesus. As a cultural Jew I was taught to reject and distrust Christianity, but I didn't want to limit God in my life. After all, I reasoned, "God knows who He is and who am I to tell Him otherwise". So I didn't want to allow any biases interfere with His directives to me. So I began to read the New Testament to explore if this was the direction God had for me. I learned about Christ's sacrifice for my sin and my need for forgiveness. I asked God if this was the way I was proceed and He said, "YES".

Once I became a Christian I began to consume the New Testament and quickly learned that heaven and hell were realities that all men must consider and Jesus is the way to heaven. I became determined to tell others about Jesus", and with every opportunity I did so, only to find moderate interest by many. "This is crazy" I thought, why wouldn't people jump at the opportunity to live for God? In my frustration I asked God to direct me to people that were interested in Him and would respond to the Gospel. Within weeks I was invited to attend a Christian service in a juvenile jail where almost everyone attending gleefully responded to an altercall. Jesus showed me that sinners who are broken are often the most responsive to His Love. I've now been involved in jail ministry since 1984, and lead a ministry with my wife Karen (Missionary Evangelism to Corrections) that puts on 80 services a week in Twin City jails ministering the gospel to thousands of inmates a year. Anytime you want to go to jail, let me know.

Saturday April 19th

Come and be a part of learning how to witness to your friends, neighbors and even people in jail.

Speakers include:
Former MN Viking Jeff Siemon
KTIS Radio Host Kim Jeffries
Chris Heeb – Good News for Israel
Saul Selby – Director, MEC

The Kingdom Builders Conference
Saturday April 19th 8:30 am
– 12:30 pm
At New Hope Church
Hwy 169 and Rockford Rd.

Register online at:
www.mecjailministry.com
Or call MEC 651-408-1300



Upcoming Events

GNFI Annual Banquet

Saturday, May 3rd, 2008

5:30 schmooze, 6pm dinner, 7pm Shelly Volk
North Heights Lutheran Church

Celebrating 130 Years of Ministry with Shelly and June Volk from Phoenix, Arizona. They have been in Jewish ministry for 35 years. He will share what they feel the church needs to hear at this time.

Kingdom Builders Conference

Saturday April 19th

8:30 am - 12:30 pm

Come and be a part of learning how to witness to your friends, neighbors and even people in jail.

Speakers include:

Former Minnesota Viking Jeff Siemon

KTIS Radio Host Kim Jeffries

Chris Heeb - Good News for Israel

Saul Selby - Director, MEC

At New Hope Church

Hwy 169 and Rockford Rd.

Register online at: www.mecjailministry.com

Or call MEC 651-408-1300

Zack is Back!

April 16th at 7:00 p.m.

Life Church

*2201 W. 108th Street, Bloomington
35W to 106th St West to Morgan Ave*

952.884.0594

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Stop by for some java and conversation,
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Shalom!

