



"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." Hab. 2:1

August 5, 2011

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The Menace of the Religious Movie - by A. W. Tozer

(This is the third installment of A. W. Tozer's booklet on Christian movies. To read the entire booklet, please go to <http://www.biblebb.com/files/tozermovie.htm>)

4. They who present the gospel movie owe it to the public to give biblical authority for their act: and this they have not done.

The Church, as long as it is following the Lord, goes along in Bible ways and can give a scriptural reason for its conduct. Its members meet at stated times to pray together: This has biblical authority back of it. They gather to hear the Word of God expounded: this goes back in almost unbroken continuity to Moses. They sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs: so they are commanded by the apostle. They visit the sick and relieve the sufferings of the poor: for this they have both precept and example in Holy Writ. They lay up their gifts and bring them at stated times to the church or chapel to be used in the Lord's work: this also follows the scriptural pattern. They teach and train and instruct; they appoint teachers and pastors and missionaries and send them out to do the work for which the Spirit has gifted them: all this has plain scriptural authority behind it.

Now, *for the religious movie where is the authority?* For such a serious departure from the ancient pattern, where is the authority? For introducing into the Church the pagan art of acting, where is the authority? Let the movie advocates quote just one verse, from any book of the Bible, in any translation, to justify its use. This they cannot do. The best they can do is to appeal to the world's psychology or repeat brightly that "modern times call for modern methods." But the Scriptures--- quote from them one verse to authorize movie acting as an instrument of the Holy Ghost. This they cannot do.

Every sincere Christian must find scriptural authority for the religious movie or reject it, and every producer of such movies, if he would square himself before the faces of honest and reverent men, must either show scriptural credentials or go out of business.

But, says someone, there is nothing unscriptural about the religious movie; it is merely a new medium for the utterance of the old message, as printing is a newer and better method of writing and the radio an amplification of familiar human speech.

To this I reply: The movie is not the modernization or improvement of any scriptural method; rather it is a medium in itself wholly foreign to the Bible and altogether unauthorized therein. It is play acting---just that, and nothing more. It is the introduction into the work of God of that which is not neutral, but entirely bad. The printing press is neutral; so is the radio; so is the camera. They may be used for good or bad purposes at the will of the user. But play acting is bad in its essence in that it involves the simulation of emotions not actually felt. It embodies a gross moral contradiction in that it calls a lie to the service of truth.

Arguments for the religious movie are sometimes clever and always shallow, but there is never any real attempt to cite scriptural authority. Anything that can be said for the movie can be said also for aesthetic dancing, which is a highly touted medium for teaching religious truth by appeal to the eye. Its advocates grow eloquent in its praise---but where is it indicated in the blueprint?

5. God has ordained four methods only by which Truth shall prevail---and the religious movie is not one of them.

Without attempting to arrange these methods in order of importance, they are prayer, song, proclamation of the message by means of words, and good works. These are the four main methods which God has blessed. All other biblical methods are sub-divisions of these and stay within their framework.

The whole preach-the gospel-with-movies idea is founded upon the same basic assumptions as Modernism, namely, that the Word of God is not final, and that we of this day have a perfect right to add to it or alter it wherever we think we can improve it.

A brazen example of this attitude came to my attention recently. Preliminary printed matter has been sent out announcing that a new organization is in process of being formed. It is to be called the "International Radio and Screen Artists Guild," and one of its two major objectives is to promote the movie as a medium for the spread of the gospel. Its sponsors, apparently, are not Modernists, but confessed Fundamentalists. Some of its declared purposes are: to produce movies "with or without a Christians slant"; to raise and maintain higher standards in the movie field (this would be done, it says here, by having "much prayer" with leaders of the movie industry); to "challenge people, especially young people, to those fields as they are challenged to go to foreign fields."

This last point should not be allowed to pass without some of us doing a little challenging on our own account. Does this new organization actually propose in seriousness to add another gift to the gifts of the Spirit listed in the New Testament? To the number of the Spirit's gifts, such as pastor, teacher, evangelist, is there now to be added another, *the gift of the movie actor*? Instead of the Holy Spirit saying, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them," these people will make use of what they call a "Christian talent listing," to consist of the names of "Christian" actors who have received the Spirit's gift to be used in making religious movies.

Thus the order set up in the New Testament is openly violated, and by professed lovers of the gospel who say unto Jesus, "Lord, Lord," but openly set aside His Lordship whenever they desire. No amount of smooth talk can explain away this serious act of insubordination.

Saul lost a kingdom when he "forced" himself and took profane liberties with the priesthood. Let these movie preachers look to their crown. They may find themselves on the road to Endor some dark night soon.

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A Reply to a Defender of Westcott and Hort -

Dear Bro. _____,

I have had difficulty finding sufficient time to look over all the material you sent and then to put together a reply which would deal with all the things that need to be addressed. I am a bit perplexed that you continue to ask the same questions that we discussed when you were here. What I have written below will not satisfy, but it will have to do.

The position on the translation issue that is taken by _____ is one I cannot support. For a long time I have followed the development of the defense of Westcott and Hort's Greek text. Between the day in 1974 when _____ spoke very strongly to me against the KJV (while at the same time he was officially supporting the KJV) to the present open animosity toward supporters of the KJV, a lot of water has gone under the bridge. Sometimes I think that a lot of bridges have gone underwater.

These are my conclusions:

- 1) I notice a strange silence among fundamentalists regarding WH's dependence on the rationalism of the German textual critics. Not one of the defenders of WH has, to my knowledge, written one word admitting that WH's work was based on the mutilation of the Greek text by modernists. This mutilation is so well documented that I am amazed at fundamentalists' support of the WH text.
- 2) There is even a suppression of the writings of any scholar who points out WH's dependence on the principles of textual criticism devised by German rationalists. No author who exposes this is given a hearing. This elitist position, taken by the defenders of the WH text, is seen in the "stonewalling" of any person who calls attention to their preference of rationalists above Holy Scripture.
- 3) It is also very enlightening to observe the gullible acceptance of the principles of textual criticism devised by Griesbach and Lachmann (plus possibly one other critic). Nowhere have I come across any defender of the WH text who is honest enough or bold enough to ask why textual scholars have blindly followed these principles of textual criticism. If the Bible is truly the sole rule of faith and order for Christians, it is therefore our solemn responsibility to test these principles by Scripture. A simple reading of these half dozen rules (some writers list seven) for determining the validity of any Greek text will show that they deny the very teachings of Holy Scripture and cast doubt on the character of God.
- 4) There is a tendency toward dishonesty on the part of the defenders of WH in that defenders of the Received text are universally accused of being Ruckmanites. Though I have met some Ruckmanites in my lifetime, I think that I have never come across more than half a dozen in the forty eight years I have been a Christian. To read the anti-KJV authors, you would think there were Ruckmanites on every corner.
- 5) There is a strange infatuation with the unproven theories of modernists and new evangelical scholars regarding the "conflation of the text" and the "Lucian" origins of the received Text.
- 6) There has also been a backflip on the part of the defenders of the WH text in that those who once were the strongest, most militant separatists have now become outspoken proponents of "peace" and "unity", not only among the "brethren" but with new evangelicals. I cannot help wondering if this "backflip" is not a form of damage control and is intended to keep their churches and colleges from decline through loss of numbers.
- 7) There is also a strange animosity toward the doctrine of the preservation of the text. I find this especially perplexing as the very people who deny the preservation of the text are the first to declare that God preserves His people, the nation of Israel, and His creation. This animosity has provoked more research and the Biblical evidence in favour of preservation is beginning to come out into public view. Of course, we cannot expect the defenders of WH to approve books which expound this doctrine since they are not written by the right authors. Didn't the Vatican have a list of proscribed books at one time?
- 8) There is also an air of superiority on the part of the defenders of the WH text. They consider themselves to be "THE scholars", and any who differ with them are "ignorant and unlearned", no matter what books they have read or what research they do or what degrees they have earned. To be frank, I notice that, in their opinion, scholarship is defined by whether or not one embraces F.J.A. Hort and B.F. Westcott. If any brother in Christ simply mines his principles of textual criticism

from the Holy Bible, humbles his heart before God seeking wisdom from Heaven, and rejects the wisdom of men for the wisdom of God, he is to be scorned and rejected.

9) There is also a shameful treatment of brethren in Christ, requiring them to "roll over and get in line with everybody else or else!" I just wonder whatever happened to the Baptist distinctive of Soul Liberty. There was a time when I remember godly men recognising a brother's right to believe what he believed.

10) I observe also a Sadducean spirit of unteachableness among the defenders of WH. The empty tomb would not convince the Sadducees, bold evidence of Billy Graham's alliance with Rome will never convince new evangelicals, just as clear evidence of German Rationalism's part in the WH text will never convince its defenders that it is bankrupt. There simply would never have existed a "critical text" if Messrs. Westcott and Hort had not had the rationalistic principles of textual critics to work with in constructing a Greek text that had never existed before they compiled it.

11) I am disappointed at the way the issue is treated by the defenders of WH, in that we are repeatedly told that the issue is unimportant, that the differences between the texts are minimal. We are continually being told that no doctrine is altered by the differences between the two texts. There is a simple, but vital error here. The Scripture not only says that no man is to add to or take away from the doctrines of the Bible, but that no man is to add to or take away from the WORDS of the Bible. To make this alteration in the foundations surely is arrogant popery! Who could presume this right to alter the Biblical guidelines for discerning truth? Again, it appears that if one has been to the accepted Bible colleges and has embraced the worthy WH duo, one has the right to alter Scripture.

12) One of the issues you have raised is the matter of unity. I, too, would like to see unity in this matter. In fact, for many years I thought we were all in perfect agreement on the superiority of the Received Text. As long as some of the brethren elevate a critical approach to the Scriptures I do not think we will ever have unity on the Bible issue. In fact, I think what you are asking is not unity but uniformity.

13) The pamphlet you sent is not convincing simply because I have read other authors who sounded the alarm about the influence of German Rationalism on textual criticism. These faithful watchmen were ignored by most of the men quoted in the pamphlet just as they are being ignored by men of our generation. Lovers of truth must consider all the evidence (especially the Scriptural evidence), and not just the evidence that supports the proud wisdom of men. Our preachers have become well trained parrots who know how to say what they have been taught, but have forgotten how to say, "Thus saith the Lord!".

14) We are both aware that present day Christian beliefs all have their roots in the beliefs of earlier generations. We would think it very strange indeed to hear a Creation Scientist quote approvingly from Lyell, Darwin, or Huxley. And we would be shocked to find that a Christian philosopher was building his worldview on the theories of Hume or Hegel or Nietzsche. Just so, it is shockingly incongruous for a Fundamentalist to build his understanding of the Greek text on the theories of Griesbach, Lachman, Semler, (or George Vance Smith). If they have done so in ignorance, let them wake up and recant their error. But I don't think they have.

Bro. _____, there is a hidden agenda in every compromise with error. Something unseen, unknown, unnamed is desired. I suspect it is intellectual credibility, possibly it is renown, maybe it is a desire to remove some of the stigma and pain of being a "fighting Fundamentalist." Whatever

the agenda, it is not worth the cost of losing the very Word of God. And that is what it will cost us in the long run. Maybe not in our generation, but it is coming. If you or I agree to roll over and conform to this compromise on the textual issue, I doubt not at all that we will in our lifetime see our own sons and grandsons preach from the NIV (or worse). In our own pulpits. It will creep into our Bible Institutes first, then into our smaller services (like a Wednesday night service), then into a Sunday night service, and finally, when the people have been conditioned to accept one of the modern (mis)translations, it will leap triumphantly into our Sunday morning pulpits. And we won't be able to say a word against it if we have shown them the way.

This is all part of swapping our armour for pyjamas.

Bro. Buddy Smith

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I Need a Faith Like Mueller's -

A Simple Prayer . . .

"**I** believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me" (Acts 27:25).

I went to America some years ago with the captain of a steamer, who was a very devoted Christian. When off the coast of Newfoundland he said to me, "The last time I crossed here, five weeks ago, something happened which revolutionized the whole of my Christian life. We had George Mueller of Bristol on board. I had been on the bridge twenty-four hours and never left it. George Mueller came to me, and said, "Captain I have come to tell you that I must be in Quebec Saturday afternoon." "It is impossible," I said. "Very well, if your ship cannot take me, God will find some other way. I have never broken an engagement for fifty-seven years. Let us go down into the chart-room and pray."

I looked at that man of God, and thought to myself, what lunatic asylum can that man have come from? I never heard of such a thing as this. "Mr. Mueller," I said, "do you know how dense this fog is?" "No," he replied, "my eye is not on the density of the fog, but on the living God, who controls every circumstance of my life."

He knelt down and prayed one of the most simple prayers, and when he had finished I was going to pray; but he put his hand on my shoulder, and told me not to pray. "First, you do not believe He will answer; and second I BELIEVE HE HAS, and there is no need whatever for you to pray about it."

I looked at him, and he said, "Captain, I have known my Lord for fifty-seven years, and there has never been a single day that I have failed to get an audience with the King. Get up, Captain and open the door, and you will find the fog gone." I got up, and the fog was indeed gone. On Saturday afternoon, George Mueller was in Quebec for his engagement.

- Selected.

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Cartoons for Wise Men -

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Pray for our Revival Meetings -

At Grace Baptist Church in Malanda, we are holding revival meetings from the 14th to the 17th of August with evangelist Dwight Smith from North Carolina.

Pray for us that the Lord will do a real work in all of us here. It is so true that we all tend to slide away from the Lord and need reviving. Sadly, those who refuse to be revived are tolerated in our churches and pastors fellowships, so that the whole movement races downhill faster and faster.

I am preaching a series of messages on the subject "What Is Revival?" in every service until our revival meetings begin. The messages are about the Bible characters who were revived. I am touching on the results in their lives. Sunday's first message was on Peter and his denial of Christ and the revival he experienced in John 21 and Acts 2.

We need prayer for these sermons and the meetings with Bro. Dwight.

Bro. Buddy

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A New Song

(Have You Ever Wondered Why We Clap For Singers at Church?)

by *Paul Proctor*

Would somebody please tell me why we applaud singers at church? We don't applaud people when they pray. We don't applaud the preacher when he preaches or the teacher when he teaches or the ushers when they pass around the plate. Does anyone applaud the greeters or the nursery workers for their performance each week? How about the folks that mow the grass on Saturday or clean the restrooms on Monday; does anybody clap for them? I'll bet your church secretary has never received a round of applause – unless she's in the choir, of course.

No, the reality is, we applaud singers almost exclusively. Why? Because that's what our entertainment-oriented world has taught us to do. Like many other things these days; as the world does, so does the church. We instinctively applaud people that amuse us in some way or another in

a live group setting. Sometimes we applaud for no other reason than, everyone else is applauding and we don't want to appear different and look as if we disapprove or weren't paying attention. It is a carnal response we offer and a clear reward intended for those who move us emotionally with a song, pure and simple – something for the eyes to see and the ears to hear, requiring, by the way, absolutely no faith in Christ.

I am reminded of the three instances in scripture where Jesus spoke disparagingly of “hypocrites” who performed for the eyes of others through their giving, their praying and their fasting in Matthew 6:2, Matthew 6:5 and Matthew 6:16 – ending all three with the same solemn pronouncement, “They have their reward.”

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” – Romans 12:1

If carrying out the Lord's will each day, including Sunday, is merely our “reasonable service”, why then should any of His redeemed be applauded for it – especially in a worship service where all glory, honor and praise belong to God?

If the songs we applaud during worship are not entertainment and we're not really rewarding singers for services rendered, why then do we only applaud performers after they finish a song? If it isn't their performance we're applauding, why don't we applaud when we see them before church in the foyer, in the hallway or on their way to the microphone? Why don't we applaud them for just being a member of the choir or for simply showing up on Sunday?

Do we applaud singers at church because they had to prepare diligently beforehand? Well, didn't the preacher and the teacher both put in at least as much time in their preparation of a sermon and lesson as that singer did for his or her song? What about the poor ushers? Where's their reward? They have to go up and down the aisles for money like beggars! I'm sure they could use some applause.

I know what some of you are thinking: “We're applauding the Lord, not the singers!” Oh, is that right? Well, if it's the Lord you're applauding, why don't you applaud Him when the preacher brings a stirring message directly from the Word of God and tells you that the sins of all those who have repented and put their faith in Christ are forgiven – that they have been forever set free from an eternity in Hell? If there was ever a time to applaud God, wouldn't that be it – or are you waiting for a song?

Why don't we applaud the Lord when the teacher shows us in the scriptures where Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose again on the third day or when Saul becomes Paul after the Lord strikes him blind on the road to Damascus and he stops persecuting the church to follow Christ and spread the good news that Jesus lives?

Why don't we applaud the Lord when we sit down over a hot meal at dinnertime? Did you applaud the Lord when He gave you your first child or when you got a raise at work? How about that new house or car? Did you applaud the Lord for either of those? Fact is – you didn't even applaud the salesman for giving you a good deal, now did you? How about when you didn't get the flu this year or that lab work that came back negative? Was there any clapping around the house over that? Why don't we applaud the Lord when we get up in the morning – if for no other reason, just because He gave us another day?

Maybe if He sang to us we would.

Why don't we applaud hymns like we do praise songs and all those sensually gratifying contemporary Christian tunes we throw our money at in the record stores? Maybe those hymns are a little more honest about our condition than praise tunes are – maybe a little too honest.

Maybe we applaud praise choruses because so many of us are still in bondage to our sin and those little simplistic chants we can't seem to live without help put a smile on our face and anesthetize the pain of our own stubborn disobedience and rebellion toward God – soothing and distracting our unrepentant hearts by allowing us two or three glorious minutes of relief to forget our troubles with a mesmerizing melody so we can pretend there really isn't anything wrong with our spiritual lives – you know, kind of like when we go to a concert or a show or just turn the radio up real loud in the car on the way to the mall to drown out that “still small voice” so we'll momentarily feel better about ourselves. Would it be accurate to say they might just be an escape for many of us?

Oh we LOVE those praise choruses, don't we? It's like we can't worship without them. Aren't praise songs essentially musical prayers? Didn't Jesus specifically command us in Matthew 6:7 to not use "vain repetitions" when we pray? And isn't that precisely what many praise choruses are; vain repetitions?

“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.” – Matthew 6:7

One dear lady, whom I think the world of, wrote me the other day about her fondness for choruses, noting, that in singing them, “you really don't have to think real hard...”

I couldn't agree more.

So, not only do we offer “vain repetitions” to God in worship these days, we applaud and exalt those that excel in it. Shall we gather to praise, honor and glorify men or worship the Lord? Just who is it we're really applauding at church? I certainly can't answer that question for you but I do know that God sees the heart.

Could it be, in casually celebrating His marvelous love for us with “vain repetitions” and resounding applause, we've forgotten all about His holiness and jealousy in order to unduly reward ourselves in His presence?

Exodus 20:5, Exodus 34:14, Deuteronomy 4:24, Deuteronomy 5:9, Deuteronomy 6:15, Deuteronomy 32:16, Deuteronomy 32:21, Joshua 24:19, Ezekiel 39:25, Nahum 1:2, 2 Corinthians 11:2

<http://www.newswithviews.com/PaulProctor/proctor39.htm>

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Therapy For the Funny Bone -

I called my stockbroker and asked him what I should be buying. He said, "If the current government is in power much longer, canned goods and ammunition are your best bet."

The Jewish pilot of the airliner departing from New York to London did not speak to his Chinese co-pilot for the first hour of the flight. Finally, he said, "I hate Chinese!"

The Chinese co-pilot queried angrily, "Why don't you like Chinese?"

"Because they bombed Pearl Harbour!" the pilot stated.

"It wasn't the Chinese. It was the Japanese that bombed Pearl Harbour!"

The pilot glared at the co-pilot, and said, "Chinese, Japanese, Viet Nameese, all you slanty-eyes are the same!"

The co-pilot sat in silence for half an hour, and then said to the Jewish pilot, "I hate Jews!"

"Why do you hate Jews?"

"Because they sunk the Titanic!"

"Jews didn't sink the Titanic! It was an iceberg!"

"Iceberg, Goldberg, Steinberg, all you Jews, the same."

In a criminal justice system based on 12 individuals not smart enough to get out of jury duty, here is a jury to be proud of:

A defendant was on trial for murder. There was strong evidence indicating guilt, but there was no corpse.

In the defense's closing statement, the lawyer, knowing that his client would probably be convicted, resorted to a trick.

"Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I have a surprise for you all," the lawyer said as he looked at his watch. "Within one minute, the person presumed dead in this case will walk into this courtroom." He looked toward the courtroom door. The jurors, somewhat stunned, all looked on eagerly.

A minute passed. Nothing happened. Finally the lawyer said, "Actually, I made up the previous statement. But you all looked on with anticipation. I, therefore, put it to you that you have a reasonable doubt in this case as to whether anyone was killed, and I insist that you return a verdict of not guilty."

The jury retired to deliberate. A few minutes later, the jury returned and pronounced a verdict of guilty.

"But how?" inquired the lawyer. "You must have had some doubt; I saw all of you stare at the door."

The jury foreman replied: "Yes, we did look...."

BUT YOUR CLIENT DIDN'T...!!!!"

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Deacon True Sez -

"No sense owning a dog and barkin' yourself!"

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Soul Winners' Specials -

(For all those high powered super salesmen of the gospel who have discovered that the methods you were taught in Bible college no longer work, here are some NEW, up to date tools for getting professions of faith so you can keep your reputation at tip top level. - Ed)

SOUL WINNERS!! - DON'T MISS THESE SPECIAL OFFERS!!

1. Soul Winner's Stun Gun (\$179.95)

Tired of always getting the excuse of: "I don't have time to listen right now!?" Buy our Soul Winner's Stun Gun! Stop 'em dead in their tracks!

2. Missionary Mace (\$6.99 @)-- For Ladies Only!

3. Persuasive Pepper Spray (\$4.49@)

Tired of being accused of "quick evangelism with no repentance"?? Make 'em cry with our Persuasive Pepper Spray!! You'll get repentance with lots of tears!

4. Soul Winner's Disposable Hankies (\$1.99 for a 20 pack!!)

Give these away to the new "convert" after using the Pepper Spray!

5. Oversized Shoe Clearance (\$29.95--all sizes!)

Make sure you get your foot in the door, and keep it there! Each shoe is enlarged to twice the normal size, weighs ten pounds and is completely steel reinforced to protect against both dogs and people! You can order either the left or right foot in sizes 6-13, AA to EE!

6. Roman's Robot (\$449.99)

No soul winning partner?? Get the Roman's Robot!! Start him up and he repeats the entire Roman's Road (supplying questions, answers and complete Scripture verses) in less than a minute! Great for

malls, as he will even witness to the guards as they carry him out! Comes in either battery or wind-up models!

7. Bible Billy Club (\$3.95)

Still no luck? When all else fails, make 'em regret ignoring you! Give 'em a sock on the noggin' with the Bible Billy Club to help them realize their mistake! This week only: free personalization for YOUR Bible Billy Club!

Double your professions or your money back!

Order today and be an "Instant (soul) Winner!!"

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A Warning about Facebook and Twitter -

Facebook and Twitter are creating a vain generation of self-obsessed people with child-like need for feedback, warns top scientist

by *Sarah Harris*

Last updated at 2:41 PM on 30th July 2011

* My Stories

Facebook and Twitter have created a generation obsessed with themselves, who have short attention spans and a childlike desire for constant feedback on their lives, a top scientist believes.

Repeated exposure to social networking sites leaves users with an 'identity crisis', wanting attention in the manner of a toddler saying: 'Look at me, Mummy, I've done this.'

Baroness Greenfield, professor of pharmacology at Oxford University, believes the growth of internet 'friendships' – as well as greater use of computer games – could effectively 'rewire' the brain.

Vain generation: A top Oxford scientist has warned that repeated exposure to social networking websites could harm users. (Picture posed by model)

This can result in reduced concentration, a need for instant gratification and poor non-verbal skills, such as the ability to make eye contact during conversations.

More than 750million people across the world use Facebook to share photographs and videos and post regular updates of their movements and thoughts.

More...

* 'It has to go away': Facebook director calls for an end to internet anonymity

* The schoolgirl killed for a bet: Boy, 16, was dared by Facebook friends to murder in exchange for a free breakfast

* Thousands of fans join online campaign to get 'Gordon the Supertramp' to carry Olympic torch

Millions have also signed up to Twitter, the 'micro-blogging' service that lets members circulate short text and picture messages about themselves.

Baroness Greenfield, former director of research body the Royal Institution, said: 'What concerns me is the banality of so much that goes out on Twitter.

'Why should someone be interested in what someone else has had for breakfast? It reminds me of a small child (saying): "Look at me Mummy, I'm doing this", "Look at me Mummy I'm doing that".

'It's almost as if they're in some kind of identity crisis. Up In a sense it's keeping the brain in a sort of time warp.'

A twitter message from Stephen Fry

The academic suggested that some Facebook users feel the need to become 'mini celebrities' who are watched and admired by others on a daily basis.

They do things that are 'Facebook worthy' because the only way they can define themselves is by 'people knowing about them'.

'It's almost as if people are living in a world that's not a real world, but a world where what counts is what people think of you or (if they) can click on you,' she said.

'Think of the implications for society if people worry more about what other people think about them than what they think about themselves.'

Her views were echoed by Sue Palmer, a literacy expert and author, who said girls in particular believe they are a 'commodity they must sell to other people' on Facebook.

She said: 'People used to have a portrait painted but now we can more or less design our own picture online. It's like being the star of your own reality TV show that you create and put out to the world.'

Read more:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2020378/Facebook-Twitter-creating-vain-generation-self-obsessed-people.html#ixzz1TjLp6BWv>

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Dating the Rapture

From the very first time I looked upon her she filled me with hope and wonder. There is no way to tell you how often thereafter my mind would dwell upon her, and the many ways in which I was sure she could change my life. Though little of her was known to me, that which I knew drew me to her and made me want to see her. When I enquired as to her name I was told she was called rapture.

Fascinated by the thought of being swept away by her power I boldly asked those who seemed to know so much about her if perhaps I might date her.

Oh no, came back the warnings, not from those who thought her evil, but from those who seemed to think that she was so high and lofty that she would never allow herself to be dated. Others led me to understand that were she to let one date her then others would be excluded, and she had no desire to specially favor one at the expense of all others.

It seems that long ago a chap named Miller tried to date her but was brought to embarrassment by the attempt. In the years that followed, once in a great while one would work up the courage try but she would allow none of them to date her. A man by the name of Peter, whom many thought worthy, tried to date her two or three times, but this only brought him ridicule from those who watched him valiantly fail. One fellow gave eighty-eight reasons why he would be the one to date her, but she ignored him altogether. Another sap named Harold boasted to all the world that he could date her, and spent goodly sums of other men's money to proclaim the news. Yet in the end he only made a fool of himself.

Being a Christian and wanting to do things in a decent and orderly fashion, I asked God if it were possible for any man to date this beautiful rapture, after all, her alluring charms appealed in so many ways to so many men. His answer was kind but emphatic, NO, no one may date her now or ever. You may adore her, you may long for her, you may speak of her charms to others, you may sing about her, and you may hope that one day she will carry you away from all your toil and trouble, but date her you may not.

Brother James Knox

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Poems That Preach -

What the hand is to the lute,
What the breath is to the flute,
What's the mother to the child,
What the guide in pathless wild,
What is oil to troubled wave,
What is ransom to a slave,
What is flower to the bee,

That is Jesus Christ to me.
- *Author Unknown*

I heard an old-time preacher speak
Without one reference to the Greek,
"This precious Book within my hand
Is God's own Word on which I stand."

And then the scholars came along
And said the preacher had it wrong;
"Conflations here, recensions there,
And scribal errors everywhere.

A book 'essentially correct',
But not in every last respect."
"A 'fairly certain' Word," they say,
"To light our path and guide our way."

Then in despair I bowed my head.
"We have no Word of God," I said.
"If some of this old Book is wrong,
Pray tell, what else does not belong?"

Will still more manuscripts be found
To make us go another round?
Correcting, changing, taking out;
Creating questions, fear and doubt?

Must more discoveries come to light
Before we finally get it right?
Will precious doctrines fade away
Because of what some scholars say?

How many "errors" must we purge
Because of what the scholars urge?
How many versions must we make?
How many changes can we take?

How will we ever know we're through -
That we possess a Scripture true?
If man must find God's Word, my friend,

When will the changes ever end?

Then to the Book again I fled
To find out what my father said.
"Forever settled...never fade"
This promise God the Spirit made

A thousand generations hence -
That seems a pretty strong defense.
A "perfect Book"? Then it must be
Men can't improve what God gave me.

We have a Book completely true,
Instructing us in all we do.
Preserved by him, not found by men.
Inscribed by God the Spirit's pen.

If God or scholars you must choose,
Be sure the "experts" always lose.
Don't give them a second look;
Just keep on believing this old Book.
- *Author Unknown*

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Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes -

* God-sent ministry, heeded and bowed to, leads to enlargement and blessing; but the Spirit's testimony rejected increases the guilt of him who hardens himself against it, and makes his condition far worse than before. It is ever the case that light refused makes the darkness all the deeper. Hence the need of a tender conscience, quick to respond to every word from God. --*H. A. Ironside*

* "And now I would ask you...who is the most powerful prelate in all England? He surpasses all the rest in his diligence. I can tell you. For I know him well...it is the Devil. He is the most diligent preacher of all others; he is never out of his diocese... call for him when you will, he is always available....But alas! The devil by the help of that Italian bishop yonder [the pope], his chaplain, has labored by all means that he might frustrate the death of Christ and the merits of his passion." - *Samuel Rutherford*, letter from prison, Aberdeen, 22 November 1637

* With the noose around his neck, having already been tortured mercilessly, and having testified for Christ to the throng of onlookers, these were the last words of *Hugh MacKail*, 25-year-old Scottish minister, hanged for refusing allegiance to the British king as head of the church and unflinchingly remaining true to Christ alone.

"Now I leave off to speak any more to creatures, and turn my speech to thee, O Lord. Now I begin my intercourse with God, which shall never be broken off. Farewell, father and mother, friends, relations! Farewell, the world and all delights. Farewell, meat and drink. Farewell, sun, moon, and stars! Welcome, God and Father! Welcome, sweet Lord Jesus, Mediator of the New Covenant! Welcome blessed Spirit of grace, God of all consolation! Welcome, glory! Welcome death!"

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Eddy-Torial - Mighty Licks and Crooked Sticks -

My old pastor used to say that God can strike a mighty lick with a crooked stick. He was right, you know. The fact is, all the sticks God uses mightily are crooked sticks. All God's sticks have knots and few are perfectly straight. Some I've known even looked a bit "crooked" and I wish it weren't so.

I grew up under the preaching of some of the old men who'd fought the battles with the modernists of the 1920's. They still had the smell of black powder about them. I noticed back then that being on the battlefield where the heavy artillery was had left them a bit deaf on some subjects. The sword of the Spirit they wielded was still stained with the blood of the Lord's enemies, and yet retained its sharpness. Among King David's mighty men was one who slew two "lion like men of Moab" and a lion in a pit on a snowy day. I've met a few preachers through the years who could have enlisted in that platoon and would have been welcomed gladly by their king and companions at arms. You know, there's a certain visage that goes with battle scarred veterans. It is almost unseen in our circles these days.

Thomas Armitage's History of the Baptists is a two volume set every pastor should read. I especially love his description of Ziska, the Bohemian nobleman/farmer/general who led good king Wenceslus' army. Armitage says of him, "...in 1410 he lost an eye in the war between the Prussians and the Lithuanians. He was a most daring chief. Sigismund laid claim to the Bohemian crown, but Ziska withstood him with desperation. ...He lost his remaining eye by an arrow shot in a great battle which defeated Sigismund, A.D. 1420. But this made no difference with him as a chieftain.

When entirely blind, his hot blood made him the same indomitable victor. He would take his stand on an elevation in the centre of the battle-field, with his best officers all around him. Then he borrowed their eyes, as he turned his empty sockets this way and that. His staff reported to him the progress of the fight, and he gave his imperious commands accordingly. Almost without fail, panic seized the Germans, who were utterly routed again and again. At last, the emperor finding that he could do nothing against him, offered him the government of Bohemia, the command of his own armies, and a yearly tribute, if he would acknowledge him as the king of Bohemia. He spurned the tender, and at that point died of the plague.

He had been the perfect terror both of the pope and the emperor when he had but one eye, and when he lost the second their torment increased. This dauntless, blind, old semi-Baptist, must have been of the sturdy type after which the iron-boned Roundhead and the steel nerved Covenanter and the adamantine Puritan took cast. For, it is said, that before he died, he pledged his followers to tan his skin for a drum-head, that the very sound of his hardened hide might strike terror into these brazen

foes of God and man. This may be legend, but it is as seriously said that they granted his request; if so, to the honour of his religious posterity, he that hath ears to hear, can catch the sound of that 'drum ecclesiastic' all around the globe in this nineteenth century." (Volume I, pp. 317, 318)

Sadly, the army of the Lord has gone soft over the last fifty years or so. Armchair prophets and virtual warriors have replaced the prophets I knew long ago. We are now being titillated by electronically enhanced sermons, but the thunder and lightning of Sinai are absent. The sound of the gravestone being rolled back by angels is blotted out weekly by the drumkit on the platform. Fundamentalism has drifted into a smiling new evangelicalism and given us a generation of soft spoken Pharisees. Sidlow Baxter once said that Pharisees are the same in every generation; they always praise the dead saints and persecute the living.

Saddest of all, the gospel has been relegated to an abbreviated footnote at the end of a twelve steps sermonette.

Buddy Smith

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