



*"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 12, 2011

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Feature Article - The Menace of the Religious Movie

by A. W. Tozer

(This is the final installment from the booklet by A.W. Tozer - to read the entire booklet, please go to:  
<http://www.biblebb.com/files/tozermovie.htm> - Ed.)

6. *The religious movie is out of harmony with the whole spirit of the Scriptures and contrary to the mood of true Godliness.*

To harmonize the spirit of the religious movie with the spirit of the Sacred Scriptures is impossible. Any comparison is grotesque and, if it were not so serious, would be downright funny. Try to imagine Elijah appearing before Ahab with a roll of film! Imagine Peter standing up at Pentecost and saying, "Let's have the lights out, please." When Jeremiah hesitated to prophesy, on the plea that he was not a fluent speaker, God touched his mouth and said, "I have put my words in thy mouth." Perhaps Jeremiah could have gotten on well enough without the divine touch if he had had a good 16mm projector and a reel of home-talent film.

Let a man dare to compare his religious movie show with the spirit of the Book of Acts. Let him try to find a place for it in the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians. If he cannot see the difference in kind, then he is too blind to be trusted with leadership in the Church of the Living God. The only thing that he can do appropriate to the circumstances is to drop to his knees and cry with poor Bartimaeus, "Lord, that I might receive my sight."

But some say, "We do not propose to displace the regular method of preaching the gospel. We only want to supplement it." To this I answer: If the movie is needed to supplement anointed preaching it can only be because God's appointed method is inadequate and the movie can do something which God's appointed method cannot do. What is that thing? We freely grant that the movie can produce effects which preaching cannot produce (and which it should never try to produce), but dare we strive for such effects in the light of God's revealed will and in the face of the judgment and a long eternity?

7. *I am against the religious movie because of the harmful effect upon everyone associated with it.*

First, the evil effect upon the "actors" who play the part of the various characters in the show; this is not the less because it is unsuspected. Who can, while in a state of fellowship with God, dare to *play* at being a prophet? Who has the gall to pretend to be an apostle, even in a show? Where is his reverence? Where is his fear? Where is his humility? **Anyone who can bring himself to act a part for any purpose, must first have grieved the Spirit and silenced His voice within the heart.** Then the whole business will appear good to him. "He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart has turned him aside." But he cannot escape the secret working of the ancient laws of the soul. Something high and fine and grand will die within him; and worst of all he will never suspect it. That is the curse that follows self-injury always. The Pharisees were examples of this. They were walking dead men, and they never dreamed how dead they were.

Secondly, it identifies religion with the theatrical world. I have seen recently in a Fundamentalist magazine an advertisement of a religious film which would be altogether at home on the theatrical page on any city newspaper. Illustrated with the usual sex-bate picture of a young man and young woman in tender embrace, and spangled with such words as "feature-length, drama, pathos, romance," it reeked of Hollywood and the cheap movie house. By such business we are selling out our Christian separation, and nothing but grief can come of it late or soon.

Thirdly, the taste for drama which these pictures develop in the minds of the young will not long remain satisfied with the inferior stuff the religious movie can offer. Our young people will demand the real thing; and what can we reply when they ask why they should not patronize the regular movie house?

Fourthly, the rising generation will naturally come to look upon religion as another, and inferior, form of amusement. In fact, the present generation has done this to an alarming extent already, and the gospel movie feeds the notion by fusing religion and fun in the name of orthodoxy. It takes no great insight to see that the religious movie must become increasingly more thrilling as the tastes of the spectators become more and more stimulated.

Fifthly, the religious movie is the lazy preacher's friend. If the present vogue continues to spread it will not be long before any man with enough ability to make an audible prayer, and mentality enough to focus a projector, will be able to pass for a prophet of the Most High God. The man of God can play around all week long and come up to the Lord's Day without a care. Everything has been done for him at the studio. He has only to set up the screen and lower the lights, and the rest follows painlessly.

Wherever the movie is used the prophet is displaced by the projector. The least that such displaced prophets can do is to admit that they are technicians and not preachers. Let them admit that they are not God-sent men, ordained of God for a sacred work. Let them put away their pretense.

In conclusion:

One thing may bother some earnest souls: why so many good people approve the religious movie. If it is an evil, why have not these denounced it?

The answer is, **lack of spiritual discernment**. Many who are turning to the movie are the same who have, by direct teaching or by neglect, discredited the work of the Holy Spirit. They have apologized for the Spirit and so hedged Him in by their unbelief that it has amounted to an out-and-out repudiation. Now we are paying the price for our folly. The light has gone out and good men are forced to stumble around in the darkness of the human intellect.

The religious movie is at present undergoing a period of gestation and seems about to swarm over the churches like a cloud of locusts out of the earth. The figure is accurate; they are coming from below, not from above. The whole modern psychology has been prepared for this invasion of insects. The Fundamentalists have become weary of manna and are longing for red flesh. What they are getting is a sorry substitute for the lusty and uninhibited pleasures of the world, and it saves face by pretending to be spiritual.

Let us not for the sake of peace keep still while men without spiritual insight dictate the diet upon which God's children shall feed. The religious movie represents amateurism gone wild. Unity among professing Christians is to be desired, but not at the expense of righteousness. It is good to go with the flock, but I refuse mutely to follow a misled flock over a precipice.

**If God has given wisdom to see the error of religious shows we owe it to the Church to oppose them openly. We dare not take refuge in "guilty silence." Error is not silent; it is highly vocal and amazingly aggressive. We dare not be less so.**

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## Engrafting The Word -

by *Buddy Smith*

Every once in a while I come across an example of the Lord's people actually living by the Word of God. They do not only hear the Word of the Lord. They actually do it. They have engrafted the Word of God into their daily lives. This is biblical Christianity:

**From missionary Jerry Wilhite in South Africa** - "Joyce makes a pittance (\$100/mon) doing hard manual labor swinging a hatchet and a scythe with a team that cleans the roadway shoulders. Sometimes she doesn't even get half her pay due to extortion by the boss.

This week someone recommended her to a man who offered her over \$500/month for a far less physically strenuous job, being a bar maid. When Joyce told him she knew the Lord and all of the evils that alcohol brings and therefore could not take the job, he was very angry.

Folks, unless you have ever been in that kind of a situation yourself or in a country like this where 99.99999% of the people would have taken the job in a second, you probably can't appreciate the decision Joyce made. Joyce stays in a shack and has been working over five years on building a two room brick house, but is not yet finished. This decision just made my day/week/month."

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## From Erin Muggleton in Inverell, NSW, Australia -

I had an idea from the Lord, about those Indian telco callers, that the next time they call I should share the Gospel with them. Well only a few days later, you guessed it, I got one of those calls.

“Hello Mame, (delay) are you the owner of this telephone? (delay) Is your Name Mrsss. Muugglllleton?” And on they go. Here was my chance to give him the Gospel.

I was enthusiastic with my “Am I glad you called, I have some fantastic news just for you.”

His reply, “You have, Mame?”

“Yes I do,” - and I gave him the gospel in its simplicity.

His reply was, “Mame, can you tell me what the Psalms mean?”

“Sure, it means songs,” and so my discussion went on.

He told me he is a catholic, so I told him to read his Bible and to ask God to teach him, not to worry about the priest. And so after more positive talk, the phone cut off. I praised God for the opportunity to share the gospel with some one half a world away.

That evening whilst cooking tea, our phone rang. Leigh answered, “Yes, my wife told me of your conversation, would you like to talk to her?”

His reply, “Yes.” and proceeded to say that his supervisor had cut him off, and he wanted to tell me how thankful he was for my call, how he was greatly encouraged by my call. He asked which part of the Bible he should read.

I said, “The Gospel of John, and read it many times, praying to God.” I thanked him and gave him my blessing.

All glory to God, my desire is to be obedient to whatever My Lord asks me. And wow! did I get a blessing from sharing Gods word. I’m still a donkey, but a “praising the Lord Donkey.”

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## Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes -

\* If we have not quiet in our minds, outward comfort will do no more for us than a golden slipper on a gouty foot. ~ *John Bunyan*

\* Our methods must always be consistent and compatible with our message and not contradict it. This again is a most important point at this present time. There are men who are quite sincere and genuine and honest, and whose motive is undoubtedly good, and whose concern is to bring people to salvation. But this so runs away with them that in their desire to make contact with the people and to make it easy for them to believe the message, they do things which I suggest often contradict that very message. The moment the method contradicts the message, it has become bad. Let us have elasticity, but never to the point of contradicting your message.

This is not only true in terms of biblical principles but it is even proved to be right in practice. What always amazes me about these people who are so concerned with modern methods is their pathetic psychological ignorance; they do not seem to know human nature. The fact is that the world expects us to be different; and this very idea that you can win the world by showing that after all you are very similar to it, with scarcely any difference at all, or but a slight one, is basically wrong not only theologically but even psychologically. ~ *D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1971) Preaching and Preachers*

\* The budget should be balanced, the Treasury should be refilled, public debt should be reduced, the arrogance of officialdom should be tempered and controlled, and the assistance to foreign lands should be curtailed lest Rome become bankrupt. A People must again learn to work, instead of living on public assistance." ~ *Cicero, 55 BC*

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## Ministering While Mammon Melts Down -

by *Buddy Smith*

Elijah ministered while Mammon melted down.

Enigmatic Elijah.

He sprang onto the pages of Scripture without introduction, a man of great discernment and perception. He saw clearly not only the wickedness of his king, he saw also the desperate spiritual condition of his people. Israel had stagnated into a state of idolatrous indecision. They, the redeemed slaves of Egypt, could not even decide which god to worship, Baal or Jehovah. He saw the idolatry of their king's covetousness and he saw the bondage of Mammon, and he discerned the mind of God regarding his nation and prayed accordingly. James 5:17, 18 describes his prayer that it might not rain, "...he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months." What an example he is to the men of God in this generation! Here is a man who was so bold as to pray for the meltdown of Mammon so that his people might have a spiritual awakening. He prayed for the loss of the material wealth of his people so that they might obtain true riches.

Elijah discerned and declared the mind of God to the nation. He prayed for drought and saw the heavens stripped bare of clouds and watched as the dew burned off the grass of the field. He learned to wait on the Lord and be content with what God provided. What unusual waiters God chose to wait upon Elijah as he dwelt by the brook Cherith. Ravens, which are renowned for allowing their own hatchlings to perish in times of want, brought to Elijah bread and flesh twice a day. Elijah learned the secret of living by faith, and waiting on God for daily bread. When the brook dried up, God taught him another lesson in the school of faith. He taught him not to take the blessings of God for granted, and he taught him that he could provide for him through others, even if they themselves had very little to give. He taught him that God blesses those who meet the needs of others. He taught him to listen to the voice of God and to know the times and seasons of waiting and walking and warning. He taught him to be on guard against the Obadiah's of Ahab's court. Elijah was tempered on the anvil of God so that his steel did not bend or break when he crossed swords with Ahab or with the prophets of Baal. He drew the Sword of the Lord on Mt. Carmel, prayed down fire out of a cloudless sky upon his sacrifice, and led the people to slay the false prophets before he pleaded with God to break the drought.

Elijah ministered while Mammon melted down.

To read more, go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/files/08231ae9cad9ff6e8370d1b5c85663ea-264.html>

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## Deacon True Sez –

\* If you get to thinkin' you're a person of some influence, try orderin' somebody else's dog around.

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## Interesting Links, Methinks -

\* The latest in drone design - <http://video.designworldonline.com/bugbots.html>

\* Radio controlled toy truck saves soldiers' lives - <http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/remote-controlled-truck-soldier-afghanistan-saves-soldiers-lives/story?id=14225434>

\* Time lapse painting of a mural of Calvin and Hobbes - <http://www.dump.com/2011/08/02/timelapse-video-of-talented-dad-painting-awesome-calvin-and-hobbes-mural-for-his-son-video/>

\* If guns don't scare you - <http://wimp.com/glockammo/>

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## Great Aussies - John Watsford

**B**ro. Wally Jaworski has been researching the lives of the early Australian preachers. He wrote recently on the life of the first Australian born Methodist pastor, John Watsford. Here is an excerpt from his life story.

I was preaching one evening in Pirie Street Church on "The lost sheep found," to a very large congregation that seemed greatly moved under the word. When speaking of the finding of the lost sheep, and the joy of the shepherd and his friends, I gave an imaginary case: A young man, well and religiously trained, left his home in England for Australia during the days of the gold fever. When leaving home his pious mother gave him a small Bible, begging him to read a portion of it every day, and to remember that she was praying for him.

With many good resolutions he left England, and arrived in Australia. Here the influence of home and early training, and a mother's holy life and earnest prayers, held him fast for a while, and he went to the house of God, and tried to do right. But he fell among bad companions; and when a young man does that, the Lord pity him, for his danger is very great.

Soon they led him to the theatre, the ballroom, the public-house, the gambling table. Down, lower and lower, he fell, with many a lash from conscience, and many a feeble effort to stop in his downward course, until he was a complete wreck.

His money gone, dismissed from his situation, without a friend, for his companions had forsaken him, he determined, as many had done before him, to leave the city and go far away into the bush, and find, if possible, some employment there. Weary, worn, and footsore, he reached a station many miles from the



city, where he was engaged as a shepherd. Out with his flock one day, he was sitting in the afternoon on a log, with his faithful dog at his feet. As he sat there all alone, better thoughts came. The old home rose before him, and his good and holy mother, and the lessons she had taught him, and the prayers she had offered.

As he sat thinking, his heart was deeply moved. The hot tears fell fast. The sun was sinking to the west, and it was time for his return. Collecting his sheep, he made for the station. Folding his flock, he went into the hut and took from his little bag all that was left of his home outfit—the Bible that his mother gave him. He opened the precious volume and read the fifteenth chapter in the Gospel by St. Luke, and as he read, subdued and bathed in tears, he said, “I will arise and go to my father;” and there was joy in the presence of the angels of God over that sinner repenting.

After the service we held a prayer-meeting in the large hall, which was packed. A wonderful influence rested on the people, and yet no one moved. I called upon them to decide at once, and not resist the Holy Ghost, but something held them fast. I cried to God for help, and, again addressing the people, said, “I am sent not to invite you to come to Christ merely, but to bring you in, to compel you to come in, and in God’s name I would do it.” Then I pleaded with them to come, and fifteen or twenty came from their seats to the penitent-form in great distress, and many of them soon found the Saviour.

Among those who came was a withered man with a book in his hand. Coming right up to me, he said, “Sir, I’m the shepherd that you told the people about, and that’s the Bible my mother gave me; and I could take you to the gum tree, far away in the bush, at the foot of which I knelt when God pardoned my sins.”

The shepherd’s tale touched many a heart that night. We had a glorious time, and it was with great difficulty we closed the meeting.”

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## Does God Exist ?

This is one of the best explanations to a nonbeliever on the existence of God that I have ever seen...

A man went to a barbershop to have his hair cut and his beard trimmed. As the barber began to work, they began to have a good conversation. They talked about so many things and various subjects. When they eventually touched on the subject of God, the barber said: “I don’t believe that God exists.”

“Why do you say that?” asked the customer.

“Well, you just have to go out in the street to realize that God doesn’t exist. Tell me, if God exists, would there be so many sick people? Would there be abandoned children? If God existed, there would be neither suffering nor pain. I can’t imagine a loving God who would allow all of these things.”

The customer thought for a moment, but didn’t respond because he didn’t want to start an argument.

The barber finished his job and the customer left the shop.

Just after he left the barbershop, he saw a man in the street with long, stringy, dirty hair and an untrimmed beard. He looked dirty and unkempt. The customer turned back and entered the barber shop again, and he said to the barber:

“You know what? Barbers do not exist.”

“How can you say that?” asked the surprised barber. “I am here, and I am a barber. And I just worked on you!”

“No!” the customer exclaimed. “Barbers don’t exist because if they did, there would be no people with dirty, long hair and untrimmed beards, like that man outside.”

“Ah, but barbers DO exist! That’s what happens when people do not come to me.”

“Exactly!” affirmed the customer. “That’s the point! God, too, DOES exist! That’s what happens when people do not go to Him and don’t look to Him for help. That’s why there’s so much pain and suffering in the world.”

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## Blinded Minds -

### The “First Casualties of Global Warming”

*compiled by Tim Blair,*

Daily Telegraph newspaper, Sydney

(As we read the following headlines, we can’t help getting the impression that the climate change alarmists are eagerly searching for a corpse to prove that the world is warming. Strange, isn’t it, that the deceased seems always to outlive its pallbearers? - Ed.)

**2000:** The golden toad which, according to environmental groups, was the **first casualty** of global warming

**2001:** Tuvalu: Global Warming’s **first casualty**

**2006:** CWI supports frontline research in the Canadian Arctic to protect polar bears from becoming the **first casualty** of global warming.

**2006:** The **first casualty** of global warming is India’s mangrove island on the Bay of Bengal, Lochachara ~ it is now gone.

**2007:** [The Maldives are] also renowned for being the likely **first casualty** in any serious increase in global warming.

**2007:** Water could be the **first casualty** of global warming.

**2007:** Australia Could Become **First Major Casualty** Due To Global Warming.

**2008:** Losing winter: as climate change takes hold, our coldest season is the **first casualty**.

**2008:** **First Casualty** of Global Warming? Rare breed of possum may be extinct.

**2008:** The world’s natural heritage, including polar bears and other wildlife, is global warming’s **first casualty**.

**2009:** The Alaskan village of Newtok is the **first casualty** of climate change.

**2009:** UNEP had also recently declared that coral reefs, which support the majority of marine life, will be the **first casualty** of climate change.

**2009:** Brunt of climate change perceived in India; small Himalayan glaciers **first casualty**.

**2009:** Were my damaged pride and chilly shins the **first casualty** of of global warming?

**2009:** In India ... agriculture is the **first casualty** of climate change.

**2010:** Will the Marshall Islands be the **first casualty** of global warming on a national scale?

**2010:** Sled Dogs: The **First Casualty** of Global Warming

**2010:** Climate change and food insecurity: Africa is the **first casualty**.

**2011:** PNG Attitude has referred to the Carteret Islands being the world’s **first casualty** to global warming

**2011:** **First casualty** of global warming? Pants.

**2011:** Surface water sources are the **first casualty** of global warming.

**2011:** The [Aldabra] snail has been declared not just extinct, but the **first casualty** of global warming.



2011: California Mussels: *First Warming Casualty?*

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## Therapy For the Funny Bone -

The recession has hit everybody really hard...

My neighbor got a pre-declined credit card in the mail  
CEO's are now playing miniature golf.  
Exxon-Mobil laid off 25 Congressmen.  
I saw a Mormon with only one wife.  
If the bank returns your cheque marked "Insufficient Funds," you call them and ask if they meant you or them.  
McDonald's is selling the 1/4 ounce.  
Angelina Jolie adopted a child from America.  
Parents in Beverly Hills fired their nannies and learned their children's names.  
A truckload of Americans was caught sneaking into Mexico.  
A picture is now only worth 200 words.  
When Bill and Hillary travel together, they now have to share a room.  
The Treasure Island casino in Las Vegas is now managed by Somali pirates.  
Hollywood movie stars can only afford to marry once.  
Nancy Pelosi's jet was repossessed and she is now flying cattle class.  
Donald Trump's had to hock his hairpiece.  
President Obama can only afford to play golf twice a day.

A Catholic nun, passing the door of a bar, commented to an old drunk standing in the door, "That stuff you are drinking will kill you."

He replied, "How would you know? I'll bet you've never tasted anything stronger than communion wine."

"Everybody knows it is poison, and will kill you," she countered.

"I'll tell you what. I'll buy you a shot of whiskey, and you try it and see if you don't like it."

Shaking her head, she refused.

"Look, if you are afraid somebody will see you drinking, I'll get the bartender to serve it in a coffee cup."

Hesitating for a moment, she finally agreed, "Oh, all right, to be fair, I'll see how it tastes."

So the old drunk staggered in to the bar, and said, "Gimme a shot of whiskey in a coffee cup."

And the bartender asked, "What, is that nun out there again?"

It's been so dry in Arkansas that the Baptists are starting to baptize by sprinkling,  
The Methodists are using wet-wipes,  
Presbyterians are giving rain checks,

And the Catholics are praying for the wine to turn back into water!

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## Cartoons for the Wise -

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## A Poem That Won't Preach -

(The next time you're sitting in the porch swing with your sweetheart, you might read her this one. - Ed)

### Redneck Valentine!

Collards is green  
my dog's name is Blue  
and I'm so lucky  
to have a sweet thang like you.

Yore hair is like cornsilk  
a-flapping in the breeze  
Softer than Blue's  
and without all them fleas.

You move like the bass,  
which excite me in May.  
You ain't got no scales  
but I luv you anyway.

Yo're as satisfy'n as okry  
jist a-fry'n in the pan.  
Yo're as fragrant as "snuff"  
right out of the can.

You have som'a yore teeth,  
for which I am proud;  
I hold my head high  
when we're in a crowd.

On special occasions,  
when you shave under yore arms,  
well, I'm in hawg heaven,  
and awed by yore charms.

Still them fellers at work,  
they all want to know,  
what I did to deserve  
such a purdy, young doe.

Like a good roll of duct tape  
yo're there fer yore man,  
to patch up life's troubles  
and fix what you can.

Yo're as cute as a junebug  
a-buzzin' overhead.  
You ain't mean like those far ants  
I found in my bed.  
Cut from the best cloth  
like a plaid flannel shirt,  
you spark up my life  
more than a fresh load of dirt.

When you hold me real tight  
like a padded gunrack,  
my life is complete;  
Ain't nuttin' I lack.

Yore complexion, it's perfection,  
like the best vinyl sidin'.  
despite all the years,  
yore age, it keeps hidin'.

Me 'n' you's like a Moon Pie  
with a RC cold drank,  
we go together  
like a skunk goes with stank.

Some men, they buy chocolate  
for Valentine's Day;  
They git it at Wal-Mart,  
it's romantic that way.

Some men git roses  
on that special day  
from the cooler at Kroger.  
"That's impressive," I say.

Some men buy fine diamonds  
from a flea market booth.  
"Diamonds are forever,"  
they explain, suave and couth.

But for this man, honey,  
these won't do.  
Cause yo're too special,  
you sweet thang you.

I got you a gift,  
without taste nor odor,  
more useful than diamonds...

*it's a new trollin' motor!!*

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## A Reply to a Hillsong Seeker -

Dear Pastor Dan,

I know it appears far too silly to be genuine, but I think this bloke, \_\_\_\_\_ (it's not a girl, is it?) has seen the smoke of our camp fire and has mistakenly stumbled in among us??? Obviously, he didn't read much on my website. I've been fairly nice to him, so I hope he comes back.

Hughie.

Hello,

I have a non-believer friend in Cairns, Australia, And i wanted her to go to a hillsong church or a church connected to hillsong or just an amazing church lol, shes young, and i would love her to experience one of those churches,

Could u please help? I live in belgium though

Thank you  
God bless You!

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Hello \_\_\_\_\_, with greetings in the Lord,

Thank you so much for contacting me regarding your friend who lives here in Cairns.

I'm sorry to have to tell you though, I'm not really one who favours the type of meetings that are promoted by Hillsong churches, in fact I came out of, or separated from just such a church about twelve years ago because of their promotion of unbiblical doctrines and ungodly activities. If you want your friend just to have a good time and enjoy the rock music and storytelling then Hillsong type churches are definitely the place to go, but it's not likely that she will get genuinely saved and spend eternity in Heaven with the Lord. Again, I'm sorry to have to say that if she did genuinely get saved it would be in spite of going to a Hillsong type church and not because of it. God requires that we deny our flesh and forsake the world and its attractions if we really want to be His disciples and enjoy an eternity in Heaven with Him.

1 John 2:15-16 "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

Titus 2:11-12 "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

Mark 8:34 "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

Hillsong type churches vainly and mistakenly attempt to offer worship to a holy God with unholy and worldly type Rock Music. This is a very grievous error, for God very specifically asks us worship Him with spiritual songs and to sing and make melody in our hearts to Him (Ephesians 5:19 & Colossians 3:16). Godly music which is based on melody caters to our spiritual nourishment, whereas back-beat Rock rhythm caters only to, and excites our fleshly passions.

Unfortunately (depending on how you look at things), we live in a time in world history which the Bible plainly refers to as the Last Days, and which it describes as a time when people who profess to be Christians will not endure sound doctrine, but instead, they will gather to themselves "bible" teachers who will preach messages that only seek to make the congregations feel comfortable and at ease with worldly and sinful entertainments and standards which the Lord condemns (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

If your friend is just looking for entertainment and a good time, any of the many night clubs here in Cairns, which don't pretend to be Churches, will be able to help her. However, if you are concerned for your friend's soul, and whether she might possibly get saved and receive the gift of Eternal Life, if you would like her to meet a group of people who would genuinely love her and seek to help her to become a truly Bible based Christian, then I can certainly try and be of help.

The church I attend here in Cairns is called Coastline Baptist Church. We are a group of fifty or so people whose desire it is to lift up Christ and to love the lost and lead them into a saving relationship with Him. We would certainly welcome your friend if you would give her our contact details and ask her to get in touch with us.

She can contact me personally on 4051 4213, or Pastor Dan DeLong on 4039 4736 or on his mobile 0408 703 802. We also have a website where our service times and the locations of where we meet are displayed. The website is located at:

[www.coastlinebaptistchurch.org.au](http://www.coastlinebaptistchurch.org.au)

Thank you again, \_\_\_\_\_, for getting in touch with us and for your concern for your friend.

If you have any questions, please feel free to get in touch.

Blessings in the Lord.

Hughie Seaborn (Cairns, Australia).

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## Sermon Fodder -

### The Wicker Basket

The story is told of an old man who lived on a farm in the mountains of eastern Kentucky with his young grandson. Each morning, Grandpa was up early sitting at the kitchen table reading from his old worn-out Bible. His grandson who wanted to be just like him tried to imitate him in any way he could.

One day the grandson asked, 'Papa, I try to read the Bible just like you but I don't understand it, and what I do understand I forget as soon as I close the book. What good does reading the Bible do?' The Grandfather quietly turned from putting coal in the stove and said, 'Take this old wicker coal basket down to the river and bring back a basket of water.'

The boy did as he was told, even though all the water leaked out before he could get back to the house. The grandfather laughed and said, 'You will have to move a little faster next time,' and sent him back to the river with the basket to try again.

This time the boy ran faster, but again the old wicker basket was empty before he returned home. Out of breath, he told his grandfather that it was 'impossible to carry water in a basket,' and he went to get a bucket instead. The old man said, 'I don't want a bucket of water; I want a basket of water. You can do this. You're just not trying hard enough,' and he went out the door to watch the boy try again.

At this point, the boy knew it was impossible, but he wanted to show his grandfather that even if he ran as fast as he could, the water would leak out before he got far at all. The boy scooped the water and ran hard, but when he reached his grandfather the basket was again empty. Out of breath, he said, 'See Papa, it's useless!'

'So you think it is useless?' the old man said. 'Look at the basket.'

The boy looked at the basket and for the first time he realized that the basket looked different. Instead of a dirty old wicker coal basket, it was clean.

'Son, that's what happens when you read the Bible. You might not understand or remember everything, but when you read it, it will change you from the inside out.'

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## Sowing the Seed -

John Wesley, the well-known preacher of years ago, while crossing the open fields one day, was threatened by a man who demanded his money. Mr. Wesley gave the robber what money he had and then said to him, "It may be that one day you will be sorry that you have thus sinned against God. Should it be so, remember that '...the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin' (1 John 1:7)"

Years afterwards Mr. Wesley was preaching in a certain town, and just as he stepped down from the platform, a man came forward and said, "Sir, do you remember being robbed by a highwayman some years ago?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Wesley, "I do."

"Well, sir, I am that man. The thought of my sins made me miserable after a while. Then I remembered the words you had spoken to me, '...the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' So I went to the Lord Jesus and told Him everything. Now I trust in Him as the Saviour of my soul."

So the poor robber found that the precious blood of Christ was able to wash away his scarlet sins. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18)

*Copied- The Gospel Standard Aug 2011*

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## Eddy-Torial -

We have a problem at our church. Our gravel driveway breeds potholes. We fill them up, and a week or two later they are back. You'd think they would get the idea after a while they aren't welcome, and would go elsewhere.

I have a problem in my Christian life. My road to Heaven breeds potholes. I fill them up and a day or two later they are back. You'd think they would get the idea after a while they aren't welcome. And besides, doesn't the Bible say, "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." (1 Peter 3:10-12)

I thought the straight and narrow way would be smooth, didn't you?

Surely the children of God are entitled to an easy run all the way from the cross to the crown. The permed and perfumed purveyors of prosperity we see on television all tell us that God owes it to the redeemed to give us a smooth passage to Glory. They say all we have to do is "name it and claim it" and send them a big fat offering, and everything will run smoothly all the way to Heaven.

I keep coming across potholes, big ones. Some of them are the size of the Grand Canyon. So, am I strange? Am I abnormal because I have trials, and encounter hardships daily, and am forever having my teeth rattled by potholes on the road to Heaven? A brother I met in South Africa told of a road that is so bad that his friend saw a four wheel drive in a pothole and it was so deep that only the bullbar and one corner of the roof was visible. Been there, done that.

This pothole problem is one we all face. It breaks down to two basic issues. First, the presence of pain, and second, the pretence of prosperity. Consider the first issue. Everywhere we look we see God's people hurting. If it's not physical pain, it is emotional, spiritual, financial, domestic, or ecclesiastic. Second, we see on every hand, polished and erudite evangelicals proclaiming to all and sundry that it is abnormal for a Christian to suffer, ever. Those are the basic issues.

So how do we resolve the obvious conflict between our experience and their message? Again, there are two possibilities. We can be swept off our feet into the blissful, everything-is-wonderful fairyland of modern charismatic evangelicalism, and ignore the pains of living in a fallen world.

OR we can go to the Scriptures for light, and see what God says about our pain, and what He does for His children who are hurting. It may surprise you to read that "Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward," (Job 5:7) and to learn that "All who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (II Tim 3:12) Some, no doubt will be greatly offended if they ever discover that suffering is to be expected in the Christian's life.

'We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels," 2 Thessalonians 1:3-7

When we examine the lives of Bible characters we see it ever so clearly. Joseph's dreams of ruling over his brothers, and Abraham's title deed to Canaan, and David's right to the throne, and Caleb and Joshua's possession of their homesteads, all of these and a hundred more teach ever so clearly that pain is a part of normal Christian living. Have you read lately the apostle Paul's pedigree? "... in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in

perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.” 2 Corinthians 11:23a-28

The health, wealth, and prosperity message of Joel Osteen and all his teachers sounds very strange to those who still have eyes to see and ears to hear.

First, their message exposes an abysmal ignorance of Scripture. The message of God’s Word is the opposite of what they preach.

Second, their lifestyle reveals a poor acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ. From his birth in a stable to His death on the tree and His burial in a borrowed tomb, our dear Lord demonstrated grace and wisdom in suffering. His cross and ours always precede the crown.

Third, their smiling and unlined faces indicate that they do not know God as the God of the Pothole. He is the One who sets our feet on Pothole Avenue and then fills all the gaps of life with Himself. He smooths out the bumps with His presence and comfort. He gives grace, sufficient grace, perpetual grace to handle all the rough spots. But He only does so for those who know the reality of the potholes. The heresy of perpetual prosperity prevents its preachers from ever seeing that the God of the Potholes fill all the gaps with Himself. How sad!

And Fourth, their tawdry mansions and luxury cars and bizjets prove that they have missed the real treasures that are only found in “the fellowship of His sufferings.” (Phil. 3:11) How shall we describe the blessings of the Potholes where God is? They are not filled with gold nuggets or diamonds. They are filled with delights to be found in the very nature of God.

Let me tell you three beautiful illustrations of potholes that were filled by God.

The first was told us by a farming couple who invited us to stay with them. They said that there was a pothole on the road to their farm, and that a little bird laid her eggs in that pothole. She hatched her chicks there and fed them there until they left the nest. All the locals rang family and friends and warned them to avoid the pothole and they did, every one driving slowly by and rubbernecking to see the marvel for themselves. Ah yes, that is just like my Heavenly Father! Life thriving in a pothole, where it is least expected! The story of His children and His churches in a microcosm. Pothole vitality!

The second illustration is one we observed forty years ago. Through my friend Gene I met Jerry, who was a corporation pilot for a ceramic tile company. Jerry taught the college and career class at a church in our town. I flew with Jerry and Gene once and was impressed with his zeal for the Lord. A few weeks afterward we heard on the news that Jerry was killed in a plane crash when the engines quit just after takeoff, and that all the executives of the company died as well. All were professing Christians, but Jerry was the only practicing Christian. We were devastated to hear of his death, but were greatly challenged to learn that, though Jerry died on Saturday, his wife stood before their Sunday School class on Sunday and gave a testimony of the everlasting arms of God that are underneath. She knew the God who fills the Potholes!

The third illustration is about dear friends of ours here in Australia. We met them in 1975. The wife was saved and the husband was not. I can’t begin to tell you all the heartaches they have been through. Criticism from family members, drug use by some of the children, marital problems, disappointments with churches and pastors, employment hassles, you name the pothole and they have driven through it. Did the wife deny the existence of potholes? Not at all. Did she despair? No, at times it was a struggle, but she sought counsel from God’s Word, and prayed and clung to the Lord Of All Trials, and He heard and sustained her and blest her. A year ago we were driving back from the coast and our phone rang. Susan answered it and it was the husband. I heard my sweetheart as she replied, and her joy was immediately contagious! She handed me the phone, and he said, “I just realised I haven’t rung to tell you that about a month ago I became a born again child of God!” What joy we had that day over his conversion to Christ! And since then we have fellowshipped over the phone several times, looking forward to doing so in person! And it all came about because his wife knows the God of the Potholes!

As I reflect on these things and read my Bible I am discovering that the God of the Potholes also has a shovel. It’s not for filling potholes, but for digging them so that I can learn that He is willing to fill them with Himself!

It really is true that “We suffer our way to wisdom!”