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Evangelism Update 03-30-08

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Note from Jim:

No, you didn't miss a newsletter for last week. We were in the midst of moving into a new home I didn't get around to sending one out. Our family is all settled in and things are now getting back to normal.

Scripture of the Week:

They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. (Nehemiah 8:8)

Quote of the Week:

"Simple assent to the gospel, divorced from a transforming commitment to the living Christ, is by Biblical standards less than faith, and less than saving, and to elicit only assent of this kind would be to secure only false conversions." (J.I. Packer)

Recommended Resource:



Check out this eye-opening video on The Church of Oprah.

[Click here.](#)

AFTER EDEN

by Dan Lietha



Questions & Objections:

This O&A comes from [The Evidence Bible](#).

O. God made me like this. Sin is his fault!

A. If this won't work in a civil court, it certainly won't work on Judgment Day. Even with an expert defense lawyer, it would take a pretty inept judge to fall for the old "God made me do it" defense. We are responsible moral agents. The "buck" stopped at Adam. He tried to blame both God and Eve for his sin; Eve blamed the serpent. It is human nature to try, but it doesn't work with God.

One-Day Way of the Master Training:



We would be glad to host a Way of the Master evangelism training for your church or small group. This one-day seminar is a proven, effective way to help people overcome their fear of witnessing and show them how to reach out to the lost. We will quickly equip those who attend to simply and effectively share their faith with family,

friends, and strangers. What makes our training unique is when the classroom training is over, you have the option to hit the streets and immediately start to use the new tools you have just learned. The seminar consists of the following activities:

- Three powerful interactive messages that will equip the attendees in how to share the gospel effectively and biblically with anyone, anytime, anywhere.
- Quick Tips on how to have fun sharing your faith while overcoming your fears.
- Quick Tips on how to effectively witness one-2-one using the Way of the Master.
- Hands-on, in-the-trenches training with proven leaders.

The One-Day Way of the Master Training is **FREE** for the host and to all who attend.

** The Way of the Master has been commended by Franklin Graham, Dr. D. James Kennedy, David Wilkerson, Bill Gothard, John MacArthur, Ravi Zacharias, David Jeremiah, Joni Eareckson Tada, Josh McDowell, and many other Christian leaders.

Weekly “Fishing” Report:

I wanted to share some pictures that I took of the window in a new age metaphysical shop at our local fishing hole. (Click either picture for a larger image.) Take it from a former witch, this is an licensed and active occult temple. Who would have believed ten or twenty years ago that this would be right along the main downtown drag of our small city? It reminds me more and more of Frank Perreti’s novels *This Present Darkness* and *Piercing the Darkness*. Sadly, this is a more and more common occurrence all around our country. Saints, we should be in prayer.



Sometimes people ask me how best to witness to a Wiccan or pagan. Law and grace evangelism works just as well here as with anyone else. What they practice at this temple is just like any other world religion at its core. They’ve bound themselves up in works. Click here to see the [42 Laws of Maat](#).

Our tract sweep around 6th St and Riverside Park brought me to two different one-2-ones on Saturday. The first was rather heart wrenching. Ethan was 17-years-old. Dressed in black and punk garb with several death symbols, he was just sitting on a bench when I met him. As we talked, I learned even at his age he’d already developed a drinking problem. His one piece of advice that he wanted to share was a basic distrust or paranoia toward the media and government. He had no real idea of what happens after we die. As he put it, it was enough for him to just figure out what he was doing next. An air of apathy or hopelessness hung around him. He held no particular spiritual beliefs, since as he put it he never really had a stable home life to learn from. In fact his mom had just thrown him out recently. I tried to swing things around to the gospel, but just couldn’t seem to make a connection. However, he took an [Atheist Test](#) tract from me right as

a couple of his friends showed up. I tried to bring them into the conversation, but they were disruptive and either drunk or stoned and I couldn't get any further. However, they liked the [Curved Illusion](#) when I showed it to them and I was able to put tracts in their hands before I left.

Mike was the next one-2-one...



The Baha'i Faith: A syncretistic sect of Islam that has evolved into a major independent religion with approximately five million believers worldwide. Bahai's teach that Moses, Buddha, Krishna, Jesus, Muhammad, Zoroaster, and others formed a succession of divine messengers. A nineteenth-century Persian teacher, the Bab (or Gate), predicted the coming of Baha'u'llah, the most recent messenger and founder of Baha'i. The movement's goals involve establishing a new global order of sexual equality, a one-world economic system to eliminate poverty, and a one-world religion. (*Today's Religions and Spirituality*, James K. Walker and Watchman Fellowship)

[Click here](#) to download or listen to the MP3 audio of our one-2-one. We covered a lot, I'll just touch on the highlights below.

This was an interesting encounter from the start. I've seen Mike when we've been out before, but he's never really been open. In fact, I didn't know it but Dave had just tried giving him a tract a few minutes before I showed him the [Curved Illusion](#) and Mike had refused. However, as you can hear in the audio he easily took the tracts from me. I even told him there was a gospel message on the back and he said "cool".

He started by saying how he normally gets upset when someone hands out tracts because he has his own faith and usually doesn't share unless someone asks him about it. Naturally, I asked what faith he follows and that lead into an hour and a half witnessing encounter! What he told me fully confirmed the description of Baha'i above. I was a little surprised to hear him freely say their objective is to create a new government akin to the European Union. Mike said Baha'i was able to borrow from other faiths since they recognize other religious leaders and prophets (including Jesus). I questioned him on this, explaining that my own experience and understanding doesn't allow Christianity to be lumped in with other world religions. I asked him how Baha'i views the Bible, pointing out that Jesus' own words in John 14:6 are exclusive - "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Mike's response was that the Bible had been chopped up and mistranslated by the Roman Catholic Church and thus couldn't be trusted. By comparison he said the writings of Baha'u'llah were translated from the original Persian and were thus more reliable. I answered that may be what we used to think until the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. I then started to tell him about the manuscript evidence for the Bible. At this point he said a call had come up on his cell phone and we'd have to cut the conversation short. It had been about ten minutes and I figured at this point it was over, but he took my card saying he would get in touch to pick this up at another time.

Mike headed off and I got to talking the other guys. However, in a few minutes Mike returned and I struck up the conversation with him again. I told him that I'd been in an eclectic religion myself (Wicca) and after coming to

Christ I just couldn't see how Christianity could mix with any other faith. I said I'd explain my understanding of why and I then wanted him to explain his view or what Baha'i had to say about it. I laid out the biblical gospel of sin, righteousness, judgment and grace. I then asked Mike what the salvation message in Baha'i was. *You really should listen to the audio, the 29 second pause after this question is really telling.*

Next, I reasoned that Jesus couldn't be just a prophet; it had to be God himself on the cross as the propitiation for our sins. Further, I couldn't see how another core belief in Baha'i made sense when looking at a passage like 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 -- "... when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus." If Baha'u'llah was another coming of Christ, then what the Bible says here didn't happen. His answer was that we're the angels its taking about ... happily proclaiming the arrival of Baha'u'llah. As for the reference to fire or judgment, he swung back to the idea of errors in translation. As he put it, Baha'u'llah came to add to scripture and reveal more from it. This brought me back to better explaining the reliability of scripture. He was stunned at the staggering manuscript evidence for the New Testament compare to other historical records like Julius Caesar or the Trojan Wars. As told him, even secular scholars will admit the Bible is the most authenticated book in antiquity.

Unfortunately, this is where my MP3 recorder ran out. We talked for another 20 minutes or so from there. I showed him Matthew 24:23-27 --"Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. So, if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out. If they say, 'Look, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man." Not only should the warning about false christs give pause for thought, but I further pointed out how the end of that passage ties in with what we saw in 2 Thessalonians earlier. The return of Christ will be globally noticable and unmistakable. I'd never heard of Baha'u'llah in any real detail until now. Mike's response was still that the Bible shouldn't be taken literally. OK, yes, when Jesus says "I am the door" this doesn't mean he's a plank of wood that swings on hinges ... the Bible should simply be read plainly. God says what he means and means what he says and these passages are pretty clear.

He told me about the Bab and how Baha'u'llah was his most faithful disciple. I asked him if Baha'u'llah was Christ, why would he need a teacher? He amended that to say the Bab was actually a frontrunner like John the Baptist. He told me some more of Baha'u'llah's background and history, finally ending with his death and burial in a shrine. I asked if the tomb was empty. It isn't. So, if Baha'u'llah was another coming of Christ why wouldn't he have risen from the dead as Jesus had? Mike said that wasn't something he needed to do. Baha'u'llah came to enhance and expound on scripture. The Bible was out dated. An example he gave was how Baha'u'llah added more commandments because the Bible only had ten and that couldn't be enough. I pointed out that ten was more than enough when you understood their purpose. I turned to Galatians 3:24 - "So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith." The commandments show our transgression and reveal our sin for what it is. We can't even keep these ten, why would we need more? Jesus further ups the bar to show lust is adultery of the heart and anger is murder in the sight of God. This gave me a place to end and bring it all together. I told Mike the difference is that biblical Christianity has a reason for the cross and empty tomb. We broke the law, yet Jesus' sacrifice pays the fine. The tomb is empty because he conquered death and hell. That's why he is the way, the truth and the life. Baha'i simply doesn't answer that.

We wrapped up with Mike agreeing we'd watch for each other out on the streets and that he'd also email me so we might continue the exchange. He then told me of a Baha'i representative in Grants Pass that we realized Paul Kaiser and some of the others got to talk with at the Grower's Market during XE'07 last July. That may be another opportunity to share the truth, we'll see what God has in store.

Pray for Mike, Ethan and the other seed that was sown. May the Lamb of God receive the reward of his suffering!

Prayer Points:

- Pray for your pastor this week.
- "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to

send out laborers into his harvest." (Matthew 9:37-38, ESV)

Calendar:

- **Downtown Fishing Hole** (Recurring)
Saturdays
Street witnessing (3pm to 6pm) downtown along 6th Street. Meet in the Budget Internet parking lot (4th St & F St).

If you would like to join us, [email us](#) your contact info.

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'til the nets are full...

