



Books in Review

DEMONIZATION OF THE BELIEVER

An Unbiblical Teaching Exposed

by Gil Rugh

Sound Words, 55 pages/4 tapes, \$14.95

One of the more hotly debated topics in both Charismatic and Evangelical Christian camps today is: Can a believer be demonized? Dr. Gil Rugh says: No! In his four-tape series and accompanying 55-page book, Rugh systematically and methodically examines that question from the Bible while dissecting the experientially based, nonbiblical ideas of popular spiritual warfare experts Neil Anderson and C. Fred Dickason.

Rugh's teaching and writing have been missed by most but are a must for every Christian. His is material that needs to be studied in the light of so much paranoia and confusion today. The concise booklet, along with the four audio tapes, is one of the best inoculations against this false teaching that can be found.

In his book, Rugh cuts to the core of the issue in his seven chapters entitled: "Sin: Who Is to Blame?," "A Biblical Survey of Demonology," "Demon Possession and the Believer," "The Biblical Way of Dealing with Demons," "The Fallacy of Clinical Evidence in Spiritual Matters," "Ancestral Demons" and "Experience-Based Theology."

The tape series is a response to Neil Anderson's "Resolving Personal and Spiritual Conflicts Conference" which has gained the patronage of Evangelical churches across the nation.

Rugh's main point cannot be missed and that is that to depart from the biblical teaching regarding how a believer is sanctified is a frontal attack and a downright denial of the sufficiency of the work of Christ and the Scriptures. We do not need "experts" and "bondage breakers." We need good theology. That is what Gil Rugh gives us.

—GRF

THE CHRISTIAN'S GUIDE TO GUIDANCE

by Jay E. Adams

Timeless Texts, 97 pages, \$8.95

The question of guidance and knowing how to make right decisions in life can be a troubling one indeed. How can a believer know what is or what is not God's will for their life? It is a crucial issue that has given kindling to shepherding and abusive sects. It is also an issue to which a vast amount of misguided counsel has been offered — even from within mainline churches and from otherwise reputable Bible teachers.

Most Christians look to the Bible, prayer, counsel of others, circumstances, reason and peace as the reliable arbitrators for knowing and discerning God's will. And these six guidelines appear to be wise and safe factors in making Godly decisions in life — after all are we not to pray without ceasing and told in a multitude of counsel there is wisdom? Yet when it comes to the issue of guidance for the Christian, Jay Adams contends that five of the six elements mentioned above are *wrong!*

Adams demonstrates how Scripture is to be the sole and final source for a Christian's guidance. He sets forth to show how all of these other factors leads one to look for guidance in "all sorts of wrong places." Following those avenues which contain a human element, and which as such are undependable, "will land those who do so in more difficulties than they already had." His, then, is a battle cry similar to the Reformers centuries ago: *sola scriptura*. He brings the reader back to the understanding that experience is not the judge of the Bible, but the Bible is the judge of experience. Too often, knowingly or unknowingly, Christians get the "cart" (experience) before the "horse" (Scripture).

The book is brief and succinct. It will be, for most readers, a quick read. While Garry Friesen's definitive work on the subject (*Decision Making and the Will of God*) may be intimidating to the average Christian, Adams' publication will not be overwhelming. And, just perhaps, may whet the appetite of some to consider Friesen's 452-page volume.

Adams deals with the problems and provides the scriptural solutions. He names names and in doing so

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Christian ministry [was] established in Eugene, Oregon, in 1933" (emphasis added). One current member of the sect, in a letter to PFO, offered a similar opinion when he wrote: "I think one of the greatest abuses of the former WCG was the denial of the breadth of the body of Christ — that there were indeed Christians outside the WCG."

Thus, in this member's view, what looms large is not the doctrinal transformation, but a move from the exclusivist attitude of the church to a realization that there are members of Christ's body *in addition* to the Worldwide Church of God.

All of this then begs the question: If the church has made such a transformation by the grace of God, why have there been such concerted efforts to adopt a revisionist position as to its founder and history and maintain a "Christian" heritage?

Yet, despite all the above, the most important reason for caution is Matthew 7:15-20. Jesus identified cultic and aberrational groups as "false prophets." He said we would know them by their fruit (v. 16) and that a rotten tree does not produce good fruit (v. 18). Yet the leadership today is telling us that the Worldwide Church of God is capable of producing good fruit. It has had to rework and relegate its "bad tree" history into a "good tree" image which just needs a little care and some pruning and fertilizer. Yet Jesus said, "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (v. 19). He did not tell us to coddle, prune and nurture it.

If for no other reason, the words of Christ require that Christians do not uncritically accept this church's image transformation. Nevertheless, PFO rejoices and thanks God for the individuals who are being set free from the bondage of false doctrine and spiritual abuse — not because of this sect's claim of the "plain truth," but because of the atoning work of the Savior on Calvary's cross.

—MKG

NEWS UPDATES

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Lourdes and Fatima are promoting and the Jewish pool of John 5. At the Pool of Bethesda, no one was being encouraged to hold to teachings contrary to God's Word.

The message of both Lourdes and Fatima are messages supposedly from the Virgin Mary promoting veneration and prayers to her.

The Catholic Almanac under "Apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary" tells us that in Fatima, Portugal, "Mary appeared six times between May 13 and Oct. 13, 1917, to three children in a field called Cova da Iria near Fatima, north of Lisbon. She recommended frequent recitation of the Rosary."

Most are not aware that in the Rosary one prays to Mary these words: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death." There is only one Mediator for sinners (1 Timothy 2:5) and only one who can deal with our sins, that is the Lord Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:21).

The *Almanac* goes on saying that Mary urged "works of mortification for the conversion of sinners; called for devotion to herself under the title of the Immaculate Heart." Can our works of mortification convert sinners? Did not Christ command us to preach the Gospel to every creature (Matthew 28:19)? It is not our suffering and sacrifice that brings conversion to others but the preaching of His suffering and sacrifice and a sinners' hearty response to the Savior. It may cost us in time and effort to evangelize the lost but ultimately it is the Gospel that is the "power of God unto Salvation." Fatima's message is a total contradiction of the Gospel.

Fatima also calls for making holy communion on the first Saturday of every month and the *Almanac* informs us that: "Fatima, with its sanctuary and basilica, ranks with Lourdes as the greatest of Marian shrines."

So what about Lourdes? Hinn evidently approves of it. Lourdes is just the French version of Fatima. The *Almanac* gives its history: "Mary, identifying herself as the Immaculate Conception appeared 18 times between Feb. 11 and July 16, 1858, to 14-year-old Bernadette Soubirous at the grotto of Massabielle near Lourdes in southern France. Her message concerned the necessity of prayer and penance for the conversion of men."

It has been a longstanding controversy as to what, if anything, is really happening at these Marian shrines. Certainly there can be improvement of psychosomatic illness just through expectations. Because of the false beliefs being promoted so blatantly at both of these shrines, we cannot even rule out the demonic and the occultic (1 Timothy 4:1-3).

Hinn has admittedly slid into spiritism and necromancy so it should not be surprising that he is spiraling down into one error after the other. We can only wonder what will be next.

—GRF

BOOKS IN REVIEW

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questions the prescripts of some noted, modern-day celebrities of the Christian faith. This book may unsettle some as it goes against the grain of the traditionally accepted views of guidance, but it's a call to return to believing that Scripture many learned as a child: "Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path."

—MKG