



Books in Review

THE COMPLETE BOOK OF BIBLE ANSWERS

by Ron Rhodes

Harvest House Publishers, 395 pages, \$11.99

Apparently, someone has locked apologist Ron Rhodes in a room with a computer. He is writing and he can't stop! In the past couple years, the Southern California researcher and writer has virtually become a "Book of the Month Club." But his high volume of output has not affected the quality. His writings are some of the best in their field and are much needed by a Church that continues to lose its desire and ability to discern.

One of his latest offerings is *The Complete Book of Bible Answers*. From the authority of God's Word to the nature of God (and Jesus Christ) to man's sinfulness, salvation and future existence, Rhodes tackles some of what can be difficult objections posed by unbelievers and cultists. He even surveys areas of theological disagreement between believers of different denominations, such as baptism and observance of the Lord's Supper.

The book also contains critiques of New Age, Word Faith, hyper-Charismatic (such as "holy laughter") and other cultic teachings and practices. A subject index enables quick location of topics.

The book's style is in a question-and-answer format. And while Rhodes' responses are not protracted, they are deliberate, to the point and insightful. While the book's title "The Complete Book..." might be a bit of an oversell, it remains a welcome addition to the Christian's arsenal of defense for the faith.

—MKG

735 BAFFLING BIBLE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

by Larry Richards

Fleming H. Revell, 390 pages, \$12.99

Witnessing to skeptics and cynics of the Bible can be one of the most formidable ordeals a Christian can face.

Thanks to Larry Richards' *735 Baffling Bible Questions Answered* the experience can now be far less intimidating.

The volume proceeds through Scripture, book by book, exploring its many difficult passages and purported discrepancies — excerpts that have become suitable grist for the critic's mill. Richards responds to various objections and suspected textual problems in every book of the Bible (except Nehemiah). A brief survey of each Bible book's author, theme and issues acts as introductory commentary for each chapter.

Prophecy, archaeology, Old Testament customs and practices, New Testament principles, and a whole lot more fill this book. The questions you know to ask are there — and some you've probably never even thought to ask. For example, on page 228, Richards considers the question of how many young children were actually killed in Bethlehem by Herod's soldiers during the slaughter of the innocents.

The paperback volume is a reissue of a work published five years ago under the title, *Bible Difficulties Solved*. Fleming H. Revell should be commended for returning this excellent resource to the availability of Christians.

—MKG

DEFENDING THE FAITH

by Richard Abanes

Baker Book House, 240 pages, \$14.99

Defined as "a beginner's guide to cults and new religions," Rich Abanes' recent publication is that and a whole lot more. His defense of and reasons for the Christian faith are not beneficial just to the novice cult-watcher. They're a great refresher course for even the well-versed apologist.

In the book's four parts (12 chapters), Abanes surveys the major doctrines of Christianity and therein infuses his study of the heretical pronouncements of cults, new religions and aberrational teachers. He exposes the counterfeit with the genuine. All the major tenets of the Christian faith are covered, including the inspiration and reliability of Scripture, the triune nature of God, the uniqueness of Christ, His vicarious atonement and bodily resurrection, man's destiny, and endtime speculation.

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rescue their souls from the summit of the Teide volcano and take them to a new world." Members of the sect have refused to cooperate in the investigation by authorities.

—MKG

SCIENTOLOGY SETTLEMENT REVEALED

The Church of Scientology revealed in early January that it had paid the Internal Revenue Service \$12.5 million in a 1993 settlement that established its tax-exempt status. Called a "closure agreement," the multi-million dollar settlement concluded a battle between the two entities which began in 1967. The IRS had maintained that the church should forfeit its tax-exempt status because they said it was a "for-profit business" that benefited church officials. The church responded by filing more than 2,000 lawsuits against the IRS.

Mark Rathbun, the church's director of Religious Technology, confirmed to the Associated Press previously undisclosed information regarding the erstwhile arrangement first reported by *The Wall Street Journal*.

Under the settlement, the church agreed to dismiss its suits and pay the \$12.5 million to satisfy any tax liability previous to 1993. And while additional compensation is possible, the IRS said it would forgo any outstanding audits of the church and its organizations. It also stated that its ruling to grant tax-exempt status to the church

was "based upon voluminous information provided by the church to the IRS regarding its financial and other operations."

Church members will be permitted to deduct from their personal income taxes the fees they incur for "auditing." Auditing is a Scientology procedure which, the church says, frees a person of false brain programming and purges negative thoughts.

The Church of Scientology was founded by science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard in 1954. He died in 1986.

—MKG

BOOKS IN REVIEW

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Readers become acquainted not only with the dominant cultic forces prevalent today, but with a handful of self-appointed prophets sowing their seeds of confusion within the Church. This latter group includes: Harold Camping, Edgar Whisenant and John Hinkle. Abanes' work could have been further enhanced by adding the unscriptural declarations and biblical eisegesis of other well-known visionaries, including Benny Hinn.

The volume's extensive endnotes, as well as its Scripture and Subject Indexes, help to make the book a valuable apologetic resource.

—MKG

PERSONAL FREEDOM OUTREACH — STATEMENT OF BELIEF

- I. THE BIBLE AS THE DIVINELY INSPIRED, INERRANT WORD OF GOD: IT IS IN ITS ENTIRETY THE SOLE AUTHORITY FOR ALL MATTERS OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF AND PRACTICE.
- II. THE ONE TRUE GOD. IN THE ONE TRUE GOD THERE EXIST THREE PERSONS, BEING: THE FATHER, THE SON JESUS CHRIST, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.
- III. JESUS CHRIST: HIS DEITY, HUMANITY, VIRGIN BIRTH, SINLESSNESS, DEATH AND BODILY RESURRECTION; WHO WILL PERSONALLY AND VISIBLY RETURN AGAIN TO EARTH.
- IV. THE PERSONALITY AND DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
- V. THE EXISTENCE AND PERSONALITY OF SATAN, HIS TOTAL OPPOSITION TO GOD, AND HIS POWER OVER THE UNREGENERATE.
- VI. THE COMPLETE AND TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF ALL MEN WHICH MAKES THEM HOPELESSLY LOST WITHOUT THE NEW BIRTH OBTAINABLE THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.
- VII. THE FINAL ESTATE OF MAN: FOR THE SAVED, EVERLASTING LIFE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD AND FOR THE UNSAVED, EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT BECAUSE OF THEIR UNBELIEF.
- VIII. THE GOSPEL BY WHICH WE ARE SAVED BEING SUMMED IN THE DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.
- IX. THE CHURCH BEING THE BODY OF CHRIST, UNITED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, CONSISTING OF THOSE WHO HAVE RECEIVED JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOR. A LOCAL CHURCH IS AN ORGANIZED ASSEMBLY OF BELIEVERS UNITED FOR THE PURPOSE OF CARRYING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST.
- X. THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST BEING TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO ALL MEN, BAPTIZING AND DISCIPLING THOSE WHO HAVE BELIEVED.