

in Himself and that “there are nine of them” — “them” being members of the Godhead.

In years gone by, words had specific meaning and when people approached the Bible it was with the understanding that grammar, cultural and historical setting, and the intent of the author really meant something.

Emil Schürer reminded us in his *History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ* that, “No incident in the gospel story, no word in the preaching of Jesus Christ, is intelligible apart from its setting in Jewish history, and without a clear understanding of that world of thought-distinction of the Jewish people” (Vol. 1, pg. 1). That world of thought is now totally ignored and only my subjective world of thought matters. Existentialism is alluring because it is so compatible with the old self-esteem ideas and humanism (that man and not God is central in the universe). People love to be the center and central actor in their own cosmic drama with God only having a bit part that always enhances them.

R.C. Sproul explains the meaning and ramifications of existentialism. After explaining the grammatical-historical method of finding the meaning of the text by studying the historical setting and properly defining the words used, he informs us that existentialism “says that God speaks through the Bible to each person directly, regardless of what the text actually says and meant when it was written. This completely relativistic approach denies all absolutes and abiding principles” (*Before the Face of God*, pg. 249).

So it is not all so mysterious after all. People are exchanging the truth of God for a human philosophy. Those who were born and grew up in the 1980s do not even know what happened. They have been nurtured on existentialism and self-centeredness, thinking the Bible only means what it means to them. It is a terrible loss as so many twist the Scriptures to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16).

—GRF

NEWS UPDATES

used and the typical patient load was 75-85 people. It was a financial disaster and drain on the school, despite Roberts’ claim that God personally told him to build it.

In spring 1986, Roberts needed \$8 million to keep the medical program solvent. After raising only half that amount by the end of the year, Roberts took to the airwaves and said God had told him unless he raised the remaining \$4.5 million, his death would be imminent.

“Please help extend my life,” Roberts begged in January 1987. A Florida dog track owner donated the money, but those funds kept the City of Faith going only briefly. It closed in 1989 and sat vacant for several years before being sold to a group of commercial real estate investors.

Roberts is said to have written more than 130 books, including *The Miracle of Seed Faith*, which has more than 8 million copies in circulation. The book’s thesis — sow a financial seed out of your own need to experience a miracle harvest — has been used by many Charismatic and Pentecostal evangelists.

Roberts is preceded in death by his wife, Evelyn, who died in May 2005, and a daughter, Rebecca Ann Nash, who died in a small-plane crash in February 1977. He is survived by a son, Richard, and a daughter, Roberta, as well as by several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

—MKG

MOON PASSING TORCH TO CHILDREN

The Rev. Sun Myung Moon, 90, recently announced he will give four of his children responsibility for day-to-day operations of the Unification Church.

Three sons and a daughter will inherit various duties in the worldwide church, whose operations include a New York City hotel and a Washington, D.C., newspaper. All three sons, Hyun Jin Moon, 40, Kook Jin Moon, 39, and Hyung Jin Moon, 30, hold degrees from Harvard University. Hyun Jin Moon will manage the theological and business aspects of the church within the U.S. and South Korea. Moon’s daughter, In Jin Moon, will carry on the church operations in America. Worldwide, day-to-day, church functions are reportedly now being handled by Hyung Jin Moon.

Despite the announcement, the elder Moon says he remains in charge. Moon founded the church in May 1954 in Seoul, South Korea.

Hyung Jin Moon has a goal of increasing church membership. He also expresses a desire to be transparent as to the fund raising activities of the church. In the 1970s and 1980s, Moon’s church found itself a target of persistent and harsh criticism for its proselytizing and fund-raising efforts, which some called “heavenly deception.”

While Moon claims his church is Christian, its primary message is that Jesus Christ failed in His messianic mission and that God sent Moon to finish the job. Moon practices spiritism and other occult activities and claims that he has direct and repeated communication with the “spirit world.”

In spite of unbiblical beliefs and practices, Moon is regularly honored by religious and political leaders. On several occasions, the late Jerry Falwell spoke at events sponsored by Moon. In March 2004, Moon was crowned

“King of America.” The ceremony took place in the Senate Dirksen Office Building with a dozen members of Congress taking part in the event. Other political leaders, including former President George H.W. Bush and former Secretary of State Alexander Haig, have given speeches at Moon-sponsored events.

—MKG

CAMPING TRIES AGAIN

The doomsday prophets pointing to the end of the world on Dec. 21, 2012, have nothing on Harold Camping. The founder of Family Radio Network is claiming that Jesus Christ is set to return, and God’s Judgment Day to begin, on May 21, 2011.

Camping has long been a fountainhead of false prophecies and unorthodox teaching. In 1992, he published a 550-page book in which he wrote, “When September 6, 1994, arrives, no one else can become saved. The end has come” (1994?, pg. 533). More recently, Camping announced that “the church was dead,” and that his Family Radio ministry was the agent to send the true Gospel into the world. His followers have withdrawn themselves from the leadership and authority of local churches and meet in homes to listen to his messages.

Camping’s programs are broadcast on 55 radio stations in America, as well as being heard on shortwave overseas. His messages are translated into 48 languages.

—MKG

BOOKS IN REVIEW

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program in which a journalist was interviewing a scientist about the coming ‘end of the world’ in 2012. ... It immediately became clear to me that I needed to understand what all the hoopla is about — why December 21, 2012 has been targeted as earth’s expiration date, and what people are expecting to happen. This book is the fruit of that search” (pg. 9).

Later, he says, “As the title suggests, my focus is to examine the 2012 phenomenon from a biblical perspective, primarily from the vantage point of end-time Bible prophecy. ... While many other 2012 books mention the Bible or Bible codes, they don’t look at 2012 through the lens of Scripture; rather, they look at Scripture through the lens of 2012” (pg. 24).

This book admirably succeeds in Hitchcock’s intentions. Despite his academic background, it is both interesting and easy to read and understand, as well as being fairly brief and inexpensive. In the first part of the book, the author clearly explains the significance of 2012 in the minds of those who believe it portends earth’s doomsday. In the second part of the book, he unfolds biblical prophecy regarding the end-times from a pretribulational perspective. Consistent with his Christian calling, Hitchcock’s volume reflects a reassuring pastoral tone and perspective. If you or someone you know wants a clear, sane Christian book regarding a supposed 2012 apocalypse, this is definitely the one.

—JGS

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.