



## Books in Review

### THE COMING EVANGELICAL CRISIS

John H. Armstrong, Editor  
Moody Press, 268 pages, \$17.99

The irony of this book, which is filled with insights into the current problems in the evangelical Church, is that Moody Press, which has published a number of questionable books of late, is part of the problem.

The 14 contributors (including R.C. Sproul, John MacArthur, Michael Horton and Dave Powlison) skillfully and with documentation diagnose the state of the Church today. With Scripture and Church history they make their case showing the serious drift from doctrine and theology.

Not everyone who reads the book will agree with the strongly stated Calvinistic statements of some of the contributors. However, that should not deter one from getting great insights from the bulk of the book. Most readers will applaud the strong appeals to return to orthodox Christian theology and the sufficiency of Scripture.

In the second section of the book, R. Fowler White addresses the crisis of Divine Revelation and examines the subject, "Does God Speak Today Apart From the Bible?" It is a masterful critique of the fanciful ideas of Jack Deere, formerly with the Vineyard movement.

John Armstrong looks at the current trend of exorcisms, renunciation prayers and ancestral bondage (repeatedly promoted in Moody books). He denounces this type of sensationalistic practice. He titles his very helpful and practical chapter, "How Shall We Wage Our Warfare?"

Robert Strimple does an excellent job in showing us that Clark Pinnock's Process Theology and defective view of God is simply a revival of the ancient heresy of Socinianism.

Evangelicalism is in dire straits and is capitulating to culture and mass-marketing techniques and is rapidly drifting from the sufficiency of Scripture. Thank God that these men have addressed the current decline in a clear fashion.

—GRF

### FROM FORGIVEN TO FORGIVING

by Jay Adams  
Calvary Press, 175 pages, \$9.95

In apologetics, more important than knowing what's aberrant and heretical, is knowing what's scriptural and orthodox. From Rebecca Brown to a host of modern day psychologists, a "forgive and forget" attitude and granting forgiveness even when it hasn't been sought is promoted as the biblical norm. Not so, says nouthetic counselor, Dr. Jay Adams.

*From Forgiven to Forgiving* will provide the Christian with solid biblical answers and actions on the topic of forgiveness. Adams, with great biblical insight and wisdom, dispels today's all-too-common misuses and misconceptions about forgiveness.

As you learn to relate and communicate principles of forgiveness in your relationships, you will experience a new freedom in Christ. This outstanding book is a worthwhile topic for group learning.

This volume is a must read for every Christian. After being out-of-print for a few years, and difficult to obtain, the publication has been reissued by Calvary Press. While it has been re-typeset and includes a new cover, the contents are just as much needed today as when it was originally produced.

—AMG

### POWER ENCOUNTERS

#### Reclaiming Spiritual Warfare

by David Powlison  
Baker Book House, 160 pages, \$9.99

Believers in Christ agree that we belong to an "army" and who the enemy is. Where we often part ways is over *how* to fight Satan and his demons.

Amid fascination with the demonic spreading beyond fringe groups and the proliferation of "deliverance" ministries that capitalize on it, this book comes across as a welcome breath of fresh air.

Powlison's work is kind, considerate, careful and decidedly biblical. He names names and cuts through the sensationalism of deliverance teachings. Anyone seeking to escape the deliverance movement's drift toward mediumship and mysticism will find solid biblical ground on which to stand in this book. He is a

(continues on page 19)

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for the dead.

Absent from the list is the principle that the first-century believers “continually devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching” (Acts 2:42). Adam Clarke, in his *Commentary on the Bible*, writes the Church’s response to the apostles’ doctrine: “They received it, retained it, and acted on its principles” (pg. 962).

Early believers subscribed to the apostles’ authority on the teaching of Scripture and accepted it as the very Word of God. In Christ’s true Church there is nothing optional about believing the apostles’ doctrine. We do not find any record of early Christians dismissing the apostles’ clear teaching with “That’s just Peter’s opinion!” or “That’s just Paul’s opinion!” Those who opposed it, such as Hymenaeus and Philetus (2 Timothy 2:18), were branded heretics.

Equally troublesome for Mormons is the extent to which one can apply the rationalization of “that’s just his opinion.” Does it apply to Joseph Smith Jr.’s claim that God and Jesus Christ told him that all the churches were wrong and an abomination? Can we apply it to Smith’s teaching that God himself was once as we are now and is an exalted man? Or can we apply it to Spencer W. Kimball’s 1978 proclamation that allowed black people to join the Mormon priesthood?

Utah Mission’s Robert McKay highlighted this error in Mormon logic recently:

“Do you see where this leads? If statements that a Mormon doesn’t want to accept can be brushed off as private opinions without authority, so can other statements. If declarations that make the church look bad are mere opinions, so are statements that make the church look good. If a General Authority said something that the Mormon doesn’t believe and it was just that man’s opinion, then the things that the Mormon does believe are also just someone’s opinion” (*The Evangel*, January/February 1996, pg. 8).

Christians need to be aware that in Christ’s Church, adherence to the apostle’s doctrine has never been an option. Their divinely inspired teachings were far more than “just someone’s opinion.”

—MKG

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## News Updates

(continues from page 3)

riality” and that He now possesses a “nonfleshly” body in heaven. Harris further asserted that the “believer’s resurrection body will come from heaven, not the grave.” (See further, *The Quarterly Journal*,

Vol. 11, No. 2, pp. 5-8 and Vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 2, 14-15.)

At the forefront of bringing resolution to the disagreement was Duane Magnani of Witness, Inc. Magnani, a former Jehovah’s Witness, had charged that Harris’ statements paralleled the heretical beliefs of the Watchtower Society. “If there was not a physical resurrection, there wasn’t a resurrection. The only kind of resurrection in the Bible is physical,” Magnani said.

In its statement of reaffirmation, the Evangelical Free Church said, “[its] leadership reaffirms unitedly and unequivocally the belief that the same body in which Jesus was crucified and was raised again, an immortal body, but nevertheless a physical body with flesh and bones; and that the dead bodies of believers will be raised immortal from the grave when Christ returns.”

A resolution letter dated Jan. 29, 1996, and jointly signed by Magnani, Dr. Paul A. Cedar, president of the EFCA, and renown Christian apologist Dr. Norman L. Geisler stated that the “disagreement has passed” and announced that “through much prayer and good discussion, we have seen that God is faithful to bring us together in brotherly reconciliation.”

—MKG

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## Book Reviews

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careful exegete who brings to his work years of experience as a biblical counselor. His logic is flawless and meticulous. His research is practical and valuable in helping readers understand how to wage war against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

His conclusion expresses his deep desire to help us reclaim true spiritual warfare:

“Reclaiming spiritual warfare means learning afresh how God pursues His glory in our lives. It means gaining an understanding of progressive sanctification in a Christian culture habituated to look for quick fixes. It means learning to see heroic dramas played out in tiny corners of life. It means becoming human, renewed in the image of Jesus Christ — the pioneer and perfecter of faith. It means learning how to become Christians.”

So-called “power encounters” may seem to have excitement and drama. But they are really a detour from Christ’s walk. This book could bring biblical sanity back to believers and help heal divisions caused by erroneous teachings.

—GRF