

The Prophet's Column

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"In whom the god of this world hath **BLINDED THE MINDS** of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (II Corinthians 4:4). "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a **SOUND MIND**." (II Timothy 1:7). The god of this world, Satan, has blinded the mind of every lost person and you are blinded and deceived by Satan beyond any words of description to any human language. Have you ever seen that truth? You will before you are saved, if you ever are to be saved. In your mind, which is your thoughts and imaginations, you cannot discern between good and evil. Why? Because you are a child of the Devil; "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." (John 8:44). Now that was a dogmatic statement of my Lord to a bunch of self-

righteous religionists one day back there when He was walking and teaching on this earth in His fleshly body. Every lost person is a child of the Devil. The Devil has you blinded in your mind and will not let you see that truth. Your mind being blinded by the Devil means that your mind is unsound. Only those in Christ have a sound mind. Do you have a sound mind? One of the evidences of an unsound mind is that you will always call evil good and good evil (Isaiah 5:20). The blinded mind, being a child of the Devil, cannot distinguish good from evil, even though you may be a preacher in the pulpit or a teacher teaching. When you bring a message you cannot warn men of their doom because you are blinded in your mind by Satan which means you do not know the danger men are in out of Christ Now you hold that! Every lost soul, no matter the position they hold, is blind and

unsound in their mind! That's why we have the mess we have in the world today, worldwide. Satan is of an unsound and blinded mind and all his children are the same. In your unsound and blinded mind you are going away from God, and you are declaring that you will not have the Man, Christ Jesus, to rule over you. You go about your daily activities living for me, myself and mine. And you dare anyone to get in your way. Such an one will remain there in that blinded state and wake up in Hell unless the Lord has mercy on you, and shines the light of the glorious gospel of Christ into your darkened and blinded and unsound mind. The only thing God has to do for you to go to Hell is just to leave you alone. If He leaves you alone, you will bust Hell wide open! You can rebel all you want to, but I'm setting forth your awful, lost, and ruined condition, according to God's eternal Word!

Congregation defies police: keeps controversial pastor

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ODESSA, Texas - The people have spoken - the preacher stays.

The congregation at St. James Missionary Baptist Church has voted to retain the Rev. R.T. McNeil as its pastor.

The vote, conducted as ordered by a Texas Court of Appeals judge, ended three months of bickering, scuffling and court action at the southern Odessa church.

A little more than half of 432-member church participated, with McNeil's supporters winning 152-86.

"They've won it and we'll go along with the decision made by the majority," said St. James deacon and founding member Ben Huckaby, a McNeil opponent. "We have no

problem with that because it was done fairly. We're satisfied that the majority of people want to retain (McNeil) as pastor."

Church members, including Huckaby, have declined to explain the rift. McNeil did not immediately return a message left Monday by The Associated Press.

The turmoil began in September when parishioners voted to fire McNeil, alleging that he was unable to perform as spiritual adviser or church leader.

A temporary restraining order barred McNeil from preaching, though his opponents filed motions last month claiming that McNeil had ministered in contempt of court.

As things came to a head,

both sides tapped an arbitrator to resolve their differences.

"We worked our rear ends off to get most of the matters resolved, and the election will hopefully take care of any of the other problems that exist," said arbitrator Denn Whalen, an Odessa attorney. "There were four to five issues I had to resolve that the parties couldn't agree on, but there were a half dozen others they agreed upon among themselves."

Both sides had already agreed to Saturday's vote, conducted at a nearby elementary school. Cries of "Praise the Lord!" and "Thank you, Jesus!" rang out among a small group gathered outside the polling place upon announcement of the results.

White, Green wave of the future

By David Briggs
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The names that have defined evangelicalism for a generation - Billy Graham, Pat Robertson, Oral Roberts, Bill Bright and Charles Colson - are entering the twilight of their careers.

What they do not leave behind is a similar coterie of middle-aged leaders to take their place at the forefront of the religious movement.

Fortunately, however, emerging is a new generation of evangelical leaders, age 40 and under, with the same urgency felt by the post-World War II group, according to the flagship evangelical magazine, Christianity Today.

In its latest issue, the magazine profiles 50 up-and-coming evangelical leaders selected through a survey of nearly 1,000 Christian leaders.

The evangelicals to watch include Lisa C. Barnes, who founded the Bethesda, Md.-based Neighbors Who Care, an organization that aids crime victims.

Also making the diverse list are singers such as Rebecca St. James and the Christian rap group D.C. Talk; and prominent athletes such as A.C. Green of basketball's Phoenix Suns, and Reggie White, the Green Bay Packers defensive star who became a national spokesman calling for the church and nation to confront racism as church

burnings in the South revived old fears.

On a more grass-roots level, the evangelical up-and-comers also include the Harambee Group; and the husband-and-wife teams of Kafi and Rudy Carrasco, and Karryn Farrar-Perkins and Derek Perkins, who are involved in urban ministry in Pasadena, Calif.

They are varied religiously and racially diverse.

In general, the group is hard to characterize, but some church observers say that together they represent a new generation of creative evangelical leaders following in the footsteps of Graham, Robertson and the others.

After World War II, there was a tremendous entrepreneurial period in evangelical ministry, with Graham at the center but a number of other prominent individuals such as Roberts and Robertson also building great institutions, said David Neff, executive editor of Christianity Today.

The next generation of people in their 40s and 50s became managerial leaders of many of those institutions, largely through necessity.

However, Neff said, the cycle is now returning to the creative ministry spirit of the older generation.

With the exception of individuals such as Reed, however, the new leaders are more likely to concentrate on grass-roots efforts. Like their Baby

Buster brethren, they are suspicious of large institutions.

"Most of these folks are going to try to make changes in local communities," Neff said.

They are people like Michael Teague of the Union Rescue Mission in Los Angeles and Alvin C. Bibbs Sr., urban ministries director of Willow Creek Community Church in suburban Chicago.

To the Rev. Leighton Ford, Graham's brother-in-law and the head of a ministry organization devoted to working with young leaders, the future looks good.

The 65-year-old head of Leighton Ford Ministries said these new leaders take the Bible seriously and are deeply interested in spiritual growth and in developing their own characters.

In many ways, they face a tougher task than did his generation because the hopefulness of the post-World War II generation has been replaced by attitudes of greater confusion and despair in a world where there are cultural wars and religious conflicts within and among nations, according to Ford.

But the spiritual energy and devotion of this new group of evangelical leaders is promising for the future of evangelicalism, he said.

"It fills me with great hope," Ford said, "because they're living in a world with not a lot of hope."

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