

Conservative Protestants are buzzing more about Mary

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Evangelicals: Toward an Understanding of the Mother of Our Lord" (InterVarsity) by Tim Perry of Canada's Providence College.

McKnight wants Protestants to overcome past neglect by holding an annual "Honor Mary Day." Perry lays ground for a full-fledged "evangelical Mariology," borrowing that category from Catholic theology.

Christmas as such is no issue (except for liberals who deny the biblical report that Mary was a virgin when she miraculously conceived and gave birth). On other topics, McKnight says, "the Mary of the Bible has been hijacked by theological controversies." A rundown:

Protestants, who believe the Bible is Christianity's supreme authority, think

some Mary traditions go beyond what Scripture says or violate its teachings. The harshest polemics say popular devotion to Mary overthrows Jesus and constitutes heresy, blasphemy or idolatry.

One very troublesome tenet, the Immaculate Conception, means that God forever freed Mary from original sin. In 1854, the papacy made this a mandatory "doctrine revealed by God." The Catholic catechism affirms that "Mary remained free of every personal sin her whole life long."

Belief in Mary's unique sanctity underlies the papacy's required dogma of the Assumption (1950), meaning Mary was taken bodily into heaven upon death.

Protestants say Catholicism contradicts the Bible's teaching that "all have sinned"

(Romans 3:23), Mary included, and that Jesus is the lone exception, "tempted as we are, yet without sinning" (Hebrews 4:15).

Perry says Mary was at least misguided because she joined doubters who tried to physically restrain Jesus and thought "he is beside himself," that is, crazy (Mark 3:21-35). Yet Mary eventually accepted Jesus' vocation and became one of Christianity's 120 founders (Acts 1:12-15).

Speculations about the beginning and end of Mary's life are unnecessary when the Bible is "utterly silent," Perry thinks. He esteems Mary not as the model of perfection above human limitations but of persistence in faith.

Is it proper to pray to Mary and other saints in heaven? Perry sees some biblical basis, since in this life believers ask

each other for prayers. He proposes that both this practice and its rejection be recognized as "authentic forms of Christian witness."

From early times, Christians taught Mary's perpetual virginity, meaning she and Joseph never had marital relations. Protestants disagree because Matthew 1:25 says Joseph "knew her not

until" Jesus' birth and passages including Mark 6:3 mention Jesus' "brothers" and "sisters."

Catholics think these weren't siblings but cousins. Perry rules that out but says they could have been stepchildren from a prior marriage of Joseph, as the Orthodox believe. However, he thinks this belief caused "regret-

table" denigration of sexuality. Fortunately for interchurch relations, Catholicism has never officially proclaimed Mary's popular titles of mediator and co-redeemer with Christ. Perry says that however such terms are used, Jesus' uniqueness as the only savior must never be compromised.

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J.M. Little, Teacher

Now my friends, seeing these great truths of the Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent and eternal Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who made all the worlds, the eternal space, He is God of very God. Seeing that all this is true of the Lord Jesus Christ, Kenneth, only the most blinded, deceived and biggest fool in all the universe would think that the Eternal Son of God would stand before a totally depraved sinner, for that sinner to accept Him or reject Him!!!!!! Then, when a Bible teacher, deacon or preacher stands before his people and tells them that they can "accept Jesus and be saved", if you had just one ounce of spiritual sense, you'd know that man does not know the Eternal Son of God. My Heavenly Father is not so foolish as to present His Son to any sinner and give that sinner the opportunity to accept or reject Him!!!!!! On the contrary, the sinner stands before the eternal Son of God to be saved or damned! Then you'll have to agree with old A.W. Pink, who said: "The 'god' of the average pulpit no more resembles the God of the Bible than a dim flickering taper resembles a mid-day July sun!" Brother Pink was right. The "god" of your church members is not the God of the Bible. The God of the Bible does not have to save any man! And you learn that under Holy Spirit Conviction. (Jn. 16:7-11) Now, do you know the God of the Bible? Do you? I'll tell you something else in passing: the bornagain believer is not ashamed of the Lord Jesus Christ. But your church members are ashamed of the Lord Jesus Christ. Well, you say you are not ashamed of Him, but you refuse to talk about Him! It is either God is a liar, or you are a liar. It is going to be an awful day when your church folks wake up in hell. When a man of the world dies, it is just one more face in hell. When a church member dies, it is just a leap in the dark. Every sinner, and that means you church members, lies behind a refuge of lies! You have a false security. You go about your life daily, hoping you are saved, hoping you will be alright when death comes. That was my life before God saved me. I praise the Lord that in Christ I don't live by doubts and fears. Why should you live by doubts and fears when there is the Omnipotent Christ waiting to be gracious to you? God never saves a sinner until He gets all the glory. Don't you want to know this Omnipotent Christ I'm writing about? Do you? You'll come to want Him more than the blood in your body before He saves you. EVERY SINNER THAT EVER GETS SAVED COMES TO WANT CHRIST ABOVE EVERYTHING UNDER THE SUN! If you did not come to the place where you wanted Christ above everything under the sun, you are not saved! Now you can put that down! Are you seeing just a little that the flimsy, cheap skate, empty religious profession that our church folks have is not Salvation? God pity your poor, blinded souls.

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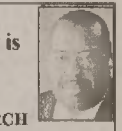
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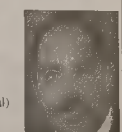
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