



Superficial Salvation, PART 1

by Jeremy Cagle

In his commentary on Romans, Donald Grey Barnhouse writes this about Romans 12:9,

The Greek theater had neither background nor scenery nor costumes; the actors carried masks, made with such expressions that the audience could easily see whether the character was tragic, comic or melodramatic. The actor walked about the stage, mask in hand, and occasionally held it before his face . . . The Lord Jesus Christ came in love and died for us. We who have been redeemed by His love are possessed by His love. Surely we should put no mask on it. Surely we should take it out among men and show it as it is - without hypocrisy . . .¹

The Greek word for hypocrisy, used in Romans 12:9, is *hupokritos*. It comes from two Greek words: *hupo* which means “under” and *kritos* which means “mask.” Literally, *hupokritos* meant “under a mask.” A hypocrite, then, was someone who was under a mask. He was an actor. He was a person who pretended. And Paul says in Romans that Christians are not to love that way. They are to be sincere in their affections.

they are also hypocritical in their love towards God. In any church in America, there are scores of members who have deceived themselves and everyone around them into thinking that they are disciples of Jesus when they are not. Some of you reading this may have family members, friends, neighbors, and co-workers who are doing this. Some of you may be doing this yourselves. You are living under a mask.

Yet, I would say, that of all the problems that plague the church in the 21st Century, hypocrisy would have to be at the top of the list. Not only are professing Christians hypocritical in their love towards each other, but

So what I wanted to do is to give you some ways to check and see if this applies to you. Are you a hypocrite? Are you an actor? Do you talk one way and live another? We all despise hypocrisy but none of us are completely free from it,

so how can you tell if you are being hypocritical about your Christian life? How can you tell if you are not the real thing? I want to help you look into that.

And I want to do this for two reasons.

First, Christians can deceive themselves about their own spiritual condition. Consider the following passages from the Bible:

Jeremiah 17:9, “The heart is more *deceitful* than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?”

Galatians 6:7, “Do not be *deceived*. God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.”

James 1:26, “If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but *deceives* his own heart, this man’s religion is worthless.”

First John 1:8, “If we say that we have no sin, we are *deceiving* ourselves and the truth is not in us.”

The Bible is crystal clear about the fact that we can mislead ourselves about our standing before God.

Second, Christians are commanded to

examine themselves about their own salvation. Consider the following verses:

First Corinthians 11:28-29, “But a man *must examine himself*, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly.”

Second Corinthians 13:5, “Test yourselves *to see if you are in the faith*; examine yourselves!”

Second Peter 1:10, “Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent *to make certain* about His calling and choosing you.”

While you might have been taught that questioning your salvation is wrong, the Bible says just the opposite. It commands us to question our salvation. It commands us to examine ourselves to make sure that we are in the faith.

So, we are commanded to examine ourselves and we are warned that we can deceive ourselves. For many of us, that’s some pretty shocking stuff. But let me shock you a little bit more. Here are ten categories² of false conversions.³ Or, to put it another way, here are ten ways that you can tell if your salvation

is superficial.

I. MAVERICK CHRISTIAN

Many young Christians that I know have indicated to me that they consider the church to be a thing of the past. It worked for their grandparents’ generation and it worked for their parents’ generation, but it is does not work for them. Or, at best, the church is not something that one needs to *commit* to. As the argument goes, you can be a Christian and go to one church, two churches, or ten churches. Or you can be a Christian and not go to any church at all. One author summed it up this way with his own personal testimony:

... though I had stopped playing the dating game with girls, I was perfectly happy to keep playing it with the church. I liked attending on weekends, and I enjoyed the social benefits of church, but I didn’t want the responsibility that came with real commitment . . . I wasn’t interested in settling down. So though I gave the appearance of commitment, I mostly just flirted with different churches and kept my options open.⁴

That is a Maverick Christian. A Maverick Christian is someone who

likes *Christianity*, but not the *Church*. He likes *Christ*, but not *Christians*. He wants a *Savior*, but he doesn’t want *submission*. He likes people but he does not like people who tell him what to do.

A Maverick Christian is a Christian by *individuality*. His understanding of the Christian faith is based almost entirely on his independence. He will frequent coffee shops, college campuses, internet chat rooms, and Christian bookstores, but he will stay away from churches. He does not want accountability. He does not mind social interaction, but he does mind social commitment. He doesn’t want someone to get to know him *that well*.

What’s wrong with this? Why is there a problem with that way of thinking?

First Corinthians 12:12-14, 27 says,

For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many . . .

Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.

The church is Jesus' Body. Jesus Himself is at the right hand of the Father in Heaven,⁵ but His "Body" . . . His physical representative on earth . . . is the church. If you are not a part of the church, you are not a part of Jesus. You are not a member of His body. Jesus will not return to rapture a coffee shop or an internet chatroom or a college campus, He will return to rapture His church.⁶

Ephesians 5:25-27 says,

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

Jesus will sanctify the church and cleanse the church and present the church to Himself in all her glory after making her holy and blameless. If you are not a part of the church, you will miss out on all of that.

No one is a Christian because of their individuality. The mentality that says that I just need Jesus and I do not need anyone else is not found in the Bible. According to First Corinthians 12, the church is Jesus' Body and, according to Ephesians 5, Jesus gave Himself up for the church and He will be wed to the church forever. If you want no part of the church, then you want no part of Jesus. There is no flying solo in the kingdom of God. Christianity is a community religion and there are no Maverick Christians.

II. C.I.A. CHRISTIAN

Where the Maverick Christian is a Christian by *individuality*, the C.I.A. Christian is a Christian by *secrecy*. He believes that the best way for a believer to evangelize and interact with a lost world is undercover. To hide his faith until just the right time. Covert Evangelism, we could call it.

I had a friend in Los Angeles who told me that, "I don't like to tell anyone at work that I'm a Christian because I want to win them over first. I keep my faith hidden until I get to know them." Francis of Assisi said something very similar when he said, "Preach the Gospel at all times and when

necessary use words."⁷ That could be a C.I.A. Christian manifesto. Live as a Christian and keep your faith concealed until someone else brings it up.

I don't mean to open up a can of worms here but this kind of thinking is very common in the Contemporary Christian Music industry. Many "Christian" songs are written in such a way that you cannot tell that the band is Christian.⁸ Songs are sung with pronouns like "you" or "he" and, by the way the song is written, you cannot tell who the antecedent is.⁹ You cannot tell if the "you" or "he" refers to a boyfriend or a girlfriend or if it refers to God or Jesus.¹⁰

Many Christian radio stations promote concepts like "Safe for the Whole Family,"¹¹ but if you listen to an hour's worth of programming, you never hear the name "Jesus" and you never hear the words "repentance" or "self-denial." On some stations, you rarely hear the word "God" or "church" or "salvation." And, if you ask the station managers, "Why do you leave all of that out?" "What are you trying to accomplish by doing that?" They will tell you that they are trying "To reach people."

That is the mentality of a C.I.A. Christian. Don't boldly proclaim the Gospel but sneak it in through the back door. Don't openly preach Christ. Don't even mention His name. Keep your Christianity hidden until just the right time.

And some people who fit into this category don't just evangelize this way, they live this way. From their conversations and their lifestyles and their interests, there is nothing Christian about them. You wouldn't know that they are professing believers unless you asked them and, even then, they might not admit it without some hesitation.

What does the Bible say about all of this? What would the Scriptures say to a C.I.A. Christian?

Mark 8:34-38 says,

And [Jesus] summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what

does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

In this passage, Jesus gives His disciples the conditions for following Him; and one of those conditions is to not be ashamed of Him. Jesus says that if someone is ashamed of Him, then “the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels” (v. 38).

If you are ashamed of Jesus before men, Jesus will be ashamed of you before His Father. If you deny that you know Jesus *now*, Jesus will deny that He knows you *in Heaven*. If you are ashamed of owning Jesus in this life, then on Judgment Day, Jesus will return the favor.

There is no such thing as a C.I.A. Christian. The mentality that says that someone can be a Christian by secrecy is sinful. Jesus says that it will make Him “ashamed” of you if you treat Him that way.

And, for those who say that this should be done to evangelize the lost, please consider Paul’s words in Romans 10:17. Here the Apostle writes, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” You will bring no one to Jesus Christ in a saving way without using words because “faith comes from hearing.” From hearing what? From hearing words. Francis of Assisi may have been right about some things, but he was wrong about this one. You are not preaching the Gospel if you are not using words. No one can be a Christian by secrecy.

III. NONCONFORMIST CHRISTIAN

Historically, a nonconformist referred to a church or an individual who refused to associate with the Church of England. Any non-Anglican Church, such as the Presbyterians or the Congregationalists or the Baptists or the Quakers were known as English Dissenters or “nonconformists.”¹² Today the term could be used to refer to any church or individual Christian who does not “conform” to traditional doctrine or to a traditional style of worship. Churches like this are very common in larger cities. They are often found in strip malls and in vacant

buildings and in people’s homes.

A Nonconformist Christian is not so much concerned with what he is as with what he is not. His greatest goal is to be different from what has gone before him. He is a Christian by *originality*. You could also say that he is a Christian by *creativity* or by *ingenuity*. He thinks he is saved because he is not like something else.

My wife and I used to live in Atlanta, GA, where there were several churches that fit this description. Here is how one of them described itself:

We are a
non-religious, rock music
wear your jeans, bring in your coffee
all out worship to God
kind of place where
you can be yourself and know
that you are loved.”¹³

The same church had a Frequently Asked Questions page on their website that said this:

Q: What can I expect on Sundays?
A: Loving not judging . . . loud not quiet
. . . talking not preaching . . . Jesus not
religion

Q: What do I wear?

A: We’re laid back. Wear whatever you want.

Q: What do I do as a visitor?

A: You won’t have to wear a name badge or raise your hand or stand up. Check us out as long as you want, no pressure.

Q: What kind of worship do you offer?

A: God-focused . . . loud . . . rockin’ . . . enthusiastic . . . all-out for Him.

Q: Will I be comfortable?

A: Nobody is perfect . . . certainly not us. So wherever you’re at, you’ll fit right in. Expect to leave knowing God is awesome, and He totally loves you.”¹⁴

Notice how many negative statements are found on this page. “Loving *not* judging . . . loud *not* quiet . . . talking *not* preaching . . . Jesus *not* religion.” “You *won’t* have to wear a name badge.” “*Nobody* is perfect . . . certainly *not* us.”

That is how a Nonconformist Christians defines himself: by what he is not. Someone in this category reasons this way, “Jesus was a free spirit. I’m a free spirit. Therefore, I must be a Christian.” “I’m a Christian by my originality.” “I’m a Christian because, in the Christian religion, I am free to

be myself.”

Why is this superficial? What is wrong with claiming to be a Christian because you are creative or free-spirited?

Romans 15:4 says, “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”

Jude 3 says, “Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.”

Christianity is not interested in the new but in the old. As one pastor put it, “The greatest theologians of our time have had the greatest respect for the theologians in the past.”¹⁵ We are, according to Jude, to contend for the faith “which was once for all handed down.” Why? Romans 15:4 says because “Everything written in the past was written to teach us.”

Christianity is not a free-for-all. There are no original teachings coming to us today.¹⁶ We are not concerned

with originality; we are concerned with conformity to the Scriptures. A Nonconformist Christian is a contradiction in terms. We are to conform to the Bible because it was given to us to tell us how to live.¹⁷ If someone is not willing to do that, then they are either living in sin or they are not saved. There is no such thing as a Nonconformist Christian.

IV. EMOTIONAL CHRISTIAN

There is nothing wrong with being passionate about Christianity. In fact, you cannot be a Christian and not be passionate about Christianity.¹⁸ It would be unthinkable to say that you could love Jesus more than your family¹⁹ and your life²⁰ and your possessions²¹ and not be passionate about Him. But, with that in mind, there is something seriously wrong when you build your entire faith on your emotions.

Many professing Christians today, however, are prone to doing this and it shows itself in several ways. Some do it through music. They feel uplifted and encouraged through the songs they sing in worship and they feel as if they have found some type of spiritual fuel through them. It arouses their emotions and it is a pick-me-up that helps them make it from week-to-week.

For other professing Christians, they focus on their emotions by spending large amounts of time meditating and directing all their thoughts inward. They do this until they get an impression or an inner sensation.²² Most of those who do this believe that the Holy Spirit is speaking to them through that sensation . . . through that feeling.²³

Others gravitate towards a particular speaker who has had an impact on their emotions. A popular Christian speaker came to Central Illinois several months ago and a friend of mine told me that everyone who heard her said, “She was powerful.” What did they mean by that? They meant that she moved them emotionally.

But one compelling example of an Emotional Christian is found in the Christian psychology movement.²⁴ Here is what one well-known Christian psychologist said about the role of feelings and self-esteem in the life of a believer.

If I could write a prescription for the women of the world, it would provide each one of them with a healthy dose of self-esteem and personal worth (taken

three times a day until the symptoms disappear). I have no doubt that this is their greatest need.²⁵

In the same book, the author goes on to write,

The matter of personal worth is not only the concern of those who lack it. In a real sense, the health of an entire society depends on the case with which the individual members gain personal acceptance. Thus, whenever the keys to self-esteem are largely out of reach for a large percentage of the people, as in twentieth-century America, then widespread “mental illness,” neuroticism, hatred, alcoholism, drug abuse, violence, and social disorder will certainly occur.²⁶

The cure for hurting women and for a hurting society is self-esteem. Not self-denial . . . self-esteem. The emphasis is on a *feeling* of self-worth. The *emotions* are emphasized over anything else.

With all of that said, an Emotional Christian is a Christian by *sentimentality*. To be sentimental is to be “colored by emotion.”²⁷ Sentimentality is when someone’s thoughts, actions, and behaviors are influenced by their emotions. An Emotional Christian is a professing Christian who has his

thoughts, judgments, and behaviors influenced - if not controlled by - his feelings.

What do the Scriptures teach about someone in this condition? What does the Bible say about the role of the emotions in the Christian life?

In Matthew 15, Jesus had just confronted the Pharisees about their hypocrisy (vv. 1-9). And starting in verse 10, He begins to confront them further by showing how they are unclean. Verses 13-20 say this,

But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted. Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit."

Peter said to Him, "Explain the parable to us."

Jesus said, "Are you still lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that everything that goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and is eliminated? But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders,

adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man."

Where does uncleanness come from? Where do evil thoughts and murder and adultery and fornication and theft and lies and slander come from? Bad self-esteem? No. Lack of personal worth? No. Loss of personal acceptance? No. Jesus said that they come from the heart. They come from inside of us. Verse 19 says, "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders."

Once the heart is regenerated through the work of the Holy Spirit it becomes alive to the things of God²⁸ but it is still prone to sin.²⁹ The heart and the emotions were never intended to be a place of authority in the life of a Christian because they are still sinful. The Holy Spirit lives within us³⁰ but we still live in a body that is desperately trying to disobey its Maker.³¹

Because of this, our lives as Christians are not to be built around our hearts. Our hearts are deceitful.³² Evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses,

and slanderings come from our hearts. To make your heart / emotions *the* authority in your life is to submit to the source of all of your evil thoughts. Because of that, we are commanded to deny ourselves instead of cater to ourselves.³³ We are commanded to submit to the Word of God and not to our feelings.

It needs to be said that if your salvation consists of nothing more than warm fuzzies and good feelings, you cannot be saved. You can be emotional and still be a Christian. You can be a sentimental person and still be a saint. But if your entire Christianity is based upon that sentimentality, then you do not know what it truly means to be a child of God.

CONCLUSION

George Barna has conducted numerous surveys regarding issues that are important to Americans. One of his most common subjects to survey is religion or, specifically, America's interest in religion. In his book, *The Second Coming of the Church*, Barna makes this interesting observation:

To increasing millions of Americans, God - if we even believe in a supernatural deity

- exists for the pleasure of mankind. He resides in the heavenly realm solely for our utility and benefit. Although we are too clever to voice it, we live by the notion that true power is accessed not by looking upward but by turning inward . . .

Most Americans have at least an intellectual assent when it comes to God, Jesus Christ, and angels. They believe that the Bible is a good book filled with important stories and lessons. And they believe that religion is very important in their lives. But this same group of people, including many professing Christians, also believe that people are inherently good; that our primary purpose is to enjoy life as much as possible.³⁴

That is a scary thought. Millions of Americans believe that God exists for their own personal pleasure. Most of the citizens of this country, according to George Barna, believe that the Bible is a book filled with important stories and lessons while at the same time believing that people are basically good. That is amazingly inconsistent.

But it should not surprise us. Jesus Himself said that many who profess to follow Him will be rejected by Him. In Matthew 7:21-23, He says,

Not everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?” And then I will declare to them, “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.

There will be professing Christians who are sent to Hell on Judgment Day. They called Jesus “Lord, Lord” in this life but in the next life Jesus will say to them, “I never knew you.” Why? Because they were superficial. Because they hid under a mask. Because their Christianity was based on their *individuality* or their *secrecy* or their *originality* or their *sentimentality* but it was not based on Jesus Christ. They did not believe on Him³⁵ or turn from their life of sin.³⁶ They thought they could be saved simply by calling themselves “Christians.”

But that is not how it works. Your life must back up your words or God will not receive you into His kingdom. As James 1:17 says, “Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead.” Faith without works is dead. And a dead faith on

earth will lead to an unending death in eternity.

Please let this be a challenge to you. If your salvation is superficial, be warned. While men may fall for your performance, God will not. He knows what is going on in your heart and when you stand before Him, you will have no mask to stand behind. There will be no act good enough to fool Him. Make yourself right with Him now before it is too late.³⁷

End Notes

- 1 Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure, Volume 4 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964) 61.
- 2 Specifically, this article will address the first four and “Superficial Salvation, Part 2” will address the next six.
- 3 To be clear here, it should be noted that someone can be saved and still struggle with any of these ten categories. But, if your Christianity is based entirely on any one of these categories or any combination of them, you cannot be saved.
- 4 Joshua Harris, Stop Dating the Church: Fall in Love with the Family of God (Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah Publishers, 2004) 14.

5 Eph 1:20-21.

6 1 Thess 4:13-17. For a discussion of the rapture, please see FAQ 1: Premillennialism v. Postmillennialism.

7 Downloaded from www.thinkexist.com/quotation/preach_the_gospel_at_all_times_and_when_necessary/219332.html as of 1/27/10.

8 For an example of this, read these lyrics downloaded from <http://www.christian-lyrics.net/skillet/comatose-lyrics.html> as of 1/27/10.

Comatose
By Skillet

I hate feeling like this
I'm so tired of trying to fight this
I'm asleep and all I dream of
Is waking to You
Tell me that You will listen
You're touch is what I'm missing
And the more I hide I realize I'm slowly
losing You

Comatose

I'll never wake up without an overdose
of You
I don't wanna live, I dont wanna breathe
'Les I feel you next to me
You take the pain I feel
Waking up to You never felt so real
I don't wanna sleep, I don't wanna dream
'Cause my dreams don't comfort me
The way You make me feel
Waking up to You never felt so real
I hate living without You
Dead wrong to ever doubt You
But my demons lay in waiting
Tempting me away

Oh how I adore You
Oh how I thirst for You
Oh how I need You

Comatose

I'll never wake up without an overdose
of You
I don't wanna live, I dont wanna breathe
'Les I feel You next to me
You take the pain I feel
Waking up to You never felt so real
I don't wanna sleep, I don't wanna dream
'Cause my dreams don't comfort me
The way you make me feel
Waking up to You never felt so real
Breathing life
Waking up
My eyes open up

Comatose

I'll never wake up without an overdose
of You
I don't wanna live, I dont wanna breathe
'Les I feel You next to me
You take the pain I feel
Waking up to You never felt so real
I don't wanna sleep, I don't wanna dream
'Cause my dreams don't comfort me
The way You make me feel
Waking up to You never felt so real
Oh how I adore You
Waking up to You never felt so real
Oh how I thirst for You
Waking up to You never felt so real
Oh how I adore You
The way You make me feel
Waking up to You never felt so real
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- 9 Webster's New World Dictionary, ed. by Michael Agnes (New York: Wiley Publishing, Inc., 2003) 26. An

- antecedent is “the word or phrase to which a pronoun refers.”
- 10 In the song quoted in Footnote 8, if you make the pronoun “You” lower case, you cannot tell who the author was singing to: God or another human being.
- 11 Numerous Christian radio stations use this phrase in their advertisements. For instance, here are three that use this by-line on their website: www.kbiqradio.com; www.thefishatlanta.com; www.wrvfmtheriver.com; www.kgbifm.com as of 1/27/10.
- 12 The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. by J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978) 714.
- 13 Downloaded from www.hishandschurch.com as of 1/27/10.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 John MacArthur at The Master’s Seminary Chapel 3/22/05.
- 16 Please see “The Close of the Canon” in the 2007 edition of jtst/.
- 17 2 Tim 3:16-17.
- 18 John Piper, *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist* (Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah Books, 1996) 15. John Piper described this passion in the following way:
- The overriding concern of this book is that in all of life God be glorified the way he himself has appointed. To that end this book aims to persuade you that
- The chief end of man is to glorify God BY Enjoying him forever.
- God is glorified as we enjoy Him. To not be passionate about following Him is to be in sin. Consider the following verses that discuss man’s enjoyment of God: Psalm 16:11; 34:8; 42:1-2; 63:1 and man’s enjoyment as he obeys the Lord’s commands: Micah 6:8; Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 2:3; 9:7; Hebrews 10:34.
- 19 Matt 10:34-37.
- 20 Matt 10:38-39; Lk 9:23-25.
- 21 Matt 6:24.
- 22 Arhtur L. Johnson, *Faith Misguided: Exposing the Dangers of Mysticism* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988) 20. This inner sensation and impression is known as “mysticism.” Johnson defines mysticism this way,
- When we speak of a mystical experience we refer to an event that is completely within the person. It is totally subjective . . . Although the mystic may experience it as having been triggered by occurrences or objects outside himself (like a sunset, a piece of music, a religious ceremony, or even a sex act), the mystical experience is a totally inner event. It contains no essential aspects that exist externally to him in the physical world.
- 23 Henry Blackaby & Claude King, *Experiencing God* (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman, 1990). A classic example of the Holy Spirit speaking through the emotions is found in this very popular book. Consider the following statements: “God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances and the church to reveal Himself” (37). “. . . the church sensed . . . felt led” (66). “God gives you specific guidance in sensing a call” (142). “When God speaks to you in your quiet time immediately write down what He said before you forget” (87). The senses that are referred to here are nothing more than feelings (i. e., when you feel God speaking to you, you need to write it down . . . when you feel that God has spoken to you through prayer, circumstances and the church, etc. you need to obey that feeling). In other words, God speaks to you through your emotions.
- 24 Martin and Deidre Bobgan, *Psycho Heresy: The Psychological Seduction of Christianity* (Santa Barbara, Cal.: EastGate Publishers, 1987) 53. This is also known as integrationist counseling. Although the word “integrationist” is not used, Martin and Deidre Bobgan give a helpful definition of integrationist counseling in the following paragraph:
- The psychologizing of the church has reached epidemic proportions. By psychologizing we mean treating problems of living by the use of psychology rather than or in addition to biblical means. This psychologizing occurs in almost every important facet of Christianity.
- 25 James Dobson, *Hide and Seek* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell, 1974) 142.
- 26 Ibid., 12-13.
- 27 Webster’s New World Dictionary,
- 585.
- 28 Rom 8:11; Titus 3:5-6.
- 29 See Romans 7:7-24.
- 30 Rom 8:9; Eph 1:13-14.
- 31 For an example of this, see Romans 3:9-18.
- 32 Jer 17:9.
- 33 Luke 9:23-25.
- 34 *The Second Coming of the Church* (Nashville, Tenn.: Word, 1998) 7, 21.
- 35 Rom 10:9-10.
- 36 Lk 13:1-5; 1 Jn 3:9.
- 37 For an explanation of how to do this, please see “A Right Relationship with God” in our 2009 edition of jtst/.