



Books in Review

THIS LITTLE CHURCH HAD NONE

by Gary E. Gilley with Jay Wegter

EP Books, 236 pages, \$14.95

PFO director Gary Gilley has written his third in a series of books reviewing the dangerous situation of evangelicalism. This meticulous study shows the road now being traveled by the 21st century “new paradigm church.” The reader is first introduced (or reintroduced to those who have read his earlier books) to the seeker-sensitive movement (e.g., Willow Creek Community Church, Saddleback Community Church) and how its pragmatic approach of “doing church” has produced few mature and growing Christians. Rather, this success-driven model has yielded a breed of evangelicals who mirror the unsaved in morals, ethics, and values. Gilley also shows that while this market-driven movement has admitted its weaknesses, the solutions being tried are equally disturbing.

Gilley shows those espousing the “emergent conversation” are also in the “process of metamorphosis” into what some label “Ancient-Future faith.” But here too, it is a further drift from — not toward — Scripture. As this adjustment moves its followers to “Rome” and mysticism, Gilley points out that “the A-F movement sees the Reformation as an unnecessary schism perpetrated by Protestants” (pg. 43).

The mind-over-matter world of Rhonda Byrne (*The Secret*) and the “invasion of paganism” are also explored. While one might ask why such subject matter is germane to a discussion of evangelicalism, Gilley writes, “the concepts behind *The Secret*, and similar ‘new spirituality’ and Eastern teachings, have been making the rounds throughout various segments of Christianity for years” (pg. 77). The most prevalent component has been the prosperity gospel of Word Faith adherents. Popular pastor and best-selling author Joel Osteen is presented as the man responsible for taking the “name-it-and-claim-it” theology and making it palatable to the mainstream.

In the first section of the volume, Gilley also surveys the challenge of pragmatism and the onslaught of the new atheism against the Church.

While the first part of the book describes the “obstacles to truth,” the reader is not left without remedy. The second part is a call to a renewed confidence in the Word of God and to godly leadership. The final part, written primarily by Jay Wegter, focuses on evangelism. Wegter speaks to “the power of a Christian worldview in evangelism,” “sharing the Gospel in a culture of truth-suppressors,” and “recovering the neglected elements of the biblical Gospel.” His four “worldview questions” (pg. 186) are an excellent technique “to bring a person’s worldview to the surface so that it can be discussed” (pg. 185) and contrasted with God’s Word. Also provided are the biblical responses to these four questions (pg. 187). These are pages that should be read, reread, memorized, and put into frequent application by Christians.

This Little Church Had None is a proficient examination written by two men who are like unto the “sons of Issachar” (1 Chronicles 12:32). They have an understanding of the times and know what we ought to do. It is a perceptive and captivating analysis of the plight of the Church. It is a book, not just for concerned leadership of the Church, but for any Christian who desires “a church in search of the truth.”

—MKG

2012, THE BIBLE, AND THE END OF THE WORLD

by Mark Hitchcock

Harvest House Publishers, 184 pages, \$12.99

The recent disaster film *2012* popularized the beliefs that some in our culture, especially within the New Age movement, hold a 2012 world apocalypse. How widespread are these notions and why do some people believe them?

Mark Hitchcock is well-suited to explore this popular theory of a possible 2012 doomsday for the earth. Not only is Hitchcock a pastor and a Bible prophecy teacher, he also holds an earned Ph.D. from Dallas Theological Seminary. He has authored numerous books on Bible prophecy, including *The Complete Book of Bible Prophecy*.

In the book’s Introduction, Hitchcock explains how he came to write this book: “In 2007 I was watching a news

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“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

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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.