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The Fruit of the Root Mormonism's Fundamentalist Fanatics

by Robert L. Griffin

In that portion of the Sermon on the Mount in which our Lord Jesus gave warning to "beware of false prophets," He used the simile of fruit trees, and averred that a "good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ... Therefore by their fruits you will know them" (Matthew 7:15-20). A modern expression of a similar idea is found in the adage, "The fruit doesn't fall far from the tree."

Often, man-made religions go further and further to extremes and false doctrine engenders more false doctrine. Those who tend toward Galatianism become ensnared in a trap that sweeps them into deeper involvement in "works" salvation and legalism. Rejection of the doctrinal tenets of the Christian faith often begets rejection of its moral tenets. The best explanation for these phenomena is, "by their fruits you will know them." There is a natural process of reaping the fruit of the root. Paul's admonition in Galatians 6:7, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap," certainly applies to individuals, as is evident from the context. But the principle is also operative for movements as well: they *do* reap



what they sow.

In approaching this subject, it should be observed that there are

distinct differences between those groups that come from a solid Christian heritage, and then forsake that heritage (whether through gradual devolution or sudden abandonment), and other movements that from their very foundation have been rife with error. Those familiar with Church history are often shocked at positions taken by certain leaders in mainline denominations. Such giants of the faith as John Wesley, John Calvin, Martin Luther, William Tyndale, and others would be aghast at positions taken by some who claim them as spiritual forefathers. The phenomenon of a formerly orthodox body sliding the slippery slope of skepticism, liberalism, and compromise into gross unbelief is tragic indeed, but that tragedy is not the basis of this article.

Here we will focus on movements that from their birth have been based

(continues on page 15)

Inside this Issue:

WHY NO ACCOUNTABILITY?	PAGE 2
HINN HELPS PROMOTE TV SERIES SCAM	PAGE 3
SIN REALLY DOES MATTER	PAGE 4