

men, asking for an explanation. Joanne Coffey, an assistant to Hagee, told the *Times* that Falwell's stern criticism of Hagee was "water under the bridge" for both men. "The beauty of being a Christian is you learn how to forgive and forget and carry forward," Coffey said.

Falwell did not immediately return a call to the Washington newspaper's inquiry.

—MKG

PEARSON'S INCLUSIONISM PROMPTS HIS EXILE

As a rule, Pentecostals and Charismatics possess a high threshold of doctrinal tolerance. However, the transition into a gospel of inclusion by the Rev. Carlton D. Pearson has cost him congregation, colleagues, and a bid to become his city's mayor. The prominent Pentecostal bishop pastors the Higher Dimensions Family Church in Tulsa, Okla.

Pearson believes that man's salvation comes solely through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, he teaches that this salvation is imparted to man apart from repentance and faith in Christ. All sincere people, including Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and others who do not trust Christ as Savior, will be saved, Pearson maintains.

"All will be saved, with the exception of a few. ... Most people on planet Earth will go to heaven, because of Calvary, because of the unconditional love of God and the redemptive work of the cross, which is already accomplished," Pearson told the Associated Press. He further teaches that hell is for those few who "deny in their hearts that there is a creator" and "who have a disrespect for the deity." He also told *Charisma* magazine that "Scripture clearly shows that the 'vast multitudes' will be in Heaven." Pearson "claims that inclusionism was the predominant thought during the first 500 years of the Christian church, until Augustine introduced the concept of hell with fire and demons from Africa," the magazine's news service reported.

Pearson says his move into the arena of universalism started over 25 years ago after reading the works of E.W. Kenyon. Eight years ago, he returned to study the doctrine and four years ago he began to publicly teach it. He argues, "A careful study of what I have taught will reveal that it is entirely scriptural, logical and theologically sound." Apparently, his staff members and congregation disagreed. Congregation members left in masses and four assistant pastors started churches elsewhere.

In addition, Pearson has come under fire from his Pentecostal colleagues, including his "mentor," Oral Roberts. Pearson has resigned from the board of Oral Roberts University and Roberts has barred Pearson from holding his annual Azusa Conference at ORU. Yet, while Pearson's inclusionism may distance him from his former

allies, it is gaining him new friends. "The pastor said he is befriending Hindus, Muslims and those of other faiths who see a difference in him because of his loving acceptance. A Hindu now underwrites Pearson's radio program," *Charisma* reported.

Pearson also told the magazine, "My Hindu friend wasn't sure he wanted to become a Christian because he and his family had been Hindu for generations and he didn't want to believe that his father — a good, devoted Hindu — was in hell, ... I said: 'I think your father is in heaven; don't you think so? Your dad is as reconciled to God as I am, according to the Scriptures.'"

Pearson alleges that not all of his Pentecostal associates are expressing concern. Last March, according to *Charisma*, "Pearson noted that fellow black preachers, including Charles Blake, G.E. Patterson and T.D. Jakes, are familiar to some extent with inclusionism. These are my friends. ... They're not bothered by this." However, Patterson, Presiding Bishop, and Blake, First Assistant Presiding Bishop of the Church of God in Christ, have denounced Pearson's assertion. In a published statement, Patterson and Blake declared, "As leaders of our nation's largest Pentecostal body, we are appalled that Bishop Pearson would so casually and carelessly associate us with a body of teachings which neither we nor our denomination supports. We feel that Bishop Pearson was presumptuous and irresponsible in assuming that we were 'familiar to some extent' with, and that we are 'not bothered by,' his teachings."

In February 2002, Pearson lost a primary election and his bid to become the Republican candidate for Tulsa's mayor. He believed his defeat was, in part, as a result of local churches denouncing his doctrine of inclusionism.

—MKG

WARNKE FIRES BACK

Christian entertainer Mike Warnke has returned to national attention with *Friendly Fire*, his first publication since being exposed as a fraud over a decade ago. Warnke, in his best-selling book, *The Satan Seller*, spun a chronicle of alleged satanic and occult involvement prior to his conversion to Christianity. In 1992, *Cornerstone* magazine published a meticulous report which demonstrated that Warnke's sensational testimony was a complete fabrication. The magazine later amplified its article into a formidable book called *Selling Satan*. During the years following the *Cornerstone* exposé, Warnke's Christian celebrity status diminished greatly.

Now Warnke's back. But apparently he's not suggesting that true confession is good for the soul. Neither is he prepared to admit that he invented a purely fictional account of his life and Christian conversion. Rather just the opposite. Warnke writes in his new book, "Were the media reports true? Was I a fake, a charlatan, a deceiver,