

Word. A re-reading of 2 Corinthians would cure thrill seekers with the reality of the ups and downs of life. We all have to decide whether it will be for us madness and muddle, fantasy and fads, or the never-changing assurance of biblical promises.

The old hymn says it well: "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word! What more can He say than to you He hath said, To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?"

—GRF

## WHERE'S WALDO?

Most people are familiar with the "Where's Waldo?" cartoons. They are expansive pictures which are a hoarder's delight. And somewhere within the panorama is Waldo, a tall thin character dressed in a red-striped shirt. Usually the drawings are cluttered with objects and people; some red and white to throw off the observer who must search the picture to try to find Waldo.

Finding truth today is something like that. We have to constantly ask, "Where's Truth?"

Walk into a bookstore that is advertised as being a "Christian bookstore" and what do you find? There will be a jumble of books and publications that run the gamut from New Age to hyper-Charismatic, and from heretical to semi-evangelical.

There are the self-help publications stacked among the books on pop psychology. There are claimed visitations to heaven, trips to hell, angelic appearances, UFO abductions, dated predictions for the rapture, and a surfeit of purported Holy Ghost-given revelations. There are instruction manuals on "breaking strongholds" and ancestral bondage. There are books about signs and wonders, including people rising from the dead and end-time revival reports.

Then there are all the books on sowing your financial seed and multiplying money a hundredfold by sending the author a "seed faith" offering. One wonders why he does not send money to his readers so that his seed can be multiplied.

There will also be books on Jesus' teenage trips to India. Or was it Mongolia, or Egypt, or maybe somewhere else where He learned ancient wisdom? And, oh yes, the section on dream interpretation and the book on "What Would Jesus Eat," along with other biblical diet books.

Then there are books by Joyce Meyer, Benny Hinn, Miles Munroe, T.D. Jakes, and a flock of other "Major League Charismatic Players," all vying for the book buyer's cash. And on and on it goes and where it stops nobody knows. As you stagger out of the bookstore in a daze, a question occurs to you — "Where's truth?"

One of the more recent charlatans on the minor league parade of extremist Charismatics is John Crowder.

Crowder knows that there is a hard-core audience that has been so jaded by past emotional "revivals" (slaying in the Spirit, laughing revivals, animal noises, violent head shaking, and even being kicked and wrestled to the ground) that experience seekers will put up with anything — the wilder and freakier the better. Insanity and total loss of control is now one of the premier marks of the Holy Spirit which you know if you watch the Trinity Broadcasting Network or read *Charisma* magazine.

On Crowder's Sons of Thunder Web site and on the myriad of "sermons" and reports posted all over YouTube, he claims to smoke the Holy Spirit like pot and get wasted. He claims people have weight loss in his meetings. (Of course, Crowder provides no documented evidence for the biggest loser.) He boasts of levitations and spirit travel. In the occult world spirit travel is called astral travel, but to his followers who cares. There are things that Crowder speaks about that are too inappropriate and vile to mention. Crowder arrogantly goes to places others like him have feared to tread. He not only pushes the envelope, he shreds it. Anyone with any discernment wants to scream — "Where's truth?" It is certainly not with John Crowder.

Despite all of the above, the Berean is neither discouraged nor does he lose heart. It is interesting that once you spot Waldo in a picture you know exactly where to look next time. Bereans have to become adept at knowing truth as it is found in Scripture. Truth, in fact, is not hard to spot. It is where it has always been, which is in the Bible. God is truth and His Word is truth. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. Truth is actually in plain sight and not hard to find at all. Go to the Word, and stay safe by listening to preachers who are trustworthy and faithful to the truth. It is also important to commit to a church where truth is honored and proclaimed, and error is exposed and false teachers named (as Paul did). Above all, get grounded in doctrinal truth.

Next time you happen to see a "Where's Waldo?" cartoon, remember where you must look to find truth. Don't be misled by the religious clutter and heretical diversions that are everywhere.

—GRF

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## NEWS UPDATES

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Years after Bakker's publicly exposed moral failure, financial improprieties, and downfall, Joyner and his ministry began purchasing the portion of PTL network property known as Heritage USA. In 2005, MorningStar acquired the failed hotel tower building with the intent to renovate the facility and then sell what it termed as "life leases" of age-restricted apartments. In the fall of 2008, it was announced that a \$40 million redevelopment of the structure, yielding 215 units, would begin the