

John MacArthur:- “His beliefs & Teachings”

Written by K B Napier

Tuesday, 04 October 2016 11:33

I must admit that I did not become interested in what this man taught until I wrote about his Summer Camps, which are more pagan than Christian. From what I can see there is plenty of room for genuine criticism, especially when such men lead Christians – the flock belonging to Jesus Christ, NOT to pastors – astray. Jerome once said: *“Shun, as you would the plague, a cleric who from being poor has become wealthy, or who, from being nobody has become a celebrity.”*

This is not just something aimed at super-rich big-name preachers; it also applies to all preachers who try to use churches to climb the spiritual social ladder to become famous with peer status. MacArthur, in 2011 earned over half a million dollars by working part-time for his own ‘Grace to You’ organisation and part time at The Master’s College. And that does NOT include his salary as a pastor, book royalties and speaking fees, etc. (thewatchmanawakes.com), so his total income each year is estimated at over \$1 million. His two sons run the Grace to You organisation, so they, too, reap big rewards.

To make this more dubious, Grace to You paid out over \$4 million to his son-in-law’s company over six years. The company receives over three quarters a million a year to produce MacArthur’s videos. Also, one must observe his other activities: a number of researches into his life show an affiliation with Freemasonry, paganism ([see A-703](#)) and druids. But, what does he teach? Scripture warns us never to accept or promote teachers who teach against scripture. It says we are to mark them:

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.” (Romans 16:17)

“Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.” (Philippians 3:17)

To ‘mark’ them, *skopeō*, is to look closely at what they say and do, to take heed, to consider what they say in the light of scripture. It also means to ‘take aim at’ or even to spy-upon. In the above text we see that some men cause divisions in the churches, by taking them away from the truth given by the Apostles. At no time should this examination involve Christians in following such men or doing what they say and imply doctrinally.

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Sadly, wealthy preachers have the money to weather a storm against their characters, so they just carry on. But, note that when a warning is given against something by God’s word, those who do not listen and favour the miscreant preachers, are denounced by that same warning, for they sin.

It does not matter if a Christian ‘likes’ a preacher or loves his verbal patter – what matters is this: “*Is what this man says and does consistent with scripture?*” If not, then he is in error and even an heretic, to be avoided and shunned. They cause divisions and spread sedition (*dichostasia*), and this leads to being a stumblingblock (*skandalon*) to those immature in their faith.

So, what is there in such men that allows others to follow them? When they follow they become guilty of the same offences and complicit in the preacher’s sins. These men, in their gall, tend to point a finger at those who criticise them, accusing THEM of causing divisions. Not so! They are, rather, doing what they are called to do by God, whereas the heretical preacher speaks against God’s word.

So, reader, do not be duped by fine verbal trickery and smooth words. Get past the Google searches that only give him kudos and status! Search for the truth! Such examination also applies to myself. The real issue is not that someone teaches error, but that, when God’s word is given to him as evidence against his teaching, he repents, tells those he taught of his error, and then goes on to teach truth. If he does not rectify such obvious error, then you can know his real spiritual state, and must avoid and shun him.

“Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.” (John 7:24)

“Ye shall know them by their fruits. ...A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” (Matt. 7:16-20)

What Does He Generally Teach?

He Quotes from Godless Sources:

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It is a fact that a tiny error can lead to an attack on, and collapse of, an entire truth. These small things undermine God’s word and grow to massive proportion. So, what seems small must be destroyed as soon as it appears amongst the churches. MacArthur is generally seen as one who is a champion of truth and against error, but:

“John MacArthur preaches against the Emergent Church and its doctrinal errors, however, his popular book, ‘Slave: The Hidden Truth About Your Identity in Christ’, is replete with references to the heretical works of Gnostic, modernist and postmodern scholars who deny the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. Many of these scholars are rabidly anti-Christian and their works, which MacArthur recommends as authoritative, are filled with slander and blasphemy of the Lord Jesus Christ.” (watch.pair.com)

Take the example of using professor Dale B Martin as an authority. Martin is an avowed homosexual (and homosexuals are infamous for their hatred of God and the Bible). In his book (Slavery as Salvation) he likens Christian servanthood to Christ to the abusive Roman slavery system. He also wrote a book (Sex and the Single Saviour) asserting that Jesus was an homosexual. I would never, ever quote an homosexual as an authority, when God Himself condemns homosexuals!

MacArthur also warmly commends Gnostic writings (which can also be found in abundance in charismaticism). He quotes another ‘authority’, professor Bart D Ehrman, who took himself away from true evangelical belief because he saw ‘errors’ in the Bible. He now writes many titles against scripture as truth, and is trying to get Gnostic material to replace the New Testament! MacArthur, then, does not truly have discernment, nor loyalty to the teachings of the Apostles.

As watch-pair.com rightly says, the ‘slavery’ book is a best-seller to younger and spiritually immature Christians. They assume that the references are sound and suitable, when they are not. But, MacArthur conceals the true identity of these and other heretics he quotes.

Though MacArthur speaks against paganism (he recently and hypocritically accused Joel Osteen of paganism), his Summer Camps display all the marks of paganism! (See A-703). Some critics see this as preparing the youth who attend ‘Grace’ churches to receive the mark of the Beast. MacArthur teaches that even those who receive the Mark of the Beast will be

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redeemed... a gross heresy.

Like charismaticism, MacArthur says his churches are not a denomination, even though his growing list of churches certainly point to them being part of a subtle denomination. He is an empire-builder. He criticises Freemasonry, yet praises the ministry of his Freemason grandfather for his influence on MacArthur's work.

Jesus' Blood

MacArthur minimises the significance of Jesus' blood by saying it was only 'symbolic' of His death. One critic of this said:

“John MacArthur talks out of both sides of his mouth. While professing to believe in the sacrificial blood of Jesus, he also keeps saying that the “bleeding” itself is only symbolic of the death of Christ. Well Mr. MacArthur, the blood that Jesus shed was just as real as His death. When the death angel came over Egypt in Moses day, the blood had to be applied to the doorposts of the home or else the firstborn died. Killing the lamb wasn't enough, the blood HAD TO BE APPLIED. John MacArthur is a heretic for DIMINISHING the importance and necessity of the literal shed (and applied) blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus had to apply His shed blood in heaven on the mercy seat, just as the Old Testament high priest had to apply the blood in the holy of holies.” (jesus-is-saviour.com)

MacArthur's heresy about the blood of Christ goes back about 40 years! Why, then, is he still admired throughout the Christian world?

“It was His death that was efficacious, not His blood. . . Christ did not bleed to death. The shedding of blood had nothing to do with bleeding. . . it simply means death. . . Nothing in His human blood saves...It is not His blood that I love. . . it is Him. It is not His bleeding that saved me, but His dying.”

(MacArthur, 'Not His Bleeding but His Dying', 1976)

By saying this, he completely shuns the Apostle's teaching on the efficacy of Christ's blood and

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rejects God’s own word. His ideas are easily found in the fake modern Bible versions, based on the hateful and bad translations provided by Westcott and Hort (see my articles on this). That is, founded on the grave errors of the German Higher Critical and Lower Critical schools (see my articles on these schools).

“In “Not His Bleeding But His Dying,” MacArthur had this to say: “I may add a note on Revelation 1:5, a passage which is confusing in the King James Version. The word ‘washed’ is not correct. The Greek work is ‘delivered.’ ” With that statement, I would like to take issue. “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood” (Rev. 1:5). What could possibly be confusing about that? He says that “washed” is incorrect and that it should be “delivered.” Like most “great” scholars today, MacArthur suffers from the Westcott and Hort syndrome. “Washed” is in the Textus Receptus, and is so rendered by George Ricker Berry in his Interlinear Greek-English New Testament. In his invaluable footnotes, Berry reveals those responsible for trying to change the reading of this verse. The word was changed by Lachmann, 1842- 1850, Tischendorf, Eighth Edition, 1865- 1872, and Tregelles, 1857- 1872. These are three of the men that laid the groundwork for Westcott and Hort, so that they could make the alarming changes in their Revised Version. The American Standard Version, 1901, of course went along with the change, but they did put in a significant footnote. While rendering the word as “loosed,” their footnote says, “Many authorities, some ancient, read washed.” (Jesus-is-saviour).

MacArthur made some weird observations and totally misinterpreted the issue of ‘blood’ in Old Testament sacrifices. As the writer of the criticism said, he was not aware that Jesus “only needed to bleed a little to save us, and not to die”! He HAD to both die and lose His lifeblood, because He was a sacrifice on our behalf, and a sacrifice cannot be partial. Yet, MacArthur said, *“Again, however, we need to keep in mind that the blood was a symbol. If Christ’s own physical blood, in itself, does not cleanse from sin, how much less did the physical blood of animals ”*

There is a great deal more we could say about this heresy. In 1986, the World Congress of Fundamentalists sent out a definition of the blood of Christ and its importance and summed it up in several points:

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1. *That the precious Blood is incorruptible. It cannot be anything else because of its intrinsic purity. I Peter 1:18,19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold...But with the precious blood of Christ.."*

2. *That the precious blood is indestructible. It cannot be anything else because of its permanence. The Blood is eternally preserved in Heaven. Hebrews 12:24: "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."*

3. *That the precious Blood is invaluable. It cannot be anything else because of its parentage. It is the Blood of God incarnate. Leviticus 17:11: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood..." Acts 20:28: "...the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."*

4. *That the precious Blood is indispensable. It cannot be anything else because of its power. No sinner can be saved without washing in the Blood of the Lamb. Revelation 7:14: "...these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."*

Therefore, this Congress:

1.

Reaffirms its adherence to the Scriptural teaching on this subject;

2.

Rejects every attempt either to deny the literalness of the Blood or to minimize its efficacy and the necessity of its shedding in Christ's death on the cross. Such denial is a dangerous and devilish deception;

3.

Calls upon Fundamentalist preachers and God's saints everywhere to proclaim anew the saving efficacy of the shed Blood of Christ in His death on the cross, and to alert the Church in regard to all heretical teaching on this vital truth, ever remembering that we overcome the devil himself

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by the Blood of the Lamb. Revelation 12:11: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony..."

It appears that what MacArthur condemns as worldly, he nevertheless practices himself! (newcalvinist.com). Though boldly condemning worldliness used to promote the Gospel, he endorsed rap music, not only in his Summer Camp, but also to youth around the world. Dr Peter Masters said this about the ‘Resolved’ Conference, 2008:

“Resolved is the brainchild of a member of Dr John MacArthur’s pastoral staff, gathering thousands of young people annually, and featuring the usual mix of Calvinism and extreme charismatic-style worship. Young people are encouraged to feel the very same sensational nervous impact of loud rhythmic music on the body that they would experience in a large, worldly pop concert, complete with replicated lighting and atmosphere. At the same time they reflect on predestination and election.

Worldly culture provides the bodily, emotional feelings, into which Christian thoughts are infused and floated. Biblical sentiments are harnessed to carnal entertainment. (Pictures of this conference on their website betray the totally worldly, show business atmosphere created by the organizers.)”

Sin and Temptation

Another critic (evangelicaloutreach.org) says this of MacArthur’s version of sin and temptation:

“Brace yourself for the other side of John MacArthur’s sin teaching in the life of a Christian, which is also connected with eternal security and the false version of saving faith and grace it has produced:

... sin does not result in spiritual death for the believer ... (The MacArthur Study Bible, p. 1927, comment on James 1:15)

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Temptation also works for our good. The main reason is that it makes us depend on God Temptation also works for our good because it makes us desire heaven. (Coming Face to Face with His Majesty, p. 118).

God promises that all things will ultimately work out for our good, and that includes the worst thing of all: sin. His promise doesn't lessen the ugliness of sin or the beauty of holiness. Sin is intrinsically wicked and deserving of eternal hell. But in His infinite wisdom God overrules it for our good. (ibid., p. 119, italics his)

Although God sovereignly causes our sin to work for good, we should never view that wonderful promise as a license to sin. (ibid., p. 119)

IMPORTANT: Reader, did you know that John MacArthur, who gives the illusion of teaching holy living at times, proclaims a Christian's sin works for his good? Wouldn't you like to hear him tell us how sin worked personal good in the lives of Adam and Eve, Ananias and Sapphira, King David, Saul, Solomon, Hymenaeus, Philetus, the people of Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-29, Judas, etc.? Moreover, if temptation really works for our good, then why did Jesus tell us to pray not to be led into temptation (Mt. 6:13)? To believe this Calvinistic/eternal security lie that sin and temptation work good is surely to teach a license for immorality, just as Jude said (Jude 3,4), even though flatly denied by John MacArthur!"

I will go no farther in looking at MacArthur's teachings and beliefs. The reason is very simple – There is little reason to reproduce what others have aptly written thus far. It seems to me that at the least MacArthur is confused in his beliefs, and at the worst he is a deceiver. Which is it? I urge you to read the many criticisms available about the man. For me, he is culpable for using pagan ideas in 'his' churches and for teaching a lesser thing about Christ's blood.

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