Marianne Williamson

Marianne Williamson, contender for the 2020 Democratic presidential candidate, has been on Probe's radar for over ten years. As Oprah's spiritual advisor and proponent of the New Age "A Course in Miracles," she is a false teacher according to biblical standards.

Here are links to articles that mention her, as well as related articles you may find interesting:

A Course in Miracles – A Christian Worldview Evaluation

> "Is A Course in Miracles Heretical? How Do I Talk to My Friend Who Believes It?"
> "Your Article on A Course in Miracles Is Very Disturbing"

Oprah: America's Beloved False Teacher

Oprah's Spirituality: Exploring 'A New Earth' – A Christian Critique

The False Teaching of "The Secret" – A Christian Evaluation

Is Being Touched by an Angel Enough?

Don Closson evaluates what's good about TV's "Touched by an Angel" and identifies areas where it lacks substance from a biblical perspective.

Society's Interest in Spirituality

During a recent television ratings week, a relatively new program, "Touched by an Angel" ranked third with a 16.6 Neilsen rating. That means more than 16 million households were tuned in to watch three angels communicate God's love and offer of eternal life to people in various difficult, real life situations. Also, *TV Guide* magazine has featured a special report called "God and Television" which includes an article by Jack Miles, author of *God: A Biography* and quotes popular writers James Redfield, author of *The Celestine Prophecy*, Rabbi Harold Kushner, author of *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, Jack Canfield, coauthor of *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, and others.(1) One might conclude that TV has suddenly found God, and to a degree, that conclusion is right.

TV producers are finding out that typical TV watchers are hungry for programming that includes spiritual themes. In *TV Guide*'s own survey, they discovered in a national telephone poll that 56% of adults feel that religion does not get enough attention on prime- time TV; only 8% feel that it gets too much. Of those responding 61% desired more references to God, church attendance, and other religious observances; 68% were eager to see more spirituality as long as it was not tied to organized religion, and 82% wanted more emphasis on moral issues. One of the most successful programs at attracting these viewers has been "Touched by an Angel."

Although it had a rough beginning and was almost canceled, the program has made a miraculous recovery subsequent to hiring a professing Christian as executive producer and changing the focus of the program to more mature topics. The stories center around the activities of three angels played by Della Reese, Roma Downey, and John Dye. In the words of the *TV Guide* article, "Never has prime-time network entertainment presented God in such an unabashed and earnest fashion."(2) Recent programs have dealt with death in a sophisticated manner,

relating how the angels help humans come to grip with both our mortality and the existence of a loving God. Significant topics such as the nature of God, works, eternal destiny, and faith itself have entered into the dialogue. In the words of executive producer Martha Williamson, “our show is God’s truth,” which is that, “God exists. God loves us. God wants to be part of our lives,” and, Della Reese adds, “. . . he has a plan.”(3)

Recently, the three actors and their producer were on the Oprah Winfrey show where they remarked about the popularity of the “Touched by an Angel” program. The actors have received thousands of letters relating how the program has changed viewers’ lives by making a spiritual reality more plausible and by focusing on the love of God. The actors are very proud of how they are portraying God. In the words of John Dye, who plays the angel of death, “If we’re doing it poorly, I just don’t think God would bless the show and allow it to continue.”(4)

Are we experiencing a cease-fire in the culture war? Is the Christian right winning the battle for the media? Some might argue that only the most cynical observer could find something wrong with programs that promote a loving, personal God who wants a relationship with us and is concerned about our salvation. But, now let’s consider what is good and not so good about programs like “Touched by an Angel.”

Audience Response

This development new TV programs that are using God-talk during prime-time hours and getting good ratings for it is a new phenomenon. “Promised Land,” “Seventh Heaven,” and especially “Touched by an Angel” are boldly going where no producer would have previously gone in the spiritual realm. With four new shows about angels, spirits, and ministers lined up for the next season, it might be suggested that TV is changing for the better. Maybe the networks are finally

listening to the public's demand for programming that is more family oriented and morally uplifting.

In fact, I believe that they are. And although not perfect, the new programs are providing a positive service to the viewing community. Let me explain why. Christians have been decrying for years what Richard John Neuhaus called the "naked public square" in a book by the same name.(5) We have lamented the fact that public institutions such as government, education, and the media, rarely leave room for a spiritual reality. Naturalism, as a worldview, has had a monopoly. Christianity, if referred to, was ridiculed and parodied—what I like to call the "Frank Burns" form of Christianity. Frank Burns, the character from "M.A.S.H.," was hypocritical, emotionally weak, and possibly dangerous when given any real authority.

Current programming like "Touched by an Angel" offers a competing worldview to naturalism. It lends plausibility to the notion that there is a loving, personal God. Although the angels seem to struggle somewhat with their own understanding of God's will, they are performing, in a general sense, the most prominent role of angels in Scripture, that of being a messenger from God.

The audience also gets a reasonable picture of what life might be like if a spiritual reality is taken seriously. Contrary to the prevailing naturalistic hopelessness that pervades much of our culture, "Touched by an Angel" does offer hope via a relationship with the Creator of the universe. Characters in the episodes are encouraged to seek God and to have a relationship with Him. And importantly, they are told that they will not earn salvation by following a set of rules. People in the show are generally treated as complex individuals with weaknesses and strengths, and they respond to life's tragedies in a fairly realistic manner. All of this contributes to a positive influence that the other networks should be encouraged to emulate. As Christians we are quick to

condemn, but slow to admit when something positive occurs. This type of programming, which in many ways reminds me of how God would have been expressed or talked about on TV in the late 50s or early 60s, is a bright spot amid new shows like “Buffy the Vampire Slayer” or “Pacific Palisades.”

But while the program does promote belief in God and the legitimate place that faith should play in one’s daily affairs, it falls short in a number of significant ways from being all that Christians would like to see in a bold presentation of biblical truth. Its most glaring omission is the “J” word, as in Jesus Christ. Also, God is seen as loving and caring, but little is said about His other attributes such as being holy and righteous. “Touched by an Angel” might be a useful springboard from which to present the biblical plan of salvation, but its message is too shallow to be depended upon to evangelize the viewing public on its own.

Let’s turn now to take a closer look at the ways in which “Touched by an Angel” might be a handicap to saving faith for its many fans.

The Nature of God and the Nature of Man

In our look at the return of God to prime-time TV programming, particularly the “Touched by an Angel” show, we have thus far considered the positive aspects of the show; now we will focus on how it might be improved.

Granting that “Touched by an Angel” points to a personal God, encourages a personal relationship with that God, and even teaches that our good works are not enough to establish that relationship, it still falls short of teaching a specifically Christian message because of one glaring omission. It never offers a means for that personal relationship. In theological terms, the program never tells us how we are to be found righteous before a holy God. The Bible teaches a concept known as justification which explains how God, being perfectly holy

can declare us righteous enough to enter His presence. The angels on TV assume that God will accept us on our own merit, that simply turning to Him will bridge whatever separation exists. This lack of clarity could be the result of a number of reasons. The writers may feel that there is no need for justification either because God isn't Holy or humankind isn't sinful or fallen in the biblical sense. Both of these ideas are popular today. While people may accept the biblical teaching that God is love, they often ignore the equally important truth that God is just and holy. Most portrayals of human nature identify lack of education as the source of our problems, not a sinful nature.

If God is loving, but not righteous, then the Apostle Paul is in great error when he says in Romans 2:5 that ". . . because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed." And concerning human nature he adds that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). This great chasm between man and God is an organic part of the Christian gospel and is missing in much of TV's current focus on spirituality.

On what basis can people have fellowship with a holy God? If you argue that God is merely a projection of human attributes, He is neither holy nor a real spiritual being. If all of us are God, as New Age pantheists often teach, all we need to do is realize our godness via meditation. However, since Jesus walked on the earth, He has been the hope of many in their quest to close the gap between man and God. But again, there have been many different ideas about what Jesus' life accomplished. Some see His life as an example to be copied. Others accept Paul's teaching in Romans 3 that Jesus provides a righteousness from God, apart from living according to the Jewish law, through his death on the cross. But again, there is confusion about who Jesus is. Mormons teach that Jesus was a pre-mortal, as we were at one time, and that everyone can

become gods like He is now. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus' death atoned for the sins of Adam, but that Jesus was an angel who lived a sinless life in the form of humanity. They also insist that good works are necessary to please Jehovah.

These different views cannot all be true. For all the good that shows like "Touched by an Angel" might accomplish, they allow for all of the above views to be seen as equally valid. When asked in an interview which God they are representing on the show (Christian, Jewish, Muslim), Della Reese responded by saying that they talk about a Supreme Being, not about religion. But one has to ask, Which Supreme Being? We will examine this question next.

Sin and Salvation

We turn now to determine which Supreme Being, which God is being referred to by these programs. When "Touched by an Angel" actress Della Reese argues that her program refers to a Supreme Being, not to a religion, just what does she mean? Della Reese, whose TV character Tess was chosen in a TV Guide survey as the person most parents would like for their children's Sunday school teacher, is the pastor of a metaphysical congregation on the West side of Los Angeles and participates in the "New Thought Movement." The New Thought movement describes itself as "creedless" and "celebrates individual freedom," but not freedom from acting ethically. Cult leader Barbara Marx Hubbard and author Marianne Williamson of the Course in Miracles fame recently attended a conference with Ms. Reese, the 81st annual meeting of the International New Thought Alliance.(6) All of this is mentioned not to condemn Ms. Reese or to deny her the right to support the New Thought movement, but merely to observe that she is anything but a neutral portrayer of God's nature and activities.

To claim that one can speak the truth about God, and do so

from a creedless perspective is a bit disingenuous. Anyone who claims knowledge about God must also tell us how they came by this knowledge. If they reject revelation, or the Christian creed that results from the Bible, where do they receive their information from and why should we accept it? Has God spoken to them personally? Are they accepting revelation from another source? How do they know what they proclaim to know about God? They must also tell us why their approach to having a relationship with God is the right one. Even if they hold to the view that all paths lead to God, or all religious perspectives are valid ones, we must ask why they believe this is true and why it is an appropriate way to think about God and salvation.

All that having been said, Christians can use "Touched by an Angel" as a beginning point in talking about God and salvation from a Christian perspective. But the Christian will begin with the message that humanity is fallen and in need of atonement and justification. At the very beginning of Jesus' ministry John the Baptist said of Him "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). This brief sentence is filled with profound implications. First is the notion of sacrifice. Jesus is both the victim and priest, both the sacrificial lamb and the high priest who offers the sacrifice. The sacrificial system of the Old Testament taught the necessity of blood sacrifice as payment for sin. Christ's sacrifice was the once-for-all payment for sin against a Holy God. Paul says that we are now justified by Jesus' blood and that He has reconciled to Himself all things, making peace by the blood of His cross (Rom. 3:25; Eph. 2:13). Jesus' death was an act of propitiation; in other words, it removed God's wrath against sinful humans; it appeased His anger. It was also a substitutionary death; He died on our behalf and in doing so bore our sins on Himself.

It is these truths of Scripture that the new TV programs leave out by not mentioning the "J" word. Without Jesus in the

picture, being “Touched by an Angel” leaves us as sinners before an angry God.

The Gospel and the Great Commission

Finally we will consider whether or not programs like “Touched by an Angel” can be used to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul reveals in a concise way what the Christian gospel is and its significance to believers. He writes, “Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.” Paul is serious about what is and is not the gospel. Paul continues by teaching that the gospel is “that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day.” Paul then notes that Christ appeared to Peter, the Twelve disciples, five hundred believers, James, then to all the apostles, and finally to Paul himself. To Paul, belief in the atoning death of Christ and His resurrection is necessary for salvation.

What Paul claims to be the gospel of Christianity is entirely missing from today’s spiritually enlightened programming. As good as programs like “Touched by an Angel” are compared to the rest of TV’s weekly fare, they fall far short of giving viewers what they need to know to experience a relationship with God. The God of these programs is enigmatic, we know that He exists, but how we can experience His love and forgiveness is a bit obscure.

But we should be neither surprised nor angry about this situation. Instead, these programs offer great stepping stones to serious discussions about spirituality and the Christian gospel. Evangelism depends upon the common ground that we humans all share, including questions about God, fear of death

and suffering, alienation, and other topics that are highlighted by these programs. In order to take advantage of these stepping stones, believers must get beyond the temptation to see Christianity as just another personal enrichment program or self-esteem therapy.

Fallen human beings are unable to satisfy God's judgment and wrath against sin. In this sense we are totally depraved. We are not as bad as we could be that would be absolute depravity but we are completely unable to please God via our good works. As Isaiah wrote, "All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags" (64:6). Paul, writing to the Church at Ephesus, states, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God not by works, so that no one can boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). If it were not for God's imputing, or attributing, Christ's righteousness to us when we placed our faith in His sacrificial death on the cross, we would have no hope for eternal fellowship with God regardless of how many angels we have been touched by.

Network TV should be applauded for recognizing and responding to the public's desire for programs that deal with important moral and spiritual themes. However, Christians cannot become complacent or believe that TV will now bring about the Great Commission. As always, that job is to be accomplished by spirit-filled ambassadors for Christ who teach the gospel as revealed by Jesus Christ and His apostles.

Notes

1. *TV Guide*, March 29-April 4, 1997, pp. 24-45.

2. "Angels & Insight," *TV Guide*, March 29-April 4, 1997, p. 43.

3. Ibid., p. 44.

4. Ibid., p. 55

5. Richard J. Neuhaus, *The Naked Public Square* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1984).

6. Larry Poland, *The Mediator* (Redlands, Calif.: Mastermedia International), vol. 12, no. 1, 1997.

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A Course In Miracles — A Christian Worldview Evaluation

Former Probe staffer Russ Wise looks at the religious movement started by A Course in Miracles *from a Christian, biblical worldview perspective. As he examines its origins and its tenets, he finds that it departs from true Christianity in multiple areas and is clearly a false teaching.*

Historical Background

In 1965 a Jewish atheistic psychologist from Columbia University began to channel messages from a spirit she believed to be Jesus. She ultimately produced, or she says Jesus revealed to her, well over a thousand pages of revelation during the next seven years.

According to her testimony, Helen Schucman had a difficult relationship with her department head at the university. In an attempt to move beyond their differences, they set out on a journey to find a base of common agreement. Schucman began having “highly symbolic dreams” and experiencing “strange images.” Her colleague encouraged her to transcribe the content of these phenomena so they might understand them

better.

As she began to write, she was surprised to see “This is a course in miracles” appear on the paper. She went on to say that this was her introduction to the “Voice.” This voice began to give her rapid inner dictation that she took down in shorthand.

According to the dictated material, the voice of *The Course* was Jesus. As a result of the influence Christianity has had on humanity, *The Course* chose Christian terminology to convey its message. A 1977 pamphlet published by the *Foundation For Inner Peace* states, “its only purpose is to provide a way in which some people will be able to find their own Internal Teacher”—in other words, their personal “Spirit Guide.”

Key Players

There are several individuals who play key roles in spreading the message of *The Course.* Perhaps the most prominent is Marianne Williamson. A former lounge singer and now its most celebrated guru, she has become *The Course’s* media star, appearing on numerous television programs. Her most-watched and persuasive appearance was on *Oprah.* She has been Oprah’s guest on several occasions. Because of her personal interest in New Age philosophy, Oprah Winfrey purchased a thousand copies of *A Return To Love,* Williamson’s book, to give to her television audiences.

Another high profile individual, well-known in New Age circles, is Gerald Jampolsky, M.D. He is a psychiatrist, formerly on the faculty of the University of California Medical Center in San Francisco and founder of the Center for Attitudinal Healing in 1975. He has written several books based on what he has gleaned from *The Course.*

In his influential book, *Good-Bye to Guilt,* Jampolsky describes his conversion to *The Course*.

> I began to change my way of looking at the world in 1975. Until then I had considered myself a militant atheist, and the last thing I was consciously interested in was being on a spiritual pathway that would lead to God. In that year I was introduced to . . . *A Course in Miracles. . . .* My resistance was immediate. . . . Nevertheless, after reading just one page, I had a sudden and dramatic experience. There was an instantaneous memory of God, a feeling of oneness with everyone in the world, and the belief that my only function on earth was to serve God.

As a result of the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of our society, namely the baby boomer generation, there is a ready-made market for the "feel good" spirituality of *The Course.* Through the influence of Williamson, Jampolsky, and others, a growing number of Christians are being sucked into this whirlpool of spiritual confusion in which they exchange the truth for a lie.

The Course and the Mainline Church

We have already established that *The Course* uses Christian terminology and its followers believe it to be the revelation of Jesus. As a result, a number of denominations within Christendom have embraced *The Course* as being legitimate and introduced it into their churches.

Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians have used *The Course* in Sunday schools and special study groups within the church. Presently there are over 1,500 official study groups that have utilized *The Course* both inside and outside traditional Christian churches.

If It's Not Love—It Must Be Illusion

Marianne Williamson, author of the best-selling book *A Return To Love,* says that we have "a natural tendency to focus on love."

Only love is real. All that is negative is illusion. It simply does not exist. If anything negative is in your consciousness, it is real only because you give it reality by holding it in your mind. According to *The Course,* sickness, hate, pain, fear, guilt, and sin are all illusions. The *Cyclopedia In A Course In Miracles* states that "illusions are investments. They will last as long as you value them." The Cyclopedia continues, "The only way to dispel illusions is to withdraw all investment from them, and they will have no life for you because you will have put them out of your mind."

The Course sums it up this way, "There is no life outside of Heaven. Where God created life, there life must be. In any state apart from Heaven life is illusion." There you have it! It is perfectly clear—murder, rape, and other forms of evil do not exist because they do not come from "love." Try explaining to a mother who has lost a son or daughter that their loss is the result of an illusion.

The Problem of Evil

You guessed it, *The Course* also teaches that evil does not exist. It is an illusion that must be overcome by right thinking. *The Text* (i.e., volume one of *The Course*) reads, "Innocence is wisdom because it is unaware of evil, and evil does not exist." In essence what is meant is that evil does not stand on its own, that it only has reality as the individual believes its existence. So, you might say that the rape victim created her own evil situation and thereby caused her own suffering. The victim is guilty; the perpetrator had no choice.

The Problem of Guilt and Sin

A pamphlet published by the *Foundation For Inner Peace* states, "Sin is defined as a 'lack of love.' Since love is all there is, sin in the sight of the Holy Spirit is a mistake to be corrected, rather than an evil to be punished."

The Course further teaches that there is no need to feel guilt because there is no sin. Sin does not exist. The problems that man faces are a result of separation from God. This separation is only illusion because it likewise does not exist. It is only a reality for those who believe they are not part of the divine.

The Text makes this point clear where it declares that "no one is punished for sins, and the Sons of God are not sinners." As you might anticipate, there is likewise no need for the cross because there was never a transgression that needed to be dealt with by God, only a mistake. If we are a part of God, how then can we become fragmented by sin since separation (i.e., sin) does not exist?

Thought-Reversal

The stated goal of *The Course* is to change how one thinks, to change one's belief system by subtle deception. The individual is for the most part unaware of the transformation he or she is undergoing because *The Course* utilizes Christian terminology. *The Manual for Teachers* (i.e., volume three of *The Course*) boldly says, "It cannot be too strongly emphasized that this course aims at a complete reversal of thought."

Religious Recovery—The Thirteenth Step

Many who become involved in studying *The Course* are active in self-help groups such as Twelve Step programs. They are seeking to make connections in their lives and discover who they truly are. They are willing participants in this transformation.

Many are desiring some form of "spirituality" and for those who see the Bible as being too harsh, *The Course* offers what they believe to be God's correction of our misinterpretation of the original message of Jesus.

The Course becomes the "thirteenth step" in recovery for those

who are attempting to escape the rigid fundamentalism that has smothered them in the past. For them, the recovery process becomes a spiritual transformation.

The integration of psychology and spirituality becomes a lure that pulls them deeper into the web of deception and ultimately suffocates them. The biblical teaching of original sin is dismissed for the more palatable "original goodness."

This "thirteenth step" regards all faiths as a part of the whole; they are one, and a psychological unity of sorts is achieved. *The Course* becomes whatever the individual desires it to be, it is "Christian," but not if you don't want it to be. It's psychology, but more than psychology. It's not New Age, but then again it is.

The Course claims to have all of life's answers. It has become the "spiritually correct" solution to bring about peace and unity. However, in the end, this transformation brings spiritual death.

Helen Schucman's new do-it-yourself psycho-spirituality is not new. The Hindus have been taught for centuries that the world and all that is in it is *Maya,* or illusion.

Sense and Sensibilities

We must be clear that the message of *The Course in Miracles* is *not* the message of Jesus Christ. Schucman and her Course do not teach that Jesus is God incarnate yet fully human, but that He is an highly evolved being who became divine. The Bible does not allow for such an idea.

The Bible also leaves no room for the idea that evil does not exist, but instead that evil entered the world through disobedience. Likewise, the Bible does not allow for the idea that God is a universal oneness rather than a personal Being.

Kenneth Wapnick, a Jewish agnostic who later became a Catholic

monk, founded the *Foundation for A Course in Miracles.* Wapnick states that *The Course* and biblical Christianity are not compatible. He gives three reasons why he holds such a view. First, *The Course* teaches that God did not create the world. Second, *The Course* teaches that we are all equally Christ. Jesus is not the *only* Son of God. And third, *The Course* is clear in its teaching that Jesus did not suffer and die for man's sin.

The above differences clearly show why a Christian cannot in good faith consider *The Course* as a source for his or her spiritual understanding. It is unequivocally anti-biblical and is without doubt promoted by Satanic deception (2 Corinthians 11:14: 1 Timothy 4:1).

A Short Course in Doctrine

The Course teaches that there are no absolutes; truth is relative and is determined by one's experience. According to the *Cyclopedia In A Course In Miracles,* "only what is loving is true." So truth is subjective.

Marianne Williamson, the author of *A Return To Love,* made this observation about truth in her book: "There's only one truth, spoken different ways, and the Course is just one path to it out of many." In other words, no one religious tradition has all the truth, but there are many avenues to the truth and the individual has the freedom to choose the path most suitable to him or her.

Who Is Jesus?

According to Williamson, Jesus is one of many enlightened beings. In her text she makes this statement, "Jesus and other enlightened masters are our evolutionary elder brothers." She continues by saying that "the mutation, the enlightened ones, (including Jesus) show the rest of us our evolutionary potential. They point the way." So in reality Jesus is a way-shower.

Williamson makes a telling observation on page 41 of her book by saying that *"A Course In Miracles* does not push Jesus. Although the books come from him, it is made very clear that you can be an advanced student of the Course and not relate personally to him at all." This is an interesting comment regarding the lack of relationship one is to have with their God. For Christians, faith is built on a personal relationship with Jesus. Without it, their salvation would be in question.

Williamson continues by saying, "Jesus reached total actualization of the Christ mind, and was then given by God the power to help the rest of us reach that place within ourselves." Such a statement brings to mind Matthew 7:23 where Jesus says, "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

The Christ and Salvation

The Manual For Teachers states that "Jesus became what all of you must be." It continues by declaring, "Is he the Christ? O yes, along with you."

The Course identifies with much of New Age thought in that it teaches false Christology. New Age proponents teach that *The Christ* is the one who is the most highly evolved being during a given age. This Christ, whether it be Buddha, Krishna, or Jesus, is the messiah for a given age. They believe, for example, that Jesus was *The Christ* for the Church or Piscean Age. According to their philosophy, Jesus achieved Christhood and by right-thinking we too can achieve Christhood.

The Text says that, "Christ waits for your acceptance of Him as yourself, and of His wholeness as yours." Keep in mind that these words you have just read are, according to *The Course,* the "spirit-dictated" words of Jesus. Now hear the true Word of God from the Bible where we read, "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many" (Matthew 24:4-5). The

Scripture is crystal clear about the deception of multitudes by signs and wonders based in experience rather than His Word.

The Scripture teaches that Jesus alone is the Christ, the Son of the living God. John 1:20 and 20:31 indicate that we are not His equals.

Abandoning Your Miracle

There are a growing number of people waking up to the fact that *The Course* cannot adequately meet their growing need to worship a being beyond themselves, much less defend them in spiritual warfare.

Warren and Joy Smith are examples of how *The Course* is totally inadequate when it comes to defending one's spirit from the evil one and his dominion. The Smiths were deeply involved in the study of *The Course*. Warren relates Joy's story in his book, *The Light That Was Dark.*

Joy was being spiritually harassed by a man who was highly proficient in astral projection (projecting his spirit for great distances). Warren relates how they faced the attacks. "We tried every metaphysical and spiritual technique we had ever learned—we repeated our *Course in Miracles* lessons, did visualizations, prayed as best we knew how, sent the spiritual intruder blessings, and kept the whole situation surrounded in white light—but none of it had any effect. We had to wait it out. The spiritual presence was calling the shots."

After an intense time of frustration, they went to their course study leaders for help. Joy explained that they "had repeatedly applied their *Course in Miracles* lessons, such as: 'There is nothing to fear,' 'In my defenselessness my safety lies,' and, 'I could see peace instead of this.'" After explaining that nothing had worked, Frank, their study leader, "made it clear that he agreed with the Course's metaphysical teaching that evil was only an illusion and that the experience was probably something that Joy was working out

within herself."

Frank's wife, Trudy, was dazed when she heard herself say, "Put on the whole armor of God and stand fast against the wiles of the devil!" In amazement at herself she added, "Ephesians 6:10. It's in your Bible."

Trudy went on and said, "I'm sorry, Frank. There is a devil . . . read Ephesians!" In the days ahead Joy continued to undergo the harassing attacks. During this time of uncertainty Warren visited a bookstore and discovered a book entitled *The Beautiful Side of Evil* by Johanna Michaelsen. He read it through and decided its message of deliverance was worth a try.

It wasn't long before he had an opportunity to test his newly found discovery—biblical exorcism. Joy fell into a depression as she had on so many occasions, and Warren seized the opportunity to act.

He relates the incident in his book this way, "Reading from my notes the exact words that I had taken from Johanna's book, I firmly addressed the presence. 'Satan, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, I command you to be gone! I forbid your presence here. I claim the protection of the blood of Jesus upon us. Go where Jesus sends you!" Immediately Joy's face cleared and the oppression was gone.

Warren later remarked, "We were amazed that the presence left every time we called on his [Jesus Christ's] name. Nothing in *A Course in Miracles* or any other metaphysical teachings had ever talked about this aspect of Jesus."

Warren and Joy's encounter with personal evil ultimately convinced them that the Bible was the spiritual teaching that they could rely on. Warren said it best, "So far it hasn't let us down."

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