

# THE HAVEN NEWSLETTER

## The Joys of Pandering!

*Wanting to be seen as a "good" person by those who hate the Lord.*

We were all once told that peer-pressure was a real problem for teenagers. But like the other similar myth about pimples, we find that peer-pressure can even go on way into adult life. The best example of that in the Church can be seen in the growth of Inclusivism - the belief that Jesus will save most people in the world - regardless of whether they believe in him or not. As I have preached for many years, there is one idea that is particularly hated by non-Christians of all sorts - the idea that only those who believe in Jesus will be saved and all others will be eternally in Hell. This is an offense now and it was an offense when Jesus first talked about it. What is troubling now is the rise of this in the Church itself. Not wanting to be looked at funny by our coworkers, neighbors, family members and friends - this seemingly new path gives us the best of both worlds - we can still claim to believe in Jesus and yet we can also say to our friends that other religious believers will be in Heaven too! Alleecallee oxenfree! I am not sure about the spelling (Is anyone???) but I do recognize the sentiment.

The historic Christian view is now called Exclusivism. This is already a pejorative term in the culture and now the classic view is saddled with it. Filled with visions of unfairness and a lack of "love", the charge is thrown at Biblically minded Christians as proof of their close mindedness, their arrogance and their just generally being bad people all around. The E - channel did a show on Spirituality several years ago which helps illustrate all this. Each celebrity came on and said they were Wiccans, Buddhists, Scientologists, Hindu's or whatever. But each person also said words to the effect "But I wouldn't say my way is the only way". By the end of the show you got the larger message - you can believe whatever you want - just don't say that your way is the only way. How dare you Christians say that? How dare you Christians think that? Why that just proves what we have always really know about you - you are just a bunch of judgmental angry people...yada, yada...yada...

The best of the Christian inclusivists, like Clark Pinnock or John Stott, make it quite clear that it is their idea of the love of God that is the driving force behind their arguments. They just can't conceive that God would send people to hell for not believing in Jesus. They find it is easier to share their faith without the hell baggage offending their intended target. But there are several problems with this view. Both Pinnock and Stott acknowledge that Jesus is the Lord of the universe - that he is the quintessential loving person in all of history - yet they seem to ignore that virtually everything we know about hell comes from the lips of Jesus himself! Was he just lying? Was he just trying to scare us? Was that the "demon-voice" of God that got snuck into the Bible? (I actually heard this from a graduate student in seminary!) Or perhaps was it the very love that Jesus personifies that motivated what he said?

*Being exclusive about truth is THE moral position. Can we imagine being inclusive about those who think it is ok to rape little children? C.S. Lewis said that there are really only two religions in the world - Judeo-Christianity and Pantheism. One is honest about being exclusive (Christianity) and the other is deceptive about its own exclusive views. The issue for the Church is allowing the thinking of non-Christians to be what drives us to reinterpret God's word to make it less offensive to a rebellious world. Let us not be found pandering lest we find ourselves with nothing left to compromise...*

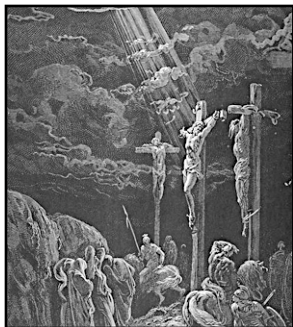
### Reasons why Inclusivism fails the test.

- 1) It denies what Jesus affirms. John 14:6, John 3:16-18, Acts 4:12, John 8:58 and so many other passages affirm the one must believe in Jesus to be saved.
- 2) It denies the need for missions. Matthew 28, Acts 1:6-8 and the rest of the entire book of Acts validate the view that Jesus and the early church believed that it was imperative to share the Gospel message to unbelievers of all nations.
- 3) It affirms what is demonstrably not true. Inclusivist proponents talk often about the good hearted people who are seeking God with an open heart and how unfair it would be if they went to hell merely by circumstance of not hearing the message. But the Bible literally denies every part of this. In the Book of Romans Paul says that we are all sinners, separated from God by our rebellion. We are not seeking the Lord, but rather to do evil. Romans 1-3. To those who are offended by this, which part of the news everyday are you missing? Several years ago in a class at Iliff Seminary - (one of the most liberal in the country) my professor William Dean and the entire class were commenting how offended they were by Augustine's negative views on humanity. As Augustine was routinely quoting Paul in Romans, their views are the same. When he asked me what I thought, I said "Which part of the 20th century did everyone miss; we have killed over 100 million human beings in just the last century alone - How can anyone talk about the goodness of human nature?" We want to think we are good, but our self-deception is evident every time we turn on the TV, read the Net or the newspaper. Romans 1 says that people are judged by God because they have already turned away from Him, not because of what they didn't hear about Jesus; rather because of what they already knew and could see about God in nature and in their own conscience.
- 4) It affirms a false view of Jesus. Jesus the God of love is set against the exclusivist judgmental Jesus. But the Scriptures constantly affirm that Jesus, who loved the woman caught in adultery, also loved the Pharisee whom he yelled at. Both were in sin - both needed to be confronted. Yet one was already ashamed, and Jesus did not add on top of that. The Pharisee by contrast, was so self-consumed by his own righteousness, that his pride and ego arrived weeks before he did! He desperately needed someone to pop his balloon and Jesus did just that. It is Jesus who talks about hell. Is that unloving? Is it also unloving if a mother warns her child not to touch the hot stove or play in the street? Or is it in fact an act of love to do those things? Would we be mad at the one who warned us that the bridge around the mountain road is out? Would we rail about the lack of love, at the constraining of our freedom to go our own way, to be the captain of our own ship, to do it "my way? You hopefully see the point here. Mothers and road crews who warn people are not unloving people - exactly the opposite. Jesus' many warnings about the results of unbelief must be seen for what they are - expressions of his love.
- 5) It results in a logical contradiction. Proponents of the inclusivist position in many ways deride their exclusivist opponents. They exclude the exclusivist for lacking compassion and love. Their inclusivism always seems to demand that it alone can be seen as right, and other views are wrong. They end up in the same place that they decry the other for taking.

The larger reason that drives Inclusivism in the church in my opinion is the deep desire we have to be accepted - at any cost. We would rather be good dinner company than faithful to God's word. We want people in the world to see us as nice...regardless of the fact that Jesus taught that being identified with him would result in enmity with the world. In John 6 many of Jesus' disciples left him. They were offended at his exclusive statements - He was the Bread of Life, etc. Jesus asked his closest disciples if they would leave him as well. How will we answer that question today?

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## PRAYER REQUESTS



**This was not the end... but the beginning of hope and faith and love in a whole new life.**

1) Please continue to pray for Scott. He needs to forgive and his anger constrains him. Also pray that Jonathan will be under control, especially for Terri. Keep praying for Joe and Gabe at school. Pray for the rest of the kids - that they survive Me!

2) We ask that yall would continually lift up marriages of many who have been destroyed by sin and cults. Some are doing better - Don and Peggy praise the Lord. Others are still struggling so pray for Bruce, Diane, Mike, Cheryl, Brad, Jeannette, Michael, Pam and many others.

3) Pray for those who are chronically ill - such as my dear wife Terri, and our friends Rebekah, Sherri, Liz, Julie, Josh, Sheila and others. Pray for Pastor Paul Scazzafazza in Sante Fe who has a mysterious ailment that is severely handicapping his ministry.

4) Please continue to pray for our soldiers at war. The Lord is doing some amazing things with the troops - many are coming to Him. Lift them up as often as you can. In the same vein lift up our police and firefighters for the very same reasons.

5) Keep praying for Christians around the world who live in cultures where they are despised, like China, Pakistan, the Sudan and elsewhere. Check out the Voice of the Martyrs website for specific examples.

6) We have had wonderful ministry opportunities over the past several months. We have had many Conversation and Cuisine dinners and have more to come. Pray for the Temple Lot Mormons and Remnant Mormons that Mark and I just talked to recently in Independence, MO. The talk with the Scientologist and with a oneness person is ongoing. As always pray for those we have mentioned in the past - Good ground members Bruce, William and others. JW's like Bruce and Bianca, Mormons all over the place. New agers like Tim, Zach, Denver, Cathy, Fausto, Jason and others.

7) Continue to pray for the staff and interns at Haven Ministry. That the Lord would bless the ministry's efforts and many would come to the Lord through the faithfulness of our people.

8) Pray for our support situation. Some of you know about our recent mini-crisis. We are way below our average giving and we ask for your prayers and consideration of this issue. We need to raise at least \$1,500 per month on average to get the support levels where we won't run out again. Please prayerfully consider joining our ministry team and having a part of what we do. We thank the Lord for all of you and covet your prayers.

**calendar:**

Sept 9 - Conversation and Cuisine #3, Littleton, CO "Why the Bible?"

Sept 12, 19, 26. Home Bible Study at our Place. 2nd Corinthians is on the Menu!

Sept 7, 14, 21, 28. Legacy College of the Bible. The Book of Acts.

Sept. 16 Ministering to the crowds at the Dali Lama's visit to Denver.

Oct 6-8. Psychic Fair In Colorado Springs, CO

Oct 3, 10, 17, 24, 31. Home Bible Study at our place. Same menu as before...

Oct 5, 12, 19, 26. Legacy College of the Bible class - The Book of Acts.

Oct 7 - Apologetics Event at Camp IDRAHAJE in Bailey, CO in conjunction with Ravi Zacherias Ministries.

Nov 7, 14, 21, 28. Home Bible Study at our house. Still in 2nd Corinthians and loving it!

Nov 2, 9, 16, 30. Legacy College of the Bible class - The Book of Acts.

This is a pretty quiet calendar for us so please check the website for updates at:

[www.havenministry.com](http://www.havenministry.com)

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# Non - Prophet Update

*Many Christians are falling in love with what is called "Contemplative prayer". Much of this is just rehashed medieval Catholic mysticism. The sad thing there is that one of the earmarks of many of the mystics is direct communion with God - with no need for Jesus in sight. Some talked of meditation in very sexual ways - and others just became full blown pantheists. Yet somehow this collection has become revitalized as the cure for what ails us as American Christians. Mindless irrationality as the solution to our so-called intellectual crisis. This is at the same time we have "Christians" barking like dogs and invoking "holy throw-up"! What intellectual crisis?... Maybe we should pay attention to God's word, like the Reformers did, and contemplate and obey what we know the Lord has said. But then that would undermine many of today's "ministries" and book sales and TV appearances just wouldn't be the same...*

## MAIL UPDATE:

Please notice our new address and even more importantly, please let us know if you have moved. It is expensive to hunt you and track you down - but we have the dogs and the extra men if we need it!

Just kidding - sort of...?

Also if you want to switch from old fashioned mail to email versions of the newsletters - let us know that as well.

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Haven Ministries - Love at the End of the Rainbow!

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