

haven

THE HAVEN
NEWSLETTER



December 2008 // The Christmas Interruption

Paganism is near and dear to the human creature. Both the Bible and life's experiences show us that left to ourselves we will worship anything but the Lord God. The pagan mind so identifies itself with nature that it sees the "cycles" as something that should be celebrated in a religious sense. Wiccans tie their rituals to the change of seasons; ancient Greeks, Persians, and Egyptians tied their gods to the change of seasons. Three of the major Hindu deities embody this as well. Brahman is the creator of the cycle, Vishnu is the sustainer, and Shiva is the destroyer, This is repeated age after age after age, and creates a mindset of "eternality" in the cycle. The horrors of hearing "The Circle of Life" song at Disneyland over and over still haunt me! Pagans have been relatively successful in co-opting the resurrection of Jesus in the same way. For some silly Roman Catholic reason, Easter has been tied to the Spring Equinox, while many celebrate the rising of Christ from the dead as if it were a simple fertility ritual! You may hear many sermons in allegedly Christian churches on that morning about how the resurrection is "really just a story of the renewal of life that each spring gives us," blah, blah, blah. You could've heard that blather at any ancient pagan temple.

Implied in this view is the idea that nature is just as it has always been. The world has always been this way and by extension will always be this way in the present and future. The pagan cultures then tie themselves to planting, harvest, and other events; such as floods, earthquakes, storms, which "divinized" in some way as to make them part of the "natural order" of things. In a smaller yet critical way, the fact that nature seems to be a constant points the way to individuals who are part of that same order - to also be cyclical and unchanging. "That is just the way he is," "she will never change," and "people are always like that" reflect a mindset that permeates culture. We are what we are and must be accepted as such. This thought has infected the Christian church as well. "This is just the way God made me, so I must be okay just the way I am." Whether one hears this from the homosexual lobby or from some church growth leader, it is the same lie. I heard Rick Warren say this on a video in front of some group of economic leaders in Europe this past year, paraphrased "You want to know what God wants from you? He just wants you to be yourself!"

Which way will you go?



2009

There are only two simple things that we are all called to do: Love the Lord our God and our neighbor as well. Some of those neighbors are very different and very far away. The American retirement ideal is not for the Christian. The Apostle tells us in Hebrews that our rest is in heaven. Until the day he calls us home, let us be faithful serving in every opportunity that the Lord opens for us. Sometimes we seek and find what He would have us do and sometimes we hide and hope it goes away. Which way will you go?

I could not believe what I had just heard. Is this really the case? Do we simply just continue on and on in the same sad state? Is this not the very definition of despair?

The prayer of the ancient believer was "How long oh Lord" and it is the prayer of the true believer today, including Terry and myself. Built into the very fabric of the Old and New Covenant is the fact that God created the world, therefore the creation had a beginning and is not eternal, which fits exactly with what we know in scientific observation. The creation is also not divine, but was made. Whatever is made is not equal to what made it, and obviously cannot be greater than who made it.

Yet there is something wrong with creation as well. We know it and feel it. There is brokenness in this life. By contrast, the pagan affirms that brokenness is normal and therefore must be accepted, even affirmed as part of the circle (as Nietzsche thought). The pagan often may also deny reality itself altogether. The universe is just a dream or illusion - Maya. So either the universe is just the way it always has been and always will be, or it is not real. The Christian offers a third option. We say that the world was created good which explains the goodness that we see and experience, and that there was a "fall" which explains the evil that we also see and experience. The fall is a rock of offense of course, to the pagan mindset. It implies that things were once different then they are now, and hints that someday might be changed from what they are now. That is a threat to the justification for our behavior - really a justification for our sin. "I was born this way" or "was raised this way." To the pagan, we are either psychologically programmed to be what we are or we are genetically formed this way. We can't change, nor do we want to. You must accept us or even more so, must affirm who we are.

This is why Christmas is such a rude interruption to the pagan mindset. In the midst of a culture convinced of its own goodness and immortality, Jesus enters the world. His message is that He is Messiah and has come to die for our sin. He says that judgment is coming and only through Him can we avoid that judgment. This is anathema to everything the pagan holds dear; that "we are what we are and it's okay." that "it has always been this way and always will be." So Jesus must be tamed - to a guru and teacher of wisdom like so many others. He must be our buddy and not our Lord. Yet Jesus refuses to be tamed. His words cut to our soul. "Repent!" But I am fine the way I am! "Repent!" But I have always been this way! "You must be born again!" No, I am okay. The Popeye defense - "I yam what I yam!" But Jesus is saying we must be in spiritual relationship with God. This is not part of your nature. Something fundamental must change - this is what Jesus brings to us. Christmas is truly a gift because it is precisely against our pagan prisons. Christmas is a threat to our self-righteousness and pride.

We often talking about putting Christ back into Christmas. I say that the Christ we put back into Christmas is often way too tame. The real Jesus who stridently interrupted our celebration of self and power, comes to transform our very being. We should tremble at the coming of Messiah as well as celebrate. The world has not been the same, and even someday will be different still.

Blessings and a Merry Christmas to all, thank you!

Giving Opportunity!

We still need about \$800. Per month to balance our ministry budget. Please pray and see what the Lord would have you do. We thank the Lord for our brother Paul who donated a wonderful vehicle to the ministry. We know that everyone is apprehensive about the economic issues in our country but we know our Father is still in control and we ask that we all act in faith and not in fear.

Prayer Requests

1. Please continue to pray for the family. Since our last newsletter things have gone much worse in some ways and better in others. Please pray for Scott and Rose that they will take their faith seriously. Johanna is in a Christian facility out of state and Joe is rebellious as well and has moved out. Shawn, Andy and Gabe are doing really well. We covet your prayers for the whole situation.

2. Continue to pray for the Agape girls at the Rainbow Ranch in the Philippines and for the kids at the Bible College in Guam and Calvary Chapel Training Center in the Philippines. I hope to go back and minister again, Lord willing. We are also still praying about ministry opportunities with the Agape girls.

3. Pray that our extended family would believe in Jesus. Pray for my step-mom's niece who was kidnapped by her mother and taken to Indonesia. Pray for my youngest brother's marriage and family. Pray for my step-dad who has cancer surgery and is undergoing radiation. My father has cancer and is receiving treatment as well. My mom also has cancer but radiation is not needed at this point. Pray for my other brother whose job situation is up in the air. Please pray for Terri's mom who is now living with us and needs to sell her trailer.

Jan 12-16 - Ravencrest College, Estes Park. Apologetics and the Cults.
Jan 27 - Bible Study at our house - Gospel of Matthew.
Jan 29 - Horizon College Denver, Apologetics, Littleton, CO 2:30 -5:30.
Critical Thinking - Calvary South Denver, Littleton, CO 6:30-9:30.

Feb 3,10,17,24 - Bible Study at our house.
Feb 5,12,19,26 - Horizon College Denver, Apologetics and Critical Thinking.
Feb 13-15 - Metaphysical Fair, Denver.

Mar 3,10,17,24,31 - Bible Study at our house.
Mar 5,12,19,26 - Horizon College Denver, Apologetics and Critical Thinking.
Mar 12-14 - EMNR Conference, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.
Mar 13-15 - Metaphysical Fair, Colorado Springs.

Haven Ministries 4th Annual Christmas Party!!!

Haven is excited to invite all in the area to our party on Dec. 6th 2008 from 2:00 - 8:00PM at our house at 24563 E. Crestridge Place Aurora, CO. This event is for friends, supporters, prayer partners or anyone who might wish to be one of those some days. Or for people who like to eat great food, or breath or something else. We would love to see you there. It is a drop in event so no rsvp is needed. If you would like to contribute food or time, please let my wife Terri know. She would love it.



4. Pray for many friends who are sick with different conditions. Pray for Lori, Liz H, Sherry C, Rebecca G, Sheila H, Josh H, Jinjae, Sherry, Jim C and my dear professor Gordon Lewis. Pray for another dear professor Jim and Ossie Andrews whose daughter Julie's situation is chronically painful. We still need special prayers for a miracle for our friend Joan C, her husband Doug and their family. We implore our Father for mercy for them all!

5. Please pray for several whose marriages have been damaged and destroyed by sin and cultic beliefs. Pray for Bruce, Dianne, Cheryl, Mike, Brad, Jeannette, Michael, Pam, Mike, Leah and many others.

6. Pray for many we have witnessed to. Jonathan; a Gnostic. Also pray for people I have spent time with recently whose loved ones have joined the 7th Day Adventist and the "Concerned Christians". Hindus; Lee and Meg, Mormons; Lane, Roebucks, Adam, Cheryl, Sandra and many more. Jehovah's Witnesses; Bruce and Bianca and lots of others. New Agers; Tim, Zach, Denver, Ian, Fausto, Jason, Anuttama, Sukkacitto, and wiccans. Muslims like Abdul and others. And many others that we have talked to over the years in ministry.

7. Please pray for our missionaries & interns with Haven. Pray for Mark and Rose, especially Rose whose diabetes has gotten worse. Pray for Mark as he still considers the best time to retire from the Denver Police Dept. and go full time with Haven. Pray for Jeff and Sandy who still have pressing issues with their family's health and spiritual state. Also please pray for Rita Dominguez, who is taking on new responsibilities with the college and the church. Also please pray Jim and Barb Choury, who are now seeking to expand their ministry into several of their churches. We welcome them and ask you to lift them up often as they raise support.

8. Pray for our military sons and daughters. Lift up our son Gabe as his outfit will be shipped overseas in Jan. Pray for his girlfriend's family as her father was killed this fall in a traffic accident.

The Haven Newsletter

Bill Honsberger
Writer

Shawn Honsberger
Editor

Pray for his fellow Marines, Matt and Chris C, Dan W. and for soldiers Josh P., Nick G, Carlos and Matt R. Pray for dear friends Josh N, and Chung H. who are now stationed in the Middle East.

9. Please pray that the Lord will raise up the support we need to run the ministry and the extra money needed for the trip to Uganda. Thank you all so much for your prayers and support and we thank our Father that you have so graciously been a part of our life and calling!



Non-Prophet Update

The new book phenomenon this past year has been *The Shack* by W. Paul Young. It is a target rich collection of heresy (patri-passian, universalism, etc) both large and small. What is worse is the enormous acceptance of the book within so-called evangelical circles and pulpits. But so many refuse to be discerning, even though the scriptures warn over and over again about false teachers within the church. The book has an emotional hook, and people tend to emote rather than think. These are not good days for the American church.

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