



THE HYLES EFFECT:

A SPREADING BLIGHT

David Cloud

The Hyles Effect: A Spreading Blight
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The Hyles Effect

“Close your Bibles and listen to me” (Jack Hyles).

The original title of this book, which was first published in March 2012, was *The Two Jacks*, referring to the ministry and influence of Jack Hyles and his son-in-law Jack Schaap, who took the pastorate of First Baptist Church of Hammond, Indiana, upon Hyles' death.

We have changed the name to *The Hyles Effect: A Spreading Blight*, because the book is still relevant, in spite of the fact that Jack Hyles is dead and Jack Schaap is in jail. This is for the simple reason that Hyles' vast influence continues unabated and we see it as a spiritual blight.

One pastor made the following comment about the new title:

“Having farmed, one of the things we had to fight against was blight. Blight will soon ruin a vegetable crop like tomatoes, melons or cucumbers. Blight was our deadly enemy.”

This book has never been just about First Baptist of Hammond. It's about a large number of IFB churches that have been influenced by the cultic pattern modeled at First Baptist and it's about large numbers of IFB preachers who have not spoken out against it but rather have chosen to bask in the glory of “bigness” rather than take a stand for truth.

A preacher friend made the following comment when I asked him for suggestions for the new title of the book:

“I wonder if you could title it along the lines of a disease, a contagion, or an epidemic. That may be overstatement, but I don't think so. Hyles' philosophy has permeated even the best of the IB churches. I threw out his books in the 80's when I started seeing what he was preaching and read his son's book on youth ministry, BUT what I

heard him preach in the 60's and 70's STILL messes with my mind.”

Another preacher who offered suggestions for the new title said:

“Years ago, my wife was given a tape of a Hyles sermon by the wife of our former pastor. When asked who Jack Hyles was, she replied something along the lines of ‘a good man that went a bit wonky towards the end.’ I have found that even many preachers who distance themselves from Hyles have plenty of nice things to say about him. He seems to have won the hearts of many of the older generation of IB preachers in the same way that Paul Chappell seems to be winning over the younger ones.”

Hyles’ philosophy has spread far among IFBaptists. Take unquestioning loyalty, for example. Try writing something “negative” of a current IFB leader like Paul Chappell, Clarence Sexton, or Shelton Smith, or try offering a critique anything less than worshipful of IFB leaders of the past such as John Rice or Lee Roberson, no matter how true and Biblical the “criticism” might be, and observe the response by their fans.

Jack Hyles is dead, but his influence lives on.

The Latest Saga in the “Two Jacks”

On July 31, 2012, Hammond Community Net reported that “First Baptist Church of Hammond had dismissed Jack Schaap as its pastor in the wake of a Lake County police investigation.” This was because of Schaap’s “physically improper” relationship with a 16-year-old girl.

In September, 2012, Schaap pled guilty to the federal charge of taking a minor across state lines for sex, and the prosecutors said they will recommend to the judge that he serve 10 years (“Pastor Accused of Having Sex with Minor Faces 10 Years,” *Chicago Tribune*, Sept. 20, 2012). Schaap will also be required to spend another 10 years under supervision and to register as a sex offender wherever he lives.

In light of the history that we documented in *The Two Jacks*, the only thing that is surprising about this sad account is that the church took action against the man. Then, again, the FBI had become involved in the matter because the girl had been transported across state lines.

Many teenage girls and even children have been the target of sexual abuse at First Baptist, including those polluted by Jack Hyles’ son, Dave.

We don’t know how long this type of thing has gone on even in Schaap’s life. It’s doubtful that a 54-year-old man would start messing with girls out of the blue. And clear warning signs were evident even in his preaching, as we document in this book.

This is the same church that covered over and justified Jack Hyles’ sins and the ministry-disqualifying sins of other pastors associated with the church and school for decades, a church that was quite willing to stand behind the character assassination of anyone who dared to bring an accusation against the “man of God.” This is the church that accepted the lie that to reprove and discipline a preacher is to “touch the

Lord's anointed." This is a church that has accepted incredible abuse at the hands of its pastors for decades.

It appears that Schaap thought he could walk in Hyles' footsteps and do as he pleased, and he succeeded for over a decade and probably could have continued to do so except that federal law officers got involved this time.

There is no reason to believe that anything of real substance will change. Another man--doubtless another Hyles worshipper--will step behind that polluted pulpit and the cult will go on.

It is also possible that the next pastor will lead the church away from the true legalism and man-centeredness of their past to the alleged "liberty" of the contemporary philosophy, and the brow-beaten people will follow with glee. Since the corner has been turned, and in the eyes of the average IFB church it's no longer unacceptable to mess around with contemporary music, that might be the path they pursue.

I wrote the following to a pastor after Schaap's disgrace:

"I am guessing that First Baptist will change in many ways, including going contemporary pretty quickly. I suspect that the people are fed up with the abuse and the true legalism of their past and will run in the opposite direction. It depends on who they call as pastor, of course, but I suspect that the pressure from former Hyles-Anderson graduates to stay in their 'old paths' isn't as strong today as it would have been 10 years ago. I think a lot of them are moving in the contemporary direction. Of course, a lot of them have rejected the nonsense they were taught and have swung over to the emerging church (instead of pursuing a fundamentalist path that is biblical rather than man-centered) or have even jumped on the New Age bandwagon."

As for Schaap, On March 20, 2013, he was sentenced to 12 years in prison.

Earlier, in seeking a lighter sentence for his crime, Schaap argued through his attorney that he was working 100-hour weeks and was thus so stressed out that he had a momentary moral failure after long years of exemplary Christian living and ministry.

The reality is that he had time to exchange 637 text messages and 25 phone calls with the girl in a one-month period from June 21 to July 21 2012. The reality is that the megachurch pastor wickedly preyed on the youth and vulnerability of a troubled young church member.

In one of the text messages that were exchanged between the 54-year-old pastor and the 17-year-old girl he said: “You have affectionately spoken of being ‘my wife.’ That is exactly what Christ desires for us. He wants to marry us + become eternal lovers!” (“Prosecutors: Indiana pastor,” *Chicago Tribune*, Mar. 14, 2013).

It appears that Schaap adopted the early Mormon doctrine of eternal marriage and multiple wives!

This is not surprising in light of his heresy of likening the Lord’s Supper to sexual union, a doctrine that he taught from the pulpit at First Baptist and in his book *Marriage: The Divine Intimacy* (Hyles Publications, 2005).

Note the following excerpt:

“When a person takes the bread during the Lord’s Supper he is not actually eating Christ’s body. That person is saying, This element represents something. The person who deeply loves Christ understands that when he receives Christ as Saviour it is a spiritual intercourse. ... Nothing symbolizes more of what God has with the believer like romantic, intimate, physical intimacies between husband and wife. The wife receives her husband’s body. Ephesians 5:23 says that the husband is Christ in the home. When a wife receives her husband’s body, she is saying, ‘I just want to remind You,

Christ, that I am receiving You” (*Marriage: The Divine Intimacy*, pp. 42, 43).

A Personal Testimony

First Baptist Church, Hammond, Indiana, was made famous (or infamous, depending on your perspective) by Jack Hyles, one of the most influential men among independent fundamental Baptist churches (IFB). Hyles pastored First Baptist from 1959 until his death in 2001 at age 74, when his son-in-law Jack Schaap (pronounced *skop*) took the helm.

With the Bible as my authority, I became convinced long ago that Jack Hyles created a man-centered cult,* and this cultic mentality has spread far too widely among IFBaptists. (* For this report I am defining a cult as an institution that names the name of Christ but that has a head other than Christ and an authority other than the Bible alone, at least in practice.)

This book is not merely about two men. It is about a philosophy of ministry that has spread very far. Hyles set the pattern for errors that are still rampant.

A major motivation in writing this report is to challenge young preachers not to be man followers and man pleasers, to walk in the fear of God rather than the fear of man, to be serious Bible students and Bereans, to be passionate for Christ and Truth, and to reject pragmatism: whether it be contemporary church growth pragmatism or emerging pragmatism or IFB pragmatism.

I am an “independent fundamental Baptist,” but I desire to be and intend to be Christ-centered and Biblical, first and foremost. I don’t hesitate to name a cult a cult no matter what it might call itself, and I don’t hesitate to distance myself from such things. I’m just a frail man that the Lord saved. I’m not a mighty anything in myself, but God being my helper I’m not going to follow a crowd in error, I don’t care how big the crowd, and I’m not going to keep quiet when the church of Jesus Christ is turned into a man-centered cult.

Some have said, “You must be very brave to speak out against such men.”

In light of the judgment seat of Christ, I say in reply, “You are very brave *not* to.”

I was saved at age 23 in the summer of 1973, and the first church I joined was independent Baptist. I chose the church prayerfully with an open Bible in hand, having first examined other churches, including Southern Baptist and Pentecostal. In the fall of 1974 I attended Tennessee Temple, an independent Baptist Bible College, and Jack Hyles was the commencement speaker for my graduation service in 1977.

I have been a member of independent Baptist churches ever since (though increasingly at the periphery of the “movement”), but the authority for my Christian life and ministry is not “independent Baptist.” It is not what some famous independent Baptist church or preacher believes or practices. My sole authority is the Bible. I do not intend to follow a man, I care not who or what he is, unless that man follows the Holy Scripture, God being my helper.

I believe in pastoral authority. I have submitted to pastoral authority all of my Christian life. (There was one occasion when I was young that I did not relate properly to my pastor, but I repented deeply of that and have always regretted it.) I have taught God’s people to submit to pastoral authority in a godly and biblical fashion. For example see the free eBooks “Keys to Fruitful Church Membership” and “The Pastor’s Authority.”)

But I also know that a pastor’s authority is limited by the Bible. He has no authority in himself. He has no authority to lead in ways that are contrary to the Word of God.

UNLESS GOD’S PEOPLE ARE WILLING TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST ERROR THERE IS NO MEANS OF STEMMING THE TIDE OF COMPROMISE.

NO PREACHER IS ABOVE BEING REPROVED FOR HIS ERROR. Paul rebuked Peter publicly when he committed

hypocrisy and was influencing others in a path that was compromising the gospel (Gal. 2).

We should have godly respect for authority figures, but numbers and prominent positions should not impress God's people. As Elihu wisely said: "Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away" (Job 32:21-22).

When the Charismatics, the Evangelicals, the Mormons, or the Catholics boast of their numbers, or when Christian rockers point out that they are in the majority, I am not impressed. I recall that the truth has not been in the majority in this sin-cursed world since Cain and his sons built the first city. I recall that the New Testament warns of an explosion of apostasy at the end of the church age. So I compare beliefs and practices with the Bible and reject that which is contrary.

Likewise, I am not impressed with independent Baptist numbers, unless those numbers are in the context of faithfulness to the Word of God.

Numbers and prestige in themselves prove nothing. Faithfulness to Christ and His Word is *everything*.

"I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality" (1 Timothy 5:21).

"Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth it not. The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe. Many seek the ruler's favour; but every man's judgment cometh from the Lord. An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked" (Proverbs 29:24-27).

It's Not Enough to Criticize

It is important to be informed and exhorted about spiritual dangers, which is why the New Testament epistles contain so many warnings about error. But the solution to the problem we discuss in this report is to move beyond criticizing error and to labor to do something right.

The solution is to dedicate ourselves to building spiritually-healthy, Christ-centered, Bible-based churches that stand unhesitatingly for the whole truth of God's Word and are separated from worldliness and apostasy, but that are pastored by godly men of genuine Christian character who are kind shepherds rather than pontificating lords, who rule by God's will rather than self-will -- churches that are careful about salvation and are in no hurry to pronounce people saved when the evidence is lacking; churches that are careful in receiving members; churches that love people; churches that practice discipline when it is necessary; churches that feed the people on a solid diet of Scripture rightly divided; churches that are training the people to be disciples of Christ and followers of God, not man; churches that are building godly homes; churches that know that external separation is essential but it must reflect inner spiritual reality and that mere busyness and external spiffiness without truth in the inner parts is vain religion; churches that pray; churches that worship God in spirit and in truth and do not conform their worship to the pattern of the world; churches that have an aggressive vision to preach the gospel to every soul but not by carnal means that are akin to worldly salesmanship campaigns.

Though we are frail and unworthy and always come short of that to which we aspire, these are the types of churches that we have always sought to plant because we know that these are the types of churches that please the Lord. (The churches we have planted are located in South Asia.)

It is discouraging to see what is happening in churches, but it shouldn't surprise us in light of Bible prophecy, and it doesn't need to cause us to be disheartened. In fact, we should be amazed, *not* that there are so few healthy Bible believing churches, but that there are so many.

I know a lot about the compromise and apostasy of the hour because of the research/warning aspect of my ministry, but I am by no means disheartened. In fact, I am very encouraged in the work of preaching the gospel and discipling believers and planting sound churches, and we are enjoying more fruit than ever.

I thank the Lord that there are many churches like the ones we described in the previous paragraph within the IFB movement, though they are most definitely in the minority. These are the churches that I am pleased to associate with and recommend.

It is important to be informed about apostasy, because knowledge is protection, but above all we need to focus our attention on bearing fruit to the glory of Christ in this needy world while the opportunity exists. The harvest is great and the workers are few, and the New Testament church is God's program and the headquarters for world missions. It is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15), and the context does not refer to a "universal church"; rather it refers to the church that has pastors and deacons.

It is well enough to know about what others are doing that is wrong, but the question I need to ask myself is, "What am I doing for the cause of Christ?"

Church work is difficult work; it is building and battling; and many hands lighten the load. And as I have often said, the church needs every member and every member needs the church. Every sound church I know of needs more faithful people to stand in the gap. The overwhelming needs on mission fields such as South Asia cry out for laborers.

If there isn't a Christ-centered, Bible-based, spiritually-healthy church within commuting distance, I would most earnestly counsel you to pray about moving to where there is one. Then spend the rest of your life serving Christ in that church, doing everything you can to make its God-given mission "successful" and to help keep it on the right path. (See "Keys to Fruitful Church Membership" at the Way of Life web site -- wayoflife.org.)

If you contact us, we might be able to help you find a church that would be worth the move, but only if you know how to submit to godly pastoral leadership and are not a self-willed, hyper-critical person. I am sorry that I have to add that qualification, but I have known too many people that fit this description to ignore it.

A Word about Robert Sumner

“Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth it not. The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe. Many seek the ruler's favour; but every man's judgment cometh from the Lord. An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked” (Proverbs 29:24-27).

I want to make a comment about Evangelist Robert Sumner (1922-2016), the preacher who was courageous enough to expose Jack Hyles in the late 1980s and early 1990s when the man was at the height of his power and influence.

Others added their voices in a public reproof, but it was R.L. Sumner who published an extensive, well-documented report of the entire ugly mess about Jennie Nischik, David Hyles, and many other matters.

Lawyer Voyle Glover was treated the same way when he published a report exposing Hyles (*Fundamental Seduction: The Jack Hyles Case*, 1990, 455 pages). Though he was a lawyer, a former member of First Baptist, and a long-time associate of Hyles, he was heaped with abuse. “I was called the Antichrist and worse,” Glover says. “I was threatened with physical harm, death threats.” His office was broken into. Excrement was left on his doorstep (“Let Us Prey,” *Chicago Magazine*, January 2013).

Lawyer Voyle Glover was treated the same way when he published a report exposing Hyles. Though he was a former member of First Baptist and long-time associate of Hyles, he was heaped with abuse. “I was called the Antichrist and worse,” Glover says. “I was threatened with physical harm, death threats.” His office was broken into. Excrement was left on his doorstep (“Let Us Prey,” *Chicago Magazine*, January 2013).

I have been treated exactly the same way each time I have warned about the error of a man who is deemed untouchable.

I didn't know Robert Sumner personally and I don't know much about his ministry, but I do understand from Scripture that it is impossible to know another man's heart's motives.

All we can do is judge a man's actions, and I, for one, believe Sumner's action in the particular matter of warning about Hyles was brave and honorable and glorifying to Jesus Christ and to the cause of truth.

Sumner's warnings, which were first published in his magazine *The Biblical Evangelist*, are available today on the internet at:

http://www.biblicalevangelist.org/jack_hyles_chapter1.php

I have read these reports multiple times over the years, and in my estimation they are written in the spirit of Christian grace and charity. I can't find a hint of mean-spiritedness or vindictiveness.

What I do find in the reports is righteous indignation, and that is what every born again child of God should feel when faced with such brazen sin and idolatrous pride as that which was represented by Jack Hyles.

Such indignation was expressed by Pastor Roger Voegtlin in his sermon "Why I Am Not 100% for Jack Hyles," a message that can be found at SermonAudio today. (It was preached on June 25, 1989.) A few other men issued similar proclamations to warn God's people and to lift a public standard against sin and idolatry "in the camp."

What is sad and shocking and telling is that the number of influential preachers who expressed such indignation can be described as "extremely few" rather than "many."

In fact, I am amazed that so many preachers turned a blind eye to the facts and continued to honor Jack Hyles and revere his legacy in spite of the irrefutable evidence of his crimes, and continued to justify and help cover up his sins and errors,

many even going further, to join in to slander and blacklist his “critics.”

What R.L. Sumner did in speaking out about the heresy and covered-up wickedness of one of the biggest IFB preachers was not the independent Baptist way, but it was right.

“Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear” (1 Timothy 5:20).

The very fact that there are still many preachers today who believe a public warning about influential independent Baptist leaders is wrong is evidence that the spirit and error of Hylesism is alive and well.

It is time for this heresy to be buried.

They say, “Who do you think you are to speak against such men?”

I can’t answer for others, but my personal answer to that is that I don’t think I’m anybody at all. I’m just a frail and simple man God saved and called to preach, but I have His authority to speak and so does every other God-called preacher.

God solemnly charges the preacher to identify false teachers, to exhort, reprove, and rebuke with all authority, to speak as the oracles of God, to earnestly contend for the faith, and even to warn about born-again compromisers (Romans 16:17; 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 2:15; 1 Peter 4:11; Jude 3; 2 Thess. 3:6; 2 Tim. 4:10).

Nowhere in Scripture are these commandments restricted in their scope. Nowhere does God say that a Bible preacher can reprove and rebuke only the members of his own church or that he can reprove and rebuke anyone who errs *except* an influential Christian leader in his own “circle.”

To reprove public sin and error publicly by the Word of God under the guidance of the Spirit of God and in His wisdom is *not* slander and is *not* gossip and is *not* “throwing

rocks” and is *not* “shooting the wounded” and is *not* hateful and is *not* dishonoring to Christ.

Private offenses and private sins need to be dealt with privately, but public errors need to be dealt with publicly. When a man builds an ecclesiastical empire, of sorts, and influences thousands of people beyond the borders of his congregation, his errors are no longer private matters and they are no longer matters pertaining only to his church.

When a man admits and repents of a sin or error, that is one thing and is dealt with in a certain way. But when an influential man covers up sins and errors and lies about them and even goes on the attack against those who try to expose them, that is another matter altogether and is to be dealt with in entirely a different way.

We must be very careful about what we say about men of God. We must be careful not to spread unsubstantiated rumors. We must be careful not to give heed to vindictive, disgruntled, backslidden people who are trying to injure the work of God. We must be very wise in what we say and in how we say it. We must make sure that we are speaking the truth, and we must test our hearts before God to make sure we are speaking the truth in the right spirit and for the right reason.

We don’t publicly reprove every pastor who errs or call out every church that compromises. Contrary to the silly and slanderous accusation that some have made against us, we don’t consider ourselves the “policeman of the IFB movement.”

The reality is that some men’s influence is much greater than others. Some men’s ministries effect only their own congregation, whereas other men’s effect tens of thousands.

When the sin of hypocrisy and the compromise of the principles of equality under the gospel was spreading in the early churches, the apostle Paul singled out Peter to rebuke

before them all, for the simple reason that he was the most influential personality in that situation.

“But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I SAID UNTO PETER BEFORE THEM ALL, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified” (Galatians 2:11-16).

We must be wise in speaking, but speak we must when the situation merits it. Let us fear God more than man.

“The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe” (Proverbs 29:25).

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen” (1 John 5:21).

One can hide in the crowd in this life and take his “stand” with the weak-kneed majority, but no one can hide at the judgment seat of Christ.

The Fruit of Hylesism

The fruit of the Hyles model and methodology has often consisted of moral and spiritual shipwreck.

Multitudes of former members of Hyles-type churches, having witnessed so much error and hypocrisy, have abandoned church altogether. Or they have explored the contemporary emerging philosophy, having allegedly found more spiritual reality in those circles than they witnessed in “fundamentalism.”

Being the products of shallow evangelism, many of these have never been biblically converted. They have prayed a sinner’s prayer but haven’t been born again. Having never had a real and dynamic relationship with Christ, they are man-followers, and when the man fails, they are offended and quit, sometimes blaming Christ and the church for something that is man’s fault alone.

Even if they were truly saved, they were not properly disciplined and grounded in the Scriptures and in solid doctrinal truth. All too typically they have been used or neglected and sometimes abused, but not shepherded.

The following is one of the many testimonies we have received through the years of the wretched fruit of the Jack Hyles philosophy:

“I have so much to say, I do not know where to start. I was brought up in an extremely fundamental ... Hyles and Bob Gray worshiping church in southern California. At one point this church, which averaged no more than 200 on Wednesday nights (at its peak in the late 90's), was 3rd in America in baptisms, with more than 10,000 in a single year. I was one of the ‘top’ teenagers in the church and I was ‘in’ as far as popularity and promise at our church. It was a shallow, man praising, numbers driven Christianity that has driven countless men, women, families, and teenagers to

bitterness and a hatred for anything that has to do with the Bible or God. I know because I was one of them. I have many old friends who have told me they could never trust a man and/or pastor cause of the trauma they went through.

“My family is currently struggling and I am praying for my family as they, too, have grown bitter. My family is currently looking to go to the complete other side of Christianity (new evangelical/praise chapel type) and I am praying and hoping they see Christ and the Bible more real as I have during this last year. I have recently read your book ‘The Two Jacks’ and am currently reading the book on quick prayerism, which I could tell so many stories about. I have had to “reset” my whole foundation of salvation, repentance and following Christ. I cannot even tell you how that the book ‘The Two Jacks’ took me on a roller coaster of emotions, from anger to disbelief, but I realized that all my emotions and EXTREMELY high, almost worship-like, feelings towards men were getting in the way of me worshiping and following Christ wholeheartedly.

“I was bitter and lost for most of my early 20's but I am now studying the Scriptures, discipling people, and following Christ in a new church. I am writing to say thanks!”

The solution to this problem is not to abandon church or to capitulate to a contemporary style of Christianity that is conformed to the world. The “newest” part of the true Christian faith is 2,000 years old; it simply is *not* going to be contemporary cool!

When I was saved in 1973 out of a “hippie” background, I was perfectly cool by the world’s standards. I was a real “dude.” I had my long hair; had my self-centered attitude and my New Age philosophy; had my sensual party music; had my drug-using, hitchhiking background. But after my conversion I didn’t search for a cool type of Christianity. I

had truly repented of my foolish ways and my rebellion against God. I had drunk deeply of “this world” and I was fed up with it. I wanted something different: something eternal rather than temporal, solid rather than shallow, unbending rather than plastic, holy rather than worldly.

When I was first confronted with cool Christianity in the form of the Jesus Movement in the 1970s, I was confused by it at first, then I was offended by it. That is what God saved me OUT OF! Why should God’s people want to conform themselves to the plastic pop culture? Why should they want to conform to the world’s music and appearance and drink deeply of its entertainment? The Bible is very plain that you cannot have the world and Christ, too. This world is at enmity with the holy God and His Christ, and the friend of this world is the enemy of God. And the Western pop culture is the most powerful and effective form of the “world” that has ever come down the pike. See the warnings of Romans 12:2; Ephesians 5:11; James 1:27; 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17.

Many who reject “fundamentalist” type churches as being too strict and hypocritical end up straining at gnats and swallowing camels (Mat. 23:24). I mean that while they claim to see all of the real and perceived errors of “fundamentalists,” they overlook even worse errors in the contemporary crowd.

The church is God’s plan. Jesus said, “I will build my church” (Mat. 16:18). He said to the first disciples that He would be with His people to the end of the age as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission (Mat. 28:18-20).

We should reject unscriptural churches, but we must not reject the church as God’s holy institution.

Further, the solution is not to abandon “fundamentalism,” which I am referring to merely in the sense of practicing separatism and being strict in one’s approach to doctrine and practice. Fundamentalism in this sense is not the problem.

(I reject “fundamentalism” as a movement as being contrary to Scripture due particularly to its trans-denominational character, its “in essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty” heresy, and its “universal church” mentality. When I speak of holding to “fundamentalism” I am using the term as a synonym for biblical separatism. See the report “The Insufficiency and Error of Fundamentalism” and the free eBook *New Evangelicalism: Its History, Characteristics and Fruit* at the Way of Life web site -- www.wayoflife.org.)

God’s Word demands separation from error and worldliness (e.g., Romans 12:2; 16:17; 2 Corinthians 6:17; Ephesians 5:11; Philippians 3:17-18; Colossians 2:8; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; 2 Timothy 2:16-18; 3:5; James 1:27; 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17).

Separatism is not an optional part of Christianity. It is biblical and it is right and it is pleasing to God.

God’s Word demands strictness in the matter of doctrinal purity (e.g. Acts 20:27-28; Ephesians 4:14; 1 Timothy 1:3; 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 1:9) and holy living (e.g. 2 Corinthians 7:1; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Peter 2:11).

Just because some have practiced “fundamentalism” hypocritically and shallowly does not mean that it is wrong at its essence.

We must exercise great patience and mercy because every church has failings. Yea, we all have failings, so it would be hypocritical to demand perfection of others. We must find the wise, spiritually-mature balance of being patient with those sins, compromises, and errors of a sort that will always be a factor in a Bible-believing church, while not ignoring the sins, compromises, and errors that render the church incapable of fulfilling its God-given task. We must learn when to stay and when to leave, when to submit and when to separate, and only the Spirit of God can grant such wisdom.

The solution to the problem we discuss in this report is to move beyond criticizing error and to strive to do something

right, as we have discussed in the chapter “Not Enough to Criticize.”

Jack Hyles

“Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth it not. The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe. Many seek the ruler's favour; but every man's judgment cometh from the Lord. An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked” (Proverbs 29:24-27).

I offer the following facts as evidence of my accusation that Jack Hyles was the leader of a man-centered cult. The reason that these things still need to be published is that Hyles' great influence did not die when his body was placed in the ground, and the institutions that he built continue to bear fruit after his image.

A new generation needs to know this history, as wretched as it is.

I thank the Lord that Jack Hyles has never been the hero of all IFBaptists and that many men have seen him for what he was and were aware that the king had no clothes (though far too few have been willing to say so publicly).

I also thank the Lord that many IFB preachers who used to be Hyles' fans to various degrees have rejected the Hyles' model of ministry and soul-winning methodology and they are not hesitant to say so. I know many of these men personally.

It is an evidence of carnality and man-centeredness that those who have exposed the following errors have been treated shabbily. Their motives have been questioned; their ministries have been blacklisted; every attempt has been made to find “dirt” on them, just as in cheap worldly politics, and when nothing of substance was discovered, lies were invented. I know this by long personal experience. Yea, I can

assure you that I have good reason to suspect the moral integrity of most IFB “good old boys networks”!

The practice of “shooting the messenger” is alive and well among IFB churches, and it has been very effective in shutting the mouths of those who should speak out.

Men who have a good Christian reputation and have given evidence, and borne fruit that they are God-called preachers and not self-called nuts, should be treated with respect when they lift their voices in warning and reproof. They should not be blindly believed; but they should be given a hearing.

“Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21).

Biblical Shallowness

Jack Hyles’ preaching ministry was incredibly shallow. It was not based solidly on Scripture, and this was a fundamental error.

He preached stories and used Scriptures as a pretext and a jumping off point.

One could sit under his ministry for years and remain biblically illiterate, which better allowed him to control people’s thinking and pursue an unscriptural pattern of ministry.

“One man took notes on Hyles’ sermons for some time. At the bottom of the page, after the sermons, this item appeared repeatedly: ‘*Observation:* after the initial Scripture reading ... the Bible was not referenced at all.’ Another member of First Baptist, who with her husband had served as leaders in the church for about 20 years, said Hyles very frequently says, ‘Close your Bibles; just listen to me” (R.L. Sumner, “The Saddest Story”).

I personally heard Hyles preach messages based on one verse used as a mere pretext. I personally heard him say “close your Bibles; just listen to me” in sermons he preached

in the 1970s. Oftentimes he would say, “You don’t need to open your Bibles; just listen to me.”

Cults don’t build up their people to be strong in God’s Word. They don’t prepare them to exegete the Bible for themselves. Cults don’t want their people to know the Bible well enough to “prove all things.” They don’t want them to think for themselves after the fashion of the noble Bereans (Acts 17:11). They want to keep the people biblically ignorant and spiritually crippled. They want them to be dependent on the leader.

Cults use the Bible, but only as a source of proof-texts for their heresies and to brow-beat the people into submission and to motivate them to work hard to build up the cult empire.

That is the way that Jack Hyles used the Bible, and a large number of IFB preachers have followed his poor example.

Heresies

Since Hyles often mishandled the Bible and did not allow his people to test his teaching with God’s Word, he promoted many private heresies, such as the following that were documented by Robert Sumner in the various reports he has gathered together under the title of *The Hyles Story*, where the reader can also find a biblical refutation of these errors.

Hyles often claimed to have found a “new teaching.”

“If you listen to Jack Hyles’ tapes, you will hear him over and over again say, ‘Now, this is something new; this is something you probably never heard before.’ I want to say that only cults do that. You see, I can’t give you anything that the apostle Paul hasn’t given you. Only someone with false teaching is going to give you something new” (Roger Voegtlin, “Why I Am Not 100% Hyles,” June 25, 1989).

Hyles taught the eternal humanity of Christ. In a message preached February 16, 1986, he stated: “There’s always been Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever. He is the human deity now. He always has been. He always will be. He did not become human when He came to Bethlehem. He became flesh, but not human. He’s always been human.” He taught the same heresy in his sermon “Human Nature Is Not Really Human Nature” on March 13, 1988.

He taught that God the Father can’t understand man and can’t reason with human reasoning and doesn’t empathize with human frailty and just wants to kill sinners. Contrariwise, see Psalm 103:8-14!

He taught that “everlasting life” and “eternal life” are two different things and a believer can have everlasting life without having eternal life, which he defined as something the believer must receive from God every day (Hyles, “The Gifts of God Are Everlasting Life and Eternal Life,” April 28, 1985). He claimed that the rich young ruler had everlasting life and merely wanted to know how to gain eternal life or how to get rewards in Heaven.

Hyles believed that his deeds could make it easier for his dad in Hell. He preached this in a sermon entitled “Full Reward,” Feb. 7, 1988.

He taught that fallen man is not human and that an unsaved man does not have a spirit (“Human Nature Is Not Really Human Nature,” March 13, 1988).

He claimed that it was good for Adam and Eve to sin (in his sermon “Thank You, Adam”).

He taught that backsliding is a necessary part of spiritual growth, calling this heresy “one of the great truths of the Christian life” and concluding, “If you are not as high as you used to be, jump up and down and say ‘Hallelujah!’”

He claimed that all men are “mental homosexuals” and that the only difference between someone who has

committed adultery and someone who has not is that the latter has the sin of adultery “in remission.”

He taught that no one has a right to judge another about anything and that the believer is not to judge a preacher’s preaching (*Jack Hyles on Judgment*, 1992).

He taught that “it wasn’t God the Father that forgave; the Man, the human Christ Jesus, forgave.”

He prayed to his mother and asked for her intercession on behalf of his big numbers days.

Worst of all, Hyles was trite and even blasphemous in the way he spoke about Almighty God, which is doubtless a fundamental spiritual issue. He did not seem to have the fear of God. Consider the following description, for example, of how he described Christ as the Rock that followed the Israelites:

“[For 40 years there was] a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night and behind you comes a little rock saying, ‘Wait for me! Wait for me!’ And take that rod out and smite it again and the rock says, ‘Don’t hit me! That hurts! Just ask me; speak to me.’ And you look at the rock and say, ‘Rocky, want some water.’ Whoosh” (Hyles’ sermon “How About Those Who Never Saw the Promised Land?” Feb. 5, 1989).

Emphasis on Busyness and External

Jack Hyles’ doctrine of sanctification and Christian living, in practice, consisted of an emphasis on blind submission to authority, busyness in soul winning, and external appearance.

If a student or church member gave unquestioning loyalty to Hyles and his underlings, conformed to the external rules, and devoted himself to “soul winning” activities, he was considered a spiritual person regardless of how carnal his personal life or how much of a shambles his home life was.

Biblical holiness will result in obedience and zeal for souls and external modesty and busyness in Christ's service, but that is the fruit of holiness and not the essence. The external must flow from the internal; it must be a reflection of the internal. The change must flow from inside out.

I thank the Lord that the first IFB church I joined got this truly fundamental issue right and placed the emphasis where the emphasis should be, which is on the heart. They didn't immediately jump on me about my long hair and smoking and dress and music and movies. They were patient with me, spent time with me, disciplined me, taught me the Scriptures, taught me the principles of separation rather than a mere list of dos and don'ts. They loved me. They worked on my heart, and God worked on my appearance.

I'm not saying that a church should not preach on external standards of living. It should. It must! When the Bible says a woman should dress modestly and that long hair on a man is a shame and that the body is the temple of the Spirit, and when it tells us not to be conformed to the world and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, this is because God does care about the "externals."

What I am saying is that there must be the right emphasis, the right approach, the right balance. I am talking about not getting the cart before the horse.

The issue of sanctified Christian living is like the issue of salvation in this sense. We are saved by God's grace without works, but we are saved *unto* good works (Eph. 2:8-10). Thus, we must exhort God's people to good works, but the exhortation must be made on the basis of God's grace.

This is why the New Testament epistles typically begin with teaching on the believer's standing in Christ before emphasizing obedient living. In Ephesians, for example, Paul spends three chapters establishing the believer's standing in Christ before he gets to the believer's walk in this world. In Romans, Paul spends five chapters on the essence of the

gospel and justification and the believer's standing in Christ before he turns to the issue of sanctification and obedience.

The proper compulsion for Christian service and separation from the world comes from the reality of one's relationship with Christ and one's love for Christ and the prompting of the Holy Spirit. When Paul exhorted the believers in Rome to dedicate themselves to Christ and not to be conformed to this world, he did so on the basis of their standing in Christ and the fact that this is their "reasonable service" in light of God's great mercies (Romans 12:1-2). Paul didn't just demand external conformity and busy service apart from establishing the solid doctrinal foundation.

But Hyles actually mocked an emphasis on internal holiness as so-called "deeper life."

"Hyles spent much time ridiculing and attacking those he called the 'deeper life' people. According to him, these are the people who spend all their time studying the Scriptures and are not out soul-winning. This is all thoroughly documented" ("Jack Hyles: General Teachings/Activities," Biblical Discernment Ministries).

By Hyles' definition, the apostles and prophets who penned the New Testament would have been "deeper life" people!

Evangelism was a major theme of Christ's ministry and He has commissioned every believer to be an ambassador for the gospel, but if evangelism is the be-all and end-all of Christian living, we wonder why so much of the New Testament Scriptures deal with other things.

The apostle Paul set the standard when he proclaimed and emphasized the whole counsel of God rather than some select things that he turned into hobby horses (Acts 20:27).

Hyles even taught that God would overlook the sins of those who were great soul winners.

"The idea that soul winning covers all sins was being taught for years at First Baptist. Our teenagers would go

there and come back and would blatantly say, ‘We can do anything as long as we fill up the bus and get a bunch of souls saved.’ That’s not in the Bible. You don’t put soul winning first; you put God’s honor first. ... We’re pro soul winning, but soul winning doesn’t cover sin” (Roger Voegtlin, “Why I Am Not 100% for Hyles,” June 25, 1989).

In his sermon on Samson, Hyles preached that those who are busy in God’s work gain “stumbling insurance” and “merits” for times when they fall. He said, “God’s degree of patience with you when you stumble is determined by how fast you are running. ... Samson was so dedicated to God that God gave him so many merits that when the demerits came he had a bonus of merits left over and God used him again.”

In this sermon, Hyles gave the illustration of a preacher whose language is “R-rated” but God doesn’t judge him because of his “soul winning” and “how hard he works” and because he “preached a sermon on Hell and has 200 people saved.”

First of all, Samson wasn’t “dedicated to God”! Further, this teaching flies in the face of the truth of God’s Word in manifold ways. It is wrong in that the way of restoration to God’s fellowship is repentance and confession. It is wrong in that there is no merit system, no stumbling insurance. No man is so important to God that He overlooks his sin. The apostle Paul was probably the most “important” preacher in church history in many ways, but he knew that God would not hesitate to put him on a shelf if he did not live right.

“But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Cor. 9:27).

Unquestioning Loyalty

Another of Jack Hyles' fundamental errors is that he didn't teach his people to act as good Bereans and to test his life, teaching, and ministry by God's Word. He demanded unquestioning loyalty.

Questioning was treated as gossip and "critics" were treated as enemies.

At least one year at Pastors' School Hyles had a deacon come to the platform and sit in a chair. He then repeatedly ordered the deacon, "Stand up" -- "Sit down" -- "Stand up" -- "Sit down" -- "Stand up" -- "Sit down." Hyles did this to impress the visiting preachers with his power over people and to illustrate to them his cultic philosophy of pastoring, which is to demand of the people unquestioning obedience. (Among many others, Pastor Tom Watson of Warren, Michigan, witnessed this while attending Pastors' School in the 1990s, and he described it to me in May 2012.)

Hyles said on more than one occasion, "If I told my staff to jump off a bridge and commit suicide, they would do it." He said this, for example, in a sermon on March 5, 1989. He was probably right about that, because his staff were more the members of a man-centered cult than of a spiritually-healthy New Testament church.

During a Sunday sermon, Hyles held up a cup bearing the image of the skull and bones, which is a warning that the contents are poisonous. He said to Johnny Colsten, one of the men sitting behind him on the platform, "I'd like for you, if you don't mind, to drink this," and Colsten did not hesitate to drink the potential cool-aid ("Let Us Prey: Big Trouble at First Baptist," *Chicago Magazine*, January 2013).

Jack Hyles' daughter, Linda, said, "Every member was in complete obedience to my father. They didn't dare disagree or be disloyal, for fear of being publicly ridiculed or punished or banished for doing so. They didn't go on a vacation without

asking my dad’s permission, and if he had said to drink the Kool-aid, I’m not kidding, they would have” (Linda [Hyles] Murphrey’s testimony at the TEDxOjaiChange event in Ojai, California, April 5, 2012).

Jack Hyles’ daughter-in-law, Paula, who was Dave Hyles’ first wife, said: “The only thing I can tell you is that you are so totally brainwashed. It’s hard to believe. And now that I’ve had a chance to step back and take a look at it from a distance, to think that I was sucked up in that really scares me. But that’s what it is. They are so influenced by him that I think if he told them that he was a black man they would believe him. He really does have that kind of influence on those people” (Dave Coleman’s audio interview with Paula Hyles Polonco, Nov. 1, 1989).

Consider the following rules that were required of Hyles-Anderson College students under Hyles’ regime. (I don’t know if they still are.) These were handed out every year in work scholarship meetings for the Dean of Women, and a copy was given to me in 2000 by a student who graduated from there in 1989 and today is the wife of a pastor.

LOYALTY TO LEADERSHIP - HYLES ANDERSON COLLEGE

1. ALWAYS THINK THE LEADER IS RIGHT. Never give your opinion when the leader feels strongly.
4. DON’T CORRECT THE LEADER ANYTIME! The people are better off hearing a wrong answer than to see the leader put down by a follower. I look at it as a putdown when a leader is corrected.
8. ALWAYS DO ANYTHING THE LEADER ASKS WHETHER IT IS RIGHT OR NOT. Why? a. I trust him to not ask me to do something immoral or sinful! b. If I do something I think will hurt someone, it is him who is responsible to God for it.

15. NEVER SAY ANYTHING NEGATIVE ABOUT THE LEADER. Not even in a joke.

That is cultic!

When Hyles had been charged by many men of lying and covering up immorality, he went before his church and compared himself with God and instructed the people to trust him as they trust God! He said:

“It is impossible for us to understand God, so He does not require us to do so. We have never been God, so we cannot understand God. Because of this, all God asks of us is our faith, our trust, our confidence. You cannot understand me. NO ONE IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICA HAS EVER STOOD IN MY SHOES, SO I CANNOT ASK YOU TO UNDERSTAND. I CAN ASK YOU WHAT GOD ASKS; I WOULD HAVE LIKE TO HAVE YOUR TRUST, YOUR FAITH, YOUR CONFIDENCE” (Jack Hyles, cited from “Statement by the Indianapolis Baptist Temple on Breaking Fellowship With First Baptist Church, Hammond, Indiana,” February 12, 1992).

This is the ultimate in pomposity. In fact, it is idolatrous blasphemy!!

God is perfectly trustworthy, but every man is susceptible to error.

“It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man” (Psalms 118:8).

“Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help” (Psalms 146:3)

“Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD” (Jeremiah 17:5).

Hyles’ put himself above being tested by Scripture or reproved for sin and heresy, and he terribly abused the Scripture toward this end.

In the book *Jack Hyles on Justice* (Hyles-Anderson Publishers, 1992), which contains sermons he preached on Wednesday evenings, **Hyles emphasized six points that would make it impossible for a church to effectively discipline a pastor and that grant preachers the liberty to live and teach above human accountability.** These unscriptural principles, to various degrees and in various incarnations, have spread widely.

First, Hyles taught that the believer can only judge within the realm of his own authority.

“You are to judge in that area and not in any other area. ... Not only are you not to take any action about things outside your own area, but **YOU ARE NOT TO MAKE MENTAL JUDGMENTS OUTSIDE YOUR OWN AREA.** ... As pastor, I am to rule (lead), and my followers or members are to follow. ... God says everybody is to have his own area of judgment, and nobody is to interfere with anybody’s else’s area. ... It is not your job to figure out what the pastor ought to do in areas of his responsibilities. You are to judge only in your God-given areas. ... The Bible is telling us not to go into the other person’s area of judgment and criticize, even if we know the facts concerning a situation. ... Judging by hearsay and judging by fact are both wrong if it is outside of your area. ... You have been given an area where you are to judge. Outside of that area, you are not even to judge in your mind. You are to occupy yourself with judging your own area. ...

“When I go hear a preacher preach, I do not judge his sermon. I search for a blessing. God has not given me the responsibility of judging his preaching. ...

“If two witnesses come to you, **AND IF IT IS INSIDE YOUR JURISDICTION,** you must then investigate it” (*Jack Hyles on Justice*, pp. 4, 5, 7, 25, 26, 82).

This is a perfect principle for a man-centered cult. Hyles claimed that no one could judge him or hold him accountable or reprove him, including his own church members or pastors of other churches, because no one else could exercise within his realm of judgment. Others could not even judge his preaching or doctrine. They could not deal with his sin even if there were two witnesses, because they are not allowed to “judge” outside of their “jurisdiction.”

To the contrary, the Bible says the believer is to prove all things (1 Thess. 5:21). The spiritual man judges all things by God’s Word (1 Cor. 2:15). Paul was an apostle, but the Bereans tested his doctrine to see if it was of God (Acts 17:11). David and Herod were kings, but Nathan and John the Baptist did not hesitate to reprove them for their sin (2 Samuel 12:7; Mark 6:18). Paul had no church authority over Peter and the Jerusalem apostles, yet Paul did not hesitate to judge their hypocrisy (Gal. 2:11-14). When it came to judgment, Paul refused to be a respecter of persons. He said, “But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (WHATSOEVER THEY WERE, IT MAKETH NO MATTER TO ME: GOD ACCEPTETH NO MAN’S PERSON) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me” (Galatians 2:6).

Young Samuel didn’t have authority over the Tabernacle, but God told him to judge Eli, the high priest, for his sin of honoring his sons above God and “because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not” (1 Samuel 3).

This is precisely one of the sins that Jack Hyles was guilty of. Eli apparently had the Hyles’ philosophy that he should not listen to “evil speaking” about his sons, even if the reports were true.

Abigail didn’t have authority over her household, but she didn’t hesitate to judge her husband truthfully as a “man of Belial” and a man of “folly” and to take it upon herself to

intercede with David about her husband's wickedness (1 Samuel 25).

Second, Hyles taught that Christians are not to believe any statement or accusation unless it is made by two eyewitnesses who present their account together.

“If one person comes accusing a person, do not listen unless he is an eyewitness and has a second eyewitness with him. If someone comes to you and tells you something bad he heard about someone you are disobedient if you listen to it. If two witnesses come to you, AND IF IT IS INSIDE YOUR JURISDICTION, you must then investigate it. These two witnesses should come to you together and present their account together. We are not to read accusations against individuals in magazines or newspapers. We are not to listen to them on the radio or television. ... Often a person will come to me to tell me something he saw, and I will tell him that I refuse to receive it unless he has another witness” (pp. 82, 83).

False accusations and gossip are harmful to the cause of Christ, but Hyles went far beyond forbidding such things. He even forbade legitimate and spiritually profitable truth telling.

Contrary to Hyles' doctrine, the apostle Paul warned Timothy about false teachers, compromisers, and backsliders by name--such as Hymenaeus and Philetus (2 Tim. 2:16-18), Demas (2 Tim. 4:10), and Alexander the coppersmith (2 Tim. 4:14-15)--and Timothy listened to Paul's warnings without requiring two witnesses or without pondering whether these men were in his “jurisdiction.”

Note that Hyles warned his followers not to read accusations in print or to listen to them in any other media format. This is why his supporters refused to listen to the accusations that were made against him by R.L. Sumner and others. They wouldn't listen, even though multiple witnesses

were cited and thorough documentation was offered as evidence.

“Just after the public exposure [of Hyles], we tried to get meetings for our preachers in California, and word was spread of where I stood and we were blackballed in the state of California. I called up the fellow that was blackballing us and I said why don’t you at least read the article? He refused” (Roger Voegtlin, “Why I Am Not 100% for Hyles,” June 25, 1989).

Pastor Voegtlin and his people were blacklisted by Jack Trieber of North Valley Baptist Church in Santa Clara, California. Paul Chappell was Trieber’s youth pastor. Trieber promoted the 100% Hyles position.

One of the most frustrating things I have to deal with is the fact that so many preachers won’t read my exhortations for themselves. They depend on hearsay from some other man about what I am saying and they refuse to look into the matter themselves.

To ignore warnings about sin and error issued by Christ-loving men who provide solid evidence is foolish and is evidence of carnality rather than spirituality, of man-centeredness rather than Christ-centeredness, of a cult rather than a New Testament church.

Third, Hyles taught that it is a sin to accuse someone and a sin to listen to accusation.

“I always defend the accused (unless it concerns a broken civil law). I do not know whether or not the accused person did that which he is accused of doing, but I do know that the accuser is doing what the Devil does. He is accusing the brethren. The Devil is not a false accuser. He is a true accuser. If you accuse someone to me, I am the witness to your sin of accusing. A dear friend of mine who had been a preacher for many years called me one day. Years ago he quit the ministry, but I never knew why. He assumed I knew, so

he started to tell me about it. I stopped him and said to him, ‘I do not want to know what bad you did. I just want to know about all the good you did. ... I try never to believe criticism. ... I do not want to know what someone did that was wrong. I do not want to know what a fellow pastor did or was accused of doing. ... Often people will ask me if I heard the news about someone. I ask them if it is good or bad. If it’s bad, I stop them from telling me any more. I do not want to hear it” (*Jack Hyles on Justice*, pp. 48, 94).

Here we see Hyles admitting to his practice of ignoring sin committed by pastors, and he expected to receive the same treatment.

Hyles made no difference between biblical exposure of sin and error and evil speaking or slander. It was all the same to him. In his opinion, accusation or reproof is almost always evil and the one doing the accusing is an evil person.

He cited the Devil, saying that the Devil accuses the brethren in truth, but Jesus said the Devil is a liar (John 8:44). Even when he speaks truth, it is from a hateful spirit and is for the objective of spreading lies and tearing down God’s work. On the contrary, godly reproof is not of the Devil. Godly reproof is speaking the truth in love for the purpose of building up God’s work.

Note in the following quote how that Hyles lumped all “criticism” together with slander.

“If you spend your time with people who criticize and hurt people, you are on the road to becoming an evil person. You hear the evil report. This is what you will get around evil men--evil reports. If you are around evil men, they will criticize or slander and try to destroy somebody. ... When people try to tell me evil about someone, I tell them I do not want to know because I do not want to get on the road that leads to becoming evil” (p. 119).

Slander is to speak lies or to speak something against a person with the objective of hurting them or hurting the church. Godly judgment, godly criticism, and godly reproof is not slander and is not evil.

When the house of Chloe told Paul about the contentions in the church at Corinth, and when Paul warned Timothy about Demas and Alexander, and when John warned Gaius about Diotrephes' pride, that wasn't slander and it wasn't an evil report (1 Cor. 1:11; 2 Tim. 4; 3 John). When Paul listened to Chloe's "criticism," and when Timothy listened to Paul's "criticism," and when Gaius listened to John's "criticism," they were not pursuing evil. They were acting wisely.

It is wise to know about evil things so that you can avoid them and not be injured by them and so you can act on this knowledge in a godly manner, such as exercising church discipline or separating from harmful things.

If someone wants to join my church and I call his former church and ask about his character and whether or not he is under discipline, it is right for the pastor of that church to speak honestly and candidly about the person. If the individual has committed some disciplinary sin and has not made it right, it is wise to find this out before receiving him as a member. This is not evil doing or evil speaking. It is acting in godly wisdom.

If a church is considering calling a certain man as a pastor who is coming from another place, the church is wise to find out about the man's background, and it is wrong if a former church refuses to tell the truth about the man if there is something in his past that would disqualify him as a pastor, such as adultery and divorce. It is not evil to seek such information and it is not evil to give such information.

Hyles even taught a technique whereby if you hear an accusation, you can allegedly purge it from your mind.

"If you cannot stop it ['criticism'] and it gets on the screen of your mind, immediately say, 'It isn't true!' or 'I

don't believe it.' Then the next time you see that person or think of him, you will have those words entered right beside the accusation. If you do think of the accusation in your subconscious mind, it will be accompanied by the fact you do not believe it and that it is not true" (pp. 94, 95).

This is how Hyles could support so many unqualified pastors. He refused to listen to the truth that was spoken about them and he refused to act on the facts even when he knew them to be true. He was like the monkey who hears no evil and sees no evil.

Even backslidden old Eli didn't go this far in his sin. At least he believed the reports about his wicked sons and made a half-hearted effort to reprove them.

"Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord 's people to transgress. If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?" (1 Samuel 2:22-25).

Fourth, Hyles did not believe in church discipline.

"On ... occasions deacons have committed what we call 'gross sin.' I called those deacons in. If they admitted what they were accused of doing, I suggested that they resign the deacon board. I did not 'blab' it around! Those deacons have lovely families who do not need to bear the stigma of their daddy's sin, just because some preacher thought he was supposed to blab everybody's sin in front of the whole church. That is the way I handle it. I am not going to get up and broadcast everybody's sins. I am not going to call my deacons together and reveal why that man resigned" (pp. 53, 54).

This is presumptuous rebellion against the clear teaching of God's Word in 1 Corinthians 5 and elsewhere. Hyles followed his own thinking rather than the Bible, and his followers accepted it.

Because of his refusal to expose sins that should have been publicly disciplined, he allowed men to continue in their sin and oftentimes this resulted in people (including many children) being hurt by them at a later time.

This happened with Jack's son, Dave. Instead of disciplining Dave, Jack swept his sin under the rug all the time he was at First Baptist in Hammond, and when Dave was called to the pastorate of a church in Texas Jack did not warn the church of his son's moral perversion. As a result, Dave continued in his sin and destroyed many homes with his adulteries.

In the 1970s Roger Voegtlin was told about Dave Hyles' long history of moral perversion by one of Dave's best friends.

"I was preaching for Jim Maston in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Afterward we had a sandwich with Maston and his assistant pastor, who had been Dave Hyles' best friend in college. As we ate, he started telling stories about Dave Hyles. I mean in detail, naming names of people he had committed adultery with. Since then I've found it all to be true. One name after another, how he had an affair here, he had an affair there, and how he was messing with the teenagers and how there was so much going on. But he said Dave Hyles laughed about it and said, 'I'll never get caught because I have twice as much on my father.' I'm talking about in the 1970s I was told this. And Dave told the same story about his father and Jenny Nischick and how his father would sit in the window and see the lights flick on and off in Jenny's house and how he would see his father take off and go to the Nischick home" (Voegtlin, "Why I Am Not 100% for Hyles," June 25, 1989).

Dave Hyles' first wife, Paula, testified as follows in 1989:

“Did David’s dad know that he was adulterous before we went to Texas? The answer is definitely yes and there are a hundred people who know that. Why he lies about that I will never know. I went to him twice about things I had heard about Dave. One of the girls told me and Dave’s sister that she was sleeping with him, and we told his dad. Another occasion was the girl who was working at the cemetery. ... I told his dad about that.

“His dad’s philosophy is if I didn’t see it I don’t believe it. And I was the one who was made to look like the bad guy in both instances. It was going to be me and my big mouth that ruined my marriage, not David’s actions. So yes, he did know. ... There were so many mothers who went to him who David was having affairs with and told him. ...

“Dr. Hyles’ lying was blatant just like David’s. David told lies that he couldn’t possibly get away with. The problem is that his dad has set himself up so good, that everybody doubts everything because that’s how they have been taught. If you don’t see it, don’t believe it. Another philosophy of his is that he doesn’t want to hear anything, because then he doesn’t have to deal with it. ...

“I believe that Brother Hyles knows that David had moral problems from the day he hit puberty, but it has never been dealt with. I mean when I was dating David, the books that Hyles has written on teenagers and dating, we never did one thing that he taught. We never double dated. David came and went as he pleased. That boy had not one rule for his life. Never. He did what he wanted to do. I met him fresh out of high school. We both graduated the same year and went to college. He never had restrictions on his life. And his dad would get up and preach this and browbeat everybody to death to raise their kids that way, but David didn’t have to live that way. I would just sit there, and he would say [from

the pulpit], ‘My son David and Paula never single dated,’ and I would look at David and start laughing and think, ‘This is hilarious; I can’t believe that he gets up and says this.’

“His dad gave me six months of sex counseling before David and I got married, and I could nail him just with that and what he said to me. He was so interested in mine and David’s personal relationship. Every time we talked he would ask me if we kissed, and I would say yes, and he would ask me real intimate questions about what happened when we kissed. But the night we got married, he told everybody it was our first kiss! I about laughed in his face. I was embarrassed and humiliated that he said that, because David had kissed every other girl in the church, too, and they were all sitting there laughing.

“What I can’t comprehend is telling a lie that so many people know is a lie” (Paula Hyles Polonco’s audio interview with Dave Coleman, Nov. 1, 1989).

Because of Jack Hyles refusal to exercise church discipline, Dave Hyles committed immorality with at least 19 women in Texas and broke apart homes and caused the Lord only knows how much far-reaching spiritual damage. Like Eli, Jack Hyles enabled Dave to do this wickedness by not putting his foot down in a biblical manner.

This type of thing has happened countless times because of the refusal to exercise proper church discipline and the refusal to speak the truth about disciplinary type sins and the refusal to stand against pastors who have disqualified themselves from the ministry.

Fifth, Hyles taught that the only sin that is to be reproved publicly is the sin of accusation.

“Immature Christians use 1 Timothy 5:19-20 to defend publicly rebuking people before the entire church. That is ridiculous! Everyone sins ... What is this Scripture

teaching? There is only one sin mentioned here, and that is the sin of being a false witness. God is teaching us in His Word that false accusers should be rebuked before everybody. ... The sin discussed in 1 Timothy 5:19 is not the sin of the accused but the sin of the one doing the accusing” (p. 61).

This is another example of how that Hyles abused Scripture in a frightful manner. He turned this passage on its head and destroyed its effectiveness. The sin referred to in this passage is not the sin of accusation; it is sin committed by a pastor. It is not every sin; it is sin that would necessitate discipline, and such sins are described in 1 Corinthians 5:11.

According to Hyles’ perverted teaching, pastors are above discipline and cannot be rebuked by the church. The only members that can be rebuked publicly are those who bring a false accusation. This is contrary to 1 Timothy 5:19-20 as well as to other Scriptures such as 1 Corinthians 5 and Matthew 18:15-19.

Sixth, Hyles taught that God’s people need human heroes that should never be criticized.

“I still feel the same awe toward Dr. Lee Roberson as I did the first time I met him. The fact is that Dr. Roberson has grown even as I have grown. I do not assume that I have caught up to him, so he is still my hero! I was with Dr. John Rice for many years, and I knew he had feet of clay. I could have found his weaknesses if I had wanted to, but I did not want to because I wanted Dr. Rice to remain as my hero. In fact, I tried to avoid seeing his faults. I feel sorry for people who think they have grown to the level of their heroes. If you ever lose your heroes, you lose your security. ... Your life is not going to be rich if you lose your heroes. ... The best preacher will be the one with a hero” (pp. 58, 62).

There is no support for this in Scripture. It is idolatry. We are warned about giving blind loyalty to man. Jeremiah warned that we are cursed if we trust in man, because our trust must be in God alone (Jer. 17:5-7).

What unassailable human hero did Paul have? He was willing to publicly reprove even Peter (Galatians 2).

To give proper honor to godly people and spiritual authority figures is right, but it is also right to test authority figures, including one's own parents and pastors, with God's Word. This is not to claim that one has "surpassed them"; it is simply to recognize that no one is infallible and that the sole authority for faith and practice is the Bible and not some "hero" living today.

When it comes to hero worship, none has surpassed that which was given to Jack Hyles.

In his *Bus Manual*, Hyles told a story about a little boy who said, "God tied my shoe," after his shoe was tied by Hyles. "Hyles seemed to enjoy repeating this story, and even seemed to enjoy being mistaken for God" ("Jack Hyles: General Teaching/Activities," Biblical Discernment Ministries).

In her book *As I See Church Music*, Hyles' long-time organist Elaine Colsten made the following idolatrous statement:

"As an organist I CANNOT SEPARATE THE TWO-- GOD AND MY PASTOR. My pastor represents my Lord. My Lord has put my pastor in my church as my leader. I shall and I want to follow him. I have no right to do anything at the organ which would be in direct opposition to that which would please the pastor, for certainly in so doing I would also be displeasing my Lord."

For a church musician to want to please her pastor and to follow his direction is right and scriptural, but to go beyond this and to say that the pastor is her lord and to identify him with God Almighty is idolatry. A pastor is not God and he is

not to be followed blindly. God emphatically forbids pastors to be “lords over God’s heritage” (1 Peter 5:3).

If a pastor veers from the scriptural path, he is not to be followed. Apparently, though, had Hyles instructed this poor woman to play rock music or to dance the rumba, she would have done so.

I have received many letters and e-mails from Hyles supporters that reflect this blind loyalty. The following, from 2011, is an example:

“What kind of ‘Christian’ is a man that would critique a man of God like Hyles? How could you possibly say such horrible things about a man of God that is serving the Lord and doing exactly what God put him on this earth to do? Until you pastor the World’s Largest Sunday School, and see over 5,000 people saved in a day, you have no right to speak as you did about Dr. Jack Hyles. I WILL STAND FOR JACK HYLES, AND EVERYTHING HE PREACHES; I will not let anybody put him down.”

This thinking is not reflective of New Testament Christianity; it is cultic; and it has been promoted far and wide by Jack Hyles and by many other IFB preachers who have imitated his model of ministry.

Hyles was one of the main culprits in the spread of the unscriptural and very dangerous philosophy that influential pastors cannot be critiqued by God’s Word.

The fact is that I have every right and responsibility to test Jack Hyles and every other preacher with the Word of God. I have as much right to test Jack Hyles or Lee Roberson or Clarence Sexton or Paul Chappell as I do to test Billy Graham or Robert Schuller or Rick Warren or the Pope. The same Bible that tells me to test the latter tells me to test the former. Consider the following Scriptures:

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind,

and SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO" (Acts 17:11).

"PROVE ALL THINGS; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

"The simple believeth every word: but THE PRUDENT MAN LOOKETH WELL to his going" (Proverbs 14:15).

"Let the prophets speak two or three, and LET THE OTHER JUDGE" (1 Corinthians 14:29).

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but TRY THE SPIRITS whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1).

"Brethren, be followers together of me, and MARK THEM WHICH WALK so as ye have us for an ensample" (Philippians 3:17).

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and IN ALL JUDGMENT; That ye may APPROVE THINGS THAT ARE EXCELLENT; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ" (Philippians 1:9-10).

"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).

A carnal, critical attitude is wrong, but a testing mindset is right and necessary for spiritual protection.

The difference between these two things is described as follows by James:

"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the

wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy” (James 3:13-17).

“Criticism” and warning that is accompanied by bitter envying and strife and confusion is earthly, sensual, devilish, but godly “criticism” and warning will be characterized by meekness of wisdom, by a gentle and merciful attitude.

We can see this in the lives of church members. Some criticize the church and the leaders from a carnal, selfish disposition, whereby others apply scriptural tests from a disposition of sincerely desiring to please Christ.

When God’s people give unquestioning loyalty to their spiritual leaders there can be no correction of sin and error.

For church leaders to demand unquestioning loyalty and mindless obedience is a perversion of biblical truth and is the mark of a cult. The Bible gives authority to pastors and elders (Hebrews 13:7, 17), and that authority is very real, but it is not unlimited or unquestionable. Those who demand blind obedience from their people are not New Testament pastors; they are cult leaders.

Consider the following description of the authority that was wielded by James and Ellen White in the early days of Seventh-day Adventism:

“ELDER AND MRS. WHITE RAN AND RULED EVERYTHING WITH AN IRON HAND. Not a nomination to office, not a resolution, not an item of business was ever acted upon in business meetings till all had been first submitted to Elder White for his approval. Till years later, we never saw an opposition vote on any question, for no one dared to do it. Hence, all official voting was only a farce. The will of Elder White settled everything. If any one dared to oppose anything, however humbly, Elder White or wife quickly squelched him. LONG YEARS OF SUCH TRAINING

TAUGHT THE PEOPLE TO LET THEIR LEADERS THINK FOR THEM; HENCE, THEY ARE UNDER AS COMPLETE SUBJECTION AS ARE THE CATHOLICS” (D.M. Canright, *Seventh-day Adventism Renounced*, 1898).

This description was given by a man who was a faithful member of the Seventh-day Adventist cult empire for 28 years and who became one of its top leaders. D.M. Canright knew James and Ellen White intimately. He left Seventh-day Adventism in 1884 and became a Baptist pastor in Michigan until his death in 1919.

The frightful fact is that Canright’s description of the perverted authority that was exercised by James and Ellen White in their Adventist cult is a perfect description of Jack Hyles’ ministry.

When Canright exposed the error of Adventism, he was treated by them exactly like Hyles’ reprovers have been treated by many Baptists.

Consider the following testimony that could be multiplied endlessly from Hyles-Anderson College graduates who have spoken out about the cultic aspect of First Baptist of Hammond:

“My poor husband got only 3 to 4 hours sleep at night during the week while going to night college. I say college loosely, as his classes all consisted on how to build a church just like Jack Hyles, and the required readings were Hyles books or books by faculty extolling Hyles. Every night he was told how stupid he was, and lazy he was, and wicked he was, and his only salvation was this college and learning how to model himself after the great and wonderful Jack. Then came the weekend, but if I thought I’d actually get to see my husband, I had another thing in store for me. We were told the Sailor ministry (at Great Lakes Naval Training Center) was more ‘family-friendly’ than the bus ministry because we all could participate together. All that meant was that

our whole family was required to be their indentured servants. My husband left for the base at six in the morning, and I didn't see him again until four in the afternoon, when he would pass by me in line as I helped serve the meal we had prepared for 100 men. Then he was off again until midnight when he would return with five to ten men (sailors) who I would have a meal waiting for. Then they would all shower and we would make them a bed on our floors and lock ourselves and our children into our bedroom, then up the next morning at five to make the sailors a 'home-cooked breakfast.' Then a full day of preaching and feeding the sailors again at our ministry base.

"If you ever missed a week you were told you didn't love your sailors and wanted them all to go to Hell. There were weeks that our children only saw their dad for a few hours on Friday nights. It's amazing that they didn't seem to care if we loved our children enough to spend some time with them to keep them out of Hell, no wonder MOST of the faculty and staff kids ended up rebelling and leaving the place.

"Meanwhile, I was taking a few classes where I was told how I was not submissive enough, and was going to ruin my husband and his ministry if I had the audacity to complain about not seeing him enough. This was God's man and if he wasn't succeeding, it was my fault. Oh, if I could only be like Mrs. Hyles or Mrs. Evans. Once I was told there was an opening to do a job that was a HUGE honor. Just to be asked was considered prestigious and that I was doing God's business. It was to clean (for free of course) Mrs. Evans house, as she was too busy traveling and changing America to actually take care of her own home, or make her meals, or even do her hair and make-up every day. I was told 'America needs her' and to clean her house was a great honor. We were grunts there to do the bidding of these great men and women of God.

“To question anything was totally taboo, and considered disloyal. My husband and I after a few years of this felt so beat down and like complete failures it was easier just to go along rather than fight it. We knew by now the place was totally hypocritical, yet they still had enough sway over us not to leave. That would be the ultimate failure. People who left were spoken of in hushed tones, like someone who had died. Besides, where were we to go? Every other church that was not 100% Hyles, was bad. Our children would surely go to the devil out there in the abyss. After Jack Hyles died and the complete idolatry took over, we finally had had enough; to escape from there was worth all the recriminations we would receive.

“Well like most, we floated around not knowing what to believe or where to go (no one was TELLING us now). I went through a few years of bitterness from being so manipulated (how could they call themselves Christians), then sadness for the lost years, and finally now thankfulness to God for being freed from there. My husband went through an extreme period of depression and guilt. We finally feel like we have healed from the experience and are happy, if not a little wary, and back in church serving God.

“There is only one word to describe that place -- CULT! If not one of the sexual scandals or monetary escapades was true, what that place does on a day-to-day basis, to all those unfortunate enough to have fallen into their way, is enough to shut their doors forever” (from *Biblical Discernment Ministries*, <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/hyles/testim.htm>).

Self-promotion and Man Worship

The clear evidence of this was the fact that Hyles did not reprove those who wore “100% for Jack Hyles” buttons in the

late 1980s. In fact, the buttons were distributed at Hyles-Anderson as well as elsewhere.

This is carnal idolatry, and it went on because Hyles promoted it.

A godly pastor would have rejected such a thing in fear and trembling and would have reproved it publicly in no uncertain terms.

Hyles boasted that if he fell “fundamentalism would fall with him.”

He claimed that God had given him the “steering wheel of fundamentalism.”

He boasted, “This is the greatest church in the history of Christianity; we must protect it at all cost; without us, America is gone.”

He carried on shouting matches with his congregation, crying out, “Which is the greatest soul-winning church?” with the crowd screaming, “First Baptist Church,” and, “Who is the best-known preacher that stands for soul winning?” with the shouted reply, “Brother Hyles!” This would end with, “WE ARE THE GREATEST!”

Hyles said, “You cannot understand me; no one in the history of America has ever stood in my shoes.”

Wayne Wall observed:

“A cursory sampling of his [Jack Hyles] sermonic output betrays his hopeless propensity to make himself the hero of every story and illustration and depict himself in his sermons in the legendary proportions of his carefully crafted person around which he has built a personality cult rivaling that of Jim Jones” (“On Tootin’ One’s Own Horn,” *Biblical Evangelist*, July 1, 1992).

The students at Hyles-Anderson College treated Jack Hyles like a rock star. The following is a description of how he was treated by female Hyles-Anderson students at his own behest.

This testimony is from a Hyles graduate who wrote to me in December 26, 2001:

“Have you heard about those meetings Jack Hyles had with the college girls on Thursday nights? Unbelievable, but true! He wrote little ditties for us to sing to him like, ‘Look at all that hair, look at all that hair/ It’s the answer to a college maiden’s prayer/ It’s no joke that I’m provoked/ But I’m not allowed to stroke those bushy locks of Boopsie-Woopsie’s hair.’ The Boopsie-Woopsie name came from a woman who supposedly called him that many years before and he seemed to enjoy having us refer to him as that. Before he came out at the meetings, we used to clap our hands and raise our arms in a straight-arm salute (Nazi fashion) while screaming/ chanting, ‘Hyles! Hyles! Hyles!’ as in ‘Heil, Hitler!’ He never did anything to stop us from ‘worshipping’ him. He clearly enjoyed the hero worship. And it was literally worship. I can say that from my own experience, although I am ashamed to admit I did this.

“My husband and I thank the Lord all the time that He saw fit to deliver us from this cult. And I use that word in the strictest sense; it is a cult. I and legions of others held him up higher than God Himself. We would rather obey his word than anything, and he taught us that God speaks to us through our pastor, and that is what we believed.”

Hyles also taught the coeds the following song which they sang to the tune of “Come and Dine.”

“Where’s the beef, the women calleth
Where’s the beef?
As they gaze at bulging biceps of the chief.
There they drool with envy green,
While with jealousy they dream,
Wishing they could find a guy with equal beef.”

Hyles had his childhood home dismantled, shipped from Texas to Hammond, Indiana, and restored as a museum devoted to himself.

Though Hyles has been dead over ten years, the personality cult continues. The church had a massive mural of the man painted on one of the buildings and raised a third of a million dollars to build a statue of the man.

An entire magazine was devoted to “perpetuating and protecting the principles and philosophies of Dr. Jack Hyles” (*Independent Baptist Contender* by Pastor Tom Neal, Berean Baptist Church, Orange Park, Florida). The November-December 2002 issue mentioned Hyles at least 95 times by name, not to mention the pronouns referring to him, and featured an article entitled “The Mind of Dr. Jack Hyles.” Whereas Biblicists seek the mind of Christ, cultists seek the mind of their human leader. An advertisement stated that “genuine independent Baptists” identify themselves “with the brand of fundamentalism taught by Dr. Jack Hyles.”

In a letter he wrote to explain his absence from the 2001 Pastors’ School at First Baptist Church of Hammond--after Hyles’ death in February of that year--Neal said: “It has been said of me, and I consider it a great compliment, that Tom Neal is all about Jack Hyles. My agenda was to please him. ... every success I have, I owe to Pastors’ School and Dr. Hyles. ... It is my desire that Jesus and Bro. Hyles be proud of me” (March 29, 2001, reproduced at <http://jackhammer.wordpress.com/2007/10/19/kneeling-tom-neal/>).

(In 2001, Tom Neal’s son, Greg, associate pastor of Berean Baptist, was caught having secretly video recorded church women changing clothes. One of the video cassettes inadvertently turned up in a box of tapes that was given to a deacon, and it even showed Greg setting up the recording session, but it turned out that by the time the video cassette came to light the case was too old to prosecute. James Colaw,

Assistant State Attorney, told MSNBC: “While the evidence of his crimes of voyeurism in 2001 is overwhelming, unfortunately, the Statute of Limitations has expired. Consequently, there is no way to legally pursue a prosecution for these acts.” Following in the footsteps of his hero, Tom Neal protested his son’s innocence in spite of the evidence. See “Berean Baptist Pastor Tom Neal Insists ‘Peeping Tom’ Son Innocent,” Apprising Ministries, Aug. 18, 2011, apprising.org.)

There is a collection of songs in honor of Jack Hyles entitled *The Other Shore*.

There have been at least two Jack Hyles Memorial conferences.

There are many web sites devoted to Hyles. The one operated by Hyles-Anderson graduate David Stewart, for example, calls Jack Hyles “one of the greatest men ever to influence America for righteousness and God” and “the world’s greatest preacher.” Stewart says that “Americans owe a debt of gratitude which cannot be expressed in words to Pastor Jack Hyles.” Having drunk the unquestioning loyalty cool aid, Stewart likens Hyles’ critics to Hitler’s Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels and claims that the “innocent” Hyles was persecuted unjustly and “hated without a cause” after the same fashion as Jesus. Stewart makes the ridiculous claim that “Hyles enemies have failed to prove any of the malicious accusations against him ... there is not one shred of proof of any of the evil allegations,” obviously never having made the effort to examine the evidence.

And, typically, Stewart claims that those who “criticize” Hyles are men who have never built anything of substance and who merely attack Hyles out of jealousy. He says, “It’s amazing how someone who has never built a hotdog-stand will criticize a man who has built a great work for God.” This is the bottom line for Hyles fans.

Stewart treats the reprovers of Hyles as the enemies of God. He calls Hyles' critics "a bunch of lazy, deadbeat ministers." He says "they're slanderous individuals who dig and look for anything (no matter how trifle) to attack an innocent man."

There is no reasoning with this type of blind obedience and man worship. No amount of facts will convince someone like this that his hero is wrong. In fact, a man like this won't even look at the facts. Nothing that could be said will convince this man that Hyles' "critics" were motivated by love for Christ and truth.

The late Dayton Hobbs rightly observed:

"When the Word of God in lives of men and women is replaced by the cultish power of some preacher with a super-ego, sound judgment is affected and all kinds of weird and unscriptural things go on under the guise of the work of the Lord" (Hobbs, "The Personality Cult," *The Projector*, Spring 1989, p. 8).

Rampant Immorality

A lot could be said about the cover up of the grossest types of sins at First Baptist Church of Hammond, and at Hyles-Anderson College, and at many churches closely affiliated with this institution.

In *The Hyles Story*, Robert Sumner documented many cases of immorality associated with Hyles and First Baptist, including the following:

There was the case of the Smith brothers, prominent graduates of Hyles-Anderson.

Tim Smith, Hyles' son-in-law, had an extended relationship with a 17-year-old girl, taking her from Michigan to Florida and leaving his wife and children behind. Tim's assistant, Bob Yonkey, personally told the entire

sordid mess to Pastor Roger Voegtlin of Fairhaven Baptist Church.

Tim's brother, Terry Smith, Pastor of Canyon Creek Baptist Church near Dallas, Texas, another Hyles-Anderson graduate and pal of Dave Hyles, was exposed in *D Magazine* as making sexual advances toward or having affairs with several women.

The other Smith brother in Atlanta was wife swapping. The pastor and staff and deacons were wife swapping, and Smith finally divorced his wife and married a deacons's wife.

There was the immorality of the college physician, Dr. Dennis Streeter, who treated the coeds at the school.

There was the immorality of John Stancil and a young Hyles-Anderson coed named Youak while he was married to another woman named Brenda. He divorced Brenda and married the coed, but he had carried on an improper relationship with the girl for some time and had actually been seen by two women in Murfreesboro in a deeply compromising situation with this young woman. Hyles performed Stancil's second wedding and Stancil kept his job at the Sword of the Lord.

The director of Hyles' rescue mission was a womanizer and viewer of X-rated movies, especially ones dealing with incest. Though Hyles was given the rental receipts from the place where the man rented the videos, and though he was given evidence by two deacons that the same director was carrying on an adulterous affair, Hyles ignored the matter. The fact that there was a room set up in the rescue mission to facilitate homosexual liaisons was also exposed.

In his sermon "Why I Am Not 100% for Hyles," Pastor Roger Voegtlin of Fairhaven Baptist Church brought to light other cases of moral perversion that were ignored by Hyles. For example, he said:

"A man here in the church hired one of Hyles' deacons because he wanted a good Christian man to work with.

The man had worked a very short period of time when it was found that he was messing with the women. Dr. Bill Behrens went to his home. He wasn't there but his wife was there, and Behrens said, 'Do you know that your husband is a whoremonger?' She started crying and said, 'Oh, not again!' He does this every place he goes. Dr. Behrens asked, 'Does Dr. Hyles know about it?' She said, 'I go to him all the time and he does nothing.' That's one little example. This is a little tip of the iceberg.

...

"Hyles said he had never had anybody guilty of adultery kept on his staff, and I say he is a liar. He is a liar, because I know otherwise.

"I know a guy whose family was in this church for 15 years and was caught in the act of adultery, a well-known Hyles staff member caught in the act of adultery. He called me up and told me about it. He was upset because they were shipping his girlfriend. Not only that, but I know the guard that caught him in the act of adultery. What happened? They shipped the girl and moved him along in the ministry and if I named his name every pastor in America would know his name. ...

"I'm talking about a perversion. I'm talking about a cesspool. I'm talking about lies.

"Pastors in this area have run into the poor mothers whose daughters have been ruined by Dave Hyles. They have seen the sin and debauchery. They have seen the lies. They've seen it! It's like an oozing, pussing sore.

"Hyles has no standards for his deacons and staff. The Bible says we are to have standards. Every pastor, every deacon, is to be the husband of one wife, and that doesn't mean one at a time either. This has been a belief down through the years. You don't have divorced people on your staff, you don't have divorced people teaching, you don't have divorced people preaching, you don't

have divorced people on your deacon board. You don't have it! ...

“When we started this church [Fairhaven Baptist Church, Chesterton, Indiana] I remember telling my wife that the older preachers were teaching their children to be adulterers, because they were running around the country covering the sin of adultery in the pulpit and putting men that were guilty of adultery back into the ministry. We should love them, weep with them, do all we can for them, but the Bible never says to restore them to the pastorate. But all my ministry I have seen the leadership of the fundamental Baptist movement going around the country trying to cover up deep sin, the sin of adultery, and trying to put them back in the pulpit. And I told my wife more than once that they are teaching their children to commit adultery, because they are being taught that it's OK, that they will get by with it, that it will be covered up. And we are reaping that philosophy today. God's Word says, 'Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear' (1 Timothy 5:20).

“You see, a pastor has a special protection against gossip, and he needs it, but he also has a special accountability, and we need that, too” [See 1 Timothy 5:17-22.] (Roger Voegtlin, “Why I Am Not 100% for Hyles,” June 25, 1989).

First Baptist Church and many affiliated churches have been rocked by child molestation and even homosexual scandals.

Consider the following examples documented from R.L. Sumner's *Biblical Evangelist*, Biblical Discernment Ministries, and other sources:

A.V. Ballenger, a deacon and bus route driver at Hyles' First Baptist Church Hammond, was convicted in March 1993 and sentenced in June 1993 of molesting a seven-year-old girl two years earlier. Hyles told the girl's

parents, 'Deacon Ballenger just likes little girls.' After conviction, but prior to sentencing to five years in prison, Ballenger was allowed to resume his FBCH bus route!

Hyles' protégé Earl Reeves, pastor of Lighthouse Baptist Temple in San Diego, served eight years in prison for molesting young women and grade-school girls from his congregation.

Geoffrey Gerald, youth pastor of Calvary Park Baptist Church, Petersburg, Virginia, and a graduate of Hyles-Anderson, pleaded guilty to having sex with 11 young girls from his congregation.

William Beith, a Hyles-Anderson graduate who founded Liberty Baptist Church in Lake Station, Indiana, was arrested for public indecency for soliciting a male undercover police officer for sex.

Beith's son, Andy, another Hyles-Anderson student, was the principal of the school, even though he had been charged in 1990 with contributing to the delinquency of a minor by exposing himself to a 15-year-old girl. In 2001 Andy was charged with leaving the state with and having sex with an 11-year-old girl who was in his Christian school. He was convicted and sentenced in 2001 to 15 years in prison.

Kerry Martin, Hyles-Anderson graduate and pastor of Temecula Valley Baptist Church, California, was caught in 1997 in an immoral relationship with a 14-year-old girl. He was convicted and sent to prison.

Joseph Combs, popular Hyles-Anderson College faculty member (head of the Bible department) and founder of a church in Tennessee, was convicted in 2001 of aggravated kidnapping, aggravated assault, perjury, and eight counts of rape for abusing a girl he and his wife took in from an Indiana orphanage. There are more than 400 permanent scars on the girl's body resulting

from the physical abuse inflicted by Joseph and Evangeline Combs.

Hyles' supporter Pastor Bob Gray of Trinity Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Florida, was charged with abusing 21 women and men when they were children and was set to go on trial for this matter, which was testified by many witnesses, when he died in 2007. He had told the police that he did it because he was having problems with his first wife. In the 1990s he had been shunted off to Germany as a missionary when he was accused by some of his victims.

In 2007, Tony Denton, who was a counselor at Trinity Baptist in Jacksonville, pleaded guilty to charges that he molested three young girls when he was minister of music at Berean Baptist Church of Fayetteville, North Carolina. Dr. Don Boys, Christian author and former member of the Indiana House of Representatives, said, "I have observed a cover-up mentality in many large Baptist churches that seems to be systemic" ("Why Would a Baptist Church Hire an Accused Child Molester," *The Cutting Edge*, 2007).

In 2004, Russell Hirner was indicted on 15 counts of aggravated sexual assault in the molestation of at least seven young girls. Hirner was the principal of Longview Baptist Academy, operated by Longview Baptist Temple, Longview, Texas (pastored by Jack Hyles' number one fan Bob Gray, Sr.). In April 2005, Hirner was convicted of sexual assault and indecency with a child and sentenced to 15 years in prison. Two months later he pleaded guilty to two other charges in another county and was sentenced to an additional 40 years.

In May 2011, Pastor Chris Settlemoir of Antioch Baptist Church, Warren, Michigan, was sentenced to prison for sexual activity with underage boys ("Former Warren pastor Gets 7 Years for Molesting Boy, Accosting Another," Oakland

Press, Pontiac, Michigan, May 24, 2011). Settlemoir is a graduate of Hyles-Anderson College.

These frightful examples could be multiplied.

Under Hyles' ministry, the divorce rate at First Baptist among workers and students reached "epidemic proportions." Roger Voegtlin testified,

"I heard Dr. Evans, president of Hyles-Anderson College, say, 'It is a shame that we have more of our men that we have trained for the ministry divorced than we have in the pulpit'" ("Why I Am Not 100% for Hyles").

The fact is that First Baptist of Hammond did not operate as a New Testament church under Hyles' pastorate, because sin was not disciplined according to the guidelines of 1 Corinthians 5.

Consider the example of Hyles' son Dave, whom Jack called "the most brilliant, spiritual man I have ever met."

Roger Voegtlin says:

"Dave Hyles would make Jimmy Swaggart and Jim Bakker look like altar boys. Dave Hyles, having adultery with girls from the time he was a teenager, having it hidden, covered up, and being made a youth pastor at eighteen years old, and continuing his adulterous affairs. When it got too hot at First Baptist Church of Hammond, he was sent down to Dallas, Texas, and went on his merry way, committing adultery, having affairs, but God has *His* way. There was a certain brief case of his full of pictures of nude women he had affairs with. It was thrown in the garbage and discovered, made its way to the deacons, and Dave Hyles was exposed.

"Now I think the very saddest thing about Dave Hyles is not all the women that he ruined, even though that was sickening, it's not the babies, even though that is so sad, but it is the fact that the man that we considered the leader of the independent Baptist movement hid that sin. Let me take it another step further. A thing that is

sadder than him hiding it is the response of independent Baptist preachers across America allowing him to hide it and defending the fact that he hid it. There is something wrong with a movement that knows that their leader is hiding adulterous, sickening affairs and says we shouldn't say anything about it" ("Why I Am Not 100% for Hyles," June 25, 1989).

Jack Hyles said in his book *How to Rear Children*, "I have spent thousands of hours trying to make a man out of my son." In this book, Hyles described Dave as a self-controlled young man.

Dave was promoted as a youth pastor, evangelist, and later as a pastor by the gushing father, yet he was a serial fornicator and adulterer. I have talked personally with former staff members, church members, and people who knew Dave Hyles who confirmed this miserable fact.

Dave Hyles deserted his first wife, Paula, and ran off with Brenda Stevens.

According to Paula, Dave fathered four children out of wedlock (George Godfrey, "Why I Left Jack Hyles after Sixteen Years," Aug. 16, 1989). These included a son he fathered by his secretary Betty McCurdy. Paula Hyles intercepted a love letter from McCurdy in which she had included a photo of her and Dave's child, born out of wedlock (Roger Voegtlin, "Open Letter to Jack Hyles").

After Dave Hyles became pastor of Miller Road Baptist Church, Garland, Texas, a church his father pastored before coming to Hammond, he continued to abuse his position to seduce sensual women. He was fired after a briefcase was found in a dumpster by the janitor's son which contained pornographic pictures of Hyles and a deacon's daughter. He was involved with at least 19 different women. These facts were confirmed by men such as Robert Sumner, George Godfrey, Roger Voegtlin, and David Coleman.

Later Dave was kicked out of Berean Baptist Church of Orange Park, Florida, for immorality. This church is pastored by Hyles' fan Tom Neal.

Jack Hyles knew all along about Dave's immorality. In at least one case, he was informed directly by one of Dave's women. Robert Sumner testified:

"I received a heartbreaking letter from a lady who was one of Dave's victims, speaking of the psychological problems she is still having. By the way, she went to Jack Hyles when he was preaching in Garland and told him, 'I'm sleeping with your son.' She wanted help; she needed help. What was Hyles' response to this troubled young woman? First, don't tell anyone; second, move out of the State. (She did, but Dave visited her in that place, 700 miles away, and they continued the affair. When Hyles came to preach in that area, she confronted him again, 'We are still sleeping together,' again crying for the help she did not receive.)" (Sumner, *The Hyles Story*, chapter 5: "The Hyles Reply").

Jack Hyles blatantly lied about this miserable business, claiming in a letter to Ed Nelson in 1989 and in a letter to Robert Sumner and on other occasions that he didn't know his son was guilty of immorality when he left Hammond to pastor in Texas, and claiming that he did not recommend Dave to go there.

In fact, many reputable people have testified that he did know about Dave. Further, though he might not have directly recommended Dave to Miller Road Baptist, he talked with the deacons by phone and said, "Dave is his own man," leaving the impression that there were no serious problems and that they should be free to appoint him as pastor ("Statement by Indianapolis Baptist Temple on Breaking Fellowship with First Baptist Church, Hammond," Feb. 12, 1992).

This is an example of the way that Hyles parsed the facts. He said he didn't recommend Dave to the church, which is technically true perhaps, but he had clearly *not* informed the church of Dave's grave immorality, so he was surely culpable in the matter.

After Hyles stated to R.L. Sumner in a letter that he didn't know about Dave's immorality until the matter broke in 1984 when he was caught at Miller Road, Sumner replied:

“Jack, you flat lied to me in your letter and both of us know it. I am talking about you saying that you did not know of his problem before the Miller Road incident. Everyone else in Hammond did, almost. And minister after minister, school leader after school leader, church leader after church leader, faced you with his problems in those days. You were given written evidence, which you promised to take care of, yet did nothing. You knew of his affair with _____, too. It is this ‘cover-up’ of sin that is so wicked and now causes you to lie. Nor are you telling the truth when you say that the Miller Road church did not contact you in advance of calling him. It did” (*The Hyles Story*, chapter 5 “The Hyles Reply”).

These are two of the many cases that compelled a former Hyles associate to say, “Jack Hyles is the biggest liar that I know of” (Ronald Schaffer, “A Pastoral Reply to the Jack Hyles Issue,” July 16, 1989).

Immorality has been absolutely rife among members of First Baptist Church and graduates of Hyles-Anderson. Rife! I have preached in more than 550 churches in every state of the Union except Hawaii, and in 12 other countries, and everywhere I have traveled I have learned about fallen men who were associated closely with First Baptist and Hyles-Anderson College.

I knew several of these men personally and in many other cases I knew men personally who had firsthand knowledge of the dirty business.

One of the first IFB missionaries to Thailand was a Hyles-Anderson graduate who was caught in an adulterous situation with a Thai woman. It turned out that he had committed adultery as a student at Hyles-Anderson but was “restored.” This missionary confessed all of this to Missionary Cliff Honeycutt of Singapore and to Honeycutt’s church, and Honeycutt told me this himself in the 1980s.

One of the first Hyles-Anderson graduates to start a church in Washington state, Gary Dick, was eventually caught in an adulterous relationship with a church member (while his wife was having her own fling with another member). This man used to be a supporting pastor of our missionary work, and I met him after his moral downfall.

Another Hyles-Anderson graduate who pastored in Washington state that I knew personally, was caught in an immoral situation. He had a private peep hole into the women’s dressing area.

Jack Hyles himself was not innocent in this matter. Evidence was provided by Vic Nischik, a long-time deacon at First Baptist, proving that Hyles stole the affection of his wife (Hyles’ secretary), even if he didn’t actually commit physical adultery with her. It is said that where there is smoke there is fire; likewise, where there is longstanding passionate romantic steam there is probably adultery.

Vic Nischik testified:

“These were passionate love notes from Jack Hyles to Jennie, all signed ‘**YOUR ACHING GUY, JACK!**’ They expressed undying love, telling Jennie that she was the only woman he loved. ... There were references to secret meetings with him in different places” (Nischik, *The Wizard of God: My Life With Jack Hyles*, pp. 57, 58).

Nischik further stated:

“... my home was tampered with and my marriage deliberately wrecked by Jack Hyles. He stole my wife,

her loyalty and affection, and when the divorce hung in balance, [Hyles] unilaterally met with the two attorneys and negotiated the divorce settlement.”

Mr. Nischik’s is a very sad case, and we feel very sorry for the man; but it is also true that he had drunk deeply of the Hyles cool aid of his own free will.

Hyles arranged for Jennie Nischik to work as a secretary in an adjoining office in the late 1960s, and she would not allow her husband to touch her by 1971.

Her office had a door opening to Hyles’ office, but there was a drape in front of it on her side so that no one coming into her office could see it. Their offices each had a door opening to the hallway as well as the private door connecting the two rooms.

In 1989, Dave Hyles first wife, Paula, testified:

“There was definitely a door between their offices. I don’t know if there is right now. My understanding is that with all the stuff going on they’ve done something with it. But yes, there was most definitely a door. In fact, she kept it covered with a curtain. You could still see it from his office. You had to really look. There was a door knob there, but it looked like part of the paneling, and there was a picture hanging there, so you really had to be studying to notice that there was a door there from his office. When she put that curtain that went across the wall, it probably stuck out a good four feet from the wall and it went all the way across, so you had to go behind the curtain to see the door after she put that up” (Paula Hyles Polonco, audio interview with Dave Coleman, Nov. 1, 1989).

Bob Kirkland, Pastor of Fairhavens Baptist Church, Sarnia, Ontario, and a pioneer of Independent Baptist church planting in Canada, testifies, “I met with Jack Hyles in his office three times and I saw the door that he said did not exist” (“Dealing with Our Problems,” March 22, 2013).

Various other people testified of the existence of the door, including a preacher who was long associated with Hyles but left in 1988 because he could no longer tolerate the deception and who the following year wrote to Robert Sumner about the matter. This preacher, who had exalted Hyles as his hero for 20 years, loved the man deeply, and prayed for him passionately, approached him in fear and trembling about “the door.” The preacher quoted 1 Thessalonians 5:22, “Abstain from all appearance of evil,” but Hyles rejected God’s Word and brazenly replied, “My people need to trust me.”

(By the way, here we see the ineffectualness of the doctrine that a pastor should *only* be reproved in private. There are some who approached Hyles through the years in private, but they were either manipulated into backing down or they were simply rejected. Since the issues were not made public, Hyles was able to carry on with his sin under a cloak of seeming innocence. It is true that many things should be dealt with privately, but when it comes to the type of sin that would disqualify a man from the ministry, particularly a man who has a wide influence beyond the bounds of his own congregation, or when it comes to compromise that is harming God’s people and God’s work, that is no longer a private matter.)

The fact is that many people saw the door, yet Hyles brazenly lied about its existence, saying, “There IS no door.” This was technically true at the time, since it had been removed after the matter became public, but it was a brazen lie nonetheless.

Of all of the church members and visiting preachers who saw the door, why wasn’t there a loud chorus of voices lifted to expose Hyles’ lie? The reason is the heresy of “unquestioning loyalty” and the fear of man, which bringeth a snare (Prov. 29:25).

With America’s prominent Bible-believing preachers lying like this by abusing the tenses of verbs and with the Lord’s

people participating in the sin by their silence, it is no wonder that the nation's president testified under oath some years later, in regard to his own hanky-panky, that "it depends on what the definition of IS is."

In 1971, Hyles took Jennie and three other women to Hawaii and stayed in the same hotel, being the only male in the group. Hyles' wife was not on the trip.

In a scene right out of some cheap romance novel, Hyles arranged for Vic Nischik to sleep in the basement of his own house and to pay rent to Jennie. Later Hyles paid to have a room built for Vic over the garage, where he lived without being allowed any conjugal relationship with his wife.

When Nischik confronted Hyles in 1985 and demanded that he leave his wife alone, she filed for divorce at Hyles' insistence. Hyles made the arrangements for and settled the terms of the divorce, and Hyles even paid for it! After the divorce, Jennie moved into a brand new \$150,000 condominium at Hyles' generous behest.

Nischik twice tried to present the matter before the deacons of First Baptist, but he was not allowed a hearing. When he tried to read a three-page letter, Hyles cried out, "You are trying to destroy fundamentalism!" and the deacons chimed in by shouting the poor man down. Nischik's letter, which he later publicized, said in part, "... my home was tampered with and my marriage deliberately wrecked by Jack Hyles. He stole my wife, her loyalty and affection, and when the divorce hung in balance, unilaterally met with the two attorneys and negotiated the divorce settlement."

After Nischik went public with the dirty business, Hyles tried to blacken the man's reputation and turn attention away from his own deeds in a self-serving letter he mailed to 60,000 pastors. He claimed that he had long heard reports that Nischik was immoral, but the following important observation must be taken into consideration in this matter:

“Throughout all of this, Hyles being privy to most if not all of it by his own testimony, Vic remained a member in good standing of the First Baptist Church, song leader in Dr. Hyles’ own adult Sunday School class, choir member, a key worker in the bus ministry (where the ‘pickings’ would be delightful among love-starved, fatherless, teenage girls), a trustee of Hyles-Anderson College, a financial adviser and assistant who helped him obtain a \$1,500,000 loan for the purchase of the Hyles-Anderson campus, as well as a respected deacon in the First Baptist Church! On the basis of Dr. Hyles’ own admissions, I rest my case about the massive cover-up of sin under his leadership. In passing, it is interesting to note that Hyles’ evidence against Vic is loose, unsubstantiated, secondhand, hearsay gossip from unnamed sources” (Robert Sumner, *The Jack Hyles Story*, chapter 5: “The Hyles Reply”).

In the 1970s Dave Hyles told his best friend, who was later the assistant pastor of Jim Maston in Milwaukee, about how that Jenny would flick the lights on and off as a signal for Jack to go over to her house. Pastor Roger Voegtlin of Fairhaven Baptist Church testified:

“I was preaching for Jim Maston in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Afterward we had a sandwich with Maston and his assistant pastor, who had been Dave Hyles’ best friend in college. As we ate, he started telling stories about Dave Hyles. I mean in detail, naming names of people he had committed adultery with. ... he said Dave Hyles laughed about it and said, ‘I’ll never get caught because I have twice as much on my father.’ ... Dave told the same story about his father and Jenny Nischik and how his father would sit in the window and see the lights flick on and off in Jenny’s house and how he would see his father take off and go to the Nischik home” (“Why I’m Not 100% for Hyles”).

Pastor Voegtlin was told the sordid story of Hyles' affair with Jenny Nischik from the lips of one of Hyles' secretaries long before the matter became public.

"In 1973 one of Jack Hyles' secretaries, a lady that was raised in the church and worked directly with Dr. Hyles, came into my office against her will. Her husband was making her come. He was making her quit her job at First Baptist. As she cried, her husband said, 'You tell Pastor Voegtlin,' and she started her sad story. She said, 'Dr. Hyles is having an affair with Jenny Nischik.' I had never heard of Jenny Nischik. ... She told how that they were caught in a motel room. She talked about how that Mr. Nischik was living alone and Mrs. Nischik was living separately. She went into detail of what was later published by Robert Sumner. She told that story in detail, the flicking lights and all. That's the only family that has joined our church from First Baptist Church of Hammond directly. They joined the church, and as I recall they were members for about 10 years, and I had no reason whatsoever not to believe her, but I didn't want to believe it. She wasn't a gossip. She didn't want to tell me what she was telling, but I pushed it aside" (Voegtlin, "Why I'm Not 100% for Hyles").

It is telling that Vic Nischik's children gave their dad their "unqualified support." The daughter, Judy, testified in a public letter that her dad was the one who was wronged and that Hyles was the instigator of the trouble in her parents' marriage. She testified that Hyles supported her mother financially to the tune of many thousands of dollars, a matter which Jennie Nischik admitted under oath during the divorce proceedings.

During those proceedings Hyles admitted that he kept no record of his speaking honorariums, which doubtless amounted to tens of thousands of dollars, and that he deposited the checks and used the cash money as he pleased.

All of this and much more was documented by Robert Sumner in “The Saddest Story We Ever Published.”

There have always been moral failings among God’s people. We do not forget Noah, David, and Solomon, but we are talking here about an absolute plague of moral pollution.

The Hyles circle of IFBaptists has been as shockingly rife with immorality as the Roman Catholic priesthood.

(I thank the Lord that this is not true of many of the IFB “circles,” such as Bob Jones University and Tennessee Temple and Maranatha Baptist Bible College in Wisconsin and many others. Regardless of any failings they had, Dr. Jones and Dr. Roberson and Dr. Cederholm, to mention a few, were honorable men who set a godly example which has tended to good moral fruit in the lives and ministries of their graduates. There are BJU and Temple and Maranatha grads who have had moral blowouts, but those are the rare exception, and adultery and such is not a plague in these circles.)

Further, Hyles encouraged preachers to continue in the pastorate after they committed adultery, pedophilia, and even homosexuality. He helped men move from one part of the country to the other to escape their sordid reputations and continue in the ministry. On January 17, 1988, he said, “You are qualified to preach no matter what you did. If one confesses and forsakes his sin, he is free to preach or evangelize.”

We are all sinners, and how we thank the Lord for His great mercy and for the forgiveness He offers through the blood of Christ to those who confess their sins; but forgiveness is not the same as restoration to a privileged position. In particular, God has high moral standards for pastors, who are to be “blameless.”

A bank president who robs his bank can be forgiven if he repents and returns the money, but he should not be allowed back into the presidency of a bank or allowed unsupervised visits to the vault!

A pastor who commits adultery grievously violates the sacred trust that was committed to him and forfeits his qualification to pastor. If he truly repents and is properly restored, let him preach in a nursing home or on the streets or somewhere, but don't let him again re-occupy the position of pastor.

We can forgive a chicken-eating dog and keep him around the house, but we don't let him back near the chicken pen!

The Bible says that the truth is established at the mouth of two or three witnesses. Reports documenting the immorality at First Baptist of Hammond include the following, each of which offer substantial corroborative documentation.

Fundamental Seduction: The Jack Hyles Case by Voyle Glover, a lawyer and former member of First Baptist and long-time associate of Hyles (485 pages)

An Open Letter to Jack Hyles by George Godfrey, a professor at Hyles-Anderson for 16 years

The Wizard of God: My Life with Jack Hyles by Victor Nischik, former deacon of First Baptist

The Saddest Story We Ever Published by Evangelist Robert Sumner (1989) who received first-hand testimonies from a large number of people

Preying from the Pulpit--The Immoral Influences of Jack Hyles, a documentary exposé by a Detroit television station (available from Bible for Today, Collingswood, NJ, VHS or audio tape # 2354)

Sin in the Camp of Fundamentalists -- a report by 25 independent Baptist pastors who met at Indianapolis Baptist Temple in January 27, 1992, to examine Hyles' teaching and actions

Why I Am Not 100% for Hyles by Roger Voegtlin, an hour and a half sermon preached at Fairhaven Baptist Church, Chesterton, Indiana, June 25, 1989.

Many confronted Hyles about these matters, to no avail.

“Dr. Hyles was confronted twice in Deacon's Meetings at First Baptist Church with no success, and on several occasions good men of God in the spirit of Matthew 18:15-19 have tried to meet with him privately and publicly to no avail; but rather their acts of love were met with rebuff. ... Dr. Hyles has had numerous opportunities to clear his name of all charges. He has repeatedly refused to meet with good men to discuss these issues; or to meet face to face those who have accused him. Dr. Hyles appears to be trying to hide his outlandish sin and heresy behind the ‘success syndrome,’ namely, big crowds, big enrollment, big conferences, and big offerings. In conclusion, Dr. Hyles’ greatest sin, in our opinion, is the sin of pride” (“Statement by the Indianapolis Baptist Temple on Breaking Fellowship With First Baptist Church, Hammond, Indiana,” unanimous action of the Church on February 12, 1992).

King of Promotionalism

Jack Hyles was at the forefront of turning the house of God into a cheap three-ring circus with his pragmatic promotionalism philosophy.

This was the first thing that struck me as wrong as a student at Tennessee Temple in the 1970s. When I first arrived, I worked on the bus ministry and the cheap gimmickry was deeply disturbing to my soul. I wanted to see people saved and had been witnessing almost from the first day I came to Christ, but what I saw in the Hyles-type bus ministry was not simple Bible evangelism. It was a circus.

It was not the bus ministry that was the problem. There is absolutely nothing wrong with a church operating vans or buses to pick up people who want to attend services. The problem is turning a bus ministry into a numbers-crazed circus.

It was pretty much “get them in at any cost,” whether it was hiding money under a bus seat, giving away a bicycle,

dunking the preacher into a barrel of water, hosting a wrestling or judo contest, or bringing in the “flaming evangelist” (a preacher who lit himself on fire to the edification of all and sundry).

Dr. Faulkner, associate pastor of Highland Park Baptist Church in those days, described promotionalism to us preacher boys as “keeping it pumped up.”

As P.T. Barnum would testify, once you attract a crowd with a three-ring circus, you have to keep the show going.

And when it comes to children, it is hard enough as it is to work evangelistically with them and to discern their true motives and genuine heart's condition when they say they want to be saved, but this becomes nearly impossible when you are giving them things as an enticement to attend church and when you are hosting contests that promote numbers, numbers, numbers.

I have no doubt that many of the individuals involved in this type of thing were (and are) sincerely trying to win people to Christ. I believe that men like Wally Beebe (called “Mr. Bus” for his prominence in promoting bus ministries) genuinely loved souls. Many were sincere in their zeal for the promotionalism craze, but they were sincerely wrong!

The following is a description of a Hyles' Youth Conference promotion in 1992, which was advertised in *Revival Fires* magazine:

“The advertisement was disgraceful of Christianity and dishonoring to Christ. The picture in the ad consisted of a gangland-style car from the Al Capone days. In front was Dr. Jack Hyles, called ‘Big Mac Hyles,’ and his staff, ‘Wendell Da Weasel’ Evans, ‘Dead Eye Don’ Boyd, ‘Eddie Da Lip Lupina,’ ‘Machine Gun’ McSpadden, ‘Baby Face’ Owens, and ‘Chop Shop’ Schaap. All are dressed in clothing identified with the men from whom they took their nicknames. They are armed with pistols, machine guns, etc.

"A few years ago we saw the church disgraced by resorting to circus-style swallowing of goldfish to draw a crowd. Next the church was disgraced by using the 'lottery' giveaway gimmick to buy a crowd (a system which was revived at this year's Pastors' School; they gave away Dr. John R. Rice's car and diamond ring and thousands of dollars as a reward for attending). Now we see the church totally disgraced and drug through the mud by Dr. Hyles using props, clothing, facial expressions, nicknames, and weapons typical of gangsters. The nicknames represent some of the most ungodly, wicked, merciless thieves and murderers that the United States has ever known!

"The commentary in the [*Revival Fires*] ad was equally ungodly and Christ dishonoring. Speaking of the church, it says, 'Da Joint opens at 7:00 p.m.' Can the place where the church meets, for whom Christ died, possibly be 'Da Joint' which Dr. Hyles refers to? No! Ephesians 5:25 says, 'Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it.'

"The ad further states, 'Dees big services will be wit da Big Boss himself.' Dr. Hyles has claimed that should he tell people on his staff to commit suicide, they would obey him. [He has also said if he told his deacons to bow down and kiss his feet, they would do it.] It would appear that the name 'Big Boss' fits him better than the New Testament word 'pastor.' The office of pastor is an office of honor, dignity and esteem (1 Thes. 5:13; 1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Tim. 3:1-4). The name 'Big Boss' is identified with the world system.

"Two observations about this matter in closing: (1) I am not surprised at Dr. Hyles. No one should be. When a man is off on one matter and refuses to repent, he will shortly be off on two matters, then four, and so on. This principle is always true. (2) I am greatly surprised that some self-proclaimed fundamentalist groups continue to remain strangely and unexplainably silent on the

issue of Dr. Jack Hyles” (Dr. Al Dickerson, *Maranatha Baptist Watchman*, July 1992).

King of Numbers-ism

Jack Hyles was a prominent promoter of the carnal philosophy that big is best. Everything he did was corrupted by this craze for numbers. He had to have the biggest church, the biggest Sunday School, the biggest conferences, and biggest Bible college, the biggest promotions, the largest numbers of professions. He claimed to have personally led over 750,000 souls to Christ.

Consider the following announcement by Hyles of a 1993 meeting:

“THE LARGEST GATHERING OF INDEPENDENT, FUNDAMENTAL BAPTISTS IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICA WILL TAKE PLACE THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 18, 1993. I have reserved the 10,000-seat Amphitheater in Chicago for the closing session of Pastors’ School. I plan to have THE LARGEST largest INDEPENDENT, FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST CHOIR IN HISTORY to fill our hearts with music. I plan to have THE LARGEST BAPTISMAL SERVICE IN THE HISTORY OF INDEPENDENT, FUNDAMENTAL BAPTISTS in America, with five baptistries being used at the same time. Each delegate will receive a picture of this historic gathering and a souvenir with which to remember this amazing service. This is a ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME opportunity--do not miss it! Pastors, do not deprive your people of being present at this great gathering. They will always be able to say, ‘I was there.’ THERE HAS BEEN NOTHING LIKE IT IN THE PAST; perhaps there will be nothing like it in the future. Pastors’ School begins Monday, March 15, and closes with THIS GIGANTIC, SUPERCOLOSSAL HISTORIC GATHERING on March 18.”

I cannot imagine the apostle Paul making such a silly, braggadocious announcement!

Commenting on this in the December 1992 issue of *Observations*, Evangelist Richard Ciarrocca wisely stated:

“No doubt there will be many sincere independent, fundamental Baptists who will attend the Hyles event and will be taken in by all the glitz and glamour. In doing so, they would do well to weigh everything in light of God’s Word, not man’s feeble thinking. Is the atmosphere of the meeting one that is suitable for the worship of a thrice Holy God, or one that is more like an ecclesiastical sideshow? Is the Word of God preached and taught line upon line, and precept upon precept, or is a verse read at the beginning and rarely, if ever, referred to again in the message? Is the message a bunch of funny and/or sarcastic stories, or is it one that is saturated with the Word of God? Does one come away with a feeling of the hype of Hyles, or a sense of the holiness of God? During this annual pilgrimage to the Mecca of Hammond, many well-meaning but undiscerning Christians will be deceived. Be wise! Beware!”

Jack Hyles even had the audacity to claim that more people were saved in his church on May 3, 1998, than “at any church in the history of Christianity.”

Someone might argue that it is O.K. to report numbers because the Bible says 3,000 were saved on the day of Pentecost and 5,000 were saved some time later (Acts 2:41; 4:4). But these statistics were reported by the Holy Spirit rather than by some braggadocious preacher. You never see a preacher in the New Testament boasting of numbers or talking about numbers at all.

Further, the Lord is the only one who knows the spiritual reality behind the numbers and the numbers mentioned by the Spirit of God represented this REALITY!

Those who were saved on the day of Pentecost were really saved and gave evidence of this by the fact that they “continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42).

Judged by this immovable biblical standard, the active membership of Hyles' church would have increased dramatically had 15,000 actually been saved on May 3, 1998, but nothing like that happened. For the most part, the big numbers represented empty professions of faith.

Boasting about numbers is such a serious sin, because of man's vanity, that God judged David when he set out to number Israel's armies (2 Samuel 24:3-17).

In spite of the Bible's warning, bragging about numbers is very much alive and well among Hyles' fans. Consider the following amazing statement in an advertisement for a Bible conference in April 2012 featuring Bob Gray, Sr. at Faith Baptist Church, Oak Creek, Wisconsin. The pastor, Dean Noonon, has an honorary degree from Hyles-Anderson College, and Gray is the author of the amazingly-titled book “When Principle Was King: The Life Principles of Dr. Jack Hyles.” The flyer reads as follows:

“There is not a man alive who has personally won more souls to Christ than Dr. Bob Gray, Sr. He has been in the ministry for 39 years and daily wins souls. Last year he personally led 404 folks to Christ with 107 of those following the Lord in baptism. He has been used of God to see 1,116,887 souls come to Christ while pastoring the Longview Baptist Temple of Longview, Texas. It grew from a low of 159 to averaging 2,047 the last year he pastored, with his high days of 10,000. They ran 40 bus routes and had a large Sunday school program. He led the church to give \$9,328,835.69 to missions.”

To win 1.1 million souls over a 39 year period would require leading 77 people a day to Christ which would require witnessing to how many people per day? 200? 300?

Yet the church's Sunday School attendance averaged 2,000 rather than a million or even 200,000, and we wonder what the Wednesday evening attendance averaged? The million-dollar question is this: where are all of those souls?

The truth is that those statistics are devoid of spirituality reality, and the bragging is sin.

King of Quick Prayerism

Jack Hyles was also one of the greatest promoters of Quick Prayerism, which goes hand-in-hand with Big Numbers-ism. It is Quick Prayerism that is geared to get those numbers!

Quick Prayerism is an evangelistic methodology that is quick to get people to pray a sinner's prayer after a shallow gospel presentation and usually without any hint of the necessity of repentance (or redefining repentance to be the same as faith or to be a mere "change of mind").

It is quick to pronounce those people saved and to give them "assurance" and to try to baptize them even if they barely show any interest and even if they give zero biblical evidence of having been born again.

Frequently, Quick Prayerism incorporates psychological salesmanship manipulation. Hyles taught Quick Prayerism manipulation in his widely-used and broadly imitated soul winning course (e.g., ingratiate yourself with the individual, ask leading questions to get the candidate in the habit of answering yes, don't give the individual an opportunity to say no). (See "The Sword of the Lord and the Carl Hatch Squeeze" at the Way of Life web site -- www.wayoflife.org.)

In Quick Prayerism, an empty "sinner's prayer" typically replaces Holy Spirit conviction and miraculous regeneration.

Quick Prayerism is characterized by soul winning reports that are grossly exaggerated, since the number of real conversions (as evidenced by changed lives) are tiny compared to the overall statistics.

For example, Jack Hyles claimed that First Baptist saw thousands saved every year he was at Hammond, amounting to something like three-quarters of a million souls won to Christ under his ministry through 2001.

Schaap reported that many thousands more were saved under his ministry.

When I visited First Baptist of Hammond on Sunday morning, December 9, 2012, the preacher said that one small group of college girls led “25,000 souls to Christ” during Schaap’s pastorate.

The preacher somehow failed to ask those 25,000 souls to stand up that morning so the congregation could see them and be thrilled at such amazing fruit. The problem is that the place only seats 7,500 and the large balcony area was not half full, so it was obvious that the vast majority of those 25,000 “saved souls” were not in church that morning.

In the United States, a church’s active membership is reflected pretty closely by its mid-week service crowd. A friend who visited such a service at First Baptist on March 14, 2012, told me that there were no more than 700 people in attendance. Seven hundred! Of course, there were some in other places in the buildings, but not that many more. And many of those in attendance would be Hyles-Anderson students from other churches.

Thus, after allegedly winning a million or so people to Christ, the church’s faithful members, the true core of the church, can be counted in the hundreds.

That is Quick Prayerism.

We realize that not everyone that professes Christ will “pan out.” There will be false professions in any ministry, but Quick Prayerism is characterized by the amazing fact that *THE VAST MAJORITY* of its professions are *EMPTY*.

And we are not talking about any sort of sinless perfection on the part of converts. We know that believers grow at

different rates and exhibit different levels of discipleship and bring forth different levels of fruit. What we are warning about is a program that counts people as saved when there is ZERO evidence thereof: *zero* change, *zero* discipleship, *zero* fruit.

I call it “prayerism” because it focuses on a prayer. I call it “quick prayerism” because it specializes in quick presentations and quick decisions and an overall lack of spiritual and biblical depth.

Jack Hyles was one of the greatest promoters of Quick Prayerism. He promoted it through his bus ministry, his soul-winning courses, and his Pastors’ Conferences.

He claimed that tens of thousands were saved every year he was in Hammond, though these numbers did not reflect any level of reality in the active church family.

If three-quarters of a million people had actually been saved at First Baptist over the years of Hyles’ pastorate, that entire region would have been dramatically affected. The reality, as we have seen, is that most of the numbers were empty professions, and the apostle Paul plainly said that a profession must have evidence. The following is an apt description of the majority of the products of Quick Prayerism:

“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate” (Titus 1:16).

The following are two of the many testimonies we could offer to illustrate the Quick Prayerism that was practiced under Hyles’ ministry:

“I was at Fairhaven Baptist Church and College (Chesterton, Indiana, graduated in Spring 2000), and I saw firsthand instances where people from Hyles’ school would come to where we had bus kids, go through the entire area, gimmick them to a Saturday ‘church party’

and baptize them all to count them as 'saved.' It made me and my fellow bus workers very angry! Thankfully, they would then abandon them so that we could continue to take them to church and teach them the gospel of repentance and faith in Christ. There was one time that they did this in a project we picked kids up in, and they baptized practically everyone, except for one kid who we picked up regularly. We asked this kid why he did not get baptized and he told us that they had baptized him twice already and he did not want to be baptized again. He did not understand the gospel, so he was not born again. Anyway, I say all this to say that I am in agreement with you about the soul-damning results of Hyles-Anderson methodology and their anti-repentance theology."

"I am also one of those converts of Jack Hyles' bus ministry back in 1981. I was in the Navy stationed at Great Lakes NTC, when approached by two men from Hyles' Church. They 'whizzed' me through the Scriptures and kept asking, 'Do you believe?' I said 'Yes' out of politeness, but it was all so fast. It seemed like we went through the salvation plan in less than three minutes, then all the sudden we were praying and I was told I was going to go to Heaven. Wow! I felt like I had been dragged to salvation. I had no clue what I had just agreed to! I even went to the church and was baptized that Sunday. I don't ever remember saying or agreeing I should do this, but I found myself in this long line of men being baptized. I remember saying to myself, 'You better get baptized; you would not want to hurt anyone's feelings.' It was all at a very manic pace."

The statement, "It was all at a very manic pace," epitomizes Quick Prayerism.

Note, too, that the young Navy man wanted to be polite and didn't want to offend. An effective Quick Prayerism soul winner banks, perhaps unconsciously, on the fact that a lot of

people are “polite” and can be manipulated into praying a prayer.

I have a friend who pastored a fundamental Baptist church in northern Indiana near First Baptist. In 1980, a Hyles-Anderson student in his church obtained roughly 1,000 decision cards from First Baptist’s visitation ministry. They diligently followed up on these individuals but were extremely disappointed to find that *not even one* was interested in the things of Christ. The batch of professions was entirely void of spiritual reality. He testified to me that this opened his eyes to the danger of the Hyles approach to evangelism and underscored the duplicity of the reports that are published by First Baptist. I will not give his name, because I don’t want him subjected to the carnal harassment to which I have been subjected; but I have it on record, and the Lord knows.

Longview Baptist Temple in Longview, Texas, founded by Bob Gray Sr., which is one of the many churches that has patterned its ministry after the Hyles model, claimed that more than one million people have been won to Christ in 25 years (www.lbtministries.com/Pastor/Meet_Our_Pastor.htm). Yet on an average Wednesday evening service, which is the truest reflection of an American church’s active membership, you will find only a few hundred people in attendance. Literally hundreds of thousands of the souls that have been “won” are nowhere to be found.

In the late 1990s we were given the “decision” cards to follow-up on a county fair ministry in Oklahoma, but of the hundreds of professions that were recorded we could not find *even one* person who gave any evidence of salvation or was even interested in attending church.

A pastor friend followed up on the more than 100 “salvation decisions” that were made at a county fair ministry in Kentucky in 2011, and he *did not find one soul* who was even interested enough in Christ to attend church.

There is something wrong with this picture. It is great confusion and a very serious error, and Jack Hyles was one of the chiefest culprits in promoting this heresy.

For decades I have observed the sad fruit of Quick Prayerism: multitudes of false professions, false hopes, confusion about the nature of salvation, indifference to biblical truth, agnosticism, reprobate living, a weakening of the significance of church membership, neglect of church discipline, and blasphemy against God.

In many communities across the land a large percentage of the population has prayed a sinner's prayer through the outreach of churches practicing Quick Prayerism, though vast numbers of these have never been born again **and they are now almost inoculated to biblical salvation**. When challenged about their lifeless spiritual condition, they commonly reply, "I have done that," meaning they have gone through a Quick Prayerism Romans Road plan, prayed a prayer, and even been given assurance of salvation by a soul winner. Since they were not told that God requires that they repent of their rebellion against Him, they are comfortable and self-assured that they have a ticket to Heaven. Those who observe these things conclude that salvation means little or nothing in relation to one's manner of living.

For more on this see the free eBook *Fundamental Baptists and Quick Prayerism*, which is available at the Way of Life web site -- www.wayoflife.org.

King James Bible Nuttiness

I love the King James Bible and have stood for it on a textual basis ever since I settled the issue as a young missionary in the early 1980s. I use the King James out of conviction of its textual purity, its translational accuracy and dependability, its verbal beauty, and its peerless influence and

fruit. My *Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible & Christianity* is based strictly on the KJV.

But there is a large element within the IFB movement that treats the King James Bible in a truly nutty fashion, and Hyles was on that bandwagon.

Hyles even taught that no English-speaking person can be saved except through the King James Bible.

“According to I Peter 1:23 we read, ‘Being born again, not of corruptible seed...’ Then, if corruptible seed is used, one cannot be born again. I HAVE A CONVICTION AS DEEP AS MY SOUL THAT EVERY ENGLISH-SPEAKING PERSON WHO HAS EVER BEEN BORN AGAIN WAS BORN OF INCORRUPTIBLE SEED; THAT IS, THE KING JAMES BIBLE. Does that mean that if someone goes soul winning and takes a false Bible that the person who receives Christ is not saved? I believe with all of my soul that the incorruptible seed must have been used somewhere in that person’s life. If all a person has ever read is the Revised Standard Version, he cannot be born again, because corruptible seed is used...” (Hyles, *Enemies of Soul Winning*).

If the King James Bible is the incorruptible seed of God’s Word, meaning absolutely perfect in itself, and if people can’t be saved apart from the King James Bible, we would ask the following questions:

How were people saved before 1611? The first English Bible, the Wycliffe, was based on the Latin text, which was corrupt in many places, including its omission of “God” in 1 Timothy 3:16. The Tyndale Bible was a wonderful translation and much of it passed over intact to the KJV, as we have documented in *The Glorious Heritage of the King James Bible*; but it is also true that the KJV differs from the Tyndale in thousands of places.

We would also ask which edition of the KJV is “incorruptible,” since it has been changed in thousands of small and hundreds of significant ways since 1611? Is the incorruptible Word of God changeable and must it be corrected and improved?

This dilemma arises because of the nutty, cultic approach to the King James Bible, which actually stems from Peter Ruckman, with his heresies that the King James Bible is more than an accurate translation of the preserved Word of God, that it is in fact “advanced revelation” over the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, that the KJV was actually “given by inspiration.” This confuses the continuing process of Bible translation with the once-for-all process of divine inspiration.

The reason that such mindless heresy is accepted widely among IFB churches goes back to the shallow evangelism whereby many church members aren’t actually saved, and to the shallow level of discipleship which focuses largely on zeal for “soul winning” and conformity to a set of external rules, and to the shallow Bible preaching/teaching ministry that is so prevalent, and to the philosophy that the man of God is not to be questioned, however strange his doctrine -- all of which was exemplified by Jack Hyles.

(For more about this see the free eBook *What About Ruckman?* at the Way of Life web site -- www.wayoflife.org.)

Praying to the Dead

Jack Hyles prayed to his mother and believed that she interceded for him.

“Hyles claims to go once a week to the mausoleum where his mother's remains are interred and there he prays to her. In his prayer meeting talk on Dec. 3, 1987, he said, ‘I go to the cemetery and visit with her and speak to her. She can hear me, but I cannot hear her.’

“Hyles has pictures in his study of John R. Rice, Lester Roloff, his mother, and Lee Robertson. Before he leaves town on a speaking engagement, he says he follows this ritual: he stops before the picture of Rice and Roloff, promising them he will do his best; then he stops before the picture of his mother and asks her to intercede for him to do a good job while he is preaching.

“Not only does Hyles pray to the dead, he apparently prays for the dead. In a sermon on Feb. 7, 1988, ‘Full Reward,’ he said one of the reasons he was so driven in his ministry was that he hoped his efforts would lessen his father’s suffering in hell. That is full-blown Roman Catholicism, on two counts: first, in the matter of praying to the dead, and second, thinking something he could do would ease his lost father’s suffering in hell” (“Doctrinal Errors of Dr. Jack Hyles,” Biblical Discernment Ministries).

Jack Schaap

When Jack Hyles died in 2001, his son-in-law Jack Schaap (pronounced *skop*) took the helm of First Baptist Church of Hammond, and nothing of substance has changed, except that Schaap might be even more of a heretic than Hyles was. He is guilty of many of the errors practiced by Hyles as mentioned previously, plus some of his own.

The church has continued to be outwardly successful under Schaap's leadership. In 2002, it was leasing and operating 250 buses for its bus routes. Giving was up 37% since Hyles died and enrollment at Hyles-Anderson College was said to be at a 25-year high (*The Chicago Times*, Dec. 9, 2002, pp. A1, A12). In 2006, the church completed a new \$27 million auditorium.

Schaap has used Hyles' methodology to continue to build this empire.

He has continued the practice of bragging about professions produced by a Quick Prayerism program.

Consider First Baptist's Teenage Soul Winning Marathon on October 5, 2002. According to baptist-city.com, "over 9,500 souls were saved" through the efforts of the 300 teenage soul winners that day. That was an average of 31 "saved" per "soul winner" in one day, which is definitely Quick Prayerism!

Schaap has also continued to turn the house of God into a cheap circus through promotionalism.

In his Fall Campaign 2010, for example, Schaap got a big crowd by giving away a series of prizes worth \$250 each. Schaap had a television game show-like spinning wheel brought onto the church platform and the five men who brought the most visitors got to spin the wheel before the congregation. There were \$250 gift certificates from Ziggie's Funland, Best Buy, Elmer's Jewelers, Alberts, and Cabela's.

As the wheel was spinning, Schaap did some figuring and blurted out, “That’s \$12.50 per visitor. Not bad!” Not bad, indeed, if you care deeply about empty numbers and if you don’t care that you have turned the house of God into a three-ring circus and a trivial television game show.

I thank the Lord for many things I learned at Tennessee Temple in the 1970s, but this type of thing sickened my soul then and it sickens my soul today. I was young in the Lord when I went off to Bible School at age 24, but I had read the Bible through a couple of times by then and I knew that the promotionalism craze that I was witnessing was not New Testament Christianity.

I am convinced that many men who have bought into promotionalism are sincere in their desire to reach the lost, but it is possible to be sincerely wrong. Moses was sincerely wrong when he struck the rock instead of speaking to it and Uzzah was sincerely wrong when he touched the cart on which the ark was carried (Num. 20:11-12; 2 Sam. 6:6-7).

We don’t have the authority to do anything contrary to God’s Word or that would bring reproach to the gospel and the name of Christ.

In my wildest imagination I cannot conceive of the apostle Paul giving away gift certificates to Ziggy’s Funland or conducting gimmicky contests in order to draw a crowd. God’s Word forbids us to adopt the way of the heathen or to conform to the world (Jeremiah 10:2; Romans 12:2), and a wheel of fortune and a carnival side show is nothing if not worldly.

Further, what do the unsaved think when they learn that they were invited to church by someone who is in a position to win a prize?

I remember when I was invited to a Jack Van Impe crusade in Tampa, Florida, in about 1972 before I was converted. One of my hippie buddy’s sisters was an Independent Baptist and she had talked us into attending. When I saw Van Impe give

away prizes to those who brought the most visitors that night, I thought to myself, "Well, that is why they asked us to come." I was wrong, but this is how the lost person thinks, and the promotionalism thing plays right into it.

Lord's Supper and Sexual Union

Schaap's likening of the Lord's Supper to sexual union is clear evidence of how he abuses the Scripture to support his heresies.

In *Marriage: The Divine Intimacy*, Schaap writes:

"When a person takes the bread during the Lord's Supper he is not actually eating Christ's body. That person is saying, This element represents something. The person who deeply loves Christ understands that when he receives Christ as Saviour it is a spiritual intercourse. A person receives the body of Christ. A Christian is the female gender in this spiritual realm and God is the male gender of the spiritual realm. When a person receives Christ as Saviour he is receiving Christ as lover. ... Nothing symbolizes more of what God has with the believer like romantic, intimate, physical intimacies between husband and wife. The wife receives her husband's body. Ephesians 5:23 says that the husband is Christ in the home. When a wife receives her husband's body, she is saying, 'I just want to remind You, Christ, that I am receiving You'" (*Marriage: The Divine Intimacy*, Hyles Publications, 2005, pp. 42, 43).

Bible Reading and Sexual Union

The following is a further excerpt from Schaap's book *Marriage: The Divine Intimacy* --

"Psalm 119:30 says, 'I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.' That word *laid* is a sexual term which literally means the same thing as a man laying with a woman. God was saying that God's

laws should be as intimate as a marriage partner in a sexual liaison. In the next verse, David gets more graphic. ‘I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame.’ that word *stuck* means ‘the act of a man entering his wife’; it is sexual intercourse. God says that the Word of God should be the Christian’s lover, and nothing should be closer to him than the Bible. The Words of God are supposed to be the most intimate lover of his life” (Schaap, *Marriage: The Divine Intimacy*, p. 44).

Generational Spirits

Schaap taught the heresy of generational spirits and generational curses that must be removed by confessing the sins of one’s fathers.

“If a couple has problems with their romantic lives, one of the places to look for a cause is the previous generation. Each person should know his ancestral background enough to know if his parents or grandparents were unfaithful to each other. Most people are aware of what type of illicit behaviour was happening in their family.

“Many times we just ‘sweep’ our knowledge under the rug and divorce ourselves from the situation, but the Bible teaches that when one of our ancestors allows sexual sin to come into his or her life, then an unclean spirit invades that family. That unclean spirit may lie quietly dormant for a long time, just waiting for the right time to rear his ugly head. That unclean spirit rears his ugly head when a person comes under some type of pressure in a marriage or in the home when that person is feeling the least aware of what is happening.

“It is not uncommon for men to tell me, ‘I’ve never had a problem with pornography, but I turned on my computer, went on the internet looking for something

else and there it was.' A 'trigger' gets pulled, and the unclean spirit goes crazy.

"When a person has been taught well, a hidden 'trigger' has to exist that causes that person to cross lines. That trigger is dormant iniquity lying in the hearts of mankind placed there by previous generations. David voiced this truth when he said, 'I sinned. My father's sin is what I am committing. I never dealt with my father's sin.' When a person doesn't deal with his ancestor's sexual sins, those sins come back and haunt that person again and again. ...

"Christians need to confess the sins of their fathers. I believe it is very wise to go to the Lord and say, 'Lord, I have to admit that my father (or any other family member) committed sexual misconduct, and I know about it, God. I want to admit that I have their genes in me because in principle, I was in the loins with them. I want to confess the sin we committed and I want You to rid me of the iniquity that is in my heart'" (*Marriage: The Divine Intimacy*, pp. 49-52).

We see how that Schaap misused Scripture. This is not biblical exegesis; it is presumption.

The Bible says that sexual sins are lusts of the flesh (Galatians 5:19) and they are to be dealt with by confession and putting off the old man and putting on the new -- not confession of my father's sins, but confessions of MY sins (Eph. 4:22-24; 1 John 1:9).

Nowhere does the Bible teach us to dig into past generations in an attempt to root out alleged generational spirits.

Nowhere does the Bible teach married couples to deal with generational spirits or to confess the sins of their forefathers.

Prosperity Giving

In a series of sermons entitled “God’s Plan for Your Money,” Schaap borrows heavily from the prosperity heresy of Don Meares, a proponent of the “Kingdom Now” theology that claims “the church” will take over the world and be made wealthy before the return of Christ. Meares lives a lavish lifestyle and alleges that God is giving him new revelations, and he is associated with many of the most radical charismatics such as Oral Roberts, Kenneth Copeland, Rod Parsley, Benny Hinn, Paul Crouch, and Creflo Dollar, Jr.

Note the following quotes from Schaap’s series on money:

“The tither’s heart is protected from the world and Satan. ... The tither is not easily offended. ... The tither has special insight into God’s Word. ... The tither is a fruit bearer. ... God promises that the children of tithing parents will reach their potential. ... Those who have love and joy and peace and longsuffering and gentleness and goodness and faith and meekness and temperance are those who tithe” (Schaap, “God’s Plan for Your Money”).

“The windows [referring to Malachi 3:10] allow the tither to see into another dimension. That dimension allows the tither to rear his children, run his marriage, to have a happy home, and to have insight into Scripture” (Schaap, “God’s Plan for Your Money”).

The Bible does promise blessings on tithing and giving when done properly from a sanctified heart, but nowhere does God promise all of the aforementioned things as the fruit of tithing.

The doctrine that tithing brings “another dimension” has no biblical basis. The “windows of heaven” in Malachi 3:10 certainly refer to no such thing. This is another example of the frightful way that the two Jacks abuse the Bible. In fact, the other “dimension” heresy is the figment of a fevered

charismatic imagination. Note the following quote from *Why Tithe?* by Don Meares:

“When you tithe, you can expect God to open the windows of heaven and DIMENSIONS OF SPIRITUAL INSIGHT. You can expect God to show you your destiny, who you are and where you are to go. When you do not tithe, God will not show you anything.”

It is sad to see a fundamental Baptist preacher glibly borrowing such nonsense. Notice another statement from Schaap’s “God’s Plan for Your Money” --

“He was no longer Jacob the hustler, the shyster, or the trickster; he was Israel, a prince with God. ... Jacob said, ‘I saw who I really was. I saw what God’s destiny was for me,’ and that destiny was showed to a man who promised he would be a tither.”

Actually, Jacob was given the vision and promises of God BEFORE he pledged a tithe to God and his tithing had absolutely nothing to do with the divine covenant that he inherited or with the revelation that God gave him.

“You say, ‘What is that blessing?’ It’s the windows of Heaven. ‘What are the windows of Heaven?’ It’s that perception, that insight. No wonder Jeremiah understood that he was called from his mamma’s womb. I bet his daddy was a tither” (Schaap, “God’s Plan for Your Money”).

Schaap implies that Jeremiah received divine revelation because his father was a tither. What nonsense.

“[Referring to Matthew 13:23] Your ground is your heart. God says, ‘I have the power to produce fruit in your heart, and those who tithe will produce fruit in their heart when they hear the Word of God’” (Schaap, “God’s Plan for Your Money”).

Schaap supposedly quotes God here, but such a statement is not found in the Bible. It is a figment of his own

imagination. The reason that Schaap's people don't call him out on such business is that they aren't trained to interpret the Scripture properly and to test everything--including the preacher--by it. As we have seen, Hyles would often tell the people to close their Bibles and just listen to him. This is a recipe for spiritual destruction and the full fruit of it is yet to be seen at First Baptist in Hammond.

"Abraham tithed because he wanted God's blessing" (Schaap, "God's Plan for Your Money").

No, Abraham tithed because he already HAD God's blessing and he wanted to honor the God who had blessed him. Abraham didn't tithe until Genesis 14, but God had already blessed him in Genesis 12.

"Nobody is immune from the devourer touching his life, but God says, 'How would you like it if I personally walk up to that spirit that wants to give you a hard time and say, 'SIT DOWN!' Would that help you at all? God will control the spirit of the devourer, that spirit that hurts your marriage, that wounds your heart, that oppresses you. ... I love tithing! I sit there and put my tithe in and say, 'I'm protected! Don't mess with me!' You say, 'Do you think your hot stuff?' No, but I've got an awesome Bodyguard. I double-dog dare you to hurt me because I know Who protects me. Tithe! It's the best form of insurance you'll ever have" (Schaap, "God's Plan for Your Money").

Schaap says that tithing not only will bring prosperity, but it will also take care of ALL of one's problems. This is another new revelation.

"According to Genesis 4, offerings are associated with tithes. ... According to Genesis 4:4, Abel brought a tithe which was the firstling, and he brought an offering, in that order. ... The result of Abel's obedience is recorded in Genesis 4:4b, '... And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering.' God respected the obedience of the

obeyer; consequently, He could receive Abel's offering. Abel was qualified to make an offering because he had given God his firstfruits. Genesis 4:5 says, 'But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect...' Why? Because Cain had not obeyed by giving the tithe first. Obedience is the prerequisite for sacrifice" (Schaap, "God's Plan for Your Money").

This is a very dangerous bit of Scripture twisting and it touches upon the very gospel itself. Schaap is saying that God accepted Abel because he brought a tithe, not because he brought the bloody animal sacrifice that fore-figured the cross-work of Christ. In fact, Hebrews 11:4 says, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain..." Abel was not bringing a tithe; he was bringing a sacrifice, a sin offering. Hebrews 12:24 also plainly states that Abel's offering pointed to Christ.

Furthermore, Schaap claims that "obedience is the prerequisite for sacrifice." But if I must obey God before I can claim the blood of Christ, which is what was depicted by Abel's offering, that is a works gospel.

The way that Schaap plays around with Scripture and adds his own private interpretation is no light matter.

Law Not Nailed to the Cross

"Nowhere in the Bible does it say that the law was hung on the cross; the Bible says ordinances were hung on the cross" (Schaap, "God's Plan for Your Money").

Schaap claims that the moral commandments of the Mosaic Law, particularly the Ten Commandments, were not taken away by Christ. In fact, though, Paul says very plainly that the entire Mosaic Law was "done away" in Christ. In 2 Corinthians 3, he refers to that which was "written and engraven in stones" (verse 7). Obviously he is speaking of the Ten Commandments and the other laws that were delivered

on Mt. Sinai. Paul calls those commandments a “ministration of death” (v. 7) and a “ministration of condemnation” (v. 9). The reason for this is that man is sinful and he cannot keep God’s holy law. Thus the Mosaic law was given to reveal God’s holiness and man’s fallen condition and to point men to the Saviour, Jesus Christ (Romans 3:19-24; Gal. 3:10-13, 24-26).

Through the Holy Spirit, Paul plainly tells us that the entire Mosaic Law was “DONE AWAY” through the blood of Christ (2 Cor. 3:11). The believer is no longer under the law’s condemnation. When we come to Christ, we are no longer under the old schoolmaster (Gal. 3:24-25). We have died in Christ and have been raised to newness of life, as depicted by baptism. The law was nailed to Christ’s cross (Col. 2:10-14). The believer lives by a different, a higher, and a better law, which is called the “law of liberty” (James 1:25), “the royal law” (James 2:8), the “law of the Spirit” (Rom. 8:2), and the “law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2).

Vote for Pro-abortion Candidate

In 2005, Schapp told the students at Hyles-Anderson College that it is legitimate to vote for a pro-abortion candidate (“Half-baked Christianity,” Sept. 30, 2005).

It is legitimate to vote for a murderer of children? It is legitimate to vote for men or women who are responsible for continuing the wicked culture of death in modern society?

Jesus Did Not Know Who He Was

Schaap has preached the heresy that “Jesus did not know who He was when He was a little boy until Mary and Joseph told Him” (“If You Can’t Be a King, Be a Kingmaker,” sermon preached at Grace Baptist Church, Gaylord, Michigan).

Schaap claims that Mary and Joseph had to teach Jesus “all the points of the law” and that they are responsible for making Jesus into a king.

To the contrary, it was Mary and Joseph who were confused about who Jesus was, as we can see from His statement to them in Luke 2:49. The prophets said that the Messiah would trust in God from his mother's breasts (Psa. 22:9), which demonstrates His divine nature. This certainly cannot be said of any other infant!

Not all of the mysteries of the incarnation are revealed. We know that Jesus "increased in wisdom" (Luke 2:52), but we also know that He had the fulness of the Spirit without measure (John 3:34) and was led by the Spirit and operated by the Spirit (Luke 4:1, 14, 18; Mat. 12:18, 28). It was not His parents who taught Jesus who He was; it was the Spirit of God.

God Hates Men

Consider the following excerpts from Schaap's sermon "For Christ's Sake," preached in 2005 at the Reformer's Unanimous National Conference and at Pastors' School.

"God absolutely does not want to work with mankind. He does not want to reconcile with those He created" ("For Christ's Sake," p. 12).

"God says to the world, 'I am going to kill you! No, I believe I will kill you twice!'" ("For Christ's Sake," p. 8).

"God makes no personal house calls because if God saw you, He would kill you. He is that wrathful" ("For Christ's Sake," p. 12).

"God hates man and does not want to reconcile him and wants to destroy man, and the only reason that God doesn't destroy man is because Jesus begs to attempt a settlement between God and man. Jesus says, 'If I can arrange a contractual agreement where man agrees quietly and honestly that you are right and he is wrong, that he did the sinning and you were holy, I will put my life on the line. If I can't arrange a reconciliation, then

send them to hell, but if they agree that they are wrong, would you forgive them?’ God answered, ‘Only for your sake.’ Jesus said, ‘I’ll make it happen.’ ... When Jesus went back to heaven, God the Father said, ‘Well what happened? Did they accept your proposal? Were you able to negotiate a contract? Is there reconciliation?’ ‘Well, it’s like this,’ Jesus ventured. ‘I went to the most promising people [to propose the reconciliation]. ... They made fun of you. They put me on the cross! They stripped Me naked. They blasphemed Your Holy name! They are despicable creatures! Send them to Hell, Father! ... I suggest that we mark a date on our calendar, and on that date we burn the earth to ashes including every idol; every coin; every dollar bill; every temple; every human being; every grave; every crypt; and every blasphemous, ungodly, perverted, lying human being. Kill them! Burn them!’ The Father took out His pen, looked at His calendar for eternity, and said, ‘So ordered! The day of judgment is set!’”

This is unscriptural nonsense and blasphemous heresy. While it is true that sinners are under God’s wrath because of sin, it is not true that God hates men or that He does not want to reconcile with them. Though God is most definitely angry at man’s sin, the Bible plainly says that it was His love that compelled God the Father to send the Son to be the Saviour of the world (John 3:16; 1 John 3:16; 4:10, 14). God desires that all men be saved (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).

It is not true that God the Father had to be convinced by the Son to be reconciled with mankind. The Father, Son, and Spirit are one in mind and purpose and work. The plan of salvation was determined by God before the foundation of the earth (1 Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8).

God the Son didn’t have to scheme or “attempt” anything, and God the Father didn’t have to wonder what happened! God knows the beginning from the end.

This is another example of how that Schaap embellishes God's Word, as described in the following section.

Embellishing God's Word

Jack Schaap is even more adept at embellishing God's Word than his mentor and father-in-law.

The following timely warning about this is by Brian Snider <bksnider@gmail.com> --

“One definition of the word ‘embellish’ is to ‘to increase the interest of a story by adding details that are not true.’ For some reason, the story of Christ’s birth seems to bring out the embellishments in a way that other Bible stories do not. Nevertheless, it is a fearful thing to add to God’s word, no matter the reason or the seeming innocence of the details.

“This month (December 2010), Chuck Swindoll’s ‘Insight for Living’ program has been running a series entitled ‘An Imaginative Christmas.’ It’s a fitting title. In Swindoll’s retelling, Joseph and Mary are young (Mary 13 and Joseph 20) and when Mary’s pregnancy is discovered, she is in danger of an honor killing perpetrated on her by her family. The fact that she rose up and ‘went into the hill country with haste’ is because, Swindoll said, she was running for her life and seeking a hideout. Swindoll provides the dialogue between the innkeeper and his wife and the dialogue that supposedly took place in Mary’s family. He invents a ‘compromising Rabbi’ who married them and shares many other parts of the story that have been hidden for 2,000 years (e.g., Mary had hard labor and lay on the ground). Of course, Swindoll never claims that these things took place in that way, but he is such a master story teller, that he is able to create mental images of these fictional events that will never leave the hearers’ minds.

“Not to be outdone by the evangelicals, Independent Baptist pastor Jack Schaap has his own version of events of which he is just as certain. You were probably not aware that Mary was an old woman--an unattractive old maid--and Joseph was a broken down old man. ‘Extra-biblical readings tells us that Joseph died at 110,’ Schaap says. Mary and Joseph thought they’d never get married and were lucky to find each other. Joseph had been looked over by a lot of girls. ... he lived in a shack; he was ‘a nobody who was looking for anybody, and he found her.....Mary.’ She ‘might not have been the catch of the year’; she was ‘one of those unclaimed blessings ... middle aged, wrinkled, stoop shouldered, hair falling out.’

“You doubt this version of the story? ‘Facts are funny things,’ Schaap says, to make sure no one doubts the veracity of his version of events.

“Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:5,6 and Revelation 22:18 are serious warnings about adding to God’s word, and providing mythical embellishments in sermons should be taken very seriously. With Christmas myths abounding, let those of us who love the Lord and his Word cling close to the Bible and not forsake the plain truths we find there.”

Obama Born Again

Schaap says:

“Do you think Obama is the antichrist? No, I think he is a born again Christian if you want to know the truth of the matter. I’m kinda looking forward to Mr. Obama. I think it is wonderful. I think it is historic. I’m glad for him.”

When Schaap made this statement before Barack Obama took office, Obama had for 20 years been a member of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, one of the most liberal

of American churches. His pastor, Jeremiah Wright, is an antisemitic racist who believes the Jews control the White House and the state of Israel is “illegal” and who preaches a false gospel of black liberation theology and salvation through social justice, after the fashion of James Cone.

The fact is that every Bible believer should question Obama’s Christian faith. We are instructed to beware of wolves in sheep’s clothing (Matthew 7:15) and to prove all things by God’s Word (1 Thessalonians 5:21). We are taught that many who say “Lord, Lord” will be false Christians (Matthew 7:21-23). We are exhorted to mark those that profess Christ but teach contrary to God’s Word (Romans 16:17). We are warned of those who have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof and who profess Christ but deny Him in works (2 Timothy 3:5; Titus 1:16).

All of these warnings fit Barack Obama. He boldly supports the murder of unborn children who are formed by God in the womb (Psalm 139:15-16). As a senator in Illinois, he voted against a bill designed to prevent partial-birth abortion and promoted a bill to allow doctors to kill infants who were born alive through botched abortions (“Barack Obama on Abortion,” *OnTheIssues*, Nov. 22, 2009).

Obama promotes the “rights” of homosexuals who flaunt practices that God’s Word calls moral abominations. He has done more than any president in history to increase the rights of homosexuals and to decrease the rights of Bible believers.

In a 2004 interview with Cathleen Falsani published in part in the book *The God Factor: Inside the Spiritual Lives of Public People* and in full on the Sojourner’s web site, Obama defined heaven as something that might exist in the present rather than the future. He defined sin as “being out of alignment with my values” as opposed to the biblical definition of being out of alignment with God’s values or breaking God’s law. He said that he draws beliefs from all religions and that there are “many paths to the same place.”

By his own testimony, Obama has a false christ and a false gospel, and Schaap's recommendation of him as a born-again Christian whose presidency will be "wonderful" is inexcusable.

Mentoring A Rapper Church

In 2010, Schaap praised a raunchy emerging rapper church and claimed to be its mentor. The church, the Richmond Outreach Center (ROC), is pastored by Geronimo Aguilar.

Schaap said Aguilar has been attending Pastors' School for 10 years and was preceded there by his street biker father, Phil Aguilar, who, according to Schaap, "followed Brother Hyles to a T."

If there is such a thing as being "conformed to the world" (Romans 12:2), Phil has mastered it. His MySpace site features demonic-looking pictures of him and his friends decked out in their biker regalia, including Nazi helmet symbols. Phil produces a line of clothing called SoldierMade, which is advertised with profanities and immodest models.

Schaap says that Geronimo sought his counsel when founding the ROC in 2001 and meets with him every year for a day or two of private counsel. "He and I are very dear friends."

Schaap praises the Richmond Outreach Center as the "sixth fastest growing church in America, running 4,000 every week." Schaap told his congregation that Aguilar "knows where to find how to build a church." That's the bottom line for Schaap. His is an unscriptural, idolatrous pragmatism that worships "results," a philosophy that he inherited from Jack Hyles.

The "results" can be obtained by side-show promotionalism or by CCM and the contemporary no-standards, judge-not philosophy. Apparently it's all the same to Schaap.

The worship leader at Richmond Outreach Center is a rapper dude who goes by the moniker “Chill” Aguilar, and the “worship service” features raunchy performances by the congregation’s rap dancers. Chill’s web site praises filthy rockers such as Korn, Lynard Skynard, Prince, Morrissey, and Kid Rock.

We are thankful for every soul at Richmond Outreach Center that might have been truly born again and set free of drugs and alcohol, but they have not given up their raunchy music and sensual dancing, their immodest, unisex clothing styles, or their “be cool, live and let live” philosophy, and the result is a worldly confusion.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjVZGUWRJgA>

This is no light matter, as God’s Word warns, “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4).

Expand Base and Stop Criticizing

On Wednesday night, May 20, 2009, Schaap preached on the need for fundamental Baptists to broaden their base and stop being so narrow.

In fact, he said we must not criticize anyone at all.

He preached this as solemn counsel for the Hyles Anderson College students who were departing for summer break.

“We refuse to acknowledge that there are other saved people that are O.K. Brother Hyles had a great philosophy. As he got older he preached a sermon called ‘I Copy the Young Jack Hyles.’ I have been going through his books and I have been going through sermon notes and I’ve been going through sermons of when he was a young preacher, and I’ve gone back and copied in so many ways the young Jack Hyles. The

young Jack Hyles who came here when the church had over a thousand members and that church grew from 1959 to 11 years later it was declared the largest Sunday School in the world. And I looked at the people he ran with and the people he talked about and the friends he had and the archives.

“Dr. Ray Young is going through his files. And who he [Hyles] corresponded with and who he made friends with, and I marvel and say, Why have we cut everything off until we’ve just got this one tiny little part that’s our part? We’re getting smaller and smaller. ...

“The Bible says speak evil of no man. We cut ourselves loose about 30 years ago and we started adding to the Good News [condemnation of and separation from] everybody that we didn’t like. It was ‘Go Gospel, and I don’t like him.’

“I was thinking about all the people that got slaughtered by name across the pulpits of fundamentalism. And I wonder if God sat there listening to His men and said, ‘What are you doing in my pulpit? That’s a servant of mine you are talking about, and I know he’s got some flaws and weaknesses, but he doesn’t answer to you, son. He answers to me.’

“And I wonder how many men have been cut up and diced and sliced in our Christian movement and I’ve had to go into my prayer closet and get my attitude straight. I was talking to a group of guys this week, and one said, ‘Brother Schaap, I’m so ashamed when I go back 20 years ago when I got into the ministry, and I think of how arrogant I was and I just said things because everybody else was saying it, and I parroted all of the terribly critical things.’ And he mentioned five names, and I’m not going to mention the five names because I think I’d be crucified by the brethren if I did.

“When you’re never supposed to speak evil of any man and when it comes out of the mouths of the most

Christ-honoring, God-fearing, uplifting, holy men of God, and they are spitting it out, does God look at that and say, 'If my men are acting that way, where's my movement going to go?' Everything rises and falls on leadership. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. I wonder if our mouths have been cursing too many people and maybe God has put a little curse, or maybe a sizable curse, on us?

"I don't want anybody in this ministry to speak evil of any man. What they say about us or about you or any man, let's not worry about that. Let us worry about what comes out of our mouths. ... If this church controls its mouth then maybe God can look at our ministry and say, 'Well, at least there's one church that's keeping their mouth on the Good News. As you go out, college students, from this ministry this summer I want you to have your mouth engaged in the Good News. Good News. Souls saved.'" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNIt-0GKz9o&NR=1>

This is an extremely dangerous message based on half-truths and Scripture pulled out of context, but it further exemplifies Schaap's frightful lack of spiritual discernment.

Observe that Schaap does not even reference the verse he quotes. In fact, it is Titus 3:2, which says, "To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men."

The context is a warning to avoid the sins that characterized the believer before he was saved. See the next verse: "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another" (Titus 3:3).

Titus 3:2 does not forbid God's people to warn about compromisers and false teachers and sin and error in the churches. The apostle Paul warned about such things constantly. It was not evil speaking for Paul to warn about

Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Tim. 1:20) or Phygellus and Hermogenes (2 Tim. 1:15) or Hymenaeus and Philetus (2 Tim. 2:17) or Demas (2 Tim. 4:10) or Alexander (2 Tim. 4:14). It wasn't evil speaking for the house of Chloe to inform Paul of the sin in the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:11).

When I take God's Word and warn about the compromise and heresies of Rick Warren or Robert Schuller or Jack Hyles, that is not "evil speaking." Rather, that is obedience to 2 Timothy 4:2, which commands me to preach the Word with reproof and rebuke. It is obedience to God's command to mark them which teach contrary to His Word (Romans 16:17). It is obedience to the command of Philippians 3:17 to be followers of Paul's doctrine and practice as recorded in holy Scripture and to mark others by that holy example.

Schaap's philosophy will destroy the biblical principle of separation, which God has given us for spiritual protection. It will destroy a preacher's ability to effectively protect his flock from heretics and from compromisers who are not yet full-blown heretics but who are walking in a disobedient path that will eventually result in spiritual shipwreck.

Note that Schaap wants the liberty to enlarge his borders of association, though he is still hesitant of being very public about it and pushing it very far because of his fear of man. This is why he refused to name the "five names" of men that fundamental Baptists have been critical of in the past but that now we should stop criticizing. Could those names be Billy Graham or Jerry Falwell or Charles Swindoll or Luis Palau or who? He refuses to tell us how far he really wants to go in his associations, but time will tell.

Observe that Schaap grossly, libelously mischaracterizes a godly warning ministry. He labels it "evil speaking." He labels it "slaughter" and "dislike" and "slicing and dicing."

He implies that warning is something only done out of malice and ignorance. Some preachers might indeed be ignorant and hateful in their criticisms of other preachers,

but that's not what I am about and that's not what many godly men that I know are about. We warn and expose because we care about the truth and the cause of Jesus Christ and we desire to see churches remain pure in a dark world. We warn because we "esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right" and "hate every false way" (Psalm 119:128). God is our witness.

Observe, too, that Schaap says that the preacher should do nothing other than soul winning. That is pure Hylesism: soul winning is everything, and soul winning covers a multitude of sins.

If this is the case, why do we have such a large Bible that speaks of so many things other than soul winning? If the Romans Road is the only thing that matters, why doesn't Schaap throw away his Bible and just preach from a little card containing the plan of salvation? Obviously God made a mistake in giving us such a large Book that deals with so many different things!

Observe, too, the constant emphasis on numbers. Schaap has to remind his church that Hyles built the largest Sunday School in the world. God judged David when he numbered Israel, but Schaap would have us believe that God is well pleased with the numbers madness that has characterized Hylesism.

Observe, finally, that Schaap's authority is Jack Hyles. He says that he is patterning himself after Hyles. In fact, he relates the amazing, but not surprising, fact that Hyles was his own hero! The old Hyles followed the young Hyles!

I thought men were supposed to grow wiser with years, but Hyles was so perfect in his youth that he could not be improved upon even by an old Hyles.

Conclusion

First Baptist Church of Hammond, Indiana, is not a cult because it holds to Baptist doctrine or because it is strict about doctrine or because it believes in pastoral authority or because it believes in standards of modesty and separation from the world or because it is zealous about soul winning or because it uses only the King James Bible.

It is a cult because it abuses these good things and has created a shallow, hypocritical, unscriptural caricature of these things and because it makes its own tradition and its pastor's teaching equal in authority with God's Word and because it exalts a man to the position of lord.

I am an "independent fundamental Baptist," but I desire to be and intend to be Christ-centered and Biblical, first and foremost. I don't hesitate to name a cult a cult no matter what it might call itself, and I don't hesitate to distance myself from such things. I'm just a frail man that the Lord saved. I'm not a mighty anything in myself, but I'm not going to follow a crowd in error, I don't care how big the crowd, and I'm not going to keep quiet when the church of Christ is turned into a man-centered cult.

Someone might ask, "Are you saying that all IFB churches are cults?"

Absolutely not. I am saying that the two Jacks are cult leaders, and as for any other IFB church, if the shoe fits wear it!

If a man wakes up one day and finds that he has been following a cultic pattern of the church rather than a Scriptural one, the best policy is to repent of that error and turn in the right direction while he has the opportunity.

The solution to the problem we have discussed in this report is to move beyond criticizing error and to strive to do something right.

The solution is to dedicate ourselves to building spiritually-healthy, Christ-centered, Bible-based churches that stand unhesitatingly for the whole truth of God's Word and are separated from the world and apostasy, but that are pastored by godly men who are genuine shepherds rather than pontificating lords -- churches that are careful about salvation and are in no hurry to pronounce people saved when the evidence is lacking; churches that are careful in receiving members; churches that love people; churches that practice discipline when it is necessary; churches that feed the people on a solid diet of Scripture rightly divided; churches that are training the people to be disciples of Christ and followers of God, not man; churches that are building godly homes; churches that know that external separation is essential but it must reflect inner spiritual reality and that mere busyness and external stiffness without truth in the inner parts is vain religion; churches that pray; churches that worship God in spirit and in truth and do not conform their worship to the pattern of the world; churches that have an aggressive vision to preach the gospel to every soul but not by carnal means that are akin to worldly salesmanship campaigns.

Though we are frail and unworthy and always come short of that to which we aspire, these are the types of churches that we have always sought to plant because we know that these are the types of churches that please the Lord.

It is discouraging to see what is happening in churches, but it shouldn't surprise us in light of Bible prophecy, and it doesn't need to cause us to be disheartened.

I know a lot about the compromise and apostasy of the hour because of the research/warning aspect of my ministry, but I am by no means disheartened. In fact, I am very encouraged in the work of preaching the gospel and discipling believers and planting sound churches, and we are enjoying more fruit than ever.

I thank the Lord that there are many churches like the ones we described in the previous paragraph within the IFB movement, though they are most definitely in the minority. These are the churches that I am pleased to associate with and recommend.

As we said in a previous section, while it is important to be informed about apostasy, because knowledge is protection, above all we need to focus our attention on bearing fruit to the glory of Christ in this needy world while the opportunity exists. The harvest is great and the workers are few, and the New Testament church is God's program and the headquarters for world missions. It is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15), and the context does not refer to a "universal church"; rather it refers to the church that has pastors and deacons.

It is well enough to know about what others are doing that is wrong, but the question I need to ask myself is, "What am I doing for the cause of Christ?"

Church work is difficult work; it is building and battling; and many hands lighten the load. And as I have often said, the church needs every member and every member needs the church. Every sound church I know of needs more faithful people to stand in the gap. The need on mission fields such as South Asia cry out for laborers.

If there isn't a Christ-centered, Bible-based, spiritually-healthy church within commuting distance, I would most earnestly counsel you to pray about moving to where there is one. Then spend the rest of your life serving Christ in that church, doing everything you can to make its God-given mission "successful" and to help keep it on the right path. (See "Keys to Fruitful Church Membership" at the Way of Life web site -- wayoflife.org.)

If you contact us, we might be able to help you find a church that would be worth the move, but only if you know how to submit to godly pastoral leadership and are not a self-

willed, hyper-critical person. I am sorry that I have to add that qualification, but I have known too many people that fit this description to ignore it.

The Women Who Knew Jack Hyles

Jack Hyles is dead, but his life and testimony matters, because his influence is so pervasive even to this day. It is nearly impossible, in fact, to escape his influence among fundamental Baptists.

I am continually amazed at the pastors who defend Hyles, denying that he was a moral reprobate as well as a dictatorial cult leader.

One pastor wrote to me as follows:

“Jack Hyles was a personal friend. I knew the man. I have listened to over 1,000 sermons on tape which he preached in his own pulpit in the 70s and early 80s. I attended at least 12 Pastors’ Schools. I sent students there and hired graduates from HAC. I have sat in his office and he in mine. In fact, he has sat at my table in my home. It is easy to sit decades later and call that ministry a cult. Were there problems, particularly in the latter years? YES. But a cult, no. Hyles certainly had enemies -- back then, more so. Many rumors and much slander developed, some of which continues to rattle around to this day. You call him a liar. That is a strong statement. I knew the man first hand. You only know about him from a distance and years later. You call him an adulterer. However, the same deacons who investigated and fired Jack Schapp also investigated the charges of adultery against Jack Hyles and exonerated him.”

The pastor continued in this vein at some length, proving himself adept at building straw men, creating smoke screens, and straining at gnats.

In light of the firsthand testimonies that have been published, this pastor is simply closing his eyes to the truth, for whatever reason. There is a gross lack of spiritual discernment at play here.

It is a frightful fact that man's will drives his discernment. If a man doesn't want to believe something, he simply will not believe it. This is why the atheist doesn't believe in God and why the devoted Roman Catholic doesn't believe his church is apostate.

But even a saved man can deceive himself. If it were not so, the Bible would not thrice warn in the New Testament Epistles, "Be not deceived."

As to getting to the truth of the issue of Jack Hyles, let's not listen to his deacons, of whom he bragged publicly that they would have jumped off a bridge if he told them to do so. Hyles had deacons come forward during Pastor's School and would order them to "sit down," "stand up," "sit down," "stand up" repeatedly to demonstrate his unquestioning power over them.

Instead of hearing from Hyles' deacons, let's consider the testimonies of three women who knew Hyles far better and more intimately than the aforementioned Hyles defender knew him--better, in fact, than any pastor who is defending him today.

No person has perfect knowledge or perfect memory about events that occurred years in the past, and it is always possible to quibble about some detail of someone's story, as any court trial would demonstrate. Lawyers are trained to use minor mistakes to draw attention away from major facts. And it's not only lawyers who strain at gnats and swallow camels (Mat. 23:24).

Each of these testimonies agree in major points that should cause any Bible-believing preacher to reject Jack Hyles as a gross hypocrite who was unqualified to be a pastor and as a cult leader rather than a true shepherd under Jesus Christ.

The major points that these women agree on are these: that Hyles had a morally inappropriate relationship with a woman who was not his wife, that he lived a double life by deception, and that he was a cult leader who controlled his people as a

lord and not as a godly shepherd. The last point is just as unscriptural and wrong and dangerous as the first.

I have no spiritual respect for a preacher who defends Jack Hyles. I am reminded of the lessons of Proverbs 29:24-27 --

“Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth it not. The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe. Many seek the ruler's favour; but every man's judgment cometh from the Lord. An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked.”

We see in that passage, first, that refusal to separate from those who are immoral takes away the ability to protest their evil. This is what happens to preachers who continue to associate with men like Hyles and their defenders.

We see, second, that the fear of man brings a snare. The fear of man is as much a problem among preachers as it is among teenagers, and it makes a man weak and incapable of taking the proper stand for truth.

We see, third, that men naturally tend to have their eyes on “big men” rather than on the Lord. We can see men, but we can't see the Lord except through faith, and the preacher who is not walking by faith in God's Word will be a man pleaser. Having been an independent fundamental Baptist preacher for nearly 40 years, I am convinced that Bigism and Big-Manism is a *major* disease.

We see, fourth, that our attitude toward sin reveals the condition of our hearts. A just man will not look with favor on an unjust man. He will “abhor that which is evil” (Rom. 12:9).

FIRST, TO GIVE THE BACKGROUND, LET ME REMIND YOU OF THE FACTS PERTAINING TO HYLES' RELATIONSHIP WITH JENNIE NISCHIK.

Evidence was provided by Vic Nischik, a long-time deacon at First Baptist, proving that Jack Hyles stole the affection of his wife (Hyles' secretary), even if he didn't actually commit physical adultery with her. Where there is longstanding passionate romantic steam there is probably physical adultery, but certainly there is mental adultery. We will see that Jack Hyles's own daughter and Jennie Nischik's daughter both believe that the two had an adulterous affair.

Regardless of whether Hyles actually committed physical adultery, he was unquestionably guilty of a grossly improper relationship with a woman who was not his wife, and was thus disqualified to be a pastor. For a pastor to develop a romantic relationship with a church member is gross, gross abuse of his position and of his solemn marital vows.

Further, this was not just one pastor. This was not merely a simple local church issue. Jack Hyles set himself up as the saviour of "fundamentalism" and the pastor of pastors. His influence was vast. There should have been a cry against him from every Bible-believing Baptist pulpit in America. Instead, the silence was golden, and it still is.

The bravest voices lifted against him were the voices of women, the very women who had been hurt by this man's ungodly actions, women who showed themselves stronger than a huge number of weak-kneed, ostrich-like pastors.

Vic Nischik testified:

"These were passionate love notes from Jack Hyles to Jennie, all signed '**YOUR ACHING GUY, JACK!**' They expressed undying love, telling Jennie that she was the only woman he loved. ... There were references to secret meetings with him in different places" (Nischik, *The Wizard of God: My Life With Jack Hyles*, pp. 57, 58).

Her office had a door opening to Hyles' office, but there was a drape in front of it on her side so that no one coming into her office could see it. Their offices each had a door

opening to the hallway as well as the private door connecting the two rooms.

In 1989, Dave Hyles first wife, Paula, testified:

“There was definitely a door between their offices. I don’t know if there is right now. My understanding is that with all the stuff going on they’ve done something with it. But yes, there was most definitely a door. In fact, she kept it covered with a curtain. You could still see it from his office. You had to really look. There was a door knob there, but it looked like part of the paneling, and there was a picture hanging there, so you really had to be studying to notice that there was a door there from his office. When she put that curtain that went across the wall, it probably stuck out a good four feet from the wall and it went all the way across, so you had to go behind the curtain to see the door after she put that up” (Paula Hyles Polonco, audio interview with Dave Coleman, Nov. 1, 1989).

Bob Kirkland, Pastor of Fairhavens Baptist Church, Sarnia, Ontario, and a pioneer of Independent Baptist church planting in Canada, testifies, “I met with Jack Hyles in his office three times and I saw the door that he said did not exist” (“Dealing with Our Problems,” March 22, 2013).

Various other people testified of the existence of the door, including a preacher who was long associated with Hyles but left in 1988 because he could no longer tolerate the deception and who the following year wrote to Robert Sumner about the matter. This preacher, who had exalted Hyles as his hero for 20 years, loved the man deeply, and prayed for him passionately, approached him in fear and trembling about “the door.” The preacher quoted 1 Thessalonians 5:22, “Abstain from all appearance of evil,” but Hyles rejected God’s Word and brazenly replied, “My people need to trust me.”

(By the way, here we see the ineffectualness of the doctrine that a pastor should *only* be reprovved in private. There are

some who approached Hyles through the years in private, but they were either manipulated into backing down or they were simply rejected. Since the issues were not made public, Hyles was able to carry on with his sin under a cloak of seeming innocence. It is true that many things should be dealt with privately, but when it comes to the type of sin that would disqualify a man from the ministry, particularly a man who has a wide influence beyond the bounds of his own congregation, or when it comes to compromise that is harming God's people and God's work, that is no longer a private matter.)

The fact is that many people saw the door, yet Hyles brazenly lied about its existence, saying, "There IS no door." Though technically true at the time, since it had been removed after the matter became public, it was a brazen lie nonetheless.

Of all of the church members and visiting preachers who saw the door, why wasn't there a loud chorus of voices lifted to expose Hyles' lie? The reason is the heresy of "unquestioning loyalty" and the fear of man, which bringeth a snare (Prov. 29:25).

With America's prominent Bible-believing preachers lying like this by abusing the tenses of verbs and with the Lord's people participating in the sin by their silence, it is no wonder that the nation's president testified under oath some years later, in regard to his own hanky-panky, that "it depends on what the definition of IS is."

In 1971, Hyles, without his wife, took Jennie and three other women to Hawaii and stayed in the same hotel, being the only male in the group.

In a scene right out of some cheap romance novel, Hyles arranged for Vic Nischik to sleep in the basement of his own house and to pay rent to Jennie. Later Hyles paid to have a room built for Vic over the garage, where he lived without being allowed any conjugal relationship with his wife.

When Nischik confronted Hyles in 1985 and demanded that he leave his wife alone, she filed for divorce at Hyles' insistence. Hyles made the arrangements for and settled the terms of the divorce, and Hyles even paid for it! After the divorce, Jennie moved into a brand new \$150,000 condominium at Hyles' generous behest.

Nischik twice tried to present the matter before the deacons of First Baptist, but he was shut down. When he tried to read a three-page letter, Hyles cried out, "You are trying to destroy fundamentalism!" and the deacons chimed in by shouting the poor man down. Nischik's letter, which he later publicized, said in part,

"MY HOME WAS TAMPERED WITH AND MY MARRIAGE DELIBERATELY WRECKED BY JACK HYLES. HE STOLE MY WIFE, HER LOYALTY AND AFFECTION, and when the divorce hung in balance, unilaterally met with the two attorneys and negotiated the divorce settlement."

After Nischik went public with the dirty business, Hyles tried to blacken the man's reputation and turn attention away from his own deeds in a self-serving letter he mailed to 60,000 pastors. He claimed that he had long heard reports that Nischik was immoral, but the following important observation must be taken into consideration in this matter:

"Throughout all of this, Hyles being privy to most if not all of it by his own testimony, Vic remained a member in good standing of the First Baptist Church, song leader in Dr. Hyles' own adult Sunday School class, choir member, a key worker in the bus ministry (where the 'pickings' would be delightful among love-starved, fatherless, teenage girls), a trustee of Hyles-Anderson College, a financial adviser and assistant who helped him obtain a \$1,500,000 loan for the purchase of the Hyles-Anderson campus, as well as a respected deacon in the First Baptist Church! On the basis of Dr. Hyles'

own admissions, I rest my case about the massive cover-up of sin under his leadership. In passing, it is interesting to note that Hyles' evidence against Vic is loose, unsubstantiated, secondhand, hearsay gossip from unnamed sources" (Robert Sumner, *The Jack Hyles Story*, chapter 5: "The Hyles Reply").

The Testimony of Judy Nischik's Daughter

Letter to Jack Hyles

From Judy (Nischik) Johnson

October 1, 1986

As I am sure you are well aware, my husband and I are moving to the Los Angeles area this month. The culmination of many events in our lives brought us to the decision that we have made to move. By this letter I wish to express my thoughts on the role you have played in these events over the past fifteen-plus years.

I remember hearing once that it is not wise to put anything in writing that one would not want the entire world to see. (You know well the horrifying effects doing so can cause, don't you?) That thought prompted me to write you on my leaving, for it would be the pleasure of my life to have the entire world see in print my feelings on you, your establishment and your gross perversion of the sacred role of Pastor.

For over fifteen years I have watched and learned much from the circus that you have performed with the lives of those I love most in the world. With your own insecurities and personal failures as your driving force, you have quite simply played havoc with an entire church, some of my dearest friends and worst of all, my family. The saddest realization is that it has all been under the guise of Christianity. How I emerged from such a pit of secret sin, manipulation, and hypocrisy

with the slightest interest in my professed religion at all, I do not know.

Actually, I have become quite a person with these many lessons of life under my belt and must admit that you were quite a teacher. You exemplify everything in this life that I do not want for myself, my marriage or my children. I thank God for giving me the sense to decide not to become one of the neurotic puppets you employ. That decision and my close friendship with your ex-daughter-in-law (you remember her, don't you?) helped salvage what was left of my self-respect. In an incredibly short amount of time I have healed much and think I would surprise even you with the strength I have gained.

Incidentally, Paula and I have volumes of stories to swap, and it is interesting to see just how similar they are. What was it that you used to say, 'Little leopards have spots because big leopards have spots'? How true it is.

Sadly, in your very heart of hearts you must be the most miserable, lonely person alive. You are a self-proclaimed giant, sensationalist, exhibitionist, and 'big-time spender' grasping for every expression of love, admiration and loyalty that you can get your filthy little hands on. Yet, you have failed with the most precious gifts God could have ever given you – your wife, your children, and now, your ministry.

I pity you ... for you will be experiencing the consequences of your actions for a very long time. You may have convinced your following in the past twenty years that 'it did not happen if they did not see it,' but God has seen every moment of those years, and my faith will not let [me] believe that He will let you go unpunished.

With these thoughts expressed, I bathe myself of you and any influence you may have had on me in the past. With God's help, I will make my life in California

everything that He would have it be and, unlike you, will not fall.

Sincerely,

(Signed Judy Johnson)

After Hyles' son-in-law, Jack Schaap, got caught in an adulterous relationship with a teenager recently, Judy sent the following e-mail to David Gibbs, who is helping the church at this time:

From: Judy (Nischik) Johnson
To: Info@christianlaw.org
Date: Monday, August 6, 2012

Mr. Gibbs,

I just watched the video on the First Baptist Church website where you, Terry Duff and Eddie Lapina discussed the church's current scandal. Your statements that your investigation will reach far and wide, and that unbelievers will see at its conclusion that the church didn't try to hide wrong doing were encouraging.

If you mean what you said, you have a lot of work to do.

I'm Jennie Nischik's daughter. The earliest memory of my mother's affair with Jack Hyles that I can remember dates back to the 1960's. Maybe you could start your investigation there.

Both Terry Duff and Eddie Lapina can help you fill in the details. Terry was a deacon in the late 1980's when the deacon board rejected my family's appeal to them to -- finally -- deal with Jack Hyles and his decades-long affair with my mother. This, of course, was well after his son, Dave, had wreaked havoc on the youth department and had moved on to terrorize more than one church in Texas. Eddie Lapina was witness to all of that. But, of course, I'm not telling you anything you don't already know.

If you and your client really want to do the right thing, you'll face the fact that First Baptist Church has had a cancer growing in it for nearly 50 years. Forgive me, but the shock and awe of this latest scandal is only felt by those faithful who have turned a blind eye to the systemic corruption and sin that has plagued FBC for decades.

So, best of luck. I anxiously await the day that I can say with all honesty, "They did the right thing".

Judy Nischik Johnson

The Testimony of Jack Hyles' Daughter-in-law

The following are excerpts from Dave Coleman's Interview with Paula Hyles Polonco First wife of Jack Hyles' son, Dave, November 1, 1989.

Did David's dad know that he was adulterous before we went to Texas? The answer is definitely yes and there are a hundred people who know that. Why he lies about that I will never know. I went to him twice about things I had heard about Dave. One of the girls told me and Dave's sister that she was sleeping with him, and we told his dad. Another occasion was the girl who was working at the cemetery. ... I told his dad about that.

His dad's philosophy is if I didn't see it I don't believe it. And I was the one who was made to look like the bad guy in both instances. It was going to be me and my big mouth that ruined my marriage, not David's actions. So yes, he did know. ... There were so many mothers who went to him who David was having affairs with and told him. ... Brother Evans' daughter was one of the ones that David had an affair with. ... Dr. Hyles' lying was blatant just like David's. David was a blatant liar. He told lies that he couldn't possibly get away with. The problem is that his dad has set himself up so good, that everybody doubts everything because that's how they have been

taught. If you don't see it, don't believe it. Another philosophy of his is that he doesn't want to hear anything, because then he doesn't have to deal with it.

When all of this happened with our church in Garland, his dad didn't want to hear it.

I believe that Brother Hyles knows that David had moral problems from the day he hit puberty, but it has never been dealt with. I mean when I was dating David, the books that Hyles has written on teenagers and dating, we never did one thing that he taught. We never double dated. He came and went as he pleased. That boy had not one rule for his life. Never. He did what he wanted to do. I met him fresh out of high school. We both graduated the same year and went to college. He never had restrictions on his life. And his dad would get up and preach this and browbeat everybody to death to do their kids that way, but David didn't have to live that way. I would just sit there, and he would say, 'My son David and Paula never single dated,' and I would look at David and start laughing and think, 'This is hilarious; I can't believe that he gets up and says this.' His dad gave me six months of sex counseling before David and I got married, and I could nail him just with that and what he said to me. He was so interested in mine and David's personal relationship. Every time we talked he would ask me if we kissed, and I would say yes, and he would ask me real intimate questions about when we kissed and what happened when we kissed. And the night we got married, he told everybody it was our first kiss! I about laughed in his face. I was embarrassed and humiliated that he said that, because David had kissed every other girl in the church, too, and they were all sitting there laughing. What I can't comprehend is telling a lie that so many people know is a lie.

There was definitely a door between their offices [Jack Hyles' and Jenny Nischik's offices]. I don't know if there is right now. My understanding is that with all the stuff going on they've done something with it. But yes, there is most definitely a door. In fact, she kept it covered with a curtain. You could still see it from his office. You had to really look. There was a door knob there, but it looked like part of the paneling, and there was a picture hanging there, so you really had to be studying to notice that there was a door there from his office. When she put that curtain that went across the wall, it probably stuck out a good four feet from the wall and it went all the way across, so you had to go behind the curtain to see the door after she put that up.

[As to why the people at First Baptist allowed these things to go on] the only thing I can tell you is that you are so totally brainwashed. It's hard to believe. And now that I've had a chance to step back and take a look at it from a distance, to think that I was sucked up in that really scares me. But that's what it is. They are so influenced by him that I think if he told them that he was a black man they would believe him. He really does have that kind of influence on those people.

Do I have any reason to believe that the Hyles don't love each other? Yes, they haven't slept together in probably 25 years, they don't share the same bedroom, they don't speak. ... He's never said that he loved Mrs. Hyles. He's never spoken of her in endearing terms.

(The previous are excerpts from Dave Coleman's Interview with Paula Hyles Polonco, first wife of Jack Hyles' son Dave, November 1, 1989).

The Testimony of Jack Hyles' Own Daughter

On August 7, 2012, nearly five months after the first edition of this book was published, I watched a very sad testimony by the daughter of the late Jack Hyles. Today her name is Linda Murphrey and it appears from this testimony that she has rejected biblical Christianity because of the hypocrisy she witnessed growing up in the home of the man who said God had given him “the steering wheel of fundamentalism” and who boasted that his church “was the greatest church in the history of Christianity.”

In her 11-minute life story Linda mentions God only once and entirely leaves out Jesus Christ, the Bible, the new birth, and salvation through the cross.

Rejection of the truth of the Bible is oftentimes the fruit of a “Christian” cult, but it doesn’t have to be. Everyone growing up in a Christian home sees some type of hypocrisy and witnesses some level of less than perfect Christian living, because at his best the Bible-believing Christian is only a sinner saved by God’s grace. That’s not an excuse; its a fact. The apostle John said, “if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves” (1 John 1:8). The apostle Paul, who in my estimation was the greatest Christian who ever lived, called himself the chief of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15) and said, “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing” (Romans 7:18).

The Baptist church I grew up in was spiritually lukewarm at best and was filled with hypocrisy. But that doesn’t disprove the truth of God’s Word and the gospel of Jesus Christ. Other people’s hypocrisy is no excuse for my lack of faith in Christ. If others fail to live up to their Christian testimony that does not mean that I should follow in their footsteps or throw the Christ of the Bible out of my life. One thing is certain: Jesus isn’t a hypocrite and He has never failed anyone! We need to look unto Jesus the author and finisher of

our faith (Heb. 12:2). We need to heed the warning of Scripture that if we trust in man we are cursed (Jeremiah 17:5). Blessing comes when our trust is in the Lord and in Him alone (Jeremiah 17:7). If I stumble at hypocrisy and turn my back on Christ and His Word because of this, it only means that I am looking to man rather than God.

I am not making excuse for Jack Hyles and the Baptist church that idolized him. What he did went so far beyond the pale of a mere “lack of perfection” that he was a cult leader rather than the pastor of a New Testament church. Only the Lord knows how many lives have been hurt and even ruined by this church and by those who have imitated Hyles’ methodology to various degrees.

As I said in the chapter on “The Fruit of Hylesism” --

“The fruit of the Hyles model and methodology has often consisted of moral and spiritual shipwreck. Multitudes of former members of Hyles-type churches, having witnessed so much error and hypocrisy, have abandoned church altogether. Or they have explored the contemporary emerging philosophy, having allegedly found more spiritual reality in those circles than they witnessed in ‘fundamentalism.’ Being the products of shallow evangelism, many of these have never been biblically converted. They have prayed a sinner’s prayer but haven’t been born again. Having never had a real and dynamic relationship with Christ, they are man-followers, and when the man fails, they are offended and quit, sometimes blaming Christ and the church for something that is man’s fault alone. Even if they were truly saved, they were not properly disciplined and grounded in the Scriptures and in solid doctrinal truth. All too typically they have been used or neglected and sometimes abused, but not shepherded.”

This sounds like a description of Hyles’ own daughter.

It appears that she has turned to a humanistic pop-psychology philosophy of “being true to oneself and pursuing

one's self-esteem." Beginning in her late 20s, she underwent years of psychotherapy and "deprogramming." If she is still a professing Christian of some sort, she failed to give any glory to Jesus Christ or credit to the Bible or Biblical salvation for her healing.

The context of Linda's talk is a series of events sponsored by the Bill and Linda Gates Foundation. Bill makes no Christian profession, as far as I know, and his wife is a Roman Catholic who picks and chooses what part of Catholicism she accepts, but their spiritual passion is a to build a new age by creating a better world. To this end they funded a series of 188 TEDxChange events "to focus on issues surrounding global health and development."

Linda Murphrey spoke at one of these in Ojai, California, April 5, 2012.

The theme of the Ojai meeting was "The Big Picture" and its New Age theme was "the power of ideas to change attitudes, lives and ultimately, the world." Linda Murphrey was introduced as a "certified personal and professional development coach" and "a practitioner of Neuro-Linguistic Programming." According to this practice, which we mention in the book *The New Age Tower of Babel*, words and thoughts affect one's nervous system and by learning to control the nervous system one can accomplish anything.

Linda is convinced that she has found truth and freedom, but in reality she has merely moved from one cult to another. Truth and true freedom come only through Jesus Christ.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).

You can be certain that TEDxChange will not invite a Bible-believing Christian to give witness to the God who created the world in six days by His almighty power and to testify of the salvation that is available exclusively through faith in Jesus Christ and the blood of His cross and to describe the righteous world that Christ will build when He returns in power and glory to rule with a rod of iron!

The following is transcribed from Linda Murphrey's testimony at the TEDxOjaiChange event in Ojai, California, April 5, 2012:

“My dad pastored a church that evolved into a 50,000-member cult. It operated and still operates under the guise of an independent fundamental Baptist church. But those who have left, the followers who have tried to leave, the outsiders, even the media (it was on 20/20 last year) recognize that it is clearly a cult.

“Every member was in complete obedience to my father. They didn't dare disagree or be disloyal, for fear of being publicly ridiculed or punished or banished for doing so. They didn't go on a vacation without asking my dad's permission, and if he had said to drink the Kool-aid, I'm not kidding, they would have.

“My dad lived a double life, one of a righteous family man and of a dynamic speaker in the public eye, but [another] one of sordid sexual secrets privately, secrets that only my siblings and me and my mom knew. He hated my mom. Hated her. Treated her terribly. Abused her. And even turned his own children against their mother. We hated her. He told us she was crazy. We thought to make him happy, we would hate her too. Our home was so full of turmoil, hatred, stress, strife, and as a little girl, it was isolating, it was intense, and it was frightening. He had affairs. He had a mistress for many years, the wife of a Sunday School teacher. He built her family a beautiful home right around the corner from

our house. You could see their family from our back door. It was craziness, living one way, preaching another.

“My older brother became another version of my father. He pastored a church in Texas and was found to be having affairs with 14 different women. He divorced his wife and married one of the 14. My father tried desperately to cover it up. He moved him to another church where he was found to have had 17 affairs with different women, and he just recreated what he had seen my dad live. And my dad did nothing but cover it up.

“I felt like I had one main responsibility as a child. It was simple, but daunting, and that was to keep all the secrets, and there were so many.

“You see, he had taught us that the best way to please God was to please him, because he was God’s man. He taught us that to please him we had to keep all the secrets. We could never even tell our best friends what went on in our home, because we might be the cause of the destruction of his ministry. I literally feared for my very life if I ever told what went on in our home, for fear that it would hurt his ministry. I was so afraid, and the greater the secrets, the greater my fear, and the greater my determination to keep quiet.

“He was very wealthy. And even to our adult years, he owned us. He owned our homes, our cars, our furniture. He owned our lives, and we didn’t dare cross him, because we were too afraid we would lose everything. He died a multi-millionaire. He left nothing to his children. He left everything to the organization, which my younger sister and her husband now lead. [This was before Jack Schaap got caught in adultery with a teenager.] And they still perpetuate his legacy: the strict rules, the undying loyalty, and they still try to keep all the secrets” (Linda Murphrey’s testimony at the TEDxOjaiChange event in Ojai, California, April 5, 2012).

The following further testimony is excerpted from Linda's Open Letter to First Baptist Church, 2013:

"[My father] taught you to adore him above all else. He insisted that you trust him, no matter what rumors you heard. He frightened you to the point that you dare not be disloyal to him. He required obedience without question. You were sincerely trying to follow God, but in your effort to do so, a man diverted your attention and convinced you to follow him. I do not blame you. You weren't trying to steal my dad away from me. You thought you were listening to instruction from God's Word, from God's man. And God's man was instructing you to obey him as a representative of...a substitution for Deity, taking you on a journey away from God into idolatry. ...

"I remember Vic Nischik always giving me a knowing, warm smile as he passed me in the hallway. He never said much, but oh how I knew he loved me and wanted to help me. He didn't dare reach out to me, but his heart reached out to me and I felt it. I knew he knew. I remember his children, Jack and Judy, being 'off limits.' We never spoke, yet I felt this weird, underlying kindred spirit and longed to know them. Tears seemed just below the surface for all of us.

"Ironically, Judy and I now live very close to one another and reconnected for the first time two years ago. When we got together, it was as if we were long lost sisters and our souls had been united since youth. It was the first time we had ever really talked to each other...and that night we talked for hours. Neither of us had any idea that our homes had been so similar as children – fathers living downstairs, mothers living upstairs, the secret phone conversations we both overheard, and the dynamics in our homes being so similarly hostile and cold. It was as if we both had missing pieces to the puzzle and it all completely fit together when we compared stories. How surprised and

grateful I am that Judy is now one of my dearest friends in the world...my soul sister! I appreciate Vic, Jack and Judy more than words can say. They lived a hell no one should ever live. I applaud them for the strength it took to stay strong, survive and now thrive.

“Things changed through the years at FBC. My dad changed through the years. You saw it. You knew it. Even if you stayed, even if you are still there, you can’t deny that things got weird. You may not say it out loud, but you thought it. We all did. And it’s why I had to leave. As I’ve said publicly, based on the definition of a cult, I believe my father’s church evolved into a cult. Everything revolved around my dad as he used God and the Bible merely as tools to glorify himself.

“When I was in my mid-twenties, I remember sitting in that huge auditorium one Sunday morning and carefully observing you – the people in the congregation - and the looks in your eyes scared me. As I mentioned in the recent Chicago Magazine article, you looked like zombies - sounds extreme, but in that moment as I looked around me, it was extreme. It had gone beyond just intently listening to your pastor. It had gone beyond merely ingesting a sermon. It had crossed over into complete worship of your pastor. You were spellbound. You were in awe. You were mesmerized. Not by Scripture. Not by God. Not by Biblical teaching. But by a man. Jack Hyles.

“The adoration in your eyes wasn’t in my eyes. It was not something I could give to this man, to any man. The blind loyalty, a loyalty he convinced you was a necessary part of serving God, was not something I was willing to offer. The twisting of Scripture to fit into his own agenda was more blatant and disturbing than ever. The control over ‘his people’ was frightening to me. ...

“My heart hurts for the precious victim of Jack’s [Schaap’s] crime. How I wish I could erase her

pain, disillusionment and confusion. I hurt for ALL the victims - and there are so many (of Jack Schaap, my dad, my brother). Numerous victims have reached out to me in the past seven months to tell me their stories and I had no idea how extensive the abuse was until recently. As I learned of the magnitude of their pain, the magnitude of my sorrow intensified. To every victim, I especially apologize - whether your abuse was sexual, emotional, mental, spiritual - or a combination thereof. My family hurt you, and if no one else in my family ever apologizes, at least you can hear it from one person in the Hyles family. I am so very sorry for what happened to you and for your pain. ...

“When I stop to think about it, I realize that Jack [Schaap] was once a victim himself – that does not at all excuse his crime, not in the least. But I see Jack as a victim-turned-predator like my brother. Both were victims of my dad. Both eventually mimicked the ways of my father and ultimately learned from the master how to prey upon innocent people. ...

“Jack, if you happen to read this, surely you now realize that one of us should have spoken up years ago. I regret for all of our sakes that I did not. And shame on you and Cindy for staying silent, for perpetuating and preserving the false image of Jack Hyles. You knew what my dad was like. You had a front row seat to the hypocrisy. And you stayed silent, too, as we all did. You wrote me an email four years ago begging me to have a relationship with Cindy because she was in a deep depression. I declined, because I was unwilling to even step a toe back into the toxicity and dysfunction of your ministry and lives. You stated in that email that you knew things were horrible in our home as children and how difficult it was for you to lead the church based on those lies. Yet there you were – pronounced as the new King of fundamentalism. How do you resign that job? And how

do you carry out the duties and step into the shoes of the King before you? ...

“I recently watched some of your sermons online. I had never heard you preach before and was astonished. Who did you become? This wasn’t the Jack Schaap I knew when you first married Cindy. This wasn’t the Jack Schaap that used to hang out and watch football at our house in our early adult lives. This was a man impersonating Jack Hyles, attempting to embody Jack Hyles, so enamored with your success in doing so that it was beyond belief - truly one of the strangest things I had ever seen. Did you know how much you were changing? I used to wonder, did my dad know how much he had changed, how bizarre his behavior had become? Or is the change such a gradual evolution that when you look in the mirror, you don’t see who you’ve become? You don’t see the monster looking back at you.”

Concluding Note by Brother Cloud

These three women confirm everything that was reported by others in the late 1980s and early 1990s: the immorality, the lies, the cover ups, the mind control, the demand of unquestioning loyalty.

Yet Hyles continued to be honored widely among fundamental Baptists until his death. In fact, he is still widely praised today. His son-in-law, Jack Schaap, who took over the cult upon Hyles’ death, was never as popular or influential beyond First Baptist itself, because he simply didn’t have the charisma, but large numbers of fundamental Baptist pastors continued to associate with First Baptist of Hammond and Hyles-Anderson College and continued to speak in conferences together with Schaap (until he was dismissed from the pastorate in August 2012).

Why wasn't Hyles' widely exposed as a fraud? The evidence was readily available, and we are not talking about second hand reports; we're talking about the testimony of eyewitnesses. Why did most IFB preachers turn a deaf ear to the well-documented reports of his ministry-disqualifying sins? Why did so many wear the "100% Hyles" button: if not the actual button, at least a mental one that brooked no "criticism" of the "man of God"? Why did so many pretend that it wasn't their business, that it was "a local church matter," even when Hyles was influencing hundreds of thousands of people beyond his own church?

One reason is that the errors that Hyles' represented have spread so widely among fundamental Baptists: e.g., the cheap Quick Prayerism, the carnal promotional gimmickry that turned the house of God into a circus (this has died down some now but in the 1980s multitudes of IFB churches practiced it), the bragging and self-promotion by pastors who were trying to get on *The Sword of the Lord's* biggest and the best rolls, the cultic principle that to "criticize" the preacher is to "touch the Lord's anointed" and to "shoot the wounded," and the idea that a man can commit gross immorality and remain qualified for the pastorate (which is like allowing a chicken-eating dog to guard the hen house).

It is unlikely that a preacher who was guilty of such things would be a critic of Jack Hyles.

In conclusion, I thank the Lord that there are many IFB churches that aren't cults. Independent Fundamental Baptist isn't a denomination; it simply identifies certain major characteristics of a type of church. It means that the church is Baptist in doctrine and polity, fundamental in its stance on separation, and independent of denominational structures such as American Baptist or Southern Baptist. Beyond that, IFB churches come in a wide variety of stripes, and when I find one of like mind and join it, I am not joining all IFB churches!

I can be independent fundamental Baptist and fellowship with likeminded independent fundamental Baptist churches without being unified with the IFB churches with which I disagree. I am at liberty to speak against any IFB church or preacher that is in error.

This is in contrast with the Southern Baptist Convention, which has to maintain denominational unity. For example, four Southern Baptist leaders recently said that Calvinism should not divide the SBC. David Dockery, president of Union University, said, "I think we can come to a place where we can all work together" (Baptist Press, Aug. 6, 2012).

Independent Baptists don't have to make such compromises. Since there is no denominational structure to preserve and and no cooperative program to support and since we are not yoked together in any organizational sense, we can speak out on any issue and call heresy heresy and let the chips fall where they may. (The exception is the big IFB schools that do act more like denominations.) In this context, I can accept a Calvinist as a brother in Christ, assuming he shows evidence of knowing Christ personally, and I can appreciate him in many ways, but I don't have to minister together with him and I don't have to keep my mouth shut about what I am convinced is serious error.

I personally know many IFB pastors who are humble, godly men and wouldn't dream of taking the place of Christ in the lives of their people, who invite the people to test their lives and teaching by God's Word, who do not lord it over the people but exercise the office of shepherd according to 1 Peter 5. I know of many IFB churches where the members wouldn't dream of giving a mere man "unquestioning loyalty." I personally know of many IFB churches who despise Quick Prayerism and hold high standards for the pastorate, believing that divorced men and men who have broken their marriage vows are not qualified for that special office.

Christ didn't start a movement; He started the church. "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). It is the assembly that is the house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15).

Good Churches Ruined by Bad Associations

After studying the emerging church for the past five years, including attending one of the largest emerging church conferences with media credentials, reading several dozen of their books, and interviewing some prominent emerging leaders--and at the same time observing what is happening among fundamental Baptists--in 2011 I issued a warning that most independent Baptist churches will be well down the contemporary/emerging path within a generation.

I am more convinced of this with each passing month.

“Why Most Independent Baptist Churches Will Be Emerging within 20 Years” is a free eBook available at the Way of Life web site.

In this book I list the following eight reasons for my prediction:

- Rejection of warning and reproof in regard to certain heroes
- Unquestioning loyalty to man
- Following the crowd
- Ignorance about important Issues
- Soft separatism
- Lack of serious discipleship
- Carelessness about music
- Quick Prayerism

More recently I have realized that a church doesn't have to be guilty of all of these things to be a candidate for becoming emerging. All it has to do is be guilty of two of these: SOFT SEPARATISM, because soft separatism builds bridges to the wrong churches and the wrong preachers that act as conduits for other areas of compromise to enter the congregation, and the REJECTION OF WARNING AND REPROOF in regard to certain IFB heroes, which makes it impossible to fully and

properly educate the church about and separate the church from the compromise that spreading so quickly among IFBaptists. (A pastor that is unwilling to listen to warnings and reproof about certain heroes and unwilling to let his congregation entertain such warnings is guilty of giving unquestioning loyalty to man, so these things are intimately associated.)

I can think of several pretty strong churches pastored by men who are not guilty of most of the previous eight things. They are not careless about music, at least for the moment. They don't practice quick prayerism. They believe in the necessity of repentance for salvation and aren't hasty to proclaim people saved when there is no evidence thereof. Their goal is conversions rather than mere numbers of professions. They are trying to disciple the people and educate them biblically. The pulpit ministry is not shallow. These pastors aren't proud men and they urge the people to prove their teaching by God's Word. There are many solid, biblical things in place in these churches. They have a vision of world evangelism. They have high moral standards and the preaching gets down to where the people live.

For the moment, these churches are capable of building healthy Christian individuals and families.

But my warning is about the future. My warning is not about big errors but about a "little leaven." It is about how that certain "little leavens" that IFB churches are commonly guilty of, that we have learned by popular tradition from our forefathers, will eventually leaven the whole lump.

The problem with many otherwise good IFB churches is their associations. The problem lies in the issue of with whom the pastors of these churches associate and who they invite in to speak and whose books they recommend and what schools they promote and what conferences they attend and who they refuse to warn about.

If a church is not guilty of the eight areas of compromise that I documented in *Why Most Independent Baptist Churches Will Be Emerging*, but if that church affiliates with men who are guilty of these things, that church will be corrupted by its affiliation just as assuredly as if it were guilty of all eight things.

Those who don't narrow their associations significantly in these days will all go down the drain together, the good with the bad, because there is a rapidly growing number of IFB preachers who are not men of keen spiritual discernment and who are committed to a path of compromise. The Word of God warns, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Corinthians 15:33).

In light of what is happening and the widespread compromise and change that is evident throughout IFB churches, it is time for a come out from among them movement much more so than a broad independent Baptist friends movement.

The emerging church hasn't targeted strong preachers. They have targeted our children and our grandchildren. They have targeted the next generation. (See the book *What Is the Emerging Church* for documentation.) The question is whether or not the next generation is being prepared properly. The question is whether or not we are allowing bridges to be built to the wrong things, bridges that the next generation will cross. Our young people will not only be influenced by us; they will be influenced by those with whom we associate.

By the way, where did we get this idea that no warnings should be given in regard to "good" men and churches? That is one of the vain and unscriptural traditions that IFBaptists have inherited from their forefathers.

Jesus reproved the good church at Ephesus, for the very reason that He loved it and wanted to see it prosper and not be destroyed.

Paul reproved the good preacher Peter because he loved Christ and the truth and didn't want to see hypocrisy destroy the work of God.

The prophet Jehu reproved the good king Jehoshaphat for his compromise because God commanded him to do so and the prophet feared God more than man.

Take a man like Shelton Smith of *The Sword of the Lord*. He spoke in September 2012 at Tom Neal's church in Florida, and Neal is the greatest Jack Hyles worshiper alive. Neal published a paper (*Independent Baptist Contender*) devoted to "perpetuating and protecting the principles and philosophies of Dr. Jack Hyles." In a letter he wrote to explain his absence from the 2001 Pastor's School at First Baptist Church of Hammond--after Hyles' death in February of that year--Neal said: "It has been said of me, and I consider it a great compliment, that Tom Neal is all about Jack Hyles. My agenda was to please him. ... every success I have, I owe to Pastor's School and Dr. Hyles. ... It is my desire that Jesus and Bro. Hyles be proud of me" (March 29, 2001, reproduced at <http://jackhammer.wordpress.com/2007/10/19/kneeling-tom-neal/>). The November-December 2002 issue of Neal's *Independent Baptist Contender* mentioned Hyles at least 95 times by name and featured an article entitled "The Mind of Dr. Jack Hyles." Whereas true Christians and Biblicists seek the mind of Christ, cultists seek the mind of their human leader.

This is wickedness. It is heresy. It is idolatry. It is not biblical Christianity. It is cultish. If we should not separate from the Jack Hyles and the Jack Schaaps and the Tom Neals, we should not separate from anyone.

(Since I first wrote this, Schaap landed in prison for committing adultery with a teenage girl and transporting her across state lines to facilitate his sin, but no one should have needed to wait until Schaap was in jail to know that he was someone to separate from.)

Yet Shelton Smith is a happy part of this man-centered crowd. Instead of reproving them, he joins them. This is part of a wide-ranging, good-old boys, mutual back-scratching network, and men who care about the truth and care about the next generation and care about their churches need to come apart from it.

Preachers who continue to associate with this crowd are building bridges whereby this influence will enter their churches and eventually leaven them, regardless of what else they do right in their personal ministries.

The same is true in regard to the music issue. There are IFB pastors who use only sacred music and who truly care about this issue, but they associate at a ministry level with men who are careless about music, men who are playing with the fire of contemporary worship music and who are justifying it, even while deceptively pretending that they are against CCM. Such associations are compromise and they are going to hurt these pastors' churches in the long run.

Consider the following real life example:

“There are teens in our church considering college, and we had the West Coast Baptist College summer tour group in. My wife and I sampled their CDs, and ... it was [mostly] the modern style, as was their singing in church. Then we had a group from Grace Baptist College in Michigan. They were fully in line with worldly singing styles and ‘toned down’ CCM songs (some of them I can recognize by the emphasis on self and feelings). The pastor’s teaching and preaching is just WONDERFUL after many years of being in a Jack Hyles-type of cultic church that preached the pastor’s opinions and ‘how-to’ messages instead of the Scripture. But the music thing bothers me. Our own church music is almost entirely out of the hymnal and has had no hint of the CCM stuff. But, when nothing is said about these tour groups, I am afraid that it is just a matter of time.”

This church is already on the path toward the emerging church for the simple reason that the pastor will not tear down bridges to compromise.

Consider another example:

“Recently a West Coast college trio sang at our large IFB church. Our church promotes West Coast and defends it. Recently our pastor preached an uncomfortable message seemingly aimed at you with only one or two Bible verses. He is normally an excellent expositor of the Word of God. The last time a West Coast group was in our church, some, I believe, godly music was included. This time, it was straight CCM, loud, and the auditorium erupted in clapping.”

All of the elements are in place for the spiritual downfall of this church. First, the pastor gives unquestioning loyalty to Paul Chappell and West Coast, refusing to entertain godly reproof of what they are doing and attacking those who issue the reproof. Thus, the people are cut off from every source of information and education that could help them avoid the compromise that is permeating IFB churches. Second, the pastor is not being careful about music but rather is justifying the “adaptation” of CCM. Thus, the people are being given a taste for pop syncopation sounds such as beat anticipation, which Pastor Graham West of Australia has warned about. This will result in the congregation becoming addicted to the contemporary sound so that eventually they will not be satisfied by the “light” stuff. This is especially true for the young people who are being influenced by this church’s compromise in music. Further, by allowing the use of “adapted” contemporary worship music, bridges are being built to that very, very dangerous world, as we have documented in the video presentations “The Transformative Power of Contemporary Worship Music” and “The Foreign Spirit of Contemporary Worship Music.” (These are available as free eVideo downloads from www.wayoflife.org.)

This church is on the slippery slope of the compromise that always accompanies contemporary Christian music, and it has rejected the very voices of warning that could help it to turn around before it is too late. One of the wisest things this pastor could do would be to show the aforementioned video presentations to his congregation, but his unscriptural loyalty to a man will not allow this to happen, since these presentations warn about what Paul Chappell is doing.

I predict that this church will be emerging within two decades. Today it is a church where God's people can attend and be fed and strengthened and disciplined and where they can find God's will and raise their children for Christ. Such churches are rare today, but the seeds of destruction are being sown so that they will be far rarer in a few years. Because of the compromise and the soft separation and the undue exaltation of man, because of the unwise bridges that are being built to the world of contemporary Christian music, through the influence of one of the pastor's IFB heroes, the church will eventually not be a sound place to raise godly children who are separated from the world. The slide might not take 20 years, either.

This is why I will continue to lift a voice even though I have been ostracized by men should be my best friends in the battle for truth.

“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us” (2 Thessalonians 3:6).

“The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe” (Proverbs 29:25).

Shooting the Wounded, Etc.

The following are three of the most common arguments that are used against those who publicly reprove the compromise and error of influential Baptist leaders.

Shooting the Wounded

Through the years, I have frequently heard the accusation that preachers who give warnings about Christian leaders are guilty of “shooting their own wounded.”

For example, I received the following e-mail that charged me with doing this in regard to an open exhortation I published about Clarence Sexton’s Friendship Conferences.

“I am deeply upset at the private letter you posted on your website to Dr Sexton. Thanks for shooting your own and not calling Pastor Sexton personally to get all of the facts.”

The fact is that I had sent that letter to Dr. Sexton via his own website months before I published it, and I received no reply. I found out later that he says that he doesn’t use e-mail, and that is fine, but he could have dictated a reply to one of his many co-workers or secretaries.

Another example of the accusation of “shooting the wounded” is contained in the following e-mail that I received a few years ago:

“I grew up in Murfreesboro, TN and was and am still associated with the Sword of the Lord and the Bill Rice Ranch. I hated it then and still do when a Christian brother bashes another Christian brother over things instead of preaching and trying to win souls to Christ. It is said that the Christian Army is the only army that stabs its wounded and kills off its own. I have to say it is very true. I am also a Marine, and we were taught to pick up those who are wounded and even dead, not

leave them to die or to be mutilated by the enemy. We as Christians do just the opposite many times.”

What does “shooting their own wounded” mean?

If it means that Christians sometimes fail to be patient with the weak, we can all probably say that we have been guilty. If it means that Christians sometimes are too quick to criticize a fellow believer instead of trying to help him, it happens too often; and we need to be reminded that God is not pleased with such things.

If, on the other hand, “shooting the wounded” means that it is wrong for a preacher to warn about influential men who are teaching error or walking in compromise, it is unscriptural nonsense.

In my public warnings, I have never injured a wounded person and I have never shot anyone in any sense whatsoever. To charge me with doing so is to confuse biblical warning, reproof, and correction with assault.

I was in the army and I understand the military, and what I am doing has absolutely nothing to do with shooting one’s own wounded.

The leaders that I warn about are not wounded! They are willfully and steadfastly committed to error or compromise in spite of having been warned, and they are influencing others.

By the way, they don’t mind “shooting” back!

The Lord Jesus Christ taught His people to beware of false prophets (Matt. 7:15). When a preacher obeys this command and attempts to mark and warn of false teachers, is he “shooting the wounded”? Of course not, but those he warns about and those who are sympathetic to them will charge him with doing so.

In 1 and 2 Timothy, the apostle Paul names the names of false teachers and compromisers 10 different times and warns about them (1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 1:15; 2:17; 3:8; 4:10, 14).

All of the men that Paul warned about claimed to be Christians and it is likely that they felt that Paul was being unfair and mean-spirited in singling them out.

When Paul warned Timothy that Demas had abandoned him because he loved this present world (2 Tim. 4:10), Paul was not shooting at a wounded Demas; but worldly Demas and his associates might have charged him with this.

The Lord has commanded the assemblies to exercise discipline toward unrepentant church members who are committed to gross sin and error (1 Corinthians 5; Titus 3:10, 11). Is that shooting the wounded? It is oftentimes considered to be so by those who are the objects of the discipline and by those who are sympathetic to them; but proper church discipline, though severe, is not destructive. It has a three-fold goal of glorifying Christ in His church, purifying the congregation, and bringing the sinner to repentance.

The Lord has instructed us to identify those who are saved but who are walking in disobedience (2 Thess. 2:6). Is that shooting the wounded?

It often happens that those who are disobedient mistake biblical correction for persecution and biblical reproof for personal assault.

Paul rebuked sin in the churches in letters that were anything but private. His epistles to the individual churches were distributed among all the churches (Colossians 4:16). Therefore, when Paul told of how that Demas had left him, having loved this present world, it was a public matter. When he rebuked the believers at Corinth for their sin and compromise and error, it was a public matter. When he warned of Alexander the Coppersmith, it was a public warning.

Some matters are private and they should be dealt with privately, but other matters are public and should be dealt with publicly.

If a man has a public ministry that influences others, that ministry should be critiqued publicly.

Evangelist Chuck Cofty is a highly decorated United States Marine officer who survived shocking battlefield experiences. Since he understands these matters extremely well, both from the side of the physical and the spiritual, I asked him to reply to the accusation in the e-mail that I quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

Following is his reply:

“Dear Brother Cloud: To my knowledge you have not struck anyone violently or injured them by striking. He no doubt is referring to the many truths that appear in your writings as well as the writings of others concerning contemporary theology that you quote. Some, perhaps even this man, are so timid that when truth is revealed they find it difficult to accept and wind up tolerating error or ignorance for fear of offending someone. When men are named, places identified and error revealed, it is upsetting to those that are ‘moderate’ in their position. Brother Cloud, it is true that marines never leave their dead on the field of battle and will on occasion render aid to a wounded enemy. This however is situational and conditional as we will not allow such aid to encumber us, slow us down, deter us from our mission or jeopardize our success. Our desire to serve our dear Lord must be the same. I personally think that this dear brother’s analogy is poor and his accusation unfounded.”

Pastor Wilbert Unger of Bethel Baptist Church, London, Ontario, observes:

“Was our Lord shooting the first century churches in Revelation 2 and 3 when He walked in their midst and exposed their sins and failures, and commanded them to repent? The kindest and most biblical thing a faithful servant of God can do is expose unscriptural conduct to lead to repentance, lest God step in and judge severely

and chasten in a most severe matter. I think the worst chastening that we Independent Baptists could receive from the hand of God is if He would just leave us alone and let us go on in our compromise. We are so bent on exalting man and lightly esteeming the Word of God. One day, we will be like Samson when it is said, 'he wist not that the Lord had departed from him' (Judges 16:20). May God be gracious and wake us up to listen to the rebuke of those who see the error in our faith and practice. No man is above rebuke. May we come to see the love and grace in those who would be so kind as to rebuke us."

Matthew 18

Anytime I publish a warning about an influential Baptist leader I am asked by some if I followed the guidelines of Matthew 18.

"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:15-20).

For example, when I published an open challenge to Clarence Sexton about the Friendship Conferences, I received the following:

“I am deeply upset at the private letter you posted on your website to Dr Sexton. Thanks for shooting your own and not calling Pastor Sexton personally to get all of the facts. I guess you don't read Matthew 18 all that often.”

As I said previously, the fact is that I did contact Pastor Sexton personally months before the publication of the article and received no reply.

As for Matthew 18, as we will see, it has absolutely nothing to do with the issue.

When I published a gentle warning about some of the newer *Patch the Pirate* music tapes some years ago, I received correspondence from people asking if I had first approached Majesty Music. The answer is yes, I did, and they completely ignored me.

Following is one of these communications:

“I am writing to ask if you follow the principles of Matthew 18 when writing about a brother in Christ? Have you gone to Brother Hamilton about your concerns alone, before writing your critique? Did you find no satisfaction and take another brother in Christ with you? I recognize these are steps to be followed in a local church context, but it seems prudent and wise and God honoring to follow similar steps when dealing with brothers and sisters from other churches.”

Another man gave the same sort of challenge in regard to my warnings about Chuck Swindoll:

“I have read your article on Chuck Swindoll. It is not our job to judge our fellow man. If you have concerns with Swindoll and his teachings then your job is to confront him personally, speak to and with him, find out where he is coming from. If you still believe he is wrong then bring it before your eldership and let them confront. Then, and only then, if there is still no change, you bring

it before the congregation, and then you leave it and him in God's hands."

In reality, Matthew 18 gives instructions for dealing with personal problems between Christians and particularly between Christians who are members of the same church. It does not address how to deal with public teachings and public actions by Christian leaders.

The apostle Paul, in the Pastoral Epistles, mentioned the names of compromisers and false teachers TEN times, warning Timothy about them. Those letters were not intended merely for Timothy and Titus. They were a part of the canon of Scripture and were a matter of public record. Paul's motive was not to injure those men. There was nothing malicious in his warnings. The men he warned about had chosen their error of their own accord. Paul's motive was to protect godly preachers and sound churches. His motive was to thwart the negative influence of the men he warned about.

Matthew 18 deals with personal trespasses between members of an assembly. Consider exactly what the passage says:

"Moreover if thy brother SHALL TRESPASS AGAINST THEE, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, TELL IT UNTO THE CHURCH: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican" (Matthew 18:15-17).

Majesty Music has not trespassed against me personally. Chuck Swindoll has not trespassed against me personally. Clarence Sexton or Paul Chappell have not trespassed against me personally.

That is not the issue, and it would be impossible to follow Matthew 18 in such situations.

Even if I were to attempt to follow the first part of the passage in such a context, it would be impossible to follow the last part. I have no way to take this issue “unto the church.” I am not a member of these men’s churches. Their churches have no authority over me, and I have no business with them (and I am sure they would ignore any attempt I might make to charge these men with error). Similarly, these men are not members of my church, so they have no business with it and it has no authority over them.

To attempt to follow Matthew 18 in such matters would be confusion.

Men such as Chuck Swindoll and Jack Hyles and Jack Schaap have published materials and distributed them widely to individuals and churches across the land and beyond. I am merely analyzing their published material in obedience to the Word of God. Public material should be critiqued publicly.

Following are some of the Scriptures that give me authority for this practice:

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:2).

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11).

“These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee” (Titus 2:15).

“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).

Human nature does not like to be corrected, and the bigger a man’s ministry the more inured he tends to think himself from criticism.

Touch Not the Lord’s Anointed

A third argument that is used against the public reproof of influential Baptist preachers is “touch not the Lord’s anointed,” which is lifted from the context in which David refused to touch King Saul.

“Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the LORD’S anointed” (1 Samuel 24:10).

The context of this verse has to do with killing an anointed king of Israel. By applying this to themselves, apparently some independent Baptist preachers think they are kings! And they must also think, strangely, that someone who reproves them is trying to kill them.

Jack Hyles certainly acted like a king and put himself above reproof and discipline, and so does Jack Schaap and many others who are imitating this exceedingly unscriptural, ungodly type of pastoral model.

But even an Israelite king was not above reproof. David didn’t kill King Saul, but the prophet Samuel did not draw back from reproving the sorry old king, and the prophet Nathan did not draw back from reproving King David, and we could continue at length with other examples.

A Baptist pastor is not an Israelite king, but even kings could be reproved by God’s preachers.

And so can Baptist pastors.

“These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee” (Titus 2:15).

“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:1-2).

“Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear” (1 Timothy 5:20).