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[“God’s Dream” – From the “Jesus” of \*Jesus Calling\* – A Deceptive Scheme](#)

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**“God’s Dream” – From the “Jesus” of *Jesus Calling* – A Deceptive Scheme**

By [Warren B. Smith](#)

Consistent with many other New Age implications contained in her channeled messages, Sarah Young’s “Jesus” introduces the New Age idea of “God’s Dream” in *Jesus Calling* when he states:

|| I want to begin with the very beginning that we are far beyond even

Reformation Anniversary in Westminster Abbey”

Brian McLaren, You Have Missed the Boat With Your “All-Inclusive Reformation”—Homosexuals and Feminists: Yes; The Bible and White Christian Men: No

Labyrinths Have Found Their Place in the Christian Church

The Words of the “New” Spirituality - What Do They Really Mean?

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Another Mass Shooting in America - God’s Help and Comfort Through It All

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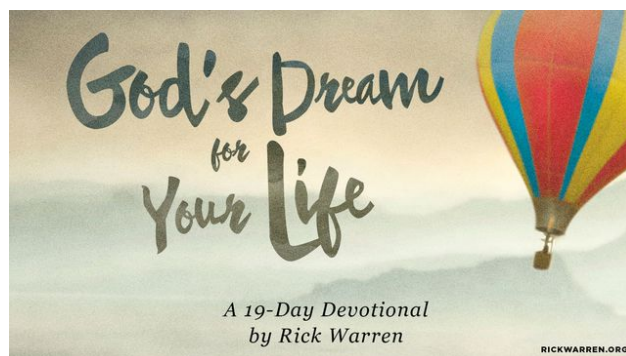
*I may intuse within you a dream that seems far beyond your reach.<sup>1</sup>*

In *Jesus Calling: 365 Devotions for Kids*, the January 6th message/devotion is titled—and has “Jesus” telling the children—“Dare to Dream My Dream.”<sup>2</sup>

### “God’s Dream” is a Deceptive Scheme

The term “God’s Dream” is yet another part of the overlapping New Age language streaming into the church. God’s Dream is a vague, loosely defined New Age metaphor that attempts to unify different religions and faith groups in an unbiblical effort to attain world peace. However, the true Jesus Christ warned that deception and the coming of Antichrist—not a “God’s Dream” peace movement—will be what actually precedes His ultimate and glorious return (Matthew 24:3-5; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5). The prophet Daniel warned that Antichrist will “destroy wonderfully” and “by peace he shall destroy many” (Daniel 8:24-25). In the future, what may appear to be a “wonderful” worldwide revival and a “wonderful” world peace will actually be a false revival and a false peace—the kind of peace that Daniel said will be associated with the coming of Antichrist, not the true Christ.

Photo: from



<https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/1597-gods-dream-for-your-life/day/1>

The New Age concept of God’s Dream was introduced at least as far back as 1916 by New Age theosophists in their *Theosophical Path Magazine*.<sup>3</sup> Since then, it has been used by numerous New Age sympathizers that include Oprah Winfrey,<sup>4</sup> Wayne Dyer,<sup>5</sup> former United Nations Indian guru Sri Chinmoy,<sup>6</sup> and African bishop Desmond Tutu.<sup>7</sup> The concept of God’s Dream was introduced into the church in the 1970s by former Crystal Cathedral pastor Robert Schuller<sup>8</sup> and later adopted by Rick Warren,<sup>9</sup> Brian McLaren,<sup>10</sup> Joel Osteen,<sup>11</sup> Bruce Wilkinson,<sup>12</sup> Leonard Sweet,<sup>13</sup> and many other Christian figures. The overlap factor is very apparent when comparing statements made by Oprah Winfrey, Joel Osteen, and Sarah Young’s “Jesus” :

*Oprah Winfrey: God can dream a bigger dream for you than you can dream for yourself.<sup>14</sup>*

*Joel Osteen: God’s dream for your life is so much bigger than your own.<sup>15</sup>*

*Sarah Young’s “Jesus”: Dream your biggest, most incredible dream—and then know that I am able to do far more than that, far more than you can ever ask or imagine. Allow Me to fill your mind with My dreams for you.<sup>16</sup>*

Rick Warren, Brian McLaren, and Leonard Sweet all used the God’s Dream metaphor to stress the urgency of achieving world peace—but at what compromised New Age cost?

*Rick Warren: This weekend, I’ll begin a series of five messages on God’s dream to use you globally—to literally use YOU to help change the world! I’ll unveil our Global P.E.A.C.E. plan, and how God has uniquely prepared you for this moment of destiny.<sup>17</sup>*

*Brian McLaren: That in itself is an act of peacemaking, because we’re seeking to align our wills with God’s will, our*

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the products as well as the online research will  
be a blessing to the body of Christ and a  
witness to those who have not yet accepted  
Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, trusting  
in Him for the salvation of their souls.

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because we're seeking to align our wills with God's will, our  
dreams with God's dream.<sup>18</sup>

*Leonard Sweet: The time to save God's Dream is now. The  
People to save God's Dream are you.<sup>19</sup>*

#### "God's Dream" is a False Dream

"God's Dream" may seem to be inspirational and have a godly feel to it, but  
there is nothing in Scripture to even hint, much less substantiate, the New  
Age concept of God's Dream. God doesn't dream in any way, shape,  
manner, or form. God's Dream is definitely one of those crossover terms also  
found in *Jesus Calling* like "co-creation" and "divine alchemy" that attempt to  
"shift" everything into a New Age context and toward the universal  
acceptance of a New Age/New Worldview. Sarah Young's "Jesus" plays right  
into this clever conditioning when he introduces the concept of God's Dream  
in *Jesus Calling* and in no less than three of Sarah Young's other books.<sup>20</sup>  
The prophet Jeremiah warned about those who prophesy and present false  
dreams like God's Dream:

*Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith  
the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by  
their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor  
commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people  
at all, saith the LORD. (Jeremiah 23:32)*

**Note:** Because so many Christian leaders have adopted the concept of  
God's Dream, it has become a popularly accepted "Christian" term and is  
now virtually indistinguishable from its New Age origins.

(This is an excerpt from Warren B. Smith's booklet [The New Age  
Implications of Jesus Calling](#).)

#### Endnotes:

1. Sarah Young, *Jesus Calling*, op. cit., p. 6.
2. Sarah Young (adapted by Tama Fortner), *Jesus Calling: 365 Devotions  
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3. Katherine Tingley, Editor, *Theosophical Path Magazine*, Volume X,  
February 1916, p. 159.
4. Ann Oldenburg, "The Divine Miss Winfrey" (*USA Today*, May 10, 2006,  
[http://www.usatoday.com/life/people/2006-05-10-oprah\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/life/people/2006-05-10-oprah_x.htm)).
5. Wayne Dyer, *You'll See it When You Believe It: The Way to Your Personal  
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7. Desmond Tutu, "Archbishop Desmond Tutu Speech" (March 18, 2004,  
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8. Robert H. Schuller, *Your Church Has Real Possibilities* (Glendale, CA:  
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10. Brian McLaren, *The Secret Message of Jesus: Uncovering the Truth that  
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11. Joel Osteen, "God's Dream for Your Life"—Joel Osteen Ministries daily  
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(<http://devotion.wedareto believe.com/2014/07/gods-dream-for-your-life-joel-osteen.html>).
12. Bruce Wilkinson, *The Dream Giver* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers,  
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13. Leonard Sweet, *SoulTsunami: Sink or Swim in the New Millennium  
Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), p. 34.
14. Ann Oldenburg, "The Divine Miss Winfrey" (*USA Today*, May 10, 2006,  
[http://www.usatoday.com/life/people/2006-05-10-oprah\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/life/people/2006-05-10-oprah_x.htm)).
15. Joel Osteen, "God's Dream for Your Life-Joel Osteen Ministries daily  
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16. Sarah Young (adapted by Tama Fortner), *Jesus Calling: 365 Devotions  
For Kids*, op. cit. p. 7.
17. Rick Warren, Saddleback Church e-mail, October 27, 2003, "GOD'S



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17. Rick Warren, *Saddleback Church e-mail*, October 27, 2009, "GOD'S DREAM FOR YOU—AND THE WORLD!"; op. cit.
18. Brian McLaren, *The Secret Message of Jesus*, op. cit., p. 161.
19. Leonard Sweet, *SoulTsunami*, op. cit., p. 34.
20. Sarah Young, *Dear Jesus: Seeking His Light in Your Life* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2007), pp. 68-69; Sarah Young, *Jesus Lives: Seeing His Love in Your Life* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2009), p. 124; Sarah Young (adapted by Tama Fortner), *Jesus Calling: 365 Devotions For Kids*, op. cit., p. 7.

**Letter to the Editor: Concerned About Public Schools Teaching Kids to Practice Mindful Meditation**



Photo from: <https://foodandnutrition.org/blogs/stone-soup/creating-culture-health-school/>

**LTRP Note:** Teaching children to meditate is teaching them to connect with demonic realms. And according to the Bible, while demons come deceptively as "ministers of righteousness," their "father" is the father of lies, destruction, and death. What's more, contemplative prayer (that is becoming widespread throughout evangelical Christianity) is from the same source as mindful meditation, but Christian leaders are giving it a pass. They will be held accountable by God for allowing this to happen to the church's children just as the public school leaders will be held accountable for what they are doing to millions of children.

**Dear Lighthouse Trails:**

I am extremely concerned about the future of America and the Church. Your publication helped me spot a problem in my own backyard. I work for \_\_\_\_\_ County Public Schools in \_\_\_\_\_. I am a part-time employee and specifically work in the library and help with lunch and recess duty. Our school is part of \_\_\_\_\_ County's "healthy schools" program. There is an emphasis on eating and living a healthy life. Part of this living a healthy life they emphasize is mindfulness. It is in full swing in the classrooms [[Healthy Schools Program](#) is in more than 31,000 schools in the US]. I have not been asked to participate in mindfulness nor have they asked me to be part of any training; probably because of my part-time status. However, I am deeply disturbed that it is present in the school, and I have not heard one

person criticize it. Every person that says anything about it praises it. Sometimes I think I am the only Christian there. I have decided that if they want me to take the training or participate, I will decline. If I lose my job because of it, I trust God to help me find another job as this will put a financial burden on my family. However, I have to put God first.

Thank you for helping me to discern that [mindfulness](#) is Satanic and something I should not participate in. I am not sure I would have understood the implications of mindfulness had I not been reading your publication.

Regards,

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### Vatican Happy About the Way Christianity is Going? – “Christians Mark Reformation Anniversary in Westminster Abbey”

**LTRJ Note:** Posted for informational and research purposes only.

#### From Vatican Radio

Christians of all different denominations gathered in London’s Westminster Abbey on Tuesday to mark the **500th anniversary of the start of the Reformation** movement. The midday service, led by the Dean of Westminster, Dr John Hall, featured a new anthem, commissioned for the occasion by Danish composer, Bent Sørensen.

It also included the official presentation by the Archbishop of Canterbury of a **resolution from the worldwide Anglican Communion** which welcomes and affirms the 1999 Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ) between the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation. Last year the [World Communion of Reformed Churches](#) also signed up to the declaration, while the World Methodist Council did the same in 2006. . . .

Anglicans have been invited to join Lutherans and Catholics around the world in marking 2017, including Tuesday’s celebration at Westminster Abbey. Gibaut says the passing of the resolution, together with its formal handing over, are part of a much larger picture of Anglican participation in the events of this Reformation year. [Click here](#) to continue reading.

#### Related Articles from Lighthouse Trails:

[Rick Warren’s Dangerous Ecumenical Pathway to Rome And How One Interview Revealed So Much](#)

[Is Beth Moore’s “Spiritual Awakening” Taking the Evangelical Church Toward Rome?](#)

### Brian McLaren, You Have Missed the Boat With Your “All-Inclusive Reformation”—Homosexuals and Feminists: Yes; The Bible and White Christian Men: No

As groups around the world celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation with [highly ecumenical events and speeches](#), Brian McLaren, once likened to Luther,<sup>1</sup> has outlined his view of what the next reformation will look like in an article he wrote on November 1, 2017 titled, “[The Last Reformation ... and the Next Reformation](#).” A disgruntled former evangelical Christian, McLaren says that the first reformation was led by white European men whose belief of an inerrant Bible was “papal authority with paper authority.” In contrast, McLaren says the next reformation will be much different:

*The last reformation is associated with one “great man”—Martin Luther. He was joined by other “great men” — all white and European. The next reformation will be associated not with one “great man” but with many*

*— all white and European. The next reformation will be associated not with one great man but with many diverse people—especially women and people of color. The contribution of Liberation Theology, Black Theology, Feminist/Eco-Feminist/Womanist/Queer and related theologies will be as central to the next reformation as white European theology was to the last reformation.<sup>2</sup>*

Photo: a 2-second clip from a YouTube video of Brian McLaren (2014);  
used in accordance with the US Fair Use Act. (source:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RfL76BnO3g0>)

This, of course, is what McLaren has been hoping would occur for a very long time.

McLaren's public beginnings on this emergent "progressive" anti-Christianity path began back in the late 90s when men Bob Buford, Peter Drucker, Rick Warren, and Bill Hybels put their heads together and came up with a way to raise up a group of young men, get them into the lime light, and bring the new spirituality into the church through them. They succeeded, and most don't even realize they were the initial driving force. What brilliance! If you have never read about this time period, it's worth doing so. We've put together a [PDF of chapter 2](#) of Roger Oakland's book *Faith Undone*, which describes the early days of the emerging church and McLaren's role in that.

Rick Warren has his own ideas and hopes for a new reformation. He's been talking about it for years. The following quotes illustrate some similarities between Brian McLaren's new reformation and Rick Warren's:



*Who's the man of peace in any village—or it might be a woman of peace—who has the most respect, they're open and they're influential? They don't have to be a Christian. In fact, they could be a Muslim, but they're open and they're influential and you work with them to attack the five giants. And that's going to bring the second Reformation.<sup>3</sup>*

*Warren predicts that fundamentalism, of all varieties, will be "one of the big enemies of the 21st century." "Muslim fundamentalism, Christian fundamentalism, Jewish fundamentalism, secular fundamentalism — they're all motivated by fear. Fear of each other."<sup>4</sup>*

*Today there really aren't that many Fundamentalists left; I don't know if you know that or not, but they are such a minority; there aren't that many Fundamentalists left in America ... Now the word "fundamentalist" actually comes from a document in the 1920s called the Five Fundamentals of the Faith. And it is a very legalistic, narrow view of Christianity.<sup>5</sup>*

As for Brian McLaren, he is convinced that it is white European Christian men who are the source of corruption in the church, and even in the world. In his article, he uses the term "white Christian supremacy" to refer to white Christian men saying they "naturally led" the "genocide" of the Holocaust and the nuclear war. He believes if there can just be a reformation that is made of everyone *else* (no matter what their beliefs are), then we will have a truly pure reformation that will change the entire world and make "Christianity" what it should be. But, like other emergent teachers, McLaren threw out the Bible as the actual Word of God, and in so doing, has embraced and clung for dear life to ideologies that try to explain why there is evil in the world. The only thing McLaren can come up with is it must be white Christian European males. McLaren has become so deceived in his rejection of biblical truth that he actually believes this, and with a passion. He rejects Christianity now because he believes it is a "white man's religion." He cannot see that man's heart is sinful and full of deceit, and it has nothing to do with color or status. While we know there have been great atrocities and abuses done at the hands of white men, there have also been great atrocities and abuses done at the hands of non-white men. McLaren believes the problems and sufferings of this world are because men of one color – white – are more wicked than any other race of people. Tragically, many will believe his new reformation theology and will turn against the God of the Bible altogether and join forces with an all-inclusive god of this world. That god, however, cannot save one single soul. He cannot give lasting peace, and he cannot give eternal life. McLaren hates the fact that the Jesus Christ of the Bible says, "no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6) and "narrow is the way" that leads to life (Matthew 7:14).

The reformation leaders from over 500 years ago tried to separate themselves from what they saw as a false corrupted Christianity (Roman Catholicism). And that was a good thing. Many of them paid a high price to stand for truth; for many, even their lives. But there were groups that formed after the reformation that created their own forms of "Christianity," and many of those groups became corrupt as well. But that is not the church (the body of Christ). The church is made up of people, starting with the very first Christians described in the New Testament, who name the name of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, who become born again through His Spirit, and who have the mind of Christ because they are born again in Him. While some of them may belong to different groups and denominations, they know in their hearts that their first allegiance is to God. This body of Christ has been in existence since the beginning of the church after Jesus Christ was crucified and rose from the dead. It consists of both men and women, rich and poor, and of many different skin colors and from many different nations. Those distinctions merely describe the outer shell of these believers. The important distinction that separates them from the entire world is that they are sealed through the Holy Spirit in Christ (Ephesians 1:13; Ephesians 4:30). They have been translated from the kingdom of darkness (sin) into the kingdom of light (Jesus Christ) (Colossians 1:13). Because they have the Spirit of God living in them, they do not hate, they do not despise

someone because of the color of his skin, and they pray for the lost knowing that God loves them and wishes for all to come to repentance and the knowledge of Him; and while they may attend various denominations, they first are Christians, born again and sanctified through Jesus Christ. Though not perfect by any means and can succumb to their flesh and sin, they are indwelt by the Holy Spirit who convicts them of sin, gives them power from on high to walk righteously, and cleanses them from all sin. After reading this article by Brian McLaren, we must seriously doubt that he has ever seen or entered this Kingdom of Jesus Christ (who said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3)).

Tragically, Brian McLaren and those like him have missed the boat and are sinking in a mire of lostness, always seeking, but never finding, and taking anyone with them who will follow. Equally tragic are the many Christian leaders and pastors who somewhere along the line jumped into that quagmire of deception because they were tempted by that evil one who offered them popularity, wealth, and lust in exchange for a truth and discipleship that costs dearly.

Brian McLaren, truth isn't about white men or black men. Yes, there are racists, and people of color have often been victim to them. But that is because of sin, sin in the hearts of men who became cold, callous, and wicked from the hardness of their hearts. But you Brian McLaren have chosen to walk on a path that is also cold, callous, and wicked. You have been kept from truth because your eyes have been on this world rather than on an invisible world that is far above anything you can imagine. You think your neo-political, anti-Christian, pro-gay, environmental, anti-Bible rhetoric is going to save the world. You are wrong, dear sir. Truth does not lie on the path you are venturing on. Nor does it lie in any man-made institution. It is found in the pages of a book that God gave us, along with His Spirit, to show us the way to One Man Who has invited all to come unto Him and believe on Him. You think that your "progressive" relevant, emergent talk is so far above those who simply believe in a simple Gospel. You have swung to the other side of the pendulum, and you are just as off as those on the opposite side.

#### Endnotes:

1. <http://www.lighthouse Trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=3665>.
2. Brian McLaren, "The Last Reformation . . . and the Next Reformation" (Patheos, November 1, 2017, <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/brianmclaren/2017/11/last-reformation-next-reformation/#o77FxR1O0HGLI2ws.99>)
3. Rick Warren quoted in "Myths of the Modern Megachurch" (Pew Forum on Religion, 2005, <http://www.pewforum.org/2005/05/23/myths-of-the-modern-megachurch/>).
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5. Rick Warren speaking at the Pew Forum on Religion, 2005, <http://www.lighthouse Trailsresearch.com/pewreligion.htm>).

#### Labyrinths Have Found Their Place in the Christian Church

We received the top two photos last week from a reader. Below that are photos of various labyrinths in churches across North America. We have posted these, not to single out these particular churches, but rather to show examples of how many denominations have now incorporated the contemplative mystical practice of walking the labyrinth. And this is only showing some of the churches that have labyrinths on site. There are countless churches, ministries, and denominations that may not necessarily have labyrinths on site, but pastors and leaders encourage their congregations or followers to use them (e.g., the [Reformed Church of America](#)), or they encourage their congregations to visit retreat centers that have them. Carl Teichrib has written an excellent [article/booklet on labyrinths](#) that is worth the read.

(The photos used below are low resolution photos used in accordance with the U.S. Fair Use Act for the critique, review, and dissemination of information.)







Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Orcas Island, Washington



St. Mark Lutheran, Salem, Oregon







Millbrook Baptist, Raleigh, NC



Mennonite Church Eastern Canada



Wesleyan University





Calvin Presbyterian Church, Zelienople PA



First United Methodist Church, Boulder, CO

## The Words of the "New Age" Christianity: The Inaugural Fuller Forum: Do They Really Mean?

By Kevin Reeves

**Alpha:** It is the goal of meditators to reach the alpha state where the mind is in a kind of neutral trance or hypnotic slumber.

**Ancient Future:** see *Vintage Faith*

**Ancient Wisdom:** The supposed laws of the universe that, when mastered, enable one to control one's own reality. Another word for metaphysics or occultism.

**As Above, So Below:** This term is seen as the key to unlocking all occultic practice as described in the New Age book, *As Above, So Below*. Signifies that God is "in" everything and man is divine. Used in Eugene Peterson's book *The Message* "Bible" in the Lord's Prayer. (Warren B. Smith explains this term in further detail in *Deceived on Purpose*).

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**At-one-ment (replaces atonement):** This term has nothing to do with the atonement of Jesus Christ on the Cross; rather it is the concept that every human being and all creation is at one with each other. We are all connected together because "God" is flowing through everything and everyone.

**Awakening:** New Spirituality proponents say man is waking up to the realization that he is God, that divinity is within him. Thomas Merton spoke of man realizing what is already there ("God"). New Spirituality leader Leonard Sweet put this on the cover of his book *Nudge—Awakening Each Other to the God Who's Already There*. Richard Foster told researcher Ray Yungen once that Thomas Merton "tried to awaken God's people" (meaning through mysticism).

**Be Still:** Taken from Psalm 46:10—"Be Still and Know That I Am God." Those promoting contemplative prayer use this phrase as part of their meditative exercises, claiming that the verse is a mandate in Scripture to practice the "silence," when in fact, the Scripture, when taken in context, means to trust in the Lord. It has nothing to do with going into a meditative state by shutting down thought processes.

**Breath Prayer:** Practice consisting of picking a single word or short phrase and repeating it in conjunction with the breath. Rick Warren encourages the use of breath prayers in his highly popular book, *The Purpose Driven Life*.

**Catalyst:** Taking pastors and leaders to a "new level" (i.e., leaving the old ways and moving into "new" innovative methods and ideas). Emphasizing that everything must change and must change quickly and dramatically.

**Centering/Centering Prayer:** Another term for meditation (going deep within your center). A type of meditation being promoted in many mainline churches under the guise of biblical prayer, but which is actually Buddhist or Hindu in origin. Larry Crabb tells readers in his book, *The Power Prayer*, that he has been greatly benefited from centering prayer. Sadly,





Larry Crabb tells readers in his book, *The Papa Prayer*, that he has been greatly benefited from centering prayer. Sadly, Christian leaders such as Erwin Lutzer, James Kennedy and Jerry Falwell endorsed Crabb's book.

**Channeling (see also Automatic Writing):** Altered state of consciousness whereby the channeler opens himself up to inhabitation by spirits, often the supposed spirits of the dead or "ancient masters" who convey hidden mysteries. Acting as a medium.

**Christ Follower:** While there is nothing inadvertently wrong with this term, New Christianity/New Spirituality proponents have captured the term to say a "Christian" is a dogmatic, preachy, uncaring, irrelevant person whereas a Christ follower doesn't preach or carry around a Bible (which they say makes unbelievers/unchurched uncomfortable) but rather becomes integrated into the culture, absorbing the culture. Whereas a Christian is set apart, the Christ follower focuses on relationships, community, and social justice, they say. It is the idea that you can go for Jesus, but you don't have to identify yourself as a Christian or part of the Christian church (for more on the term Christ follower, see <http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=4810>).

**Christian Formation: See Spiritual Formation**

**"Christian" Yoga:** Some claim that Yoga can be neutralized by performing a Christian rendition of it. But even Hindu yogis say there is no such thing as "Christian" yoga because the exercises cannot be separated from the religious aspects. Yoga is the heartbeat of Hinduism.

**Civility:** Basically, no one is to challenge or question another's beliefs. All are valid.

**Cloud of Unknowing:** An ancient primer on contemplative prayer written by an anonymous monk. It instructs: "Take just a little word, of one syllable rather than of two . . . With this word you are to strike down every kind of thought under the cloud of forgetting."

**Co-Creator/Co-Creation:** According to New Spirituality/emerging church advocates, man is a co-creator with God because man is equal, in abilities and nature, to God.

**Colonialism:** A derogatory term used by New Spirituality advocates to describe those who are still clinging to the "old time religion," which is seen as outdated, archaic, irrelevant, and unsuccessful.

**Common Ground:** Using the dialectic process, an agreement among people that "ameliorates the extremes," thus effectually dispensing with tolerance for diversity.<sup>3</sup> In practice, it is arriving at agreement through compromise. A one-world religion will be achieved through this means.

**Contemplative Prayer:** Going beyond thought by the use of repeated prayer words or phrases. Similar to centering prayer in that it encourages a clearing of the mind of conscious thought in order to create a spiritual receptivity to God or the divine.

**Contextual Theology:** The belief that the Bible, in and of itself, is not free-standing—other factors (culture, ethnicity, history) must be taken into consideration, and with those factors, the message of the Bible must be adjusted to fit.

**Convergent:** A coming together or unifying of ideas. The boundaries that distinguish different beliefs are eradicated.

**Conversation (or Conversation Journey):** New Christianity followers reject the idea that truth is unchangeable or that we can have certainty in knowing truth; thus, we have "conversations" that are always seeking answers but never finding. To be certain of anything is arrogant, they say. This ongoing conversation journey is inclusive of all beliefs and ideas; nothing is rejected.

**Critical Mass:** While a scientific term, when speaking of populations of people it is referring to "an explosion in global consciousness capable of 'touching' or transforming all of humankind."<sup>4</sup> The idea is that when a certain critical number of people all share the same awareness, then change can come to all people's thinking because of the critical mass (as in an atomic explosion). A critical mass does not have to be a majority if it is a powerful enough mass, but unity is essential and so is meditation.

**Cultural Architect:** An emerging church/progressive Christianity term for pastor or leader with the idea that these cultural architects differ from their pastor counterparts in that they are in touch with the culture and are relevant.

**Daniel Plan:** Saddleback Church's fifty-two week spiritual and physical health and wellness program. For the program, Warren enlisted the assistance of three physicians with New Age/holistic medicine beliefs and teachings (Dr. Mehmet Oz, Dr. Daniel Amen, and Dr. Mark Hymen).

**Dark Night of the Soul:** Term coined by John of the Cross, describing a time of intense inner crisis in which the seeker feels far from God. It is highly typical of contemplatives to use this idea of spiritual dryness or emptiness to convince followers they need something more in their relationship with God. Contemplatives insist that the "old ways" don't work anymore.

**De-Construction:** Undoing the old traditional Christianity. In *A is for Abductive*, McLaren says it is "disassembling anything that has acquired a pat and patent set of meanings [i.e., doctrine] for the purpose of reassembling in new ways [i.e., emerging/New Spirituality]" (p. 95).

**Desert Fathers:** A group of ancient Christian monks living in wilderness areas of the Middle East who practiced contemplative prayer, borrowing meditation techniques from Hindu and Buddhist sources. You will often find references to the Desert Fathers in contemplative-promoting books.

**Ecstasy:** The hoped-for outcome of contemplative prayer or meditation wherein the seeker is carried out of himself into a oneness with the Divine. People say they experience an ecstasy compared to nothing they have ever known before. They



oneness with the Divine. People say they experience an ecstasy compared to nothing they have ever known before. They feel a sense of unity with all of life and are convinced of their own immortality. Such experiences keep them returning for more. One is not going to believe he or she is God if one doesn't feel like God.

**Emergent:** The term emergent was first used by the group (Brian McLaren, Tony Jones, Dan Kimball, Mark Driscoll, etc.) originally called Young Leaders Network. When they left Leadership Network to go on their own, they became Emergent. Today the terms emergent and emerging are often used interchangeably.

**Emerging Church:** Postmodern congregations that follow a loose set of doctrines promoting a redefinition of Christianity and incorporating into their fellowships some or all of the following: Roman Catholic mysticism and contemplative prayer, eastern meditation techniques, pagan religious practices such as walking the labyrinth, Lectio Divina, mantra, etc. Highly ecumenical. The focus is on social justice and cultural relevancy rather than the Gospel and the Word of God. Emphasis is on a social gospel as opposed to a personal Gospel.

**Fractal:** Directly related to what are being called the "new sciences" of "Chaos Theory" and "Fractal Theory." Linked with the occult phrase "as above, so below." Mentioned in William Paul Young's book, *The Shack*.

**Fresh:** New Spirituality advocates say we need to see God in new "fresh" ways. Rick Warren says this in *The Purpose Driven Life*. Occultist Alice Bailey says the path to God will be based on "a fresh orientation to divinity and to the acceptance of the fact of God Transcendent and of God Immanent within every form of life."<sup>1</sup>

**Fusion:** A common term within New Spirituality to describe a fusing together of ideas, beliefs, and people.

**Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan:** Initiative originating with Saddleback Church's pastor Rick Warren, where social justice "deeds" take precedence over doctrine and beliefs.

**God's Dream:** A crossover term used by both the New Age and the church and oftentimes connotes desire for world peace. When people of all faiths move past "doctrinal idiosyncrasies" and "transcend divisive dogmas," they can attain "God's Dream" for world peace.

**Ground of All Being:** New Ager Marilyn Ferguson wrote that God is within everyone and everything. God is described as the universal "ground of all being."

**Higher Self:** Supposed God-self within each human being. New Agers seek to connect, through meditation, with their higher self. Also called the Christ-Self or True-Self. Brennan Manning helped to bring this term into the evangelical church.

**Ignatius Exercises:** Meditative exercises named after Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Catholic Jesuit Order.

**Immanence:** The New Age belief that God is in everyone.

**Incarnational:** A term used to describe an emerging "progressive" kind of evangelism that focuses on the needs of people but downplays the importance of sharing the Gospel message (as that can offend).

**Individualism:** New Spirituality advocates resent individualism, saying that is the old way of viewing things. Now we must be collective, unified. Individual relationships with Jesus Christ are to be replaced with communities in which social justice is the focus.

**Kingdom Now:** A teaching that Christians should be walking consistently in supernatural power and establishing Christ's kingdom on earth. Much overlap exists between Kingdom Now, Dominionism, and Latter Rain theology.

**Kingdom of God:** New Spirituality believes the kingdom of God can be brought to earth through humanity becoming one. When they use this term, they don't mean it in the sense the Bible uses it but rather it is a kingdom based on the unity of all mankind and man realizing his divinity. There is no Cross in this kingdom.

**Lectio Divina:** Means "sacred reading." This contemplative prayer practice is gaining popularity within the evangelical/Protestant camp. It often involves taking a single word or small phrase from Scripture and repeating the words over and over in order to "hear from God." Basically, Scripture is being misused as a tool for meditation.

**Making History:** Another way of saying things must change.

**Mantra:** Word or words repeated either silently or out loud in order to induce an altered state of consciousness. A way to turn off thoughts and enter the "silence."

**Maturity:** A term used by all contemplatives, such as Richard Foster and Rick Warren, to describe the outcome of someone who is a regular practitioner of contemplative prayer. The traditional view of God, they say, is somewhat immature or childish, and the contemplative view of God is mature. In other words, the mystical view of God will give true maturity as opposed to a more juvenile or childish view of God.

**Meditation:** The meditation most of us are familiar with involves a deep, continuous thinking about something. But New Age meditation does just the opposite. It involves ridding oneself of all thoughts in order to still the mind by putting it in the equivalent of pause or neutral. A comparison would be that of turning a fast-moving stream into a still pond. When meditation is employed by damming the free flow of thinking, it holds back active thought and causes a shift in consciousness. This condition is not to be confused with daydreaming, where the mind dwells on a subject. New Age meditation works as a holding mechanism until the mind becomes thoughtless, empty, and silent.

**Mindfulness:** A Buddhist term from *bhavasana*. It's the practice of meditation. Gives the classic Buddhist spiritual enlightenment. Now it is being used in virtually every area of human endeavor: stress reduction, education, medicine, post-traumatic stress, and stress in the workplace.

**Missional (also Missional Church):** Replacing the term missions; it strives to improve society through social justice. De-emphasizes evangelism to the lost. Emphasizes being relevant and connected to the culture.

**Namaste:** A greeting that occurs at the end of each Yoga session—meaning *the god in me greets the god in you*.

**New Reformation:** The emerging church says there is a “new” reformation every 500 years, and we are due for one now. Whereas the last reformation was a breaking away from the Roman Catholic Church, this one will be a uniting of all belief systems. The late emerging church leader Phyllis Tickle said once that Brian McLaren is the next Luther.<sup>2</sup>

**Non-dualism:** Satan is trying to eradicate the gap between good and evil. In the New Spirituality, there is no “dualism” (good and bad, right and wrong, etc.).

**Nonphysical Guides:** Spirit guides or as the Bible refers, familiar spirits and demons.

**Occult:** Means “hidden” and refers to spiritual practices utilized to contact the supernatural realm. The practice of metaphysics throughout history.

**Oneness:** God is in everyone and everything.

**Organic Church:** Often called a house church or simple church movement; different from “going to church.” The organic church sees itself as new, vibrant, and unique, not like the “outdated” traditional church.

**Palms Down, Palms Up:** A contemplative exercise wherein with eyes closed, one puts his palms up to receive from God and his palms downward to get rid of the bad within him.

**Paradigm Shift: See Shift**

**Postmodernism:** A fluid term indicating a worldview in direct opposition to the morals, logic, and societal expression of the modern world from the Enlightenment through the beginning of the Twentieth Century. Truth is viewed as a social construct and is not objective or absolute. In the emerging church, it is marked by a disdain for both solid biblical exegesis and rational theological discourse, and an embracing of individual experience, desires, or thought processes over objective truth. In the emerging mind, one is always seeking but never finding. Doubt is heralded whereas certainty is considered arrogant.

**Practicing the Presence of God:** Taken from the ancient monk Brother Lawrence’s book by the same name, today the phrase is used in conjunction with practicing contemplative prayer. God’s presence is no longer based on a personal relationship with Jesus Christ for the born-again believer but focuses on “practicing” God’s presence through meditative exercises such as Lectio Divina or centering prayer.

**Prayer of the Heart:** Another term for contemplative prayer. A move from doctrine to the mystical. Henri Nouwen stated: “The quiet repetition of a single word can help us to descend with the mind into the heart.”<sup>3</sup>

**Progressive:** A term used to replace the term emerging or emergent, meaning a type of advanced Christian who has shed the old stale ways of traditional biblical Christianity.

**Red-letter Christians:** A term promoted by Tony Campolo and other “progressive” emerging figures who say they follow the red letters of Jesus in the Bible. They focus primarily on Christ’s words of love and forgiveness but disregard His words about judgment, sin, and evil.

**Re-words (re-jesus, re-imagine, re-think, re-form, re-invent, re-imagine):** Words used to suggest that traditional historical Christianity is outdated and must be re-created.

**Sacred Space:** Either a physical spot where one goes to engage in a mystical practice or the actual silence (state of being) during the mystical experience.

**Scripture Engagement:** When used, often includes Lectio Divina. Biblegateway.com, a popular online Bible resource, is promoting Lectio Divina through “Scriptural Engagement.”

**Seeker-friendly:** When a church puts more emphasis on making unbelievers comfortable in church and less emphasis on discipling believers. Regular members are often encouraged to leave their Bibles at home so “seekers” are not made to feel uncomfortable.

**Self-centered:** In the eyes of the New Age/New Spirituality teachers, anyone who is not focused on bringing about global unity and world peace through interspirituality is self-centered. “Self-centered” people do not believe that all humans are connected to each other with a god-energy in each person. To say that God is separate from man is “self-centered.” Rick Warren uses this term numerous times in his book *The Purpose Driven Life* in the context of unity and peace.

**Servant Leadership:** Today, there is much talk about teaching people to become good leaders. In reality, what is happening is people are being taught to be “good” followers who do not exercise discernment. The term (and the concept) is used to further encourage people to accept the teachings of the New Age/New Spirituality.

**Shift:** The idea that the church needs a radically different view of approaching and experiencing God.

**Silence,** the: Absence of normal thought. Common in Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian contemplative practice and is supposedly a state, often reached through meditation, where the practitioner can be in touch with his higher self, the universe, or the divine.

**Soaking or Soaking Prayer:** A method commonly seen in charismatic revival meetings. The participant receives the particular anointing present, normally through the laying on of hands, and “soaks” in the supposed presence of God. Manifestations associated with soaking prayer can include slain in the spirit, uncontrollable shaking or laughter, being encompassed by a sense of heaviness, spontaneous visions, altered states of consciousness, etc.

**Social Justice (and Social Gospel):** Shifts the emphasis from repentance and faith in Jesus Christ to more earthly endeavors like environment, empowerment, employment, entitlements, equality, and esteem-building programs promoted by global elites to benefit or punish selected people groups as needed for its “sustainable development”—an agenda more in keeping with that of a community organizer than a follower of Christ.<sup>4</sup>

**Soul Care:** Another term for “spiritual direction” with the purpose of finding the divinity that is within each person through contemplative meditation.

**Spiritual Disciplines:** The supposed disciplines used in Spiritual Formation for the purpose of becoming more christ-like. Can include fasting, prayer, good deeds, and always includes the “discipline” of contemplative prayer (e.g., solitude and silence). The Desert Fathers practiced extensively self-denial and disciplines, which as Paul indicates in Colossians 2:20-23 only provide “a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility.”

**Spiritual Director:** One who promotes or mentors people in the spiritual disciplines. Often ministering in Christian retreat centers or employed by Christian colleges.

**Spiritual Formation:** A movement that has provided a platform and a channel through which contemplative prayer has entered the church. Find spiritual formation being used, and in nearly every case you will find contemplative spirituality being promoted. In fact, contemplative spirituality is the heartbeat of the spiritual formation movement. In spiritual formation, it is believed that if you practice certain disciplines, you will become more christ-like.

**Synergy:** Working together in unity to bring about the spiritual evolution of man.

**Taize:** Taize is an ecumenical interspiritual community in France. Taize worship is a prayer service consisting of meditative singing and periods of silence in order to reach a contemplative state.

**Tantra (aka: tantric sex):** Tantra is the name of the ancient Hindu sacred texts that contain certain rituals and secrets. Some deal with taking the energies brought forth in meditation through the chakras and combining them with love-making to enhance sexual experiences.

**Thin Places:** This term originated with Celtic spirituality (i.e., contemplative) and is in line with panentheism. Thin places imply that God is in all things, and the gap between God, evil, man, and the universe thins out and ultimately disappears in meditation.

**Transformational:** From the contemplative point of view, one experiences transformation from practicing the contemplative silence. This transformation is actually a change in consciousness brought on by entering altered states through meditation. Focus becomes interspiritual and universalistic.

**Tribal:** Used to explain that everyone is in a different tribe (religious belief system), and all tribes are legitimate; we need to embrace each other’s tribes.

**True Self:** Deceptively used by both the New Age and by many in the church to define your “inner divinity,” your “divine self,” which they say can be reached through meditation.

**Ultimate Reality:** Buddhist concept of God. Spiritual presence in all things.

**Vintage Faith or Vintage Christianity:** A spirituality that goes back to former practices, but not as far back as the apostles’ and Jesus’ teachings in the Bible. They say we need only look back to Catholicism and early century monks and mystics.

To read the complete list of “New” Spirituality language, see [Kevin Reeves booklet, D is for Deception](#).

#### Endnotes:

1. Alice Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ*, p. 150.
2. <http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=3665>.
3. Henri Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart* (San Francisco, CA: Harper, 1991), p. 81.
4. Paul Proctor, “Social Justice Is Not Christian Charity,” <http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=4193>.

#### Pictures That Say a Thousand Words – What Would the Reformers Think of Them?

The following photos are an assortment taken from stories we have written or posted over the last three years.

July 2017







Leaders of the World Communion of Reformed Churches sign copies of the declaration in the Saint Mary's City Church in Wittenberg, Germany, expressing support from Reformed churches for the Catholic-Lutheran Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. (Credit: Photo courtesy of WCRC/Anna Siggelkow.)

**2014 at the Vatican, Italy**



Pope Francis speaks at an inter-religious conference on family values at the Vatican on Monday. Saddleback Pastor Rick Warren, bottom right, sits in the audience.





2014



Pope Francis with several evangelical leaders including James Robison, Tony Palmer, and Kenneth Copeland

**2014 - Beth Moore's Legitimizing of the Catholic Church**

#### **"On Reformation Milestone, Experts Detect 'Astounding' Thirst For Unity"**

Photo: Pope Francis, right, hugs the President of the Lutheran World Federation Bishop Munib Younan during an ecumenical prayer in the Lund Lutheran cathedral, Sweden, Monday, Oct. 31, 2016. (Credit: L'Osservatore Romano/Pool Photo via AP.)

**LTRP Note:** The following is posted for informational and research purposes and not as an endorsement of the source or the content.

**By John L. Allen Jr.**  
**Crux (Catholic publication)**



Two experts on the Catholic/Lutheran relationship, one Catholic and the other Lutheran, both say that joint commemorations of today's 500th anniversary of the launch of the Protestant Reformation reflect a strong yearning for unity in the grassroots, and may represent a new "springtime" in ecumenism, meaning the quest for Christian unity.



Five hundred years ago today, tradition has it, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on the door of the cathedral in Wittenberg, Germany, thereby triggering the Protestant Reformation that's divided Western Christianity ever since.

Today, two experts on each side of that Catholic/Lutheran divide say what they detect in the trenches is an "astounding" thirst for unity. [Click here](#) to continue reading.

## Another Mass Shooting in America - God's Help and Comfort Through It All

**LTRP Note:** As another mass shooting has struck our country, victimizing yet another community, we knew of no other words to say that day than the ones from Scripture.

### God's Help and Comfort Through It All

By Warren B. Smith

*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. (Psalm 121:1-2)*

*For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. (Isaiah 50:7)*

*For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. (Isaiah 41:13)*

Henry Francis Lyte completed the lyrics of his hymn *Abide With Me* shortly before his passing in 1847. Aware that death was near, he directed his hymn to God who he described as the "Help of the helpless."

*Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide;  
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me!*

The 1719 hymn *O God, Our Help in Ages Past* by Isaac Watts and William Croft, reminds us that God has been our help in the past and will continue to be our hope in the years to come:

*O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come; Be Thou our guide while life shall last, And our eternal home.*

The following Scriptures refer directly to the help and comfort God brings to those who put their faith and trust in Him:

#### God is Our Helper

Behold, God is mine helper. (Psalm 54:4)

So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. (Hebrews 13:6)

#### God Helps Us

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. (Isaiah 41:10)

For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. (Isaiah 50:7)

#### God is Our Help and Our Shield

Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield. (Psalm 33:20)

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him. (Psalm 28:7)

#### God is Our Help and Our Deliverer

But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God. (Psalm 40:17)



But I am poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou art my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying. (Psalm 70:5)

### God Helps Deliver Us From the Wicked

And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him. (Psalm 37:40)

Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity? Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. (Psalm 94:16-17)

### We Pray to God for Help

Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man. (Psalm 108:12)

[Click here to continue reading this article/booklet by Warren B. Smith.](#)

## NEW BOOKLET FOR MILLENNIALS: The Cross and the Marijuana Leaf

**\*\*THIS BOOKLET IS PART OF OUR EFFORT TO REACH OUT TO MILLENNIALS WITH THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD\*\***

**NEW BOOKLET: *The Cross and the Marijuana Leaf* by Linda Nathan is our newest [Lighthouse Trails Booklet](#). The Booklet is 18 pages long and sells for \$1.95 for single copies. Quantity discounts are as much as 50% off retail. Our Booklets are designed to give away to others or for your own personal use. Below is the content of the booklet. To order copies of *The Cross and the Marijuana Leaf*, [click here](#).**

### *The Cross and the Marijuana Leaf*

By Linda Nathan

*Cannabis is the most commonly used illicit drug worldwide, with 5 million daily users worldwide.<sup>1</sup>*

Should Christians use pot? Should they condone the use of it in our society? What would Jesus do? The author's extensive experience, biblical approach, and current research provide clear guidelines for those struggling with today's exploding drug culture.

### INTRODUCTION

#### WHAT'S HAPPENING?

For the first time in U.S. history, Christians in America are facing the challenge of a majority approval of marijuana. A recent Gallup Poll revealed that 58% of Americans now favor its legalization, and 67% of ages 18 to 29 back legalization. Yet when Gallup first asked the question in 1969, only 12% favored legalization.<sup>2</sup>

By September 2017, there was some form of marijuana legalization in 29 states and the District of Columbia.<sup>3</sup>

This massive change has occurred in less than fifty years, and it is a major sign of the seismic shift occurring in our culture—a shift that should concern Christians deeply.

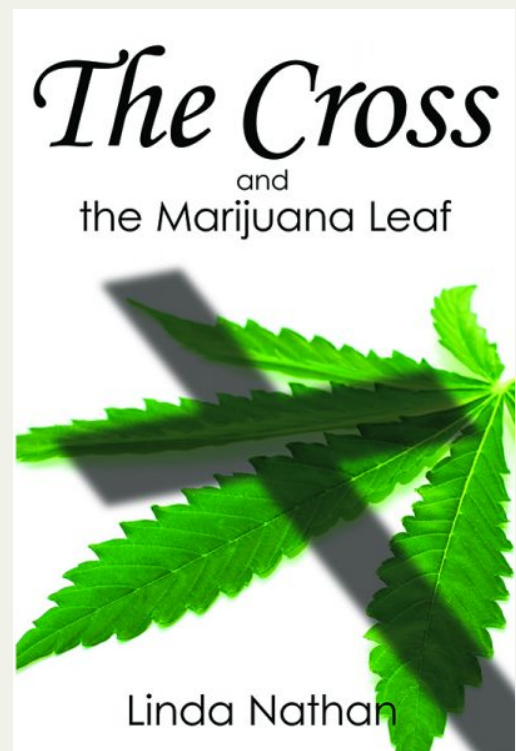
But some Christians are uncertain how to view this shift, for the Bible doesn't mention marijuana directly—*or does it?*

What do we know about marijuana? Is it good for our health? Or can it be harmful and even lead to psychosis? But, most important, how does the Bible deal with it?

Before we continue, let me tell you a little about myself and why I'm writing this booklet. I think it's fair to say my involvement with marijuana stretches over half a century, through experience, observation, and research. My husband Richard and I met in San Francisco in 1962 and spent fourteen years in the Bay Area counterculture. By the grace of God, we survived the '60s meltdown for thousands of young people into corruption, crime, and madness. And we personally experienced and saw with our own eyes the destructive effects not only of marijuana but also of some of the other drugs to which it opened the door. And the pot we smoked then was much milder than what is available today.

I thought I knew all about marijuana from my experiences during the '60s and '70s. But as I researched what is happening today, I saw that it's now an entirely different ballgame. Today's marijuana has a much, much stronger psychoactive (THC) content. Billionaires now power its promotion. And radical changes are occurring in our society as a result.

Besides our personal experience, Richard, who has a B.S. in Biology and a Master's in Christian History, has spent the last 24 years working in psychiatric and drug treatment centers where he has continually observed the devastating effects of marijuana and other drugs.



So, let's look at what's happening.

## TWO MOVEMENTS IN ONE: MEDICAL AND RECREATIONAL

Although there are around 400 derivatives of the marijuana plant, the battle for legalization focuses mainly on two: medical marijuana (cannabidiol or CBD) and recreational marijuana (tetrahydrocannabinol or THC).

**“Recreational” marijuana (THC).** Currently (2017) eight states (Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Massachusetts, Maine, and Colorado) plus the District of Columbia have legalized marijuana for recreational purposes, but the movement is growing rapidly as other states are moving toward legalization.<sup>4</sup> More on recreational marijuana later.

**Medical marijuana (CBD).** By September 2017, twenty-nine states and Washington DC had medical marijuana laws, and another eighteen had passed CBD laws.<sup>5</sup> CBD has minimal THC content. Therefore, many states have legalized it for specialized cases, primarily with childhood epilepsy or seizures. Some believe that legalizing CBD isn't the same as legalizing medical marijuana because it's not using the entire plant.<sup>6</sup> A common assumption is because the CBD extract has some healing benefit, then the entire plant does too. But there are many dangers with using the entire plant.

Later, I will discuss the use of marijuana for medicine and the positions of major medical organizations.

Many powerful factors are propelling these movements, but first, we need to know what the Bible says. While it doesn't address the issue of marijuana specifically, it has a great deal to say about its effects and about God's demand for holiness for His people.

## THE BIBLE SPEAKS

**1. We are to obey the law.** We are to obey the Law of God (Romans 13:1–2), as well as the laws of the land, unless those laws conflict with God's law (Acts 5:29). Marijuana is still illegal by federal law except within approved research situations.

*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. (Romans 13:1)*

**2. We are to live soberly.** The Bible tells believers to be sober and practice holy behavior. Marijuana (THC) can lead to a vulnerable, drunken type of state.

*Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envy. (Romans 13:13)*

*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21)*

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8)*

**3. Marijuana can be harmful.** There is a great deal of scientific evidence concerning its mental and spiritual harm, which is discussed later. According to the Bible, our bodies are not our own; we belong to Christ.

*What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:19–20)*

**4. Only God's Word can transform our minds;** supposed “consciousness-raising” drugs can be spiritually dangerous. Here again, I speak from experience: Under marijuana, the soul can become more vulnerable to false teachings.

*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. (1 Timothy 4:1)*

**5. Marijuana can lead to idolatry and demonic bondage.** Whatever has power over you becomes an idol, and behind every idol is a demon. Richard has observed marijuana leaf tattoos on many young psychotic patients, sometimes entwined with a cross. The idolatry of drug abuse involves both spiritual and physical bondage.<sup>7</sup>

*Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. (1 Corinthians 10:14)*

*Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. (1 Corinthians 10:21)*

**6. Marijuana is a method of sorcery.** This is one of the strongest arguments against Christians using marijuana and the reason why it opens the door to worldview changes. Witches have used it and other such drugs for centuries to contact the demonic realm. The Bible uses the word *pharmakeia* for “sorcery,” which is the root of our modern word “pharmacy.”<sup>8</sup> Consider the following thoughts from a Bible forum:

*Marijuana is a hallucinogenic. This is one of the reasons why using it is sorcery and witchcraft. With the use of drugs, you are opening yourself up to all sorts of spiritual attacks and seducing spirits. Mind-altering drugs are used in witchcraft to alter your reality. This can be very dangerous. This is why God calls us to be sober and avoid attacks from Satan (1 Peter 5:8).*<sup>9</sup>

Let us make it our concern to grow in holiness through obedience to Christ. Scripture exhorts us:

*For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. (Galatians 5:13)*

## **TURBO POT— NOT YOUR GRANDMOTHER'S MARIJUANA**

*It occurred to me lately that these new ultra-high THC level marijuana breeds or what the kids refer to as (KB) Killbud mixed with any other narcotic is [sic] altering the children's minds in such a destructive way the consequences are irreparable.*<sup>10</sup>

*When I committed my life to Jesus Christ, I knew that I needed to give up marijuana and other hallucinogenic drugs. I realized that the influence of these drugs was the opposite of the influence of the Holy Spirit. The two are incompatible.*<sup>11</sup>

Now, maybe despite the Bible's warnings about how we are to live, you're not convinced that there isn't some good in using marijuana recreationally.

But there's a vital fact many people don't realize: The current weed is immensely more powerful than it used to be—to the point of being hallucinogenic. In their book *Going to Pot*, William Bennett and Robert White explain:

*Let's acknowledge that today's marijuana is at least five times stronger than the marijuana of the past. The THC levels of today's marijuana average around 15 percent, but go as high as 20 percent and above in the dispensaries found throughout the states that have legalized it for 'medicinal' or recreational use. The*

*marijuana of today is simply not the same drug it was in the 60s, 70s or 80s, much less the 1930s. It is much more potent, leading to a great many more health risks.*<sup>12</sup>

*The Marijuana Potency Project at the University of Mississippi has found levels of THC as high as 37 percent. That is a growth of a psychoactive ingredient from 3 and 4 percent a few decades ago to close to 40 percent.*<sup>13</sup> (emphasis added)

## **WHAT IS THC, AND WHY DO HIGH LEVELS MATTER?**

Tetrahydrocannabinol or THC is the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana that gives the “high.” Synthetic versions can be very harmful.<sup>14</sup> Consider the following:

*The difference between 3 to 5 percent THC and 13 to 30 percent THC is very significant. It is like comparing a twelve-ounce glass of beer with a twelve-ounce glass of 80 proof vodka; both contain alcohol, but they have vastly different effects on the body when consumed. Indeed, many argue that because of the difference in potency, it is not even the same drug we once knew. Some have taken to calling today's marijuana “industrial marijuana” or “turbo pot.”*<sup>15</sup>

**A hallucinogen.** Such high levels can be hallucinogenic and cause profound perceptual distortions of reality. Regular use may lead to “flashbacks” or (sometimes frightening) hallucinations that can reoccur for years. There may be panic and anxiety attacks, and health problems. Used with other drugs or medications, it can lead to vomiting, stroke, increased blood pressure, convulsions, seizures, and nerve problems; and it can affect babies in the womb.<sup>16</sup>

**Psychosis.** And then there is the connection with psychosis. “Nine studies following hundreds to thousands of people for



**Psychosis.** And then there is the connection with psychosis. Nine studies following hundreds to thousands of people for decades searched for a connection between marijuana use and psychosis. *All but one* of these studies suggest a connection between marijuana use and schizophrenia.”<sup>17</sup>

Other studies reveal the connection between high pot use and a clinically significant increased risk of developing schizophrenia and other mental illnesses during adolescence.<sup>18</sup> Our own experience has shown that you can't know how it will affect you; it might seem fine for a while and then act without warning as a depth charge in your soul.

Sir Robin Murray, a psychiatrist at King's College in London, says, “Even I, 20 years ago, used to tell patients that cannabis is safe. It's only after you see all the patients that go psychotic that you realize—it's not so safe.”<sup>19</sup> My husband says amen to that, having worked 24 years at treatment centers.

## MARIJUANA AS MEDICINE?

### PART I: THE BATTLE

*In 1970, the US Congress placed marijuana in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act because they considered it to have “no accepted medical use.” Since then . . . [21% of the U.S. population] now lives in a state where smoking weed is legal.*<sup>20</sup>

*There is no level of marijuana use that is actually completely safe. . . . even the casual use of marijuana changes the brain.*<sup>21</sup>

*This new marijuana is waaaaaaay beyond simple medical use for pain.*<sup>22</sup>

The controversy rages. *The Journal of the American Medical Association* defines medical marijuana as:

*. . . the use of cannabis or cannabinoids as medical therapy to treat disease or alleviate symptoms. Cannabinoids can be administered orally, sublingually, or topically; they can be smoked, inhaled, mixed with food, or made into tea. They can be taken in herbal form, extracted naturally from the plant, gained by isomerisation of cannabidiol, or manufactured synthetically.*<sup>23</sup>

So, do the Bible's warnings apply only to using marijuana with THC? After all, the CBD used for medical purposes doesn't contain THC. Does it?

Actually, CBD *does* contain the hallucinogen THC, in varying ratios. Some claim the two work together therapeutically and that “a patient's sensitivity to THC is a key factor to determining the ratio and dosage of CBD-rich medicine.”<sup>24</sup> But many advocates don't differentiate and insist on using the entire plant.

**Proponents** argue that it can treat the symptoms of chemotherapy-induced vomiting, HIV/AIDS, multiple sclerosis, childhood epilepsy, and neuropathic pain. Testimonials are the main support for other conditions, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, glaucoma, Crohn's disease, and Alzheimer's.<sup>25</sup>

In 2015, *The Journal of the American Medical Association* published the preliminary conclusion of a compilation of 79 studies of the experiences of 6,000 patients who used marijuana for self-medication. The report stated:

*Smoking pot was found to be of little use in relieving symptoms for many ailments, among them hepatitis C, Crohn's disease and Parkinson's disease. Researchers found that smoking pot did show some success in relieving nausea caused by chemotherapy, and “spasticity” for multiple sclerosis patients. The authors of the study did not rule out other medical benefits, but found little evidence of any so far.*<sup>26</sup>

**Opponents** decry marijuana's dangers, the fact that it lacks FDA approval, and that legal drugs make marijuana unnecessary. They point out its addictiveness and that it can lead to harder drug use and mental problems; they also say it “interferes with fertility, impairs driving ability, and injures the lungs, immune system, and brain. They claim medical marijuana is a front for drug legalization and recreational use.”<sup>27</sup> There is no clear optimal dose for its various approved conditions. THC concentrations vary widely; and sometimes users breed out CBD, which can ameliorate THC's negative effects, to increase THC's potency.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, marijuana smoke can contain up to 70 percent more carcinogenic materials than tobacco smoke.<sup>29</sup>

*No one medicine has ever been recommended or used for the number of diseases and ailments political proponents of medical marijuana say it is a therapy for. The proponents have turned it into some kind of major miracle drug while, at the same time, the scientific literature finds marijuana either dangerous or of extremely limited use, and often both.*<sup>30</sup>

Now let's look at the positions of professional medical associations.

## MARIJUANA AS MEDICINE?

## PART II: THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY SPEAKS

### The American Psychiatric Association—

*There is no current scientific evidence that marijuana is in any way beneficial for the treatment of any psychiatric disorder. In contrast, current evidence supports, at minimum, a strong association of cannabis use with the onset of psychiatric disorders.*<sup>31</sup>

*Medical treatment . . . should not be authorized by ballot initiatives.*<sup>32</sup>

### The American Medical Association—

In November 2013, the AMA retained its longstanding position that “cannabis is a dangerous drug and as such is a public health concern.” Recent policy changes call for further well-controlled studies.<sup>33</sup>

### The American Society of Addiction Medicine—

The ASAM warns against marijuana’s adverse effects on mind and body, its increasing potency, and its influence in precipitating relapses in alcoholism and other drug dependencies. It recommends carefully controlled medical use and drug education for early school grades and health workers.<sup>34</sup>

### The American Cancer Society—

A 2013 position paper states that cancer patients may receive benefit from marijuana, which can “help alleviate the nausea, vomiting, wasting, and muscle spasms caused by chemotherapy in some patients.” The ACS supports more research for treatments for cancer and its side effects, but it does not advocate marijuana legalization.<sup>35</sup>

### The American Ophthalmological Society—

In 2014, the AOS reaffirmed its stand that marijuana does not help glaucoma. Ophthalmologists believe marijuana has side effects that could endanger eye health, increasing risk for cancer and eye diseases.<sup>36</sup>

### The American Academy of Pediatrics—

In 2015, the AAP reaffirmed its opposition to legalizing marijuana for either recreational or medical use. It recommended protections for children in states that have legalized either. It says, “For adolescents, marijuana can impair memory and concentration, interfering with learning, and is linked to lower odds of completing high school or obtaining a college degree. It can alter motor control, coordination and judgment, which may contribute to unintentional deaths and injuries. Regular use is also linked to psychological problems, poorer lung health, and a higher likelihood of drug dependence in adulthood.”<sup>37</sup>

## CRITERIA FOR MARIJUANA AS MEDICINE

The general conclusion appears to be, “If marijuana is to be used for medical purposes, it should be subjected to the same evidence-based review and regulatory oversight as other medications prescribed by physicians.”<sup>38</sup>

Bennett and White offer the following controlled program for obtaining medical marijuana: a) A physician specialist for the patient’s chronic condition must sign a special waiver; b) Approval by the Institute of Medicine; c) Both patient and physician must sign a formal statement under penalty of federal perjury charges limiting the marijuana to that patient only; d) The patient must sign a waiver of understanding releasing the government of any liability regarding marijuana’s possible adverse side effects; e) It must be a standardized dose of government-provided marijuana; f) A hospital pharmacy must fill the government-approved, doctor-certified prescription; g) The patient’s prescriptions must be based on the doctor’s regular reviews.<sup>39</sup>

So, if marijuana is still illegal on the federal level, and all these authorities oppose or caution about its legalization, why is the legalization movement growing so rapidly? This is a question that begs an answer.

## BIG MARIJUANA AND CULTURAL CHANGE

*“The pro-legalization movement hasn’t come from a groundswell of the people. A great deal of its funding and fraud has been perpetrated by George Soros and then promoted by celebrities,” said John Walters, director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy under George W. Bush. “The truth is under attack, and it’s an absolutely dangerous direction for this country to be going in.”*<sup>40</sup>

Marijuana use in the United States before the ’60s was mostly underground; but as its popularity spread, the public became much more accepting, until by the ’90s,

*[L]eaders and politicians stopped speaking of the harms of marijuana . . . anti-drug ads became less prevalent . . . arguments on behalf of marijuana use were no longer answered . . . a market was found to create medical marijuana and call marijuana medicine because of its analgesic effects, and . . . Hollywood made punch lines out of the use of marijuana in blockbuster movies and popular television shows.*<sup>41</sup>

## NEVERTHELESS, LEGALIZATION TODAY IS NOT A GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT.

Bill Clinton, President George W. Bush, and others who were in power when it was started it and now maintain it. Clinton “has become

Billionaire financier George Soros and other wealthy people jump-started it and are maintaining it. Soros “has become one of the largest supporters of drug reforms ranging from medical marijuana use to the easing of sentencing for drug charges. His foundation has donated about \$200 million to drug reforms since 1994.” He has also spent around \$80 million on reforms through a nonprofit network and his mouthpiece, the Drug Policy Alliance.<sup>42</sup> Soros provided 68% of the financial backing to pass Washington State’s 2012 initiative and is focusing on other states.<sup>43</sup>

Other promoters include the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and billionaires Peter B. Lewis, PayPal cofounder Peter Thiel, and Sean Parker and Dustin Moskovitz of Facebook.

## THE NEW GOLD RUSH

Today the pot industry is viewed as the “new gold rush,” with “hundreds of tributary businesses.”<sup>44</sup>

*Sales of marijuana grew 30% in 2016, and as long as acceptance continues to gain steam, the industry could hit \$20.2 billion in North America within four years, according to a marijuana market research firm.*<sup>45</sup>

The legalization movement and industry are transforming our culture and institutions.

## THE POT PRESIDENT

Former President Obama’s administration greatly expanded the movement. He openly admitted smoking marijuana when young, calling it merely a “bad habit and a vice,”<sup>46</sup> and supported legalized pot in Washington State and Colorado. In April 2013, his administration even told the Supreme Court to ignore a lawsuit by Oklahoma and Nebraska opposing legalized pot in Colorado.<sup>47</sup>

The Obama administration also pressured the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) of the Department of Justice to consider removing marijuana from the list of the country’s most dangerous drugs.

*That list was created as part of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) of 1970, which consolidated all federal drug laws into a single comprehensive measure and defined marijuana as a Schedule I controlled substance, alongside heroin, LSD and other drugs that the government says have no medical value and the highest potential for abuse. That meant marijuana was saddled with the strictest possible restrictions and penalties.*<sup>48</sup>

To date though, the DEA has maintained its “core priority” to oppose marijuana and prosecute “those who manufacture, distribute, or possess any illegal drugs, including marijuana.”<sup>49</sup>

However, movement is underway to reclassify cannabis as a non-Schedule I drug, allow states to regulate medical marijuana programs, remove CBD from the Controlled Substances Act, and reconcile federal banking issues in the legal marijuana industry.<sup>50</sup>

## DRUG-DEALING STATES

George Soros also funds studies about the profits from marijuana legalization.

**Colorado.** Such a study found that marijuana legalization could generate as much as \$100 million in state revenue after five years. “That research was *widely considered* to have influenced the election.”<sup>51</sup> (emphasis added).

**Washington State.** Marijuana sales generated \$70 million in tax revenue during the first year of legalization, with over \$257 million in sales.<sup>52</sup> But one business owner said \$70 million is low and sales should increase.<sup>53</sup>

Logan Bowers, who co-owns a recreational cannabis store in Seattle, claims there’s a “*cultural shift happening* in Washington, Colorado and other states *that have started to legalize marijuana use.*”<sup>54</sup> (emphasis added) Although the article doesn’t describe that “cultural shift,” I know it well. And my husband sees its results every day.

## POPULAR ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST

*You talk to the kids and with everything that’s going on with it being legalized in Colorado and comments being made that it’s just not that bad for you, the kids are taking it one step further and they’re telling me, “It’s just an herb. It’s OK. In fact, it’s used for medical purposes, it’s not bad for you. It’s good for you.” And that’s the belief our kids are getting.*<sup>55</sup>—Fourteen-year veteran, Salt Lake City Police Department

There’s a wide spectrum of opinion about legalizing marijuana, but the battle doesn’t fall on a simple Left-Right continuum. Some Republicans favor it and some Democrats oppose it. Issues involve personal health and freedom, tax revenues, public policy, expense to our justice system, cultural change, and states’ rights. Many believe a ban would be futile.

Bennett and White conclude in *Going to Pot* that most advocates are poorly informed because of deliberate falsehoods by interest groups, ignorance about the strength of today’s marijuana, and unwillingness to give it up.<sup>56</sup>

Even Christians have many different views, as you will see in the chart below.

## FOR



**Divine intervention.** Pot is God's intervention to bring healing and relief. Even Jesus must have smoked it because it grew in the Middle East then.

#### **AGAINST**

What can bring temporary relief isn't necessarily good (e.g. alcohol, opioids, etc.) (1 Corinthians 10:23). To assume that Jesus Christ smoked it because it may have been around is an irrational unbiblical leap.

#### **FOR**

**Relaxation.** It relaxes me, so it must be good.

#### **AGAINST**

**Don't count on it.** Marijuana is not a sedative; it can excite and even stimulate hallucinations and psychosis. The present high levels make it unpredictable.

#### **FOR**

**God's creation.** God created everything and gave us the plants of the field (Genesis 1:29).

#### **AGAINST**

God created deadly nightshade, too, but we treat it with care. This is a fallen creation.

#### **FOR**

**Not from Satan.** Satan doesn't create, so marijuana couldn't be of Satan.

#### **AGAINST**

Instead of creating, the devil spins webs of deceit (2 Corinthians 11:3).

#### **FOR**

**Freedom.** Jesus wasn't legalistic; Christians live by grace.

#### **AGAINST**

This is true, but Scripture clearly says that we are never to use our freedom as a license to sin (Romans 6). And the Bible has given us many instructions on how we are to live including being sober minded and avoiding drunkenness.

#### **FOR**

**Fairness.** Trust the democratic process.

#### **AGAINST**

The democratic process also brought us homosexual marriage and transgender bathrooms.

#### **FOR**

**Just an herb.** Marijuana is just a medicinal herb.

#### **AGAINST**

Opium can be medicinal too, but recreationally it's destructive.

#### **FOR**

**Popularity.** My friends all use it.

#### **AGAINST**

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world" (1 John 2:15; see also 2 Timothy 2:22).

#### **FOR**

**Bigotry.** You're a bigot to oppose pot.

#### **AGAINST**

Don't be afraid to be criticized for standing for righteousness. Be bold. (1 Peter 4:1–5)

#### **FOR**

**Legality.** It's okay for Christians in states with legalized pot.

#### **AGAINST**

It's still illegal on the federal level, and even if that changes, it won't make it safe or right. You can sin with legal and social approval.

*For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. . . . Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices. (2 Corinthians 2:9, 11)*

Many Christians today are confused about marijuana. This may result from:

*Lack of education*

*Misreading the Bible / rejecting biblical authority*

*Peer pressure and moral laxity in churches and society*

*Confusing propaganda*

*Naiveté and/or ignorance of the devil's wiles*

Here in Washington State, we've not witnessed any noticeable Christian resistance to the "legalization." On the contrary, we've encountered apathy in some churches and casual openness to it in some church youth groups. Online, youth pastors sometimes seem uncertain. There seems to be little awareness of its spiritual dangers. A woman who had opposed a marijuana factory in her neighborhood called us after our letter protesting the new law was published. She'd approached many Christian neighbors, but few had signed her petition. There was a lot of apathy, she said, an attitude of, "Well, it's a law now, what can we do?"

Well, there's a lot we can do. First and foremost, we can pray. In spite of all that is happening in the world today, including the growing use of marijuana and other drugs, as Christians, we serve a God who cares and who listens to our prayers.

We can also help to educate those around us, in our homes, churches, and neighborhoods. And while it may seem like a hopeless case there are some encouraging signs. As of this writing, the White House has announced that we should expect to see greater enforcement of federal marijuana laws, regardless of states' laws. Attorney General Jeff Sessions opposes the drug. Furthermore, marijuana is still classified on the federal level as a Schedule I drug along with heroin, LSD, and ecstasy.

But the battle will continue. The exploding marijuana industry is up in arms about losing its huge profits from a possible major crackdown. While President Donald Trump doesn't oppose medical marijuana, the White House views recreational use differently. The Department of Justice (DOJ) is examining the whole issue. If the White House and the DOJ go easy on the "legal" states, the marijuana industry will continue flourishing, with the states as drug dealers. But if the DOJ cracks down, marijuana will increase as a powerful symbol of rebellion. One thing is clear: President Trump, the DOJ, and the country need our prayers.

No one knows which way

the nation will go.

But which way will you go?

*Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen. (2 Peter 3:17-18)*

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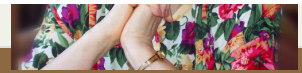
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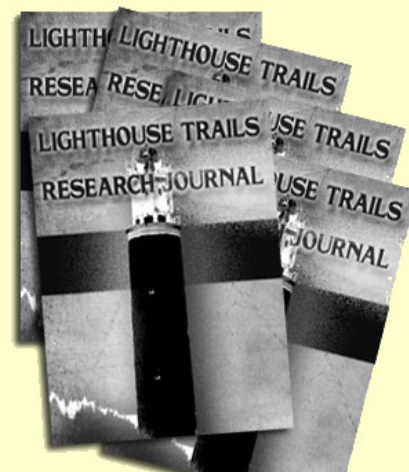
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