



THE REFLECTOR

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'Oh, God'

JOHNNY STRINGER

I have never seen an R or X rated movie, but I doubt that any of them could be more disgusting than the blasphemous movie entitled "Oh, God!" in which George Burns stars as God. I have not seen it either, and I don't intend to; I don't think my stomach could handle it. Some might think I have no right to judge a movie to be disgusting when I haven't even seen it; but one does not have to eat slop with the hogs to know that the experience would be something less than desirable.

The very title of the movie is highly offensive to those who properly revere the holy name of God (Ps. 111:9). He is the Almighty Creator of the universe; He is perfect in His holiness; He is the One before whom we are to bow. It is He that we are to serve, and it is He who will determine our eternal destiny. His love is incomparable (1 John 3:16); His power is awesome. His wrath against sin has been manifested time and again, and will finally be poured out in all its terribleness on the last day when all who have failed to properly honor him will be sentenced to eternal torment in hell.

Truly we should stand in awe before Him. His holy name should never be uttered except with the utmost reverence and awe. To use the name of our God in a light, frivolous way is to profane it. Such disrespect is nothing less than blasphemy. When we use the name of God we are not talking about Joe or Sam down the street. Before we utter His name, let us first consider of whom it is we are speaking. It grieves, angers and offends the God-fearing person to see the name of the God he worships and reveres thrown around in a light, frivolous way in a comedy.

The movie received a very favorable review by Dudley Saunders in the Louisville Times. He describes it as "one of the happiest comedies to come down the road in many a day." He predicts that most people will love it, but concedes that a few might call it blasphemous. It looks like I find myself in the min-

ority, but this is not necessarily bad (Matt. 7:13-14).

I suppose the reason many people like the movie is that it presents the kind of god they desire. Men do not want a God that demands to be honored and obeyed; they do not want a God that will punish people in hell; in short, they do not want the God that is revealed in the Bible. Thus the makers of this movie have created the kind of god that people want. Here is Mr. Saunders description of the god that is depicted in the movie:

"All that he asks is that we be nice to each other. This God doesn't preach hell and damnation. He doesn't scold people for ignoring him. He'd rather they'd be nice to each other than to spend a lot of time praising Him. He doesn't have much of an ego. He just happens to be the nice guy who created the whole system."

Thus the movie presents a grossly unscriptural picture of our God and Creator. It brings Him down to the level of a "nice guy" who does not demand to be praised, honored, and obeyed. (Note Matt. 7:21-27; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Heb. 13:15; Eccl. 12:13-14; Rev. 4:8-11; Rev. 7:11-12; Ps. 100). As a part of reducing Him from the omnipotent God of the Bible before whom we are to bow in awe, and bringing him down to the level of just a nice guy, the movie depicts God as being imperfect. Mr. Saunders says,

"God admits he isn't perfect. He made a few mistakes. Tobacco was one. Ostriches were another. And he put too big a seed in avocados."

Christians will not be amused by this blasphemous treatment of our God. To see such a distorted picture of the character and nature of the God we worship is offensive to all God-fearing servants of the Most High.

via Pause-Profit-Ponder

INTERCESSION AND MEDIATION

EDWARD O. BRAGWELL, SR.

"But the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." -- Romans 8:26.

Does the Holy Spirit intercede for Christians? If so, does he do it without influencing them separate from the written word? can the Holy Spirit intercede when Christ is said to be the ONE mediator? These questions are being discussed a lot lately.

First, the most likely meaning of "the Spirit", in Romans 8:26, is the Holy Spirit. One would get that idea from just reading the text. There would have to be some grounds other than the passage itself to consider it otherwise -- such as conflicting with a plain passage elsewhere. It is obvious that our more reliable translators understood it to be the Holy Spirit. The King James, American Standard, and Revised Standard versions all capitalize "Spirit", indicating they consider it to be the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, the Holy Spirit can intercede for us without speaking to us apart from the Scriptures. The advocates of the direct operation and influence of the Holy Spirit upon the hearts of men today can find no help for their theory in this verse. It tells what the Spirit does FOR Christians, not what He does TO them. The action is directed toward God (the Father) on our behalf -- not toward us on God's behalf. Both the Holy Spirit and Christ intercede for us -- but neither guides us apart from the Bible.

Thirdly, there is a difference between mediation and intercession. Paul told Timothy to make intercessions for all men. (1 Tim. 2:1). Yet, only three sentences later, he said there is ONE mediator. (1 Tim. 2:5) If the words mean exactly the same thing, then Paul contradicted himself.

An intercessor simply pleads on behalf of

or against another to a third party. The word (ENTUNCHANO, εντυγχάνω) describes the Jews' appeal to Festus against Paul in Acts 25:24. ("Have dealt" -- KJV; "Made suit" -- ASV; "appealed" -- NASB). It is used of Elijah's intercession ("pleads" -- NASB) to God against Israel in Romans 11:2. In Romans 8:26,34 it is used of intercession made by Christ and the Holy Spirit for man. In 1 Tim. 2:1; 4:5 it, in its noun form, is used of intercession (prayer) made by man.

A mediator is more than a mere intercessor. He not only appeals, he is in position to bring about a settlement. He represents both parties in a dispute with equal force. In the New Testament, the word even suggests that the mediator is the very guarantee of settlement. The verb form of the word for mediator (MESITES, μεσιτης; MESITEUO, μεσιτεύω) is rendered "confirmed" or "interposed" (Heb. 6:17). The margins of the ASV and NASB have "mediated" and "guaranteed" respectively.

The mediatorial work of Christ is tied to His death. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Tim. 2:5,6). "For this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of DEATH... (Heb. 9:15). "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the BLOOD of sprinkling ..." (Heb. 12:24). Thus, He is the mediator between God and men by His blood, by which fellowship with God is established and maintained for sinful men. (1 John 1:3-7).

Christ, the Holy Spirit, and even Christians can and do make intercessions for us. But, Christ, and only Christ, is in position to effect peace between God and man. Only His blood can cleanse us from sin and keep us in His grace. He is, indeed, our ONE mediator.

DATING AND MARRYING NON-CHRISTIANS

[EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is by a young lady whom I have known a number of years. I have spent pleasant days in her and her parents' home during gospel meetings. The last time there, she and several other teenagers carried my wife and I out to eat. She and the others laughed, joked and even giggled like one expects young folks to do. I thought other young folks might like to read what she had to say as published in the bulletin of the congregation where she worships.]

When I first started dating, so many people, especially my parents were telling me that I shouldn't date guys who were n't Christians, I just kind of ignored them because all I was concerned about was being able to date. I wasn't really thinking much about falling in love with anyone, I just wanted to date a lot of different guys and enjoy being with them. But, it doesn't always work out that way. For instance, a friend of mine always said that she would go ahead and date non-Christians, but if she started getting too serious with anyone, she would just stop going out with them. That's when it is too late. She ended up marrying a non-Christian, and has had a very hard time keeping strong in the faith. It hurts her in more ways than you can imagine. That's one point that should help you on deciding not to date non-Christians. Everyone says, "Oh, that won't happen to me." What makes you think you are different? Just stop and think about it. Many of us don't want to think about it because we might decide to change our mind, and some of us are plain too stubborn to think about it logically.

Since my parents would never allow me to date non-Christians I never did. Now that I'm old enough to make my own decisions on who I date, I am so thankful to my parents that they wouldn't let me before. Now I am old enough to understand why I shouldn't. A Christian would naturally have more things in common with you than a person of the world would. That is, if you are the kind of

Christian that you should be.

So many people say, "There just aren't enough Christians around here to date." If you would do things and go places with other Christians, you would find Christians to date. There are so many things we can do to meet other Christians. We can go to gospel meetings all around. Sometimes it does take a while. If you have the right attitude you will find someone though.

If you would just stop and think of all the hurt you would feel, being married to someone who isn't a Christian, that might also help change your mind. Sure, your home may be happy and content, with no disagreements, but deep inside your heart you would ache, thinking about your husband or wife going to hell. That might sound harsh, but isn't it true? I know that would really hurt me. I have a lot of friends who are Christians, and I have a lot who aren't and that if they aren't converted they will be lost. So I can imagine thinking of one that you love so much, being lost. I talked to a Christian friend of mine who is married to a non-Christian. Her husband teaches their children one thing, and she teaches them what the Bible says. Where do these children turn? They about have to be mixed up, as far as to what they should do. This friend told me that she teaches her little boy to turn the other cheek as the Bible teaches, but her husband tells the child that he will be punished if he does this.

I really don't understand people that have already gotten themselves in this situation, letting their children go ahead and mess their lives up also by not teaching them to only date Christians.

Think about it, please and read Deut. 7: 1-4 to see what God says would be the result of such marriages.

In Christian love,
Donna Brewer

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"Doc, I need to see you about my leg."
 "Which leg?" asked the doctor.
 "My right leg."
 "Sorry," says the doctor, "You'll have to see Dr. Knix for I specialize in LEFT legs."

The late brother W. Claude Hall used to tell this story to his "preacher boys" to illustrate what he saw as an unhealthy trend of preachers' becoming "specialists" of sorts. It has been about twenty three years since I heard him tell it, but the danger has not lessened.

Gospel meetings where any and every Bible theme may be discussed has become dull to some. We have to have "specials". We are seeing more and more emphasis upon "specialty" meetings and less upon general gospel meetings with a lot of churches.

Certain preachers have found them a "specialty" while others are looking for one that they can "market". Now, we are not so sure that this is so good. We may just be a bit jealous, but we have known few brethren well-known for a "specialty" that were not lop-sided somewhat either in life or doctrine. One gets so wrapped up in his special theme that he neglects other areas that need just as much attention. The same goes for churches that, in my judgement, overly emphasize "special studies".

If the trend continues, I expect some day for my granddaughter to call the preacher to ask a question about baptism only to have him say, "You'll need to call brother Knox. You see, I'm a repentance specialist". Or maybe have him ask, "How old are you?" "Nineteen, you say?" "You'll need to call brother Knoll because middle-aged problems is my specialty."

O.K., brethren I have gotten that off my chest. If any church wants a "week-end special" on the "Dangers of Specialization", I am the man to call. But you had better call soon because I will have to work you into my busy schedule. You see, I am so busy between golfing rounds attending "specials" on var-

ious themes trying to keep abreast of ALL themes that my time is limited.

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Well, here we are at the close of another year. It has been a good year for the church here. We are looking forward to 1978. We hope to complete our new building the first half of the year. At this writing, plans are not complete for financing the building--but it looks as if we will go the bond route.

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EDITOR: Edward O. Bragwell, Sr.

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