

Before You Jump on Anyone's Bandwagon

By Tim Nichols

A freshman at Eagle Rock Junior High won first prize at the Greater Idaho Falls Science Fair, April 26. He was attempting to show how conditioned we have become to the alarmists practicing junk science and spreading fear of everything in our environment. In his project he urged people to sign a petition demanding strict control or total elimination of the chemical "dihydrogen monoxide." And for plenty of good reasons, since it:

1. causes excessive sweating and vomiting.
2. is a major component in acid rain.
3. can cause severe burns in its gaseous state.
4. is a fact that accidental inhalation can kill you.
5. contributes to erosion.
6. decreases effectiveness of automobile brakes.
7. has been found in tumors of terminal cancer patients.

He asked 50 people if they supported a ban of the chemical dihydrogen monoxide. Forty-three said yes, six were undecided, and only one knew that the chemical was... WATER!!!

The title of his prize winning project was, "How Gullible Are We?" The conclusion is obvious.

Religion is another area where people have a tendency to be gullible. Extreme examples can be found in David Koresh's followers and the Heaven's Gate cult. But it can happen any time we believe someone without checking out God's Word to

see if what is being taught is the truth. Faith does not mean blindly accepting whatever anyone (even a preacher) says. John warned, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1).

Use God's Word to discern between what is true and what is false. And if you feel like living dangerously today, pour yourself a big tall glass of dihydrogen monoxide. Have a great day!

This ought to cause us to remember and to beware that facts can be so easily manipulated and that gullible people are ready, willing, and able to uncritically believe and act upon just about anything. Careful thinkers gather all available and relevant facts before drawing hasty conclusions. Divisive "church members", dishonest politicians, faultfinders, and other evil sorts distort and manipulate facts for the consumption of the gullible. Adolf Hitler was not willing to openly discuss his doctrines. He correctly believed that if you repeatedly claim that certain things are true, long enough, then people will believe them.

We all need to always obey the biblical injunction to "test all things" and to "hold fast what is good" (1 Thess 5:21). The result, for all honest and faithful people will be that we will "abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thess 5:22).



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Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

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Bible Detective

Thought To Ponder

A man of correct insight among those who are duped and deluded resembles one whose watch is right while all the clocks in the town give the wrong time.

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Before You Jump on Anyone's Bandwagon

Larry Rouse
Editor

Four Flaws in the Four Spiritual Laws

By Mark Roberts

Have you read the tract "The Four Spiritual Laws"? It was written by Dr. Bill Bright, the president of Campus Crusade for Christ. Approximately 1.5 billion copies of this tract have been printed and distributed all over the world. It was written to quickly and efficiently teach people how to be saved.

Unfortunately, "The Four Spiritual Laws" tract is badly flawed. A simple comparison between its teaching and the teaching of scripture reveals that "The Four Spiritual Laws" simply does not teach God's plan of salvation.

Here are the Four Spiritual Laws:

1. **Law 1:** God loves you and offers a wonderful Plan for your life.
2. **Law 2:** Man is sinful and separated from God. Therefore, he cannot know and experience God's love and plan for his life.
3. **Law 3:** Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Through Him you can know and experience God's love and plan for your life.
4. **Law 4:** We must individually

receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives.

What exactly does the tract mean "receive Jesus Christ?" How do you do that? We are not left to wonder:

1. **We Must Receive Christ - Jn 1:12**
2. **We Receive Christ Through Faith - Eph. 2:8-9**
3. **When We Receive Christ, We Experience a New Birth - Jn 3:1-8**
4. **We Receive Christ by Personal Invitation - Rev. 3:20**

The tract goes on to say "You Can Receive Christ Right Now By Faith Through Prayer" and even includes a suggested prayer to ask Jesus to be the Lord of your life and receive Him by faith alone.

What could be wrong with this? A study of the Bible shows these laws are terribly flawed.

Flaw 1: "The Four Laws" forgets that faith works.

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Read **Genesis 6:13-14**. Did Noah have faith? Yes! But did his faith alone save him? Could he have been saved by merely believing God without building the ark? Of course not. Noah's faith led him to obey God (**Gen. 6:22; 7:5, 16**).

Romans 1:5 speaks of our "obedience to the faith." Obedience and true faith in God always go together. You can't have one without the other (read **James 2:14-26**).

Where is this concept in the "Four Laws" pamphlet? The "Four Laws" says nothing about obedience, only faith!

Flaw 2: The pamphlet forgets baptism.

The New Testament teaches that water baptism is very important. It...

1. Puts you into Jesus Christ - **Gal. 3:27**
2. Saves you - **1 Peter 3:21**
3. Forgives your sins - **Acts 22:16; 2:38**

Baptism is so crucial because it is linked to Jesus' death, burial and resurrection (**see Romans 6:3-6**).

The "Four Laws" teaches you can be saved without baptism, advocating a prayer and faith alone approach. This simply is not the teaching of the scriptures.

No passage of scripture promises the non-Christian that he can pray and receive forgiveness of sin. No passage of scripture says that you can pray "into Jesus Christ." No passage says prayer can save you. All of these vital functions are ascribed to baptism, not prayer!

Flaw 3: The tract forgets that the N.T. specifically teaches that faith alone cannot save.

The "Four Laws" says that to be saved you need only believe in Jesus Christ. What does

the Bible say?

"You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only" **James 2:24**

Once again we see how scripture puts faith and obedience together, while "The Four Laws" artificially and arbitrarily divorces them.

Who should we believe -- a booklet written by a mere man, or the inspired word of God?

Flaw 4: The tract forgets that God's grace doesn't exclude man's obedience

Many seem to think that there are only two choices: be saved by your actions and doing, or be saved completely by God's grace.

This is why so many oppose baptism. They believe that baptism is an attempt to earn or merit salvation. This is false. The Bible never sees obedience and grace opposing each other.

Read **Hebrews 11** and notice how these men and women of faith responded to God's grace by obeying the Lord. Their obedience didn't earn salvation but was absolutely necessary to being saved.

Likewise, you cannot earn salvation today by doing good works. But you must do what God has said if you want to be saved. These works of obedience demonstrate our faith and love for God. Won't you do what God says so you can be saved today?

What must I do to be saved?

- Believe in Jesus Christ - **John 3:16**
- Repent of past sins - **Luke 13:3**
- Confess Jesus as the Son of God - **Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:10**
- Be baptized in water for the forgiveness of your sins - **Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mark 16:16**

Don't be fooled by the ideas of men. Read your Bible. Study these things carefully. Then obey God's simple plan for salvation today and become a New Testament Christian!



Discouraged of Men

By Bill Hall

We recently read a very fine article by J.D. Jeffcoat entitled "Discourager of Men." Indeed, churches everywhere are troubled by those who are constantly discouraging others. But something needs to be said also concerning those who allow themselves to be discouraged.

Some are discouraged by criticism. Every person who has tried to do God's will has been criticized. Jesus was constantly criticized. So was Moses. Paul once said, "All those in Asia have turned away from me" (**2 Timothy 1:15**), and apparently he was afraid that Timothy might be affected by this adverse criticism against Paul (**2 Timothy 1:8**). Do you listen to others when they criticize you? Do you listen when they criticize the local church of which you are a part or some good person within the congregation? Do you allow their negative comments to affect your feelings? Or do you cast aside their discouraging remarks that you might maintain a positive attitude toward the Lord, His church, and His work?

Criticism may be just. But, on the other hand, it may be an outgrowth of envy toward others; or it may be a dishonest effort to destroy another; or it may just be the product of ignorance as to what is right and wrong, consequently ignorance of what deserves criticism and what deserves praise. One must not be discouraged in the Lord's work by unjust criticism.

Others are discouraged by the chronic pessimist. This is the man who is always reminding the church that "it won't do any good," and that

The apostles serve as a perfect example of men who refused to be discouraged. They were constantly faced with setbacks; their teaching was attacked; they suffered from those within and from those without.

"this is just a hard area and we're never going to convert people here." He can in one business meeting totally demoralize a whole church, and can destroy in one sitting that which took a year to build up. He is the true "discourager of men." But if he is wrong in discouraging, others are wrong in allowing themselves to be discouraged by his pessimistic remarks.

The apostles serve as a perfect example of men who refused to be discouraged. They were constantly faced with setbacks; their teaching was attacked; they suffered from those within and from those without. It was said of them: "To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and home-less. And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the off-scouring of all things until now" (**1 Corinthians 4:11-13**). But they kept on preaching!

Blessed is that man who is not easily discouraged by others; who can see through unworthy criticism for what it really is; who takes his stand for truth and right and does not let others move him from that stand. Let us avoid being either a "discourager of men" or "discouraged of men." Rather, let us be found working for the Lord, encouraging and finding encouragement in the hope we have in Christ.

