



Reviews

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Evangelical teaching exposed*

John Nicholls

THIS BOOKLET OF sixty-four pages comprises in fact two independent reviews by two brethren. Philip Yancey is an evangelical who has written a very popular work, *What's So Amazing About Grace?* The reviews were produced because apparently the book has been widely distributed within some parts of the Brotherhood. The two reviews complement each other, looking at the book in different ways but each reaching the same conclusion: that it is un-Scriptural and unsound.

Brother Dangerfield quotes fairly extensively from the book and comes to several conclusions about it:

- Yancey uses little Scripture to support his theories
- He claims God and Jesus accept us "just as we are" and sees no need for repentance by the individual
- He believes the Holy Spirit leads us to repentance
- He questions whether personal obedience is really necessary
- He believes that Jesus died as our substitute, not as our representative
- He condones active homosexuals
- He adopts a scoffing attitude towards those who advocate morality and the upholding of God's principles, and calls them bigots, hypocrites, etc.
- The outworking of his ideas on grace do not lead to the Kingdom, or the fulfilment of God's promises. His concluding picture is of people full of drugs and drink in a rock concert at Wembley Stadium 'receiving' God's grace.

Brother Burke's conclusions concentrate more on the erroneous doctrines that underlie Yancey's book. He says he found it hard to tell why Yancey was wrong on first reading the book. He speaks

of the dangers inherent in reading a doctrinal work by a non-Christadelphian, 'Christian' author, saying: "We are so quick to ignore the false doctrines which we cannot accept that we read over them without appreciating that they are being used as the whole foundation of the author's arguments, the very authority from which his case is derived" (p. 32). The false doctrines which Brother Burke came to recognise in this work are:

- The atonement necessitated that Christ was God, that he was Divine
- God's grace is extended to sinners prior to repentance
- Obedience to God's commandments is unnecessary for our salvation
- The Holy Spirit has to dwell in believers.

There are several useful appendices to his review.

Both reviews are well reasoned and logically set forth, and the booklet is commended to those who are concerned to withstand and fight the errors that are creeping into the Brotherhood through the pernicious influence of evangelical teachings like those of Philip Yancey.

* *A Review of Philip Yancey's Book Entitled 'What's So Amazing About Grace?'*, Andrew Dangerfield and Jonathan Burke. Published by the Christadelphian Scripture Study Service. Available in the UK from Brother Peter Talbot, 6 Ridge Lane, Radcliffe-on-Trent, Nottingham, NG12 1BD; tel./fax 0115 933 3683; e-mail talbotpj@aol.com; at £2.50 plus 85p postage and packing. Main address Brother Brian Luke, 85 Suffolk Road, Hawthorndene, South Australia 5051; tel. 08 8278 6848; fax 08 8271 9290; e-mail bluke@bigpond.com; or contact other local CSSS agents.