Subject: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by jisamazed on Thu, 03 Jul 2008 13:37:44 GMT
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I know what you were thinking when you read the title of this entry. You think that I'm going to rail on HEF or FA. Actually, I am trying to reflect the experience that a lot of us have had, regardless of what your opinion is about FA nowadays. A few stories:

A young woman in our GR group is expecting a child. She is told to not worry about the birth, the Lord will take care of everything, and is ill-prepared for it. Her mother-in-law functions as the midwife. There are complications in the labor, which takes forever it seems. The mother-in-law tries a procedure that only a trained midwife or obstetrician should perform. The baby dies, and the mother is in severe pain for weeks. After the birth is over and it is clear that the baby will not rise from the dead, the father-in-law says, "That was judgment from the Lord!" and slams the door. Years later, after enduring more pain and emotional abuse, the mother goes to a doctor, who states that she was in worse shape than any woman he has ever examined.

The father of the child sings a song at church the next week, Carl Seitz' "Psalm 84." The beautiful song is powerful and expresses faith in God in spite of the man's incredible grief. However, after church the teacher from FA tells someone else, "Rebuke him for singing that song. We don't sing funeral songs here."

A woman in the church was regularly abused by her husband, who had left the church years pervious. She stuck with him in spite of his abuse and philandering. One day he threw her out of the house without any clothes on. She had to hide in the bushes, but somehow got access to a phone. She called her sister-in-law, crying. The sister-in-law told her, "Stop confessing that. Don't you believe that your husband is saved, spirit-filled and walking by faith?" Eventually the poor woman got divorced and married a stable man.

My wife grew up in a FA-planted church in Lansing, and it was particularly dysfunctional. A handful of people thought that they should divorce their spouse and "believe" to remarry their first spouse, even if that first spouse was already remarried to someone else. Therefore there were a lot of couples that were separated from each other, and the children devastated. Of course none of them remarried their first spouse. Most of them wised up eventually to the ludicrousness of that practice.

A man in that church was found to be a serial rapist. No one had any clue about it. In one day he was arrested and the family's life was permanently altered. I can't imagine the emotion that his wife experienced, and she tried to "stand strong in faith", but sometimes would start crying after church when talking to a friend about her experiences. A man who was a local leader in that church told her, "You are not on believing ground because of this, this and this..." He was very harsh with her.

The Tomax7 site contains many other such stories. I know that such experiences were replicated many times over.

When I think about all that happened, I sometimes want to scream, "Were we all crazy?" How did this group get this way? What possessed us to behave like that? Where did we get the idea that this was Christianity? What was I thinking to join myself to a group like that?

I know that the Lord had His reasons. For my part, I benefited from some of the teaching, some of which was very good. The problem is, it was mixed with some very bad teaching, and many of us did not have the tools to discern between the two at the time. Some of us were afraid to discern it because we would have been ostracized.

I'm still trying to answer some of those questions. Any input would be appreciated.

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by sparkles on Sun, 06 Jul 2008 17:21:16 GMT
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I would like to answer your question of "Were we all crazy?" with an absolute, definite, positively, utter NO!!!!!!!!!!!!! At least some of us weren't. It never ceases to amaze me how the critics are the ones who expected Faith Assembly, Dr. Freeman, all the ministers and all the people to be perfect and never make a mistake or say/do anything wrong or offensive. Let me tell you, Jae, I could have been offended multiple times by what people said and did. By the father in law of the person who lost her baby I was told that unless I quit playing softball and a few other things I was not allowed to fellowship with his daughter/family. I could give other examples of how this person treated me even after I came to the church, but I won't because it just doesn't edify. Years later this same man came to me and asked my forgiveness for what he had said and done. It wasn't needed because I didn't hold anything against him, as he was just doing what he felt was right at the time. I can still remember his daughter saying to me that she tells her dad that she was praying for me and to just let the Lord do the work. I appreciated that and never forgot it. I loved this family over the years and am thankful for all I learned from them, as they were the ones God used to help me in my walk with Him.

It is totally improper for you to use the example of the sister who lost her baby, as anything that could be said about it would just be cruel and hurtful. Jae, you are speaking half truths about some things, which makes them a lie. Having been in the same meeting as you I also know the story and it may not be as you think. Should the father-in-law have said what he did at the time? No, but I am sure many things are said at such a time that may be inappropriate because of all the

grief, shock and pain everyone is in.

And the fact that someone was abused by their husband is not exactly something that only happened at Faith Assembly and the other meetings. I would say this is something that happens all over the world in probably every church, although it may not always be physical abuse. I would think this person who was the abuser had some things in their life they just never gave up to the Lord. I knew someone who was also in an abusive relationship, and what she said to me was: You think you can just get up and walk away, but it isn't that easy. Her mother also had been in an abusive relationship, so she said it seems like that was the kind of man that she got involved with. And I might say that there have been people in abusive relationships that did see their husband or wife saved and delivered and walk with the Lord. So you cannot say that what she did was wrong with staying with him for a while, and I cannot say it was right, but she is the only one who knows what was right.

It is quite judgmental of you to say what you did about nobody having a clue about the man who was a rapist. I knew the man and his family and actually stayed in their home a few times. He came across as a very nice person, quite hospitable and seemed to love the Lord. I was shocked myself when I heard that he had been arrested for such things. I suppose he is the only one who has ever lived a double life with no one knowing. Wait, I think a man named Ted Haggard also was living a double life style, as was Paul Cain, Earl Paulk, and Bob Jones(not of the college.) Why weren't these people also found out years ago before they got caught? I guess it is just Faith Assembly related groups that have this problem, no discernment. I am sorry is someone came across as harsh at such a time, but sometimes people just aren't perfect. I have a friend who went to a Christian Reformed church here in Grand Rapids, and she was sharing with one of the ladies in the church some things she was struggling with. I guess this person was quite harsh with her and she eventually ended up leaving. NO love there either I guess. Another person in the same church was spoken to quite harshly when she came to the leadership with a concern over the lack of being fed from the pulpit, but all she was told was to feed herself. I guess ministers don't need to feed people anymore as people can just feed themselves.

I could also give examples the way you and others at Grand Rapids treated me that was wrong, but I won't since it doesn't edify and it really isn't important any more.

Maybe it is time for you to get rid of your hated for Dr. Freeman and all the groups associated with it. The man wasn't perfect, the people in the churches weren't perfect, and maybe you forget about the message of the wheats and tares. Could be some of the people who hurt so many were just tares growing with the wheat. Or maybe they were wheat who just made some horrible mistakes and need to be forgiven. I often think of the verse that says he who has been forgiven much, loves much. And I have been forgiven much and want to give all the people who could have offended me the same grace to change and be conformed into the image of Christ as I have gotten.

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by jisamazed on Sun, 06 Jul 2008 19:12:34 GMT
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Sue, it was helpful to hear a little bit of your story and perspective, thank you.

I want to point out that I purposely did not include stories about myself or how people treated me, because this matter is not about me or my need to forgive. It is much bigger than that. I have forgiven those who hurt me and I take care to keep my garden weeded, lest any root of bitterness spring up. I hope those I hurt have forgiven me. My experience there was actually relatively positive compared to many others.

However, the heart-wrenching stories coming from the FA-related groups never seem to end, and there was a general pattern of harshness, legalism and poor people skills in every assembly. My question is, "How did that happen?" Such problems happen all over the world in many Christian and non-Christian groups, but we cannot overlook the extremely high frequency of such incidents that happened in the "faith" assemblies. For such an elite group of overcomers, we were really messed up. There is a cause for it, and we have to face the answer head on.

I was not criticizing the woman for not leaving her abusive husband. I was simply incredulous that her sister-in-law would respond to her the way that she did during such suffering. It was insane!

When I say that no one had a clue about the rapist, I was not judging anyone. I was simply trying to make a point that it was a total surprise when he was arrested one day. Oftentimes we don't know what underlying sin a person is in. That's no one's fault. Sometimes, however, the Lord gives discernment of spirits or prophecy to expose that kind of duplicity. I had a serious red flag about Earl Paulk the first time I saw a video of him preaching. Looking back, it was the Holy Spirit warning me about him.

I certainly don't hate HEF. I have forgiven him. I benefit to this day from some of his teaching. But I also have to cast off a lot of baggage from it as well. It is not enough to say, "Hobart Freeman was not perfect." We have to identify where he preached or practiced error and hurt people, and acknowledge it for what it is. Otherwise we continue to make his mistakes, and, like him, we will continue to hurt people, whether in person or via posts on this forum. Healing sometimes requires a brutal honesty with the truth.

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by james on Mon, 07 Jul 2008 00:24:16 GMT
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Jisamazed,

I can only answer for myself, regarding whether or not I think I was crazy for believing that the teachings of Hobart Freeman were in fact the teachings of Christ.

NO! I don't think I was/am crazy for what I believe. You brought up that "healing sometimes requires a brutal honesty with the truth." I don't believe you can handle

the truth(yeah, just like in the movie). But I don't think I'll waste my time sparring with you, that's not my bag. But I do hope you find healing, and I don't say that

in a condescending additude. It's just that you "seem" to want to argue about everything and it's not in my nature to be argumentative.

I read an earlier post of yours where you brought up how you had a "red flag" go up in regards to a false teacher/prophet; yet you still don't see the deception of

Todd Bentley's ministry. I'm just wondering if you're not looking through rose colored glasses. Your memory of the assembly that you attended seems to be very

different from Sue, who, if I understand correctly, was also there and has positive reports of her experiences. Maybe you could benefit from listening to those older

and possibly wiser than you, instead of arguing over every comment made. I'm saying this in an spirit of love, I don't need to feed my ego by telling you how to live

your life, I have a full time job taking care of my own life.

Sometimes the best love is tough love...Hope you'll consider and pray about what I (and others) have tried to share with you.

Grace & peace... james

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by jisamazed on Mon, 07 Jul 2008 17:10:49 GMT
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I will consider it. I also hope that you and others will weigh carefully what I say. Hopefully it has been with the right spirit most of the time. Sometimes I gave into the fleshly urge to respond to certain comments with intent of getting my point across, but apparently it did not work, anyway. I actually don't really like to argue, but I thought that this forum allowed for a little bit of constructive argument with the underlying assumption that at the end of the day we still love one another.

There is a difference between constructive arguing and simply being contentious.

I am taking a time out from this forum. I have other things to focus on. I would much rather contend for the true faith with a Muslim or Jew, trying to show them that Jesus is the Messiah, than bicker with brothers about medical science or first fruits raptures. However, these discussions have been helpful for me, and hopefully for some of you.

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by james on Mon, 07 Jul 2008 21:27:28 GMT
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I really wish I could write this anonymously, so no one would think I'm trying to lord over them...

But I can't, so here's a loving admonishment. If Jiz or anyone else feels in their spirit that God is

directing them to take a break to examine themselves, great, we all could probably benefit from a humble,

honest self examination. BUT!!! If it's childish behavior that we've all witnessed in children before...YOU KNOW...

"I can't get my way SO...I'll just take my ball and go home." Or "I don't like correction, so I'm outta here."

Come on folks! I suggested to Amazed James that he/you, listen to and pray about what some of us have been trying to share with him/you...

So now you have better things to do with your time? O.K...Just suggesting you examine your motive for these actions.

Only God knows the motives of your heart...ask Him to reveal it to you. Hey! If it's kosher with Him....GO IN PEACE

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by reddmarie on Tue, 08 Jul 2008 16:30:17 GMT
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Were we all crazy? Perhaps, at times it seemed that way lol. As the years went by, after leaving FA affiliate, I felt crazier than I did while attending. One of my very close friends, attended the birth

you referred to. Of course, ultimately, we have to face our own choices/decisions,,but the true missing link for FA'ers and the Ex-FA'ers, is validation. Just a simple "I'm sorry for your loss/pain".."I'm sorry..I was wrong"..When I hear the huge defense of FA, I just shake my head. It was a cult. It is a cult. I no longer need anyone's 'confirmation' of that. I know what I know,,for me. I remember when that particular person lost their child. I've talked to her a few times over the years. She's a hero in my eyes. Partly because she has a core inside her who survived. She's strong. Her family/inlaws were messed up. lol..like many of us were. They held a 'leadership' position in many people's eyes. Some saw right through their phoniness,,but many did not. I think of how people will say 'even if one life is saved, such and such is worth it'..my point being...even if one persons life was adversely affected by something you did or said..own it. So many FA'ers, just won't own their behavior. I was such a control freak. Not to mention a harda$$. It bit me, too..bad. I learned a lot ..still am. Hub and I left the Grand Rapids group quite publicly, for that very reason. Of course I look back now, and it all seems rather dramatic..but that was then. This is now. As far as benefiting from the 'teaching'..I tend to look at that a bit differently. I dont choose to believe it was the 'teaching', at all. God yes..teaching..no. HF was off the deep end. His very death was a contradiction of everything he taught and stood for. Period. People scrambled to explain it..lest it made their belief system crumble. ..after all,,if HF died...does that mean the 'faith message' is wrong? Man..it all seems so simple and clear now. But back then,,Mind control is a real thing. I dont think you can be a member of such a group, then leave..and not address mind control. Its hard to admit it. That you gave yourself away that much. We pretty it all up..ie: Well, it started out good...or..some people just went to far...or..they didn't really tell us we couldn't go to doctors..some just took it that way...Again,,Major earmark of a cult..Blame the Follower. NEVER place responsibility on the 'Leaders'. What a tangled web. It's incredible. Anyways, Jae/Jay..I remember you..and your family..particularly your mother. She was a great help to me and Garret, when we started to 'question' the teaching. I remember you as a very serious young man..and I watched you struggle with the 'depth of the teachings'. I knew many like you. Your parents didnt seem as 'pulled' into it. Thank God for that, eh. It was definitely a life altering period of time. People's lives were absolutely destroyed coming out of there. On the 'flip side'..ppl's lives can be destroyed/messed up...by lots of things. A Cult is just one thing, out there in the big, wide world:) Cults are generic. I've talked to so many ppl who have been in groups that are not FA..the earmarks are the same. I know ppl in marriages that are like a Cult. Control is the issue ..ultimately..for me. Ppl can own it or not. Owning it brought freedom from it, over time. It was nice catching your post...I found your blog..Interesting remarks from some of the ex members of FA..JB..Chet..I started a blog of my own,,now that Im 53,,and 20+ years past the experience, I have come almost full circle..and writing about it is more cathartic..and it's less emotional. I have a respect for those who have come out of it, and managed to pull the pieces of their lives together,,and still believe in a God of Love. Anyways..take care. My email is reddmarie@sbcglobal.net, if anyone wants to say Hey. Marie Richardson

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Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?

Posted by reddmarie on Tue, 08 Jul 2008 20:39:56 GMT
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It was nice hearing from you, J. I told a friend today, I'd found this 'blog'. She was a member of FA for about 10 yrs, also, as were her bro/mother/and sister. We're best friends now, and I'd love to write a book or just 'journal about the journey'..cuz it has been one heck of one lol..It feels good to think about, talk about FA/HF/Teachings, without the heavy angst. It is what it is..and was. Life's about lessons,,and that place taught me several. Of course, I know now that the teaching affected everyone differently. Some were truly and totally manipulated, and had no thoughts of their own. Others were on the fringes. I was in like Flynn. lol..a total convert. I feel free now, for the most part, after realizing I had to take responsibility for opening myself to the cult. Learning about myself as a young person,,some baggage in my background..easily led..no boundaries,,I was ripe for the pickin. As was my husband. Cults never start out to 'be a cult'..but where there are humans,,there is error. For several years it upset me when ppl couldnt call FA a cult..Im ok, now. I don't have to hear those words or whatever,,I just know what I know, for me. That's key isn't it? To learn to walk your own walk. ..If there are ppl out there, though, who are struggling with this issue..was it a cult? ..was it all error..just take it a day at a time. It definitely is a cult..but that's so not the issue..and its so not what you're going to have to deal with. You have to learn to make decisions..all by yourself. Ask God in your OWN way..for years I was certain He didnt hear me..since we had 'left the Word'..so not true. Deep down I knew that..but the programming is intense..as is mind control. You gotta keep educating yourself..and believe God can work through absolutely anything,,anyone,,anytime,,and will. Keep it simple. That's all I had. Anyways..this is just a bit of continuation of some ramblins..just cuz:)..again, anyone from FA or any other crazy like cult groups, dealing with issues,,hang in there..God is not limited by ppl.

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by OnceRemoved on Sun, 20 Jul 2008 18:25:11 GMT
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Some of us were crazy. And we seemed to draw the crazy people in off the streets.

I remember one woman standing up in a service, giving testimony to miraculous healing she had received after a serious bike accident. The church was overjoyed but in reality, there never was a bike accident, she was never injured and never miraculously healed. She was mentally unbalanced, and she thrived on the attention her stories brought her.

I remember another man who practiced â€œfaith checking.â€• He felt it was a lack of faith to balance your check book or look at a bank statement. He exhorted me, for the better part of an hour, to get right with God and start banking by faith. Later he would be jailed for sexually abusing his step-daughter.

I was only partially crazy. The message of the Overcomer sat well with me. I could easily imagine God choosing me to be part of the 144,000. After all, I did earnestly want to seek Him, so it was natural that I would be spared from judgment while the rest of the lukewarm Christians got what was coming to them. If I could only master enough of the Word all things would be possible to me. The only problem was that God wouldnâ€™t cooperate with the plan. He kept behaving unpredictable, refusing to be domesticated by the â€œEnd Time Message of Faith.â€•

OnceRemoved

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by Michael The Disciple on Sun, 20 Jul 2008 22:03:59 GMT
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Quote:Once Removed

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The message of the overcomer still sets well with God. However it never was a message that nothing bad can happen to one. An overcomer is one who is faithful IN TRIBULATION OR AFFLICTION.

35: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
36: As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.
37: Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. Romans 8:35-37

Note it does not promise to keep you from all these hardships. One who is MORE THAN A CONQUERER has endured it and keeps loving Yeshua!

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?

Posted by OnceRemoved on Mon, 21 Jul 2008 01:55:13 GMT
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Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by OnceRemoved on Mon, 21 Jul 2008 11:54:00 GMT
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After further consideration...

I would like to withdraw my last response. My tone was inappropriate. No sense in beating up on people I've never met over things they had nothing to do with.

And your zeal for the word, well I'm glad you still have that.

Peace,

OnceRemoved.

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by james on Mon, 21 Jul 2008 13:21:39 GMT
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John,

Thank you for setting an example of how we, as people who follow after Jesus, should daily strive to walk.
Humility and the willingness to forgive and not offend a brother are marks of an overcomer.

I pray you'll find healing and peace(if needed) through Jesus. We could all probably find answers to our questions quicker by not blaming others and seeking God for wisdom and understanding. He said if we'd ask He'd give it to us. I know I need it, everyday, all day...

As to a zeal for The Word, may we all hunger for more of it.

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by Michael The Disciple on Mon, 21 Jul 2008 17:06:33 GMT

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Once Removed,

No offence taken on this end. And no I could not explain why things happen. I am just one who wants to believe all the scriptures. Thank God through Jesus Christ he has allowed me to see enough of his glory to keep me pressing on.

I want to be one who encourages faith in the truth. As far as Mark 11:24 I cant find anything to say why it should not be taught and embraced as HEF did.

All I can say is if we put it together with the truth of holiness living and knowing the will of God we should be receiving from God. peace, mike

---

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by OnceRemoved on Mon, 21 Jul 2008 17:44:55 GMT
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Hombre,

"What does that have to do with you?

How can another persons actions and/or beliefs affect your walk with God?

...we have to learn to be strong in the Lord ourselves, not allowing ourselves to be modeled by peer pressure, but only by the Potter.

...and if this happened, in such a way that you could prove it, why didn't you confront Mr XYZ about it?...or maybe have provided a public exhortation to that end when you saw it occurring?

...either way, what matters most is that we learn that it is we ourselves, individually who must answer to God..if there is hypocrisy in someone elses' life, God will get to it in HIs own time....and it would also be a good thing to pray for that person...after all, I wouldn't want to see anyone in the judgement hand of God...would you?"

I can't argue with your points and 24 years after the fact, what you're saying makes perfect sense.

I shouldn't have sucumb to peer pressure, I did confront, but I was always trumped by the spritual athourity of the pastor and I lacked the confidence to stand my ground (I was barely out of my teens.)

I don't spend a lot of time thinking about it and I thought I had forgiven but, to your point, I have some more work to do in that area.

Thanks,

OnceRemoved

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by NBF56 on Wed, 30 Jul 2008 01:03:52 GMT
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And I remember a brother teaching a sermon on "shoot cussin'" that was about as legalistic as any I'd ever heard. By the time he got done, no one could say much of anything, because nearly every word we said could be in some way related to a swear word. This was at FA in Indiana, the "mothership", right before my wife (at the time) and I left - actually were, more or less, presented an ultimatum that I knew wasn't scriptural, and chose to leave. My brother, Bill Schwan, had been kicked out publicly a few days before, vilified from the pulpit on a Sunday night, along with about 25 other people, including the entire Roach family. This was during the time when they had decided to "purify" the Body, by demanding 100% agreement with everything taught by HEF, and his designated surrogates. I don't know how many people ultimately left or were kicked out.

My wife and I moved back to Ohio, and later contacted WSBT-TV in South Bend, as they were doing a series on FA, and the deaths there. We were interviewed, and appeared in one of the segments, along with some others who had formerly attended FA. We spent some time healing and getting a grip on things before we started attending another church. We never did find a church that had the worship services and quality teaching that we had become used to, and our disagreement with HEF was over some issues that were hardly divisive ones. But, we were not given any room to disagree at all, and leaving was actually a relief.

Was FA a cult? In some ways, yes. Not a radical cult like the Branch Davidians, or the Moonies, or the Children of God, or God's Army, but there were cultish aspects. With the passage of time, the wounds have healed, and I have many fond memories of our time there, along with a few not-so-fond memories that have dulled with time. I still miss the worship services, and the fellowship with some of the people we were close to. I remember a Thanksgiving spent with Jerry Eckles and his wife, in a log cabin, in front of a fire in the fireplace, reading scripture and talking about it, and sharing experiences. I remember Rick and Sarah Carey, John and Debbie

Whetstone, Jim Brenneman, Bill Fiel, Mark and Cathy Yotter, Andy and Melinda Roach, Cal and Caroline Roach, Sherwood and Mary Jo Roach, Mayrea Simpson, Audie Gates, and many others whose names I can't remember, but whose faces are forever etched in my memory.

God led us there for a reason, and He kept us through it, and out the other side. My life is richer for having been there.

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by jisamazed on Fri, 01 Aug 2008 16:48:05 GMT
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NBF56 wrote on Tue, 29 July 2008 20:03And I remember a brother teaching a sermon on "shoot cussin'" that was about as legalistic as any I'd ever heard. By the time he got done, no one could say much of anything, because nearly every word we said could be in some way related to a swear word. This was at FA in Indiana, the "mothership", right before my wife (at the time) and I left - actually were, more or less, presented an ultimatum that I knew wasn't scriptural, and chose to leave. My brother, Bill Schwan, had been kicked out publicly a few days before, vilified from the pulpit on a Sunday night, along with about 25 other people, including the entire Roach family. This was during the time when they had decided to "purify" the Body, by demanding 100% agreement with everything taught by HEF, and his designated surrogates. I don't know how many people ultimately left or were kicked out.

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Was FA a cult? In some ways, yes. Not a radical cult like the Branch Davidians, or the Moonies, or the Children of God, or God's Army, but there were cultish aspects. With the passage of time, the wounds have healed, and I have many fond memories of our time there, along with a few not-so-fond memories that have dulled with time. I still miss the worship services, and the fellowship with some of the people we were close to. I remember a Thanksgiving spent with Jerry Eckles and his wife, in a log cabin, in front of a fire in the fireplace, reading scripture and talking about it, and sharing experiences. I remember Rick and Sarah Carey, John and Debbie Whetstone, Jim Brenneman, Bill Fiel, Mark and Cathy Yotter, Andy and Melinda Roach, Cal and Caroline Roach, Sherwood and Mary Jo Roach, Mayrea Simpson, Audie Gates, and many others whose names I can't remember, but whose faces are forever etched in my memory.

God led us there for a reason, and He kept us through it, and out the other side. My life is richer for having been there.

So many abuses seem to have included "church discipline" in some way. If a person said anything in opposition to "the faith message" or the current teaching fad at the time, that person was held in question. If they were in leadership they were asked to step down for a while. Without mentioning any names, I know of at least one situation in which HEF asked a teacher to stop teaching over a very minor matter. Others were put out over less-minor-but-not-major issues. A few were legitimately disciplined. It makes it easier to understand why so many teachers held the HEF line and replicated his problems-- they were scared silly that they might lose their ministry if they did not preach it just right. He made sure of it. Those who recognized the problems had to choose between teaching against what they believed to be true or losing not only their ministry, but their friends and faith community overnight, in some cases. The misuse and abuse of church discipline is one earmark of an abusive church. I am familiar with some shepherdship churches that practice that harshness and control to this day, and it is the same spirit. I can think of fewer practices more devastating to a person's psyche than harsh church discipline. The wounds ran deep.

So my question is, did the problems happen simply because people misunderstood "the teaching" on church discipline, or was it flawed to begin with? Remember, HEF taught by example, not just verbally.

I have more thoughts on that matter, but I would like to hear from others first before I go any further on it.

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by jisamazed on Mon, 04 Aug 2008 02:39:26 GMT
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[quote

...I wonder just how long I would last in ANY church, should the anointing fall upon me to prophesy....I have a feeling I would be playing Elijah in a cave real fast.
[/quote]

Maybe, but the prophets of Baal would not have a chance.

NBF already gave us one example. The Tomax site gives a couple of specific examples of church discipline/abuse at FA, but I will hold off before I give any more specifics. I can only speak primarily for the GR group, plus one or two stories that were told to me first hand at FA. There are others who went to FA who have expressed their insight about the misuse of church discipline at

that church, so I would rather let them tell the story if they are willing.

No, not all churches are the same way in that regards. Mine certainly isn't. There are plenty of churches who practice a healthy, balanced approach to church discipline. I talk to people at work or relatives or neighbors, and the ones who are a part of Christ-centered, Bible-based churches that are on fire for God seem to have a sound approach to it.

Subject: Re: WERE WE ALL CRAZY?
Posted by reddmarie on Mon, 04 Aug 2008 05:17:44 GMT
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It's so interesting reading the posts..its been a long time, really, since I've thought about FA in any real detail. For a period of time, after leaving, it was what I slept, ate and thought. Heavy stuff..I find it interestinnng to hear other's conclusions..someone in earlier post said,,My life is richer, having attended FA..(translation)..Im curious what that means, exactly. My life is richer,,from the experience and what I learned. For me, though, it was because after I left,,I basically tossed it all(except God Himself),,and started from scratch. That was my experience, of course. Just curious what the poster meant, exactly. Im always amazed, too, at the authority with which people speak about Christianity/Bible Teachings, and the Mind of Christ. Not saying its wrong...Im just very 'observant' when I hear ppl speak so dogmatically. Of course, Im leery of that and always will be:) One of the bigger lessons I think I learned after leaving FA,,was the lesson of my own individual relationship with Jesus Christ. Just mine. No rules...No legalism..a natural progression, filled with questions, fears, some really happy moments..and some moments that were dull, frankly. True Christianity for me has been and still is, a Pilgrims Progress. I love that book. Anyways,,just 'observin' and ramblin a bit ..my .02 Red

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