Subject: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by jisamazed on Mon, 08 Dec 2008 04:59:27 GMT
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The following was the first installment in the series of 4 articles about FA and HEF written by John Davis in 1983. I was told that people were advised not to read them. However, I'm wondering what everyone thinks of them now with 25 years hindsight. I can include the other 3 articles in subsequent posts, or simply give the links for the website and let everyone read them that way.

Hobart Freeman: Mystic, Monk or Minister

Permission given by John J. Davis to offer this on YesterYear In Print (6/12/2007)

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Part 1 of Four Parts
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Writing About Faith Assembly
John J. Davis, a professor of Old Testament at Grace Theological Seminary, has utilized two recent private conversations with Faith Assembly leader Hobart Freeman and other research to compile a four part series --the first of which appears in today's Times-Union.

Freeman has refused to grant all media interviews and told Davis their meetings were "private conversations."

However, Davis, a student of Freeman's before the latter was fired from Grace Theological Seminary in 1963, told his former professor during their initial meeting he was planning to write a series of articles on the group. The two spoke for approximately 45 minutes following a Faith Assembly service and one and one-half hours on a later occasion at Freeman's home.

Because Freeman was adamant about not being interviewed, Davis said he did not pepper him with controversial questions, for fear the conversation would end abruptly. "I basically let him do the talking, " Davis said. "If he felt confident moving into sensitive or delicate areas, I let him ... He knew I was writing about it, so if he wanted to stop, he could have."

Davis also spoke with approximately eight former and 15 current members of the Faith Assembly. Unlike Freeman, he did not tell the current members of his intentions, and for that reason, felt it would be unethical to name them in the articles.

In addition, he read all of Freeman's books, listened to 61 Freeman tapes and 10 tapes of other ministers at the Assembly. He also attended 10 services at the headquarters near Wilmot.

Along with reporting on the background of the group and Freeman, Davis offers analytic insight in
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each of the four articles. With a doctorate in Old Testament and Hebrew (ironically, the same degree held by Freeman) from Grace Theological Seminary and the author of 13 books and numerous articles of 13 books and numerous articles, he is well versed to do so.

Davis said he wrote the series because "a good many articles were not in balance. They were based primarily on statements from former members, but were not trying to get into why this was happening."

Davis has been associated with The Times-Union since 1972 as a part-time correspondent, and since 1979, has written the weekly "Outdoor Scene" column.
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"There's no doubt about it," the elderly lady announced with authority. "If Hobart Freeman is not a self-proclaimed mystic or messiah, he certainly is a religious monk with incredible power. No minister would encourage mothers to allow little babies to died without medical help."

But that is only one opinion. Views on Dr. Hobart Freeman, founder and pastor of Faith Assembly in Wilmot, are as varied as current opinions on political matters.

"I have known Brother Freeman for 13 years and have been blessed by his love for the Lord and his skillful preaching from the Word of God," explains a current member of the assembly. "If it were not for his ministry, I would have been the victim of moral, physical and spiritual disasters from which I would have never recovered."

How can opinions vary so dramatically over the ministry of the same man" What happened to this scholar who, in 1961, appeared to be well on his way to a brilliant teaching career in graduate theological education?

The story of Hobart Freeman does not begin in Indiana, however, but in the little hamlet of Ewing, Ky., where he was born on June 17, 1920.

Early Education
After attending Isaac Shelby Elementary School in Louisville, Ky., for eight years, he enrolled in duPont Manual High School, also in Louisville, where he completed three and one-half years before dropping out, to work.

Several years later he attended Bryant and Stratton Business College in Louisville, where he received a diploma after only one and one-half years of study. He graduated in 1942 and in June of that year was married.
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His undergraduate studies at this point in his life also included one semester of work at the University of Louisville.

Freeman and his wife, June, were not Christians at this time and life interests were more in the area of business. They moved to Tampa, Fla., where he began a freelance photography business. After a short time, they moved to St. Petersburg where he opened up a retail grocery business in addition to his photographic work.

Apparently his early years in business were quite successful. "I was making money hand over foot ... and everything I touched turned to money," he explains in his recorded testimony.

Dark clouds began to move across what was a bright horizon in 1950 and both businesses ran into trouble. He attempted to sell the retail food market but had no success. It was in January, 1952, after two years of financial struggle, that he became a Christian. His conversion to Christ took place while returning home from a night club in Tampa.

Feeling he had been called into the gospel ministry, he decided to enroll in Georgetown College in the fall of 1952, where he came in contact with the Baptist denomination and its beliefs. After a year of study at Georgetown, he was ordained as a minister by the Great Crossing Baptist Church.

It was also at Georgetown that his academic potential was first realized when he completed the four-year baccalaureate degree in Bible and history in just three years with an "A" average.

In the fall of 1955 he enrolled in Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville and completed the standard Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1958 and the Master of Theology degree a year later.

While in the Master's program at Southern, he taught Hebrew and pastored the New Testament Baptist Church in Sellersburg, Ind.

During this short involvement in the Baptist ministry, Freeman felt uncomfortable with the denomination and openly criticized its programs and policies. He claimed the celebration of Christmas, along with Easter, was regarded as pagan and was rejected.

The "life of faith" concept along with "positive confession" had already become features of his life and ministry. "We claimed everything by faith ... I didn't work five minutes all the way through college or seminary," he says.

For much of the time at Southern, he and his wife served as houseparents at a home for delinquent children which provided not only food and a place to live, but unlimited study time.

The fall of 1959 brought another move for the Freeman family which now numbered five with the addition of three daughters -- Kathy, Pamela and Becky. The decision was made to pursue a Doctor's Degree in Old Testament and Hebrew at Grace Theological Seminary in Winona Lake.

He completed the program in 1961 and was hired by the institution that Fall to teach in the Old Testament department. This was made possible, in part, by the fact that he and his wife had been rebaptized and had joined the Grace Brethren Church in Winona Lake one year earlier.

His disciplined study habits and scholarship in the classroom impressed students and faculty alike. "I often sat across from him in the library," recalled Rev. Ivan French, now pastor at Pleasant View Community Church. "He was one who could sit for hours without moving."

Freeman has written 10 books, including a major volume on the Old Testament prophets published by Moody Press in Chicago.

A deepening commitment to separatist ideas regarding Christmas, Easter and other holidays, along with open criticism of virtually all churches, failure to attend the church and meetings with students in his home, became a matter of concern to the Grace administration. Growing doctrinal differences, coupled with a lack of compatibility with his colleagues, came to a head in the fall of 1962 ending with his dismissal as a professor in January, 1963. The seminar bought up his contract for the remainder of the year and has not had contact with him since that time.

"I was fired because I refused to promote Santa Claus and my wife did not attend a Christmas party," Freemen maintained in a private conversation. School officials, however, argue that the issues were far more substantial than that.

It is noteworthy that among the controversial doctrinal and practical issues in his dismissal, divine healing was not involved. That ministry was to come much later.

By action of the board of the Winona Lake Brethren Church, he was excommunicated from membership on Feb. 24, 1963. While his official membership with the Brethren Church was severed, his doctrinal commitments remained virtually unchanged. This is evidenced in a document published by Freeman in 1964 entitled, "The Faith and Practice of the Church at Winona Lake, Indiana."

Shortly after his dismissal from Grace Seminary, the informal gatherings in his home took the form of an organized church complete with a doctrinal statement.

Of special interest to observers is the fact that between 1964 and 1966 his theological positions remained within the Baptist-Brethren tradition, but views regarding practical living and church policy shifted substantially.

The home church moved to Claypool until his 1972 alliance with Mel Greider at the Glory Barn in North Webster.

A Turning Point

One of the most significant turning points in his spiritual and theological experience occurred on March 19, 1966 at McCormick Seminary in Illinois when he received the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit," an experience defined by charismatic teachers as a special empowering of the Holy Spirit subsequent to personal salvation and evidenced by speaking in "new tongues."

"Dr. John Rea was responsible for my introduction to the baptism experience," Freeman noted. "That revolutionized my approach to Scripture." Rea, also a former professor at Grace Seminary, is presently teaching at a West coast charismatic seminary and at the time, was an editor at Moody Press.

It was at this point that Freeman's theological interests shifted to charismatic theology including speaking in new tongues, divine healing and the experience of special visions and revelations.

Deeply influenced by healing evangelists like Kenneth Hagin, John Osteen, Kenneth Copeland and T. L. Osborn, along with the writings of E. W. Kenyon, his ministry emphasis drifted quickly to expanded faith and healing concepts.

Freeman's association with converted gang member and alcoholic Mel Greider at the Glory Barn was an interesting one. On one hand, it provided a unique setting for his charismatic ministry to grow, but on the other, it resulted in bitter differences between the two in matters of doctrine and practice. According to observers, Freeman's position on many matters became more rigid and his contacts with outside groups began to decline.

Finally, in 1978 the two separated and Freeman held his meetings in a tent first located in Warsaw, then Goshen. By this time, however, he had established himself in the field of charismatic theology and his books and tapes were being circulated across the country.

When his ministry was moved to its present location near Wilmot, observers agree that his perspectives narrowed even more and church discipline became extremely rigid.

Freeman Today

What is Hobart Freeman like? Very few really know this man, including people in his congregation, simply because his is a very private individual. He is only available for counseling for a short time after the Sunday and Wednesday evening services. Otherwise assembly members have little or no contact with him.

He refuses all interviews with the media and his public appearances are largely limited to

preaching at the Faith Assembly near Wilmot. Most of his time is spent at his home on the west side of Shoe Lake where he prepares radio programs (which are aired over more than 10 stations around the country) and sermons for the Assembly.

Critical of the media which has resorted to "shabby sensationalism" in his estimation, he recently described reporters as "blind men looking for a black cat in a dark basement at midnight who is not there ... and finding him!"

I did have the privilege of two recent private meetings with Dr. Freeman at the church and later in his home and found him to be personable and intensely dedicated to his ministry. Aside from aging since his teaching days at Grace, he still exhibits a deep interest in the highly disciplined study of Scripture.

His current hobbies include photography (16mm movies) and ham radio. He has renovated a small room for his ham equipment, most of which he has built himself. He possesses an "extra class" radio operator's license which is the most advanced license the government issues for amateur ham operators. Recently he also earned a first class radio operator's license.

He has won awards for ham radio contacts from around the world, including parts of Russia. In his spare time he also enjoys building antique radio models and old telegraph keys. For a short time in the middle 1970's, he attended meetings of the Fort Wayne Radio Club.

"I have not been on the (amateur radio) air in the past two months," Freeman said in one of our conversations, "mostly due to a busy schedule of correspondence, research and the Assembly ministry."

Reports of his great personal wealth have sometimes been exaggerated or founded on faulty information. His home, consisting of a little more than 2,000 square feet, is very comfortably furnished, but is by no means in the class of a "luxurious mansion" described by some. He owns a motor home, Lincoln Continental and a small Jeep station wagon.

His personal income is largely derived from donations given at the Assembly and some of the profits from his books and tapes. "Most of the profits from the tapes go to subsidize the radio programs," he explained. "I do not ask for money on any of those programs."

Estimates on the amount given at the Faith Assembly vary from $500 to $2,500 a service. Donations are given to Freeman by placing money in specially marked boxes at the rear of the church. Some boxes are marked for others ministering at the assembly as well.

He has had his share of health problems over the years, beginning with polio as a child. He still limps with a withered lower right leg and wears a special lift for that short leg. He has had kidney surgery and has suffered several heart attacks.

Since his kidney surgery prior to his charismatic experience, he claims he has never been to a hospital for treatment. Rumors of emergency trips to Kosciusko Community Hospital are not verified by the records and the same is true for an alleged trip to the Mayo Clinic.

He would not comment on those specific allegations, but maintained, "I have not spent a dime on medicine or medical care since the baptism of the Holy Spirit and new insights into God's promise of healing."

Pulpit Mastery or Mind Control?
His grip on and influence over the minds of those who attend Faith Assembly is very strong and there are several reasons for this.

First, he has a mastery of the Scriptures which includes facility in the original languages. His presentations are characterized by careful organization and profuse Scripture quotation. Those wanting to know the Scriptures better find his teaching challenging and interesting.

Second, there is the constant claim to supernatural visions and special revelations. Since these are said to have come form God, no one in the congregation is about to challenge them, for to do so is to question God Himself.

Third, his is a ministry frequently supported by fear. Members are often reminded of the curses and punishments that follow a falling away from the faith as taught at the assembly. Illustrations of this fact are regularly paraded before the congregation, not only by Freeman, but by other ministers in the assembly.

The use of this technique came home with full force when I was leaving his house and he called my attention to the fact that virtually all the reporters who had recently spoke critically of his ministry had since suffered illness, injury or death. I assumed that bit of information was for my benefit.

Finally, the seclusion and discipline of his Faith Assembly ministry which forbids reading newspapers, watching television and having fellowship with members of other churches, virtually guarantees an uncritical commitment to his ideas. (Members utilize only materials (tapes and books) produced by him.)

Hobart Freeman: a Charles Manson or Jim Jones?

I doubt it. He has many positive accomplishments to his credit and most of his theology falls within the framework of evangelical through generally and charismatic ideas specifically. This area will be examined in a later article.

His insistence on absolute obedience to all his ideas and the reinforcement of those ideas by fear and seclusion is dangerous and has been tragic for many young families.

Hobart Freeman is a scholar, capable author, effective teacher and friend to many who have had significant needs. On the other hand, his has been a ministry of turmoil, suspicion, fear and despair to others.

According to some, he is a religious tyrant and cultist, but to others, a man of God who exhibits great faith and meet the critical spiritual, physical and emotional needs of thousands. Clearly, his ministry presents a paradox.

Warsaw Times-Union Tuesday, September 27, 1983

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by jisamazed on Mon, 08 Dec 2008 18:14:01 GMT
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Lois, I agree.
It was the athiest Neitzche who said that the best way to achieve unity was to create a common enemy for the people. Hitler took Neitzche's ideas to their ominous conclusion by making all non-Germans the enemy, especially Jews. The German nation experienced a "unity" of sorts in their opposition to all others. The same had occured in Russia 40 years previous. The point? Sometimes unity can have sinister roots, such as making all "denominations" a common enemy, demanding absolute conformity and rejecting nonconformists ("those who leave this assembly"). Neitzche-style unity. However, according to I Corinthians 12-14, true unity in Christ actually allows for diversity of ministries, and in Romans 14 allows for some variety in how to apply certain non-essential ethical principles. HEF himself taught it at one time-- unity is to be of vision and spirit, not of rules, spoken or unspoken. It is one thing to teach that kind of unity, it is another to apply it.

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by james on Tue, 09 Dec 2008 01:30:57 GMT
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I just wanted to say that today is the 24th anniversary of Bro. Freeman going to be with Jesus. I personally miss him and the anointed teachings God gave us through him. While he wasn't perfect and had his personality quirks, just like we all do, I haven't came across any pastor-teacher who even comes close to being able to explain, teach, make easily understandable, God's Word, like he could. (and I'm sure he would quickly point out that all glory goes to God; and I'm not glorifying HEF, but I am thankful for having been taught by him)

No comment on the John Davis articles, I read them a long time ago...

and no, I don't worship HEF...only JESUS....but he helped
me come to know Him in a deeper way...

sign me,
grateful to have known him...

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by GWB on Tue, 09 Dec 2008 03:44:59 GMT
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Except for the article, I can understand the feelings of all of the above.

I, too, am so very thankful for everything I learned at FA.

Blessings, GWB

"Be still and know that I am God"

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by jisamazed on Tue, 09 Dec 2008 18:10:33 GMT
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[quote title=buckley wrote on Tue, 09 December 2008 07:47]Quote:jisamazed wrote on Mon, 08 December 2008 10:14Lois, I agree.
It was the athiest Neitzche who said that the best way to achieve unity was to create a common enemy for the people

Recently, I was asked to perform a piece by Dietrich Bonhoeffer...the Lutheran pastor who was killed by the Nazi's before the war ended.

Bonhoeffer wrote a musical piece? I did not know that he had that talent! His book "Life Together" is a classic.

I did a bit of research on him, as ignorance is not bliss when it comes to understanding text.

Bonhoeffer was the only theologian who opposed Nietzche as far as I understand. Oh, there were others, but they were afraid to make noise for fear of the Nazis. Bonhoeffer asserted that we have to bold about these things and not be afraid of those who can kill the body, but not the soul. There was actually an underground group of Christians who operated similar to the way that the Christians did in the Soviet Union. He was the visible and bold of the group. Knowing what he experienced, needing to join with other precious brothers in that environment, helps me to appreciate "Life Together" all the more.

Nietzsches' reasoning at the time was that religion only promoted 'God', in order to justify human revenge against one another. Neitzche was a twisted thinker.

The point?

...those of us who have been hurt by a religious group, whether it be church, college or misapplied theology, can easily fall into the temptation to turn against the people who we feel are responsible, rather than look objectively that many things we do, are born out of personal choice.

Finding fault with someone/something that has hurt us and then using scripture to justify turning against them, is actually a form of revenge.

Yes, that is why Jesus told us to turn the other cheek and not return evil for evil. Revenge only serves to perpetuate the problem, as the situation in Israel today shows.

Both sides of the theological divide practice this and then have the nerve to call it...

'contending for the faith'
It is a tough balance to figure out how to contend for the faith without being contentious, to be firm and even polemical when necessary without joining with the devil in accusing the brethren. I Corinthians-type love has to be the motivating factor that balances us. Even when we rebuke pharisees the motivation must be love.

Where I differ from Nietzche, (you will be relieved to hear)

is,

that I do believe in a God who says categorically,

"Vengeance is mine I will repay".

Obviously I don't want to start making a specific application here, but the whole concept of mind control is a very serious one.

Quote:unity is to be of vision and spirit, not of rules, spoken or unspoken. It is one thing to teach that kind of unity, it is another to apply it.

Absolutely,

.. and may we all actually do what Jesus commands and that is,

... to bless and not curse those who disagree with us...that is never easy. Amen. Loving our enemies as well as our brothers in Christ (which is sometimes more difficult) is the most challenging aspect of following Jesus, IMO.
Someone quoted this song recently...

'they will know we are christians by our love'

Have a great day and love the Lord your God with heart, soul and mind Amen again. With all your getting, get understanding. Proverbs 4:6-7

Lois

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by jisamazed on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 00:06:26 GMT
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These are the link addresses for the remaining 3 articles in John Davis' series.

http://yesteryear.clunette.com/faithassembly2.html

http://yesteryear.clunette.com/faithassembly3.html

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by Mark L on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 03:27:35 GMT
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I read those articles some time ago. I thought they were reasonably well balanced although I didn't agree with everthing he said. I passed them on to people who sat under the faith message but no longer do because they were so interesting. Maybe they so interesting to me because I was never part of FA and there was a lot of background stuff there I didn't know.

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by jisamazed on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 18:24:23 GMT
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Hardbones said, "I read those articles some time ago. I thought they were reasonably well balanced although I didn't agree with everthing he said. I passed them on to people who sat under the faith message but no longer do because they were so interesting. Maybe they so interesting to me because I was never part of FA and there was a lot of background stuff there I didn't know."

I agree. I think that Davis tried very hard to be objective and well-informed. He made some overstatements, and I would actually agree more with HEF's theology than Davis' in the areas of divine healing and speaking in languages. However, Davis showed more insight than any outsider that I know of who has ever commented on the group. He showed integrity and care in his research. He did not exude the same animosity toward HEF that other writers have. He pointed out HEF's strengths as well as his weaknesses. We all have some of both.

In the end, I believe that Faith Assembly might have been able to avoid the bad turn it took had HEF been more accountable and less isolated from other Christians. That theme has repeated itself over and over again throughout church history, and the story of FA is actually mild compared to some of the atrocities that have happened over the centuries (Jan of Leyden, Jim Jones, the Children of God, etc...). There is still much from his ministry that can be affirmed and used for the kingdom of God.

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by GWB on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 19:32:04 GMT

Hey Jiz,

I have gone back and read some of your posts. Due to time, I am not able to read all of them. Forgive me if I overlooked something as to your experience with FA.

You have really been on my heart as of late. I cannot seem to get the young fifteen year old boy, you mention on occasion, off of my mind. When you started attending Jerry's meeting, I am seeing a young man who had little control, let alone input, as far as your Christian walk at FA was concerned. If this is not the case, please let know. It must have been very difficult at the time; conforming to things that you did not understand. I was a young woman and I chose to be there. I cannot imagine the struggles the circumstances must have brought to that age group. You have been very brave to open up and share about the hurt and anger your have had to deal with since then. I am so sorry you were emotionally hurt; many of us were.

I, too, have had my share of feelings to sort through and understand. Even as of late, I found myself lashing out at our dear sister, Lois. Lashing out is always a direct result of hurt, which is anger. In spite of it all, this forum allowed me to make that mistake, and because of that, I have learned lessons and have grown in Him. We all have a story to tell since leaving FA. I may share portions of mine on this site; we will see what He would have me do.

I have known anger, hurt, and confusion due to my being a part of FA. I justified a compromised lifestyle in dealing with all of it. He allowed me to walk in rebellion for a period of time. You could not have told me, but I was backslidden in a big way. Do not get me wrong, I was not a bar drunk, etc. It was something much more subtile and dangerous; my heart had grown hard and so very cold. How one can deceive themselves, to their own destruction, is frightening. But, because He loves me so much, He allowed circumstances to transpire in my life to where I had to reach back to a cornfield in northern Indiana, let go of my emotional baggage, and fight for my very life. I used many of the tools I learned at FA to stay alive. I learned that the good experiences I had at FA, far outweighed the bad. Not only that, the enemy had only used them against me to his delight; it was all about dead weight and wasted time; whining if you will. I felt that if I let go of the bad, that those experiences would be seen as invalid. I kept looking back, taking my hands off of the plow, making myself unworthy of the Kingdom of Heavon.

I see that you have come far since the FA days. If I understand correctly, you are a counselor and spend everyday helping others. I commend you for that. Obviously there is a strength in Him, in you, to have done so well even though you had much to overcome in connection to FA. You are well versed and know the Word well; I commend you for that as well. Your sign off tells me that you have been shown His mercy too within His great love. His love for us is a supernatural power that can transform the hardest of hearts; speaking of myself.

I carefully, and with much thought, know that all of the articles in the world will not squelch what

was Truth at FA. I respect your opinion; but I disagree that all was bad at FA. If I am wrong about my perspective of your opinion, please correct me. You have been through much, and I would be interested in knowing what you feel has been of benefit to you in being successful in overcoming the past. Forgive me if I have offended you; offense is not my motive. Like everyone else in this forum, I am learning to walk in love; not hate. If you keep it simple, everything is either love or hate.

Jesus is the God of restoration, not condemnation, for me, people in this forum, people looking and watching from afar, and even for fifteen year old boys.

Please continue to share, however hard it may be. Your posts are important to me, even if I do not agree all of the time. I believe people care more than you think. If we do not care about wounded people what good are we? We are frightfully deceiving ourselves and are no better off than the world and will one day burn with them. "Depart from Me you workers of iniquity, I never knew you." How tragic that would be, after knowing what we know. However, it is possible, very possible.

This site is a goldmine to me. A place to reconnect and be encouraged, even when you make mistakes. I personally know that there is persecution and martyrdom on the horizon for many, maybe all of us, I do not know. Therefore, I need all of the encouragment I can get!

If I have been wrong, presumptuous, or just flat obnoxious in any way in my response to you or this thread, I am sorry. I am diligently trying to led by Him minute by minute these days. I hope this post has been a blessing to you in some way.

Blessings, GWB

"Be still and know that I am God"

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by GWB on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 19:43:32 GMT
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Hey again Jez,

I did not see your last post; I told you I was learning!

I see that you do agree on some things at FA. I was not trying to be a smart aleck; just trying to understand where you are coming from.

Blessings, GWB

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by jisamazed on Thu, 11 Dec 2008 18:11:18 GMT
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GWB, I appreciate your input. It might help for me to clarify a couple of things. When I was 15, I attended voluntarily. I was never coerced to attend. My family attended another church, but my mother, sister and I liked the teaching and worship at the FA group. I was baptized in the HS shortly after I began there. My life has never been the same since, and the bondage that I got into is a result of my decision to believe what they told me and ignore those who warned me about the legalism. I did not have the intellectual tools to discern the problems at the time, and out of fear of apostasy (emphasized heavily in the early 80's) I allowed myself to get sucked into it. In retrospect, it was simply a season of my life, a segment in the straight and narrow path that leads to the celestial city, per the Pilgrim's Progress.

My experience with the group was actually mild compared to many others, and I still say that the overall fruit in my life was more positive than negative. Some others went through unbelievable suffering as a result of the imbalances. Some people who grew up in the group are still trying to sort things out. I forgave those who put me in bondage long ago, and I hope that I have been forgiven for my part as well.

That having been said, this is not about me or any one person. It is far greater than us. This is about the kingdom of God. The Lord wants to advance His kingdom through us, and that advance is slowed when groups like FA become toxic. It dims our light. I enjoy this forum and discussing the whole matter because I perceive that a lot of former FA-related people can be mighty soldiers in God's army when they come back to balance. The Lord will use the strengths we had while stripping away the negative baggage so that we will be faithful and effective soldiers in Him. The freedom from bondage is exhiliarating, but with freedom comes responsibility to serve the Lord better than we did before.

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by GWB on Thu, 11 Dec 2008 22:07:18 GMT
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Hey Jiz,

Thanks for helping me understand by filling in the blanks. I still think, including myself, there is a fifteen year old boy in all of us.

I have a question I need for you to clarify. In a post to Lois on this thread, you said our unity at FA was sinister. Webster's says sinister means singularly evil. What did you mean by this absolute statement?

Also, you said in your reply that it was not about you or any one person. The articles were about one person.

There are many FA people who need restoration, including myself. I think you know that I mean no malice. I respect your opinion and your right to post articles of this nature. I do not believe they promote restoration or promote strenth in Him. Why do you?

If I understand your perspective, do you believe Dr. Freeman was a type of Hitler who practiced mind control?

Also, Pilgrim's Progress is so awesome! There is a CD called City of Gold. It is about this story with narrative and music. I think you would really be ministered to by it.

Thanks Jiz. Your answers to these questions are important to me and will be considered with a thoughtful heart.

Blessings, GWB

"Be still and know that I am God"

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by JWBTI on Fri, 12 Dec 2008 01:20:41 GMT
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Jisamazed wrote:

GWB, I appreciate your input. It might help for me to clarify a couple of things. When I was 15, I attended voluntarily. I was never coerced to attend. My family attended another church, but my mother, sister and I liked the teaching and worship at the FA group. I was baptized in the HS shortly after I began there. My life has never been the same since, and the bondage that I got into is a result of my decision to believe what they told me and ignore those who warned me about the

legalism. I did not have the intellectual tools to discern the problems at the time, and out of fear of apostasy (emphasized heavily in the early 80's) I allowed myself to get sucked into it. In retrospect, it was simply a season of my life, a segment in the straight and narrow path that leads to the celestial city, per the Pilgrim's Progress.
My experience with the group was actually mild compared to many others, and I still say that the overall fruit in my life was more positive than negative. Some others went through unbelievable suffering as a result of the imbalances. Some people who grew up in the group are still trying to sort things out. I forgave those who put me in bondage long ago, and I hope that I have been forgiven for my part as well.
That having been said, this is not about me or any one person. It is far greater than us. This is about the kingdom of God. The Lord wants to advance His kingdom through us, and that advance is slowed when groups like FA become toxic. It dims our light. I enjoy this forum and discussing the whole matter because I perceive that a lot of former FA-related people can be mighty soldiers in God's army when they come back to balance. The Lord will use the strengths we had while stripping away the negative baggage so that we will be faithful and effective soldiers in Him. The freedom from bondage is exhiliarating, but with freedom comes responsibility to serve the Lord better than we did before.

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Luke warm ![/[/B]COLOR]

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by jisamazed on Fri, 12 Dec 2008 01:42:27 GMT
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GWB wrote on Thu, 11 December 2008 16:07Hey Jiz,

Thanks for helping me understand by filling in the blanks. I still think, including myself, there is a fifteen year old boy in all of us.

I have a question I need for you to clarify. In a post to Lois on this thread, you said our unity at FA was sinister. Webster's says sinister means singularly evil. What did you mean by this absolute statement?

Also, you said in your reply that it was not about you or any one person. The articles were about one person.

There are many FA people who need restoration, including myself. I think you know that I mean no malice. I respect your opinion and your right to post articles of this nature. I do not believe they promote restoration or promote strenth in Him. Why do you?

If I understand your perspective, do you believe Dr. Freeman was a type of Hitler who practiced mind control?

Also, Pilgrim's Progress is so awesome! There is a CD called City of Gold. It is about this story with narrative and music. I think you would really be ministered to by it.

Thanks Jiz. Your answers to these questions are important to me and will be considered with a thoughtful heart.

Blessings, GWB

"Be still and know that I am God"

Fair questions, GWB, written in a positive tone. Thank you. I will try to answer as graciously as you have asked.

This is what I wrote: "Sometimes unity can have sinister roots, such as making all "denominations" a common enemy, demanding absolute conformity and rejecting nonconformists ("those who leave this assembly")." I don't believe that HEF or anyone intentionally meant it to turn out that way, but I do believe that Satan, in an attempt to make FA less effective, drove the church to focus on their uniqueness and how they had a leg up on denominations. There was a false sense of unity that came from cookie-cutter conformity. The verse, "I would that you all be of one mind and one spirit" was posted right on the wall of the building. HEF seemed to teach that there should be no disagreement with the leadership, and there seemed to be a lot of suspicion about receiving teaching from anyone outside the "faith camp". That conformity that masks as unity is a deception from the devil. That does not mean that it was all of the devil, and I gather that there were seasons of true unity.

If there was indeed mind-control going on, that would also have demonic roots. Many political and religious leaders have purposely implemented mind-control techniques to keep power. I don't believe that HEF did so intentionally, and he actually opposed the control spirit that the shepherdship churches had.

I know that in Grand Rapids there was a sense of unity that came from not being a part of "the Babylonish denominational system." Our unity was sometimes based more on what we were not rather than who our Lord was. In the last year of the group, the pastor typed up a flyer to explain to people in the neighborhood who we were. It was all about how we were not like so many other Christian groups. It was meant to appeal to the lost by putting others down. Thankfully we never used it.

When I say that it was not about one person, I was trying to deflect the focus of conversation off myself. I was not referring to the article. Your previous post had talked about hurts and forgiveness, which is important, but in the entire, grand scheme of things my experience is relatively insignificant. When we view all of our discussions in light of His kingdom, the big picture, we see our experience in proper perspective and can avoid bitterness or whining.

GWB, I do desire to write words of healing and restoration, and I take your comments about that seriously. I can only speak for myself when I say that one of the ways that I got freed from some of the bondage related to HEF was when people confronted me head-on with the problems in the group. I had to be honest with myself that HEF was not the teacher I thought he was, and FA was a wounded, messed-up group in large part due to his issues. The only way to bring healing is to acknowledge that the wound is there, and then clean it out. That hurts at first, but only then can the healing begin.

For me, it is not about impugning HEF or anyone else. It is about being honest with the fact that his ministry was a mixed bag. I try as much as possible to affirm what I believe were the positive qualities of his ministry. However, for years many of us did what we could to try to justify his actions and words and absolve him from responsibility for the problems that went on. But one can only be in denial for so long. Admitting the truth is the first step toward repentance and restoration. It is hard to do when we have viewed things a certain way for so long.

I have to call it the way I see it. Maybe I'm too straightforward, but straightforward was helpful for me. I have not figured all of this out yet, and it helps me to express what are my conclusions so far.

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by jisamazed on Fri, 12 Dec 2008 02:13:07 GMT
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JWBTI wrote on Thu, 11 December 2008 19:20Jisamazed wrote:

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When the Bible tells us to be moderate, the idea is to be balanced. We do not go to the left or the right (Proverbs 4), but we look straight ahead of us.

A word on the lukewarm passage. The city of Laodicea had two streams that fed it: a hot spring and a very cold one. Both springs were useful to the people of the city. They could drink cold water and cook or bathe with the hot. Lukewarm water had no use. When the Lord told them to be hot or cold, he was telling them to be useful. Don't be proud about how you have it all together and are in need of nothing. Make yourself useful. He did not equate balance with lukewarmness.

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by GWB on Fri, 12 Dec 2008 19:53:20 GMT
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Hey Jiz,

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I want to address the issue of toxin and the issue of balance; Light that is not dim.

I have often wondered if the teaching at FA could have been compared to the Written Law and the Oral Law. The Written Law, or everything that is in print from Dr. Freeman's ministry, is solid and above reproach; balance and Light that is not dim. It is being used in seminaries today. Billy Graham's ministry directs people to the Angels of Light book for deliverece issues, etc. The Oral Law, or everything spoken from the pulpit and discussed within the body at FA, was subject to all of the things you address. I believe this is the possible toxin you are confronting in this forum; shoes, earrings, how to have babies; cookie cutter conformity. Please know when I say law, I understand that we all had choices; it is only my general comparison in making my point as to the dynamics at FA. Also, please know that I do not mean to demean the teachings at FA in anyway when I use the OT law system to compare what was taught at FA. The subject of law and grace, when referring to the OT, needs to be another thread. Hey, I think I am catching on!

The Oral Law at FA is a senstive issue. Everyone was influenced in different areas and in different ways. Everyone, also, had different levels of control when deciding to excercise or embrace any of the Oral Law. This is where, I believe, the peer pressure and fear issue enters. We were all subject to hierarchies, be it the five-fold, husbands, or even parents. I believe this is the muck, so

to speak, we are all wading through and coming to terms with; what was toxic and what was Light and balance. I hope my comparison makes sense.

In my own life, I have had to "cut away" some of the toxin. What was considered toxin and Light with balance in the teachings at FA, is up to the individual and I feel should be respected and left alone so that person can learn and grow in Him as an individual; to make those decisions for themselves. Jesus is dealing with all of us concerning these issues on a personal level.

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There are times I feel people need to face off with Dr. Freeman himself; that is not possible because he is gone. Sometimes I do
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Your concept of the "common enemy" of FA; denominations, is, IMO, not valid. The common enemy, I feel, at FA was unbelief, carnal flesh, our mouths, our thoughts not lining up with the Word, our hateful attitudes toward one another, the occult, ignorance of our power in the Blood and His name, ignorance of the Word in general, the self-life, lack of operation of the gifts in the body and worship, ignorance of the importance of the five-fold ministry, ignorance of body ministry, and just plain 'ole unbelief in tongue talking. I feel we had an awesome teacher, Dr. Freeman, in defeating our foes to this very day. The denominations lacking these things, even today, does not make them our "common enemy."

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Blessings, GWB

"Be still and know that I am God"

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by jisamazed on Sat, 13 Dec 2008 06:30:13 GMT
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GWB wrote on Fri, 12 December 2008 13:53Hey Jiz,

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Blessings, GWB

"Be still and know that I am God"

GWB, your written vs. oral angle is a new way of looking at it for me. I never thought of it quite that way before. I'll have to think about that one for a while. However, I would say off the bat that even some of HEF's books had problems, but I won't go there right now because that would be better addressed in another thread. Some of his books were very good, especially the scholarly ones like the OT Prophets (it was a textbook in my uncle's OT survey class when he went to Bible college in the early 70's). I believe that HEF could have avoided some of the problems in his later years if he had stuck with being a Bible teacher instead of trying to pastor.

I posted the articles for several reasons. First, many people were afraid to read them at one time, and never had access to them. Posting the articles makes them accessible to people who would like to read them now. It is freeing for some people to do things contrary to the odd rules that we had at one time. Second, the articles are actually very insightful, I think, and they contain some helpful information that people like me did not know about. As Christians we need to love

the truth of a matter, and the articles contain a lot of truth. Third, John Davis DID know Hobart Freeman enough to write the articles, and I think he tried to give a level-headed approach without the animosity that was present in a lot of other articles about him. If a reporter has to know someone intimately before writing an article on him, few articles would ever be written. Davis was as qualified as anyone to write them. He was very careful to be objective and took his time in making his conclusions.

Posting the articles is not wading in the muck so much as it is pointing out what the muck is so that we can avoid it should it cross our paths again. It is not enough to say, "HEF got legalistic." We have to understand how he got legalistic, and what attitudes brought that about. Davis' articles help to shed light on that question.

Davis pointed out that there were a lot of paradoxes in HEF's ministry. Some found him to be a savor of life, others a savor of death. Some found his teaching to be liberating, others found it to bring bondage. There were indeed numerous miraculous healings and deliverances, praise the Lord. There were also a lot of non-healings, and, worse, death or unnecessary suffering as a result of his teaching that medical science=occult. Some found his teaching to be refreshingly challenging, others found it to be burdensome and tedious. I found it to be both. FA was a tight community on one hand. It was a dysfunctional community on the other. There was a lot of freedom given in some areas, a lot of control in others. These paradoxes can be found just about anywhere to varying degress (with the exception of the taboo on all medical science, which is not very common anymore).

When I referred to Hitler or Jim Jones or Jan of Leyden, I was trying to point out that the spirit of mind control is the same in different situations, but simply takes a different form. It usually involves some sort of pride of being right, superior or different combined with a fear of leaving the group or being rejected. That combination is toxic. It was a much lesser degree at FA than it was with most fringe groups, and I do believe that most of us grew to a more mature walk with God because we genuinely loved Him and were not satisfied with the state that we were in under that teaching.

There is so much good that is in the body of Christ, GWB. I have met so many dedicated, faithful followers of Christ that make most of us in the faith camp look shallow. I have sat under some excellent teaching from people who never heard of HEF or FA or anyone related to them. The idea that all denominational churches and Christians are bad or unbiblical is simply a lie from Satan. Now that my family has experienced a healthy, Biblical community of believers, the unhealthy aspects of the faith camp seem all the more, well, unhealthy.

However, I have stated frequently that I am thankful for my experience there, and the Lord had his reasons for sitting me under that ministry. There was a lot of good that I take from it. Someday HEF and I might be able to talk about it during the millenium, who knows?

You have added a positive input into the discussions lately. Thank you.

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by JWBTI on Sat, 13 Dec 2008 14:36:03 GMT
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Jisamazed wrote:

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Blessings

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by GWB on Sun, 14 Dec 2008 18:41:15 GMT
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Hey Jiz,

Thanks for your time. I appreciate your replys to me and do consider them with much thought. I also appreciate your concern for others who have been hurt or have suffered due to FA. You seem to be a very caring person.

I personally believe that most in this forum are beyond the level of suffering and hurt in which you speak. Some did not suffer at all, and I think others have dealt with it and have chosen to move on so they could grow stronger in Him. That is just my personal observation. Because of this, and with your background in social work, would it not be more productive to use this passion for the suffering in reaching out to those who have been hurt? Maybe you could start a support group and put a link to it. Your knowledge of the Word, and your experience with FA, would be vital and a positive way of dealing with your frustrations concerning FA. You and I both know that it takes much time and thought to contribute to this forum. Would it not be more productive to spend that time with those who agree with you on these issues and strive to understand how to deal with it? Your contribution to those in need, by lifting them up in the Word and concentrating on what is now, would be priceless. It would give them direction as to where to go from this point. This is a serious suggestion, Jiz. You know I am not trying to be smart or cute with you at this point. I, personally, do not have time for that these days.

I feel that continually bashing the bad aspects of what happened at FA is pointless in this forum. Again, that is just my opinion and for what is worth. I, in no way, am trying to bash your character. For me, it makes it hard to wade through some of the good things you are trying to convey. I feel the never ending disgruntledness, IMO, you show in your postings is not productive for you or me. I am still looking forward to postings by you that speak of things that will help me overcome on a daily basis. In saying that, please know that I have overcome any of the negative aspects of FA. They were there, it is now said, done deal.

I do have some questions for you to address in helping me overcome even today. I have emailed you and have offered to share some things privately with you. I hope you will still take me up on this offer. It would help you get a background picture of what I have been through and what has happened to me since FA.

A member of my family has emotionally abused, not only me, but my family as well. Me and my family have experienced the "mind control" you mention. I am believing for emotional and mental healing, as I write, for me and my kids. I have had to intercede for me and my kids concerning demonic dreams and threats. They have stolen thousands of dollars from me and from my home and children. It would easily be in the tens of thousands of dollars; art, money, diamonds, collections, antiques, etc. This does not even include personal baby pictures of my children torn into shreds. I was desperately ill, and food was stolen while in weak states. They have slandered my name within the community and continue to do so. They have manipulated my personal family to where they will not even speak to me. They are very skilled in the occult and I have to break curses everyday against my family when shown by dreams, words of knowledge, etc. My children have had serious car accidents due to these curses. They have abused me for years and delight in it. They in no way want me, or my kids, to better ourselves and in no way try to help us do so. They have never given me anything to sift through, be it written or oral,
to help me in my walk with Him. If anything, they have stolen countless Bibles, marked mockings

throughout everyone, torn up my reference books; Pigs In The Parlor, etc. They only offer pure hate to me. They dismantled my childhood three-story home and did not allow me to even enter it. I have not set foot in it for almost four years. My Mother is ninety-three and I have to walk past this person if I want to go visit her. Every visit could be my last and all conversation is monitored. So what should I do Jiz? What do I do when someone like this has hurt me so much and continues to do so? I know, for a fact, that they are connected to people with padded cells forty-five minutes from where I live. I believe they would love to have me in it. What do I do about this, Jiz? I would really like to know and need an answer from you about this matter. Should I go and confide in the demoninationl churchs' love while I try to sharpen my skills in spiritual warfare so me and my family do not die? Can any denominational church you know of help me discern and fight this battle? Would they even believe me? What do I do when they do not? Stay there for the love while I, and my kids perish? Do I whine in this forum because I have been hurt and abused by them and by FA in some areas? Just what do I do, in this situation concerning the denominational system and this forum, Jiz? Who has what to offer me concerning all of this. What do you have to offer me about all of this? What kind of frame of mind do I need to be in so that I can battle this situation? Should I be thinking about what was wrong with FA, or right? Let me know Jiz.

Because I see this quality of caring in you, I would like to address your care for others in this forum. I do not speak for others. These are my opinions only that I would like for you to consider. I have just touched the surface of my life. What about the others here? We are all facing trials of every nature; most just do not talk about them. What is our place in this forum as to undergirding each other as we face padded cells being filled up, let alone when the mark of the beast enters the picture. I, for one, need to talk about more than what was wrong with FA. I need to hear what was right and how to apply it NOW, TODAY. I want to live and not die to declare the glory of the Lord; for me, my kids, my grandson and one on the way. Tell me how to do that, Jiz.

With all love and respect, Jiz, nothing is going to change the fact that His finger will be pointing at us in the end. What did we do with the coins we were given? In all honesty, I believe your place here is still about personal choices and a fifteen-year-old boy God has put on my heart. You are very much on my heart.

I am sorry if I got carried away and became too candid. I believe I needed to do so to make my point. Drama can be used to make good and bad points. My point is real and not about drama.

Your posts are still vital to me, Jiz. You sat under a goldmine of knowledge I could be applying to my situation. I just do not hear anything from you, at this point, that can help. Will you consider helping me and others from this point forward?

I will not be able to respond to any posts for awhile. I am moving and need the time to pack and resettle. It is part of the restoring work He is doing in my life concerning my testimony.

Blessings, GWB

"Be still and know that I am God"

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by jisamazed on Mon, 15 Dec 2008 01:34:32 GMT
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JWBTI wrote on Sat, 13 December 2008 08:36Jisamazed wrote:

Ron, I was responsible for giving in to HEF and other teacher's false teaching. I have never tried to blame another person for my decision. However, I am not responsible for their error. They taught it, and they are responsible for it. James 3 is clear about that. I have simply asserted that they did teach error, and the error hurt people. When HEF said, "You might even lose your salvation if you go to the arm of the flesh (doctors)" he was responsible for putting people under a yoke of bondage with that statement. Those who believed him were responsible for believing him and allowing the condemnation to set in.

When the Bible tells us to be moderate, the idea is to be balanced. We do not go to the left or the right (Proverbs 4), but we look straight ahead of us.

A word on the lukewarm passage. The city of Laodicea had two streams that fed it: a hot spring and a very cold one. Both springs were useful to the people of the city. They could drink cold water and cook or bathe with the hot. Lukewarm water had no use. When the Lord told them to be hot or cold, he was telling them to be useful. Don't be proud about how you have it all together and are in need of nothing. Make yourself useful. He did not equate balance with lukewarmness.

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Blessings

Ron, I appreciate your testimony regarding cluster headaches. The Lord frequently heals people without the use of medical science, including me. No argument here. The problem is with HEF's assertion that the only way to trust God for healing is to avoid medical science altogether. In doing so, he tried to put God in a box. People became afraid that they were sinning by accessing medical help, and they ended up dying or suffering unnecessarily as a result.

If we believe that the Lord is our healer, we need to be open to him leading us in a way that we don't expect, which could include some medical interventions at times.

By the way, I would prefer that you call me Jae, James or Jiz, but not Jim. Or late for dinner.

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by jisamazed on Mon, 15 Dec 2008 01:55:47 GMT
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GWB, the things that you have written that you have experienced are very serious, and I have sent you a private message about it. It's not appropriate for me to talk about some of that publicly. I would say that, yes, I do know of "denominational" churches that would be a great help to you here in the GR area. However, I see that you are from Kentucky, so I don't know what are the strengths of churches in your area.

The "denominational" label is an old way of thinking. The Lord has brought the truths of spiritual warfare and the Holy Spirit to many churches and Christians who are a part of denominations, and some of them excel anything you would find in the charismatic movement, including FA. The distinction between "charismatic" and "non-charismatic" is more blurred than it used to be, as many "denominational" churches have received the infilling of the Holy Spirit, and many charismatic churches have become very dry. The Lord is not bound by denominational or charismatic or faith labels. You will find good, Spirit-filled believers in places that you least expect.

Subject: Re: John Davis articles on HEF
Posted by JWBTI on Tue, 16 Dec 2008 01:26:09 GMT
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Jae wrote:

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By the way, I would prefer that you call me Jae, James or Jiz, but not Jim. Or late for dinner.

Brother Jae, â€¦..I am sorry about that the wrong name !

Ref the assertion from the statements Brother Freeman made.

I remember another statement he made over & over & over again.
If Itâ€™s Not Faith in your heart, donâ€™t try it !â€¦..Get help !
He was very clear on that ! I wish, I would have counted the times he gave us that warning.

In the church today, Most people equate Medical Science as Divine Healing.
They have taken the power away from God and put it in mans hands and they call it Divine. That boarders on Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit !

Also, Jesus never lead anyone to anything Other Than Himself and His Word.
If you need the services of Medical Science, use it !

But I prefer that you donâ€™t call it Divine Healing !

Blessings