



## **Another Gospel**

Joseph Herrin (3-26-2002)

[jbherrin@heart4god.8k.com](mailto:jbherrin@heart4god.8k.com)

I have been thinking much lately about what distinguishes the Babylonian church spoken of in Revelation 18 from Zion, the church of the Overcomers. In this hour Yahweh is calling many of His people to come out of the Babylonian church system so that they will not “participate in her sins and partake of her plagues” (Revelation 18:4).

This past week the Spirit led me to a personal revelation that has to do with the difference between these two groups. I went to the library to return some books my children had checked out, and then I was going to meet a brother for lunch, but I had a little time on my hands so I went to the stack of books where they put all the new arrivals. While looking at these books there were three of them that stood out.

The first was a book written about Kurt Warner, the quarterback for the St. Louis Rams. The book was titled “Kurt Warner”, with the subtitle “And the last shall be first”. The second book was a book on witchcraft, and the third book was about the son of Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker and the youth “ministry” in which he is involved. As I looked at these three books the Holy Spirit allowed some questions to be raised in my spirit and later He answered them.

First, let me tell you about the book on witches and witchcraft. I live with my family in Middle Georgia and there is reported to be a large number of people in this area involved in witchcraft, Satanism, and the occult. One of the two main high schools in the town has chosen “Demons” as their mascot and namesake. They have a large caricature of a demon’s head fastened to the front of their school building and all of their sports teams bear the name of “Demons.” There is much witchcraft among the students of this school, so I was not too surprised to see this book on the shelf at the local public library.

I picked the book up and looked through the index and then I flipped to the middle of the book, which was written by a young female witch. There were photos in the center, and in some of the photos this young woman appeared completely nude as she practiced different aspects of her rituals and ceremonies. As I considered this

book the thought arose, “How can Christianity compete with this?”

The message of the book is that witchcraft is spiritual as well as being powerfully attractive to the flesh. Many young men and women are getting sucked into it, and all the more since the Harry Potter series has gained such prominence. Witchcraft appeals to people on various levels. It attracts them with sexuality and eroticism. It attracts them with power and the promise of enhanced personal and occult abilities. It attracts them with its mystery and its false spirituality.

I thought of what witchcraft offers and how it is so very appealing to the young people of this generation. I then considered Biblical Christianity and how it offers none of the same things to appeal to the flesh or the carnal nature of man. In fact Christianity calls the disciple to come and die to all the desires of the soul. It speaks of putting the flesh to death, and there is much written of the call to suffer with Christ that we might later reign with Him. The glory and reward of Christianity is to be received at a later time, for Paul speaks in this way:

**Romans 8:18**

**For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed in us.**

And again, we have Peter’s words:

**I Peter 5:10**

**After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.**

Those who would be disciples of Christ must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Him. The disciple must not seek to protect their life and its desires, or fulfill their soulish longings, but rather they must die to the desires of the soul that they might live. This does not seem, to offer much attraction. The hope of the Christian has for the last 2,000 years been set off in the distance. This hope is to rule and reign with Christ after the resurrection from the dead.

As I mentioned, the question arose in my mind, “How can Christianity compete with what was presented in this book on witchcraft?” The book this young witch wrote says nothing of denying self. It speaks of gratification now. Witchcraft offers its

followers powers now, and it entices with sexuality and mystery.

Upon placing this book back on the shelf I then picked up a book on the Bakker's son. It is not my intent to malign any man. The Bakker's have chosen to live in the public eye and to present various messages to the church. They invite comments by their visibility and by the fact that they choose to present themselves as leaders and teachers to the church. Jim Bakker has repented of many of his former teachings, and a book on the period of his life dealing with the PTL Club could rightly be subtitled, "The first shall be last."

As I flipped through this book on Jay Bakker it was evident that it focused much on a youth ministry that he is involved in, and there were pictures of the people who participated in it, as well as pictures of their activities. It appeared to be a high octane type of group that offers non-stop activity of the type that would appeal to many different segments of youth. Its approach is to offer to youth the things that would entice them and keep them interested.

In one picture that was subtitled something to the effect, "Jay and two of his friends", he was standing between two very strange and bizarre looking characters that looked like something one would normally only encounter on Halloween night. One of the young men had tattoos all over his body and he was described as being a tattoo artist. The other young man had an appearance that I will describe as ultra-gothic. He was wearing black leather and spikes and his face had a ghoulish appearance. My immediate reaction upon seeing the picture was that I was looking at something demonic. There was nothing in their appearance that would tell anyone that these people had anything to do with Yahshua the Messiah.

In the past week I have reflected more upon these first two books I have just described. The second book is actually man's answer to my question, "How can Christianity compete with witchcraft and the allure of the world." The solution of much of the church is to entice the youth and the adults with the same things that appeal to them in the world. If they like Acid Rock, the church will give them Acid Rock. If they like Rap, the church will give them Rap. If they like Gothic styles, the church will give them Gothic styles. If the people like money and all it can buy, the church will give them a message of prosperity. If the people like sensuality, the church will give them as much as they can stand.

The Babylonian church has adopted a mindset that it must become like the world to

attract those who are in the world. The church takes everything the world has and it creates a “Christianized” version of it. The world has its music with its soulful appeal, and the church has mimicked the same. The world has its fiction, mystery, and romance novels, and the church has the same. The world has its T-shirts with sensual, provocative, or profane sayings and pictures, and the church has the same.

Recently I have noticed Christian girls wearing T-shirts that have the message emblazoned across their breasts “R- Rated”, or “X-Rated”. On the back of the shirt would be some scripture, along with some pithy saying, that would explain the message on the front and make it “Christian”. However, knowing some of the young ladies wearing these shirts, I know they are out to make more than a Christian statement and to lead people to Christ. The terms R-rated and X-Rated immediately stir thoughts of adult content and have explicit sexual connotations. When another person is confronted with such a message across the bosom of a young lady an instant sexual association is made.

Does Jesus Christ, Yahshua the Messiah, need the young girls of the church to use themselves as sexual billboards to entice people to read some message about Him? Yet, this really reveals the mindset of the church as it tries to compete with the world and its allure. The church has taken the things that appeal to the soul of man and it has incorporated these things into its message and its ministries to entice people into the fold of Christianity. But what is presented is “another gospel.” It is a gospel that attracts the flesh and soul of men and women. It is a gospel that is devoid of the cross. It is a gospel that says, “Come and live and be fulfilled” instead of “Come and die.” It is a gospel that makes the following words of Christ meaningless:

**Luke 14:25-35**

**25 Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them,**

**26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.**

**27 "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.**

**28 "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?**

**29 "Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him,**

- 30 saying, "This man began to build and was not able to finish.'  
31 "Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand?  
32 "Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.  
33 "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all he possesses.  
34 "Therefore, salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned?  
35 "It is useless either for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

It seems strange that every time Yahshua saw a crowd gathering He would say something to get rid of the majority whose hearts did not truly desire Truth and Light, yet the church today seeks to attract and retain these same ones by whatever compromise or allure is necessary. Yahshua was content to receive only those whom the Father had given to Him (John 17:12), but the church seeks to widen its embrace to include many false brethren and many who desire the things of the world and all that is in it, forgetting that love of the world is enmity with the Father.

Yahshua cautioned all those who would follow Him to count the cost before they committed. Today the church avoids all talk of a cost being associated with following Christ. There is a great cost, however, and many who would like to be called followers of Christ really don't have the desire to "give up all they possess", to hate their own life. They are salt without savor. The church is seeking out these bland, tasteless followers, for although they may not please God, they provide all that the church desires, pews that are filled, offering plates that have lots of money, and participants for its activities.

The Spirit has answered my question regarding how the church can compete. The answer is that the church doesn't have to compete. There is only One Way, One Truth, and One Life, and it is Jesus Christ, Yahshua the Messiah. Those who love Truth will overcome all obstacles from within and without to follow hard after Yahshua. They need no enticement of the flesh, no allure to the soul of man. Such ones may be few and far between, but they will follow Christ, despising the shame, taking up their cross, and by their lives they will glorify the One who has given all for

them.

It is Satan that must use the allure of immediate gratification of the flesh and soul to woo people to that which is false. If the church uses the same methods then the church is itself walking in unbelief and it knows not the true gospel of Christ. If the church must entice people into its fold with entertainment and a self-centered gospel then it knows not the mind of the Savior that it so fervently calls Lord, for Christ never enticed anyone. Christ said His sheep know His voice and they will not follow another.

It is a Babylonian church system that attempts to use the methods of man to build the kingdom of God. It was Nebuchadnezzar, the great king of Babylon, that surveyed his realm and declared, "Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty" (Daniel 4:30)? In the same way a Babylonian church builds kingdoms to rule over men, and then the men who have done the building boast over what they have constructed.

It matters not whether there is one true disciple of Christ among all those who fill the pews and coffers of the church. It matters not whether the people have had their ears tickled, telling them exactly what they want to hear, to get them there. It matters not that the youth are merely being entertained and that they are having all of their worldly desires met by the programs of the church. It matters not if there is lacking a single member who has truly been delivered from the world, the flesh, or their own soulish desires. If people are gathering, activity is going on, the church is making money, buildings are being constructed, and the church is paying large salaries to its ministers then it is viewed as being successful.

**Revelation 3:17**

**Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing..."**

Yahshua did not come simply to forgive men their sins and to assure them of a trip to heaven when they die. He came to make disciples of Himself. He came that man might be formed in His own image and that the intent of man's original creation might be fulfilled. The scriptures state that the elect are being "conformed to the image of Christ." This same Christ never satisfied His flesh. He did not turn the stones to bread when He was hungry, instead He waited upon the will of the Father.

He never did anything of His own initiative. He never even spoke a word of His own initiative. When it came time to be handed over to sinners to be crucified for the sins of man He declared, “Nevertheless, not My will, but Thy will be done.”

Is this the same image that the church is forming among those who fill the pews week after week? Are the youth also dying to their own fleshly and soulish desires? Can they state that they never speak a word of their own initiative, but they speak only what the Heavenly Father commands them to speak? Is the body of Christ being brought to a place of maturity that is like unto the fulness of the stature of Christ who is the Head of the body?

In truth, there are two bodies present today. One is the Babylonian church from which God is calling His people out. There is also the true Ekklesia, the called out ones, who are being formed and fashioned after the image of Christ. One body uses the allure and methods of the world to attract and retain its members. The other body is going through continual refining, purging, and purification from all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life.

I mentioned that there was a third book at the library. It was the only one of the three that I checked out. It is a book on the NFL quarterback Kurt Warner, and it bears the extraordinary subtitle “And the last shall be first”. I believe that in many ways, the path of the Overcomer is portrayed in this man’s life. I have been impressed with what I have read about him. Let me share a couple of items that have stood out.

Kurt and his older brother were raised by his mother who encouraged their participation in sports. He particularly liked basketball, but he also played football. As a freshman in high school his football coach talked him into playing the position of quarterback because he needed a big kid to play the position and Kurt was already 5' 11" or 6' while a freshman. Kurt really didn’t want to play quarterback because he didn’t want all the pressure of the position. He preferred to play wide receiver or some other position, but his coach pressed him to play in this role.

In Kurt’s first couple of games he would see all the defensive linemen charging toward him and he would begin to run to evade them while he looked for a receiver to throw the ball to. This is a natural instinct, protect your flesh, but it does not produce good quarterbacks. A good quarterback needs to be able to stay in the pocket and focus on his receivers without being distracted by all the defensive linemen who are rushing towards him to tackle him. To teach Kurt this skill, his

coach devised a special drill that they used in practice.

The special drill used to get Kurt to overcome his sense of self-preservation and to “stand and deliver” under pressure was jokingly called the “kill Kurt drill.” In this drill, Kurt would have only one offensive player in front of him and this was the center who snapped the ball to him. Kurt would have all of his receivers who would start running patterns as soon as the ball was placed in Kurt’s hands. Facing Kurt were two defensive linemen who both had arm pads on and they would begin rushing toward Kurt as soon as the ball was snapped.

With no one to block the linemen rushing Kurt, he knew he was going to get knocked down every time. He learned that it was much more satisfying to get knocked down after completing a pass, than to get knocked down without having a pass completed. Kurt learned to ignore the linemen charging him and to focus on his receivers. Instead of spending his time trying to evade the players who were charging him, he developed a focus upon those he needed to get the ball to. He became very adept at this, and on many occasions when players were closing in on him, and even when he was being knocked to the ground, he had such focus on his receivers that he could throw the ball in these situations with incredible accuracy and make great plays.

There are many correlations that could be made to this skill that makes a great quarterback to the life of the saint. The Overcomer in Christ cannot succeed as long as he is focused upon pain avoidance, nor can he succeed while trying to protect the flesh and fulfill the desires of the soul. We have this description of the Overcomer in scripture:

**Revelation 12:11**

**They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.**

It is the natural tendency of the flesh to protect itself. For this reason the life of faith is difficult. The Spirit is always leading the saint to step out on the water when the flesh is afraid of drowning. The Spirit leads the saint to cast all, even one’s very life, upon the Father and to trust Him to keep that which is entrusted to Him. The flesh cries out with a million objections to such a course. The Overcomer must learn to remain focused on God and to ignore all that which threatens his or her life.

I will share one other item from Kurt Warner’s life that is typical of the Overcomer.

Kurt had a very successful high school career in football and he and his coaches looked to his being sought out by one of the two major universities in his home state of Iowa. When Kurt was not selected by either Iowa State University or the University of Iowa, he went instead to a smaller 1-AA school called the University of Northern Iowa.

Kurt arrived one year behind another young man who played quarterback, and this young man was very studious at the game and he performed well. Kurt was in a situation where he would not get to start as quarterback unless this other young man who arrived first messed up. Kurt was seen by many of the players as a more talented player, and one year the coaches divided the team up into two squads, one led by Kurt and one by the other young man. When the two squads played against each other, Kurt's team won 17-7.

Still, the coaches were unwilling to put Kurt in the starting position because the other young man had not done anything bad to warrant being replaced. In fact, the University of Northern Iowa went farther in the playoffs than they had ever gone before under this other player. As a result, Kurt spent four of his college years sitting on the bench as a back-up quarterback and playing sporadically, and it was only in Kurt's senior year, after the other young man had graduated, that Kurt became the starting quarterback.

The noteworthy thing in all of this was Kurt's attitude. He didn't complain. He didn't grumble or murmur. He didn't express his discontent to the coaching staff or other players. He didn't go to the media as many players do when they are upset with the progression of their career. He simply waited patiently for his opportunity to arrive. Even when asked by his high school coaches how things were going in college he would tell them "OK", and would not complain. In his last year of college his opportunity did arrive and he made the most of it being named offensive player of the year in the league he was in.

Because of his limited exposure to scouts in college, Kurt was not drafted by an NFL team, but the Green Bay Packers did sign him as a free agent. Green Bay already had three very good quarterbacks, one being Brett Favre who has proved his worth, another being Ty Detmer who was a Heisman Trophy winner in college, and another being Mark Brunell. Being the fourth, and least experienced, quarterback on the team, he was let go after only two weeks.

It seems that the Father puts all of His Overcomers through a school of delays and disappointments. We see this pattern in the lives of Joseph, Moses, David and many others. A mark of the Overcomer is that they are faithful wherever they are placed. They do not wallow in self-pity and develop a bad attitude. They do not refuse to give their best because they have received a bad deal in life. They bloom where they are planted.

This has been true of Kurt Warner. After college, and after being cut by Green Bay, he looked for other opportunities and did whatever he could. For six months he even worked at a local Hy-Vee grocery store where he made \$5.50 an hour and did everything from stocking shelves to cleaning floors. His supervisor reported that he always did everything requested of him with a great attitude and without any complaint.

Kurt then got a position playing quarterback in the Arena Football League where he excelled. Over time people took notice and he made it to the NFL where he went to the Super Bowl and was named Most Valuable Player. This seems appropriate and it is a great parallel to the Kingdom of God where we are told to “humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time” (I Peter 5:6).

The Overcomer must not only walk in faith, refusing to protect the flesh and the life of the soul, he/she must also wait patiently upon the Father. The Overcomer must not resort to self-promotion and fleshly means to attain to the position desired, or the dream that tarries.

**Habakkuk 2:3-4**

**3 "For the vision is yet for the appointed time;  
It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail.**

**Though it tarries, wait for it;**

**For it will certainly come, it will not delay.**

**4 "Behold, as for the proud one,**

**His soul is not right within him;**

**But the righteous will live by his faith.”**

Many churches today have promoted themselves through human effort. Outwardly they appear successful. They are attracting great numbers and constructing large edifices, but conformity to Christ is nowhere to be found. On the other hand, many

of the Overcomers seem to go from one setback to another, even as did Joseph and David, but they are remaining faithful wherever they are found. They are being conformed to Christ in wilderness places where dreams are both crushed and born again.

There is a way that seems right unto a man, but its end is death. There is a gospel that appeals to the flesh and soul of man. It is a gospel with many adherents and it is attended by all the worldly signs of success. Those who abide in these places are convinced that they are “rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing”, but Christ’s opinion is altogether different. He is not impressed by the great buildings, by the height of the steeple, by the masses of well adorned people who gather within, by the padding on the pews, by the beauty of the stained glass or the richness of the carpet and the chandeliers and other adornments. He is not impressed by the degrees that are appended to the names of the ministers, nor by the salaries they receive and the honors they have garnered from men.

No, Yahshua is looking for those who are humble. He is looking for those who exhibit faith in God and who love not their lives unto death. He is seeking those who will declare, “Nevertheless, not my will, but Thy will be done.” He is delighted with those who wait patiently upon the will of God and the fulfillment of dreams that He has authored. He is pleased with those who are faithful in every place that the Spirit leads them. Are you one of these?

How can the true church compete with the world and false religion? She will not do it by becoming like the world, for this only creates myriads of worldly followers who have not been delivered from that which they truly need deliverance from, their own lusts and desires. The world needs to see a body of Overcomers who have been conformed to the image of Christ and who love not their lives. What is needful is for the Elect and the Overcomers to take up their crosses and follow wherever the Spirit leads. There is a glorious hope set before these ones for after they have suffered for a little while, in due time they will be exalted. May you be encouraged by these words.