

Feedback April 2006

Faith and Politics

Thanks for the outstanding February issue! I thought it was over-the-top. It was excellent and relevant to my needs. Since I live in Michigan, the article on Keith Butler ("The Bishop's Campaign" by Valerie G. Lowe) was very timely and appreciated.

Dawn Sneden

Hudsonville, Michigan

The Republican Party is synonymous with scandalous greed and the wholesale slaughter of Americans, Iraqis and Afghans. The Republican Party stands for corporate greed and the whittling away of middle-class wages—to say nothing of the poverty and so many other selfish encumbrances foisted on those "without a loud voice."

Shame on you for your role in the disillusionment of the trusting Christian community.

name withheld

I strongly support the candidacy of Keith Butler to replace Debbie Stabenow in the U.S. Senate. So do former congressmen Jack Kemp of New York and J.C. Watts of Oklahoma. Come join us and let's revive the American spirit.

George Wiland

Tulsa, Oklahoma

I am writing in response to Stephen Strang's endorsement of Keith Butler for U.S. Senate (Final Word, February). I do not take issue with the endorsement. I know Keith Butler and I believe he is a fine man and a man of God. But I take issue with the suggestion that there are those in the Republican Party who were "uncomfortable" with his candidacy.

Is it fair to say that people were concerned that Butler

couldn't beat Stabenow? Yes!

These weren't powerbrokers who engineered an opponent. They were voters who, in poll after poll, suggested that Butler wasn't their choice. It left an opening, which Mike Bouchard opted to fill—not because anyone got him into the race. Mike believes he will make the best U.S. senator.

Kathryn Packer

Okemos, Michigan

On the Brink of War

Thank you for pastor John Hagee's article on Iran's threat to Israel ("The Coming Holy War," February). It is important that as Christians we are aware of events occurring in the Middle East, especially those concerning Israel.

We need to remember that the only nation whose boundaries are clearly laid out in Scripture is the nation of Israel. These boundaries are for today just as they were for the day when God first laid them out.

David Cottrell

Grande Prairie, Canada

Have you or John Hagee ever considered that hostility in the Middle East from non-Jews has been provoked in the last few decades not by the preaching of the gospel but by Christians' efforts to manipulate a wrong prophetic fulfillment? Hagee is naive if he thinks Iran would blow up Jerusalem with a nuclear weapon. It has Islam's third holiest site.

Samuel Bowman

Tuscaloosa, Alabama

In Defense of Narnia

Although I appreciate Diane Valentine's right to her own viewpoint in My Turn (Feedback, February), I don't think C.S. Lewis ever intended his work to be placed literally next to Scripture. The Chronicles of Narnia is a fictional tale filled

with symbolism. It is fantasy!

Narnia was an excellent film. The mysteries of the gospel were woven throughout the film in a way that made it relevant to young people. I am grateful, and I want to encourage Disney and others to produce more movies like it.

Lisa Gardella

Palm Coast, Florida

I was disappointed to read Diane Valentine's letter regarding The Chronicles of Narnia. The writer's misunderstanding of the differences between literalism and allegory would not only discount every artistic endeavor, it would cancel many of the Lord's parables and other stories.

John L. and Debra Moore

Miles City, Montana

The Bible clearly tells us to stay away from any type of witchcraft. A book titled The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe should offer a clear enough warning to stay away, yet so many Christians and churches are embracing the book and movie. I wonder if Christians think we must have something to compete with Harry Potter?

Valerie Amsdil

Hinton, West Virginia

C.S. Lewis was influenced by the occult poet W.D. Yeats, and he was fascinated by old Norse, Germanic, Celtic, Greek and Roman mythology. It is a tragedy that an influential mind such as Lewis' is used as a rationale to encourage acceptance of these things in the church.

name withheld

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Unless you printed Diane Valentine's comments for the purpose of evoking rebuttal, it is disappointing that you would give such prominence to her misperceptions. She said: "Narnia supports the idea that the glory of an incorruptible God can

be changed into an image of a four-footed beast.” Though there is certainly room for criticism of the film for not having been more true to the book, it conveyed enough of the book’s Christian theology to touch unbelievers with the gospel.

Edwin W. Brown, M.D.

Indianapolis, Indiana

Editor’s note:

Obviously if we agreed with Ms. Valentine we would never have run a cover story on The Chronicles of Narnia. Our new My Turn feature offers readers with opposing viewpoints an opportunity to challenge us. And, in turn, we invite all our readers to speak out if they disagree with My Turn. All My Turn entries must include a photo of the writer.

Carlton Pearson

You reported that Carlton Pearson’s church has gone into foreclosure (News, January). That means the gift of discernment is alive and well in the church! I do not rejoice when a church or ministry struggles to keep its doors open. My prayers are with Pearson and his congregation. But this is what happens when heresy shows up on the menu.

Sadly, the church is filled with parrots who are quick to squawk “Amen” and drop large sums of money into the laps of ministry leaders who water down or pollute the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Rene De La Cruz

Hesperia, California

Too Much Sugar?

Thank you for Steve Hill’s article on churches that water down the gospel (“No More Candy-Coated Gospel,” February). If ministers can’t challenge their congregations, and if their words don’t bring conviction to those harboring sin, God cannot bring new life or growth to our churches.

Terri Swerzler
Tacoma, Washington

I was disappointed with Steve Hill's message. Rather than produce even one quote from any credible source, Hill rants in a five-page diatribe. He says people are "never confronted," Christians are "turning aside to fables," and the gospel is becoming "watered down." Please hold your writers to the same standard of journalistic integrity as any other serious publication.

Jeff Appel
Littleton, Colorado

Steve Hill's article was another of too many Charisma articles criticizing churches and pastors and accusing them of forgetting the cross and "sugar-coating" the gospel.

I was raised on this type of judgment and guilt. But hearing that I was a sinner every day didn't stop me from sinning. Not until I learned that my heavenly Father loves me could I grow as a Christian.

Linda Zent
Bismarck, North Dakota

People will faint and die of malnutrition if they continue to be fed candy instead of meat. Those in America's pulpits must not soften the gospel or pacify people with words without challenging them to be holy.

Alyce D. Paul
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Don't Blame God

It was a breath of fresh air to read your article about people who are angry with God ("Are You Mad at God" by Duane Vander Klok, January). I've been preaching the same thing about Job for years and I'm glad to see that someone else sees it that way too. I'm tired of so-called "Spirit-filled" people blaming God for everything from pimples to hurricanes! You published

the truth.

Tom Rambow

Colorado Springs, Colorado

Your article about people who are mad at God was simplistic. It didn't deal with a difficult theological problem—that God allows the devil to operate. When honest people are struggling, they are not being “scornful,” as the article states. They deserve more meaningful counsel than the “good God, bad devil” the article provides.

Mark Brower

Westerville, Ohio

Comb Your Hair!

Why should Seventh Day Slumber, a group of four young men who look like hippies and punks, be profiled in Charisma (Buzz, January) as a Christian rock group?

It is now common for people with tattoos, body piercings, and eccentric hairstyles and clothes to introduce themselves as servants of God. Christian musicians should dress decently.

Chukwuma Ukoha

Umuahia, Nigeria