


# Cliff's Notes

Random Musings About 'What In the World Is Going On...?'

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**GBF** is now 7 months and 1 week old...vital signs still good. We have had 1<sup>st</sup> time visitors every Sunday since we began, we averaged 82 people per week in March, we added 3 new members, we baptized 2 adult saints, we kicked off our Friday home Bible study ministry, the saints keep faithfully giving and serving, we had our first ever **GBF** prayer vigil, the Fellowship Meals continue to be a delectable hit, we continue our study in the book of Ephesians and we added our **GBF** resource table, featuring the latest and greatest in Christian education literature!

## Did you know that...


Our very own, **Tim Wong & Gene Simpson** have not missed a Sunday with us since we started back on August 20<sup>th</sup>? That's 33 weeks in a row!

Our very own **Laura Simpson** will be singing at the prestigiously historic Carnegie Hall Saturday, May 26! She'll be singing with *The Master's College* Chorale, who has been invited back for a command performance. Others who have gone before Laura at the Hall—Richard Strauss, George Gershwin, Benny Goodman, Leonard Bernstein, etc.



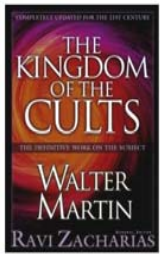
Our very own **Charissa McManis** and **Connor Nunley** took first place in the AWANA team competition last month...in a field of 14 teams! **Breanna McManis** placed 5<sup>th</sup>.

Our very own **Timmy Beckmann** placed 2<sup>nd</sup> with his teammate, out of 16 teams, in the T & T division of AWANA Bible quizzing last month and he was 1<sup>st</sup> place overall in the individual category, earning him the moniker of 'Quizzing Champion'!



**HE IS RISEN!** This month we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. His death and resurrection were planned in eternity past by God and predicted many times in the Old Testament by the prophets. The first prophecy of Christ's atoning work is in Genesis 3:15, where God predicted the Messiah would overcome the devil by crushing his head (Jesus' resurrection) after He was bruised by the snake (Jesus' death). This prophecy was made more than 4,000 years before Jesus came to earth in human form--Amazing!

## Book of the Month- *The Kingdom of the Cults*, by Dr. Walter



Martin, is a classic resource that all Christians should have in their library. He gives a practical survey of various religions from a biblical and historical point of view with the goal of equipping Christians to defend their faith in light of the imperative in Jude 3 which states, "contend earnestly for the faith." Martin was a master at defending the faith. A former Baptist pastor, lecturer, scholar, and the founder of the 'Bible Answer Man' radio program, Dr. Martin had a very personal, humorous and warm side. I spent a day with him once in Santa Barbara where he bought me dinner and then a **Slurpee** at **7ELEVEN** before he preached.

## THE BEAUTY OF PERSPICUITY

[per-spuh-cue-uh-tee] 'Perspicuity' is the forgotten doctrine about the Bible which states that "the Bible is a readable book." This doctrine reminds us that God's Word is comprehensible and was written to be obeyed. The Bible was written in normal, everyday, plain language. Read the narrative of the Gospels about Jesus to a child and it will be clear. The Reformers like Luther & Calvin reiterated the doctrine of perspicuity that had been lost and shrouded by the institutional church which held that lay people could not interpret the Bible for themselves because it was too "mysterious." As such, interpretation was reserved for the elite 'anointed' in the upper echelon of the Church hierarchy. That notion defies the clear, perspicuous teaching of the Bible which says to every Christian: "As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you...His anointing teaches you about all things" (1 Jn 2:27). This verse is simply reminding Christians that they have the indwelling Holy Spirit and He is our personal tutor who allows us to understand and apply God's Word—we don't need a human intermediary or some esoteric formula to grasp basic biblical truths.

The doctrine of perspicuity is being blatantly attacked in the Church today by those who call themselves 'evangelical.' Brian McClaren, author of the best-selling 'A Generous Orthodoxy' & most prominent spokesman for the emerging church, writes, "clarity [of Scripture] is overrated." Rather, he dogmatically contends that we don't really understand the Bible after all. Another popular evangelical, Clark Pinnock, says that "all the prophecies of the Bible are imprecise and ambiguous." Rob Bell of Mars Hill Church, another leader in emerging circles, says he grew up thinking he knew what the Bible says, but now has discovered that he actually does not understand much of it after all for it's shrouded in incomprehensible mystery. That kind of thinking directly undermines perspicuity. In the garden, the serpent attacked the doctrine of perspicuity by asking Eve, "did God really say?" which is another way of saying, "God's Word is unclear and hard to understand." Today people do the same thing by making statements like, "Can we really understand Genesis 1-3 and take it at face value?," "Is hell really a literal place?," "We can't really understand the Book of Revelation because it's so full of mystery and symbols and there are so many views on it..." Instead, we need to remember God's promise to us that "we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor 2:16).

