Strange Fire Panel Question and Answer, Session 1
Selected Scriptures
TM13-11

Strange Fire Conference

PHIL: Well, they gave me the task of introducing this section…session, and I don't know if I need to really, but I definitely want to introduce at least Todd Friel and Justin Peters because some of you may not have met them yet. You all know Tom Pennington because he spoke this morning, one of my favorite pastors ever. (Applause) And I should say I worked with Tom for, I don't know, more than a decade at Grace To You and I owe a lot of whatever good there may be in my reputation to Tom because he was the guy who made Grace to You work all those years. As John said this morning, a lot of the processes he set in place, we still have going. I love Tom and he's a great pastor.

Steve Lawson, you know, who is one of my favorite preachers (Applause), and I never fail to learn from him when he preaches. I love the historical content of what he writes and what he says and he's…there's a lot of preachers I could easily tune out, he's not one of them. And I love that about him. And, of course, John MacArthur I owe everything I am to. (Applause) I was a total theological bumpkin when I met him and he has taught me practically everything I know about the Word of God and I love him. And I could talk about him forever, so I won't.

But I have to introduce you to Todd and to Justin. I'll start with Justin. Justin lives in Edmund, Oklahoma, which is where my Dad grew up when it was a tiny little one-horse town. So he lives in my homeland. And I visited him there not long ago and I love Justin, too. He's a great speaker with a passionate heart and he has done more, I think, than any other single individual I know to sort of debunk the shenanigans of some of the worse name-it, claim-it Charismatics, Faith healers, and all of that. And he has an uncanny ability to find You Tube clips that I've never seen, that just leave me sort of gasping and banging my head on the desk. Anyway, you'll see that. If you go to one of his sessions, and you should, he's a great teacher and a great friend.

And Todd Friel who is my all-time radio talk-show host, even though…yeah, go ahead, (Applause) He is a wretched, wretched man. And I say that with all due respect. He has deliberately embarrassed me many times on the radio and yet I can't tune him out. I listen to him all the time, and you should, too. Very insightful. When I first heard Todd years ago, he was doing a talk show out of Minneapolis, and when I first turned him on, here's this guy who was funny and over-the-top energetic and I thought somebody needs to tone him down. And I kept thinking, "He's going to get himself in trouble." And the more I listened to him, the more I thought, you know, it's like he has this uncanny knowledge of where the line is and he comes right up to it and never crosses it. When we first corresponded, he wrote to me and said, "We'd like to use whatever random audio clips of John MacArthur we can on our radio broadcast, do we have your permission?" And I wrote him back and said no. I thought what is he going to do…and I said, "No, we guard those very carefully, no, no, no." And I told him no. Then I started listening to his radio broadcast and I quickly got to love it so much that I wrote him back and said, "You know what? Go ahead." And so he has. And thank you for that, Todd. I consider him virtually a partner in ministry because of the amount of air play he gives to John

MacArthur and sometimes even to me.

So buckle your seatbelts though because Todd is going to be leading this session. Todd, I'll turn it over to you.

TODD: All right, wow. This is my Diet of Worms. You know, when Martin Luther was called before the Roman Catholic Church at the Diet of Worms in 15…

STEVE: Twenty-one.

TODD: Fifteen twenty one, of course you would know that. One of these dark suits is not like the others, let me tell you that. And, you know, I wonder, you know, it seemed that he kind of copped out. They asked him, "Will you recant?" And he asked for a day before delivering the infamous "Here I stand, I can do no other," in both Latin and German so the people could hear it so he couldn't be killed by the Roman Catholic Church. And I always wondered, you know, he was such a manly man, what caused him to just seemingly need to take a day.

Well, first of all, he thought it was going to be a debate, so he wanted to carefully get his answer constructed. But second of all, if you've ever visited the church in Worms, it's huge and with all the big religious people around, he was probably scared and intimidated and that's why this is my Diet of Worms, I'm horrified to be here with these guys, are you kidding me? I've seen this on You Tube for years and now I get to be here. Very cool

I just want to let you know what's going to happen. Today there's going to be two sessions of Q & A and I'm going to try mostly today to be theological and then tomorrow when we spend our time together, I'm going to try to be exceedingly practical. Now these two are going to bleed back and forth, but I know you are like I am and you know some people who are perhaps stuck in this movement and you'd like to know how to go back and to speak to them, what should you so? Where do we draw the lines? Associations? What if it's in my church, how do I respond? Predominantly we're going to tackle that tomorrow with a little bit of a today. And you've also been submitting questions. You should know that many, many questions have come in, I have them right here on this phone, and we are going to try to tackle in big categories of many…as many of those as we can, but you should also know that Grace to You within the coming weeks is going to answer each and every one of your questions on the website. So be looking for that, amazing indeed. (Applause)

By the way, if you've been at the conference and you've been detached from your telephone and you're missing Fox News because you're an evangelical so you miss Fox News, it's part of the deal. You get saved, you watch Fox, you get a gun permit. Okay, so you…it's true though, isn't it? It is true, yeah. I just saw that Fox News is reporting O.J. Simpson wants to become a TV evangelist, no kidding, following after apparently his new favorite teacher, Fredrick Price. So we can all look forward to that in about 28 years when he is finally sprung.

All right, you're up to speed. (Laughter) Everybody…sorry. Okay.

This is the Strange Fire conference, next year we're hoping for strange water to talk about baptismal regeneration, is that correct?

JOHN: We can do that…we can do that.

TODD: So Strange Fire conference…the Strange Fire conference, I would like to…I would like to tackle some words that we hear regularly in the Charismatic community, and I'm going to use the term Charismatic community in a very broad umbrella sense, initially, because these are words that we hear a lot and, gentlemen, I'd like for you to respond and I would like for us to interact with their ideas and their theology by showing clips of these individuals. And so for our department who is working on that, this is going to be clip number 16 and then we're going to see clip number 20. I want you, in case you haven't, I want you to see the things that have been spoken about not for the purpose of laughing because some of this is rather extreme and rather outrageous, but we want to interact with them in their own words and the first word that I want to tackle is indeed the word "fire." It's a word that gets used a lot in Charismatic circles and clip number 16 and then clip number 20 will show you that.

Clip #16: FIRE! Pick him up.

TODD: In case you didn't know, this is Rodney Howard Brown, the self-appointed Holy Ghost bartender. This next clip is clip number 20, this is Jesus Culture, a group about whom you must know and we'll be talking about, but this is a concert that kids are going to in droves, Jesus Culture and the word "Fire."

Clip #20: (Singing) Fire fall down, fire fall down on us, we pray… As we seek you, Fire fall down, Fire fall down on us, we pray…

TODD: About 16 thousand kids are in the auditorium right now.

Clip #20: (Singing)Fire fall down, fire fall down on us, we…

TODD: All right. Now that song, by the way, goes on for 17 minutes. The word "fire" calling down fire from heaven is a persistent theme that we hear. Theologically do we want fire to come from heaven? In the context, and Justin can point this out, too, a lot of the conversation is about feeling, a burning, being set on fire, thereby calling the fire down from heaven. Theologically how do we respond to this prayer to call down fire from heaven.

JUSTIN: I can only assume that they're referencing Acts 2, taking an image that is tied to a larger context. The fire there is defined as, even we were talking about this morning, clear and discernible ways that essentially, ultimately it was representative of the Spirit's coming and the Spirit's expression was in the gift of tongues for a specific purpose, to confirm the Apostles, to confirm what He was doing, as R.C. said yesterday, and now bringing out a people for himself, confirming the Jews were, in fact, going to be a part of the church. So it has a context. But instead it's removed from that context and made to mean something just strictly experiential.

JOHN: Yeah, and again that's a non-repeatable event, Pentecost, as we heard from R.C. Pentecost and then the subsequent exact same reality occurs I those different people groups to somehow turn Pentecost into this kind of mockery, as if you could literally call down fire from heaven is not only unbiblical, it's just folly. But it's more than that, it's manipulation. It's all about mind control. Rodney Howard Brown is a mind manipulator.

From a human viewpoint, even more frightening is this is demonic from a supernatural viewpoint. Fire came down from heaven, of course, in Leviticus 10 and consumed the worshipers…consumed the ones who offered the sacrifice. That's the whole point of this conference. John talked about fire baptism, John the Baptist, and that was judgment. I really don't…these people are so a-biblical, they're so acquainted with words, Bible words without Bible sentences, Bible words without Bible context, Bible words without Bible doctrine. They throw the words around and they become means by which they manipulate people's minds. Fire is obviously an incendiary word. It has all kinds of implications of heat and power and energy and…I mean, that's a perfect word for them to use to manipulate people. The next time fire comes from heaven, it's going to engulf the world in judgment. God will not drown the world in water again, but He will end the world in fire. The elements will end with a fervent heat. It's going to be an atomic implosion, the uncreation when the elements melt with fervent heat, that is fire from heaven.

And I don't think anybody in his right mind would be calling down fire from heaven, because that's…that's…going forward, that is a judgment metaphor after Pentecost. You will be baptized by the Holy Spirit and with fire. That's another baptism, and that's a judgment.

TODD: The second word that we hear a lot, this is going to be clip number 17, clip number 17, the word "anointing" is used a lot and I would like for us to see how the anointing presumable is applied in a worship service where they are doing the (sorry y'all) the Holy Ghost Hokey Pokey and applying the anointing. This is clip number 17, the word anointing.

Clip #17: (Music & Singing) You put your left foot out, you put your left foot in, you put your left foot out…put your left foot in, put your left foot out, put it in, and then you shake it and you shake it all about. You put your whole self in, you put your whole self out, put your whole self in, put your whole self out, put your whole self in, put your whole self out. Now jump in, jump in, and shake it all about. Come on! Release your body, release your body…(?) (Music…)

TODD: Okay, and this goes on for a long time. He's anointing people. We hear a lot about different anointings. Could you please define for us biblically what is the correct understanding to be anointed and can we be today and if so…how?

JOHN: Did you want to say something, Justin?

JUSTIN: Sure. Well Scripture teaches that if you are a Christian, you're anointed. If you've been regenerated by God's Holy Spirit, you are anointed. It is not a feeling, it's not a buzz, it's not an experience, it's a reality. First John 2:20, "But you have an anointing from the Holy One and you all know…" this is not for a select few, it's not that some Christians have a super special anointing that the rest of the common Christians don't have. That is…that is a division of Christians into classes, the haves and the have-nots, you know to say, "Oh well, So-and-so is anointed, he has a great anointing."

If you're in Christ, you are anointed. There's no division of classes within Christianity. We are one in Christ, the ground is level at the foot of the cross. So this is a false understanding of a biblical reality. It's used to manipulate people and it's used to make light their emotions and their behavior and it's also used to elevate the whatever false teacher you're looking at, elevate him to a status that is

above everyone else. He has a different source of authority. He has a unique access to God and he gets divine revelation knowledge from the Holy Spirit, from Christ, this pipeline from heaven to various false teachers, and that is…that is their way of insulating themselves against biblical criticism. “Well if you can’t find this in the Bible, don’t worry about it because I have the anointing. God has spoken to me directly. And so if you can’t find it in Scripture, don’t sweat it, I’ve got the anointing, I’ve got this inside avenue to God.”

TODD: Regularly we’ll hear we can’t critique them because we can’t touch God’s anointed.

JOHN: Yeah, touch not the Lord’s anointed. Yeah, I think what you have to understand and what Justin’s saying is the anointing is essentially the promise of illumination from the Holy Spirit to understand the Word. And we all have that. We possess not only the Word but we possess the teacher and the author of the Word. That is the anointing. That’s why we don’t need to turn to human teachers. That’s the rest of that verse, we don’t need to be taught from the vantage point of human wisdom. The anointing we have is the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit which leads us to a true understanding of Scripture. Every believer has that. That comes with the resident Holy Spirit.

We would not be able to live the Christian life if we couldn’t understand the Bible. And we know the natural man understands not the things of God, they’re foolishness to him. But we have the mind of Christ. Why do we have the mind of Christ, 1 Corinthians 2:16? Because the Spirit teaches us the deep things of God. That’s the anointing. But you’re exactly right. They throw that word around in kind of an Old Testament sense like a prophet or a priest or a king was anointed and some official ceremony. As if they’ve been pulled up above the hoi polloi and they’re so elevated that they’re beyond criticism. They have the anointing from God.

I think the other thing to say about that is that is pagan…that kind of activity has nothing to do with Christianity. That is a blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. It is a mockery of the Word of God. It is a travesty to do that in the name of Christ.

I don’t know how those people survive the fire that should come down from heaven. I don’t know…(applause)…I don’t know how God can exercise as much patience as He does. And if you ever question the patience and forbearance of God, look at how long that stuff goes on. Why is God patient? Why is He forbearing? Because, listen carefully, because He has people in that movement yet to be redeemed. And He will rescue His people from that movement.

TODD: Let me…let me…oh boy, this is going to hurt. I’m going to argue with you. Let me play advocate, okay?

JOHN: Sure.

TODD: Here…here’s your problem, you like organs and cellos, this is our way of expressing ourselves in worship, why would you judge something that is so clearly filled with the Spirit?

JOHN: Because it’s just mindless emotional hysteria. It’s just hysterics. They have no thoughts. It’s mind-numbing hysteria. It’s not about worship.

Let me explain worship in a simple way. The deeper your understanding of the truth of God, the

deeper your understanding of God Himself, the higher your worship goes. Worship is directly correlated to understanding. The richer your theology, the more full your grasp of biblical truth, the more elevated your worship becomes. You don't have to turn the music on for me to worship. Low understanding of God, superficial, shallow understanding of God leads to shallow superficial content less hysteria. You can whip that up, you can create that kind of frenzy, it has nothing to do with worship, it isn't worship, it's not connected to worship, it is sheer hysteria in a mindless expression. You've been singing hymns this week. Why? Because there's rich theology in hymns. We don't have to go hysterical, we want your mind fully engaged. Hymns, I like hymns, I don't need to hear fire, fire, fire a thousand times. I don't need 7-11 choruses, seven words eleven times over. I need to advance the doctrine. I need to advance the richness. I need to deepen the truth and broaden the truth and hymns have verses, not just five words repeated, and repeated, and repeated, and repeated, and repeated but never really with the nuances (applause) of theology. So, yeah…that's not worship, that's not even Christian. That's no different than a rock concert. There's a lot of ways to manipulate people's minds, and they have figured out how do that.

TODD: So you're saying the theological depth of hokey-pokey isn't…

JOHN: Yeah, it leads to that.

TODD: Okay, the next word I'd like to talk about is the word "glory," the word "glory" is used a lot. Folks, this is going to be clip number 18, and then clip number 21. My apologies, but this is about…this is John Crowder, to my surprise he has grown in popularity. He's not one of the big boys, but he is…he continues to find accesses, you will see, into churches. This is clip number 18, John Crowder experiencing the drunken glory.

CROWDER: Oh, yoi, yoi, yoi. I think I'm going to wreck because, they say when you put two, two users together, see when Whinny gets up here, I think you expect me to get up and say coherent words later, afterwards. Oh Jesus, O dear Jesus, O Lord…(Odd noises)…yes, Lord. I've learned a quick prayer, teach it to all you really quickly, okey-dokey, Lord. Ooooooookey-doooookey, I love your heavy, drunken glory. Lord, I love it, Lord, thank You, Father, for more of the heavy, weighty drunken glory in this house today.

TODD: That's the drunken glory. This is clip number 21, this is the church we are going to be talking about in more detail. It's in Redding, California, I know we have some pastors here from Redding, California. This is a movement that is very…it's extraordinarily large. It's Bethel Church and this is, get ready everybody, you're going to be in the presence of God, clip number 21 as the glory cloud comes down from heaven, or the ventilation system.

Clip: …Noisy yelling…

TODD: That's it, you've just experienced the glory of God. Gentlemen…

TOM: I mean, it's hard to even respond to that, isn't it? It's mind-numbing, it's blasphemous. You know, I was thinking as you were showing the clip of Moses, we were talking about him this morning as prophet. He wanted to see the glory of God and he wanted to have the glory of God declared to him.

The glory of God, I mean, the Hebrew word *kavod*, it's what makes God weighty. It's what makes Him take our thoughts and drive us to the ground and, you know, worship. There's nothing weighty about any of this, it's instead a blasphemy of Him. And what does God do with Moses? He shows him a visible display of His glory. He can't see the whole thing, He has to hide him. But the real display of the glory of God was when He proclaimed His name before him. It was propositional glory. It was the truth about His character. That's what weighty about God and this is just.

JOHN: Tom, I add a thought. If that was the glory of God, everybody in the building would be dead…everybody.

TOM: That's right.

JOHN: Even Moses couldn't look on the glory of God. The only way that the glory of God could be revealed in the world and people wouldn't die was when it was revealed in Jesus Christ and it was veiled in human flesh. And when Jesus went up on the Mount of Transfiguration, God protected the disciples that were there and they only went into a coma and not death when they saw the glory of Christ. The veiled glory is manifest in Christ. We see the glory of God, and I love 2 Corinthians, we see the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ. But it's veiled in Christ as it was veiled to Moses. That…that…that kind of folly, that's…it doesn't get more serious than that. When you start tampering with the glory of God and the guy before that, whoever he is, if that…that kind of behavior, if he hasn't figured out how to do that and make that up, that's demonic. I mean, that's either him really adept at pulling that off, or he's under some power and it's not the Holy Spirit.

TODD: Before we go any further, I just think for the sake of fairness, Steve, if you could just stay out of this for one of these questions. Let the other guys have a go.

JOHN: Jump in…

STEVE: I'm saving it all for tonight, okay? Yeah, no, I'll hop in. The word "glory" is used basically in two different ways. There is the intrinsic glory of God and there is ascribed glory. The intrinsic glory of God is the sum and the substance of all the divine perfections. It is all of God's attributes, it is the fullness of His eternal being. And there is nothing that we can do to add to the intrinsic glory of God nor take away from the intrinsic glory of God. He is the God who was and who is and who shall be forever. He is immutably the same from age to age. And it is the sum of His holiness, His transcendence, His independence is antonymous—autonomy is sovereignty, His righteousness is truth, His love is grace, His mercy, His omniscience, His omnipresence…all of the attributes of God comprise His intrinsic glory.

There is ascribed glory which is the glory we give to God which is to render to Him the praise and the worship that belongs to Him alone. And the more we understand of His intrinsic glory, the more we will ascribe to Him glory. And so, a low view of God leads to low worship. And a high view of God leads to high worship and high and holy living. So what we see here are people who have no knowledge of God, or who have so little of God they don't know enough to get out of…I mean, that was like a bad fraternity party, it's hard to even know how to respond to that. They don't even know what the word "glory" means, they have no concept, they have no truth regarding the glory of God. Yeah, and that first guy, I mean, he does have a strange spirit, a different spirit about him, small "s".

TODD: Gentlemen, if I could without being annoying, which maybe we've already crossed that line, but I want to bring this way, way down for a moment, okay? Because I think most of us see things like that and we just, because of theological training, we just look and go…"Well, that's just dopey, that's just dumb." But when you engage in a conversation with somebody who is in to that movement, I need more than "Well that's…" and it is, and that's how I want to respond. Equip me to in a pithy way respond to that to help them understand why it's dumb.

STEVE: Well certainly if they're in that, we may need to be sharing, probably need to share the gospel with them and bring them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. I don't see how a born-again, converted, regenerated person would stay in that environment for two seconds, especially given the anointing that we just talked about. I'd be scared to even be in the building with that going on. That somehow I'm going to end up being trafficking in some kind of dark, devilish spirits.

TODD: Tell me why…so I'm in this, I'm in this, I like jumping around, I don't…why? Why is this bad, David danced before the Lord, why is this bad?

STEVE: It's mindless, it's a-theological. There is no Christ. I mean, John this morning just spoke of that first principle from 1 John 4:2 and 3, it's a magnification of the true Christ. I mean, that's just responding to crowd control, as John said, mind-numbing music. You're just whipping yourselves up. I think you have to be a little emotionally unstable to even want to be in that and to be pulled along into the vacuum of that.

JOHN: You know, the thing with David…David in response to the truth about God expressed himself physically, that's all that's saying. It's simply that with every faculty, every part of his body, every means he had humanly, he expressed his joy and his gratitude to God. That's very different than that.

And this speaks to an issue, Todd, that I think Steve nailed. This is why I believe that we are not dividing the body of Christ in this conference. We are trying to identify the body of Christ and show that these people aren't part of it. (Applause) I think the big issue here, you know, people have been hitting the twitter thing all day and it was kind of interesting, they told me today that it was the number one hash-tag twitter thing in the world, Strange Fire conference. So that's pretty interesting. In fact, I was told that we were several points ahead of Kim Kardasian. (Laughter)

TODD: Now we're relevant. Sweet.

JOHN: But one of the criticisms coming is, "This is divisive, these are our brothers, these are our sisters in Christ, they're not. Should we be happy about that? No, we ought to be heart-broken about that. If we want to talk about fire, then we need to be talk about snatching brans from the burning. These people need to be rescued, and one of the reasons we did this…there's two things in my mind that's driven toward this conference. One was the terrible dishonor of the Holy Spirit so that the reproaches that fall on Him are falling on me. Zeal for Your house has eaten me up, is what Jesus said when He cleansed the Temple.

And secondly, the reality that these people are lost in this system and throwing the word "Jesus" all over the place. They don't know the gospel. They don't understand the gospel. So, you know, I got to thinking about that today and I decided that on Sunday morning here, I'm going to give a message

on the true gospel and who's really saved, because at the end of the day this becomes the issue. And I will tell you this, that people can't be saved out of that movement until they hear the gospel. They can't call on the one they don't know. (Applause) They can't know Him unless they hear.

TODD: Because this is such an important issue, I am certain with the people sitting here, they might say, "Dr. MacArthur, I know some people, and yeah, it's whacking, it's goofy. But I think they love the Lord and they're so nice and they would tell you that they're actually a Christian."

JUSTIN: I want to take just a minute to tag along with what John was just saying. Is it…this is very, very serious and the people who are in this movement, the vast majority of them are not saved. And one of the things that so confuses and so blurs the line is that they use some of the same terminology but the definitions behind that terminology are very, very different. It's not enough just to use the same lingo, how you teach it, how you flesh that out. And one of the things that honestly, and I'm going to…I'm out to blackball myself here. One of the things that makes…that makes it so hard to warn people about false teachers is when the good guys start associating with the bad guys. (Applause) And they give these people…now what we've seen in these clips is extreme, to be sure, but the same movement, this word of faith, Charismatic Movement, certainly the more as you drift toward the word of faith, one of the things that so confuses people, I cannot tell you how many times I've heard from people and they ask me, "Well what about So-and-So, I saw him with Paul Crouch, I saw him with Marcus Lamb, you know, on Daystar and on TBN, it makes it very hard for us to warn people about the wolves when the leaders of the sheep are associating with the wolves. And they give them…let me…Paul Crouch loves to have the good guys on his set, loves it because the good guys give him a level of credibility that he does not have on his own. And Paul Crouch, TBN, Daystar, Marcus Lamb, these guys are the tips of the spears that are exporting this theological poison to the rest of the world. And that is an offense to the gospel. And these guys should know better. It is a shame that prominent people, some of the supposed good guys are breaking metaphorical bread with the bad guys. It's hard enough (Applause)

TODD: If I could for a moment, because I have the gift of encouragement, Justin. Don't worry, you've been blackballed for years, bro. Nothing's changed. The fourth word…okay…

JUSTIN: Yeah, I suppose I have…

TODD: The fourth word that I'd like to discuss is the word "dominion," and this is going to get a little bit theological because it's also eschatological, it also has ends times implications. In brief, they believe that there are seven mountains in culture…politics, society, family, the arts…and if the new…from the new apostolic Reformation, what do they call the kids? The new…the new warriors of Joel's army, the Latter Day...Yeah, they raise up these kids in the new apostolic reformation to conquer each one of the mountains of the seven mountains, and then as soon as we conquer the seven mountains, Jesus is going to come back. It's a dominionist's theology, this is from one of the few books that actually is critical of anything in the New Apostolic Reformation from Latter Reign theology which is also could be underneath the new Apostolic Reformation. If you don't know, there's basically three rivers. One is from Toronto where the Toronto blessing happened, in Kansas it's IHOP, not the pancake story, International House of Prayer, and then the third river which flows together into an ocean of sewage is out of Bethel, the Bethel Church in Redding California with Bill Johnson. Those are the three streams that form the New Apostolic Reformation. Gentlemen, the church must be restored and equipped to rule. It must come to perfection. Out of the purified church will come a spiritual elite core, a corporate Christ who possesses the Spirit without measure. They

will purge the earth of all wickedness and rebellion. They will judge the apostate church. They will redeem all creation.

First of all, very attractive to young people who want something to do. You can comment on that, if you'd like, but I would like you to focus on "dominion." How do we biblically take dominion? What are the eschatological implications of this? And where are they going wrong?

STEVE: That's post-millennialism that we're going to usher in the Kingdom by making the world a better place and once we have restored the earth under the dominion of the gospel, then Christ will return at the end. And that is certainly contrary to what we read in the Word of God. We see that it will be desperate times at that period before Christ returns. Not better and better…

JOHN: Worse and worse.

STEVE: It will be worse and worse. And so they really have it totally backwards. We cannot usher in the Kingdom until the King comes back, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. And if you read the New Testament and try to see that we are to restore dominion and arts and media and all of that, I mean, that was laughable in the first century, like okay, they're going to restore these different hills in the Roman Empire. I mean, they're just trying to survive for their life and escape being martyred to death. It's just a false eschatology.

JOHN: I don't think it starts with a false eschatology, I think it starts with a madness, an egotistical madness that you actually think you have the kind of power that could pull that off. And if you tell yourself that long enough, and you get enough people to buy into it, it gets a life of its own. And I think it is just a way to dupe people.

We all know how young people are interested in social justice, and how Christianity…even evangelical Christianity non-Charismatic has turned away from the gospel. Why has it turned away from the gospel? If you go to a place that's been through a difficult time, you go to New Orleans after a hurricane, or whatever, and you start reaching out to people, if you go and sit them down and say, "Let me tell you why you need to come to Jesus Christ because you're a sinner," and you go through the gospel. What kind of reception are you going to get? You'll probably going to run out of the house, it's going to be very difficult, people aren't going to buy in. But show up with food, show up with clothes, they will love you. They will embrace you and say you're doing this in the name of Jesus.

That kind of stuff is easy. What's hard is the gospel presentation. Well I think they've captured some of this desire to change the world which is always appealing to young people and that's who you see in these things, young people. And with a kind of crazy megalomania and kind of a vast overestimation of the power that they have, they…they define their eschatology. I don't think it comes from studying the Bible and coming up with a post-millennial view. I think it comes from egotism gone mad and it may be aided and abetted by Satan himself. If you read about the NAR, you know, they have…when Rick Perry was running for President and he ended up at a bunch of NAR New Apostolic Reformation…and by the way, it is basically built on the fact that there are Apostles today. Peter Wagner's the leading Apostle. And you can be an Apostle, I think it was for 600 bucks you can be an Apostle. And you send your money to Peter and he sent you a certificate saying you were an Apostle. So they had divided the state of Texas, if you remember, into…they've taken every county

in Texas and they had started to take dominion over every county in Texas. And the big prayer meeting that Rick Perry attended was a prayer meeting of all these dominionists trying to take over Texas. And they came up with crazy things like little demons and all kinds of stuff. There's a sense in which this is just egotism gone mad and there's also a sense in which…it may be literally that the kingdom of darkness behind it all. But Steve is exactly right in saying what the Bible says as the world gets worse, and worse, and worse, and worse, and worse and Jesus comes and judges the entire world in a judgment that parallels the Flood in Genesis only it's by fire and not by water.

TOM: You know, the passage that immediately jumped in my mind while you were saying that is out of Daniel. We hear about the kingdoms that are going to exist and they're going to be all human kingdoms. They're described later in Daniel, of course, of these vicious animals. That's what the world is going to be. And then one approaches the Ancient of Days, the Son of Man and to Him is given dominion.

JOHN: Is given the Kingdom. Yeah.

TODD: I think that you've answered this most certainly in part, and perhaps in whole. But why else do you suppose so many young people are drawn to that, to being a forerunner generation.

JOHN: I don't think it has anything to do with what they're saying for most of them. It's the music. It's all the stuff. They're liberated. It's like getting drunk. It's like going out and just getting bombed so you don't have to think about the issues of life. Shut down the music, totally shut down the music. Turn on all the lights and they all need to be white lights just like normal light bulbs, just turn on the lights, shut down all the music and have some guy get up there and try to sell that. Yeah, it's not going to work. You've got to have some way to manipulate their minds and turn them into zombies.

JUSTIN: And that's the very reason all of the healing crusades that I've ever been to, and I've been to more than I can count, almost, but they've always got the music going, it's this extended, repetitive music that lulls people in to what's essentially like the first stage of hypnosis. You've altered…you've disengaged your mind, you've disengaged rational thought, and this emotionally driven music in people become more susceptible and there are a lot of psychosomatic healings. That happens all the time at Benny Hinn crusades. But what you don't see are organic healings that people are actually bonafide, medically documented healed. That does not happen. The people are very susceptible to this emotionally driven music and it goes on and on, like you said, for 17 minutes goes on and on.

JOHN: Can I add a note to that. You're not going to find that kind of music in a Reformed church. You won't find it. Why? Because that's not who they are. They're going back to the Puritans. They're going back through Martyn Lloyd-Jones, they're going back through Spurgeon, they're going back to Calvin and Luther, and Athanasius and Augustine and the Apostles and they're…they're…they're world is sound theology, Bible exposition, serious worship, love of God, obedience, discipline, order…that's their world. This is a completely different stream. This is the world invading the so-called church and carrying it away with things that have nothing to do with the Kingdom of God, and nothing to do with the history of the church and nothing to do with sound doctrine.

JUSTIN: You know, you look at the New Testament and you see two groups of people, you know, those who are in Christ and those who aren't. And always what you find is that those who aren't in Christ are driven by their feelings, their emotions, they're driven by their body's appetites. And those

in Christ are driven by their minds, by their understanding of the truth. Over and over again you hear, “This you know,” or “You need to know this.” It’s the mind for us in Christ and there’s nothing…there’s nothing about the mind.

JOHN: But the attraction is the same thing in a bar. It’s the same kind of thing. It’s sensual, sensual experience that disconnects you from the realities of life.

TODD: If I could, and Dr. MacArthur, I’m going to let you determine when this is going to stop cause I realize this is going to be very painful but I’ve chose, if you would be so kind in the booth, to prepare clip number 19…clip number 19, this is Jesus Culture…Jesus Culture is the worship band out of Bethel Church in Redding, California. They do concerts all over the world. They sell up sixteen thousand seaters like that, most likely kids in your church have Jesus Culture music on their iPads…almost certain that they’re listening to it in their ear buds.

Now I brought three minutes, three minutes of a fifteen-minute song and let’s endure this for as long as we can because it’s one thing to say it’s hypnotic and repetitious, I think it’s another thing to see it. So we will watch this until either we all pass out, or Dr. MacArthur says, “Enough, I can’t take it anymore.” All right? This is clip number 19, Jesus Culture asking to be filled up with something, clip number 19.

JESUS CULTURE: (Music) Singing: “Fill me up, God, fill me up, fill me up, God, fill me up, God, fill me up, God, fill me up, fill me up, God, fill me up, God, fill me up, God, fill me up, fill me up, God, fill me up, God,fill me up, God,fill me up, to overflowing, God.

TODD: Dr. MacArthur… (yelling) Dr. MacArthur…

JESUS CULTURE: Fill me up, fill me up…

TODD: Okay, alright, that’s enough. Okay, I couldn’t take it. That was about a minute and that was 12 fill me ups. This is wildly popular. Now this is the tricky part. Some of the Jesus Culture music is passable. I’m a parent, my child loves it. Am I concerned?

JOHN: Absolutely you’re concerned. I mean, it’s obviously, you know, it’s the old clock that doesn’t run is right twice a day. If they don’t ever do anything that is acceptable, then you’re not going to buy in to what isn’t. I mean, it’s just the greased slide.

That has nothing to do with Christianity, nothing to do with God. In fact, I’d be afraid to put my mind in neutral and start yelling out loud with that kind of sensual music, “Fill me up, fill me up, fill me up,” among a group of non-believers who would go from being kind of normal non-believers living in the kingdom of darkness, to be demon possessed. I think you’re inviting a spirit for sure, but it isn’t the Spirit of God. And it has nothing to do with Christianity. Again this is paganism. This is the Kundalini Cult. You can look on the You Tube and see that kind of stuff. This is paganism. This is what Hindus do, the mindlessness of this. And I think if you accept any of it, if you say, “Well, there’s some good in it,” you literally have left your young people open to demon powers. I would run from this so fast.

TODD: This maybe sound silly to you but I see this stuff and I experience this stuff. They’ve got a few songs, they maybe have 50 songs and there’s a couple of them, there’s nothing bad in them, and

people will just say, “Well that one’s okay, it doesn’t hurt anything.” Does it hurt anything to bring their music in any way, shape, or form into my church, into my home, into my kid’s ear buds?”

JUSTIN: The music is just an avenue to get them into their teaching. The music is popular and what they’re wanting to do is they’re wanting to draw people in, “Oh, we’ve got good music. Jesus Culture, Hillsong, we’ve got good music,” they use that as an avenue to get people into their teaching. The Mormons do the same thing. Mormonism…Mormons don’t approach you with a full-bore list of all their heresies that they believe. They look very normal. They look Christian. They look very nice and they suck people in. It’s the same thing with this, it’s to draw people in to their belief system. And it’s sad that today theology and doctrine have almost become bad words. What we just saw there, that is a mark supposedly of spirituality. You know, it’s a high mark, you’re spiritual if you can…but it’s totally opposite.

JOHN: I would go so far as to say evangelical, non-Charismatic churches are using music that is unacceptable to draw people in. (Applause)

JUSTIN: Right, absolutely.

JOHN: They’re using the music of the world to suck people in as if somehow people would get saved because the music of the world is attracting them. It’s a big jump from being attracted by the music of the world and being regenerated by the Holy Spirit. And the two have no connection. So I think this is so close to what’s in a normal evangelical environment, this is so close to what people see in non-Charismatic quote/unquote evangelical churches that it’s a very small step to getting sucked in because the style is the same. But the theology inherent in it, as Justin says, is unbiblical.

TODD: Alright, I want to…

STEVE: You know, Todd, one other thing too, just the theology of that little chorus is wrong. We’re not filled up with the Holy Spirit as though we get more of the Holy Spirit. The whole issue is the Holy Spirit gets more of us. And so it’s totally reversed.

In Ephesians 5:18 we are to be filled by the Holy Spirit, not filled up with more of the Holy Spirit. And it is a total wrong, you know, pneumatology of understanding of how the Holy Spirit works in sanctification. And as if that is what you need to do in order to be filled by the Spirit, is just keep repeating that over and over. No, in reality you need to die to self, you need to resist temptation, you need to mortify the flesh, you need to have the Word of Christ richly dwell within you…those type of things, buffet your body and make it your slave. Those type of things really are the precursors to being filled by the…confessing sin, repenting, turning away from the world, loving Christ, those are the things that accompany being filled by the Spirit.

TODD: That’s a great point, that’s excellent. Yeah. (Applause)

TODD: Let me take you to Bethel Church in Redding, California, this is clip 22 for the booth, clip 22. We’re going to return to the word “fire,” but this is Bethel, and I want this to lead us into more conversations about the kids who are typically attracted to this. This is a fire tunnel at Bethel Church where you are, I think you are getting the fire anointing, feeling the glory, all of it kind of coming together in a fire tunnel. This is clip 22 at Bethel Church.

Clip #22: (Lot of noise and cackling)

TODD: Okay, I want to explore more of that but in general. We've got pastors sitting on the stage, pastorally how grievous is this?

TOM: It's shocking is what it is. I mean, you look at that and you think, how we live for the glory of God. We live to teach the Word of God and to see Him denigrated in such a way, to act like that is inappropriate, my mind goes immediately to the first two commandments. The first being you're not to have any God but the one and only true God. But secondly, the second Commandment isn't primarily about having idols as opposed to the true God, it's about having a wrong kind of worship, a human-created worship of the true and living God. That's what the second Commandment is about. Ultimately out of that came the regulative principle and the idea that we don't get to decide how we think God ought to be worshiped. We don't get to create that. We are shaped by what the Scriptures themselves teach. You come to the New Testament, why do we do what we do in corporate worship? I remind my congregation this often.

When we come to worship God, we don't come to decide, "Okay, we're going to do this because we like it, or we think it's…it's popular, it's going on in other churches." We do these things because they're prescribed by the New Testament for corporate worship. You don't find that prescribed for corporate worship in the New Testament. Everything is Word driven. We sing the Word, we pray the Word, we…we read the Word, we preach the Word. Everything is ultimately Word focused and there's nothing that's Word-focused there. It's idolatrous in the sense of the second Commandment. It is probably also a violation of the first commandment, but surely a violation of the second, even if they perceive the true God as is required.

TODD: Closely related to the regulative principle, or the normative principle, how we go about worship. Here is one of the most often repeated responses to what you're saying. "Nowhere in the Bible does it say that the Holy Spirit cannot do that. I know you may be find it to be strange, but the Bible does not say that the Holy Spirit cannot knock people over, cause them to be drunk, cause them to bark like dogs, or run around on fire. Therefore, who are you to put the Holy Spirit in a box?"

TOM: My response is, God put the worship of Himself in a box in the second Commandment. And we have to respect that box. You don't get to…you don't get to live outside that box because you want to, He set the standard, He set the fences.

JOHN: There's just two ways. You either have a direct mandate as to how to worship in the Bible, or you have a model for it. I mean, there can be elements of worship that are commanded. Paul says to Timothy, "Read the Scripture till I come, read the Scripture." Okay, that's part of what it means to worship. You also have examples of what went on in worship. They're regulated. They're regulated in 1 Corinthians, right? You're doing this, you're doing this, stop doing this, stop doing this, do this. So you have illustrations of teaching the Word of God. And this is one of my favorite exemplary principles, "Teach the Word of God till people are so tired they fall out of the window and die, raise them from the dead and bring them back and keep teaching."

So, you either have prescription for how to worship, or you have examples of how to worship. You can't find in the Bible people barking, falling over, or flopping. The only people who were ever slain

were unbelievers who were knocked over by the power of God. There's no illustration of any believer ever being knocked down, ever barking like a dog. So the burden of proof isn't on that. I mean, that's the cheesiest argument there ever is. Since the Bible doesn't forbid that, you know, why can't we allow the Holy Spirit to do it?

But, it is consistent with their entire view of Revelation because they will not prescribe themselves to the fact that the end of the New Testament was the end of divine revelation. So if God is still speaking and still talking, and most amazingly talking to me and giving me impressions, and revelations, then, of course, who's to say we can't bark and we can't squirrel around and wiggle and dive and jump and…yeah, you know, revelation is still going on and it's now coming through me. So there's no restrain on anything.

TODD: All right, cheesy as it is, that is one of the battle cries. "Well, Dr. MacArthur, the Bible nowhere says that there should be an organ in the church and you should sing hymns with four-part harmony."

JOHN: Well, I think the Bible does tell us explicitly in the Old Testament that we are to use instruments in worship. And that, in fact, just the panoply of instruments is throughout the Psalms. And I don't think the New Testament cancels that out at all. And I think you can even show that from the words in Ephesians as well. But we do have that. An organ is just another instrument. It's a wind instrument, if you will. If you want to go back before there were electronic organs, it was a wind instrument. Other wind instruments were used in the Bible. Pipes and horns were wind instruments. This was a mechanical way to push wind through horns. That's what an organ was. And I think the reason that historically the church found its way to organs and instruments was because they were following a biblical pattern and that biblical pattern was as you see it in Psalm 150, to take every possible means there was. And everything that has breath should be used to praise the Lord. So, whatever it is.

And I even think guitars can be used to praise the Lord. I'm not against that. Modern electronic instruments, but I think they are only accompaniment. How can I say that? I think the primary praise that God wants in His ears is not instrumental praise. Instrumental praise aids the people of God in their praise. And I think when you go to many churches, you sit in the dark and this massive electronic explosion of sound overwhelms you. But people in those churches don't know what congregational singing is. They can't hear themselves, let alone the people around them.

TODD: This is the other stream that I talked about. And I'm going to show two clips pretty closely here. This is clip number 8, and then clip number 6. Clip number 8 and then 6. This is the International House of Prayer, this is again Mike Bickle up in Kansas. And I want you to see a young lady who visited their ministry for training, for equipping, we'll then try to figure out what's going on here and what's happening to this young lady. This is clip number 8 from IHOP.

GIRL: "Oh, oh the Lord is so good, when the waking broke out we were made to come here." (Druggy)

MIKE: You were made to come here.

GIRL: (Acting as though drunk) Well, not on a Wednesday, we all came because it was our Sabbath,

and we were all excited, so we came to see what was going on. And I've never seen anything like this before, or even heard about it and I didn't know that the Lord could work like this.

MIKE: So you never did this kind of thing before?

GIRL: No.

MIKE: Have you ever seen it before?

GIRL: (Druggy) Nooo.

MIKE: Never seen this kind of manifestation of the Holy Spirit you're now experiencing?

LADY: Yeah… No.

MIKE: No, you never had.

GIRL: No. (Giggling) Oh yeah.

MIKE: Because you haven't stopped shaking since you've been on the platform.

Another Lady: Before the platform, she was sitting over there shaking for the last two hours.

GIRL: Yeah.

MIKE: So this is all like the last two months, this is brand new to you what the Lord is doing.

GIRL: Yeah, I grew up in a Methodist church, and…

MIKE: So did I, by the way, I grew up in a Methodist church.

Another Lady: So did I.

TODD: By the way, at the International House of Prayer there's a room where they are perpetually praying 24 hours a day, again eschatology involved now. You've been mentioning, Dr. MacArthur, the Kundalini part of Hinduism, Andrew Strom happens to be a Charismatic and he put together a very concerned expose on what's going on. This is clip number 6 about Kundalini.

STROM: Now this all began with Rodney Howard Brown imparting a new anointing into a bunch of leaders and they spread it around the world. In fact, it spread like wildfire. How do we know that Rodney Howard Brown had a pure anointing? How do we know it wasn't a Kundalini spirit from the beginning, because it seems absolutely identical to it? Now one of the very clearest signs of a Kundalini awakening has always been these kriyas. You see this woman involved in the New Age Movement—she's walking along exhibiting these kriyas happening, involuntary jerking motions, and the staggering thing about it is that we are seeing again and again and again these exact same type

of kriyas right through the Toronto Movement. This has always been one of the clearest signs of Kundalini that we know of.

JOHN: And then he shows the Kundalini cult in India doing the exact same thing. There's a whole range of those experiences. Now my heart goes out to that young girl, because if Satan would want to cloak himself in a most convincing way, he'd put himself in a pretty young lady like that, that first girl, at IHOP. By the way, their history isn't admirable, as you know, and we write about that in the book. Bob Jones, primary guy there. Paul Cain who is associated with them, but that's the way Satan would want to dress himself in another young woman walking down a road.

You know, it's my sense that if Jesus were around, He would do with those two women what He did in the synagogue with a demon-possessed person. And He would cry out to that demon and call that demon out. I mean, I don't know that, but that would be my suspicion, that somebody who says this has never happened to me before hasn't learned how to do that, like people kind of learn how to speak in tongues. That's a very frightening thing. You know, it's so sad to think of a place that says it represents Jesus Christ literally inducing people into the kingdom of darkness in these kinds of experiences.

Now I want to say one other thing. I don't believe that can happen to believers. I don't think that can happen to a Christian. So what we're talking about again is backing up to this reality that this thing is full of people who throw the name of Jesus around and have jumped into the experience because they have spiritual needs and anxieties and they want to belong and they want to be a part and it's a powerfully overwhelming experience, like they've never had in their lives, which exposes them to Satan. But to do it in the name of Christ, on the one hand it's tragic, on the other hand it's not surprising because Satan is disguised as an angel of light.

I remember up in the other building when I first came to Grace Community Church, talking to a woman and demon started talking in different voices to me as I was talking with her. And this one demon, I didn't know what I was doing, I was just a kid. I was only here for maybe a year. And this demon kept…I said, "Who are you?" And he said, "Jesus…Jesus…Jesus." Kept repeating that.

This particular girl flipped a desk, that's how much strength she had. I knew I wasn't talking to Jesus, I knew that. So if Satan can make people think that this is Jesus, that's the ultimate deception.

TODD: As we close, if I might, I think what we've seen, and we need to understand this is not a fringe activity.

JOHN: No. No.

TODD: This is millions of people in the U.S. of A. millions more around the globe and while I believe this is correct, these teachers and these leaders, these false teachers and wolves are to be rebuked and they are to be called out. The people that are following predominantly are simply slaves to sin, they're slaves to Satan and they are lost just like we were. And as we see this, we are grieved by it and that I think as we focus tomorrow on trying to figure out how to respond to this, might I suggest it begins to making sure that we're evangelizing as many people as we can with the gospel of Jesus Christ because these people are just lost. (Applause) So with that thought in mind that these are just, they're slaves to sin, they're slaves to the devil. Dr. Lawson will you pray for us, please.

STEVE: Yeah.

Father, it's hard to know how to even respond to what we have just seen, other than, Lord, we are so grateful that You have made Yourself known to us through Your written Word by Your Spirit, and You have caused us to be regenerated by Your Spirit. And we praise You and give You thanks that You have rescued us out of the kingdom of darkness and have transferred us into the Kingdom of Light, and that You by Your divine initiative have made Yourself known to us and the truth has set us free.

Father, I pray that You will use us to rescue people that have been made in Your image, who have been marred and corrupted by sin, who have become slaves of Satan, bound in chains of darkness. Lord, I pray that You would use us and would use others in the preaching of the gospel which is Your power unto salvation, that You would sovereignly overcome their resistance and that You would bring them to a saving knowledge of Christ. Lord, I pray that You would give much wisdom to pastors, to elders, to spiritual leaders to know how to give counsel to people in their flocks, to know how in the preaching of the Word of God to even make right and proper, to show implications from the text of how to unmask all of these deceptions and these lies and these forgeries. Lord, again, it just seems that You're giving us over as in Romans 1 and gone beyond even giving us over to homosexuality but now giving us over to a reprobate mind whereby we cannot even reason and think our way back to You. What we see here is just insanity. It is lunacy. It is irrational. It is illogical. It is mind-numbing. And so, God, we pray that You would have mercy upon so many people like this. We pray that the preaching of the Word of God would go forth with renewed power. We pray that Your people would be yet further armed with the full armor of God and advance into this world and to be able to be used by You to reach people for Christ. Lord, give us discernment. Give us penetrating insight. Let us not be caught up in really the emotional pull and the crowd appeal and pull. Give us eyes to see. Give us ears to hear. And, Lord, I pray that again You would help us to identify the church, help us to identify true believers and may we be fortified in the truth and then be able to reach those who are in dire and desperate need for the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Lord, we do take great comfort that greater is He who is in You than he who is in the world, we do take great comfort that the darkness will not extinguish the light, but that the light will extinguish the darkness. So I pray that we would be armed and gird our loins with truth and that we would shine forth the light. We would not be a lamp hidden under a bushel, but that we would shine forth the light into the darkness of this world and that it would please You, God, to move in a saving redemptive way in the lives of so many that are caught up in this false movement.

So, God, we plead with You that You would do this, that Your name might go forth, that Your glory might be properly and rightly put on display. Father we pray this in the name of the head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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