

To Wit: Special Edition

II Corinthians 5:19

To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself,
Not imputing their trespasses unto them;
and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

The Newsletter of The Living Epistles Society • Special Edition

May 2004 • www.livingepistlesociety.org

ACTUAL ERRORS IN POWER FOR ABUNDANT LIVING

AND OTHER WRITTEN WORKS OF

VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE

Edited by Rafael A. Olmeda

Background: This list began as an attempt to refute the contention that the written works of Victor Paul Wierwille, founder of The Way International, are the “God-breathed” equivalent of Holy Scripture. In compiling this list, it was not my intention (or anyone else’s) to demean Wierwille, judge him, or even question his motives. The only goal was to show that, by its own standards, PFAL disqualifies itself as the “God-breathed Word.”

It is necessary, first, to summarize how Wierwille defined “God-breathed.” The term is taken from II Timothy 3:16, which states that “All scripture is *given by inspiration of God...*” Those last five words are one word in the Greek, and can be literally translated “God-breathed.” It was Wierwille’s contention that if the Word of God is “God-breathed,” then it will have *no errors* and *no contradictions* in it. To underscore this point, Wierwille went so far as to say that if a different preposition were used for the word “with” in John 1:1, the whole Bible would “fall to pieces.”

We feel this sets a remarkably low threshold of proof to establish something as an “actual error,” disqualifying PFAL and the remainder of Wierwille’s books according to their very own definition of “God-breathed.” *Any one* of the errors we submit should be enough to disprove the claim that PFAL is God-breathed, according to the book’s very own standard.

It is our belief that Wierwille himself never considered his own works to be “God-breathed,” and this list is not meant to refute him. However, there does exist a group of Wierwille followers, however small, who consider PFAL and Wierwille’s other books to be divinely authored.

Finally, we distinguish between “actual errors” and “errors of interpretation.” An actual error is indisputable. There is simply no room for disagreement. If Wierwille wrote that “two plus two equals five,” or that “c-a-t spells dog,” those would be actual errors. We have no interest in debating the Trinity, dispensationalism, the state of the dead or the timing of the rapture. Wierwille may or may not have been mistaken on one or all of those issues. But those are theological arguments too grand for the scope of this work. Actual errors are easier than that.

We acknowledge that some people may challenge the status of some of these “actual errors,” and will refer to them under “discussion.” Updates will be added pending further input from readers, and errors may be removed (with explanation) if we feel the challenge effectively refutes the alleged error. To respond to this list or challenge the errors, please write to me at Rafael@livingepistlesociety.org.

The Errors

Error 1

In PFAL, Wierwille writes that David is called “a man after God’s own heart” AFTER the events in II Samuel related to Bathsheba and Uriah. “Then it says in the Word of God...” he writes.

In truth, David is called “a man after God’s own heart” indirectly, in I Samuel, long before he is king, long before he met Bathsheba. He is called this again in Acts 13:22, which is clearly speaking of a time before the incident with Bathsheba and Uriah, her husband. While speaking of a time after this incident, the Bible never refers to David as “a man after God’s own heart.” It says he sinned. It says he repented. It says he got right with God. But it never says in the Word of God that David was a man after God’s own heart.

Error 2

In PFAL, Wierwille writes that there is no word “lama” in the Aramaic.

In truth, there IS such a word in Palestinian Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke. It means “why?”

Error 3

In PFAL, Wierwille writes that the word “lama” should probably be replaced with “Imna,” “for this purpose,” which is “always a cry of victory, a declaration of ‘for this purpose.’”

In truth, “Imna” can also be used in a question, in which case it will not be “for this purpose,” but, identically to “lama,” it would be translated “why?” This is something Wierwille acknowledged near the end of his life, and which is acknowledged in TWI’s very own Aramaic Interlinear.

Error 4

In PFAL, Wierwille notes the distinction between “thoroughly” and “throughly.”

In truth, the latter is an archaic form of the former. They mean precisely the same thing (Wierwille failed to follow his own principle of interpreting words according to their Biblical usage).

Discussion: We understand and acknowledge that Wierwille was trying to teach the principle of *reading*

that which is written. That principle is valid, and this is a good example of the need to read the Bible carefully. But Wierwille was in error when he explained the distinction between “thoroughly” and “throughly.” There is no distinction.

Error 5

In PFAL: Wierwille writes of the difference between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven.

In truth: The Bible uses these terms interchangeably. There is no difference whatsoever in their usage. While honest writers have sought to draw distinctions between them, the truth is that there are none. Only the Gospel of Matthew uses the term “Kingdom of Heaven,” and when other gospels offer parallel accounts of identical sayings of Jesus, the term used is “Kingdom of God.” This proves that the two are identical.

Error 6

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that *apistia* is the kind of unbelief held by people who don’t know enough to believe, while *apeitheia* is the kind of unbelief held by people who’ve heard enough, but don’t care.

In truth: the word “apistia” is used of the disciples after the resurrection (Mark 16:14) and of Israel (Romans 3: 1-3). Neither can be said to have not heard enough to believe.

Discussion: It’s interesting to note that newer Bible translations render *apeitheia* as “disobedience,” not merely “unbelief.”

Error 7

In PFAL: Wierwille defines “apostle” as one who brings new light to his generation. It may be old light, but it is new to the generation that hears it.

In truth: “apostle” means “sent one.” It simply does not carry the definition Wierwille applies to it.

Error 8

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that “all without distinction” means anyone within a specific category.

In truth: basic grammar should be enough to tell us that all in a certain category means “all WITH distinction,” the distinction being membership in that category. This error is so fundamentally blatant that Wierwille himself corrected it in *Jesus Christ is Not God* and at least one

other book. This actual error is, therefore, accompanied by an actual contradiction in Wierwille's writings (if we were to take Wierwille's writings as "God-breathed," we would be forced to conclude that "all without distinction" and "all with distinction" mean the same thing)!

Error 9

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that the gospels are *addressed to* a period before the day of Pentecost, to Israel and Gentiles but "never to the Church of God."

In truth: the gospels are all written after Pentecost and are all *addressed to* a period after Pentecost. They are written to practicing Christians as much as to Jews and Gentiles.

Discussion: The gospels were written for several reasons. As time passed after the events described therein, heresies arose as to the nature of Christ. It became necessary for followers of Christ to set a clear account of Christ's mission and doctrine so that believers would not be confused as to his identity. The opening of Luke makes it clear that the message is intended for practicing Christians. The conclusion of John makes it clear that the gospels are also written so that those who read them may become Christians.

Had Wierwille written that the gospels are *about* a period before Pentecost, he might be correct. One must accept a dispensational view of scripture to accept all that is implied in this premise. That argument is beyond the scope of this work.

Error 10

In PFAL: Wierwille states that in Luke 2, Jesus was taken to the Temple at age 12 instead of 13 because he was considered illegitimate, and illegitimate children were considered men a year earlier than other children. Wierwille makes specific mention of the bar-mitzvah ceremony that Jewish boys undergo at age 13, and cites an "old piece of literature," which he never identifies, as his only evidence that illegitimate children were treated differently for this purpose.

In truth: the passage in Luke 2 has nothing whatsoever to do with bar-mitzvah. The passage states rather clearly that they were celebrating Passover, not Jesus' bar-mitzvah. In addition, there is no such custom in Judaism (treating illegitimate children differently for the purpose of bar-mitzvah). Wierwille's failure to recall the "old

piece of literature" leaves us with no ability to verify its accuracy. At best, this claim is baseless speculation.

Discussion: This entry resulted in a lively debate that, in my opinion, only served to underscore the extent of the error while bringing another error to light. In the PFAL book, Wierwille never directly states that Jesus went to Jerusalem to undergo a bar-mitzvah ceremony. He only states that illegitimate children were considered men at the age of 12 instead of 13. The Bible does not teach that, nor can we find any other source which verifies it, old piece of literature or new. The bar-mitzvah ceremony originated in the Middle Ages, so could not have been carried out in Jesus' time. Nonetheless, it is possible and likely that there was some recognition of a "coming of age" at age 12 or 13.

In the home studies that accompanied the Power for Abundant Living class, students were asked to read this section of the PFAL book and then answer a question specifically asking why Jesus went to the Temple to undergo bar-mitzvah at the age of 12 instead of 13. The question itself is riddled with error. Jesus did not go to the Temple for bar-mitzvah. He went for Passover with his family. The rest of the error has already been discussed above. We also note that Wierwille required students to complete the Home Studies questions in order to be allowed into the Advanced Class on Power For Abundant Living. That requirement indicates that he accepted the premise of the Home Studies question, which was clearly in error.

The discussion became even more fascinating as it led into the next entry.

Error 11

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that the people in Jesus' hometown did not believe in him because they considered him illegitimate.

In truth: The Bible very clearly states, on several occasions, that Jesus was considered to be the son of Joseph and Mary. It says it specifically about the people in Jesus' hometown. There is nothing at all in the Bible to suggest that anyone believed Jesus to be an illegitimate child.

Discussion: The Pharisees *may* have accused Jesus of being "born of fornication" in John 8, but a careful examination of that record reveals that they were more likely defending themselves against Jesus' charge that they are not Abraham's children (Jesus was speaking figuratively, which went over their heads). There is no

basis to suggest that they considered Jesus to be anything other than the son of Joseph.

Error 12

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that no one in Israel had the right to criticize King David for taking Bathsheba, the wife of another man, because David was king and “technically every woman in the kingdom belonged to the king.”

In truth: The word “technically” establishes this as an absolute error. “Technically” means that we should be able to find something in Jewish law or culture that allows for a king to simply seize another man’s wife because she belongs to the king. There is nothing in Jewish law or culture to suggest this. In fact, this very record disproves it. The claim fails on every level: legal, cultural, historical and Biblical.

Error 13

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that the “original” text has “God” as the first word of the Bible.

In truth: All available texts in the oldest known Biblical language, Hebrew, say *bereshith* (in the beginning) *barah* (created) *Elohim* (God) *ha-shamayim wa ha-erets* (the heavens and the earth).

Discussion: Even if one believes “Bereshith” was the original title of the book of Genesis, it still means the first word of the Bible is “*barah*,” not “*Elohim*.”

Error 14

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that Nathan was afraid to confront David during the Bathsheba episode. Specifically, he states that he was afraid of being beheaded. He further states that had Nathan gone to David with any other story other than the one he told, David would, in fact, have beheaded the prophet.

In truth: There is simply nothing in the Bible to substantiate any of this.

Discussion: The first part of what Wierwille writes can be written off as a didactic technique. Wierwille is telling a story and embellishing on the Biblical record, which is a legitimate teaching device. God did tell Nathan to confront David, and it might be fun to speculate about that conversation. One could just as easily speculate that Nathan was eager to confront David, but whether he was afraid or eager, we do not know, because the Bible simply does not say. To state

further that David *would have* chopped Nathan’s head off brings this story from speculation to actual error.

Error 15

In *Receiving the Holy Spirit Today*: Wierwille writes that Jesus was instructing the apostles concerning how to receive holy spirit in John 20:22, and that instead of “he breathed on them,” the verse should read, “he breathed in.”

In truth: The following is quoted from an article by Douglas Morton. I’ve checked some of the references, enough to convince me that he is correct.

“Can the word *enephusasen* be translated as ‘to breathe in’ or ‘inhale’? Wierwille would certainly have the reader believe so. However, the evidence does not support this translation. The New Testament can offer no help because it is found only in John 20:22. The verb used in this text is an aorist, active, indicative, third-person, singular form of the Greek word *emphusao*. While it is not used in any other place in the New Testament, it is used 11 times in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament.

“In each case, the word carries with it the meaning of ‘to blow upon’ and not ‘to breathe in’ or ‘inhale.’ The classic example of the use of this word is recorded in Genesis 2:7 in the Septuagint. God formed man from the dust of the ground and ‘breathed upon (*enephusesen*) his face the breath of life.’

“A quick glance at various Greek lexicons also helps in understanding the meaning of this word. Liddell-Scott’s *A Greek-English Lexicon* gives the basic meaning of the word as ‘blow in.’ Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich and Danker’s *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* gives the meaning of the word as ‘breathe on.’ Thayer’s *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* gives the meaning as ‘to blow’ or ‘breathe on.’ Kittel’s *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* gives the meaning as ‘to breathe upon’ or ‘over.’ Even E.W. Bullinger’s *Lexicon*, which is used by The Way, gives the meaning of the word as ‘to breathe upon, blow upon.’

“The unanimous evidence, therefore, shows that the word means to ‘blow upon’ or ‘breathe upon.’ Jesus was not inhaling in John 20:22. He was not showing his disciples what they were to do on the day of Pentecost. He actually breathed upon them and said ‘receive the Holy Spirit.’”

Error 16

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that the Greek word for “rightly dividing” is *orthotomounta*.

In truth: The Greek word for “rightly dividing” is *orthotomeo*. The word *orthotomounta* does not appear in the New Testament.

Error 17

In PFAL: Wierwille writes, “The first word in II Timothy 2:15 is ‘study.’ The very first thing a person must do to rightly divide the Word is study. He is not told to study commentaries or secular writers; he must study The Word.”

In truth: The word “study” in II Timothy 2:15 would more accurately be translated “endeavor.” It does not mean “study” in the way Wierwille uses it. The NIV translates it “do your best.” So does the Contemporary English Version. The New Living Translation renders it “work hard.”

Discussion: Wierwille is deliberately using a mistranslated word to prove his point. The point itself is valid: studying God’s Word is a good thing. But that is not the point of that particular word. The strange thing is, Wierwille knows this. His chapter on “Study: Be Diligent” in *The Bible Tells Me So* makes that clear. So why allow the mistake to remain? If the accuracy of the Bible is such a big deal, why rely on an inaccurate translation to make your point?

Error 18

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that the word “replenish” in Genesis 1:28 implies that the earth was filled before that time, then wiped out, and that God was instructing Adam and Eve to fill it again.

In truth: Whether or not that is theologically true (and there are arguments on both sides), the word “replenish” does not prove that point. The key is understanding the original Hebrew word, not its flawed English translation. The Hebrew word merely means “fill.”

Error 19

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that the term “Christian” is a mockery of the expression “Christ in you.” Believers in the first century spoke frequently of having “Christ in” you that their critics came to call them “Christ in” and later Christian.

In truth: That might, maybe explain the origin of the term, if the first century believers spoke English. The believers in question spoke Greek.

Discussion: The word “Christian” is *Christianos*. It means follower of Christ. It does not mean “Christ in” any more than Italian means “Italy in,” or Berean means “Berea in.”

Error 20

In Christians Should Be Prosperous: Wierwille writes that throughout the Bible, material prosperity has always hinged on tithing.

In truth: The falsity of this statement is too simple for words. Abraham had material prosperity before he tithed. Jacob had material prosperity before he tithed. The Egyptians probably did not tithe, and had great wealth. There’s no reason to believe Job ever tithed at any time ever, yet he prospered greatly prior to his calamity, and he prospered greatly afterward. There are people who do not tithe, yet prosper. There are people who tithe, yet do not prosper. Tithing is clearly not the hinge for prosperity.

Error 21

In Jesus Christ Our Passover: Wierwille writes that modern Jews are the descendants of the Khazars.

In truth: Some modern Jews are the descendants of Khazars. Most are not.

Discussion: Wierwille misinterpreted parts of the book *The Thirteenth Tribe*, by Arthur Koestler. The main thesis of Koestler’s book has been pretty much debunked by science and history. Genetic studies conducted in the mid-1990s establish that European Jews share key genetic markers with the Sephardim, who are decidedly not the descendants of the Khazars. Information regarding that study is available upon request.

Error 22

In Jesus Christ Our Passover: Wierwille writes that Yiddish is the Khazar language written with Hebrew characters.

In truth: Yiddish is a dialect of German and has little to nothing to do with the Khazar language.

Error 23

In PFAL: Wierwille wrote that in the Old Testament, spirit was “upon” believers, but not “in” them, as with New Testament believers.

In truth: In Numbers 27:18, God Himself says the spirit is in Joshua. Also note Exodus 28:3; 31:3; 35:31; and Nehemiah 9:30.

Discussion: Joel 2:29 which is a prophecy referring to the future outpouring of spirit, uses the word “upon.” Ironic, since it’s the one time it should say “in” according to Wierwille’s statement.

Error 24

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that God can only speak to that which He is, namely, spirit.

In truth: Leaving aside the presumptive fact that God can speak to whomever He chooses, whenever He chooses, however He chooses, this statement fails purely on a mechanical basis. In order to communicate with people, God has to do one of two things. He must either come into concretion (ie, use a voice, a burning bush, whatever) or he must place His spirit on or in someone. The spirit then speaks to our minds... but how? If God, who is spirit, cannot speak to our minds, how can the spirit He places within us speak to our minds? And if the spirit within us CAN speak to our minds, why can’t God? And by the way, isn’t “coming into concretion” in and of itself a contradiction of the statement “God can only speak to that which He is?” The answer is, yes.

Further, Wierwille states that unless you have the spirit, God has to come into concretion to speak to you. There’s no Biblical evidence to support this. What of God communicating with un-anointed folks like King Abimelech (Gen 20:3) and Laban, Jacob’s crooked father-in-law (Gen 31:24) by dreams? Dreams are not in the five senses. Therefore, they are a direct communication from God to the recipient, through their minds, without the spirit.

Discussion: Wierwille’s thesis is meaningless. God Almighty can speak to anyone or anything. He may have different ways of communicating with different people, but He can speak to anyone.

Error 25

In Jesus Christ is Not God: Wierwille writes that God can only give that which He is, namely, spirit.

In truth: God is love. He can give love. God gave manna. God is not manna.

Discussion: This error, along with the one above it, is amusing as it comes from the same person who wrote a chapter called “Are You Limiting God?”

Error 26

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that God created man’s spirit, made man’s soul, and formed man’s body. He writes that these terms are used precisely.

In truth: The Bible does say God formed man’s body. It never says He made man’s soul. It says He created man in His image, but does not define “His image” as spirit. (Wierwille says God is spirit, therefore His image is spirit. That hardly proves his case, as the Bible also says God is love. Why not say His image is love?) In Genesis, God also says “Let us **make** man in our image, after our likeness.” So the words “make” and “create” are used to describe the same act. Therefore, despite his insistence that the words are not synonymous, they are clearly used synonymously in this highly relevant case. The only scripture that specifically states how God placed spirit **within** man is Zechariah 12:1. It does not use “created.” It does not use “made.” It uses... “formed!” Wierwille’s Bible just crumbled to pieces.

Discussion: Wierwille attempted to employ a logical framework that crumbled on close examination. It wasn’t enough to say God made us with bodies, souls and spirits?

Error 27

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that Jesus Christ came so that we could have a life that’s more than abundant.

In truth: Wierwille cautions against adding to the Word, subtracting from the Word, or changing the Word. Doing so leaves you with something that is not God’s Word, he warned. Yet in the opening pages of the PFAL book, Wierwille takes John 10:10 and violates the rules he would later establish. He changes “abundantly” to “abundant,” and he adds the word “than” so that instead of Jesus coming so that we could have “life...more abundantly,” he comes so that we could have a life that’s “more than abundant.” He added a word, changed a word, and changed the order of the words. Does this change the meaning of the verse? According to Wierwille, it must, for once you do those things, you no longer have God’s Word. Wierwille clearly used the term to speak of material prosperity, and

lamented that unbelievers manifest a “more abundant life” than believers do. But clearly, an “abundant life” by Wierwille’s definition was available before Christ came. So Christ must have been speaking of something other than the abundance of possessions that even many unbelievers manifest.

Error 28

In Receiving the Holy Spirit Today: Wierwille writes that the Greek word *laleo* means speaking without regard to the words being spoken.

In truth: That’s gibberish (pun intended). An examination of the verses in which this word is used proves conclusively that Wierwille’s definition makes no sense. Examples include Matthew 12:34; Matthew 12:46; Matthew 26:13

Discussion: Jerry Barrax writes: “The vast majority of the uses of this word are in the context of preaching or witnessing. It’s even used in a backward sense because when Jesus and the apostles were falsely accused of speaking blasphemies, *laleo* is the word used. So it may perhaps be most narrowly defined as to proclaim or speak boldly, as opposed to the word “say” or “said” which is usually translated from the word *lego*. *Lego*, which is used over 1,300 times, seems to have a more casual meaning than *laleo*. But the PFAL definition that implies inspired utterance and the bypassing of conscious thought is not derived from Biblical research.”

Error 29

In PFAL: Wierwille writes that the Greek word *heteros* means “another, when only two are involved,” while the Greek word *allos* means “another, when more than two may be involved.”

In truth: The words are synonymous and darn near interchangeable. If there are distinctions in their meaning, those distinctions are not the ones drawn by Wierwille. A blatant contradiction of Wierwille’s definitions can be found by comparing Matthew 5:39 (for *allos*) and Luke 4:43 (for *heteros*).

Discussion: Bullinger writes that *allos* means “another of the same kind,” whereas *heteros* means “another of a different kind.” I don’t know how consistent that distinction is either, but I do know there are strong examples to back it up.

Once again Jerry Barrax put it best. Citing Matthew 5:39 and Luke 4:43, he wrote:

“According to VP’s definitions, we would guess that the first ‘other’ is *heteros* because a man only has two cheeks and that the second is *allos* because there may have been more than two other cities involved. And we would be dead wrong.

“The verses are Matthew 5:39, in which *allos* is used of the other cheek, and Luke 4:43, in which *heteros* is used referring to ‘other cities.’ Of course there are verses in which these words are used according to VP’s definition, but the fact that they seem to be interchangeable in the whole of the New Testament defuses the claim that the ‘sharp accuracy’ of God’s Word demanded that *heteros* be used in Luke 23:32 and *allos* in John 19:32. [Jerry is referring to Wierwille’s analysis of the word “other” in his discussion of how many people were crucified with Christ]. Of the 94 uses of *heteros* in the NT, only about 20% of them fit Weirwille’s definition. That’s not very sharp accuracy.”

Error 30

In PFAL: Wierwille draws a distinction between “faith” and “believing.” He claims that Old Testament believers couldn’t have “faith” because faith only became available with the accomplished work of Jesus Christ. Old Testament believers could “believe,” he writes, but they could not “have faith.”

In truth: It would be tempting to say that “faith” and “believing” are Biblically synonymous, but the truth is even simpler than that: In Greek, as even Wierwille acknowledges, they are the exact same word, *pistis*. Hebrews 11 lists a whole slew of Old Testament believers, and explains to role of faith in their lives. Wierwille arbitrarily mandates that the word *pistis* should be translated “believing” in those verses, oblivious to the fact that changing the translation does not change the original Greek word.

Discussion: Wierwille’s explanation of the difference between “faith” (*pistis*) and “believing” (*pistis*) is based on a tortured interpretation of Galatians 3:23, which speaks of a time “before faith came.” According to Wierwille, there was a time when faith had not come. But that’s an ENGLISH explanation. The Bible was not written in English. The verse in question was written in Greek. If Wierwille were honest about this section, he would argue that there was a time before *pistis* had come. But that would be provably false, as noted by Hebrews 11. So Wierwille creates two translations of

pistis and separates them by time: namely, Pentecost. The problem is, he draws the distinction in English, but does not look for differences in Greek. Had he gone a step further, he would have seen that the Greek text of Galatians 3 contains the definite article, which is not clear in the English translation. The text actually reads “before THE faith came.” Throughout the passage, “THE Faith” is contrasted with “THE law.” What is “THE faith” throughout Galatians 3? It is clearly referring to that which Christ accomplished. And it makes sense that Old Testament believers could not have faith in all Christ accomplished, because Christ had yet to accomplish it. It would be like expecting us to express faith that Christ has returned. He hasn’t, so we can’t have faith in that.

Error 31

In Jesus Christ is Not God: Wierwille writes (after quoting John 1:18): “The next part of this verse reads ‘... the only begotten Son...’ The Greek words are *ho monogenes huios*. *Ho* is the article bringing a special emphasis to his being the only begotten Son. *Monogenes* is a combination of the word *monos* which means ‘only’ and *genos* which means ‘offspring,’ ‘nation,’ ‘race’ or ‘family.’ (English derives the word ‘gene’ directly from *genos*. Christ was genetically God’s only Son). Literally, this word means ‘only offspring’ or ‘only begotten.’ **The usage of this Greek word in the New Testament is always found in the context of one and only one offspring.**”

In truth: In Hebrews 11, Isaac is called Abraham’s *monogenes*, “only begotten son,” and we know for a fact that Abraham had more than one offspring.

Discussion: Wierwille’s definition of the word is correct, but he failed to note that the word *monogenes* can and is used in a figure of speech in Hebrews 11:17. That figurative usage is NOT in the sense of one and only one offspring. The usage in Hebrews 11:17 is one of uniqueness.

Could it be that *monos*, meaning one, and *genos*, meaning “kind” (a definition Wierwille peculiarly omitted), were combined to form not only the literal term “only begotten,” but also the figurative term “unique,” (ie, “one of a kind”)?

Error 32

In Jesus Christ is Not God: Wierwille writes: “There was no pronounceable name for the true God, in contrast to pagan gods who were always called by name.”

In truth: God’s name was both pronounceable and pronounced. Frequently. The name appears so many times in the Old Testament that your Young’s Concordance won’t quote each line: it merely lists all the verses for most of four columns. I mean, we are literally talking about, what, a couple of thousand usages in the Old Testament? Would you believe the answer is close to 7,000?

The Hebrews pronounced this name. They did so frequently. Most people don’t know that the term “thus saith the LORD” is not frequently found in the Bible. Nope. It’s the name, not the word “Lord,” which appears in those verses.

Yahweh is a proper name. It was pronounceable and pronounced, many times. The original pronunciation may be lost to us, but to write, as Wierwille did, that there was no pronounceable name for God reflects a REMARKABLE ignorance of the Biblical usage of God’s proper name, Yahweh.

Error 33

In The Bible Tells Me So: Wierwille writes that Matthew 27:5 is a summary of Judas’ life after the betrayal, and that it does not mean the things there happened in quick succession. He then writes that the term “hanged himself” refers to different types of suicide, and specifically says Judas impaled himself on a stake (mentioned in Acts 1). However, **in Jesus Christ Our Passover**, Wierwille goes into detail about how “Judas hanged himself” really means that he went away choked with grief.

In truth: Quite simply, one of these explanations has got to be wrong. If Wierwille was right the first time, then the events did not happen in quick succession. If Wierwille was right the second time, then the events DID happen in quick succession. If Wierwille was right the first time, then “hanged himself” was a clear reference to Judas’ death. If Wierwille was right the second time, “Hanged himself” was clearly NOT a reference to Judas’ death.

How do we handle this error? Simple. Further research into Matthew 27:5 led Wierwille to change his mind. Perfectly acceptable. None of us should lose any sleep over it, *unless* you hold that all of Wierwille’s books are God-breathed and therefore free from error or contradiction. If that’s your position, then the burden is on you to explain why and how Wierwille contradicted himself.

Acknowledgements

Too many people contributed to the compilation of this list for me to take credit for writing it. This began as a thread on the "Greasespot Café" discussion board. Many, many people contributed, and some of the observations are lifted in their entirety from the Greasespot Café posts written by others. This is especially so for errors 28 and 29, which were just about entirely written by Jerry Barrax. Unfortunately, not everyone has contacted me about properly crediting them with their assistance and observations. You know who you are, and you know how much I appreciate all the contributions you made to this list. I'm not excluding you: I just don't know if you want your name or "handle" associated with this document, and I await your permission. I do not take credit for writing all of the above, but I do take credit (and blame) for putting the list together, boiling down the arguments to something concise.

So let me thank, in no particular order:

Karl Kahler, author of *The Cult That Snapped: A Journey Into The Way International*

Jerry Barrax, poster at the Greasespot Café message board (<http://www.gscafe.com/eve>)

Actually, a note is necessary about Jerry. At the old Waydale message board (now defunct), Jerry was the first poster to attempt an analytical review of PFAL. Even those who disagreed with his conclusions were in awe of his unflinching honesty in approaching the material he once considered sacrosanct. He deserves credit for many of the observations on this list, and in some ways, for inspiring it.

Tom Joyce, a.k.a. "Oakspear".

WordWolf.

Reece Watkins, a.k.a. "Zixar".

Troubledwine.

Discuss this article and others on our message board.



Copyright 2004 by *The Living Epistles Society*

**Submissions to "To Wit" are welcome.
Write to rafael@livingepistlesociety.org**