



# F.A.C.S. REPORT

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## What's Inside:

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*"We must be prepared to reject these modern proponents of a New Testament-only Bible."*

## KNIGHTS OF THE OLD CODE

*By Murray McLeod-Boyle*

### Introduction

**S**EVERAL YEARS AGO a movie by the title of "Dragonheart" was released. The central characters in this movie were a dragon, a knight and an evil young king. This evil king was the offspring of an equally evil father and a Celtic princess. In a battle that claimed the life of his father, this young king was mortally wounded through the heart. In a bid to save his life, his mother took him to a dragon, who, in the hope of restoring humanity, gave part of his eternal heart to the boy. As a result of this, shall we say, surgery, the boy lived.

At this same time, the mother, concerned that this boy should not be a despot like his father, employed a knight to teach him the "once ways". This knight, present when the dragon saved the boy's life, pledged himself to the service of the dragon should he ever require it. Sometime later, the boy's evil nature comes clearly to the

fore. Enraged by the belief that the dragon has corrupted a good boy, the knight pledges to destroy the dragon responsible.

In the end, the knight and the dragon find themselves working together. As the story develops we are shown what makes each "tick". The dragon remembers a day of noble kings and peace on earth. A time when man and dragon lived in peace. A time when the dragons pledged to help restore the former things. Now, because of the dragon's action, he is afraid of death. He shall not reach eternal bliss because he helped this evil king live. What was meant to be his crowning achievement turned out to be his condemnation.

Alongside of this we have a disenchanted knight. He had hoped to train this young king in the "once ways" so that he would be a good king. The knight had long dreamed of an opportunity of serving a good, righteous king. He thought often of Arthur and

Camelot as a paradigm. Now his dream was shattered.

Both of the characters are now in the "slough of despond", to borrow a phrase from Bunyan. What was to be their salvation is now a nightmare personified. Therefore, both commit to rectifying the situation, and working toward their utopia.

### By What Standard?

**O**F ALL THE aspects that could be focused upon in this story, we have chosen to focus upon the code. Why? Because for all the shortcomings of this film, it is interesting that behind the actions and dreams of our central characters stands a law code. A code that binds the life and dictates the way in which one should act.

This story from Hollywood portrays a time of battlefields, oppression, poverty and darkness. What is needed is liberation from bondage, salvation.

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FOUNDATION for the ADVANCEMENT  
of CHRISTIAN STUDIES  
P.O. Box 547  
Ferny Hills, QLD 4055  
Australia

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3. His might upholds the weak.
4. His wrath undoes the wicked.
5. His word speaks only truth.
6. A knight is sworn to valour.

Now, we recognise that this is Hollywood's version. However, when we look at this list we can see that, in essence, it would serve very well as a paradigm for the Christian. Why is this? It is because, and only because, it accurately reflects God's Word.

It is a sad reflection on today's Church that these concepts are only known and cherished among 'Liberation' theologians and those peddling a 'Social' gospel. The question that springs immediately to mind is, what has happened to the mainstream Church? Why has She abandoned Her crusade?

It is because she has forgotten the "Old Code."

### That's no Standard!

**W**HEN SCRIPTURE IS examined several themes are immediately apparent. For example, there is a cosmic war; there is truth; there is nobility; there is righteousness; wrath is acceptable; justice is mandatory; and the list could continue.

So why does the average Christian ignore or play down these aspects of their Christian walk? It is because they have abandoned *the* Old Code. Here, we do not mean Hollywood's version. We are talking specifically about the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup> Nowadays, there are too many New Testament Christians and by this we mean, Christians who do not believe or see the Old Testament as in anyway relevant to their situation today. When we talk of justice they will say, 'yes, that will happen when Jesus come back!' Or 'Justice is the peace God will grant to the inner soul.' If we talk of mercy, they say, 'yes, ban capital punishment!' Eager to be compassionate they say, 'yes, embrace the homosexual!' In order be gracious, they say, 'yes, anger of

any sort is unacceptable!' Totally committed to peace, they say, 'yes, all good people should surrender their instruments of war!'

These people do not know the first thing about the Christian life because they have severed themselves from the fountainhead. They have severed themselves from the God of the Scriptures. The God to whom all men shall give account. The God to whom we live for His glory. Not content to cut themselves off from true wisdom and knowledge, these people speak error at every turn. With the voice of authority they cry out to the Christian masses that we should join them on their campaign of tolerance and love. This is the Christian life they say; to embrace homosexuals; to justify the sinner; to defend the corrupt; to be a doormat to the world. Why do they speak like this? Because they do not know the Old Code.

### A Truncated View

**S**OME MAY THINK THIS a little harsh, but let us think for a moment about some practical aspects. When people like Gideons and the Bible League distribute Bibles, how many are whole, i.e., including both Old and New Testaments? In a year, how many sermons would your minister preach from the Old Testament? When was the last time you heard a series from an Old Testament book? Have you ever argued with someone only to have them say, 'Oh, but that is the Old Testament!' Better still, have you been told that you are pharisaical or legalistic when you pointed out what the Law said? You see, each and every day, Christians have a tendency to exclude the Old Testament in favour of the New.

Now there is nothing wrong with the New Testament. However, we must realise that it is only half the story. To start with Matthew as though he was the beginning of God's revelation is like beginning a novel three-quarters of the way through. You may pick up some of

Into this situation come two unlikely characters who both know that the only hope is the "once ways"—a full return to the "old code".

When this story is arranged in this manner, it is immediately apparent to any Christian that it parallels another well-known story. The major difference is that Hollywood's version is fiction, whilst that breathed by God is truth.

Today, the Christian Church in general is idle, because it has forgotten the "code" and standard by which it is to operate. There are few knights willing to enter the battlefield. Most are not even willing to contemplate this option. In fact, many denominations have engaged in an active "we hate swords and armour" campaign, which has debilitated the Church.

### By this Standard

**S**O, WHAT WAS the "old code"? The code was a system of six laws that a knight had to subscribe to, and read as follows:

1. His heart knows only virtue.
2. His sword/blade defends the helpless.

1. It is a pity that many Christians will not adopt Hollywood's version, for it is better than much of the trite nonsense that is regularly peddled in major denominations.

the themes and the conclusion is going to be clear, but you are going to have a lot of questions and an equal amount of confusion.

## The New Rests on the Old

**I**F WE DENY the validity of the Old Testament, then we run into doctrinal problems. If we do not have an Old Testament, then we must ask, who is Jesus and what did He come to do? If Genesis is nonexistent, then what is sin? If sin cannot be defined or known, then why did God put Jesus to death? What is sacrifice apart from the prescripts found in the Pentateuch? When Jesus spoke of the sign of Jonah, what did he mean? If we do not have the Old Testament then none of these questions can be answered correctly. Sure, we can have a "stab in the dark", but we have no guarantee of getting anywhere close to the truth.

Recently, in a sermon that I heard, it was declared that the Old Testament sacrifices were of no intrinsic value to the sinner. What mattered most was the state of heart in which the sinner came. Now, if this is true, then what matters in salvation is not the shed blood of Jesus Christ on behalf of those *dead in trespass and sin*, but our state of heart. Once again, man sets the terms for his own salvation, and God is obliged to act according to our state of heart. Heresy, by any other name!

The reason that the Church is to a large degree impotent can be directly traced to its abandonment of the Old Testament as a genuine part of God's Word. Yes, we recognise certain changes in emphasis, but there is nothing that has been radically altered, changed or abrogated. Let us, as an example, look at the sacrifice of Christ. All the Old Testament sacrifices pointed forward to the one great sacrifice. Because Jesus was crucified in our stead, we do not any longer offer the blood of animals. Jesus' one sacrifice replaces the many animal sacrifices. The

blood of God's Son replaces the paltry (in comparison) blood of animals. So here we have an alteration. The sacrificial system has not been abolished completely. It has been changed or modified. That is all.

Let us look at it from another angle. Has the Law's demand been abrogated, abolished or overturned? No, it has not. God still requires a satisfaction for sin. God has not decreed men to be free from sin. The Law's requirements still stand. God will only acquit on the basis of a propitiatory sacrifice. That sacrifice is, and always has been, Jesus Christ, God's beloved Son.

There is a modification in the mode, shall we say, but the principles of operation are still the same as those laid down in the Old Testament.<sup>2</sup>

Another example is that of a minister who did not like hymns like "Onward Christian Soldiers" because it had a militant aspect that was not at all palatable. Christianity should supposedly be seen as a minor skirmish with cream puffs, at least according to this theory, rather than a full blown cosmic battle with a winner and loser. This sounds so nice, but it is very hollow when we compare it to Moses song:

Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the Lord, and said, "I will sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted; **The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea.** "The Lord is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; This is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will extol Him. **"The Lord is a warrior;** The Lord is His name. **"Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; And the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea.** "The deeps cover them; They went down into the depths like a stone. "Thy right hand, O Lord, is majestic in power, **Thy right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy.** "And in the greatness of Thine excellence **Thou dost overthrow those who rise up**

**against Thee;** Thou dost send forth Thy burning anger, and it consumes them as chaff. "And at the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were piled up, The flowing waters stood up like a heap; The deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea. "The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; My desire shall be gratified against them; I will draw out my sword, my hand shall destroy them.' "Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them; **They sank like lead in the mighty waters.** "Who is like Thee among the gods, O Lord? Who is like Thee, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders? **"Thou didst stretch out Thy right hand, The earth swallowed them.** "In Thy lovingkindness Thou hast led the people whom Thou hast redeemed; In Thy strength Thou hast guided them to Thy holy habitation. *"The peoples have heard, they tremble; Anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia. "Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed; The leaders of Moab, trembling grips them; All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.* "Terror and dread fall upon them; **By the greatness of Thine arm they are motionless as stone;** Until Thy people pass over, O Lord, Until the people pass over whom Thou hast purchased. "Thou wilt bring them and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, The place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thy dwelling, The sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established. "The Lord shall reign forever and ever" (Exodus 15:1-18. NASB)

Nor does this minister's view concur with Revelation 19:11-16, where we read:

And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and **in righteousness He judges and wages war.** And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The

2. Think here of a car and a truck. These are differing "modes" of transport. However, the "principles" of operation are still the same. A combustion engine drives a shaft that turns the wheels. The operator has an accelerator, a brake and a clutch. The operation of these is the same in both vehicles (modes).

Word of God. And *the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.* And **from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron;** and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

The point here is that the New Testament does not declare the Old Testament to be null and void. In fact, it does quite the opposite. The New Testament writers, and Jesus Himself, draw on the Old Testament to establish basic truths.

One of the clearest instances of this is found in Luke 24:25-27, where we read the following:

And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter

into His glory?" And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures (NASB).

Here, Jesus openly proclaims that He existed in the Old Testament and was there for everyone to read. Looking again at our text from Revelation 19, we see a reference to the fact that Christ "*will rule ... with a rod of iron.*" Where is this reference first encountered? In Matthew or maybe Romans? No! It is found in Psalm 2, way back in the Old Testament.

Given this fundamental truth we must be prepared to reject these modern proponents of a New Testament-only Bible. This error has been largely responsible for the Church's lethargy and failure to advance the cause of Christ. Jesus entered the fray because we could do nothing to liberate ourselves from slavery to sin. He died on Calvary's tree in order to purchase us with His *precious*

*blood.* In return He asks us to gird up our loins, enter the fight, and serve Him faithfully. This is to a large degree easy, but how are we going to understand the tactics of warfare if we have thrown away the manual. The Scriptures declare that we are in a battle and that we must be armed for this conflict. If we decide to throw the Old Testament away, then we take away a great proportion of our armoury. Why? Because we sever ourselves from God's revelation. More importantly, we fail because we sever ourselves from God's prior revelation, in which the enemy and the tactics of war are described and from which we must learn.

Oh, that Christians would return to a sincere belief that they are indeed Knights of the Old Code.

'What was indispensable to the Redeemer must always be indispensable to the redeemed' (G. A. Smith).<sup>3</sup>

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3. Bible, *The New Bible Dictionary*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1962.