

A Mystic's Way

(from *The Berean Call*)

Gene Edwards is well known for a number of helpful books in the past. In fact, a number of his books are considered classics in certain circles. He wrote on the abuse of authority taking place in the “Shepherding Movement” that was popular in the 70's and 80's, *Tale of Three Kings* and also *Letters to a Devastated Christian*.

But that was then and this is now.

Benny Hinn's interview with Gene Edwards on “This Is Your Day” program (4/27/04), proves that it does not matter if someone is close or far off in their Biblical teaching, as long as it tickles the ears of the listeners. This is not the first time Gene Edwards has been on Hinn's program. However after hearing what he said, I and others became very concerned with the content and what he is teaching.

Mysticism is an immediate, direct, intuitive knowledge of God or of ultimate reality attained through personal religious experience (Encarta Encyclopedia). Thus, a mystic tries to find deeper meanings from the scripture that are unclear or not there.

A belief in the existence of realities beyond perceptual or intellectual apprehension that are central to being and directly accessible by subjective experience (Excerpted from *American Heritage Dictionary*.) There are numerous ways to be mystical

I began to do some research on Edwards and did not find so favorable comments on his writings as he once had years ago. Commenting on a tape by Edwards, the 11/96 *The Berean Call* states: “Edwards is obviously a mystic who applies his own esoteric meaning to words.”

After hearing what he said on Hinn's program and checking it by the Scripture, I can only come to the same conclusion. Let's take a look at the statements he made on Hinn's program, in portions, to decipher what he is saying and see if he is using a Biblical interpretation or has a Biblical position. You will need patience to read this article as we unravel the mystical views of Edwards.

Benny Hinn introduces Gene Edwards and begins by saying Suzanne has talked to me about reading Edwards' incredible book, which surely touched her life. It's titled *The Day I Was Crucified as Told by Jesus the Christ*.

Benny Hinn then asks: "Why did you write this book?"

Gene Edwards: "*Because almost no one knows the rest of the story. There is so much about what happened on the cross that is not covered in the gospels, the epistles are filled with statements about what happened on the cross. So I decided not to just tell about it but take these wonderful things, mostly spoken by Paul, and weave them into the story we are all so familiar with, Matthew, Luke and John the story of the crucifixion. And make those incredible statements, those unbelievable statements, incomprehensible statements and weave them in as though they were part of the story.*"

How can we not know the rest of the story? It's been written in the Bible for almost 2,000 years. Anyone can read the gospels and the epistles to know the rest of the story. Edwards is suggesting that only a small handful of people know the complete story of the cross. The first clue of error comes from the beginning of this interview. Edwards implies that most have an inadequate Bible knowledge on what took place on the cross. Apparently, Edwards considers himself to be among that small handful of people of whom are able to grasp these (well known) facts, then write a book and share it with others. It certainly implies exclusivity and corner-on-the-market theology.

On Edwards' position, most respected theologians and scholars throughout the body of Christ would have to disagree, along with any student of the word on his position.

What Paul wrote is known as part of the story, and Edwards is not the first to put them together with the crucifixion. However, he is the first to come to certain conclusions. The epistles are filled with statements about what happened on the cross; just not what *Edwards says happened on the cross*.

Hinn: "Would you share some of this?"

Edwards: "Well, *I was crucified that day and so was Benny Hinn. So that's a part of the story...uh the world was crucified that day. So the world comes as part of the story and is crucified there on the cross with the Lord Jesus Christ. The world is personified as a human being, as a person, and is*

crucified with Christ and in Christ. Sin comes as person and makes a incredible speech and becomes part of Christ even as he's dying, and then comes the death himself, and they have quite an interaction between the two of them, the lord and death, the two great enemies that have never known defeat. And then the law is invited by the lord commanded to come there and he's part of the story. And the law is stern and unrelenting, and all of these rules and regulation 613 of them to be exact that are in the law of Moses, and the law is crucified with Jesus Christ, so is creation itself, so is Adam's race and just as the Lord... and so is Benny Hinn."

"And just as the Lord is dying he takes them into his bosom and they die with him. And you know brother Benny they really did die that day, in the eyes of God the world is gone. You and I are having a problem here on earth because we are fettered to time and space, but the Lord's not. He's already been there when it's all taken place. And He works from the viewpoint of the reality of all these things that have been crucified. You know it goes a little bit more than that. You and I can't here on this earth, grasp how incredibly free he has made us, he has actually done away with these things"

Mystics make something sound profound when there is no Biblical basis. They then turn around to those who challenge the validity of their statements and say you are not spiritual enough to understand this. I hope that the people who follow Hinn and Edwards teachings will not be foolish and do this.

What is incredible in this interview is how he, Edwards, spiritualizes plain, literal statements that have spiritual truths to denote something they do not. Like a mystic, Edwards goes deeper into events than is in Scripture--extrapolating meanings that are foreign from the text. Taking literal events and spiritualizing them to mean another literal event is incorrect Bible interpretation. While there is a correct way to use a midrash interpretation (which seems to be what he is trying to accomplish), there is also an incorrect way, as we see here. Good teachers elaborate on Scripture all the time, but when the meaning is changed it is no longer good teaching. The Bible does use examples of personification (Wisdom is personified Prov. 8:22-23). Personify means to give human or personal qualities to something that is not human. What needs to be looked at more carefully is if Edwards is personifying things the way the Bible does.

Again, let's look at this, in portions; to see if what is being stated is in fact what the Bible means.

Was the world crucified with Christ? Was the world on the cross with Him? Is the world personified as a person in Scripture? If so, where does the Bible say this? In some ways this can be summarized by using poetic license, but not when it is changed so drastically.

When the Bible says we were crucified with Christ it means that Christ was put to death on a cross, and thus became literally dead. It does not mean we were literally put in Christ and died with him on the cross. Edwards uses this premise for everything in the world (death, sin creation etc.) being crucified and united with Christ when he died.

What this means is that the effect of the death of Christ on the cross is to make us dead to sin. In the same manner as he died our lives are to be similar to this by carrying our own cross. We are dead to the Law and to the world, and to sin because Christ lives in us. Galatians 2:20 teaches that "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God." Here is what Paul means: we are no longer to sin, as sin is no longer to rule over our lives. Because Paul considered himself dead, "He is truly alive," Jesus is to be in control and Paul makes several statements that clarify this. Galatians 5:24 "And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." Galatians 6:14 it is through the cross "by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." In other words we are to be dead to the desires of sin in the world and to our own sinful nature that we still carry in this body, just as Jesus was dead on the cross.

Where does the Bible say creation died in Christ? It doesn't. In fact, it says the opposite. Rom. 8:21-23 teaches that "because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body." We are all under the corruption still until the resurrection the redemption of our body. Unless one spiritualizes or allegorizes the Scripture, there is no other way to interpret

these clear statements Paul makes. Creation has not been delivered and still is in the state of corruption.

According to Edwards, *The world, sin, death, the law, creation and Adams race* became part of Christ and are crucified with him. Edwards makes the definitive statement “*the world is gone*” and “*done away with these things.*”

Sin

Rom 6:4-7 teaches “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.”

Clearly the bible says that sin is no longer our master, Christ is. It does not mean that sin is completely removed from our experience. We have been transferred from darkness into the kingdom of his son. This happens when we are baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13).

Paul continues in v.8-9: “For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.”

Romans 6:14-16: “For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?”

Paul does not think sin is removed and he explains how we are to conduct ourselves so we can be masters over sin and not have sin master us.

The Law

The law isn't dead (613 commands) or done away with, it is only inactive for those in faith who have clothed in the righteousness of Christ from the great exchange on the cross. 1 Tim 1:9 “knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the

ungodly and for sinners”(and continues to give the explanation of the law). In fact when we obey and walk by the spirit and live by faith we establish the law (Romans 3:30-31).

Therefore, Edwards his premise is wrong on what exactly happened at the cross.

At this point, it is unknown if Edwards uses the scripture for his claims in his book, but he gave none on the program. “*Sin comes as person and makes an incredible speech and becomes part of Christ even as he’s dying,*” says Edwards. “*Death himself and they have quite an interaction between the two of them... the law is invited by the lord commanded to come there*”

Sin is not a person, sin is a nature, something we all still possess. The law is the requirement God gave to have us be pleasing to him and show us we are sinners so we can come to a savior.

Also, Edwards seems to conclude that sin and Christ became one (i.e., the spiritual death of Christ heresy), which is a dangerous heresy promoted by the word faith teachers, which Benny Hinn had vocally taught in the past. What nonsense. Sin did not become part of Jesus. Jesus was our sin substitute. He carried it away but did not become sin itself. What Edwards says is void in the Scriptures. In fact, Jesus was the word made flesh. All the commands and laws were kept perfectly by Him. He had no sin in him. Because of his purity, as the unblemished lamb he was able to carry our sin away. To say sin was part of him is unbiblical teaching.

Edwards also makes the claim “*in the eyes of God the world is gone. He’s already been there when it’s all taken place. He has actually done away with these things.*”

Has sin been eliminated from the world? No! Sin continues to exist in the world. Otherwise, God could not continue to make a sinner forgiven in his sight, there would be none. God is not a mere time traveler into the future. He knows the future (foreknowledge) and the world is still here. God had the viewpoint of the world’s history even before he even created the world.

Acts 15:18: “Known to God from eternity are all His works.” The Scripture states Jesus was “the lamb slain from the foundation of the world” which means that God’s plan began before anything was made. And God is still actively involved in the world the way it is today. Yes, the day will come

when sin and death will cease to exist. But at present, sin and death are having a field day on planet Earth. To make such statements as God's viewpoint is negligent.

Yet Edwards states, "*And just as the Lord is dying he takes them into his bosom and they die with him (i.e., Sin- death -the law- creation- Adams race)*". This certainly implies they become part of him, but the Bible does not say this AT ALL!

Edwards continues: "*You have heard of the exchanged life, you've heard of the victorious life, but we almost never hear of the resurrection life. That there is a life higher than the life of God! God lives by divine life but there is a life higher than divine life that God lives by, and that is God's life that is passed through all that is death and has come out the grave absolutely triumphant. And Benny Hinn that's the life God gave you, its not divine life but divine life--resurrected.*"

Can there be anything greater than *the life of God*? What is *a life higher than divine life*? What does Edwards mean by these statements?

Edwards incorrectly merges the *resurrection life* with a "life" that is "higher than God." This is utterly ridiculous! God has no equal! There is no life higher or greater than the life of God! God isn't subject to anything. What he created cannot be higher than who He is! These statements are beyond ridiculous; they are surreal! Furthermore, there is a subtle meaning to these statements, Edwards is suggesting that Jesus acquired His higher life than divine life after the resurrection?

When Jesus died on the cross he was still alive in Spirit. Death means the body and the Spirit separate. There was no change in the nature of Jesus' Spirit. The spirit that has eternal life. God cannot change (Mal.3:6). God's life (nature), doesn't change. It is eternal and immortal. Jesus as "The last Adam became a life-giving spirit"(1 Cor. 15:45). To those who believe the gospel, this is the life He gives to us through the Holy Spirit. Simply, *eternal life* is life everlasting.

1 Jn. 2:25: "And this is the promise that He has promised us-- eternal life" (see also 1 Jn.5:11,13,20). God only has one life. Rom. 6:23: "...the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." John 17:2 "He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him."

The eternal life God includes the resurrected life. These are not two different qualities or being of life. What of those who never die when Jesus comes again? Will they miss out on this higher life- the resurrection life and settle for mere eternal life? 1 Cor. 15:21-22 teaches: “For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ ALL shall be made alive.”

John 5:24-25 tells us we have “passed from death into life and because of this life” the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.”

There is nothing mentioned of a life other than what is given to ALL of the saints-eternal life.

Continuing on divine life, Edwards states, “*You and I live today, and this is why I wrote the book so that God’s people can see this and know its taken place. Know that it is part of what dwells in you and in me. I can’t fully know what its like to live in triumph and resurrection until I see, I can have anything I see by revelation. And when I can see that he that he did all these things took them to the cross and left them there and rose from the grave, and when he came out of the grave there was a lot that came out of the grave with him, you and I came out of that grave. We came out in a life that cannot be stopped by anything not even death, because death is dead in the eyes of God. (Hinn amen) Everything that he took to the cross that Paul speaks of these are behind us, we do not live in the reality of those things that were crucified.*”

Can we *have anything we see by revelation?* This has a Gnostic slant, which means that I see and understand can be my possession NOW.

If we came out of the grave with Christ and death is no more, why does it say in 1 Cor. 15:20 teach “But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” v:23 says: “But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.” It is important to understand the basis of Edward’s theology he is promoting. We have a hope of a future resurrection. It hasn’t happened yet. It is because Jesus resurrected that our body can come out of the grave. To say death is not reality is to miss the very Scriptures on what that Christ died for, as already pointed out in Rom. 8:21-23. This has not been fulfilled. 1 Cor. 15:24-26: “Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to

God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. **The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.**” The last enemy is death and death is still a reality, not defeated in completion.

Edwards states that “*death is dead in the eyes of God.*” Paul further explains that we still must wait, because “Death is swallowed up in victory.” “So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” “O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?” The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15:54-57).

Do we still die? Of course, so this event has not occurred. This also means sin is with us. This is distorted by what Edwards said. Death was not crucified. In Rom. 8:2, “Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.” But Jesus has not removed sin and death.

In Rom. 6:7-9, Paul further explains “Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.” Even if we die, death will not have the final victory because Christians get resurrected unto eternal life.

This is speaking positionally about our dying with Christ, for obvious reasons, death and sin is not literally destroyed. Death and sin are rendered inoperative, by faith, and by our walking in the Spirit then we do not serve sin” (Rom. 6:6).

Edwards states that “*Everything that he took to the cross that Paul speaks of these are behind us, we do not live in the reality of those things that were crucified.*” Paul never says death is not a reality. Paul explains we should not sorrow as others who have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13)

Yet Benny Hinn responds with, “*Awesome.*”

Let’s pause here and understand the word “**awesome,**” in light of what we have heard from Edwards. What is disturbing is watching Hinn affirm everything Edwards is saying--as if it is correct. Hinn appears to be mesmerized by Edwards' super-duper, extra-Biblical interpretations that

“*almost no one truly knows*” (refer to the first paragraph). Hinn, himself receives revelation knowledge, visions and spiritual experiences on a regular basis. Hinn, who also claims to receive regular visitations from “Jesus Christ,” angels and other Biblical figures approves of this. Yet, Hinn does not have the ability to discern right from wrong or truth from error” At this point, Edwards has not wrapped up his spiritual trip. He has a destination he is bringing Hinn’s audience to.

Edwards: “*Now there’s one more aspect, something else that is-- when the Lord went into that tomb uh what a battle between death and the lord, and it is depicted in very dramatically there, there and in the nether world. And whose going to win, the two great enemies of all time. well finally the Lord wins and he comes out of that grave.*”

Apparently, Edwards wants his listeners to imagine a tremendous, earth-shaking, wrestling match between Jesus Christ and the forces of death in the realm of the dead (hell?), which resulted in Jesus supposed slaying death. (“*As the lord is dying he takes them into his bosom and they die with him.*”) Previously Edwards said death was crucified on the cross with Christ. Then suddenly death is resurrected, back with a vengeance, oh well, that’s allegorical story telling for ya.

Where, in the bible, is the battle the Lord enters in after he died? In the “*nether world*” Edwards teaches. The Bible says it was completed on the cross, not afterwards. This is Star Wars theology.

Col. 2:14-15 teaches “having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.”

Those principalities and powers are a part of Satan’s kingdom.

In Heb. 2:14 we find “that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.” By Jesus death Satan was defeated; not by having a fight afterwards in the underworld.

The fact is, death--which is the result of sin--was completely overcome by Jesus being resurrection, but death was not removed.

1 Cor. 15:24-26: “Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.”

“The **last enemy** to be destroyed is death.”

Death is not gone. It is only when the tabernacle of God is with men, and He dwells with them that “God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away”(Rev. 21:3-4).

This Scripture mentions the things Edwards claims are already gone, proving it is still future for us.

Edwards: “*He came out that grave too, with you, in him. But he also came forth with a totally new creation.*”

*Brother Benny I know you have read many times in 1 Cor.5 that we are a new creature in Christ. “that word needs to be translated **were a new species**. That means we are biologically unique to anything else on this earth. Dear brother you have parts in you that lost man does not have. You have an organ in you that the rest fallen race of Adam doesn’t have, you have all sorts of things in you that make you different just like the difference between an eel and an electric eel. There are things going on in the electric eel the eel doesn’t know anything about. You have things going on inside of you that have been given to you and have been given to you in resurrection. Benny Hinn, you are brand **new species** the world has never known before, you have the eternal realm in you.”*

Because of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, born again Christians are a new creation in Christ. Their sins are forgiven and a new life and lifestyle emerges. To interpret this to mean a new species, that Christians are biologically unique with different organs is ridiculous. While Christians are spiritually unique, they are not “biologically unique” as Gene Edwards claims.

Edwards mention of 1st Corinthians chapter 5 is a reference mistake. It is 2nd Corinthians 5:17. He interprets the word “*new creature*” to mean new species. The Bible has a different definition.

New creature (kainee (NT:2537) A fresh start is made kainee (NT:2537). Ktisis (NT:2937) is the old word for the act of creating (Rom 1:20), but in the New Testament by metonymy it usually bears the notion of ktisma (NT:2938), the thing created or creature as here.

New Greek kainos- a) as respects form: recently made, fresh, recent, unused, unworn b) as respects substance: of a new kind, unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of.

creation (Greek -ktisis) is the act of founding, establishing, building, etc. a) the act of creating, creation b) creation, that is, a thing created; used of individual things, beings, a creature, a creation 1) anything created 2) after a rabbinical usage (by which a man converted from idolatry to Judaism was called) 3) the sum or aggregate of things created

The word creation is from the root word *ktizo* (through the idea of proprietorship of the manufacturer); to fabricate, i.e. found (form originally): 1) to make habitable, to people, a place, region, island; to found a city, colony, state 2) to create a) used of God creating the worlds b) to form, shape, that is, to completely change or transform.

A.T. Robertson's commentary on 2 Cor 5:17 says that the old things are passed away ta (NT:3588) archaia (NT:744) parelthen (NT:3928). Did pass by, he means. Second aorist active of parerchomai (NT:3928), to go by. The ancient archaia (NT:744) way of looking at Christ among other things. And yet today there are scholars who are trying to revive the old prejudiced view of Jesus Christ as a mere man, a prophet, to give us "a reduced Christ." That was once Paul's view, but it passed by forever for him. It is a false view and leaves us no gospel and no Saviour (A.T. Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament).

Vincent's Commentary on 2 Cor 5:17 says, A new creature kainee (NT:2537) ktisis (NT:2937). Or "creation." Compare Gal 6:15. The word ktisis (NT:2937) is used in three senses in the New Testament. "The act of creating," as Rom 1:20. "The sum of created things," as Rev. 3:14;; Mark 13:19. "A created thing or creature," as Rom 8:39. The Rabbis used the word of a man converted from idolatry. "He who brings a foreigner and makes him a proselyte is as if he created him" (Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament).

In other words this all has to do with a new spiritual birth, our dead spirit is made alive, we begin again.

The words “New creature” are mentioned elsewhere in the Bible, but it does not mean what Edwards is implying. Mk.16:15 -new tongues; Rom.1:25-creature 8:19,20,21creation 39-created thing. Gal.6:15-new creation. Also Col.1:15;23; Heb.4:13. Creation Mk.10:6,13:19; Rom.1:20;Rom.8:22; 2 Pet.3:4; Rev.3:14.

What we should learn from the above definitions is that we are new spiritually, as reborn. But we are not completely new. We still have the same body; the same personality, and the same sin nature, etc.

Edwards states: “*A new creature in Christ. “that word needs to be translated were a new species...”*”

biologically unique. That word really needs to be translated we're a new species, is inaccurate. The word “species” is defined as a “category in the system of classification of living organisms consisting of similar individuals capable of exchanging genes [genetics] or interbreeding” (*The Oxford Desk Dictionary*, 1997, p. 766).

Are we a new species now? Or, are we spiritually unique? We are still waiting for the resurrection when we will be given bodies that do not decay. Even that will still not qualify us as a new species. We will still be human. Yes, we have a new nature that fallen man does not have but it's not an organ (like a body part). The Holy Spirit in us does not change us to a different species. We are still human with a sin nature, not sinless humans as we will be after the resurrection. To be biologically unique means that something within our physicality has been altered. This is untrue as well. Christians are spiritually unique, not “biologically unique” as Gene Edwards claims, we do not possess different “organs” than the unsaved. If a doctor performs an operation on a Christian and a non-Christian, side by side, will he find anything different physically? Will we have any different organs? This is absurd. When Edwards redefines the words, he opens the door for traveling down the road of new interpretations.

Edwards: “*The spiritual realm is actually in you, you've been given a spirit that matches the eternal realm. You have contact with and a right to the other realm. Eph.1:3. you have many, many things in you that no other*”

species has ever known, but you got this. Jesus Christ is a creature of two realms, the spiritual realm and the physical realm. When he made you his child and made you a citizen, he made you a citizen of that realm. You are a two realm human and everyone one of us needs to know that just to get to get on the basic foundation of our Christian life.”

The spiritual realm or spirit realm is something that spiritists say all-to-often, and isn't good terminology. The Bible does not say we have a spiritual realm in us, but the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and there is the difference. The new nature is the Holy Spirit living in the believer; it is not made but given.

We have the Holy Spirit in us. The Holy Spirit is God, not a spiritual realm, but a personal being. Eph. 1:3 has nothing to do with contact with this so called other *REALM*. He has blessed us with every SPIRITUAL blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” We are now citizens of heaven (not a spiritual realm on earth) but are still pilgrims on earth. If this is what Edwards meant we could agree, but considering everything he said, it probably does not mean this. The Bible says to walk in the spirit, not walk in the spiritual realm (let the Holy Spirit control you). To claim that one needs to know this to understand the basic foundation of our Christian life is flat out silly.

Jesus Christ is not a creature of two realms. Creatures are created and only his humanity was made, for he is God who existed before anything was created. “all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Colossians 1:16-17).

Edwards' subtle statement that “Jesus Christ is a creature” suggests that Jesus was created. Nowhere does the Bible state “Jesus is only a creature.” Only his humanity would he be considered a creature (human). Jesus Christ is God Himself in human form. He has two natures (humanity and deity) as one person.

Here is where we arrive at where Edwards was going. It is the culmination of all that he means. **Edwards** “There’s one other thing that came out of that tomb. A girl. One beautiful gorgeous lady. When Christ died on the cross his wounds, his side was pierced and it was open, something came out, something of water and of the spirit and blood - something of humanity. When Adam was put to sleep his side was open and a girl came out. Here’s incredible news, there’s been a girl inside of Jesus Christ all this time.

There's a girl in there, and in the resurrection there came out of that water and that spirit a girl and she matches him, she has his dna. She's called the bride of Christ. And she came out in resurrection; and I really want your people to hear this and walk in it. When she came out of that tomb, that girl, the ecclesia, the church, she has never laid eyes on the world system, she's never seen death, she's never known sin, she has never known the law she is the freest creature in the world, there's not a rule or regulation you can put on her. And if she can see this from the eyes of her lord who has just, y'know, he has transcended space and time we are dealing with and has given us a girl this beautiful incredible girl, who never met any of the enemies of God.

John 19:34 teaches “But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.” This was to prove that Jesus was actually dead. It has nothing to do with what Edwards claims *something of water and of the spirit and blood*. Again, Edwards is adding to the Scripture and spiritualizing what is not there.

Did a girl come out of Jesus' side on the cross or the tomb, or both? Which is it? To say there was a girl inside of Jesus all this time--and she came out when he was already dead--is not only silly, but sacrilegious!

Gen. 2:21-22 teaches “And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.” There was not a woman in Jesus anymore than there was a woman in Adam. Eve was made from portions of Adam's body, from his side. She was not taken out of Adam's body but made from the elements of Adam's body.

“There's been a girl inside of Jesus Christ all this time. There's a girl in there, and in the resurrection there came out of that water and that spirit a girl and she matches him, she has his dna.”

What Edwards says doesn't make sense. Where does the Bible teach water and spirit as a girl came out from the resurrection? It doesn't. I just don't understand how he can actually say this. Edwards is teaching the Church is the girl who is the water and that spirit but that these same elements came out of his side when he was pierced. Either way it is both confusing and unbiblical.

The church was birthed by God through the Holy Spirit. This took place not at the resurrection but on the day of Pentecost, though it was assembled through Jesus' time of ministry. Jesus clearly says this "For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:4-5).

Edwards states that, "*I really want your people to hear this and walk in it.* He wants us to believe the church was literally as spirit in Christ laying dormant as a girl (water spirit and even blood), and came out of the tomb the same time Christ did. According to Edwards this girl is an exact duplicate of Jesus.

*Furthermore, Edwards states the girl has "**never seen death, she's never known sin**, she has never known the law...has given us a girl this beautiful incredible girl, who never met the enemies of God's system, she's never seen that."*

The church was paid for by his death purchased by His blood, but not birthed by it. There is a difference. Eph 1:7 teaches: having "redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." This does not make us sinless.

Do believers die? Of course they do. The Scripture says so (1 Thess.4), and this is what the resurrection is about. The wages of sin is death. Edwards is spiritualizing the passages to make the church something she is not. Not yet, that is. If *she's never known sin*, why does Paul warn us of the world system in Col. 3:5: "Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry." If we are the woman that is sinless, why does John write in I Jn. 1:8, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

If Edwards is saying that this woman is not the church, but some other personified entity, this also would be incorrect and have another set of problems. But this is not what he is saying. Much more could be said on these statements but let go to the heart of the matter.

If we are perfect and without sin, then what is sanctification? It would not be necessary if we are already without sin? The Bible's position is that Christ represents man as perfect sinless man, and God accepts us because of his

work. But we are not sinless like Jesus is. Rom. 5:8 teaches that, “while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” Sin is still in the world and men are still sinners. Rom. 8:13: “For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.” How can this death affect us if it no longer exists?

There is plenty of Scripture that admonishes believers to not live as they once did. This would be a useless admonishment if we are indeed already sinless, as Edwards claims. We have commands by the Lord through the apostles that contradict what Edwards is saying and what Hinn is affirming.

Eph. 4:22-28 teaches “that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another.” Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.” Let him who stole steal no longer...”

Col.3:9-10 teaches “Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him” Why tell the believer what not to do and to do if it has already been done away with? Notice each time Paul says we have a choice between the new man and the old. Rom. 6:12-14 “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.” Why say this if we cannot sin or know sin?

Paul even said “But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified” (1 Cor. 9:27). If Paul taught we were Sinless there would be no reason to bring his flesh into submission of the Spirit. Rom 7:17-25 “But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.”

Speaking to the church, James teaches that we should “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded” (James 4:8).

Gal. 2:17: “But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners.” We are still sinners though we have right standing with God.

Eph. 5:26-27: “that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish” (Future tense). One can only wonder what Bible Edwards is reading or how he has come to so many wrong conclusions from the event of the cross. Edwards may be a deeper thinker than most but he is using his imagination to arrive at his conclusions. Edwards has exercised his own private interpretations and given himself permission to retell the gospel of the New Testament with his own imagination as its interpreter.

Edwards continues: *“He didn’t even let her come around until he took care of everything. And here she comes out of the tomb and will we don’t get to meet her until 47 days 49 days later. There she is introduced on the day on the day of Pentecost, and she is without spot which means she doesn’t have any scars, no wrinkles she’s ageless, she’s pure, she’s a virgin, and she’s triumphant, she’s robed in white, perfectly innocent, She has a DNA that will match Jesus Christ just like Eve DNA matched Adam. She is kin of his kin, spirit of his spirit and benny hinn you are part of her. And that is what God sees all the time her holiness, her perfection, her triumphant, nature her divinity and she is living by a life not human, she is living by divine life everyday. If you can have a revelation of that - and you can and that’s why I wrote the book...because I would like God’s people to see what they have.”*

At this point Hinn responds with: *“Dear lord we are sitting here amazed what we are hearing from this man of God today... this is so powerful and so deep.”*

Lets examine at the DNA statement. DNA is deoxyribo nucleic acid, and is defined as: “A nucleic acid that carries the genetic information in the cell and is capable of **self-replication** and synthesis of RNA” (ribo nucleic acid), which is defined as: “The structure and base sequence of RNA are

determinants of protein synthesis and the **transmission of genetic information**. Also called ribonucleic acid” (*American Heritage Dictionary*).

Note the above words, ”self-replication” and “transmission of genetic information.” Is Gene Edwards teaching that the “bride of Christ” has the same divine attributes as Jesus Christ? (“*She has a DNA that will match Jesus Christ*” and “*her divinity*”). DNA is a physical substance, inscribed upon DNA in encoded language that only certain protein molecules can decode. These are unseen but organized instructions for building and operating trillions of cells as one body. Edwards states what came out of Christ as “*water and that spirit a girl and she matches him, she has his dna*” is what came out of Jesus at the resurrection. How this is explained is not given.

We do not have the same DNA as the only God/man. This idea is too similar to the manifest sons of God heresy of the Latter Rain movement, only it is explained from another angle. We are not clones or copies. But Edwards goes further and shows word faith/ manifest sons of God leanings, saying this woman (who he claims is the church), has the same DNA as our Lord, our savior, and actually states she is divinity. We are divine? In what sense? Could believers who are creatures, and who are still sinful, be divine? Where does the Bible ever say we are divine (except for the one scripture that people seem to consistently misunderstand -John 10 which quotes negatively Psalm 82). Also we should not overlook that the Catholic church has a similar teaching like Edwards. “By entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God.’...For the Son of man became man so that we might become God.” The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods” (Catholic Catechism Pg. 116, #460)

For someone to say such a qualifying statement “*DNA that will match Jesus Christ*” they must arrive a different interpretation of Scriptures plain literal sense. Isaiah 43:10: “before me there was no God formed nor is there after me.” Edwards diminishes God as unique by lifting up man to be God’s equal.

This is exactly why I’m pointing this out. That is so concerning and even dangerous. Because Edwards says this is “*why I wrote the book, because I would like God’s people to see what they have.*”

In Edwards' book, *The Highest Life*, he writes the same errors: "*He [Jesus] received the DNA and genes of divinity from His Father. He is therefore the Son of God*" (p. 29). Does God who is spirit have genes? Is not God one? This is more than a unique way of explaining it. Jesus did not receive anything from the Father to make him deity as the Son. Jesus Christ, God the Son, has always existed with the Father. What makes all three persons God, is that they share the same essence.

*"Watch as the resurrection life slips into this man. See a new species being born. Behold the very first moment of a new creation: Simon Peter, of all people, the very first fruit of a new, and eternal, creation (p. 62). Peter, by adoption you have become the first fruit of a new human" (p. 63 *ibid.*)*

Hinn is very comfortable with this type of unsubstantiated interpretations, due to the fact that his ministry has been carried along with visitations, visions and dreams, failed prophecies and flawed Bible interpretations. He is able to welcome this with arms wide open and pass it on to his listeners and viewers as higher spiritual truth (which is not true Bible interpretation).

Edwards' "deeper life" teaching goes beyond the doctrine that is our Scripture. "*That is what God sees all the time her holiness, her perfection, her divinity*" says Edwards. If this were so then God would not have to chasten us or correct us if he sees us being sinless and doing no wrong. In my opinion Edwards has confused our position in Christ with the reality we live in here on earth.

In fact, this teaching has a very dark side to it. When one takes the position that we are already sinless and divine, it means we can do no wrong; that we are perfect and flawless--just like Jesus. Furthermore, it means that one is not watching out for deception. Something to seriously think about, considering the lack of discernment resting with Benny Hinn.

I will end with I John 2:21: "I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth." The truth is in God's word. When it is read and explained correctly, the truth comes alive.