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4/28/03

Dr. Timothy LaHaye
c/o Tyndale House Publishers
351 Executive Drive
Carol Stream, IL 60188

Dear Dr. LaHaye:

This is a follow-up to my email to you of April 24, 2003. I recently read your site's discussion of the Iraq mess, and was appalled that you run a site which uses extensive advertising to gain people's attention, that attempts -- quite blatantly -- to exploit the present disaster of American foreign policy to your benefit by claiming that the situation in Iraq is part of "end-time prophecy." Further, that you permit people to post rhetoric on that site regarding the SARS epidemic, in a transparent attempt to also tie that to your apocalyptic fantasies. Lastly, that you do not permit those who do not agree -- and who might, possibly, have some level of education - to post counters to the outrageous material that you present, even in your message boards, without first paying your (in my opinion) fraudulent ministry nearly \$30.00. Leaving people who visit the site the unappetizing choice of leaving your (again, in my opinion) lies unchallenged or... giving you money to spread them further.

That said sir, would you consider a message board debate with a layman who does not agree with the idea that Christianity is or ever should be "Biblically" centered (the Bible can only be interpreted in full light of present scientific knowledge, wisdom, and compassion) on the nature of the Bible and on whether it is God's verbally inspired word or not? I strongly maintain that it is not, and that it developed (with the help of the bishops of the time) out of the need for a holy book that agreed with the Nicean Creed -- the basis for proof of that is, I maintain, in the dramatic internal conflicts, failed prophecies, and lewd imaginations displayed for public consumption in the Bible.

If you are interested, I would be glad to start negotiating the terms of the engagement -- where (perhaps someplace more accessible than a paid board – belief.net perhaps? If they would allow it, and given the connections I am fairly sure that Agora Media could get belief.net to allow it.) how many postings, how often, etc. It must be open debate, and NO presumptions are allowed -- you are the one claiming extraordinary things for a book -- you have to prove them. My starting position is pretty evident above, and it should not be difficult for you to imagine my opening volley. This debate would be held (as mentioned above) via a message board from which both sides could record the discussion for posterity -- and thus there could be no question by anyone of what had been said before. No weaseling, so to speak.

Surely if you are convinced of the validity of your position, then this would offer nothing to you but the opportunity to prove a layman wrong. “Truth” would flow from your fingers and defeat me would it not? After all, doesn’t 2 Corinthians 10:5 say (RSV) “We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God?” An opportunity to destroy my “arguments” must be what I am offering you if you are right and I am wrong – and the Bible is more than a piece of historiographic mythological fiction, being exploited by theocrats to abuse those less educated in theological nuance. According to a fundamental interpretation of the Bible – you cannot fail.

I await your mailed reply.

Regards and may the peace of Lord Christ somehow find you,

Reynolds Jones

c: The Right Reverend John Shelby Spong (ret.)
The Venerable Reverend Susan Morrison
The Reverend Doctor Timothy Lake, SPC
[Distribution List]

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