

# Critical Issues Commentary

A BIBLICALLY BASED COMMENTARY ON ISSUES THAT IMPACT YOU

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## THE COLOSSIAN HERESY PART 3 RICK JOYNER VISITS HEAVEN

BY BOB DEWAAY

*"I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago— whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows— such a man was caught up to the third heaven. And I know how such a man— whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows— was caught up into Paradise, and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak." (2Corinthians 12:2-4)*

There is a recent genre of Christian literature that goes far beyond the fiction of Dante. We can read privileged individuals expound their meetings with Jesus, visitations to heaven, conversations with departed souls, and other incredible, mystical experiences. An earlier CIC article critiqued several such books.<sup>1</sup> Since Paul's experience is recorded in the Scriptures quoted above, we know that his is legitimate. We do not have the same certainty about these recent ones. They must be judged by the teachings of Scripture. It is important to note that Paul, "[H]eard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak." The modern visionaries apparently have no such restrictions. They write books and tell all.

Kenneth Hagin pioneered this approach with his book *I Believe in Visions*.<sup>2</sup> I still have my yellowed copy, with the price printed on the cover (\$1.50). Heresy was much cheaper in 1973. As a young man and a recent convert to Christianity, I read Hagin's book with interest. I was intrigued by stories of healings, visions, and his tour of heaven and hell led by Jesus Himself. As I read through the book, I was believing it and hoping to some day have such dramatic experiences. However, at the very end of the book something "Jesus" said to Hagin left me doubtful. Jesus supposedly said to Hagin, "If you learn to follow this inward witness, I will help

you in all the affairs of your life. If my children will listen to me, I will make them wealthy."<sup>4</sup> Although possessing little discernment that early in my Christian walk, I simply could not believe that Jesus would say that all Christians could be wealthy by following inner impressions properly. To my way of thinking, this called the entire book into question. If this was not really Jesus talking to Hagin, then I could not take as authoritative anything this book quoted directly from Jesus.

It turned out that Hagin's book with its revelations and teachings spawned the hugely successful movement known today as the Word of Faith movement. What is amazing is that teachings that came by revelation supposedly from Jesus Himself, were uncritically accepted and disseminated by so many. For example, in the final pages of the book, Jesus taught Hagin that Hagin had personal angels at his disposal who would go and get money for him, but that they would not unless Hagin gave these angels their instructions.<sup>5</sup> This idea of speaking to angels and sending them to bring us what we need became a popular teaching in the Word of Faith movement. It originated in a vision in which Jesus taught the method to Kenneth Hagin. The book of Colossians warns against using angelic intermediaries (Colossians 2:18).<sup>6</sup>

Today we have new books that take the vision of heaven genre much

farther than Hagin ever did. Rick Joyner is writing a series of books based on visions he received while in a series of dreams and trances.<sup>7</sup> Like Hagin, Rick Joyner ultimately has his own unique theology verified by the words of Jesus. Joyner talks with Jesus, elite prophets, angels, and departed saints who all provide a rather elaborate confirmation of his Latter Rain theology.<sup>8</sup> God is sending to the earth an army of prophets who have ascended to higher level experiences and hold the key to raising up an end times army which will win the final battle over Satan. In Rick Joyner's book *Jesus Himself* teaches Latter Rain theology. Joyner quotes Jesus directly:

I will make more of My grace, and more of My power available to the last day church, because she must accomplish more than the church in any age has yet accomplished. The last day believers will walk in all of the power that I demonstrated, and more, because they will be the final representatives of all who have gone before them. The last day church will demonstrate My nature and My ways as they have never been demonstrated before by men.<sup>9</sup>

Can we believe that Jesus really said that to Rick Joyner? This is a claim that the church will reveal Jesus' power better than Jesus Himself did when He was on the earth. Jesus is God Incarnate, sinless, and all powerful. He claimed to have fully revealed the Father before men, so much so that He could say, "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). How can the church demonstrate Jesus' nature better than Jesus Himself did? This cannot be true.

It is interesting that what Joyner learns from Jesus is somewhat different from what Hagin learned. Jesus told Hagin that if Christians followed inner revelations more clearly, then Jesus would be able to make them wealthy. The Jesus who spoke to Joyner teaches mysticism to be sure, but emphasizes

self-denial and other aspects of the pietistic/deeper life movement.<sup>10</sup> The Jesus of Hagin's book said nothing about an army of latter day prophets, but they are central in Joyner's. What is revealing is that both of them find justification for their own theological streams in the revelations they receive from Jesus Himself. Both the Word of Faith movement and the Latter Rain movement have serious theological problems. Rather than interacting with their critics in a scholarly, Biblical manner, the leaders of these movements go to heaven and talk to Jesus Himself to find confirmation of their own doctrines.

Another similarity between Hagin and Joyner is that they seek to silence their critics by inferring that God may kill some of those who do not listen to them. For example, Hagin quoted Jesus, "If I give you a message for an individual, a church, or a pastor, and they don't accept it, you will not be responsible. . . There will be ministers who don't accept it and will fall dead in the pulpit."<sup>11</sup> Joyner is more subtle. Joyner speaks to a departed saint in heaven who was a contemporary on earth. This person had been allowed to die of a disease and was in the lowest ranks of heaven.<sup>12</sup> This remorseful dead person confesses to Joyner, "I began to touch the Lord's anointed, and to do His prophets harm."<sup>13</sup> This phrase is from an Old Testament passage about Israel and the patriarchs that has nothing to do with supposed end time prophets.<sup>14</sup> So Joyner misuses Scripture through the mouth of a departed soul (which by the way is necromancy, forbidden in Scripture<sup>15</sup>). The saint further explains: "We sowed fear and division throughout the church, all in the name of protecting the truth. In my self-righteousness I was headed for perdition. In His great mercy the Lord allowed me to be struck by a disease that would bring about a slow and humiliating death."<sup>16</sup>

Accordingly, people who are concerned enough about the truth to correct false prophets are killed by the Lord. How handy and self-insulating this is for Joyner and his cohorts! Joyner goes on to pile up the veiled warnings

against his potential critics through the mouth of the now dead ex-critic: "Many of the attacks that came against you were from those whom I agitated and encouraged in their assaults on others."<sup>17</sup> Can Rick Joyner do anything he pleases, however unbiblical, and not worry about the saints being shown the difference between Biblical truth and Joyner's error, all because God will quickly kill those who disagree? An honest Bible teacher would welcome Bereans who search the Scripture and be willing to defend his perspective through scholarly exegesis and sound doctrine. How unethical to merely threaten dissenters with imminent judgment and death.

### THE COLOSSIAN HERESY TAUGHT FROM "HEAVEN"

In the rest of this article I will show how the visions in Joyner's book promote the very heresy that Paul warned against in Colossians 2. In fact, the great detail to which the book *The Final Quest* follows the teachings warned against in Colossians is amazing. I cannot speculate why, other than that God warns us about things for a reason. The warnings of Colossians 2 were given to help people in Paul's day who were seduced by visionaries who had angelic intermediaries, an elitist version of Christianity, and special information that would free people from the hostile powers (*stoicheia*). Historically speaking, heresy is always repeated in subsequent generations in other forms. As far as heresy that is seducing contemporary Christians, it seems the Colossian heresy is the most prominent.

### ELITISM

Paul warned, "Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind," (Colossians 2:18) In part 1 of this series of articles I discussed the key Greek word "embateuein," which means "having entered" in the grammatical form it takes in Colossians 2:18.<sup>18</sup> We saw that certain elitists had experienced a special mystical experience that

involved the *stoicheia* (hostile powers), angelic intermediaries, and an enlightenment that made them immune from the hostile powers. "Having entered" meant now being in a state of freedom that ordinary Christians do not have.

Joyner's book begins with a vision of demonized Christians who are prisoners of demonic vultures.<sup>19</sup> These Christians have only the vomit of the vultures for their food.<sup>20</sup> The Christians are a horrid lot, being ridden by demons: "[T]hese demons were urinating and defecating upon the Christians they rode."<sup>21</sup> When Joyner tried to warn these wretched, demon-defiled, Christian prisoners, "[M]any of them started reaching for their arrows to shoot at me."<sup>22</sup> Again, notice how cleverly Joyner wards off criticism — those who "shoot at" him are demon-desecrated prisoners who feed on buzzard vomit. The hope for these miserable Christian wretches? — Joyner and others who share his experiences. There is a Christian army that is being raised up, who are going up the "mountain" to higher level experiences. However, most of them were a mess too, not ready for battle.<sup>23</sup>

The problem in Colossae was that false teachers were telling the Christians that they were still under the domination of the hostile powers. To counter this claim, Paul taught that the Christians were: transferred into Christ's kingdom (1:13), attached to the head, Christ, who is above all powers (1:16-18), reconciled to Christ (1:21-23), having all wisdom and knowledge in Christ (2:2,3), being complete in Christ (2:10), and alive, forgiven, and victorious over the rulers and powers (2:13-15). Compare that picture to Joyner's version where most Christians are a pathetic, demon-driven lot:

I quickly thought about the mob behind the army [these are Christians who did not think the Lord would let anything bad happen to them — Joyner 23] and ran to see what had happened to them. It seemed impossible but the scene among them was even worse. Thousands lay on the ground wounded and groaning. The sky over them was darkened

by the vultures that were carrying them off to become prisoners of the enemy. Many of those who were not wounded just sat in a stupor of unbelief, and they, too, were easily carried away by the vultures.<sup>24</sup>

Clearly, Joyner's idea is very much like the false teachers in Colossae. The hostile powers would dominate Christians unless the Christians shared the elitist's special knowledge of the workings of the *stoicheia* and were initiated into a higher order Christianity. Joyner's journey up the mountain to the third heaven was about finding the answer and bringing it back to help the demonized Christian hoards. Certain elite Christians make it up the mountain to be congratulated by Jesus, while the ordinary Christians are stuck in demonic, spiritual squalor.

The elitist teachers in Colossae claimed to "have entered" a higher order experience and found freedom from the hostile powers. This is exactly the claim Rick Joyner makes about himself. After making up the mountain and being congratulated by Jesus Himself for reaching the top,<sup>25</sup> Joyner eats of the tree of life,<sup>26</sup> and is then taught mysticism of the "Star Wars" sort by an angel: "What you see with the eyes of your heart is more real than what you see with your physical eyes."<sup>27</sup> This Greek dualism is not dissimilar to pagan ideas in first century Colossae, and taught by an angel nonetheless. The tree of life and garden that Joyner experienced were to always be with Joyner, because he could then after leave the "real" world that is not actually real in his mystical scheme of things, and enter the more "real" inner world that would take him back to the higher level.<sup>28</sup> The angel, Wisdom (who later is Jesus Himself) told Joyner, "But this dream is more real than what you think of as real. . . . In dreams they [angels] can bypass the fallen mind of man and go straight to the heart."<sup>29</sup>

Let us understand more clearly what Joyner was taught in his mystical experience. First, what is this eating of the tree of life? Biblically, either all true Christians have eaten of it when they

met Christ through the cross or none have. The tree of life signified living forever. All Christians have been given eternal life. So what did Joyner experience that the rest of us lack? Second, the mind/heart dualism that was taught by angels in heaven is very unbiblical. The Bible does not teach that the mind is fallen and the heart is not. In the New Testament, the heart stands for the whole inner person, which includes the mind.<sup>30</sup> For example, the terms mind and heart in this passage occur in a synonymous parallelism: "*This is the covenant that I will make with them After those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws upon their heart, And upon their mind I will write them,*" (Hebrews 10:16). How can revelation by-pass the mind? If the mind is not involved, nothing was revealed, because the mind is the faculty for reasoning and understanding. Third, the dualistic idea that the material world we see with our eyes is less **real** than the unseen world is completely unbiblical. This false concept was behind the gnostic thinking that John refuted in 1John. So on Biblical grounds alone we know that this is not really Jesus speaking to Rick Joyner, because Jesus does not teach Greek dualism.

The gnostics taught that the material world was evil and therefore lesser than the spiritual realm. Here is what the angel Wisdom taught Rick Joyner:

Part of John's revelation was from the third heaven, but most of it was from the second heaven. The first heaven was before the fall of man. The second heaven is the spiritual realm during the reign of evil upon the earth. The third heaven is when the love and domain of the Father will again prevail over the earth through the King.<sup>31</sup>

This scheme has nothing to do with the idea of the third heaven in Scripture. In Scripture it is the dwelling place of God. In **1Corinthians 12:2,3** the terms "third heaven" and "paradise" are used synonymously. Lenski comments on this passage: "The first heaven is that of the clouds, the second that of the far firmament of the sky and stars, the

third is the actual abode of God, of the angels, and of departed saints in glory."<sup>32</sup> The idea that the second heaven is the "spiritual realm" now, is completely foreign to anything taught in the Bible. It is very much like the teachings of pagan dualists. Though Joyner claims to not be adding new revelations to the Bible, this teaching of the three heavens being epochs of history on the earth is clearly a new revelation. Since it is put in the mouth of the angel Wisdom who later reveals Himself as Jesus, it constitutes adding to the Bible. What could be more authoritative than direct quotations from Jesus Himself?

There is even a stronger connection to the warnings in **Colossians 2:18** in what happens next in Joyner's "magical mystery tour" of the third heaven. Joyner is given a special armor and shield: "It was then I first noticed the glory of the Lord was emanating from my armor and shield."<sup>33</sup> The false teachers of Colossae claimed to be judges because of "having entered." Here is what the angel Wisdom told Rick Joyner:

[Y]ou can enter Paradise at any time. The Lord, His Paradise, and this mountain, are all abiding in you, because He is in you. What were but foretastes before, are now a reality to you because you have climbed the mountain. The reason you can see me and others cannot, is not because I have entered your realm, but because you have entered mine.<sup>34</sup>

Obviously, this puts Joyner above ordinary Christians because of "having entered." Due to this experience, Joyner was able to easily defeat the enemy. He became a "dreaded champion," who is the object of the awe of angels.<sup>35</sup> Because of his diligence and skill at climbing to higher levels, he became part of a group of "great champions" who could destroy the enemy.<sup>36</sup> This is precisely what the false teachers at Colossae claimed: that they had entered, that they had access to angelic intermediaries, and because of these things were free from the hostile powers and were in position to help the lesser Christians who were under these powers.

Interestingly, Joyner does not deny elitism when questioned about it. On his website he answers a question about elitism:

**Q. Am I trying to start an elite group of Christians?**

**A.** Absolutely. I will not apologize for the fact that I am on a quest to find Christians who will rise above the lukewarm and fearful to be true knights of the cross, true nobility in the earth that will not compromise the biblical standards for morality, integrity, and commitment to sound biblical truth.<sup>37</sup>

I am truly amazed that one who wrote such a grossly unbiblical book could claim commitment to "sound biblical truth." F.F. Bruce writes in his commentary on **Colossians 2:18**, "Some people love to make a parade of exceptional piety. They pretend to have found the way to a higher plane of spiritual experience, as though they had been initiated in sacred mysteries. . . ." <sup>38</sup> Given such lofty claims, it is ironic that Joyner also claims superior "humility."

### SUPERIOR HUMILITY

When studying for the previous articles on the Colossian heresy, I came across a word from the Greek that was used twice at the end of Colossians 2. It is the word "humility." It appears in the Greek of **Colossians 2:18**, in the phrase *thelo\_n en tapeinophrosune\_* (willing in humility). The KJV translates it "voluntary humility," while the NASB translates it "self-abasement." The same Greek word for humility is used in Paul's description of the false teachings at Colossae in **Colossians 2:23**, again translated "humility" in the KJV and "self-abasement" in the NASB. Quoting the KJV which is more literal, "*Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility. . .*" (**Colossians 2:23a**). The key question is this: what does humility have to do with elitism? The false teachers claimed that they were more spiritual, had superior experiences, were above being touched by the *stoicheia*, and thus were the judges of the lesser Christians. That hardly seems like humility.

When reading *The Final Quest*, Paul's use of the term "humility" twice in Colossians 2 began to make a lot of sense to me. Rick Joyner makes continual reference to a "cloak of humility" that served as a cover for the underlying glorious shining armor that he was given because of having entered the higher realm of the third heaven. On the way back down from the heights, Joyner had problems seeing: "[I] had to shield my eyes from the glory emanating from my own armor to see anything."<sup>39</sup> The angel Wisdom gave him a drab "cloak of humility," that immediately enabled him to see clearly.<sup>40</sup> This cloak enabled him to see the enemy (hostile powers). So the cloak of humility gives Joyner insights about the *stoicheia* that the rest of us lack. Humility fits into his elitism just as it did in Colossae.

Not only that, but if we do not see his superiority, it is because we are full of pride! This comes from the angel Wisdom (Jesus), "*Only the soldiers who wear this cloak will recognize your authority.*"<sup>41</sup> Rick Joyner is a great prophet from God with special experiences, revelations for the end time church, direct quotations right from the mouth of Jesus and angels, and great power over Satan. You do not believe it? It is because you do not have enough humility to see his authority. Frankly, he takes self-validation to a new level. In essence his position is, "Either agree with me or you are full of pride and sitting under demonic influence." Heads I win, tails you lose. How do you argue with that? That is assuming God does not kill you like some others and make you apologize to Joyner on one of his visits to heaven.

F. F. Bruce comments on humility in **Colossians 2:18**, "Humility is a Christian virtue, but the 'humility' professed by the people here referred to is a counterfeit 'humility.' The truly humble person is unconscious of his or her humility, let alone taking delight or pride in it."<sup>42</sup> When Joyner speaks to the apostle Paul in heaven, Paul tells him, "[Y]ou do not understand just how much we have looked forward to meeting you. You are a soldier in the last battle; you are the ones whom everyone

here is waiting to meet."<sup>43</sup> Paul confesses to Joyner, "I fell short of all that I was called to do." But about Joyner the Apostle Paul proclaims, "[Y]ou can walk in much more than I did."<sup>44</sup> Such is Joyner's "humility."

Throughout the book we have Biblical reason not to believe what is claimed. In the Bible Paul said, "*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith*" (**2 Timothy 4:7**). The same Paul in heaven told Joyner he fell short. The Paul that Joyner meets in heaven soft peddles the value of his own inspired writings: "If what I have written is used as a foundation, it will not be able to hold the weight of that which needs to be built upon it. . . . You must see my teachings through the Lord's teachings, not try to understand Him from my perspective. His words are the foundation."<sup>45</sup> This means that the canonical books written by Paul are not really "the Lord's teachings." By Joyner's weird standards, supposedly learned from a departed saint, the "red letters" (some Bibles put Jesus' words in red) are more inspired and authoritative than the black ones. Paul claimed that the church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (the Biblical ones<sup>46</sup>), but now Paul in heaven denies what he had written under inspiration. What a horrible mess this makes of the authority of scripture. Paul tells Rick Joyner to take the actual words of Jesus as more authoritative than Paul's writings; but Rick Joyner's book supplies page after page of direct quotes of Jesus, verbatim, published for all to read. Dear readers, I hope you can see that this is a set up: it denigrates the importance of the epistles, elevates the words of Jesus, and then supplies more words of Jesus.

The humility of Joyner is mentioned often in his book. God knows the heart. The fact is, none of us is totally free from pride in this life. It is endemic to the fallen race. However, God does bring humility, freedom, and real love for Him and others. The truly humble, as Bruce said, do not know it, and are aghast at their own pride. We do not know our own hearts, much

less someone else's. Yet Jesus told Rick Joyner that he could gain complete knowledge of others like Jesus has,

This knowledge [about some people's illnesses] comes when you touch My mind to just a small degree. I know all things. If you were to fully have My mind you would be able to know everything about everyone that you encounter, just as you have begun to experience here. . . . When you know My heart, then the eyes of your heart will be opened. Then you will see as I see, and you will do what I do.<sup>47</sup>

Besides being awash in a sea of subjectivism, there is a serious problem with the idea that Rick Joyner can know everything about others like Jesus knows. The problem is that God does not dispense the ability to fully know the hearts and minds of others. We do not fully know our own hearts. "*The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds*" (Jeremiah 17:9,10).

#### JUDGMENT BEFORE THE TIME

Paul told the Corinthians, "*Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God*" (1Corinthians 4:5). We do not know the motives of anyone's heart. We are to judge teachings in light of Scripture and lives by their fruits, but the inner motives of the heart are hidden from us. Since only God knows the heart, only God can be the final judge. God's judgment is yet future. Neither the judgment seat of Christ (2Corinthians 5:10) nor the great white throne judgment (Revelation 20:11) have happened yet. Amazingly, Rick Joyner claims that the final rewards of certain individuals have already been revealed to him. He learns about this through interviews with the departed.

The interviews with two un-named

individuals, whose identities are not hard to guess, are very revealing. Joyner saw a man he knew on a great throne in heaven.<sup>48</sup> From Joyner's description, it was apparently the heretical Latter Rain teacher William Branham. Jesus told Joyner this about the man: "He was a messenger to My last day church, but the church could not hear him for reasons you must understand in due time. He did fall into discouragement and delusion for a time and his message was distorted. It must be recovered. . . ." <sup>49</sup> So Joyner sees that Branham (if that is who it was) is greatly rewarded and that Branham's message must be recovered.

Previously Joyner had met another departed saint, "I recognized him as one I had considered as one of the greatest Christian leaders of all time."<sup>50</sup> The man was not well rewarded in heaven: "Seeing this man in the company of 'the foolish virgins' was the greatest surprise I had yet."<sup>51</sup> The man is called, "the famous Reformer."<sup>52</sup> According to Rick Joyner's interview with the Reformer, he had been allowed to die early.<sup>53</sup> The Reformer confesses to Joyner, "By the end of my life I was actually an enemy of the true gospel, at least in practice, even if my teachings and writings seemed impeccably biblical."<sup>54</sup> He also confesses, "I did trust in the cross for my own salvation, even though I actually kept other men from it, leading them to myself rather than to the Lord."<sup>55</sup> There is more along these lines, with Joyner also interviewing the man's wife.

So in Joyner's scheme of judgment, those who go off into heresy are sitting on thrones next to Jesus and those who defend the faith in a scholarly manner are on the lowest rung of heaven. He also finds his unbiblical Latter Rain theology in this part of the book. That the Reformer is a "foolish virgin," is a reference to the elitist idea that only some Christians are a part of the bride of Christ. Rather than just trying to prove from Scripture that his elitism is true, he seeks to prove it through the mouths of judged, contrite, departed saints. Throughout the book, those who contend for the faith, correct false

teaching, and are concerned with scholarly study are always shown in a bad light. They are stuck partly up the mountain fighting for some doctrine while the truly enlightened ones enter the highest realm.<sup>56</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

It is hardly noteworthy that Rick Joyner and those of his ilk teach mysticism, elitism, and portray an anti-scholastic bias. Their theological roots are deep in such approaches. What is so very disturbing about *The Final Quest* is the way these theological ideas are taught. Rather than trying to justify elitism from Scripture, he puts it in the mouth of Jesus, angels and departed saints. His whole scheme is rife with elitism and works righteousness. By having Jesus teach it, how is one to correct it, or prove Joyner wrong? It is not like we can have our own journey to heaven, talk to Jesus and Paul, and ask if they really told Rick Joyner these things. Since Joyner claims to already know the results of judgment (at least in certain cases) before the fact, the reader is bullied and intimidated into accepting his unbiblical scheme. Those who did not promote mystical and elitist versions of Christianity are found to have died young and lost most of their rewards. Those who do not see Joyner's "authority" are full of pride. Those who correct error are under horrific demonic influence, unable to find freedom unless the "eagles" (prophets like Joyner who have entered the highest realm and come back to help the wretched masses of ordinary Christians), come to our aid.

As we have seen, Rick Joyner's teachings are nearly identical to those Paul warned against in **Colossians 2**. Having "entered," he is now claiming to be able to judge, discern, and hold the key to freedom from the hostile powers. Since this is the case, we should simply take Paul's advice about it. He told us three things to do with Joyner and others like him: 1) "See to it that no one takes you captive" (lit. carry you away as plunder — **Colossians 2:8a**); 2) "Let no one act as your judge" (**Colossians 2:16a**); and 3) "Let no one keep

defrauding you of your prize" (lit. "act as an umpire and disqualify you" — **Colossians 2:18a**). If we refuse to believe that Joyner's direct quotations of Jesus are really Jesus' words, we are being wise, not putting ourselves under judgment. We will not lose our "prize" because we fail to let supposed prophets lead us up the "mountain" to the third heaven. God will not kill us because we see how unbiblical Joyner's book is and warn people about it. Paul says of the elitist teachers, "[A]nd not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God" (**Colossians 2:19**). The entire body, even the seemingly least significant member, is held together by Christ, and our growth is due to the grace given to us by Christ through the cross. No elitist teacher can "disqualify" even the neediest saint. Every part of the body is supplied by the head, Christ, without intermediaries, angelic or human. So do not fear the Rick Joyners of the world; they cannot take away your prize.

#### END NOTES

1. Issue 54, *Visiting Heaven and Hell*; [www.twincityfellowship.com/cic/articles/issue54.htm](http://www.twincityfellowship.com/cic/articles/issue54.htm)
2. Kenneth E. Hagin, *I Believe in Visions*; (Revell: Old Tappan, NJ, 1972).
3. Throughout the rest of this article, I will not put quotation marks around the "Jesus" who speaks to Hagin and Joyner. Though the evidence shows that this was not the Jesus of the Bible, I will dispense with the quotation marks for the ease of writing and reading.
4. Hagin, *Visions*, 117.
5. *Ibid.* 124 - 126.
6. Clinton E. Arnold in *The Colossian Syncretism The Interface between Christianity and Folk Belief at Colossae*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 101. In discussing the phrase *the skeia to n aggelon* (translated 'worship of angels'), argues that phrase did not likely mean direct worship of angels, because neither Jew nor Christians would do that, but more likely in the folk context it mean "veneration." Arnold writes about this, "People

- called on the angels are intermediaries of God to protect them from the evil powers . . . They probably also called on angels for revelation that would have taken place in a visionary manner."
7. The first of these, Rick Joyner, *The Final Quest*, (Morning Star: Charlotte, 1996) tells of the means of receiving these experiences; 10 - 12.
  8. CIC issue 66 discusses the basic ideas of the Latter Rain Movement: [www.twincityfellowship.com/cic/articles/issue66.htm](http://www.twincityfellowship.com/cic/articles/issue66.htm)
  9. Joyner, *Quest*, 137. The idea that the last day church will do greater miracles than Jesus did is not Biblical. See CIC Issue 65 for Biblical evidence that this teaching is in error: [www.twincityfellowship.com/cic/articles/issue65.htm](http://www.twincityfellowship.com/cic/articles/issue65.htm)
  10. See Joyner, *Quest*, 140 where "Wisdom" (Jesus when in angelic form walking with Joyner) tells Joyner, "If you really desire to be even closer to Me than Paul was, you can. Some will want this, and they will want it badly enough to lay aside anything that hinders their intimacy with Me to give themselves fully to it, and they shall have what they seek."
  11. Hagin, *Visions*, 115.
  12. Joyner, *Quest*, 107, 108.
  13. *Ibid.* 107.
  14. This is from Psalm 105:15 which is about the patriarchs in particular and Israel in general and has nothing to do with New Testament prophets. All Christians are equally anointed according to the New Testament. See: CIC issue 5; [www.twincityfellowship.com/cic/articles/issue5.htm](http://www.twincityfellowship.com/cic/articles/issue5.htm)
  15. Also consider this passage: "And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, in order that those who wish to come over from here to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us" (**Luke 16:26**). See **Deuteronomy 18:11**.
  16. Joyner, *Quest*, 108.
  17. *Ibid.* 109.
  18. See CIC Issue 69: [www.twincityfellowship.com/cic/articles/issue69.htm](http://www.twincityfellowship.com/cic/articles/issue69.htm)
  19. Joyner, *Quest*, 19-22.
  20. *Ibid.* 21
  21. *Ibid.*
  22. *Ibid.*
  23. *Ibid.* 22,23.
  24. *Ibid.* 24.

25. *Ibid.* 35.
26. *Ibid.* 41.
27. *Ibid.* 42.
28. *Ibid.* 44.
29. *Ibid.*
30. See *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*; Vol III; (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1965), s.f. *kardia*, 611, 612.
31. Joyner, *Quest*, 45.
32. R.C.H. Lenski, "2Corinthians" in *Commentary on the New Testament*; (Augsburg: Minneapolis, 1963) Hendrikson reprint edition, 1293.
33. Joyner, *Quest*, 48.
34. *Ibid.* 50.
35. *Ibid.* 56.
36. *Ibid.* 27.
37. Joyner from his website: [http://mornings.temp.veriohosting.com/pages/questions/answer\\_index/Oct\\_1\\_2001\\_Print.html](http://mornings.temp.veriohosting.com/pages/questions/answer_index/Oct_1_2001_Print.html)
38. F.F. Bruce, "Colossians in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*; (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1984) 117.
39. Joyner, *Quest*, 50.
40. *Ibid.* 51.
41. *Ibid.*
42. Bruce, *Colossians*, 118.
43. Joyner, *Quest*, 131.
44. *Ibid.* 132, 133.
45. *Ibid.* 133, 134.
46. Ephesians 2:20; 1Corinthians 3:10; See CIC Issue 66 for Biblical evidence for this: [www.twincityfellowship.com/cic/articles/issue66.htm](http://www.twincityfellowship.com/cic/articles/issue66.htm)
47. Joyner, *Quest*, 130.
48. *Ibid.* 144, 145.
49. *Ibid.* 145.
50. *Ibid.* 95.
51. *Ibid.* 96.
52. *Ibid.* 98.
53. *Ibid.* 97.
54. *Ibid.* 96.
55. *Ibid.* 97.
56. *Ibid.* 49.

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PO. Box 8068  
Minneapolis, MN 55416  
612-874-7484  
[www.twincityfellowship.com](http://www.twincityfellowship.com)  
email:  
[pastorbob@twincityfellowship.com](mailto:pastorbob@twincityfellowship.com)