

Letters to the Editor

“Sinners in the Arms of a Loving God” article was awesome! I keep recommending it to people. But I couldn’t seem to find who authored it. Was this an oversight? If so, could you let me know who the author was?

LO, California

The author’s by-line was inadvertently left off this article. It was written by Paul Kroll.

I truly enjoy *Odyssey* magazine and appreciate the work you have done towards the spreading of God’s word. I very much enjoyed the article by Mr. William Seymour on the Pentecostal surge in the church today. In regards to speaking in “tongues,” what is the WCG position on this doctrine? It is obviously a significant component in the New Testament Church.

TT, email

We are not a tongues-speaking church

and our worship services do not include tongues-speaking. We neither discourage nor encourage tongues-speaking in private or in small groups where everyone agrees to the practice. For articles about spiritual gifts and tongues-speaking, please go to our website at: www.wcg.org/lit/spiritual_gifts/default.htm

My grateful thanks to the author of the article “Sinners in the Arms of a Loving God.” Not only did it share the truth about the biblical “hell” concept, but also revealed a common hypocrisy held by many people professing Christianity. On the one hand these believers eagerly mouth abundant words of praise, honor and adoration towards a God of love, mercy and forgiveness. Yet deep down inside they also harbor a satanic concept of God as a sadistic

fiend tormenting his detractors forever and ever—a tragic contradiction to which they seem oblivious. Scriptures like 1 Tim. 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9 and Rom. 11:26 give us a heavenly glimpse into God’s plan for the billions who have never embraced Jesus as their Lord and Savior. I believe this understanding of God’s plan for all mankind is a major gift of hope the Worldwide Church of God has been given to share with the world.

JK, email

Letters for this section should be addressed to “Letters to the Editor.” Send your letters to Worldwide Church of God, PO Box 5005, Glendora, CA 91740-0730, or by e-mail to john.halford@wcg.org.

The editor reserves the right to use letters so addressed in whole or in part, and to include your name and edit the letter for clarity and space. We welcome your comments.

I’ve Been Reading...

Everything Must Change: Global Crisis and Revolution of Hope

by Brian McLaren

Reviewed by Brenda Steffen

My father-in-law often says, “Change is as good as a holiday.” I tend to agree—even something as simple as a change in seasons (especially to the warmer ones) often gives us the same lift as taking a vacation.

But change is also feared. Most of us have a comfort zone we don’t like breached. Even our churches have programs, events and people who make us feel comfortable, and we usually don’t like someone coming in and rocking the boat.

It’s little wonder then, that Brian McLaren’s latest book, *Everything Must Change*, has gotten mixed reviews. It is a bold title, but then, this is a bold book. Like him or not, McLaren has something to say, and chances are, it may crack the barrier to your own comfort zone.

Everything Must Change proposes that our world is operating as a “suicide machine,” spiraling into chaos as a result of our dysfunctional approach to prosperity, equity, security, and spirituality. The author suggests we’ve dug our own grave through warfare, globalization and an economy in which the rich get richer and the poor even poorer.

McLaren asks two main questions: what are the biggest problems in the world, and what does Jesus say about them? These are not questions often asked by any church, and yet shouldn’t they be topics of discussion amongst those of us who follow Jesus—a Jesus who, McLaren suggests, came not just to save us from our sins, but



to teach us how to live with justice, peace, equality and compassion in this world.

I have struggled with many of the issues McLaren faced as he traversed the globe. Through it all, I have ached and still ache for the church to return to “the Way,” as McLaren states—the term used to describe the community of believers in the book of Acts. Those believers had to learn how to share everything with each other and with others, and through their witness of the good

news, they stood in sharp contrast to the negative social issues of their day. Yet it often seems that churches around the world focus more on the style of worship or the size of the building, than on racism, warfare, poverty or the environment.

This book was an overwhelming reminder for me of how messed up our world’s society has become. McLaren’s ideas, however, still seem revolutionary to some people. This is not a feel-good book. Some readers may find his tone patronizing, and even in some instances, heretical. I encourage readers of this book not to get bogged down in one or two points of disagreement, but to read the book in its entirety with a global image in mind and see why McLaren insists that our view of Jesus and our role in society *must* change.

Brian McLaren, *Everything Must Change: Jesus, Global Crises, and a Revolution of Hope*, Thomas Nelson, 2007. 256 pages. \$21.99.