



STATEMENT DE160

D-Day Declarations

The prophet: JOHN HINKLE.

The platform: The Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN).

The prophecy: "The most cataclysmic experience that the world has ever known since the Resurrection...is going to happen."

Hinkle had everyone's ear. He claimed that God, "in the most awesome voice," told him that "on Thursday, June the ninth (1994), I will rip the evil out of this world,"²

In his August 1993 newsletter, TBN president Paul Crouch elaborated on Hinkle's pronouncement. The voice, said Crouch, was "so loud and clear that it sounded like a great bell being rung by his ear" (emphasis in original).³

Four days before this apocalyptic event was to take place. Hinkle, pastor of Christ Church Los Angeles (formerly Christ Church Unity), assured parishioners that "the glory of the Lord is coming upon everyone in this world in such a way they will see it outside but 10,000 times more they will feel it inside."⁴ As thousands waited anxiously for "D-Day" to arrive. Crouch assured his vast television audience, "John has promised to be our special guest on June 9th, 1994— that is, if we have not already been lifted to meet the Lord in the air!"⁵

Hinkle was a no-show on June 9th. And so was the "cataclysmic experience."

Neither Crouch nor the pastor he made famous apologized for the false prophecy. Instead, they employed a tactic that worked for the Watchtower Society some 80 years earlier. Like the Jehovah's Witnesses who predicted Christ would return in 1914, they proclaimed that their prophecy had come to pass — *only invisibly*.

Crouch hedged his bets early. On June 2nd he declared, "Something may happen invisibly."⁶ Hinkle, however, waited for June 9th to come and go. Then he sent his congregation the following communique: "At first myself and others were very disappointed it did not take place in the way we expected. It did begin, and is continuing to take place, but it happened in the spiritual realm first."⁷

In this final decade of the second millennium, prophetic pronouncements such as Hinkle's seem almost to have become the rule rather than the exception. A growing cacophony of voices now claim to have discovered the date of Christ's return.

- Edgar Whisenant said Christ's second coming would occur in 1988. Millions fell for his Scripture-twisting tactics in the runaway bestseller, *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988*.⁸
- Harold Camping predicted Christ would return in September of 1994. In his best-selling volume titled *1994? he wrote, "When September 6, 1994 arrives, no one else can become saved, the end has come."*⁹
- Lester Sumrall points us to the year 2000. In his book, *I Predict 2000 A.D.*, Sumrall wrote, "I predict the absolute fullness of man's operation on planet Earth by the year 2000 A.D., Then Jesus Christ shall reign from Jerusalem for 1000 years."¹⁰

As the year 2000 approaches, millennial madness will continue to escalate to near-epidemic proportions. Thus the alarm must be sounded against what I refer to as "current events theology," "Cabbala theology," and "comic book theology."

"Current events theology" is focused on harmonizing items in the daily newspapers with the New Testament. One

CRI, P.O. Box 8500, Charlotte, NC 28271
Phone (704) 887-8200 and Fax (704) 887-8299

classic case in point involves a slew of ads placed by the Tara Center, a New Age organization, which proclaimed that the Christ — a.k.a., Lord Maitreya — would soon reveal himself. Upon stumbling onto this paid advertisement, a number of biblical prophecy pundits immediately jumped on it and began proclaiming that the Lord Maitreya was in fact the Antichrist (some even took out their own ads to make the announcement).¹¹ Huntington House Publishers released a book by self-proclaimed New Age expert Tiny Lawrence titled, *New Age Messiah Identified*. The so-called Lord Maitreya never revealed himself, and Lawrence was subsequently exposed as a hoax — a Mormon writing under an alias.¹²

“Cabbala theology” might best be described as assigning secret, rather than sacred, interpretations to Scripture. By way of illustration, Harold Camping suggests that the 2,000 demon -possessed pigs mentioned in the fifth chapter of Mark’s gospel actually represent 2,000 years. He then adds these 2,000 years to the time of Christ’s birth (which he believes to be 7 B.C.) to come up with his prediction that Christ would return in 1994!¹³

“Comic book theology” is equally absurd. Rather than focusing on the factual it focuses on the fanciful. Chick Publications, whose comic books and tracts run rampant in Christian circles, provides a perfect example. In “Chick’s World,” you can be sure of one thing: there will never be a shortage of conspiracies. Indeed, conspiracies can be easily found around every corner and in just about every nook and cranny. The list of conspirators includes the pope, Kathryn Kuhlman, and even CRI founder Walter Martin.¹⁴

Texe Marrs, another conspiracy alarmist, not only impugns the credibility of long -time evangelist Billy Graham but adds Christian statesman Chuck Colson to a roster of individuals who are supposedly being used by the Vatican in its global end-time schemes. Marrs even makes CRI part and parcel of his Roman Catholic conspiracy theory, alleging that “CRI is a Vatican mouthpiece” and “Jesuit priest Mitchell Pacwa is a member of the [CRI] Board of Directors.”¹⁵

Tragically, wild speculations such as these are all too often circulated throughout the Christian community with reckless disregard for the reputations they injure. In the case of Texe Marrs, a cursory examination on his part would have revealed to him that CRI has no Vatican ties and has never had a Jesuit priest as a board member.¹⁶

In today’s world of discordant date-setters we must, as believers, abandon sensationalism and embrace scriptural truth. While no one knows exactly *when* Christ will return, we do know that He *will* return. In the meantime, we are called to be sober-minded and alert (1 Pet. 1:13). Indeed, we should be prepared as though Christ were coming this very moment and prepare as though He may not come for yet another millennium, — *Hank Hanegraaff*

¹John Hinkle, *Praise the Lord* (television program), Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), 25 January 1994.

²Ibid.

³Paul Crouch, “Send Us Around the World,” *Praise the Lord* (newsletter), August 1993, 2.

⁴John Hinkle, message delivered at Christ Church Los Angeles, 5 June 1994.

⁵Crouch, 2.

⁶Paul Crouch, *Praise the Lord* (television program), TBN, 2 June 1994

⁷John Hinkle, Further Message from John J. Hinkle Concerning 6/9/94” (personal letter) 15 June 1994.