



STATEMENT DL210

Counterfeit Critique

CHRISTIANITY TODAY'S REVIEW OF MY RECENT BOOK *COUNTERFEIT REVIVAL* is, as its title advertises, a “counterfeit critique.” When I first read it, Mark Twain’s words flashed across my consciousness: “A lie can travel halfway round the world while the truth is putting on its shoes.”¹ Since I can expect *Christianity Today* to allow me only a brief reply to James Beverley, the reviewer, in their letters column, I decided to take advantage of having my own column here in the JOURNAL to offer a more substantial response.

Beverley begins by mischaracterizing *Counterfeit Revival* as “misleading” and then proceeds to mislead his readers, using a variety of unprofessional techniques, such as “term switching,” “time twisting,” and “trashing tactics.” Beverley’s lack of objectivity is hardly surprising in light of the fact that he self-publishes materials in support of counterfeit revivalists. I was disturbed, however, to read about what Beverley refers to as “financial arrangements.” In fact, Vineyard pastor and Promise Keepers director James Ryle and other Vineyard leaders have made payments to Beverley.² Tom Stipe, former Vineyard board member and pastor of the Crossroads Church in Denver, was equally disturbed. In a statement to *Christianity Today*, he wrote,

[Beverley] represented himself to me as unbiased and neutral. He complained repeatedly about shouldering the cost of the trip himself and appealed to my generosity. I contributed as a friend not knowing that the Vineyard had, in effect, solicited Beverly [Sic] to write the anti-Hanegraaff literature under the auspices of “fresh research.” Further it is appalling to me to find my financial gift alluded to as proof of my awareness and support of Jim’s alleged fairness in approaching the issues. Aside from my concerns about the content, soundness and logic of Jim’s writings on this issue, my wife and I feel incredibly manipulated by a “hired gun” sent into the field masquerading as an unbiased researcher.³

In divulging what went on “behind the scenes” Stipe stated,

After some 30 hours of conversation with Jim Beverley over the last few years I believe him to be a consumer of counterfeit revivalist activities, not an unbiased researcher...I am not Jim’s doctor or judge. In fact I considered him a friend until observing the obsessive manipulations that lead [sic] to his latest book and the CT review...My church staff, leaders, as well as myself are amazed that *Christianity Today* would print the prejudiced as well as duplicitous views of Jim Beverley as a balanced review of Hank Hanegraaff’s *Counterfeit Revival*.⁴

While I do not wish to pass judgment on the motives of a person I hardly know, I would like to take a closer look at the *methods* he employed.

First, let’s take a look at his “term-switching” technique. Beverley accuses me of “nasty misrepresentation of key charismatic leaders.” To make his point, he writes: “Consider, for example, Hanegraaff’s assertion that Howard-Browne *denies* the deity of Christ in order to elevate himself” (emphasis added).⁵ What I actually wrote was: “Counterfeit Revival leaders like Howard-Browne *denigrate* the deity of Christ to elevate themselves” (emphasis added).⁶ While I provide ample evidence in *Counterfeit Revival* to substantiate that Howard-Browne *denigrates* the deity of Christ, I nowhere attempt to demonstrate that he *denies* the deity of Christ. Once Beverley has successfully completed his term switching, he has little difficulty in destroying a straw man of his own making.

Furthermore, let’s briefly examine the “time-switching” tactic that Beverley employs to impugn *Counterfeit Revival*. He writes, “Hanegraaff refers to a 1979 service where Wimber ‘turned his church into a laboratory and his church members into guinea pigs.’” Beverley goes on to assert, “The evening service in question was on Mother’s Day in 1980, not in 1979.”⁷ In reality, it is Beverley who should be corrected. Not only does Wimber disagree with the date

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suggested by Beverly, but also had Beverley objectively looked into the matter, he would have realized that 1979 is the only date that fits with undisputed facts in Vineyard history, as I have carefully documented in *Counterfeit Revival* (286-87). Because this date is crucial (Carol Wimber refers to what happened that day as the “watershed experience” of the Vineyard), and because other dates have been suggested (Carol Wimber claims it was 1981: John White says it was 1978; and John Wimber agrees with my conclusion that the year was 1979), I meticulously researched this issue. Had Beverley done likewise or even merely read the evidence I provided, he certainly could not have cited this as an example of poor research in *Counterfeit Revival*.

Finally, let’s look at the “trashing tactics” employed by Beverley. Not only does he use shrill and sarcastic language, referring to my work with words like “simplistic,” but, as previously documented, he also deceptively manufactures straw men and then sets them ablaze. He suggests that *Counterfeit Revival* is based on old and limited research. One need only read *Counterfeit Revival* in context or review the literally hundreds of bibliographic references and endnotes to dispel this outrageous assertion. It is true that I have done (and continue to do) exhaustive research on historical revivals. It is also true that I have gone back and researched the roots of movements like the Vineyard so that I might more accurately analyze their ripened fruit. But as Pastor Tom Stipe wrote in his response to *Christianity Today*, “To dismiss the theological seedlings of Wimber’s early teachings, which became the cornerstones of the Toronto and Pensacola movements, as ‘outdated’ is like relegating E=MC² as irrelevant because it’s old.”⁸

Ironically, while trashing *me*, Beverley self-righteously accuses me of “trashing” Todd Hunter, national coordinator of the Association of Vineyard Churches. Anyone who takes the time to check out Hunter’s words in context will agree that, unlike Beverley, I have accurately represented his remarks. The reality is that *Counterfeit Revival* has become the catalyst for open and honest dialogue between Vineyard leaders like Todd Hunter and CRI. One can only pray that men like Beverley will repent of practices like “term switching,” “time twisting,” and “trashing,” and participate in open, honest dialogue.

- Hank Hanegraaff

¹ Attributed.

² James Beverley, *Revival Wars* (n.p.: Evangelical Research Ministry, 1997), 10-11.

³ Letter from Tom Stipe to Michael Maudlin (managing editor, *Christianity Today*). 29 August 1997.

⁴ Personal fax to Hank Hanegraaff from Tom Stipe, 27 August 1997.

⁵ James Beverley, “Counterfeit Critique,” *Christianity Revival* 1 September 1997.59.

⁶ See Hank Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1997), 104-5.

⁷ Beverley, “Counterfeit Critique,” 60.

⁸ Fax to Hanegraaff from Stipe, 27 August 1997.