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# DISCERNMENT NEWSLETTER

“...how is it that ye do not discern this time?” Luke 12:56

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## An Endrun around Rom. 1 and Acts 17

*A gameplan of YWAM with reference to the “World Christian Gathering on Indigenous People” Movement (WCGIP)*

by Sandy Simpson and Mike Oppenheimer

*[Excerpted with permission from their new book, **Idolatry in Their Hearts: Startling Evidence of Idolatry and the Worship of False Gods in Every Culture Throughout the History of the World**]*

Daniel Kikawa, formerly working with YWAM and now with his own organization called Aloha Ke Akua, and Danny Lehmann, Director of YWAM Honolulu have repeatedly pulled Romans 1 and Acts 17 from their contexts in order to promote IPM [“Indigenous People Movement”] ideology. I have yet to hear them, or any other leader in the IPM for that matter, teach these Scriptures in context. Yanking Scriptures out of context is one of the first marks of false teaching.

On Daniel Kikawa's video called *God's Fingerprints In Japan* he quotes Romans 1:19-20 and Acts 17:26-28 out of context as he also did on the *Word to the World* radio show on KLHT on two separate programs spanning a few years. Never were these verses taught in their context but rather twisted to fit a particular agenda. Let's look at both cases:

### ROMANS 1:19-20

On the *Fingerprints* DVD Kikawa quotes from the NIV:

*Romans 1:19-20 ... what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.*

He also takes Romans 1 out of context in his latest interview on *Word to the World*.

*He was born in the center of civilization of that day. y'know the nexus of Europe and Asia and Africa, the civilization of that day and what did Jesus say is tell everybody that I came, y'know. Not that you don't know God or that you don't have no relationship with him and he's a foreign God to you. But that, that the son of your creator came who made himself known to as Rom. 1:20 says and so this is what we bring to them and we find that if there are people who are really seeking God, there are people like Jobs everywhere who know.*<sup>1</sup>

No explanation of context was given on either the video or in the radio interview. IPM leaders are constantly quoting Romans 1:20 out of context. They love to emphasize what is NOT the point of the passage. Of course the creation is obvious for men who want to look at it and understand it, thus understanding there has to be a Creator. Sure ... when men think about their nature they might possibly see that man is created in the image of God Who is Spirit. But that's about all they know. They know NOTHING of the Son, therefore they know NOTHING of salvation and sonship. What they don't quote is what follows because it destroys their argument that all nations, cultures and peoples are already worshipping the true God.

*Romans 1:21-25 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.*

As I stated in a previous article, the fact is that ALL Gentiles (1) did not glorify God (2) did not give thanks to God (3) were foolish (4) were futile in their thinking, their beliefs (5) exchanged the glory of God for images (6) were given over to sin (7) and exchanged the truth of God for a lie, worshipping created things instead of the Creator. This covers EVERYONE since Adam until God revealed Himself to Israel through the patriarchs, Moses and the prophets. This started at the fall. Adam and Eve “exchanged the truth of God for a lie” and it has been getting worse ever since.

The point of this passage also comes to light when you read what precedes it. Notice that the word “since” was taken out of verse 19 by Kikawa, possibly so that the sentence would read smoothly. But it does tend to make the reader assume that what was quoted in the video is a complete thought. Yet the word “since” means that we have to look back to what the passage states earlier.

*Romans 1:16-19 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith." The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.*

God made it plain to men that He was the Creator and had all power. But men, from the beginning, rejected God. Though they were created by God they could not be His children and He their Father. The wrath of God is coming on men who do not believe. What must they believe? The Gospel! The only way to be righteous before God is to believe in the Gospel message about Jesus Christ. There is no other way and “no other name” by which we may be reconciled with God except through His Son, Jesus Christ ... and His Son must be revealed by those who preach the Gospel. The power of salvation does not lie in the old gods renamed. It lies in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, revealed!

## ACTS 17:26-28

This passage, pulled from context, is what is used over and over again by the leadership of the IPM, which includes YWAM leaders, Daniel Kikawa, Richard Twiss, Terry LeBlanc and many other First Nations “Christian” leaders. This is how it was quoted on Kikawa's *Fingerprints* DVD:

*Acts 17:26-28 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'*

The writer of Acts, Luke, was quoting from the Old Testament. We can understand the context of Acts 17:26 by reading Deut. 32:7-11.

*Deut. 32:7-11 "Remember the days of old, Consider the years of many generations. Ask your father, and he will show you; Your elders, and they will tell you: When the Most High divided their inheritance to the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel. For the LORD'S portion is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance."*

God was setting the boundaries for the nations according to the children of Israel so that the Gentile nations would end up in proximity to Israel and thus possibly come to know the God of Israel. It was not that God was creating nations and giving them “promised lands”. He was going to spread Israel out among the nations as a witness from the establishment of Israel till the incarnation of Jesus Christ. After Jesus Christ the message of the Gospel would be spread through Jews and Gentiles who had come to understand and believe in the mystery of the Gospel.

The above erroneous interpretation of Acts 17 is reinforced by Danny Lehmann's statements on his program:

*Now yesterday Daniel, we closed our*

*broadcast by talking about the issue of Japan and how people have a hard time having the gospel being communicated to them because it sounds foreign... that's the big problem- whether its India or Thailand, Africa or Latin America. If God appears to be a foreign God it would be equivalent to us in America which is a normally Christian based society accepting Buddhism, because it sounds foreign to us. And in the Bible when Paul was preaching in Acts 17 it tells us that when he was talking about Jesus and the resurrection, they said "well he's talking about a foreign God" and he went on to bridge the gap there in a magnificent way there at Mars hill.*<sup>2</sup>

As I covered in a previous [chapter], Paul did preach the Gospel in terms that the Greeks could understand. He used the illustration of the “unknown god” which they were worshipping, with some sarcasm as scholars note, to point out that they did NOT know the true God at all, not to bridge a “gap” between them and their worship of an “unknown god”.

*Acts 17:23 For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.*

Barnes New Testament Notes states that an altar had been erected in Athens during a time of pestilence some 600 years before Christ because all the other "known" and named gods could not deliver them. Paul came and used this altar to illustrate that they did NOT know God at all, saying “Him I declare to you” in other words,

*“I make known to you his name, attributes, etc. ... In other circumstances it might seem to be presumptuous for an unknown Jew to attempt to instruct the sages of Athens. But here they had confessed and proclaimed their ignorance. By rearing this altar they acknowledged their need of instruction. The way was, therefore, fairly open for Paul to address even these philosophers, and to discourse to them on a point on which they acknowledged their*

*ignorance”.*<sup>3</sup>

An “unknown god” means they were worshipping something unknown, not known. *John Gill Expositor* states:

*“God is an unknown God to those who have only the light of nature to guide them; for though it may be known by it that there is a God, and that there is but one, and somewhat of him may be discerned thereby; yet the nature of his essence, and the perfections of his nature, and the unity of his being, are very little, and not truly and commonly understood, and the persons in the Godhead not at all, and still less God in Christ, whom to know is life eternal: hence the Gentiles are described as such who know not God.”<sup>4</sup>*

Another problem with Lehmann's analysis of this passage, out of context, is that most of the Greeks rejected the true God Paul was preaching because they did not believe in a resurrection.

*Acts 17:32-18:1 When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." At that, Paul left the Council. A few men became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others. After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.*

These WCGIP promoters keep claiming that the supreme beings of all cultures are YHWH. So if Paul was bridging a gap between YHWH and the supreme being of the Greeks, Zeus, he was doing a very poor job! As far as we know Paul was never invited back to the Areopagus to speak, so this invitation was really an empty one, designed to get him to shut up and leave. Only a few believed in Jesus Christ. Paul was not there to bridge a “gap” between an unknown foreign “supreme being” like Zeus, or an unknown god and YHWH. He was there to tell them that they had been acknowledging an unknown god among many other false gods and to use that as an illustration to show them they were in error and to preach the Gospel about Jesus Christ. This example of Paul, the only one in Scripture, does not justify telling people around the world that they have already been worshipping the true

God and just have to add Jesus Christ into the mix, and usually by the name of some foreign god. Paul was clear about the Gospel he preached:

*1 Corinthians 2:2 For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.*

Apparently, according to people like Kikawa, we now need to be experts in foreign gods to present the Gospel effectively, bridging the gap between false gods and the One True God. Paul resolved to be an expert in the Gospel! Lehmann goes on to say:

*"and isn't it interesting that he used the Greek word for God "theos" and he says I'm going to declare to you about that God."<sup>5</sup>*

"Theos" is a general word for "god" as is the word "god" in our language. This in no way shows that Paul was talking to them about YHWH when he said "unknown god". Paul simply talked about an unknown "god" (theos) then proceeded to tell them who YHWH is—the Triune God they knew nothing about and were not prepared to believe in.

The end result of teachings of the IPM are leading people to unrepentance for their cultures, for their demonic worship, and for their very lives. Yet the context of Act 17 is very clear:

*Acts 17:30-31 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."*

This verse goes to the heart of the error of the IPM. Those who lead others to be unrepentant about their traditions of men, their lifestyles, and even their worship of other "supreme beings" are in DIRECT opposition to the clear command of God for "all people everywhere to repent".

## ON THE ISSUE OF ABSTAINING

The endrun around these passages is leading people from every culture in the world toward unrepentance. But the IPM message, as illustrated in Kikawa's video and in IPM events, is decidedly aimed

at believers. This was evident by the fact that in Kikawa's *Fingerprints* video he apologized to Japanese Christians in a Baptist church in Japan. What is the purpose of this? The purpose is that the enemy wants to get First Nations Christians back to the worship and practices of their former heathen cultures!

Let me give you some examples from the Old Testament and the New Testament where the people of God were urged to get AWAY from cultural/religious activities as a witness of the Gospel of Christ. What IPM leaders are doing is basically trying to put a stamp of approval on cultural activities that are tied to false religions and false gods. In fact one of the big pushes in the IPM is to get people in every culture to go back to worshipping "God" by the name of their former "supreme being" deities. But God is clear that we are to worship Him and Him alone, and God has a name revealed first to the Jews and later to the Gentiles through Jesus Christ by way of Paul.

IPM leaders are teaching Christians to "redeem" their cultures by worshipping their former gods, pretending they are YHWH. To call Jesus by other names of gods is to blaspheme His name (Phil. 2:9-10)! There is salvation in only one name under heaven ... that is the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12). We are to worship God by His name, not in other names. 27 times the New Testament declares that we are to follow God in the name of Jesus Christ.<sup>6</sup>

We as true believers are to follow God first and where our cultures lead us into idolatry and sin we are to obey Jesus Christ and abstain from things tied to past false religions. Kikawa, in his video, left the door wide open for Christians to take part in the "Tea Ceremony" of the Buddhists in Japan, to worship at shrines and structures dedicated to false gods, to pray to Buddha with a hidden cross behind a wall, and then had the audacity to apologize for missionaries who told the people to get away from their false religions! Getting people to go back to the worship of false gods is one definition of "*doctrines of demons*" (1 Tim. 4:1).

Let's take a quick look at just a few examples from the Old Testament, among many, to see what God had to say about former cultural practices.

*Leviticus 18:3 You must not do as they do in Egypt, where you used to live, and you must not do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. Do not follow their practices.*

We are not to follow the cultural and religious practices of the heathen nations ALL Gentiles were bound to. When we become followers of the One True God we take on a new culture and religion, that of the worship of YHWH, and the practices we are taught in the Word of God. But even Israel disobeyed the Lord.

*1 Kings 14:24 There were even male shrine prostitutes in the land; the people engaged in all the detestable practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before the Israelites.*

*1 Kings 17:7-9 All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt from under the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshiped other gods and followed the practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before them, as well as the practices that the kings of Israel had introduced. The Israelites secretly did things against the LORD their God that were not right. From watchtower to fortified city they built themselves high places in all their towns.*

Yet IPM leaders want Christians to go back to their cultural practices including those tied to the worship of demonic false gods. It is worthy of note that Kikawa introduced ancient three-tiered watchtowers/high places in Japan as places of worship of "God". Kikawa picks out one supreme being and says the Japanese can continue to worship *Ama-No-Minaka-Nushi* (allegedly the high god) who is actually simply the "*Divine Lord of the Middle Heavens and god of the Pole Star*".<sup>7</sup> He is presented as part of three gods of Creation, thus promoting Tritheism instead of Trinitarianism, and tries to prove they are worthy of worship because of the ancient watchtowers. But notice from the verse above, the children of Israel were not to use the high places and watchtowers of the past for worship. For a partial list of the pantheon of gods, including a number of "supreme beings" of Japan, you can go to a number of web sites on the Internet. That Japan has a number of "supreme beings" is beyond dispute. Which supreme being among the vast pantheons of Japan is the true God? Just as in Greece the answer is "NONE"! All Gentiles were "*without hope and without God in the world*" until they heard the Gospel (Eph. 2:12).

Let's look at the consistency of Scripture in the New Testament in forbidding cultural practices tied to demonic worship. There were only a few suggestions of the Apostles for the Gentile Christians.

*Acts 15:20 Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. Acts 15:29 You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell.*

If this were today and the false apostles of the New Apostolic Reformation including their adherents in YWAM, the IPM and other affiliated organizations were actually leading the Church, there would be no rules given whatsoever. But these suggestions of the Apostles on things to avoid show real Holy Spirit-inspired depth of insight. We are to avoid immorality, avoid filthy pagan rituals like drinking blood and eating strangled animals, and stay away from cultural practices tied to the worship of false gods. We are here as salt and light in a dark world. We have a witness to live out before the world that involves not only what we say but what we do. Gentile Christians were to abstain from food to be sacrificed to idols. A lot of the meat sold in the public marketplaces of that time was for the express purpose of making sacrifices to idols. If nonbelievers saw Christians buying and eating this meat it would make them think that what they were doing was fine in the eyes of God, even though for Christians that meat was clean before God.

This illustration from Scripture has direct implications to what the IPM is leading Christians to do. How can you go to the ancient watchtowers/high places or tea rooms in Japan as a Christian, allegedly to worship God, and not legitimize the worship of demons there in the eyes of unbelievers? How can you practice the hula without changing the name, the movements, and the names of the gods being worshipped without legitimizing those who practice the hula in worship of false gods like Pele? How can you participate in an Indian powwow, beating drums, and summoning "Yohewa" without legitimizing the worship of the demonic deity the Great Spirit? The answer is—as Christians we lose our testimony before a sinful world, that continues in idolatry, when we do things

like the Apostles told the Gentile believers not to do. Even more seriously, Christians who do these things can expose themselves to demonic oppression through the types of practices advocated by the IPM.

### Endnotes

- 1—Daniel Kikawa, Word to the World with host Danny Lehmann, KLHT, Feb. 14/06, #7
- 2—Danny Lehmann, Ibid., Feb. 7/06, #2
- 3—Barnes New Testament Notes, ALBERT BARNES. PHILADELPHIA, August 25th, 1832.
- 4—John Gill Expositor, LONDON: PRINTED FOR MATHEWS AND LEIGH, 18 STRAND, by W. Clowes, Northumberland-Court, 1809, Edited and revised and updated by Larry Pierce, 1994-1995.
- 5—Danny Lehmann, Word to the World with host Danny Lehmann, KLHT, Feb. 7/06, #2)
- 6—Ac 2:38, 3:6, 4:10, 4:18, 4:30, 5:40, 8:12, 8:16, 9:27, 9:29, 15:26, 16:18, 19:5, 19:13, 19:17, 21:13, 26:9; 1 Cor. 1:2, 1:10, 5:4, 6:11; Eph. 5:20; Php. 2:10; Col 3:17; 2 Thes.1:12, 3:6; 1 John 3:23
- 7—Encyclopedia of Gods and Goddesses, <http://www.geocities.com/thewitchescircle/biggg.htm>; Japanese Gods, <http://www.lowchensaustralia.com/names/godsjapanese.htm>

### BOOK REVIEW

#### *Idolatry in Their Hearts*

By Sarah Leslie

This is one of the most important books to be published this decade. You won't want to put this book down once you start reading it because it tells a fascinating story of the indigenous peoples who live on the Pacific islands, a unique and special culture which the Lord saw fit to bring missionaries carrying the Gospel truth several generations ago. Authors Mike Oppenheimer and Sandy Simpson have a special place in their hearts for these people as they are served as missionaries to them.

It is quite an amazing read as you discover just how far and wide the heresies of the New Apostolic Reformation have become embedded in the writings and activities of mission leaders and practioners in this generation. The Truth of the Gospel has been

systematically broken down into a mishmash of new doctrines like “redeeming the cultures,” “cultural identification,” “first nations,” “identificational repentance,” “reconciliation walks,” “confronting the powers,” and other heresies. It breaks your heart to read account after account of the leavenizing effects of these new teachings upon this vulnerable island culture.

In these new heresies, God's name is not important: one can worship God with the name of any island deity, some of whom were horribly connected to human sacrifice and other atrocities. God and His Son Jesus Christ are reduced to the level of just being part of the pantheon of gods, as new converts are being told to “redeem their cultures” by worshipping God and Jesus by the names of their pagan deities. Missionaries trained in this new theology are teaching that God and salvation can be found in culture rather than the Scriptures, the Word of God. Historical facts are being replaced by fictional tales and fables, which sometimes are very bizarre and obscure. The Hebrew God and the importance of the Jews to God and human history are denigrated completely – an alarming show of the anti-Semitism that so often accompanies the Dominionist teachings. And the teaching of the Word of God is being replaced by “orality,” using parables and stories to communicate – a condescending and patronizing method at best, and a way to dumb down people to accept any sort of nebulous “Jesus” at worst. What actually is being taught is a form of cross-cultural syncretism which paves the way for a global Antichrist church.

According to the authors of *Idolatry in Their Hearts*, the “Indigenous People Movement” (IPM) or “First Nations” movement is “an unbiblical movement teaching heresies and even doctrines of demons. It is being spread worldwide by YWAM, Don Richardson, author of *Eternity In Their Hearts*, John Dawson, the President of YWAM, Richard Twiss of Wiconi International, Terry LeBlanc of World Vision Canada, Daniel Kokawa of Aloha Ke Akua and many other adherents. This movement has ties to the apostolic leadership of the New Apostolic Reformation and C. Peter Wager.”

The Discernment Research Group has been running excerpts from this book on a series of posts explaining entitled “The Doctrines of Dominionism” (See [www.herescope.com](http://www.herescope.com)). In this

series we have been delving into the background of how these new heresies were concocted and promulgated by men such as Ralph Winter of the U.S. Center for World Mission (also connected with Fuller Theological Seminary, *Perspectives* mission training course, and editor of the influential *Mission Frontiers* publication). An entire generation of missionaries has now been trained by this *Perspectives Course*, and many mission agencies picked up these concepts and spread them far and wide.

This is a monumental shift away from old-fashioned Gospel evangelism. It is evident that the shift didn't happen all at once, but rather through gradualism. One new idea at a time was introduced, that seemed right at the time. The idea of being culturally sensitive or culturally relevant, for example. But these concepts took off into wild and hazardous dimensions, as documented by Simpson and Oppenheimer, and have now become part of an open apostasy with staggering ramifications on a global scale, possibly becoming mainstream in the next few years via Rick Warren's massive Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan.

The authors of this book, Mike Oppenheimer and Sandy Simpson, may be well known to Discernment Ministries readers because we link to their websites: [www.letusreason.org](http://www.letusreason.org) and [www.deceptioninthechurch.com](http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com). The book can be purchased directly from [www.deceptioninthechurch.com/idolatrybook.html](http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/idolatrybook.html). Be sure to check out the other excellent research materials offered by this Apologetics Coordination Team. They've been on the cutting edge of research about the New Apostolic Reformation for about a decade.

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Discernment Ministries has recently acquired a treasure trove of books by the late Larry Thomas. Larry went to be with the Lord in the late 90's, yet his apologetic ministry lives on. Larry Thomas was a researcher, preacher and a journalist who wrote a newsletter entitled **THE INKHORN**. (We will be putting these up on our library website.) The three books available are:

1. **THE WATCHMAN** which is a challenging collection of 15 years of writing. In these perilous times, this book sounds a clear alarm that will stir

your passion for the presence, power and purity of God.

2. **NO LAUGHING MATTER**. Hundreds of thousands of people were caught up in this charismatic craze. As a result there are confused churches, feuding families and deep divisions.

3. **SPIRITUAL WARFARE** – Separating Fact from Fiction. Real warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil has been trivialized by misinterpretations of biblical passages and extra biblical teachings. Motivated by a desire to be "super saints", many modern warriors have tried to take authority they have not been given. And while they lay fictionalized warfare, Satan is making great inroads into the church.

*See the order form for ordering these books.*

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- . Effects on Family & Marriage
- . Roots of the Feminist Movement and how it affects the church and society today.
- . Necessity of Discernment