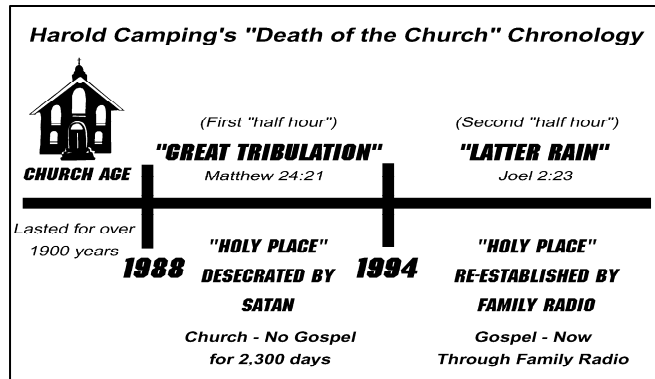


Death of the Church

(Harold Camping's Heresy Refuted)



Harold Camping is in error for the following reasons:

1. Camping's Reasons for God's Completion of the Church Age are simply not true and accurate.
2. Camping has No Accountability
3. Camping has added to Scripture
4. Camping has No Proof Text
5. Camping is Dividing God's People from each other
6. Camping is a Heretic for saying that "Faith" is a "Work."
 - Faith and works are distinguished in Paul's epistles.
 - Salvation comes to us by faith
 -
7. Camping believes that although Churches have historically taught a false Gospel (preaching Faith or Believe on Christ) God, despite this false teaching or "high place," has saved people through this false teaching.
8. If there is no Church, there is no Biblical Polity and no Guidelines for organized Leadership roles.
 - Sheep need Shepherds. (1 Peter 5; Acts 20)
 - Fellowships need Structure. The local church structure is the only structure given in Scripture.
 -
9. Camping's Real Enemy/Target of Attack is Pastors (elders).
10. Camping has several Marks of a Cult.

"It's not a stretch to say that those who have been influenced are inundated with similar methods employed by the major cults:

 - (1) there is the general distrust of anyone outside the circle.
 - (2) The visible church majority is in the process of falling away or has completely fallen away.
 - (3) No accountability in organizational structure.
 - (4) A single charismatic leader who his followers tout as being very unique and an instrument that God is greatly using to bring the Gospel.
 - (5) Scripture is filtered through the interpretation of this one man. Members only find it natural to "see" the same things while studying the Scriptures for themselves.
 - (6) A constant focus on the apparent huge doctrinal antithesis between them and others." (from:www.FamilyRadiolsWrong.org)
11. **The Bible Teaches that God is not Finished with the Church (as an institution)**
 - a. We are commanded to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together (especially as the day of the end approaches). *Hebrews 10:24-25*
 - b. The Lord's Supper (which is a "church" ordinance - 1 Cor. 11:18, 22) is to be practiced until the day the Lord Jesus returns - *1 Corinthians 11:26*
 - c. The Biblical Local church is the Pillar and Ground of the Truth (God's plan is to use Biblical churches to uphold truth till Christ returns)- *1 Tim. 3:15*
 - d. The revelation that Jesus Christ gave to the Church of Thyatira shows that the church would be in existence at His return - *Rev. 2:25-29*
This same principle is found in Christ's revelation to the Church of Philadelphia. *Rev. 3:10-11*
 - e. The Church Age has not ended; The church age will not end until Christ returns (since he is with us as we make disciples until "the end of the age") - *Matthew 28:19-20*
 - f. Regarding the church that Christ builds; Not all the rulers of Hell will prevail against it. (as long as it remains a Biblical church founded upon the Lord Jesus Christ) *Matthew 16:18*
 - g. Without the Local Church, we do not have a Biblical Context through which to fulfill the N.T. imperatives that apply to believer to believer relationships. (note the "one-anothers" of the N.T.)
 - h. The Church is an Equipping Station for Preparation for Service that is to last "till we all come in the unity of the faith...unto a perfect man..." This has not happened yet! (See: Ephesians 4:11-13)



Death of the Church

(Harold Camping's Heresy Refuted)

A Study by: Vincent Sawyer, Pastor of Faith Baptist Church
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A Brief Biography: Harold Camping is President and cofounder of Family Stations, Inc., a Christian educational network. He serves full-time as a volunteer. Harold Camping was born in Colorado and moved at an early age to California. He earned a B.S. degree in Civil Engineering from the University of California at Berkeley (1942). Harold Camping was raised in the Christian Reformed Church and attended and served as Sunday school teacher in the Alameda Bible Fellowship. In 1958, he helped found Family Stations and some years later, he gave up a successful construction company, Camping Construction, to devote full time to the Family Radio ministry, which now broadcasts worldwide and has a School of the Bible with an enrollment of over 30,000 students. In addition to serving as president and general manager of Family Radio, Mr. Camping participates in the broadcasts by teaching on the Family Bible Study program and as host of the Open Forum: a live weeknight call-in program. The Open Forum telephone number is: 1-800-322-5385.

Just a few years ago Harold Camping believed in the churches existence until the very end of the age: Harold Camping in his book called "*Sunday the Sabbath*" said: "In the New Testament, God has organized the external body called the church. He has given us rules for the church; the church is not appointed by man, it is not a manmade organization. It is a divine organization, created by Christ going to the cross. He has laid out the qualifications for elders and deacons and said how they are to oversee the congregation. He has ordained that believers are not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25), **which means the congregation is to continue all the way TO THE END OF TIME.**"

In this message, my purpose is not to speak against Family Radio; Family Radio has offered a lot of good, sound ministry (good music; good Bible reading programming; It used to have good preaching by many Godly pastors (which are no longer allowed on the station).

My purpose is to expose what I believe to be a heresy of major proportions. I wish to warn you of a heretic who is influencing many, many people in the NYC area:

"We have seen that based on this, we have probably about 1 ½ million people in the New York City area who listen at some time or another during the day to Family Radio." (Audio Cassette Tape: "God Tests N.T. Corp. Church # 5, 2002)

To be fair with Mr. Camping. I must say that, while he believes that God is through with the organizational church (the Local assembly), he does not believe that God is finished with the spiritual church (the bride of Christ).

There are two aspects of the Church taught in the N.T.: Universal/Local

Two Aspects of the New Testament Church

NOTE: Upon careful study of the word ekklesia in the New Testament, it must be noticed that there are two basic concepts which may be accepted as valid expressions of the "Church." The context of each usage of ekklesia will determine which of the two legitimate concepts is to be understood.

1. The primary sense of the word - "the local church"

A body of Christ; often called the visible church; a microcosm, a smaller body of believers.

Definition:

- a. An assembly of immersed believers, meeting together regularly in a particular location to fulfill God's program.
- b. Scripture:
Mt. 18:17 - "Tell it unto the church"
Acts 15:41 - "Confirming the churches"
I Cor. 4:17 - "I teach everywhere in every church"
Rom. 16:1 - "A servant of the church"
Rom. 16:5 - "The church that is in their house"
I Thes. 1:1 - "The church of the Thessalonians"
Rev. 2:1 - "The church of Ephesus"
- c. NOTE: This is the most ordinary, natural meaning of the word ekklesia in the New Testament. Unless some compelling reason is present to reject this meaning, the first rule of hermeneutics asserts that it ought to be accepted.
- d. The local church of the New Testament is composed of those who are:
 - 1) Saved (Acts 2:41, 47)
 - 2) Baptized (Acts 2:41; Matthew 28:19)
 - 3) Assembled (Particularly on the first day of the week - Heb. 10:25; John.20:19; Acts 20:7; I Cor.16:2)
 - 4) United for fellowship and exhortation (Acts 2:42-47; Heb.10:24,25)
 - 5) With Bishops (Pastors) and Deacons (Philippians 1:1; I Timothy 3:1-13)
 - 6) Fulfilling the ordinance of the Lord's Supper (Mt.26:26-f; Acts 2:42; I Cor.11)
 - 7) Carrying out the Great Commission (Making Disciples- Matthew 28:18-20)

2. The generic (general) sense of the word - "the church" (the universal church)

The Body of Christ; often called the invisible church; a macrocosm, a greater body of believers which will be in heaven.

- a. Definition: All of the redeemed of this age who will one day be assembled in heaven (hence, "the Church in prospect"). This general (non-specific) use of the word "church" does not refer to an actual assembly, such as "The Church at Corinth" (I Cor. 1:2), but to all who are redeemed during this present age (from Pentecost to the Rapture).
- b. Scripture:

Mt. 16:18 -	"I will build my Church"
I Cor. 12:28 -	"God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers..."
I Cor. 15:9 -	"I persecuted the Church of God"
Gal. 1:13 -	"I persecuted the Church of God"
Eph. 1:22, 23-	"Gave Him to be head over all things to the Church"
Eph. 3:10 -	"Be made known through the Church"
Eph. 3:21 -	"Might be glory in the Church"
Eph. 5:23-32 -	"...Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for her..."
Phil. 3:6 -	"Concerning zeal, persecuting the Church"
Col. 1:18 -	"He is the Head of the Body, the Church..."
Col. 1:24 -	"For His body's sake, which is the Church."
Heb. 12:23 -	"To the general assembly and Church of the firstborn (ones), which are written in Heaven..."

NOTE: The general (generic) usage of the word "Church" is often described as:

- "The Church" (Eph. 3:10, 21)
- "The Church of God" (I Cor. 15:9)

Camping does not believe that God is finished with the greater body of believers, but that God is finished with the local bodies; He has judged the institution of the church as an organization, not the greater body of believers, the church at large. He is done with local congregations with pastors & deacons.

Camping's reasoning is as follows:

The Church has changed from 50 years ago. The KJV has been replaced; Divorce has been accepted; The Sunday "Sabbath" is no longer observed; The Charismatic Movement with its signs & wonders has grown (Tongues/Slain in the Spirit/New Revelations) The Churches teach a "Works" Gospel. There is not one church left that doesn't have at least some of these "High Places" in it. Therefore God has judged His church as He did to O.T. Israel. Camping says Sennacherib is a picture of Satan. Just as Sennacherib destroyed Israel and Judah, so Satan has been "loosed" to destroy the Church. Just as He destroyed Jerusalem through Nebuchadnezzar and had the Jews leave that City, so He has destroyed the Apostate Church through Satan and wants all true believers to leave the Church.

Satan is making war with the saints and God has brought judgment on all churches. His holy spirit is no longer working through the churches. The Gospel is no longer going out through the churches. And no one is being saved through the churches.

According to Harold Camping the Great Tribulation began around 1988.

Camping says: "We could speculate, I don't say this dogmatically, but in all likelihood that would identify with the year 1988. And I have various reasons for saying that. At that time, if the gospel, if the churches had now become overrun with Satan and if the Holy Spirit is not operating, so that missionaries that have been sent out by the church, they are still under the unction, under the authority of the church, no one is becoming saved, and that brings a tribulation to the world that is terrible, it's an intense tribulation, there's no possibility of salvation, because the churches have come under the judgment of God and the Holy Spirit is not operating in them anymore to save people." (Audio Cassette Tape: "God Tests N.T. Corp. Church # 3, 2002)

Why 1988? Because 1988 is 2,300 days before 1994 (a date Camping predicted would end the world with the return of Christ)

"I said some time ago and I still believe it's true, that we can understand these 2300 days to be literal days, in all likelihood, I still say in all likelihood. I am not going to be absolute this at all, but I still say 2300 days. 2300 days would be six years and four months. And that, if indeed the great tribulation began in 1988, which is very well possible, then six years, four months brings us to 1994, which coincides with some other things that have to do with the timing of the great Tribulation." (Audio Cassette Tape: "God Tests N.T. Corp. Church # 3, 2002)

Camping says that the Anti-Christ (or Satan) has set himself up in the Church

“In Matthew 24, verse 15, it says in that context, that the abomination of desolation will be standing in that holy place, and that holy place, the only holy place is where the churches and congregations are, that’s where the gospel has been holding forth from, and now the abomination of desolation is there. And that has a reference to Satan, that he now stands in the churches and congregations.”

When Harold Camping proved to be in error about his 1994 prediction, he had to say something to justify himself. Rather than apologizing for his false prediction, he did what the founders of the Seventh Day Adventist Movement and the Jehovah’s Witnesses did. He said that 1994 was the time (not of the end of the World) but of “the latter rain” (a final time period of an unknown duration, to pour out the Gospel via a ministry like family Radio).

“But then a few years ago -- 1994 did not end with the world -- but a few years ago as we continued to read the Bible, we discovered this matter of latter rain, latter rain. And discovered that God has one more season of sending out the Gospel.” (Audio Cassette Tape: “God Tests N.T. Corp. Church # 3, 2002)

The Latter Rain falls via Family Radio

“It is a major sign of the fact that we’re in great tribulation. Because it comes coincidentally with the latter rain, and the anomaly of us sending the gospel out by a ministry like Family Radio and how God is blessing and blessing, we are crystal clear in knowing that we are there, we are in that time of great tribulation.”

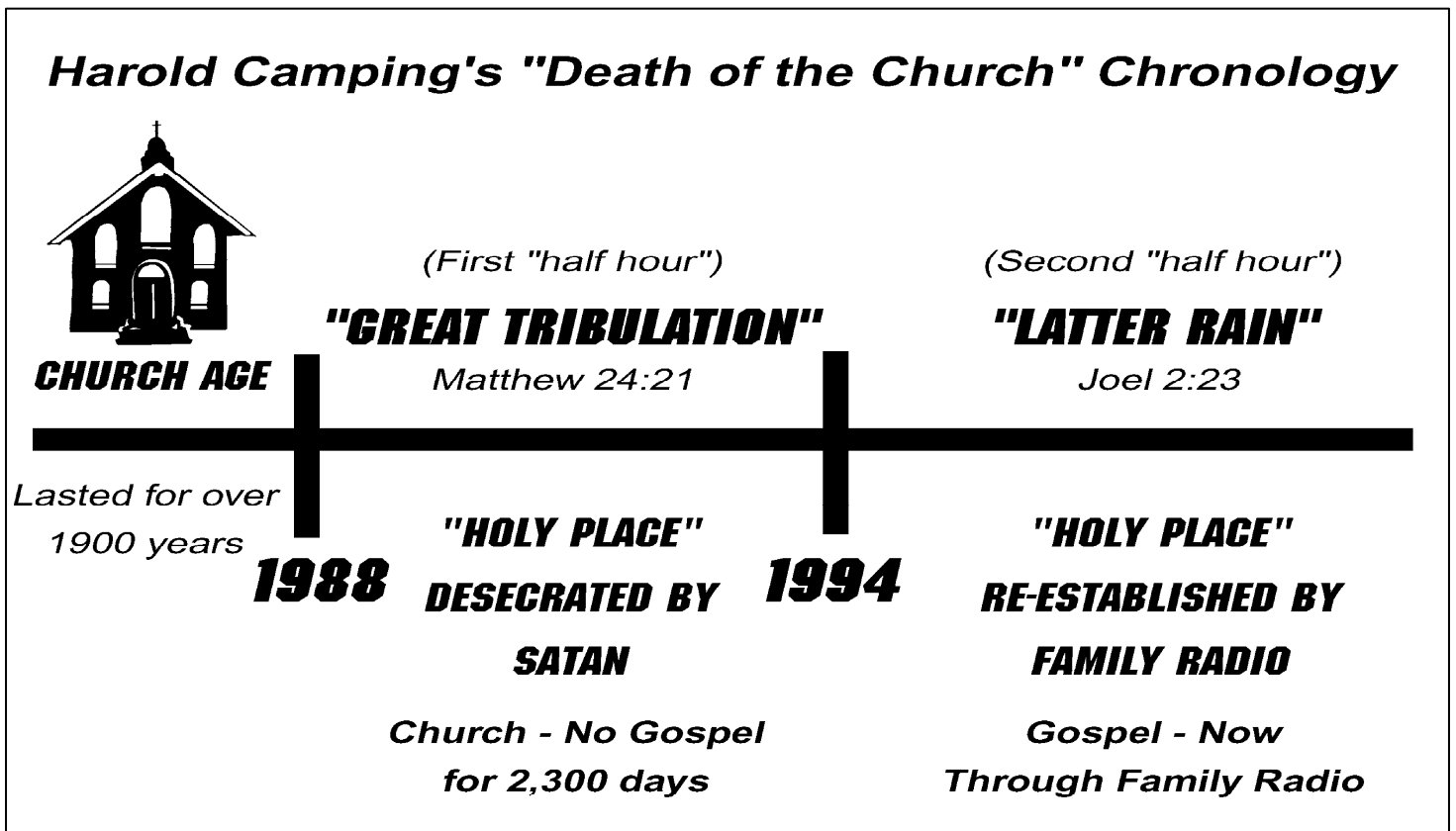
If God is finished with the N.T. Church, how will he spread His Gospel message? Not through the organizational church, but through the new “holy place” – Family Radio.

“Now in so far as the world is concerned, while they were in great tribulation for the first half-hour-- that is for the period of the 2300 evening/mornings-- now God has re-established the Holy Place, but in a different fashion all together. It’s the era of the latter rain, it’s the era where there is no organization that is used as to interface between, the uh, heaven and men, as the churches have been used. As I said earlier in one of the studies, the churches were the methodology, the local congregations were the methodology that God utilized for over 1900 years, because for the major part of that time there was no printing press, people were illiterate, and the only way that the Gospel could go out was by establishing these little groups here and there and give them authority to teach and have oversight of the congregation, and then to send out others and so on, that was God’s methodology. But once we have come to the end of that half hour, now God has another methodology, and he has prepared for this by giving all this modern means of communications and raising up a ministry, for example, like Family Radio, which is outside of the church. And it’s outside of the church now that is the Holy Place, that is where righteousness has been established.” (Audio Cassette Tape: “God Tests N.T. Corp. Church # 3, 2002)

Although Camping puts a question mark at 1988 (as to the beginning point of the Great Tribulation and the end of the church age), he is dogmatic about his conclusion (and there is no question mark as to whether or not it is time to leave the churches).

"But when we read it in the Bible and have done our home work and we understand what the Bible is saying and we teach that, we're saying, "Thus saith the Lord", yes, "Thus saith the Lord," this is what God is saying, because it comes right from the Bible. [caller asks] "Thus saith the Lord, it is time to leave the church, is that what you're saying?" That's what I'm saying, because that's what God has commanded."

According to Camping Everyone must Leave the Church Now!



Either Harold Camping is right or he is wrong. Either he is telling the truth or he is telling a lie. If what he is saying is true he speaks for God; If what he is saying is a lie, he speaks (at least as far as this doctrine is concerned) for Satan. Either he is right and every other pastor in the world is wrong, or he is wrong and they are right.

Harold Camping is in error for the following reasons:
Evidences of Heresy:

1. Camping's Reasons for God's Completion of the Church Age are simply not true and accurate.

Defective Reasoning.

Every church in the world has NOT left the Faith

"Many" is not "ALL." The doctrinal and moral apostasy of many churches world-wide does not mean that all are apostate. (You don't throw the baby out with the dirty bath water).

A study of Scripture shows that God has always had a faithful remnant.

The Lord promised to be with His Church (as they fulfill the Great Commission) "until the end of the Age."

"Israel" is not the Church. (the two are distinguished)

Every reference to Israel in the Bible refers to either Jacob or National Israel. Never in the word Israel used of the Church.

The only reference to Israel that some might argue refers to the church is Galatians 6:16 where Paul speaks of "the Israel of God." Here Paul speaks of Believing Jews (and not a Gentile church). He speaks of true Israelites which are Jews who do not believe in a works Gospel.

The "Holy Place" is not the Church.

All 59 references to the "holy place" in the Bible (only 5 N.T. references) refer to either the O.T. Temple or to God's Holy Place in Heaven. Not one reference is to the N.T. Church!

Physical "Jerusalem" is not the Church.

Camping says: "Jerusalem. And God uses that destruction upon Jerusalem as a dramatic picture of the destruction that finally comes on the churches and congregations."

All 767 references to "Jerusalem" in the Bible refer to the capital city of Israel; ie. To literal, physical, earthly Jerusalem. The only exceptions are 5 references to the "new Jerusalem" or "Heavenly Jerusalem." Not one time does God use the word Jerusalem to refer to the organized church!

The Anti-Christ is not Satan.

He is called “the man of sin.” And he is called the “Beast” He is empowered by Satan (Revelation 13:2). He only continues his powerful rule for 42 months (or 3 ½ Years) (Rev.13:5). After this 3 ½ years he is thrown alive into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20; cp. Dan. 7:11). Satan later joins him 1,000 years later in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10).

Rev. 20:10

And the **devil** that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the **beast** and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

In the above verse, the beast and the devil are clearly distinguished. They are not one & the same.

The 2,300 days of Daniel 8:14 are not Fulfilled Today (in 1988)

They were fulfilled historically in the Days of Greece (Daniel 8:21) by one of Greece’s rulers, named Antiochus Epiphanes.

“Antiochus’ persecution of the Jews would last for 2,300 days, the period from 171 BC. (when peaceful relations between Antiochus and the Jews came to an end) to Dec. 25, 165 B.C. (when Judas Maccabeus restored the Temple for its proper worship). (Ryrie Study Bible Note). (Compare I Maccabees 1:59 with 6:1, 3-8,16);

The Jewish celebration of Hanukkah is a reminder of God’s faithfulness to cleanse the Jewish sanctuary (temple). Which he did on December 25, 165 B.C, exactly 3 years after the pig (swine) was slain on the altar and the image of Zeus was erected in the second Jewish temple.

The Great Tribulation does not refer to the Spiritual problems some churches have today.

Camping says “Speaking here about Satan being loosed and that we have understood through the years pretty well, that Satan would be loosed at the beginning of the great Tribulation, and that’s why the churches were going bad so very rapidly. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints and power was given him over all kindred and tongues and nations.” (Audio Cassette Tape: “God Tests N.T. Corp. Church # 3, 2002)

Camping is citing Daniel 7:21 & Revelation 13:7

Daniel 7:21

I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;

Rev. 13:7

And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

Is that “war” (described in Daniel 7:21) spiritual or physical persecution?

Answer: **Physical**

Rev. 13:15

And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

Rev. 20:4

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

The ½ hour of silence does not refer to God no longer speaking through churches

Rev. 8:1

And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

(It is a silence in “Heaven” not on earth!)

2. Camping has No Accountability

Harold Camping and his radio ministry is not under any earthly authority. He answers to no one; He has no accountability; No checks & balances; He has free reign. Whereas Elders (Pastors) who fall into sin (or false doctrine) were to be rebuked by the church (I Timothy 5:20), Camping (because he part of no church) has no official, organized group who might reprimand him or hold him in check. Camping is not subject to any other recognized godly group of men. So he does what he wants and teaches what he wants with no regard for any other servant of God who might sharpen or reprimand him.

Proverbs 27:17 Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.
Proverbs 24:6 “...in multitude of counsellors there is safety.”

Not one reputable Bible teacher in the world agrees with him.

No one in history ever taught that God would finish the Church Age prior to the Rapture.

God warns us against trusting individuals, no matter how spiritual they may seem, if they separate themselves from God’s organization. (“they went out from us...”)

--He must be tremendously arrogant (to assume that God revealed this doctrine of the death of the church age to him & him alone; No one who hasn’t been taught by Camping believes this doctrine.

--He stands alone.

Apart from those who received direct revelation from God [ex: Noah], no one has ever stood alone on a major doctrine.

3. Camping has added to Scripture

Not by adding pages to the Text, but by twisting the meaning of the Text, thus adding concepts not supported by sound exegesis.

Camping, in fact, does what he condemns the Charismatics for doing—namely, coming up with new messages. They do so by dreams and visions. He does so by twisting Scripture. In the final analysis, there is no difference.

Camping says. . . “We are learning things that no one ever understood before.” Just as God promised Abraham that he would be the “father of many nations, and it wasn’t until thousands of years later that Paul’s understanding was enlightened to what that Genesis text meant, so it is today! God is revealing things today never revealed before.

Some people are always looking for something new. Camping is very appealing to them. This is Gnosticism reborn!

“If a doctrine is new, it’s not true; and if it’s true, it’s not new.”

Camping’s hermeneutic is Satanic!

His allegorical approach and numerology is a similar style of hermeneutic employed by cults. There are no checks & balances. Words have no literal meaning, if everything is figurative. An example of Camping’s numerology:

Does the number 37 really signify judgment?

185,000 = 5x37

Seven years after, after Isaac was born. What does the 37 signify? Well, I didn’t, I never realized this before, but I had learned a long time ago that the number 37 is a number that signifies judgment, judgment. For example if we look at the armies of the Assyrians that were destroyed during the days of Hezekiah, how many people, how many soldiers died in one night? Do you remember? 185,000. And 185,000 breaks up into two numbers, 5 x 37, Both 5 and 37 signify judgment, although at times the number 5 can also signify the other side of the coin of judgment, salvation, But in this setting of 185,000 it signifies judgment. What is the number of man? 666. Remember that? And that breaks down into 6x3x37. Six signifies the work that is being done, three – purpose, 37 - judgment. So we have a sentence here. We could say that 666 signifies those who are working for their salvation, and God’s purpose is that they’re going to come into judgment.

When I was thinking about this message, I was thinking, you know she was 90 years old when she gave birth to Isaac. Now, 90. Spiritually, if we break that down, that’s 3x3x10. Uh, 3x3x10. If a number 10 has any spiritual significance, what does it signify? Completeness. Completeness. Remember that. 10 hundred times 10 thousand, It’s always completeness. The number 3, if that signifies anything, that signifies purpose. Purpose. In other words, in the completeness of God’s plan, his purpose,, Isaac was born. I think that’s what we look at when we look at that 90 years.

John 21 is Harold Camping's favorite place to justify his teachings on the death of the Church.

--The apostles are fishing (seven of them)

--It's night (this is significant)

--Two boats (number 2 represents the Church)

(the boats can sink; therefore the Church can sink)

--v. 7 – Peter is naked and throws himself into the sea

--“Sea” = hell

--Peter becomes a picture of Jesus

“Girding the cloak” = Psalm 18

“Boat” = church

“Fish” = those getting saved

The fish cannot be taken into the boat = people cannot be taken into the church.

“Theological play dough”!! You can shape the Scripture any way you want.

If you wrote a letter to a friend and someone were to read that letter 2,000 years from now, how would you want to be understood? Interpreted? (the historical context, the grammar, etc.)

What if I interpret Camping with the same method (allegorical) in which he interprets the Bible?

4. Camping has No Proof Text

There is not one text of Scripture or passage that hints at a close of the Church Age. (no direct statement suggesting that God would ever stop working through churches in this Age)

When Camping attempts to defend his position, he never addresses passages that directly deal with the Church (EX: Pastoral Epistles [1 and 2 Timothy, Titus], the book of Acts).

5. Camping is Dividing God's People from each other

God loves the unity of true believers

Psalms 133:1 <<A Song of degrees of David.>> Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity!

Proverbs 6:16-19

“These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: ¹⁷A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, ¹⁹A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”

Mr. Camping is fracturing relationships (under the guise of obedience to God).

According to Camping, failure to get out of the churches is just as serious a sin as the disobedience of Adam & Eve:

“And now, this really is the final test, the final, final test. What are you gonna do? Are you gonna obey God and get out? Or are you gonna argue with God about this whole matter? And , every test is very serious business because when we saw Adam and Eve fail the test, we saw how terrible it was for the whole human race and the whole world. When we saw the people in Noah’s day fail the test, what happened to them? They were destroyed in the flood. When we see anybody fail the test, there is a terrible, terrible consequence to that. And so we want to make sure that we don’t fail the test.”

John’s words in **3 John 1:9-10** apply to Mr. Camping:

*“I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and **casteth them out of the church.**”*

Many people are blindly following Camping.

The newest cult leader, Harold Camping has intentionally or unintentionally has successfully drawn away disciples after himself.

Acts 20:28-30

*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. ²⁹For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰Also of your own selves shall men arise, **speaking perverse (distorted) things, to draw away disciples after them.***

7. Camping is a Heretic for saying that “Faith” is a “Work.”

“What they didn’t recognize was, and as a matter of fact, in fairness, I didn’t recognize this either until just a few years ago, that faith is a work, the Bible clearly indicates, that faith is work, and if it’s a work, then obviously it cannot tie into our salvation. In fact, if you’d like to make a note of that, in case you haven’t done that already, and maybe most of you have done that, but if you look at 1 Thes. 1 verse 3, 1 Thes. 1, verse 3, “Remembering without ceasing you work of faith.” Your work of faith. Without question, faith is work.”

1 Thes. 1:3

Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

1 Thessalonians 1:3 is not calling Faith a Work. Rather Paul is talking about Good Works which flow out of Faith. In the same way as Labour flows out of Love and Patience comes out of our hope. Note: Paul in Context is commending them for their work of faith. If faith was a work and therefore was not the means to salvation, Paul should have corrected them, not remember them in praise.

Faith and works are distinguished in Paul's epistles.

Romans 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Romans 9:32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;

Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Ephes. 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: ⁹Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Salvation comes to us by faith (yes a faith from God and His Word, but faith none-the-less)

Romans 3:22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

Romans 3:30 Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Romans 5:2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Romans 11:20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

Galatians 3:22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Galatians 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Galatians 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Camping believes that although Churches have historically taught a false Gospel (preaching Faith or Believe on Christ) God, despite this false teaching or "high place," has saved people through this false teaching.

But Camping says: "The thing is that, and I am astounded at this, and yet this is the fact, that while throughout the history of the church age, there has been a violation in almost every denomination that I know of --and maybe all of the denominations that I'm aware of --of this principle that we're saved by grace alone, that in every denomination there have been uh, at least some doctrines that-- like for example, faith is an instrument, or water baptism is a seal, or you must accept Christ, or if you pray the sinner's prayer, or if you do this or if you do that, then God will save you. And we would think, based on what we're reading here, nobody throughout the church age became saved. But it's a testimony to the absolute mercy of God and, oh my, the Bible again and again talks about the mercy of God, and the patience of God, the long-suffering character of God, that God has tolerated this kind of a high place. And it is the significant high place that God has tolerated this for over 1900 years. This has been present in the churches to some degree, so that in spite of this violation God has, has evangelized the world."

“Not to have , to have any kind of a high place, where our work has something to do with salvation. In spite of that, God has been patient, God has allowed the churches to continue to send the gospel into the world, and as long as they were using the Bible alone and in its entirety, and as long as they had that high place, that wrong doctrine, as well as many other wrong doctrines, nevertheless, God in spite of that, would bless people with salvation. So that I’m sure, I dare to say this, I am sure, that there are a great many people who think they have become saved because they reached out and accepted Christ, and a portion of them, a remnant of them undoubtedly are saved, not because they reached out and accepted Christ, but that Christ in spite of that dreadful wrong doctrine of adding some of our own works-- because that’s work that I do if I’m reaching out to accept Christ-- in spite of that, God still has saved.”

Can God save people by means of a false Gospel? According to Paul they should be accursed to Hell.

Galatians 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, [let him be](#) accursed.

8. If there is no Church, there is no Biblical Polity and no Guidelines for organized Leadership roles.

Who qualifies to lead, speak at, teach at “Fellowships”?

--Can females organize and lead?

--What about new converts (“novices”)?

No Church = No rules for Christian fellowship (assembly).

The commands given in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 which describe the qualifications for “bishop” (Pastors/Elders) and Deacons have no application outside of the Church.

Paul gave the standards for leadership to that churches would know how they are to conduct themselves when gathered.

1 Timothy 3:15

But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:11-12

Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

There is no more authority for baptism, Lord’s Supper and mission work (churches send out missionaries).

Sheep need Shepherds.

(1 Peter 5; Acts 20)

Camping's heresy is dangerous to weak Christian people. His lie fits right in with human depravity because people naturally look for reasons not to come to church, to avoid accountability.

The need for proper, Biblical guidance is greater now than ever before. Is God using any Bible teacher today? Camping obviously believes God is using *his* teaching ministry; if his, why not someone else's?

Fellowships need Structure.

The local church structure is the only structure given in Scripture.

Someone called Camping and asked, "If there is no church. . .

"What about funerals?"

"What about weddings?"

"What about the Lord's Supper and baptism?" (which we are commanded to do until He returns)

Camping says that the ordinances of the Church (baptism and Lord's Supper) were ceremonial laws (signs and shadows) (not sacraments) but they have no spiritual substance in them. They were given to the Church.

9. Camping's Real Enemy/Target of Attack is Pastors (elders).

Why? Perhaps due to his insubordination to pastor leadership in his past. Perhaps due to the fact that not one pastor agreed with his 1994 return of Christ theory.

10. Camping has several Marks of a Cult.

(--Exclusivity—addition to Scripture—division in the Body—No accountability & dialogue—disobedience & distrust of pastor authority—)

--He assumes exclusive exclusivity (he's the only one; he knows who is standing up for the truth of God). He has been successful to draw away disciples after himself.

--He adds to Scripture (not additional ink but additional ideas, private interpretations).

--He causes division in the Body

--He avoids accountability and dialogue.

--He leads people into disobedience to and distrust of pastoral authority. ("It's too late to trust your pastor")

“It's not a stretch to say that those who have been influenced are inundated with similar methods employed by the major cults:

- (1) there is the general distrust of anyone outside the circle.
- (2) The visible church majority is in the process of falling away or has completely fallen away.
- (3) No accountability in organizational structure.
- (4) A single charismatic leader who his followers tout as being very unique and an instrument that God is greatly using to bring the Gospel.
- (5) Scripture is filtered through the interpretation of this one man. Members only find it natural to "see" the same things while studying the Scriptures for themselves.
- (6) A constant focus on the apparent huge doctrinal antithesis between them and others.”
(from:www.FamilyRadioIsWrong.org)

The thought of yourself having superior knowledge over others is clearly a cultic mark. And they are taught to feel sorry for others who don't see things their way.

Camping says: “You meet people who are very upset and who are very, um, belligerent in their attitudes. They're just like, “Oh, you believe that it's the end of the church age, now that can't be.” And they almost want to assault you. Bear in mind, except for the grace of God, that's where you and I would be. Just bear that in mind. None of us can take any credit if we have any understanding, and anyone who doesn't understand and they even may become _____ and belligerent and may begin to engage in reviling or character assassination, or whatever, just have pity and love for those individuals, because God hasn't opened their eyes, and we can't take any credit because God has opened our eyes, Just pray for them. But whatever you do, don't lash back, don't call names, don't look down your long noses at them, because they are people who we have to feel sorry for and we could hope that they too might come to truth.”

He further states: “. . .That separation and the second coming of Christ, isn't he the one who is supposed to separate the wheat?” [caller asks] Well, ya see, that's what I would have said that would be the way it would be 5 or 10 years ago, I would have said what you are saying, but we're learning that the final judgment is already in process. It begins with judgment in the house of God. It will have begun in the house of God, and then it will transition into the final judgment. Judgment begins where the gospel has been proclaimed for the last couple thousand years, and it'll transition to judgment day on everything. But it's during this period that there already is a separation, and that's what makes this a time of great tribulation. I, for example, have loved ones who are, can't see this end of the church age at all, they just believe that they have to stay where they are, and I worry, and I can't judge their hearts, maybe the Lord is just slow in opening their minds to this, but if they remain there, it means that they're gonna be proving to themselves that they are part of the weeds or the tares rather than part of the wheat, because those who are the true believers, they have a desire to do the will of God and if God has commanded to come out, to depart out, then a true believer is going to move on that.”

11. **The Bible Teaches that God is not Finished with the Church (as an institution)**

Although God is certainly finished with many local churches which have gone apostate, he is not finished with Biblical Local Churches that seek to honor Him and His Word.

a. We are commanded to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together.

When this was written, it was written to Hebrew Christians who assembled in local congregations during the “church age.” What this passage meant then is what it means now! That same Scripture says to assemble and exhort one another and especially so “as ye see the day approaching” That “day” is the “day of the Lord” or the rapture. (note: the context of Hebrews 10:37, makes mention of the Lord’s return; and every reference to the phrase “the day” refers to “the day of the Lord”) Therefore churches are to exist until that day of the rapture occurs.

Hebrews 10:24-25

*And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: ²⁵Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see **the day approaching**.*

b. The Lord’s Supper (which is a “church” ordinance – I Cor. 11:18, 22) is to be practiced until the day the Lord Jesus returns, therefore the church must be in existence until Jesus comes.

*1 Corinthians 11:26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death **till he come**.*

c. The Biblical Local church was the Pillar and Ground of the Truth in Paul’s day (as he wrote his pastoral epistles of 1 & 2 Timothy & Titus); and The Biblical Local Church IS still the Pillar and Ground of the Truth. God never promises to change his program before Christ’s return.

1 Tim. 3:15

*But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which **IS the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth**.*

On this point, Harold Camping says that It is God and not the Church which is being described as “the pillar and ground of the truth” (He admits that both “church” or “God” being the pillar and ground are legitimate possibilities.

Although he is dogmatic that it is “God” who is the right interpretation. And in fact if anyone teaches that the “Church” is the pillar & ground of the truth, they are idolaters who have a “high place” in their doctrine.

“You see, if a church holds that the church is the pillar and ground of truth, it means they have a high place. Right in that statement, because that means that the doctrines of men are being taught rather than the doctrine of the Bible that GOD is the pillar and ground of truth. Just in that very one statement.” (Audio Cassette Tape: “God Tests N.T. Corp. Church # 1, 2002)

Several reasons can be given to show that Paul here is describing the “church” as the pillar and ground of the truth.

- 1) The subject of the sentence is the church (not God).
- 2) In the Bible, God is not merely a “pillar & ground” of truth; HE IS TRUTH itself! Camping appeals to Ephesians 2:20 and I Cor. 3:10 to try to show that Christ and the Apostles are the foundation upon which truth is built. However, the greek word translated “foundation” there is “themelios” whereas the word translated “ground” in I Tim. 3:15 is “hedraioma.” Two totally different words.
- 3) The words “pillar” and “ground” match with “Church” in the nominative case and not with the genitive word “God” The words “pillar and ground of the truth” are in apposition to ekklesia and oikos (Robertson’s Word Pictures in the N.T. Vol. IV, P. 576). To make grammatical sense the appositional phrase here must refer to the subject and not the genitive phrase.

The Biblical Church has the God-given task of **holding up** the truth (as a Pillar holds up the roof of a building) and the church is to be as a buttress or bulwark and firmly **support** the truth.

d. The revelation that Jesus Christ gave to the Church of Thyatira is given to be helpful to churches like the church of Thyatira until the return of Christ. This fact proves that churches like Thyatira will exist until Jesus comes again.

Listen to what Jesus says to the church of Thyatira:

Rev. 2:25-29

*But that which ye have already hold fast **TILL I COME**.²⁶ And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:²⁷ And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.²⁸ And I will give him the morning star.²⁹ He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the **CHURCHES**.*

This same principle is found in Christ’s revelation to **the Church of Philadelphia**.

Rev. 3:10-11

*Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.
¹¹**BEHOLD, I COME QUICKLY**: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

e. The Church Age has not ended; The church age will not end until Christ returns.

There is absolutely NO Scriptural Support to prove otherwise.

The work of Discipling “all Nations” through the local church will continue as long as Jesus is with us as we disciple people. And this will continue “unto the end of the world (age)”

Matthew 28:19-20

*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, **EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD.** Amen.*

f. Regarding the church that Christ builds; Not all the rulers of Hell will prevail against it. (as long as it remains a Biblical church founded upon the Lord Jesus Christ)

Matthew 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; **AND THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT.**

g. Without the Local Church, we do not have a Biblical Context through which to fulfill the following imperatives. Note the following imperatives were given to the church in Rome, Italy:

***We need to genuinely take care of each other in the family of God!**

How should we take care of each other?

- I. BE MEMBERS with one another (Rom.12:4-5)**
(A plea to contribute our gift to each other)
- II. HONOR one another (12:10)**
(A plea to show family honor to each other)
- III. LOVE one another (13:8)**
(A plea to pay the dept of love to each other)
- IV. EDIFY one another (14:13,19)**
(A plea to be a stepping stone, not a stumbling block to each other)
- V. BEAR with one another (15:1)**
(A plea for patience toward each other)
- VI. PLEASE one another (15:2-4)**
(A plea for unselfishness toward each other)
- VII. UNITE with one another (15:5-6)**
(A plea for oneness with each other)
- VIII. ACCEPT one another (15:7)**
(A plea for impartiality toward each other)
- IX. ADMONISH one another (15:14)**
(A plea for loving confrontation with each other)
- X. WARMLY GREET one another (16:16)**
(A plea to show loving affection to each other)

h. **The Church is an Equipping Station for Preparation for Service
(See: Ephesians 4:11-13)**

Ephesians 4:11-14

*“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, **pastors and teachers**; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: **Till we all come in the unity of the faith**, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive”*

The word “**till**” (v. 13) is a word describing the time duration of an activity and means that the activity of Pastors-teachers equipping the saints is to occur **until there is total maturity** in God’s people. Has this been fulfilled? No. Therefore the ministry of Church officials ministering to God’s people is still in operation today!

CONCLUSION:

Harold Camping’s teaching must be abandoned not your church.

I would not want to be handcuffed to Harold Camping at death!

1 Cor. 3:16-17

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? [17] If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye (plural) are.