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Pastor Russell in Reply to Critics

Posted By [ResLight](#) On June 16, 2009 @ 11:06 pm In [1914](#), [Hell](#), [Miracle Wheat](#)/p>

The following is taken from
[Pastor Russell's Convention Discourses](#) ^[1]
Regarding Brother Russell in Tacoma, Washington (1913)

(*Tacoma Tribune*, June 19, 1913.)

Opposition by Preachers

We give herewith the
newspaper report of the attack by the preachers and Pastor
Russell's reply:

(From *Tacoma Tribune*)

ATTACKS RUSSELL for SELLING PRACTICES

Rev. E. L. Benedict of Mason M. E. Church
in Statement Scores Evangelist

Attacking Pastor Russell "for sailing under false pretenses," Rev. E. L. Benedict of the Mason M. E. Church today declared the evangelist had made a fortune by selling books and [wheat](#) ^[2], using his religion as a means to raise money.

In his statement Rev. Benedict said: "Pastor Russell sails under false colors regarding the running of his church. He claims to charge nothing for his services, takes no collections and pays his own bills. This immediately places every other church which does take collections in a false light.

The facts are: Pastor Russell, by preaching the end of the world in [1914](#), ^[3] makes people believe that their money is of no use after that date, and easily gets hold of it. "Another game that is worked by Pastor Russell's followers is the selling of "[miracle wheat](#) ^[4]" at \$1 a pound. We are informed that his man, Mr. Bohnet, sold \$100,000 worth of miracle wheat at \$1 a pound, and while Pastor Russell claims not to have sold the wheat, yet Mr. Bohnet has his office in Pastor Russell's church and Pastor Russell got the money for the publication of his tracts.

"Pastor Russell's connection with the Union Bank of Brooklyn is not in harmony with the thought of the modern ministry. If we pursued such methods for raising money we would not have to take a collection in church, either.

"We object to Pastor Russell because of the way his agents have of fooling the public about his literature. They change the name of their literature from time to time, so that the unsuspecting church member does not know the name of the [denomination](#) ^[5]. They call it the "People's Pulpit," the "Interdenominational Religious Newspaper," "The Bible Students' Monthly," etc. By this method they pull a number out of the churches under false statements or else get them dissatisfied.

In their method of disposing of his four volume library on millennial dawnism, their agents invariably deny being connected with any church. Many people get this library, thinking it is not [sectarian](#) ^[6] and interdenominational.

"Pastor Russell takes passages of scripture, mainly from the allegorical chapters of Daniel, and old testament prophesy, twisting them all out of their setting, and applies them to this age in which we live. Pastor Russell sets up a bogy man called "a literal fire in hell" and accuses us ministers of preaching a literal fire. I have been preaching for 18

years, and I have never preached a literal fire nor have I heard any other minister preach a literal fire. Anybody with common sense knows that we do not need a literal fire to burn up a soul.

Pastor Russell teaches a [future probation](#) ^[7]. He says it is the business of the church (meaning his church) to brush up the saints and that the mass of the world are all going to the devil. But in this new earth, during this millennial reign, these polished saints will give another opportunity for these terrible sinners to repent. It is for this reason and to satisfy his religious calamity theory that the committee that made the tour of the world reported that foreign missions in different foreign lands was virtually a failure.

"When such men as William H. Taft, Theodore Roosevelt and William J. Bryan speak in great praise of the work of foreign missions, we prefer to believe them, instead of Pastor Russell's calamity hunters.

We take issue with Pastor Russell on his exploded theory of "soul sleeping." Pastor Russell would try to make us believe that when we go through the little gate called death, [the soul](#) ^[8] goes into the ground, there to smoulder with the decomposing body until the resurrection.

The Bible in unmistakable terms says, 'Dust thou art and unto dust shall thou return, but the spirit shall return to [God who gave it](#) ^[9].'

Another reason why we cannot accept Pastor Russell doctrinally is his 'end of the world fallacy.' He has it all figured out by Scripture that the world is coming to an [end in 1914](#). ^[10] "The Advents, of which Pastor Russell is first cousin, made themselves the laughing stock of the world by several times setting a date when the world should come to an end, and 'the world still do move.'"

Dr. Hugo P. J. Sellinger, professor of religious education and sociology at University of Puget Sound, in a statement said: "Outside of the late Alexander Dowie, founder of Zionism, in my opinion, Pastor Russell is the most monumental religious faker of the age. He is one of the few men who have been able to take a segment of religious truth and by ingenious perversion make it appeal to the popular imagination.

"Pastor Russell stands for the immoral doctrine of conditional immortality, which is merely to say that you can follow every lascivious and pervert bend of your imagination or inclination without, in the end, having to be held [accountable for it](#) ^[11]. "Pastor Russell is a man of strong animal magnetism, gives one the very strong impression that he is in the pursuit of his movement for revenue and for revenue alone. It must be utterly denied that he is rendering service to humanity or to humanity's God in the spirit of the Gallilean, who said: 'If any one would be greatest among you let him be servant of all.'"

Rev. Thomas W. Lane of the First Methodist church said: "I have no use for him. I came from the same section of the country where he made records I do not care to discuss, for I fear they would get me into trouble. I have no confidence in him. I have no use for him."

Rev. H. T. Mitchelmoore, acting for Rev. Murdoch McLeod, says of Russell: "Let Professor Moorehead speak for me; the millennial dawnism of C. T. Russell is a mixture of universalism, second probation and restorationism and the Swedenborgen method of exegesis. Let the reader remember that imposition is not exposition, nor is eisegesis, exegesis. Mr. Russell constantly employs both. He imposes on scripture his views and reads into it that which never entered the mind of the inspired writer.

"Men and women of force do not follow Russell. Equally manifest is the sincere piety and Godly character of many of his followers, when God in His infinite mercy preserved His people from being deceived and betrayed by His counterfeit of Christianity."

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Pastor Russell in Reply to Critics

Editor of The Tribune: I am requested to reply briefly to the charges of my critics reported in your yesterday's issue. On some points my opponents are misinformed, on others they are evidently prejudiced and spiteful. The basis of their opposition is stated by Rev. Benedict. They are opposed to me because, without taking up collections or making any solicitation for money, I am preaching to thousands almost daily, while they have but few hearers even on Sundays.

They are specially vexed that a newspaper syndicate representing nearly 2,000 editors are weekly placing my sermons in the hands of more than 12,000,000 of readers. A further grievance is that the public are buying and reading my books "Bible Keys" in 19 languages, to the extent of 8,000,000 of copies. The proposition with these ministers seems to be "What can we do to prejudice the people against this man and his writings?" When, therefore, they attempt to state my views, etc., it is not to inform the public, but to deceive them—to prejudice them so that they will not hear me, nor read my writings.

FEAR PEOPLE ARE IMBECILES

They fear that all the thinking people of all denominations will be convinced by my message. Therefore, they declare that only imbecile crossheads would be deluded by it! Do they fear that all or nearly all of their people are imbecile? or why do they think worth while opposing what they describe as insane? The public is getting wise respecting their objects and methods. Yet, those who hear me know that I never speak an unkind word respecting any minister. I do, however, smite the creeds of the Dark Ages hip and thigh!

FOREIGN MISSIONS REPORT

I challenge a single unkind remark or exaggeration in the report made by a committee of seven of which I was chairman. Indeed, the report was too moderate. That committee of the International Bible Students' Association are all deeply interested in the heathen, and laboring for their true enlightenment. Within the past year they have printed 4,000,000 of tracts in the 10 most prominent languages of the East, and have put them into the hands of the benighted ones. This is more than all other missionary and Bible students' societies together accomplished. And no one was asked to give a dollar. It all came freely from loyal Christian purses.

MIRACLE WHEAT AND UNION BANK

What perverseness moves a minister of Christ, a minister of truth, to slander a brother minister or anybody else? Why tell what he does not know to be the truth? I have no knowledge of the Union Bank of Brooklyn. I heard that it failed through the dishonesty of its officials. I never was inside its doors; never was financially nor otherwise connected with it; nor do I know who were its directors.

"Miracle Wheat" is a new variety of wheat discovered and so named by a farmer at Fincastle, Va. I copied an item about it from a newspaper in my religious journal, which carries no advertisements. Three years later one of the readers wrote me that he had bought some of the miracle wheat at \$1.25 per pound and found it very prolific—up to 3,000 grains from one seed. He sold some of it and donated to the society of which I am the president.

The following year he and another donated 18 bushels, fixed the price at \$1 per pound and asked that it be mentioned in my journal and that we bear the trouble of mailing it. I merely gave their reports and a copy of a report by United States government expert. The wheat was sold and in all \$1,800 was thus donated by these two friends to the work done last year amongst the heathen. No one ever complained of the wheat, and all were offered "money back" if not satisfied.

If anybody has a microscope that will show anything wrong with this, we would like to have a look through it. We presume the wrong was that it was not "raffled at 10 cents per grain," or grab-bagged for at a church fair!

NO FIERY HELL IN TACOMA

Rev. Benedict knows of no preaching of a fiery [he](#) ^[12] in Tacoma. Good. But what kind of a hell do they preach here since the people will no longer come to hear them describe the fiery one? I wonder if the people who have heard these ministers preach for years know what kind of a hell the local reverends have made for them — or rather for the masses of Tacoma people who do not go to church?

By the way, who gave these ministers authority to change hell from what their forefathers and their creeds fixed it to be! Ah! perhaps Rev. Benedict is the preacher we heard of who declared

that—"There is no literal fiery hell, but there is a hell of gnawings of conscience which is still worse." Poor humanity! How they need the very message that is now stirring up classes of Bible students all over the world! How they need to know exactly what the Bible hell is and just what salvation from it is to be!

I now offer to your readers, free, a pamphlet which gives every text of the Bible containing the word [hell](#) ^[13], and shows the original Greek and Hebrew words and makes the whole subject plain and clear as a crystal. It also explains the parable of the "[Sheep and Goats](#)" ^[14] and of the "Rich Man and Lazarus." It contains just what the bible students need and want to know, and just what my critics do not want them to know about. Their motto would seem to be, "Keep the people in ignorance." A postcard addressed Pastor Russell, Brooklyn, N. Y., will bring your readers free copies of that pamphlet with my best wishes for their present and future.

THE END OF THE WORLD

One critic says I work upon the fears of the foolish by telling them the world will soon end. I assure your readers that this is untrue. I do believe and teach that the present age is about to end, but that "the earth abideth for ever." I tell that the coming age is to be one of great blessing to the race as a whole, and that present-day blessings are but foregleams of that blessed time. But note how dishonest the accusation. Every creed represented by my critics teaches that the world is to be burned up! And these preachers say, "Yes, but no one knows when. It may occur tonight!" Rev. Morehead, quoted by one of the critics, declares that he goes to bed every night expecting that Christ's second coming may be before morning! All my critics are angry about is that I get the money and the hearers and they do not; and I don't tell them how it is done.

Very truly yours,
C. T. RUSSELL.

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URLs in this post:

[1] Pastor Russell's Convention Discourses: <http://www.heraldmag.org/olb/bsl/Library/Russell/CONVRPRT/crs.pdf>

[2] wheat: <http://ctr.reslight.net/?p=122>

[3] 1914,: <http://ctr.reslight.net/?p=80>

[4] miracle wheat: <http://tinyurl.com/rl-mwheat>

[5] denomination: <http://tinyurl.com/ags-denominationalism>

[6] sectarian: <http://tinyurl.com/ags-sectarianism>

[7] future probation: <http://tinyurl.com/ags-futureprobation>

[8] the soul: <http://tinyurl.com/rl-souldies>

[9] God who gave it: <http://hereafter.reslight.net/?p=12>

[10] end in 1914.: <http://tinyurl.com/rl-endofworld>

[11] accountable for it: <http://tinyurl.com/ags-accountabilitysin>

[12] he: <http://tinyurl.com/rl-hades-sheol>

[13] hell: <http://hereafter.reslight.net/?p=62>

[14] Sheep and Goats: <http://hereafter.reslight.net/?p=152>

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