

Bias-based Blunders About C. I. Scofield

A friendly open letter to Dr. Jeffrey Van Goethem, Senior Pastor of Scofield Memorial Church, Dallas, TX, reviewing with gratitude his critical amazon.com review of *The Praise of Folly: The Enigmatic Life & Theology of C. I. Scofield* (published by NiceneCouncil.com). That is my biography of the editor of the well-known *Scofield Reference Bible*, who was a former pastor of that church, and whose name the church's name commemorates,

By David Lutzweiler

This "open letter" format is what I think to be the most effective way to share further not only the most relevant facts about C. I. Scofield but also the observation that many dispensationalists' refusal to face those facts reveals a desperate need for a major revival—no, make that a "Reformation"—among them today.

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.

Acts 17:30

For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?

1 Peter 4:17

A man never discloses his own character so clearly as when he describes another's.

Jean Paul Richter

For the benefit of all who do not have convenient access to a copy of Dr. Van Goethem's rather hostile and (as I'm sure that my "open letter" here shows) greatly misinformed review of my book, *The Praise of Folly*, I cheerfully and confidently reproduce it in full here at the beginning of my friendly and well-informed review of his review.

As Senior Pastor of Scofield Memorial Church, I think I have read about everything on C. I. Scofield, books, articles, unpublished material including stuff from the files of our own church, papers written by Dallas Seminary students, etc. I think I am in a position to be objective, having taken in about everything that could be said, good and bad. This volume is not an honest biography nor a credible effort in establishing the truth. There is much that we do not know about Scofield, particularly in his early life. What we do know is that he was a very troubled character prior to his conversion. That he was converted and had forty years of effective ministry is also quite obviously true. In fact the great D. L. Moody himself invited Moody [sic—Van Goethem means "Scofield" here] to pastor his church in Northfield, MASS. Those who put forth the view that Scofield was a liar, schemer, fraud, etc., in all his years in Christian ministry must also agree that the great Moody was the same or perhaps a dupe of Scofield. Does anyone believe that? Scofield was selected to preside over the funeral service of Moody, who was the greatest evangelist of the last half of the 19th century. The FACT is that Scofield was highly thought of by Christian leaders in his time. Was he divorced? Yes. Was he a drunk prior to conversion? Yes. Was he a swindler? Yes. Was he in jail? Yes. Did he move on in his life and attempt to leave his past behind? Yes. But let us also ask the question, was he converted in his thirties and did he go on to have a happy second marriage and many, many years of effective ministry? The answer to that is yes also. Was he effective as a pastor and respected by his peers? Yes.

The author of this lamentable volume, whom I do not know, presumes to find the darkest possible conclusion at every possible point in Scofield's life, seemingly because he does not agree with Scofield's theology and is resentful of the success and popularity of the Scofield Reference Bible. He apparently does not understand the grace of God and how it can transform a man.

Don't waste your money on this one. If you want an objective treatment of Scofield's life, I would suggest the first fifty pages of "The Scofield Reference Bible—Its History and Impact on the Evangelical Church" by R. Todd Mangum and Mark S. Sweetnam. Paternoster, 2009. These authors do a good job of pointing out what we can know about Scofield, what we cannot know and present plausible conclusions on some of the more controversial aspects of his life.

April 1, 2013

Dr. Jeffrey J. Van Goethem
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Dear Brother Van Goethem:

Having been a pastor myself, and being the son of a pastor, I can understand very well the demands that must be upon your time as the senior pastor of a church like Scofield Memorial!

I saw early in life that the problem of time allocation is one of the greatest that anyone must solve—but it is especially difficult for us ministers, because there are so many *good* things that can command our attention, let alone those that are clearly trivial and wasteful. Trying merely to prioritize the overload of good things, then, to choose only the best, is all that we can do.

That being the case, it is not surprising that you, as the pastor of the church that Scofield not only once led and enlarged greatly but after whom it is now named, would see that it was important enough to spend some of your valuable time to read a new biography of him when it appeared.

However, I must confess that, for the reasons that I will give in just a moment, your amazon.com review of my book makes me wonder if you actually read very much of it, or if the pressures of time demands upon you made possible only some hasty scanning, with no time for adequate reflection and thorough analysis?

In turn, that makes me wonder also if you will have even the time to read this review of your review—let alone give a response to it that I can share with all of those who will be receiving it as well. (They will be many; and possibly some, as a result, will contact you with their own feedback, thereby taking up even more of your valuable time!)

Anyway, before I give my reasons for suspecting that your time limitations prevented you from getting an accurate understanding of my book, I want to assure you immediately that this is not in any way an irritated or hostile review of your review! Far from it: for even though I must point out frankly, of course, the mistakes that I perceive in it, I affirm here sincerely, nevertheless, that you have made a valuable contribution to the important task of investigating and evaluating the character and competence of C. I. Scofield. It is a task that always will be important for every generation because of his extensive and continuing influence.

I say that you have made a valuable contribution because of the universally accepted principle of Christian fairness, which requires that all of the aspects of any issue must be aired and then evaluated independently by all observers, back and forth, until the truth stands out clearly and unassailably forever. That is why, for instance, I enclose cheerfully a copy of Dr. Robert L. Sumner's very hostile (and very flatteringly lengthy!) review of my book (see "Lutzweiler's Folly") along with a couple of favorable reviews. (Perhaps you saw all of the reviews, too, on amazon). Let it never be said, then, that not all sides have been heard fairly!

Concerning books and book reviews: you have provided also another opportunity for me to fulfill one of the pieces of advice given to me by Dr. A. W. Tozer—whose name I am sure you recognize. I quoted him in the very first sentence of Chapter 1; and if you read the footnote for it, you know that I was a member of his church during some of my college years, 1957-60; that he published several of my first articles during that time; and that he gave me my first job out of Wheaton College (1962) as one of his assistants on *The Alliance Witness*.

After my first articles were published, he told me, "You're only 25 years old, and you already write better than most men in their 60's who send me stuff; and if you keep on, you could become one of the best writers in the country." Later, then, during my six-month tour of Army reserve duty at Ft. Leonard Wood, MO, 1961, after which I was planning to try to get a job teaching in high school somewhere, he wrote me a letter, saying, "I don't think that you should go into teaching. There is truth in the old saying, 'Them as can, does; them as can't, teaches.' You are a born writer, and you should keep at it." (I wish I had kept the letter; but I never forgot the contents, verbatim!)

So he acted on his advice by inviting me a few months later to interview for a job as his assistant on the magazine of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in NYC; and it was on the job there one day that he told me, "Don't bother to review a book unless it gives you the chance to say something that needs to be said."

Well, I guess that advice applies just as much to reviewing a review of a book, too. In any case, it certainly applies to your amazon.com review, which (along with Mangum and Sweetnam's book as well) makes all of the very common but misleading statements about Scofield that need very much to be corrected. You have given me, then, "the chance to say something that needs to be said."

That, however, makes me feel immediately the need for commenting first upon another piece of advice from Dr. Tozer (although others have expressed it also): "Never defend yourself."

I agree with what I understand the real import of that advice to be. It is expressed in the title of one of Tozer's famous editorials (if I recall it correctly): "No Christian Should Feel Resentment." We should trust God alone to work out justice for us whenever it is due; whereas those who lash out in anger against personal attacks hurt themselves because their self-defense (often whining) reveals them to be not only thin-skinned or petty—as well as lacking faith in God's ways!—but sometimes even unsure of the actual strength of their position.

I perceive, however, that what we have in this discussion about Scofield is not a case like that. It is, rather, in the routine and universally-accepted category of scholarly debate. Dr. A publishes in a journal, book, or book review a certain position; and Dr. B is invited to write a reply. Usually, then, Dr. A replies to the reply, and Dr. B gives a final reply to that.

Sometimes angry attacks occur in those exchanges, of course—but they are only unfortunate and unnecessary side effects, and they can be separated from the bare facts and logic of each case.

It is not, then, a mere defense of someone's character that is at issue in such exchanges, but two other things: (a) upholding truths that are too important for allowing misunderstandings and, consequently, unjustified rejections of them to go on uncorrected in the minds of many who would otherwise remain dangerously deceived; and (b) correcting an attackers' defects that caused an attack to be made in the first place—whether defects of only knowledge and understanding or (if relevant—which sometimes is the case) attitude and character.

Thus, you believe, of course, that your very short review fulfills those two purposes for my attack upon Scofield; and I believe that my very long review here of your very short review does likewise for your attack upon me for attacking Scofield. It is for each unbiased reader to decide, then, whose case is convincing.

Even with that explanation, I still feel very reluctant to be the one to provide this review of your review. I would much rather have another do it; but the simple explanation is that I do not know of another who has both (a) adequate time and (b) enough competence to do an adequate job.

That is because this job requires more than only a mastery of the facts of Scofield's life, but also a mastery of his interpretations of Scripture—which, as I believe that I have shown irrefutably, are pathetic. So I leave it at that.

(I will discuss my motives, as best as I can perceive them, as the last part of this review).

Do not conclude, in any case, that my reaction to your critical review has been hostility or even disappointment. Far from it: I expected, long in advance, the type of reaction to my book that would come, for instance, from Dr. Sumner and other dispensationalists like yourself. You neither surprised nor disappointed me. (Hey, the worst thing for any writer, as we all know, is to be *ignored!*) I am now 77 years old, and I have been through the wars.

(To name only a few: I participated with Dr. John H. Ludlum as one of his associates in a public debate many years ago with Madelyn Murray O'Hair, the nation's then-leading atheist; from 1964-1972, I was Administrative Assistant to Dr. Spiros Zodhiates, president of AMG International, and moderated the debates he sponsored at AMG headquarters on the charismatic movement, triggered by his writings and radio messages, which offended charismatics; and I once ran for the school board in Wayne, NJ. Mental combat comes with the territory of serving God in writing and speaking. So, "if you can't stand the heat . . .").

Let me begin, then, by saying that one of my first reactions to your review was not resentment but amazement and bewilderment at one particular point; and it was reflection upon that point that led me to the suspicion that I mentioned at the beginning of this letter: that it might be possible that you did not really read very much of my book, due to the demands upon your time, but only scanned it and drew some general (and wrong) impressions from only a hasty and incomplete survey of randomly-chosen passages.

1

What raises the question of inadequate time

The particular point in your review to which I refer is at its end, where you state of me: “He apparently does not understand the grace of God and how it can transform a man.”

My dear brother: that is what made me wonder if you actually read all of Chapter 4 of my book, particularly pp.113-115? It is on those pages that I discuss, in full detail, exactly that subject that you say I “apparently do not understand”!

Since you may not have a copy of my book handy as you read this, I will quote directly the opening lines of that section—entitled “Whitewashing the Pre-conversion Years”—and I ask you to consider, as you read the following lines, whether or not they justify the statement that you made in your review:

In view of the evangelical gospel of redemption, forgiveness, and the new life that Christ gives when one is born again, why have so many felt any necessity at all to whitewash Scofield’s pre-conversion life?

Church history is full of saints who, before their conversion, lived lives far worse than Scofield’s. Paul’s testimony is the classic example of this: he was bent on destroying the Christian church by persecuting it to death. . . . One of the most notable examples in modern times is the slave trader, John Newton [dates wrong here from a typographical error], author of one of the best-known hymns of all time, “Amazing Grace.” There are also many ex-criminals whose testimonies have been published by Chaplain Ray of the International Prison Ministry, such as the ex-jewel thief, Jack Roland (“Murf the Surf”) Murphy.

I even met Floyd Hamilton, once a member of the Bonnie and Clyde gang in the early 1930’s. For a while he was the FBI’s Public Enemy Number One and, when captured, was given a life sentence without parole. But God worked a miracle and he was eventually released from prison and went on to preach the gospel. Meeting him at a convention of the National Religious Broadcasters in the 1970s, he was an elderly and gentle saint.

The worse the life, the greater the testimony of deliverance. Therefore, on that principle, Scofield’s testimony could have been one of the best of his time. “Former Swindler and Crooked Politician Finds Christ” could have been a headline in *The Sunday School Times*. That would have been far more powerful than mere deliverance from alcoholism, which was far more common, and the only thing that Scofield ever claimed.

In fact, in all such cases, the typical fundamentalist trend is not to minimize but maximize the past life of sin. If there is any stretching of the truth, it usually is to make things appear to be worse rather than better, in order to make the new life in Christ shine all the brighter. In Scofield's case, however, we find that the "ex-forgery and swindler" card is not the one that he himself played—nor any of those who knew him. Why?

There is much more, expanding on this, which I need not repeat here. I am sure that you get the idea. Some comments on this:

2

Your review reveals your acceptance of at least one part of the revolution in Scofieldology.

In common with all other dispensationalists today, including Mangum and Sweetnam, you perceive Scofield's life to have been in the traditional black-and-white pattern of pre-conversion and post-conversion: sinner (in varying degrees) before; fruitful saint (even though with some admitted imperfections) after.

Now, here is something very, very interesting about that: the black-into-white pattern was not quite the view of Scofield's life that was held throughout the first 60 years after he passed away. Notice that the caption of the section of my book that I quote above is: "Whitewashing the Pre-conversion Years." That is because there is in Trumbull's hagiography, *The Life Story of C. I. Scofield* (1920), and in BeVier's M.A. thesis (1960), *not a hint of much pre-conversion trouble*, beyond mere alcoholism (which I do not accept as a fact, by the way, for reasons given below). BeVier also downplays the messy divorce from Leontine (about which more also, in a moment). What we find, then, is that Scofield's life story B.C. (Before Canfield) was whitewashed as a "successful lawyer," whose only major fault from which Christ delivered him was "alcoholism." The pattern was not black-into-white but only gray-into-white.

Now, although we will see that the new black-into-white pattern that you present in your review is also not quite correct—no more than the whitewashed-pre-conversion pattern—it is nevertheless, in itself, a very remarkable phenomenon in the history of Scofieldology. Your review shows that you recognize that *the whitewashed view of his pre-conversion life is over!*

How did that happen?

It happened this way: all dispensationalists, including you and Mangum and Sweetnam, now reveal clearly that it was only the labors of Canfield and, later, my brother, James (archivist at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in NC), plus a prominent attorney in TX, Jeff Dunn, and (just recently) Jean Rushing in her M.A. thesis, that brought to light all of the known facts of Scofield's troubled pre-conversion life, as well as all of the troubling facts of his post-conversion life.

Canfield, for instance, around 1984, had said that "rumors persist" of "a jail term in Canada" after Scofield had fled Kansas to escape the heat from his scandals there, abandoning his wife and children. When Canfield wrote that, however, he

was unable to document the truth of those rumors. Well, the rumors were not far off. By the modern technology of a digital recovery of the contents of centuries-old issues of newspapers and other publications, attorney Jeff Dunn, in collaboration with my brother, James, found the 1870's articles from Milwaukee and St. Louis newspapers that revealed Scofield's financial swindles and arrest in Wisconsin—which, of course, is close to Canada. They confirmed the rumors of where Scofield went ("somewhere north") and what he did after fleeing Kansas.

Note, then, that it is only because of those labors that you, yourself, could include in your review the references to his pre-conversion sins!

Dispensationalists have thus made some gratifying progress, accepting at least some of the work of their antagonists! However, it has been said that if you build a fire under a mule, it will force it to move ahead only far enough to burn up the wagon; and that is what has happened here. Canfield, my brother James, Jeff Dunn and, lately, Jean Rushing and me have built the fire under the dispensationalist mules; but they still have not moved far enough ahead. We have yet to cover more strongly the post-conversion years. Here is the situation:

Because the whitewashing of the pre-conversion years now stands refuted irreversibly forever, its pattern of gray-to-white has been replaced by, allegedly, black-to-white in your review; and you apparently superimposed the new black-to-white pattern onto my book for comparison (even if only unconsciously and automatically) and got the impression that I, in ignorance of God's grace, did not accept it—i.e., that I took all of Scofield's pre-conversion transgressions and used them to smear his entire life, completely overlooking the supposed "fact" that his post-conversion life was a model of Christian rectitude and fruitfulness, certified by no less than the great D. L. Moody (whose misguided endorsement of Scofield I explain below).

That impression is wrong so egregiously that it compels very strongly, my dear brother, the conclusion that you either did not read my entire book or, if you did, that you unaccountably failed to understand it. The final documented pattern of Scofield's life is neither gray-to-white (Trumbull and BeVier) nor black-to-white (current dispensationalists) but black-to-gray (Lutzweiler, Rushing, et al.).

Before I go on, however, to list the undeniable facts of his post-conversion life that I ask you to consider, I think it is necessary is to take up first the root of the matter, which you reveal in the opening two sentences of your review:

As Senior Pastor of Scofield Memorial Church, I think I have read about everything on C. I. Scofield, books, articles, unpublished material including stuff from the files of our own church, papers written by Dallas Seminary students, etc. I think I am in a position to be objective, having taken in about everything that could be said, good and bad.

Those two sentences raise the following:

3

A question of "objectivity"

Clearly, you begin that way in order to establish your competence and

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credibility for handling the issue that you address. That is understandable; but It also conveys just as clearly—even emphatically—your self-estimate that your favorable evaluation of Scofield is the only valid one that anyone should trust; and that mine was written by an incompetent and “resentful” unknown jerk.

A polite demurral to that:

(a) Although it is obviously credible that your position in Scofield’s church has led you to read “about everything” on Scofield, it seems to me undeniable (and I am sure that it will seem this way to almost everyone else) that such wide exposure to those materials does *not*, in itself, put you “in a position to be *objective*.” To the contrary! The senior pastor of the church that not only bears commemoratively Scofield’s name but also still teaches his dispensational (or, more accurately, Dual Covenant) theology is about 99.9999 percent certain to be biased heavily in favor of Scofield, viewing all negative facts about him through a lens that is at least rose-tinted, and likely to have a few deforming wrinkles as well.

Not that such a condition cannot be overcome, as my own case proves: my beloved father was a dispensationalist; and I, at age 17 (1953), started Moody Bible Institute, which formed me into a DPZ (Dispensational, Pre-millennial, Zionist) believer until I was about 35. I was thus an investigator who had what lawyers view as the highest level of credibility, known as “admission against interest.” It was only the force of indisputable facts coming to my attention that overcame the built-in bias of my early training. I had no axe to grind but the truth.

(b) Although there certainly can be a bias against Scofield by some, such as Canfield, the existence of the opposite bias that governs you in your review is also very evident in the work by Mangum and Sweetnam which, not surprisingly, you recommend.

(c) Although you undoubtedly have read much, it may be that that you have not yet read the latest, and one of the most important, works on Scofield: the M.A. thesis by Jean Rushing at East Tennessee State University (December, 2011). I know that she emailed you a copy. However, for your convenience here, I enclose a few pages from it, including three of the most important: a copy of a letter that she uncovered, which Scofield had written from St. Louis, MO on November 18, 1862. It provides one more of those “indisputable facts” that I refer to in section (a), above.

That letter confirms what we knew already of one of the many unconscionable lies that Scofield told Trumbull in the interview that he gave in 1918 as the basis for Trumbull’s hagiographical so-called “biography,” *The Life Story of C. I. Scofield*. We knew that Scofield had lied shamelessly about his Civil War record—even though the 16 months that he did serve (May 20, 1861—September 26, 1862) were honorable enough! As you probably know, he fought in five major battles, the last of them being the worst in American history, Antietam. We knew also that after his discharge in 1862, he had made his way to St. Louis, where he had three sisters, including Emeline, who had married into the wealthy von Papin family; and that is where he was when the Civil War ended in 1865. Nevertheless, he claimed later, falsely, that he had fought *through the entire Civil War, and told Trum-*

bull that he was 12 miles from Appomattox when Lee surrendered to Grant!

The letter that Jean Rushing uncovered fills in some of the details of that interlude between his 1862 discharge and his ultimate arrival in St. Louis. The Confederacy had tried to induct him back into service, but he escaped from McMinnville, TN and walked north to Bowling Green, KY, and went somehow from there to St. Louis.

Finally, on this point about records that you may have missed: I am not sure that you are aware of the existence of the letter to Scofield that my brother, James, found in the archives of the Central American Mission. It was from a CAM missionary who reminisced about hearing Scofield's testimony of conversion in a rescue mission in St. Louis. That is totally different from (1) the version that he gave Trumbull, about being led by a 28-year-old Christian lawyer, Tom McPheeters, to accept Christ as his Savior; and (2) the version reported in the *Topeka Daily Capital*, that while he was in jail on forgery charges, a female Christian visitor led him to make a profession of faith. The existence of these various accounts (and perhaps others, which Scofield himself acknowledged to Trumbull as being "many") led my brother, James, to write an essay on "The Many Conversions of Fundamentalist Saint, Cyrus Ingerson Scofield."

More about his post-conversion life, then, follows:

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Specific points to be addressed in Scofield's post-conversion life.

Everyone who reads this is hereby invited to try to refute the following:

(a) On the divorce and re-marriage.

In your review, you ask the question, "Was he divorced?" and answer only, "Yes"—without identifying for the reader the grounds and circumstances, and whether the divorce was pre-conversion or post-conversion—as though those considerations make no difference and that everyone should just overlook it as of no major importance!

Well, brother Jeffrey, on the grounds of all of the Scriptures concerning the issues of divorce and the qualifications for ordination to the ministry, I disagree 180 degrees. This is another point that makes me wonder if you read thoroughly the 17 pages of my discussion of Scofield's divorce and remarriage (pp. 96-113). To summarize briefly:

(1) First of all, the timing of the divorce: this was ***four years after his conversion***. Leontine had filed earlier her first petition, which was withdrawn, perhaps in hope that it would bring Scofield back for a reconciliation. When that failed, she filed the second petition, which was granted; and please note the following:

(2) The divorce hearing was proceeding during the same time that Scofield was going through the process of examination for ordination!

That surely is a very rare occurrence in church history! Worse, he was not only going through the examination for ordination but he already, before the divorce was granted, was looking at Hettie. (We know this by looking at the time line, which I give in my book and will not repeat here).

(3) Leontine had not been unfaithful, but Scofield was the guilty party by reason of abandonment, for which he never sought forgiveness and reconciliation but rather “denied all charges.” (!!?? On what grounds?!)

Now, if this was four years after his profession of conversion, and he considered himself grown up in the faith enough to qualify for a pastorate, all of that conduct is totally inexcusable. Even the fervently-biased Sumner cannot deny the seriousness of this event in Scofield’s life, and says that if he had been on the ordination council, he would have recommended a postponement until a reconciliation could be reached; and if it was after the divorce had been granted, he would have walked and refused to lay hands on the candidate.

Neither of those two things, of course, was done. So it is my conclusion that Scofield *never should have been ordained. He was unqualified.* We also do not know to what extent the members of the ordination council are accessories after the fact in this, because we do not know what Scofield told them. (Does Scofield Memorial Church still have any minutes of the ordination in its archives?) Nevertheless, it does not matter what he told them, because it is a lose-lose situation either way, as follows:

There are only two possibilities: either he told the council the truth, or he lied. If he told the truth, he would have told them that Leontine, not he, was the one initiating the divorce, on the ground of abandonment. That, in itself, would have cancelled the ordination process immediately, if the members of the council followed the Biblical standard.

It is hard for me to believe that they would have proceeded if they had known all of the facts; and that is why I conclude that it is more likely that Scofield shaded the truth, and gave them a sob story, which won them over. That, however, does not change the fact that lying also disqualifies a man from ordination to the ministry. So either way, Scofield loses. His ordination was counterfeit—just like his “D.D.” (about which more in a moment).

(b) On all of the self-enhancing lies, late in his Christian profession.

On pp. 125-136 in my book, I discuss nine lies that Scofield told in his entry for *Who’s Who*—six of commission, and three deceptions by way of omission—and I note elsewhere the other lies that he told Trumbull in the interview for his “biography.” One egregious lie about his Civil War service has been exposed already, above; and another is his claim that his Cross of Honor award was “for bravery at Antietam,” when it was actually a general honorary award given in 1900—thirty-five years after the close of the war!—by the Daughters of the Confederacy as an expression of gratitude to every ex-Confederate soldier who had served honorably for the South. It was not as a special battlefield award “for bravery,” given to only a few who earned it. The Confederacy did not strike such medals at the time.

There is also his false claim to Trumbull that his mother had prayed, when dying at his birth, that her newborn son would grow up to be a preacher, and that his father delayed telling him of it until he was in the ministry. That is proved false by the facts that (1) his father died in 1872, seven years before Cyrus even professed conversion, let alone entered the ministry; and (2) his mother did not die at his birth but three months afterward.

Now, it is not necessary for me to repeat in this review the full itemization and further discussion of all of those lies. If you think that any of them were *not* lies, I surely will give, of course, close attention to any rebuttals that you would see possible to make; but I am confident that neither you nor anyone else can make any. Assuming their validity, then, for the sake of argument, I proceed to the really critical significance of *the time when he told these lies*.

Just as I noted above that the time of his unbiblical divorce and unbiblical re-marriage is of major significance, coming four years after his conversion profession and at his ordination to the ministry, the time that he told all of these lies in *Who's Who* (circa 1911, age 68, two years after the publication of the first edition of the SRB) and to Trumbull (circa 1918, age 75, one year after the second edition of 1917, and only three years before his passing) makes them to be one of the most outrageous records of conduct in modern church history (or, for that matter, earlier).

This is not the “fruit of the spirit” of a genuinely converted person! For a man who was allegedly a world-class leader of the Christian church, supposedly able to bring out an annotated edition of the entire Bible, a speaker at Bible conferences, and pastor of D. L. Moody’s notable church, his entire conduct is inexcusable; and please note also the position into which these lies place those who defend him!

These lies also have a direct bearing on the question of the authenticity of his “D.D.” degree, which I will take up next. For in view of all of those other lies, his phony self-awarded doctorate is perfectly consistent. It is in line with his character.

(c) On the phony “D.D.” degree.

Mangum and Sweetnam reveal their bias in accusing Canfield of making an “amateur’s mistake” on this issue, because he makes “absence of evidence to be evidence of absence.” What they do not realize is, first, that Canfield was no “amateur” researcher, but a professional in his own field of railroad history; and, second, that it is often true (although, admittedly, not always) that “absence of evidence is, indeed, evidence of absence.” That happens to be the case here, as proved by the convergence of all of the following known facts:

(1) The absence of any mention of the D.D. in both *Who's Who* and the Texas Presbyterian Directory is a very, very large and bright red flag. It could not have been a case of mere absent-mindedness in either case, for the following reasons:

(i) First of all, such publishers always provide a form for the candidates to fill out; and the form contains the categories to be covered, including

any degrees and awards, etc. That is to prevent oversights.

(ii) Second, at the time that he began using the title “Dr.”—around 1890 or 1891—he had not produced anything of enough significance to move any institution to award such a degree. *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* would not qualify, nor *The Believer* periodical. What he saw, however, was obviously the self-promoting advantage that such a degree would give him in getting himself accepted by the larger evangelical community at which he was aiming.

(iii) Third, because of the already-proved powerful egotistical, image-enhancing tendency in Scofield’s spirit, as revealed by all of those lies, it is absolutely certain that not only the publishers’ forms of reminder but his own nature would have made a *genuine* D.D. award from an accredited institution stand out in his mind, for all of his life thereafter, like the bride at a wedding.

Therefore, the absence of evidence in this case does, indeed, prove evidence of absence. As a skilled lawyer (which he was, no doubt), he was smart enough to know that it would be suicide for him to list falsely a known institution as the grantor of such a degree: for it could be checked, and he would be disgraced irreversibly for the rest of his life. He apparently did not realize that the *absence* of any mention of the degree would *also* be noticed by someone, and that the absence itself would lead to the same effect, in view of his prominent use of it.

(d) On the question of his conversion accounts and “alcoholism.”

His claim of “alcoholism” was, from all of my analysis, greatly exaggerated. No one else ever had mentioned it—not Leontine, in the divorce nor elsewhere; and not the hostile journalists who covered his cases. If it was as bad as he implied, they surely would have mentioned it in those days, because they had a clear bias against Scofield and thus would have grabbed on to anything as conspicuous as that in order to help document their case. Thus, we have it *only on his word—and we see that his word on anything about himself is totally unreliable*. “Drunkenness,” by comparison with his real sins of swindling and womanizing unfaithfulness to Leontine, which he never disclosed to Trumbull nor to anyone else, was a more common and acceptable claim for his self-image. It calls into question, then, the depth of his conversion experience. Genuine repentance is completely honest.

(e) On the private concession to Roman Catholic prayers to saints.

This is revealed in his final letter to his daughter, Abbie, only two and a half months before his passing. Since you may not have read all of my book, I again reproduce here for your convenience the shocking relevant passage, putting the relevant words in bold italics:

A word about your bungalow—which is I suppose waiting realization for that third thousand dollars. How I long to start it on its way to you! Since beginning this letter it has come to me clearly that my fault lies in not really- trusting God to give it to me. Instead I have been trying to “make” it. ***Let’s pray together—you in San Luis Obispo, I in Douglaston—and it will surely come to one of the other of us. I believe with absolute conviction in the communion of saints—so do you, but you also believe in their intercession. Now I***

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say in all reverence & seriousness, why don't you seek the special inter- cession of the San Luis in whose name-town you live? You surely will not accuse or suspect me of any lack of sincerity in this. Ah! Now we shall get that \$1000. And our Heavenly Father loves us so that He might very likely add another five hundred to the thousand. Oh! but it will make me happy when it comes.

We Scofields are home lovers. I can't bear to think of your increasing years under rented roofs. Mrs. Ingalls wrote me that Helen's husband had inherited a comfortable home. Thank God! Helen saw my home & will be able to tell you that it has the comforts which an aged man (78 in August!) needs. What a God and Father we have.

Now do write me, Dearie. With love to Dr. Kellogg & to the L.M. if she is still with you.
Papa

Note, in passing, the closing sending of love to not only Dr. Kellogg but also to "the L.M.," which is, of course, his ex-wife, Leontine Marie. Love to her? If so, why the divorce?

But I digress. Back to the issue at hand, concerning the bold italicized words above: I ask you, Dr. Van Goethem, if you think that they are what a super-spiritual Christian leader, of world-class stature, and the editor of a Reference Bible that condemns the "Babylon" of Romish heresies, would write to a Roman Catholic daughter as a means of winning her to accept the saving truths of the Protestant Reformation? He said, "you also believe in their intercession." Well, did Scofield believe in their intercession, too? If not, why did he tell her to seek it? Why did he not use the occasion as an opportunity to set forth a clear statement of the true Biblical view of prayer?

I think that everyone can see that his letter speaks for itself, so I will move on to the next point:

5

On the endorsement by D. L. Moody (and many others)

Yes, Moody was, indeed (and not surprisingly, either, as I will show next) one of Scofield's millions of "dupes."

Following next are the further facts about Moody that you need to know as background for evaluating his endorsement of Scofield:

First of all, it is well known that Moody was, himself, acutely aware of his lack of formal theological training; and it is because of that awareness that he deliberately and consciously surrounded himself with men who, in his opinion, were more capable than himself in that field.

A good thing, too! For on more than one occasion they saved him from serious embarrassment. The best thing I can do here is to quote a paragraph from Ernest R. Sandeen's very valuable work, *The Roots of Fundamentalism* (University of Chicago and Baker Book House, 1970), p. 176:

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Not all of the speakers selected by Moody were considered safely orthodox by the millenarians, and they sometimes became alarmed

that Moody was on the brink of selling out to Modernism. When Moody invited George Adam Smith, professor of Old Testament at Free Church College, Glasgow, a man feared for his acceptance of higher criticism, the *Watchword and Truth* began its editorial condemnation of Moody by quoting Paul's words in Galatians, "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." Even Moody could go too far.

Now, add to that these two further observations: (1) that Moody was primarily an evangelist, interested only in winning souls; and (2) that Scofield was not a liberal like Smith but, at least, a professing evangelical who, in spite of all of the character flaws that we know about today, did preach the same true gospel of grace that Moody preached.

It is virtually certain that Moody did not know all of the facts about Scofield's unbiblical divorce, unbiblical re-marriage, and unbiblical ordination—for if he did, it is difficult to believe that he would have invited Scofield into his circle. So we are able to address with certainty this quotation from your review:

Those who put forth the view that Scofield was a liar, schemer, fraud, etc., in all his years in Christian ministry must also agree that the great Moody was the same or perhaps a dupe of Scofield. Does anyone believe that?

Jeffrey, you reveal here once again the haste in which you must have written this review. Since I have been an editor for the last 51 years, and a writer for 55, perhaps it will not be presumptuous of me to point out a correction in your question. It follows the presentation of two options to believe, not just one; but the singular "that" in your question does not discriminate between them and allow the addressee a choice. You force, against true reason, the choice of either "both" or "neither." You should have asked, "Does anyone believe either of those two things?"

I will answer, then, that revised question that you should have asked. The answer to the first option is clearly, "No." Moody definitely was not the liar, schemer, and fraud that Scofield was. The answer to the second option, however, is very definitely "Yes." That is because, as has been proved already abundantly, Scofield was a master con artist before his conversion; and he maintained that skill throughout his post-conversion life. So when one adds to that talent his open profession of the evangelical gospel, combined with Moody's proved weakness in judging character, the outcome of a meeting between the skillful Scofield and the meek Moody was inevitable and predictable.

Nor should anyone be surprised at this, when looking at how many great and good people have been victims of extremely clever con artists, not only in the world but in the church. I need not labor the point with someone as experienced as you, but only mention the names of Jimmy Swaggart, Jim Bakker, Billy James

Hargis and, more recently, Ted Haggard (president of NAE and therefore in a position comparable to Scofield's).

Now, many people at this point—probably including you—will be asking:

6

What good purpose is achieved, anyway, by all of this hanging out of Scofield's dirty laundry?

Well, I can assure you that it is not a case of *schadenfreud* nor of delighting in scandalous gossip ("juicy," to use Sumner's unjustifiable smear). Instead, it is absolutely necessary for teaching and learning some of the most important spiritual lessons of life.

One of those lessons, which I will teach immediately now (the others following in the last section), can be remembered easily by the initials of the name that I give it:

(a) The first lesson: CCC.

CCC stands for something far more important than FDR's Civilian Conservation Corps, or the Continental Can Company, or Crete Carrier Corporation, whose 18-wheelers we see every day on the highways. Whenever anyone does see one of those trucks, I ask them to remember the high spiritual significance of those letters, taught in 1 Timothy 1:19, where Paul exhorts Timothy to be "holding faith and a good conscience, which some, having put away, concerning the faith have made shipwreck."

The Greek for the word "which" there is unequivocally a reference back to the word that immediately precedes it, "conscience." What Paul is saying there, then, is that there is an inseparable connection between one's moral character (conscience) and one's grasp of "the faith." The first step in apostasy is not in the mind, but in the heart, the "putting away" of the guidance of the conscience. I call that, then, the "Character-Comprehension Connection," or the spiritual and psychological principle that *Character Conditions Comprehension*.

I do not say that "Character *Completely Controls* Comprehension," but only "conditions" it, because "comprehension" is created by not just one factor but a combination of two factors, the head and the heart. Part of the "head," the intellect, is an immovable sub-stratum of involuntary ideas that God installed at the factory, giving us no access to make changes in them; but an evil heart will try its best, anyway, to make unchangeable human logic *appear* to ratify the errors that it loves more dearly than it loves the truth. So the stubborn intellect limits how far into error that anyone can fall. It prevents an evil heart from completely *controlling* comprehension—e.g., a mass murderer can be a mathematical genius and learn much of science, history, economics, and even religion—but only *conditions* it. For instance, the brilliant economist, John Maynard Keynes, was a pedophile.

On the other hand, a good heart does not completely control comprehension, either, but merely "conditions" it by allowing the intellect to guide it accurately into the truth. It is vital to note in this regard Paul's words in 2 Thessalonians 2,

that the unbelievers who perish “received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” He did not say that they “received not the truth,” but “received not the *love of* the truth.” Revelation 22:15 adds that they are those who “love and make a lie.” Heart first, comprehension second. Good heart plus intellect makes truth; bad heart plus intellect makes error. CCC. (Get it? Get it?)

That is the explanation, then, for Scofield’s outrageously stupid misinterpretations of Scripture. For we have covered above, in summary fashion, the serious defects in his character; and that is precisely why we find what we find next, how he made “shipwreck concerning the faith.” Moreover, in doing so, he brought many others down with him as well.

(b) Scofield’s Outrageous Misinterpretations of Scripture.

To save time on this section, I have enclosed a copy of an entire chapter on it, entitled “Christianity’s Consummate Convincing Crackpot.” Only part of it is in *The Praise of Folly* (pp. 120-124). That part is my rebuttal of his outrageously feebleminded, moronic interpretation of 2 Timothy 2:15 in his first major booklet, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* (1888).

Most of that chapter was omitted from *The Praise of Folly* only because of space limitations, not because of any disagreement by the publisher with its contents. I will mention here only one more item from it, which is very forceful proof that Scofield was not being led by the Holy Spirit in making his Reference Bible—regardless of Trumbull’s adoring, enraptured paean that it was “God-planned, God-guided, God-illuminated, and God-energized”—a description that practically claims the infallible, divine inspiration of “God-breathed” in 2 Timothy 3:16 and thus creates the foundation for a cult. For that description is clearly very close to the Seventh-Day Adventists’ view of Ellen G. White’s writings as well as the Mormons’ view of their own books, or Christian Science’s view of Mary Baker Eddy’s *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, and so on.

The item to which I refer is:

Egregiously and gratuitously slandering Obadiah, God’s devout servant, in 1 Kings 18.

Dr. Donald R. Hubbard boldly takes issue with a Scofield note.

Because I work for a medical laboratory, I sometimes have to work on Sundays. Hospitals do not stop testing patients on Sundays and holidays. Thus, when I drive on a Sunday, I attend First Church of the Car by means of God’s great gift of radio—that which once was called by the more extreme Luddites the “prince of the power of the air,” but which was given a great leap forward by the electron tube invented by a former student at D. L. Moody’s Mt. Hermon school, Lee de Forest.

So there I was, driving along, listening to Bible Broadcasting Network. It was airing a message by Dr. Donald R. Hubbard on 1 Kings 18, “Obadiah: The Man in the Middle,” a study of the character of the man who was the “business manager” for King Ahab, as well as a loyal supporter of the prophet Elijah.

My ears perked up when, as part of his introduction to the message, Dr. Hubbard mentioned his regret that he found it necessary to reject the comment on Obadiah that is found in the Scofield Reference Bible. Aware that many of his listeners used that edition and respected its notes, Hubbard's presentation of his disagreement was very gracious—but also firm, accurate, and very necessary.

In 1 Kings 18:3-4, God's own infallible evaluation of Obadiah's character was that he "feared the Lord greatly." Then, to give a specific example of Obadiah's devotion, God mentions that "it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water." In his message, Dr. Hubbard pointed out that this was at great personal risk, revealing clearly and inspirationally Obadiah's courage and faith at this critical time of Israel's history.

The message addressed the question of how a believer can serve God in a worldly environment, especially during a time of such difficulties. Dr. Hubbard pointed out many others who had been in secular governmental positions, comparable to Obadiah's: Moses in Pharaoh's house; Joseph in Egypt's government; Daniel in Babylon; "the saints in Ceasar's household," and Luke's mention of "Joanna in Herod's court." Obadiah, then, set a good example for us in how he dealt with his "pressure points," our own day having the same general challenges.

So even though there is not a single negative comment nor incident in the text that would modify in any way the positive impression that God presents of Obadiah, here are the astonishingly critical notes in the SRB:

First, the descriptive section heading in italics that Scofield put before verse 3, where the narrative covering Obadiah and his actions begins, is:

A believer out of touch with God.

Now, it is *immediately after* this heading by Scofield that we read God's own comment (end of verse 3): "Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly."

The contrast is absolutely devastating! However, the SRB's comment in the center column—probably entered in order to explain the obvious discrepancy between Scofield's opinion and God's--only reinforces the error:

In such a time as the reign of Ahab and Jezebel a believer's true place was by Elijah's side. Obadiah is a warning type of the men of God who adhere to the world while still seeking to serve God. The secret of the Lord, and the power of the Lord were with Elijah, the separated servant. Cf. 2 Tim. 2.20,21

Hubbard said, "I am going to take issue with that note in the Scofield Reference Bible." He also attributed the note to "the editors," rather than to Scofield personally—but that still does not let Scofield off the hook, because he would have had to see it and approve it. Besides, (1) the rhetoric sounds like Scofield; and (2) it is very doubtful that any of the other editors would have made such a comment. (Proof: Hubbard said that although he had not had an opportunity to check the 1967 revised edition, he thought that it had removed this note. Well, it did! That makes it clear that the later editors, at least, had enough sense to see Scofield's folly

here). In any case, it is to Dr. Hubbard's great credit that he dared—rather courageously himself, like Obadiah—to repudiate the great Scofield's outrageous repudiation of God's own assessment of Obadiah.

Hubbard's disagreement was expressed very graciously. So he is the “good cop.” I, then, will have to be the “bad cop,” adding two more points to this case, and making them a bit more harshly:

(1) First, the assertion that Obadiah's obligation in that circumstance was to abandon his position in the royal household and go out into the wilderness with Elijah is totally without foundation. Obadiah's job was perfectly legitimate, even if the personal character of his employers was wicked. Do not most Christian believers work at secular jobs, including some in government? Furthermore, Obadiah's position was clearly God's provision for the protection and feeding of His prophets, putting one of His own servants into the position from which that provision best could come. That comment by Scofield was therefore totally gratuitous, pure (or impure) imagination, and an attempt at pious invention.

It was not an isolated mistake, a passing error. It was another manifestation of Scofield's exegetical incompetence, one among scores, beginning with his wild interpretation of “dividing” in 2 Timothy 2:15.

(2) Second—and very ironically—Scofield, being a member of The Lotos Club when he wrote this and for the rest of his life, scarcely was in a position to be making such a comment about anyone! If ever there was a man who was trying to “adhere to the world while still seeking to serve God” (or at least give the appearance of “seeking to serve God”), it was the writer of this very comment: for at the very moment that he was writing it, he was rather suspiciously in the company of the rich, the famous, and the powerful at The Lotus Club; and the only reason for it that seems plausible is that it was to obtain whatever assistance they might give him for the advancement of the dispensationalists' Zionist agenda.

(His gratuitous attack on Obadiah was, however, an all-too-typical tragic example of other preachers, too. I have heard more than one try to find preaching points where there are none, just for getting something spiritual-sounding to preach. It is done by spiritually-starved preachers who have no genuine experience of the deeper life upon which to draw. Lacking, then, the deep knowledge and experience of the Scriptures from which to make a genuine case in a sermon, they must hold an audience with colorful imagination and invention; but I never heard a single occurrence of it in years of listening to A. W. Tozer, Alan Redpath at Moody Church, and others. For them, the truth was enough).

To sum up: all of the exegetical buffooneries that I document in “Christianity's Consummate Convincing Crackpot” are connected inseparably to his outrageously defective life of lies. He exchanged the first half of his life in financial swindling to spend the last half of it in theological swindling.

This is all that I have to say here on learning how the “CCC” lesson applies to the study of Scofield's life; but there is much more, which follows next:

Additional important lessons from studying Scofield's life

Besides the all-important CCC lesson above (which can be read also as “See? See? See?”), I perceive two others. The first is from Scofield's life itself; and the second is from the different reactions, favorable and unfavorable, that have been prompted by the different published accounts of his life. The latter lesson is suggested by the quote from Jean Paul Richter that I use as one of the epigraphs on the title page of this “open letter”—“A man never discloses his own character so clearly as when he describes another's.”

As I point out in the beginning of my book, Trumbull's account was hagiographical and woefully inaccurate. BeVier's was more accurate and supplementary, but still hagiographical and inadequate. Canfield's broke valuable new ground and was mostly accurate, but a little too demonizing. Thus, I made mine to be the only fair and balanced one so far, because that kind was obviously very sorely needed. (It is too early to get any feed-back on Jean Rushing's). In any case, one's reactions to each of those works reveals one's own position vis-à-vis not only Scofield but, in the only way that really matters, God.

(a) God uses imperfect servants—even *very* imperfect ones.

It is very gratifying to pass now from the black side of Scofield to the white side—which is what makes his life's pattern to be neither gray-to-white (Trumbull, BeVier) nor black-to-white (current dispensationalists), nor the black-to-black which you erroneously imply that my book portrays, but black-to-gray.

My book does not deny that Scofield founded a very fruitful missionary ministry, the Central American Mission, and a very useful Christian educational institution, Philadelphia College of Bible (later changed to other names, ending as Philadelphia Biblical University and another recent change). Moreover, I do not deny that his preaching of the basic gospel of grace could have led many to saving faith in Christ, and that he could have made other useful contributions to the extension of God's kingdom.

G. C. Berkouwer wrote a book entitled *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*. We could entitle a closing section of Scofield's life, then, “The Triumph of Grace in the Life of C. I. Scofield.” For that is one of the single greatest spiritual lessons that all Christians can learn from a study of his life—and I bring that out in my two DVD lectures, that “God uses imperfect people—for the simple reason that He has no other kind. The only difference is that some are more imperfect than others!”

I bring out also the necessary follow-up to that lesson: the further lesson that God's sovereign choice to use and bless an imperfect person *does not constitute God's approval of everything that the person said or did, even if many of God's imperfect children (such as you) conclude otherwise!*

(See also “The fruit-bearing enigma,” pp. 88-94 in the enclosed binder of the

chapters omitted from my book, beginning with “Christianity’s Consummate Convincing Crackpot.” It contains the story of the work of missionaries to Africa from Aimee Semple McPherson who, herself, as well as those missionaries, were far, far worse in character than Scofield—and yet obtained a few genuine converts!)

The application: “If God could and did use a person as imperfect as Scofield and many others who were even worse, He surely can use anyone—including me! So maybe we all have hope, after all!”

(b) The desperate need for not merely a revival but a new Reformation within evangelical Protestantism,

Dual Covenant theology (a.k.a. “dispensationalism”—misleadingly, and thus dishonestly) must be repudiated by all of its current adherents.

The lesson that “God uses imperfect servants” is why I believe that God can and will use not only me and many others but you, too, brother Van Geothem. For you, too, show in your review how imperfect you are.

(1) That is because, in spite of all that I point out above that is in my book, you say, nevertheless, that my biography of Scofield is “not an honest” one, “nor a credible effort in establishing the truth”—which implies that I make serious perspective-changing omissions and misrepresentations, either intentionally or unintentionally. You also state, incorrectly, without giving a single specific example, that I “presume to find the darkest possible conclusion at every possible point in Scofield’s life.” That falsehood implies that before I began writing, I must have had a strong dislike and suspicion of Scofield and allowed those feelings, unacademic-like, to govern my presentation. Strange that no other reviewers received that impression!

I respectfully deny all of those charges, which are misleading to potential purchasers of the book, and which you clearly made in order to discourage them from buying and reading it. Nevertheless, counter-intuitively, I believe that their eventual effect will be to do a great service for not only yourself but others. That great service will be by the revelation that they give of the desperate need for not merely a revival but a new Reformation within Protestantism: the final obliteration of Dual Covenant theology, which has been going by the deceptive and inaccurate name of “dispensationalism.”

For your review fulfills the principle articulated by Jean Paul Richter: you do not reveal anything at all about my book, but you automatically and unavoidably reveal much about yourself! Moreover, that is a good thing, even if it is bad, because of the famous principle enunciated by the equally famous Dr. Sigmund Freud: “It is only when we can see a problem clearly that we can deal with it.”

The problem, stated very simply, is this: like several million other genuine Christian believers today, including thousands of pastors and Bible school teachers among them, you have come to love deeply the seriously erroneous and unacceptably damaging Dual Covenant theological system that was developed by J. N. Darby and the Plymouth Brethren, with supporting roles from Edward Irving and

Margaret MacDonald's feverish teen-age "vision" (or whatever it was). Scofield was not the inventor of the system, but only its greatest promoter—he was only in sales, not manufacturing—and that is because he combined his greatly-developed swindling skills from his unconverted years with his equally great incompetence as a Bible student and expositor for anything heavier than the surface of John 3:16.

(2) To document what I mean by "unacceptably damaging," the phrase I used above, I have enclosed (among all of the literature that I am wondering if you will take the time to read) "An Appraisal of Folly," which is a transcript of my two DVD lectures on Scofield, "Te Man and the Myth." I marked with a paper clip the section that expound upon three classes of damage that Dual Covenant theology has inflicted and still is inflicting.

(Just one brief infuriating example: the 2 billion dollars (yes, that's a "b") that evangelicals have diverted from desperately needy Christian foreign mission to the satanic, deceptive, counterfeit modern state of "Israel" since its founding in 1948. Heretic Hagee alone has raised many millions of dollars for it, and says that "only God knows" if any unbelieving Jews will be saved apart from Christ. Wrong, John! We know, too, because God has told us!)

(3) You say in your review that you have the impression that my book was written because I do "not agree with Scofield's theology" and am "resentful of the success and popularity of the Scofield Reference Bible." Those are two more mistakes that, again, fulfill Richter's rule of self-disclosure:

The first implies that disagreement with Scofield's theology, while it is widespread among, e.g., the Reformed wing of evangelicalism, is really only a matter of opinion, and that no one can be absolutely certain of which system is the only correct one. That is the same cop-out of agnosticism that liberals use against conservatives in economics and politics: "All truth is relative; there is no absolute truth of which everyone can be certain." It is one of the all-time favorite subterfuges practiced by those who "love and make a lie," referenced previously.

The second is a gratuitous libel on my motives and character. It reveals that it springs only from your own powerful bias in favor of Scofield and the SRB, and how resentful you are, yourself, against any attacks on them! As Henri Bergson once observed, "Most of our suspicions of other are aroused by our knowledge of ourselves." A person who feels resentment, there-fore, will be quick to imagine it in others.

No, the right word for what I and many others (including A. W. Tozer) feel about the SRB is not "resentful" but "grief," "dismay," and even "alarm" because of all of the damage that I document in "An Appraisal of Folly." Dr. Tozer said that "our first obligation is not to spread the gospel, but to be sure that we have the only true gospel that is worthy to be spread." Dual Covenant theology has enough of the true gospel to save souls; but it has a lethal contaminant that has weakened the church unacceptably. This is now about 175 years after the first drops of it were injected into Christ's visible body, the Church. It is time to purge it. "It is time for judgment to begin in the house of God," and "The times past of this ignorance God

winked at, but now commands Dual Covenant people everywhere to repent.”

(4) In view of that, I introduce the leadership principle that I perceive to be one of the most important for preachers, and which God Himself has ratified by His own act of providing the cross for our redemption: that *no leader ever asks anyone to do anything that the leader is unwilling to do.*

Well, what is it that we preachers are always asking others, both sinners and saints, to do, brother Jeffrey? Is it not to have the good character virtues of humility, honesty, and courage to admit a mistake when it is undeniably apparent and to correct it?

That is the challenge that I present to every Dual Covenant (a.k.a. “dispensationalists”) and every defender of C. I. Scofield. That includes not just you but everyone at Dallas The Illogical Seminary (as Dave McPherson puts it), Moody Bible Institute (my alma mater), Philadelphia Biblical University (or whatever its new name is), Bible Broadcasting Network (which I listen to appreciatively every day for its music, and give a monthly contribution)—in short, the whole ball club.

You say in your review that “there is much that we do not know about Scofield.” True—and that, in itself, when put into the context of his life, is very troubling! Remember, for instance, that his son, Noel, refused to give researchers any information about him. Nevertheless, be that as it may, it still is also true that there is much—very much, in fact—that we *do* know about him; and that which we do know is totally sufficient for making a reliable evaluation of his character and the nature of his ministry.

Not only that, but we now know conclusively—although many, such as Charles H. Spurgeon, knew conclusively from the very beginning, 175 years ago—that Dual Covenant theology is flat-out *wrong!* This is not a matter of mere opinion. It is a matter that strikes at the very heart of Christian epistemology and the Character-Comprehension Connection. The proofs that Dual Covenant theology is wrong are just as conclusive as the proofs of the existence of God, the resurrection of Christ, and the divine authorship of Scripture. (See also section 8, below).

The latter point raises finally, then, a question, Jeffrey, which you may or may not have the time, or the desire, to answer:

Of all of the exegetical buffooneries that I list in that chapter on “Christianity’s Consummate Convincing Crackpot,” is there any one that you feel that you can, in all honesty and certainty, defend as being *not* the “buffoonery” that I call it but at least a reasonable and plausible interpretation? If you can, I assure you that I will give it my careful attention and analysis.

In conclusion: what I have presented in my book and now, in this “open letter,” is obviously an extended sermon, with an invitation here at the close for repentance and, if necessary, a call for a church council of examination and censure for failure to respond or to refute my assertions. (Any member of the body of Christ has the authority and right to make this approach to any other member, beginning with the first steps of Matthew 18. The first step here is public rather than one-on-one privately, only because the issue itself began as public).

Remember also when Paul had to confront Peter with an error. I think I have been charitable. I could have called your review “A Lamentable Review”!

(5) For all of the above reasons, I believe totally that the board of Scofield Memorial Church should re-name the church, omitting Scofield’s name. His character has been proved to be the type that is not worthy of an example to be followed, which is what a memorial in one’s name implies.

I close this section (the next to the last) by pointing out what the change of name would do: it would be a spark that could ignite the Reformation that is needed. For there would be outraged cries from all over, wondering why the change was being made. That would invite the response of explaining by, for instance, providing a copy of this “open letter” (free by email attachment). The evidence would convince a certain number, I am sure—for not everyone is a lover and maker of lies—even though we also could expect the usual number of gutless wonders.

8

A concluding point on how time management is absolutely critical to this.

On the problem of time allocation, a particular point about the time that a pastor spends on continuing Bible studies. That point concerns the tribal roster of Israel in Revelation 7:4-11.

The only way to understand what the Holy Spirit meant by inserting that roster there is to begin by going back to the original birth order of the patriarchs in Genesis and make a table of them, noting not only the chronological order of their birth but their mothers (there were five), the meaning of their names, their locations in the land, their spiritual characteristics, and Jacob’s prophecy of their destiny.

The next step is to go to all of the subsequent rosters that are given in several other OT books, plus the only one in the NT (Rev. 7:4-11)—there are 20 such explicit rosters, and 4 implicit ones—and then compare them, noting any patterns and, if any, their significance.

I did all of that, and have published my results in a complete essay, which I take the liberty of enclosing if you care to look at it.

Now, all of the research and writing for this took (as anyone can imagine) so many hours that I can’t put a number of them; but it is definitely well over a standard 40-hour week. However, it has proved to have been very worthwhile, not only for me personally but for others, as many have testified, including those who got the content from lectures as well as reading the essay. (In the DVD of my two lectures on Scofield, I offer the essay as an email attachment free upon request. I have been receiving continuing requests from time to time).

Notice, then: although reading that essay will take, obviously, far less time than I took to do the research and write it—a pastor like yourself would require only two or three hours plus a few more to reflect, analyze, and evaluate—it is a judgment call as to whether or not even those few hours would be worthwhile.

Well, all that I can tell you immediately here is that all who have spent those few hours have seen clearly the irrefutable proof that there is no possible way for that tribal roster in Revelation 7 to be literal. So it must be symbolic (which is, of course, the basic format of the book of Revelation). If, then, it is symbolic, *of what* is it symbolic? Well, how many candidates do we have for the position? There is only one, unmistakably: the Church, which Paul and Peter and James identify as the new and only true Israel.

Once that is understood, the cataclysmic, life-altering effect upon any dispensationalist is the immediate and undeniable perception that the whole dispensationalist view is wrong! For there are several misunderstood passages of Scripture that are supporting pillars of dispensationalism—e.g., Daniel 9:27 (the seventy heptads), or Scofield’s crackpot “exegesis” of 2 Timothy 2:15—so that, whenever any dispensationalist discovers for the first time the correct interpretation of any one of them, the effect is just like the demolition of a key support in a building: because everything is connected, it creates a chain reaction, and the whole edifice collapses.

Revelation’s tribal roster is one of those key supporting pillars; and my essay is one of those demolition blasts.

The analogy with a “demolition blast” is limited, however, to only the effect, and not the time required for producing it. In literal demolitions, the explosion occurs in milliseconds. This demolition will take a few hours; and there is a force acting against even the placement of the charge into position, as pointed out by Leo Tolstoy in one of his writings:

I know that most men, including those who are at ease with problems of the greatest complexity, seldom can accept even the simplest and most obvious truth if it would oblige them to admit the falsity of conclusions which they have delighted in explaining to colleagues, proudly taught to others, and which they have woven, thread by thread, into the fabric of their lives.

The power level of the spiritual quality of Scofield and the Dual Covenant theology that he promoted is definitely NOT the level that will meet the desperate needs of this present evil world until Christ returns. For the sake of bringing the much-needed relief to the dying and hurting people of this world, we need every Dual Covenant (so-called “dispensationalist”) believer and institution to have the Christian character to admit that they have been following a seriously damaging error and repent immediately, and “do the works that are meet for repentance.”

It has to begin with the leaders.