

**Assemblies of God and Elim**  
**LIVING IN a FOOL'S PARADISE** <sup>1</sup>

*He, who being often reprov'd hardens his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy – **Proverbs 29:1** (KJV)*

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Philip Powell (PP) the author of this piece is planning a short ministry tour of UK in May/June 2011, when he had hoped to offer the first of a series of books entitled ***Whatever Happened to the Assemblies of God***. That now seems unlikely so it is being published as a two part series in **CETF** as a prelude to the book series, God Willing. Preparatory to this an early draft of this article was sent to the AoG-UK and Elim head-quarters and, through the kind service of John Glass, General Superintendent of the **Elim Pentecostal Churches (ECC)** was forwarded at the suggestion of PP to Colin Dye (CD), senior pastor of *Kensington Temple* London, UK. CD and PP engaged in extensive email correspondence, which ultimately led to an impasse. During the discussion CD attempted to embargo PP, who refused to accept CD's restrictive confidentiality insistence. The final email exchanges were as follows:

**PP to CD – 7/02/11 –**

Dear Colin: I have now carefully read your email to me (Saturday, 5 February 2011 12:22 AM) see below and have cursorily read the attachments thereto. I respond as follows:

1. I will NOT sign the agreement. It is unreasonable, impractical and impossible.
2. I will NOT publish your response, which is approximately 3,000 words long. It is diversionary and misrepresentative.
3. As previously stated I am prepared to meet with you to discuss the matter of accountability—mine and yours.
4. I am willing to debate the matter publicly provided the debate is recorded by video and each party is given a copy of the debate.

I now propose to finalise my article with a view to publishing it. There will be some changes between the final article and the DRAFT article which you say you received on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2011. ***Kind regards, Philip L. POWELL***

**CD to PP – 7/02/11**

Dear Mr Powell - I have duly noted your decision to refuse the agreement I proposed concerning my response. I have also noted your intention to go ahead and publish your article. I accept your decision as final. Thank you - *Colin Dye* (Sent from my BlackBerry® wireless device).

There was no reply from the AoG-UK Office.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cwmfellowship.org/articles/TheUKAssembliesofGod-ADifferentMovementwiththeSameName.pdf>

## **LIVING IN A FOOL'S PARADISE**

**By Philip L. Powell**

Coincidentally a large AoG-OZ event called ***The Influencers*** scheduled for early 2011 was cancelled in Brisbane on account of the flood in this city where we live. Everyone read about the flood; very few knew about the so-called ***Influencers*** or its cancellation. How ironic. We all kid ourselves when we have an inflated sense of our own importance and our own influence. My concern however in writing this relates not merely to this self deception, but rather to the questions of who or what are the movements mentioned in my title influencing? Ashley and Jane Evans (AoG) head up ***The Influencers*** "down-under" using T D Jakes, who denies the trinity and Creflo Dollar, who preaches the false message of ***Word of Faith*** and ***Faith-Prosperity***, which is "another gospel" and "another Jesus" cf. 2 Corinthians 11:4 & Galatians 1:6. In both regards they are living in a fool's paradise and this is representative of so much in the AoG and Elim denominations of our time.

In May 2010, during my last year's ministry tour in UK, a concerned British AoG pastor, of many years experience, handed me the first, and at that time the latest, official national AoG magazine ridiculously named "RE" and published in that month. Part of the Resources' page of the official AoG website (<http://www.aog.org.uk/>) explains:

RE Magazine (formerly known as 'Joy') is the official monthly publication of Assemblies of God. For further information and to order your monthly copy, please click on the following link: [www.newlifepublishing.co.uk](http://www.newlifepublishing.co.uk)

By following their recommendation you will arrive at the official ***New Life Publishing (NLP)*** website, where we "learn" among other things that this is a "brilliant magazine" that "provides news, articles and interviews to encourage and build-up everyone in Assemblies of God and beyond." There follows a clever marketing spiel that tells you how to "ensure you never miss an issue" by subscribing for a year (£22.95), two years (£42.95), three years (£60.95). Those in Europe have to pay more and the rest of the world even more.

NLP is the publishing arm of the British ***Assemblies of God (AoG-UK)*** and ***Elim Pentecostal Churches (EPC)***, also called ***Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance*** - <http://www.elim.org.uk/>. Together they constitute the main part of the organised section of the ***Pentecostal*** denominations of Great Britain.

As I cursorily read some of the text and glanced at the many pictures and graphics of the first edition of "***RE***" I had the strong suspicion that I was witnessing a precursor to the cadaveric spasm of a one-time godly movement. More than six months later as I am writing this piece (January 9, 2011), following my reading the article by Kate Kent in the December 2010 issue of "***RE***" about Simon Cowell, I know that the Assemblies of God in Great Britain and Ireland as a

“revival movement” is dead. Of that there can be no doubt to any discerning person who is biblically literate and who is aware of Church History.

***Whom God wishes to destroy, He first sends mad.*** <sup>2</sup>

**RE – ROBERT BELL** (May 2010) – Style NOT Substance.

A denominational magazine is essentially a window into the soul and psyche of that denomination. **Re**, by modern standards is a very well produced, nicely illustrated and obviously costly to print (full four colours), magazine. I would estimate that at least 60%, maybe as much as 70%, has more to do with style (graphics etc) than with substance (text). Of course this is the modern trend in the world and is part of the “dumbing-down” of the population. We live in a graphics based society. The AoG has fallen for the ploy that pictorial “appearance” is all-important. I am not saying that this is unimportant, far from it. There is a balance; but when stylistic appeal dominates at the expense of substance, you have a problem. From my observation this print and publication drift from substance to style in AoG circles, started in Australia and has now extended to Great Britain.

However there is an element which makes matters much worse regarding “**Re**” and it has to do with transparency that borders on issues of honesty, integrity and character which are essential considerations in the promotion of our Christian and Pentecostal message.

Page 68 includes a photograph of Roberts Liardon (RL) and three graphics of his book series **God’s Generals**: 1) *The Roaring Reformers*; 2) *Why They Succeeded and Why Some Failed*; 3) *Revivalists*. It is claimed that there are “over 7 million in print.” Liardon is the recently appointed principal of the Bible College of the London (UK) EPC mega Church – **Kensington Temple (KT)**, pastored by Colin Dye referred to above.

In December 2001, *Charisma News Service* published a disclosure of RL’s admission to a then “recent short-term homosexual relationship”, <sup>3</sup> for which he was disciplined and was allegedly back in the pulpit at his *Embassy Christian Center* in Irvine, California after a three month absence. Even if that were the full story, which according to the website documented below is not the case, it is NOT acceptable biblically that a serious “short term” immoral sin should incur a mere three month discipline. However it seems that it may not be exactly as *Charisma* reported as the following quote suggests:

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<sup>2</sup>A Christianised version of the Latin, **quem** (or **quos**) **Deus perdere vult, dementat prius**, which is more frequently rendered, “**Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad**”, being a variant spoken by **Prometheus**, in *The Masque of Pandora* (1875) by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1852) see <http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Euripides> cf. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prometheus> and [http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Henry\\_Wadsworth\\_Longfellow](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Henry_Wadsworth_Longfellow)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.charismamag.com/index.php/news/23485-evangelist-roberts-liardon-leads-london-bible-college->

DITC <sup>4</sup> Commentary: According to sources the above is not the whole story. Roberts Liardon was having a long-term homosexual relationship with another member of his church, as well as others. <sup>5</sup>

In an email to me dated 20/01/2011 John Glass, General Superintendent of EPC wrote:

Re your draft article..... Elim played no part in the appointment of Roberts Liardon. The appointment was made by Colin Dye to IBIOL [*International Bible Institute of London*]. IBIOL is not the training centre or bible college for Elim. That is Regents Theological College. IBIOL is based at KT, which as you have rightly pointed out is an Elim church.

In my long correspondence with Colin Dye, which I am quite happy to publish if required, I gained the impression that CD thinks that Roberts Liardon was adequately disciplined for his sin and that he, CD was therefore free to appoint him as principal of IBIOL. Surely he must be referring to a discipline that the Christian public knows nothing about. Why?

The Bible, which is our FINAL authority for church order, is perfectly clear – a leader must be above reproach:

*... he must also have a good report from those on the outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the Devil - **1 Timothy 3:7.***

Paul is NOT writing about "ministry" i.e. service, but about position i.e. authority. This verse precludes Roberts Liardon, not from ministry but from a leadership position such as that bestowed upon him by Mr Dye. Biblically he is disqualified from Christian Church leadership FOR LIFE. Incidentally the fact that Mr Glass claims that the appointment was made by Colin Dye and not by Elim raises an interesting issue about accountability. We understand that Mr Dye and possibly Mr Liardon operate under so called "apostolic authority" whatever that may mean.

To make my and CWM's position perfectly clear I draw your attention to an article published by us several years ago when this matter of Mr Liardon's moral sin was first made public – see ***Donning the Mask Again – the restoration of the fallen - By Siam Bhayro and Philip Powell*** - [http://www.christian-witness.org/archives/van2003/bilby\\_restor16.html](http://www.christian-witness.org/archives/van2003/bilby_restor16.html)

I do believe in the restoration of the fallen and I do believe in the Bible standard for leaders. Those who truly repent will want to obey the Bible. As the article linked above points out we at CWM do not rank moral failure a greater sin than false teaching. In our view Roberts Liardon has been guilty of both. Nicholaitanism (false teaching) frequently leads to Balaamism (immoral action) and vice versa.

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<sup>4</sup> Deception In The Church - <http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/ditcnews.htm>

<sup>5</sup> <http://bibleman.18.forumer.com/index.php?showtopic=145>

The **EPC** would have been "mad" to appoint RL as principal of the "prestigious" *Kensington Temple (KT)* Bible College with his track record. The **AoG** must have taken leave of their senses to promote his books, which obviously contain his teaching material. RL is by any standard an opportunist, who has notoriously climbed on the back of those whom he dubs Pentecostal "generals" to establish fame and notoriety for himself. I doubt that his biographies of those whom many of us would consider "Pentecostal Greats" are in fact accurate. But setting that aside and the grandiose claim about RL being a "Church Historian", how should we view RL and his writings in the light of his moral failure and obvious character traits? Remember what Jesus taught about "wheat and tares" in Matthew chapter 13 cf. "You shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" (**Matthew 7:16**).

Do a Google Search on "Roberts Liardon – homosexual", and research what comes up e.g. follow the links below:

<http://endtimespropheticwords.wordpress.com/2009/05/11/what-on-earth-are-elimkensington-temple-thinking-part-1-appointing-roberts-liardon/>

<http://moriel.org/MorielArchive/index.php/news/australia/elim-temple-bible-institute-appointment>

For those who have "eyes to see" there are a number of other signs of the "madness" contained in the first renamed official national AoG magazine, which is a window into the denomination. For example pages 13 and 69-70 relate to Morris Cerullo and Oral Roberts (now deceased), who are (were) the consummate "rip-off" artists of our time. Why are they featured? Then there is the lead article about Emergent Church leader Robert Bell, who among other things denies the authority of the Bible. <sup>6</sup>

Did you get that? On page 21 of **Re** (May 2010) in a beautifully graphically designed double page introduction to the lead article - **The Mission – BELL** - author Mark Wreyford writes:

Few pastors start out in alternative rock bands, but **Rob Bell** set out to "repaint the Christian faith" and has broken many moulds in his time.

I wonder what that means. It seems from these words that Mr Robert Bell, when he was in an alternative rock band devised the idea of "re-painting Christianity" and is now systematically going about his task, with the full support of the AoG leaders in UK, and please don't forget Rob Bell denies the authority of the Bible!!

**RE – SIMON COWELL** - (December 2010) – Nail in the AoG Coffin

Bad as all of this is, the latest "**RE**" magazine (December 2010) is effectively the nail in the AoG-UK coffin. I was alerted to the offending article by a close friend who remains a credential holder with the *Assemblies of God*, though he is dead against what is happening at "leadership"

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.worldviewweekend.com/worldview-times/article.php?articleid=526>

level. My friend drew my attention to two newspaper reports with the titles - *Simon Cowell is like modern-day Jesus, claims church*<sup>7</sup> and *Simon Cowell is just like Jesus*.<sup>8</sup> Since then I have obtained a word document copy of the actual article, which is written by someone called Kate Kent entitled *The Cowell Factor*. This woman (I presume by the name that she must be female) writes that she is "learning lessons from the guru of the modern talent show", which is a statement that should immediately ring alarm bells (no pun intended) in any Christian's mind. Have we forgotten the instruction of the psalmist or the warning of the apostle of love?

*Blessed is the man who has not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, and has not stood in the way of sinners, and has not sat in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is only in the Law of Jehovah; and in His Law he meditates day and night -*

**Psalm 1:1-2 (MKJV).**

*Do not love the world, or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, because all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust of it, but he who does the will of God abides forever –* **1 John 2:15-17 (MKJV).**

*The Cowell Factor* article highlights a major problem with the rationale and action of so much that is going on within this former godly denomination of which I was once a part, and this constitutes **"the writing on the wall"** (cf. Daniel 5:25–28) which spells the doom of AoG. Sadly none of the national or international leaders appear able to read the writing and tragically they resent and reject those who can and simply go on their merry way – HEEDLESS!

So what's wrong with ***The Cowell Factor*** and why do I so dogmatically assert that it is in reality the "nail in the AoG coffin". I talked to a veteran AoG credential holder about the article, on Skype. He and so many like him cannot see the obvious. They have bought the ploy of the author that because our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and Simon Cowell are both forthright in their expressions there must be some parallel between them, and we, as followers of Christ, are therefore able to learn some leadership principles from Simon Cowell. Will you please think for a moment about what I have just written? It is the obvious and only conclusion you can logically make from the article and the secular media were not slow to pick up on it. The following is what Kate Kent wrote in part firstly about speaking the truth; secondly about taking risks; thirdly about giving people opportunities; and fourthly about looking at the heart:

**Quote 1:**

So what can we learn from Mr. Cowell? Let's take a look.... In Matthew 23 Jesus literally let rip on the teachers of the law and the Pharisees, branding them hypocrites ...

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<sup>7</sup> <http://entertainment.stv.tv/showbiz/213853-simon-cowell-is-like-modern-day-jesus-claims-church/>

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/showbiz/tv/x\\_factor/3258006/Simon-Cowell-is-just-like-Jesus.html](http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/showbiz/tv/x_factor/3258006/Simon-Cowell-is-just-like-Jesus.html)

For some, his words were upsetting and difficult to swallow (just like Cowell's), but he spoke truth and doesn't let the truth hurt sometimes.

In the introduction to his classic *The Old Cross and the New*<sup>9</sup> the late **A W Tozer** (1897-1963)—**a prophet of his time**—wrote:

ALL UNANNOUNCED AND MOSTLY UNDETECTED there has come in modern times a new cross into popular evangelical circles. It is like the old cross, but different: the likenesses are superficial; the differences, fundamental.<sup>10</sup>

The same applies to this disturbing article published by AoG in **Re**. As Christians and especially as Christian leaders we learn nothing from Simon Cowell and everything from Christ. The similarities between Cowell and Christ are "superficial; the differences fundamental."

**Quote 2:**

Another lesson we can learn from Mr Cowell is that he's not afraid to take risks .... Simon Cowell takes risks, learns from them and grows through the process, and there are numerous stories in the Bible of those who did the same.

If Abraham hadn't taken a risk, he would have never left his homeland to follow God's leading. If Moses hadn't taken a risk he would never have confronted Pharaoh and ordered that the Israelites be set free from captivity. If Elijah hadn't taken a risk he would never have challenged the prophets of Baal to a showdown on Mount Carmel where God showed his power. And the list goes on and on -great people in the Bible and throughout history accomplishing great things because they were willing to take risks.

That simply is NOT true. Each of the Bible characters cited above achieved what they achieved not because they took risks but because they acted under divine instructions. Notice how the author, who is ostensibly drawing a parallel between Jesus and Simon Cowell, makes no reference to Christ taking risks. Her article is a ploy and a humanistic ploy at that. Any "revival movement" that tries to lift their game by appealing to secular characters in this way is scraping the bottom of the barrel.

**Quote 3:**

A final observation we can take from Simon Cowell is his ability to give people opportunities, and none more so than the remarkable Susan Boyle, who auditioned for Britain's Got Talent.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.crossroad.to/Excerpts/books/faith/Tozer/tozer-cross.htm>

<sup>10</sup> <http://ldolphin.org/oldcross.html>

Susan Boyle is a Roman Catholic woman who clearly has great singing ability. Her story and her voice are "tear-jerkers". The world of music and all who love to listen have been enriched as a result of the fact that she was given an opportunity and if Simon Cowell was behind that chance then I am sure we are all grateful, but in all honesty what has this got to do with the Christian Church and with leadership within that church? Surely there are biblical examples to which it is preferable that we should look for inspiration and guidance rather than to someone who the author herself describes as having the signature phrase,

"I don't mean to be rude but ...", which is frequently followed by offensive comments  
...

That's not like the Jesus of the Bible. In fact it's so totally contrary to His nature, character and conduct as to wipe out all and any similarities there may be between Jesus and Simon Cowell.

#### **Quote 4: Look at the Heart**

There are two factors (sic) we can draw from this, the obvious being that we should never judge on appearance alone. God told Samuel (1 Samuel 16:7), "Looks aren't everything. Don't be impressed with his looks and stature. I've already eliminated him. God judges persons differently than humans do. Men and women look at the face; God looks into the heart." And even Susan was heard to say of the crowd, "I knew what they were thinking, but why should it matter what I look like as long as I can sing? It's not a beauty contest."

But more than not judging by appearances, we should be prepared to give people a break and a new opportunity to achieve something great. Simon Cowell was heavily criticized for allowing Susan Boyle to continue in the competition because of her reported mental state, but he answered his critics by saying, 'I'm glad I gave Susan the opportunity, and I wouldn't change that because we are helping her live her dreams and we are giving her a shot. We are not setting people up to have a miserable life.'

Here author Kate Kent plays fast and loose with a number of ideas. Only God can "look at the heart"; we can't. He neither judges by how a person looks nor how well he or she sings; we do. In true Christian service our purpose and aim are not to be great, but to serve.

Whether Kate is accurate in what she attributes to Simon Cowell, I cannot tell. She fails to document what she claims. However it really makes no difference. All of these things, that she highlights, are "superficial" similarities. Between Simon Cowell and the Lord Jesus Christ is a world of difference. They are poles apart and quite frankly, as a Christian of over 60 years standing, I resent the notion that anyone can even try to draw a parallel. That a former godly movement like AoG should give publication space to such a notion is an absolute disgrace.

The AoG of this absurd antichrist **Re** magazine is definitely NOT the Pentecostal holiness revival movement of my childhood and upbringing, where I ministered in various capacities for more than thirty of my fifty plus years of Christian ministry.

### **My history with Assemblies of God**

Often I am confronted with the question and statements, "What has this got to do with you? It's none of your business. You are no longer a part of AoG." Naturally I have thought many times about these things. Most people do not know my history and testimony so let's start at the beginning and have a cursory look at my background. I assure you it gives me no joy to write as I do. My early motivation in publishing articles like this was to try to get the AoG leaders to see the direction in which they were heading and to help rescue them from it. More recently it has been with a view to alerting good people to the serious things that are going on within the AoG and to get them to speak up or to get out. I can produce evidence of some success in both aspects.

I was born in Great Britain in the same year that World War II began – 1939. I can remember some of the trauma and the difficulty that all our families faced. How some survived the restrictive rationing imposed by the government is hard to imagine. Living off the land in a farming environment was less difficult for us than for some city-dwellers. Mum and dad, my older sister Ruth and I survived, largely due to the goodness and grace of God, and to the hard work and thrift of our parents. We give thanks to the Lord and to our parents. That was all at the natural level, but what about the spiritual level?

Aged six I surrendered my life to Christ and was soundly saved and baptised into the Holy Spirit aged ten. Being born and bred in a Pentecostal pioneer Assemblies of God pastor's home in South Wales, I feel a deep sense of sorrow at the spiritual drift into worldliness and sheer stupidity that have occurred in the movement where I was born-again and baptised into the Holy Spirit.

Now aged seventy-two, I have been trying, for some years, to assess what happened to the Assemblies of God that I once knew and why. It certainly is not the same movement that it once was. I have given expressions to some of my thoughts [elsewhere](#),<sup>11</sup> and in so doing have largely concentrated on my observations about the Assemblies of God within Australasia (Australia and New Zealand) and Great Britain, where I have served.

My criticism of the denomination where I once had a very active part, both pastorally and at national leadership level, especially in Australia, may not apply universally. As I have asserted previously elsewhere, Italy and India appear to be notable exceptions. They claim to have retained the original message, "*repent and believe the Gospel*" and method "prayer and reliance

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.cwmfellowship.org/articles/TheUKAssembliesofGod-ADifferentMovementwiththeSameName.pdf>

on God". Although I do think that the generational drift is now beginning to show in those countries. They too maybe moving towards a crisis point.

In Britain, Australasia and America the writing has been on the wall for a number of years. In fact, as far back as the 1950s John Wallace in his UK-AoG Conference Chairman's addresses warned that the denomination was in danger of going off track. He entitled his two messages **Assemblies of God – Wither Bound** and **Repentance or Else**. As a young minister, growing up in the movement to which I owe so much, I heard a number of AoG preachers refer to those messages, but I have to wonder how many within the Assemblies of God actually heeded the warnings.

John Wallace's brother, James, for whom I have a very high regard as the late principal of the Australian **Commonwealth Bible College (CBC)** where I studied (1957-1959), gave similar warnings within the Australasian context. He was ruthlessly outspoken against the antics of conmen such as [Oral Roberts](#)<sup>12</sup>, T.L Osborne, and [William Branham](#)<sup>13</sup> et al, who were beginning to make their impact upon the AoG scene back in those days.<sup>14</sup> Sadly most of my former Australian colleagues at national executive level ignored James Wallace's warnings and in some cases said scurrilous things about him and his supporters. John and James Wallace were right and their critics are being continuously proven wrong.

Some of those named above and their false doctrines and wrong practices undoubtedly influenced the Assemblies of God in both Australasia and Britain. The Australasian leaders claim numerical increase, which is true in the cases of Australia and New Zealand. In Britain there has been a notable decline with "Assemblies" withdrawing. In each of the three countries there has most certainly been a "[down-grade](#)"<sup>15</sup> which is as serious as that of [C H Spurgeon's](#)<sup>16</sup> day, to which the great preacher gave constant warning.

If the "[Pentecostal Down-Grade](#)"<sup>17</sup> began in the 1950s, as recognised and warned against by John and James Wallace and others, it gained great momentum through the so called "Charismatic Renewal" when doctrine was largely jettisoned in favour of emotional and psychological sensationalism that masqueraded as a "move of the Holy Spirit" during the 1960s. This paved the way for the various so called "waves of the spirit", of the 1980s and 90s, which were nothing more than the expending of human energy and sheer emotionalism—"Dancing and Demons", John Wimber's *Signs and Wonders*, Toronto, Pensacola, Peter Wagner's "apostles and prophets" ad infinitum, ad nauseam. The problem in every case was a failure to test "the move" by Scripture hermeneutically understood and rationally (logically) applied.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.apostasyalert.org/Oral%20Roberts.htm>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.letusreason.org/Latrain4.htm> Also do a Google search on these men

<sup>14</sup> Do a Google search on these three names and research what comes up.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.spurgeon.org/downgrd.htm>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.tecmalta.org/tft351.htm>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.christian-witness.org/blog/?p=4>

The “down-grade” reached a watershed with Toronto and Pensacola. That is why I and others constantly allude to this “false move” as the one thing that those who were caught up in it, in any way, should openly confess and publically repent over. It opened the sluice-gates to an avalanche of spiritualistic and new-age hypnotism that paved the way for the emergent church, a major proponent of which is Rob Bell with whom John Partington of Assemblies of God and his new “Re” magazine are now flirting. Ironically if you merge the title “Re” with the word “Bell” as they appear on the front cover of Issue 1 of this strange magazine you may see a truth – “Rebellious” – hmm.

THOUGH the mills of God grind slowly;  
Yet they grind exceeding small;  
Though with patience he stands waiting;  
With exactness grinds He all.

**Henry Wadsworth Longfellow** (February 27, 1807 – March 24, 1882)

In June of the year (2010) I drove many miles around [England’s green and pleasant land](#)<sup>18</sup> and within South Wales—[the Land of My Fathers](#)<sup>19</sup>. It is always a great joy to return to the countries of my birth and early ministry. (I led the **Droylsden Pentecostal Church** from 1962 to 1978 aged 22 to 39 in the then greater Manchester area, also called Tameside). Obviously there have been many changes, but the most impacting, by far for us, on the natural level, was the observation of the spread of Islam in many English cities, with what now appears to be the inevitable downgrading of the infrastructure and the general environmental standards—potholes and litter abound, similar to third world countries—and the perception that Islam has not yet touched the villages and hamlets away from the cities. Things in the country remain comparatively clean and pristine. Obviously Muslims are first targeting the large population sections of our society and they will swamp us by sheer weight of numbers as a result of their frightening birth rate.

Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965), commented in his 1899 ***The River War*** :

How dreadful are the curses which Mohammedanism lays on its votaries! Besides the fanatical frenzy, which is as dangerous in a man as hydrophobia in a dog, there is this fearful fatalistic apathy. The effects are apparent in many countries. Improvident habits, slovenly systems of agriculture, sluggish methods of commerce, and insecurity of property exist wherever the followers of the Prophet rule or live. A degraded sensualism deprives this life of its grace and refinement; the next of its dignity and sanctity. The fact that in Mohammedan law every woman must belong to some man as his absolute property - either as a child, a wife, or a concubine - must delay the final extinction of slavery until the faith of Islam has ceased to be a great power among men.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. English poet William Blake 1757-1827 - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Blake](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Blake)

<sup>19</sup> Cf. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hen\\_Wlad\\_Fy\\_Nhadau](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hen_Wlad_Fy_Nhadau)

Individual Moslems may show splendid qualities. Thousands become the brave and loyal soldiers of the Queen; all know how to die; but the influence of the religion paralyses the social development of those who follow it. No stronger retrograde force exists in the world. Far from being moribund, Mohammedanism is a militant and proselytizing faith. It has already spread throughout Central Africa, raising fearless warriors at every step; and were it not that Christianity is sheltered in the strong arms of science - the science against which it had vainly struggled - the civilisation of modern Europe might fall, as fell the civilisation of ancient Rome - [http://www.chuckbaldwinlive.com/read\\_churchill\\_islam.html](http://www.chuckbaldwinlive.com/read_churchill_islam.html)

We do well to take heed. We are facing a creeping paralysis in our Fool's Paradise.

At the "spiritual" and equally frightening level was the observable failure of the so-called Christian Church, including our own section of it. Why is this? Well it's largely because the leaders have forgotten or ignored their real purpose. They've bought the lie that **bigger is better** and **Church Growth should be our chief goal**. In chasing this "will of the wisp" they ignore the fact that the Church is not primarily a social-welfare instrument but should always be a spiritual force no matter what the cost and irrespective of size and numbers. Paul, the apostle describes the Church as "*the pillar and ground of the truth*" (1 Timothy 3:15).

The irony is that, in U.K., with all their efforts towards growth the opposite is what actually has occurred. For example in the years just prior to our family's leaving UK for Australia (1978) the annual Assemblies of God Conferences boasted thousands of registrants year after year. It reached its zenith somewhere in the mid 70s of 10,000 registrants. Now if they get 500 they think they are doing well. And the latest I hear is that through the "influence" of John Partington and the present leadership AoG-UK will cancel their annual Conference opting for some strange "so-called" apostolic leadership. Ah well – Peter Wagner here we come with the disgusting Todd Bentley style experiments. May the Lord look in mercy on AoG-UK, but then it may well be too late. It's **Repentance Or Else** as John Wallace warned those many years ago.

The most disturbing indication of what is happening within my former denomination in UK presented itself when that pastor friend in South Wales showed me the new AoG national magazine referred to above. Throughout my ministry I have always been interested and vitally involved with literature. In my pastoral years in Manchester (1962-1978) I published and edited an evangelistic paper called **Release**, which circulated nationally through local churches of varying denominations and eventually touched countries beyond UK. I founded a company to carry out this work called **Bethel Publications Limited**, which continued for a number of years after we, as a family, left Britain and came to Australia in 1978. During my two-year pastorate in the **Blue Mountains** I published and edited an enlarged and revamped version of **Release** for local church evangelistic purposes and during my eight-year pastorate in Northern Victoria produced a newspaper called **Stand up Australia**. Later I was editor of the national **Australian Evangel** and am now editor of the international magazine **Contending EARNESTLY for THE Faith (CETF)** since 1994. I write these things simply to stress my

interest in and concern about this method of communication, not to promote anything grandiose about myself. After all what's great about editing and publishing magazines? It's a lot of hard work!

When I say that I have NEVER closely examined any piece of literature that could by any stretch of the imagination be called "Christian" that is so infantile, puerile and plain silly as this "Re" magazine I am NOT exaggerating. I have already mentioned other serious impediments from a Christian perspective, apart from its puerility. It is the "spiritual" window into the Assemblies of God and possibly also into the Elim movements. In the remainder of this article I propose to further examine – **Re**. Now what was that, or maybe more pertinently what is it?

**RE**<sup>20</sup> – John Partington (JP) in his editorial of the first issue defends the use of the title –

Well the truth is that the prefix 're' is a wonderful description of our God. ... 'Re' in its simplest form means 'again', and without doubt our God is an 'again' God ..."

### **REALLY** or should I ask **RE-ALLY?**

Let's examine both claims i.e. that "re" means "again" and that this represents our God.

According to my **Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary** (the full expanded edition comprises some 80 volumes) the derivation of the prefix is from a Latin word which signifies "in the matter of" or "referring to" in the general sense of "back" or "again". The primary idea is "back" so if the secondary idea—"again"—features at all it must be related to the primary notion. This carries over into today's parlance.

Everyone recognises that the prefix "re" in today's world is an abbreviation for the words "regarding", "respecting" or "relating to" which certainly do not include the idea of "again". There are many words where "re" has no reference (there it is again) to "again". It's a ridiculous notion and it matters not how you spell that word or what its derivation 'ridiculous' means absurd, preposterous, comical, laughable and that's what Mr. Partington's claim amounts to.

To make things worse "**Re**" is going to be the title of this AoG publication indefinitely. Being so absurd, the idea that the new leader of AoG-UK is projecting is bound to wear thin – the sooner the better!! For you see JP and those whom he represents have done it AGAIN. They have overlooked what is basic to biblical "recovery" and that's biblical "repentance". Instead they simply put a new spin on the past in the vain hope that the spinning top will confuse their bewitched and bemused followers. They should come out into the open and confess to all that they got it wrong and have departed from the old paths of Pentecostalism.

*For I am the LORD, I do not change; therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed*  
- Malachi 3:6.

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<sup>20</sup> <http://www.newlifepublishing.co.uk/re/index.php>

In his writings (see "**Re**" Issue 1, May 2010, pages 5 and 38-42) JP has confused not only the true meaning of words but also the nature and character of the God of the Bible, who in His grace and mercy will give humans a second and a third chance—again and again—yet He Himself never changes. If we disobey His Word or go contrary to His ways once, He will not adjust either of them to something else for our benefit nor will He forgive forever. That's not how the God of the Bible operates.

This is never more clearly illustrated than in the passage of scripture that I read in my morning devotions (26/07/2010)—Jeremiah chapters 35 to 39 inclusive. In chapter 36 we read that the "scroll" was cut up with a pen knife and burned (verses 22-25) and the king sought to kill Jeremiah and Baruch his scribe in order to destroy both the evidence and those responsible for it. What did Jeremiah do after God hid him? He simply dictated the exact same words to Baruch the scribe who re-wrote them in another scroll, that was read a second time to the rebellious king and his people, then judgment came. God's Word is forever "*settled in heaven*" (Psalm 119:89).

Amazingly JP actually quotes Jeremiah in the opening paragraphs of his article ***Will you not revive us again O God?*** (Pgs 39-42) yet he still misses the point and actually perverts the divine intent of Jeremiah's words. Here are JP's words:

One day while I was in Honolulu, I felt the Holy Spirit ask me as in Jeremiah 1, "What do you see?" .... I noticed a boy with Down's Syndrome trying to pay for a DVD but not having enough money.

As I read his story my mind went to Acts chapter three and what we know as *The Healing of the Lame Man*. I almost became excited. Were we about to read of a modern "miracle"? But then the huge anti-climax. JP continues:

My prayer in the morning was, "Lord, today let me experience a miracle, see a God opportunity and have another exiting day of adventure." When I found myself in that situation I had a choice as to what I saw. I paid for the DVD without the boy even knowing and walked out feeling ten feet tall ...

Now wait a minute. This is the new leader of the Assemblies of God in Great Britain and Ireland, in what must have been his inaugural address. Do you get it? He paid for a poor incapacitated boy's DVD and he calls that A MIRACLE. I wonder if it was a good or a bad DVD and whether it would actually do the boy any good or harm? We are not told and I guess JP wouldn't know anyway. But still he felt ten feet tall.

How different from the scenarios of scripture – both Acts chapter 3 and Jeremiah chapter 1. In the former the ambassadors of our Lord gave no financial benefit to the poor beggar—"*silver and gold have we none*"—but they did share a real miracle. In the latter Jeremiah never chose what he saw but he did receive the divine call to a supernatural ministry. And oh, by the way, Jeremiah saw two things on two separate occasions—both as the result not of natural

observation but of supernatural vision cf. Jeremiah 1:11-12 with verses 13-19. Can you imagine Peter and John or Jeremiah for that matter "feeling ten feet tall". The Christian and Pentecostal message has nothing to do with us or how we feel. It has everything to do with Christ and what He did and does on behalf of needy mankind. Until the AoG and Elim get back to that there is NO HOPE.

JP is clearly an ambitious man who is trying to solve a spiritual problem with a purely natural approach and a lot of hype thrown in. I tremble for the future of AoG in UK. What Mr Partington projects is pure, undefiled, motivational claptrap.

*The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved – **Jeremiah 8:20.***

There is a time for harvest; there is a season that produces harvest. O the sad lament – "We are NOT saved ..." Superficially some have seen a measure of improvement in AoG-UK. The new "face" at the top has at least acknowledged past mistakes, declining numbers,

... discouragement, disarray and despair wondering who we really are, where we are going and what our purpose is? (Ibid page 39).

He calls for

... change and to embrace a new culture, a new DNA and a new outlook." (page 40).

How sad then that he simply dishes up more of the same, without any mention of repentance and no meaningful Bible quotes in his entire editorial and his long article. He found space to quote Bill Cosby and Mikhail Gorbachev, but NOT the Bible, the Word of God, other than by mere reference to try to validate his ridiculous idea about the prefix "re" or to condemn the excessive reference to the so called Ephesians 4:11 ministries.

The Bible tells us that we should rejoice (Philippians 4:4), be refreshed (Jeremiah 31:25), be re-established (2 Chronicles 29:35), refine [that's stretching things a bit] (Psalm 66:10), rebuild (Ezra 5:2), renew (Isaiah 40:31) and remind (2 Timothy 1:6).  
Ibid p. 40.

"Can you see the connection" he naively asks. Sorry John I can't. There is no connection other than in your befuddled mind and hyped up sales pitch.

Dear Reader, if you are an Assemblies of God adherent please read those Bible references—all of them—and read them in context and you'll see what I mean. Incidentally "rejoice" does NOT mean "jice" again, nor does it mean as the author of the article claims "rejoice again", otherwise why does Paul repeat the word? It's just one of the numerous occasions where "re" does not mean "again"!!

**John Partington**, who is this man? He certainly likes his own picture as it is full length on page 5, appears as a silhouette on pages 3 and 39, and occupies a full page in four colours on page 41. Just in case we missed it he's there again in full colour on page 42.

It is plaintively obvious that Mr Partington the replacement General Superintendent of AoG-UK is second choice. First choice was Danny Guglielmucci of Adelaide, Australia, who acted as JP's mentor. The wheels had already been set in motion and an announcement of an approach to Danny and possibly of his appointment would have most certainly been made had it not been for the breaking of a scandal in connection with Hillsong, Sydney. Michael Guglielmucci, Danny's son had presented himself as a young man suffering from terminal cancer. He went so far as to sing a song on public television with oxygen mask and tubes as if he were about to die. The song went to the top of the [Aria Charts](#) <sup>21</sup> boosted mainly by the inevitable sympathy vote. Huge sums of money changed hands by way of donations and other things. Then came the announcements by [Michael](#) <sup>22</sup> and by [Danny](#).<sup>23</sup> It was a total [fraud](#).<sup>24</sup> Michael had never suffered from cancer in his entire life.<sup>25</sup>

While Michael's parents tried to distance themselves from their son's lies and fraudulent behaviour it was difficult for people to accept their claim that they were in the dark throughout given the circumstances. It was undoubtedly as a result of the breaking of this scandal that the offer of the position of General Superintendent was diverted from Danny Guglielmucci to John Partington who had moved from Britain to work with Danny at his [Edge Church](#) <sup>26</sup> in Adelaide.

Danny Guglielmucci has learnt the modern corrupted AoG craft well. In his earlier days when he served in some associated position to senior pastor Andrew Evans at the Paradise AoG he frequently was "used" to make difficult platform announcements to cover embarrassing situations. What goes around comes around, but the modus operandi tends not to change and those who don't know are just kept in the dark. It's best that way you know! That's how natural politics operates and that's how theocrats carry out their business. Then when a scandal breaks just go into "damage control" but never come out and tell the full story; after all why tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth, when you can project a "cover up" with smoke and mirrors and by telling half truths. Why should the common folks know everything when the bourgeoisie can handle it? After all that's what leadership is all about. No! The Bible calls it Nicholaitanism and God hates it cf. Revelation 2:15.

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<sup>21</sup> <http://www.ariacharts.com.au/>

<sup>22</sup> <http://dchapman.wordpress.com/2008/08/21/michael-guglielmucci-an-appropriate-response/>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/michael-guglielmucci-releases-statement/story-e6freo8c-111117287125>

<sup>24</sup> <http://groupsects.wordpress.com/2008/08/22/michael-guglielmucci-the-police-probe/>

<sup>25</sup> For more information do a Google search on Michael Guglielmucci and Danny Guglielmucci

<sup>26</sup> [https://edgechurch.com/page/locations\\_and\\_service\\_times/59/display/location](https://edgechurch.com/page/locations_and_service_times/59/display/location)

This really is what this new "**Re**" is all about, is it not? Don't reveal anything and take your readers and supporters for a deceptive ride. Don't tell your readers that popular author of **God's Generals** and recently appointed principal of Kensington Temple's (Elim) **International Bible Institute of London (IBIOL)**, was disciplined, albeit inadequately, by his then church for having a [homosexual affair](#) <sup>27</sup> with his youth pastor. He was excluded from his pulpit for a mere matter of months and was then back again preaching. Now he's the principal of the Bible College of Elim's showpiece Church – **Kensington Temple**, London. Shame on them and shame on John Partington and Assemblies of God in UK for giving Liardon such publicity. Stay quiet about these things and just go ahead and advertise his books (page 68).

Include a full page advertisement in your more than 70 page glossy magazine of sensational money preacher [Morris Cerullo](#) <sup>28</sup> (page 23) but don't publish anything about his money [rorts](#) or his detractors and critics who allege that he's a fraud who falsely claims healings, none of which are ever verified simply because they are fake. Take a look at the [YOU TUBE](#) <sup>29</sup> evidence. Then for good measure throw in another full page of AoG-UK "evangelist" Melvin Banks with his sensational and equally suspicious claims of healing (page 34) and include two pages about the daddy of them all, the late Oral Roberts with his "**Let me share a few secrets**" (pages 69 and 70) and confuse everybody by publishing alongside the Oral Robert's baloney a photograph of George Jeffreys who may indeed be a true **Hero of the Faith**, though personally I'll leave that for "*the Judge of all the earth*" to decide. We know that Oral Roberts was an arch heretic whose legacy includes the abominable "[seed faith](#)" <sup>30</sup> doctrine which has deceived millions and [bereft](#) orphans and widows of their money and made him and his family enormously rich. [Paul Crouch of TBN](#) <sup>31</sup> and many other faith prosperity teachers still rake in the money based on this false teaching

A son of two of our good friends in South Wales and a mild critic of some of my work some time ago suggested that I should include some positive suggested remedies for AoG. Personally I now find that extremely difficult if not impossible. Obviously there are some good, godly men and women and churches within AoG-UK and the renamed **Australian Christian Churches (ACC)** of Australia, but the "movements" as they were founded and intended no longer exist. They are now backslidden denominations that to a large extent have become ecumenical.

During my time in UK I learned of yet another former pioneer AoG that withdrew under protest – **Crosskeys, South Wales**. My strong suggestion is that many others would do well to follow

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<sup>27</sup> <http://bibleman.18.forumer.com/index.php?showtopic=145>

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.cephas-library.com/evangelists/evangelist\\_morris\\_cerullo\\_fraud.html](http://www.cephas-library.com/evangelists/evangelist_morris_cerullo_fraud.html)

<sup>29</sup> <http://vodpod.com/watch/1189134-morris-cerullo-fake-miracles>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.letusreason.org/Popteach47.htm>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.apostasyalert.org/Oral%20Roberts.htm>

their lead. Let the religious bureaucrats continue with their silly "**Re**" nonsense. True servants and soldiers of the Lord are made for nobler and more sensible stuff.

Rise up, O men of God!  
Have done with lesser things.  
Give heart and mind and soul and strength  
To serve the King of kings.<sup>32</sup>

Author William P. Merrill (1867-1954)<sup>i</sup>

***In Christ,***

***Philip L. Powell***

Brisbane – January 13, 2011 –

The River is in FLOOD. Today is its highest peak.

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<sup>i</sup>Author William P. Merrill (1867-1954) wrote (1911):

Nolan R. Best, then editor of [Presbyterian newspaper] *The Continent*, happened to say to me that there was urgent need of a brotherhood hymn...The suggestion lingered in my mind, and just about that time I came upon an article by Gerald Stanley Lee [1862-1944 American Professor], entitled "The Church of the Strong Men." I was on one of the Lake Michigan steamers going back to Chicago for a Sunday at my own church, when suddenly this hymn came up, almost without conscious thought or effort.

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<sup>32</sup> Words: [William P. Merrill](#), 1911; first published in the Presbyterian newspaper *The Continent*.