

View

The "Wii Gospel"

BY AL DIESTELKAMP

Nintendo's Wii video game system allows those of us who have abandoned most forms of exercise to "pretend" to go bowling in our living rooms, in a virtual reality setting. Instead of lifting a heavy ball the "bowler" uses a hand-held controller the size of a TV remote and goes through the motions as if bowling a real ball. It can be very satisfying when you end up with a better score than you ever get at the bowling alley.

The idea is that this is better for you than other video games in that you're at least supposed to get up out of your easy chair to play the game. I was buying into that concept until one of my friends beat me without ever getting out of his chair. It's beside the point, but I was also beat by a child who wasn't big enough to lift a real bowling ball.

This convinced me that someone whose only bowling experience was with this video game would surely be disappointed if they ever tried real bowling.

It occurred to me that many churches have developed an appealing alternative to the real gospel of Christ – sort of a virtual gospel (Gal. 1:6-7). With it, no heavy lifting of obedience is required. Instead of a Bible, their "controller" is a handy "statement of faith" written by men. Those who "play Wii church" are entertained, and at the same time impressed with their ability to master what they think is "spirituality."

After being spoiled by the hype and convenience of "Wii gospel," those who have never been exposed to the real gospel of Christ as revealed in the New Testament are likely to be disappointed if they ever get around to giving it a hearing.

P.O. BOX 891, CORTLAND, ILLINOIS 60112
E-MAIL: AL@THINKONTHESETHINGS.COM

The church of Christ

Meeting at 900 E. Natoma
PO Box 492
Folsom, CA 95630
916/608-4866

Elders

Forrest Brown: 530/295-9230
Randy Clark: 916/939-5066
Rich Ladd: 916/774-9048
David Posey: 530/676-9514
Dennis Reagan: 916/797-5539

Deacons

Brent Agee: 916/786-0436
Bryan Byrd: 916/351-9320
David Byrd: 916/985-6564
Barrett Cain: 916/351-0774
Michael Caisse: 530/672-2902
Jeff Clark: 916/985-8689
John Daniels: 916/985-3090
Jerry Deschler: 916/285-9115
Steve Dickey: 916/983-1071
Eric Fields: 916/817-6495
David Main: 650/292-5417
Terry Raposa: 916/782-1140
Dane Scott: 916/631-7221
Russ Tarrant: 530/672-1748
Steve Thompson: 916/983-4170
Jeff Warshaw: 916/933-9399

Evangelist/Editor

David Posey: 530/676-9514
dpaulposey@mac.com

Services

Sunday Morning Assembly
9:30 AM
Sunday Evening: 5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Study
7:30 PM

Classes for all ages.
Private classes arranged
at your convenience.
www.folsomchurch.com
Webmaster: Richard Harvey

Unread Letters

BY MATT HENNECKE

A childhood accident resulted in poet Elizabeth Barrett becoming an invalid and recluse. Despite her isolation her early poetry drew the attention of Robert Browning who began courting her. He eventually asked for her hand in marriage and Elizabeth and Robert were married in 1846. But there's more to the story.

In her youth, Elizabeth had been watched closely by her tyrannical father. He was strict beyond reason and attempted to prevent suitors from courting her. In fact, he did not want any of his children to marry. As a result, Elizabeth and Robert eloped, their wedding held in secret because of her father's disapproval.



After the wedding the Brownings sailed for Italy, where they lived for the rest of their lives – exiled from her parents. Even though her parents had disowned her, Elizabeth never gave up on the relationship. Almost weekly she wrote them letters. Some were fairly lengthy, others short and poetical in form. Not once did they reply.

After ten years, Elizabeth received a large box in the mail. Inside, she found all of her letters. Not a single one had been opened. Eliza-

beth's years of writing, her letters pleading for reconciliation – were for naught.

Today those letters are among the most beautiful in classical English literature. Had her parents only read a few of them, their relationship with Elizabeth might have been restored. These events were reported in the Daily Walk in May 30, 1992.

What makes the story of Elizabeth Barrett Browning so compelling is that it is so similar to another story. A story that is repeated over and over again--generation after generation.

You see, I am aware of other letters which have been written but not read. Beautiful letters. Letters of reconciliation. Letters of hope. We know them better as epistles. These letters, written by men, but authored by God through the Holy Spirit have been written for our reconciliation, for our salvation. Sadly, they often go unnoticed, unread, unheeded. Indeed, the entire Bible, God's Word, is a book pleading for reconciliation. What is amazing is that God is pleading with us for reconciliation but He has done nothing wrong. We are the ones who have gone astray (2 Peter 2:15), and yet God stoops to beg for our reconciliation.

In Colossians 1:18-23, Paul speaking of Christ says, "it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross" Why? Why would God give His only begotten Son for all of us who have gone astray? Paul tells us in verse 22: "in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach." Paul's letter speaks of reconciliation and of hope. Are you listening? What a beautiful letter. It would be a shame if it were never read, or if read, ignored.

VIA THINK ONLINE

18410 STANDWICK DRIVE, LOUISVILLE, KY 40245
E-MAIL: MATT@BIBLEMAPS.COM