

THE INTERNET : OUR FINAL FRONTIER; YOUR LAST CHANCE? : PT 1

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Is Internet A Final Frontier To Give People One Last Chance?, Armageddon BBS, FidoNet History And BBS'ing, The Rise Of The Internet, Demise Of FidoNet, Lure Of The Internet, Great Was The Company, Brief History Of My Online Ministry, Blessings Through Obedience, God Will Provide Our Needs, Don't Question God's Methods, Extent of God's Love And Mercy, Pride, Ego And Self-Preservation, Our Moment Of Vulnerability In Privacy Of Our Homes, Sharp Sword Of God's Word Pierces Our Hearts, Why God Give People Many Chances, God's Coming Judgment And Wrath

For those of you who may be interested, this article concerns the early history of my online Christian ministry, beginning with my BBS and my presence on the FidoNet message network, and then moving on to the creation of my website -- Endtime Prophecy Net -- on the Internet. In addition to discussing my history with BBSing and the FidoNet network, this article will emphasize my growing realization that the Internet may quite possibly be our final witnessing frontier insofar as Christian evangelism is concerned.

In other words, as I will be explaining in more detail later on in this article, it is my personal belief that once other missionary frontiers have closed, the Internet may provide some people in closed countries with one last chance to here the Christian Gospel. Once this frontier -- the Internet -- is closed to the Christian Gospel, that may be it, and many people may not get another chance. So let us begin by going back in time to the early 1990's, when I became involved with the FidoNet network, and set up my first BBS -- Armageddon -- which was originally called "The Treasure Trove" BBS.

For those of you who may be new to online communications, there is a good possibility that you have never heard of FidoNet. Briefly, back in the late 1980's and early 1990's, FidoNet was arguably as popular as the Internet is today. In fact, some people who are still diehard FidoNet members in its waning hours, won't hesitate to inform the "unlearned", that FidoNet was one of the precursors to the now-public Internet. It was -- and still is -- comprised of individual BBSes -- that is, Bulletin Board Services, or Bulletin Board Systems -- which are run on private computers, and which are networked together using terminal software via local, direct telephone dial-up connections.

Today, FidoNet BBSes -- and BBSes in general -- are likewise accessible over the Internet via the telnet protocol. Such BBSes utilize port 23, which is the standard telnet port. This was the case with the Armageddon BBS, until I finally took it offline in July of 2011 due to low traffic and other technical reasons.

In other words, unlike today where the vast majority of us must rely upon an ISP -- Internet Service Provider -- or at least a LAN -- Local Area Network -- connection, in order to connect to the Internet, there was no need for a middle man back then, because the original FidoNet networks were run by SysOps -- or System Operators -- who all generally lived in the same city, town or general area. Connecting to another computer in the network was simply a matter of making a local telephone call -- via modem -- to a particular BBS. Upon connecting to such a system, one could then obtain a list of other local BBSes -- or nodes -- which formed a part of that particular BBS network. Being as these were usually local calls, there was no charge involved. In fact, in the beginning, most -- if not all -- BBSes were run for free by people who were dedicated to the hobby. How different from today where everything revolves around money and profit.

As the acronym "BBS" implies, the primary purpose of a BBS was to serve as a bulletin board, or message board, for the users of the system, as well as for the other members of the entire local network, via the exchange of message packets by the SysOps. File-sharing also became an integral part of the local BBS environment. While files were for the most part free, many SysOps eventually found it necessary to implement upload/download quotas in order to maintain a fresh stock of interesting files for their BBS members. Sadly, even back then, file leeches -- people who download a lot of files, but who rarely upload anything in return -- were a problem.

Originally, FidoNet -- which was but one of such networks -- was confined to the United States of America and Canada. As more local BBS networks joined FidoNet, it became necessary to form various "stars" -- or hubs -- that served as message relay stations between the various BBS networks which formed a part of the overall FidoNet network. As I recall, there were three such "stars" in the continental USA. If memory serves me correctly, these three "stars" were located in Texas, Pennsylvania and possibly California or Washington State.

The people who administrated these hubs also worked together to set the various policies which governed overall FidoNet operations. There was a lot of politicking going on, and on occasions there were problems. Some FidoNet message echoes were also dominated by dictatorial, tyrannical types, who at times acted like little "gods", and their word was law. If a BBS visitor dared to challenge an echo moderator's word, or worse yet, argued with them in public -- which was a serious taboo within FidoNet -- it could easily lead to that user's temporary, or even permanent, expulsion from participation in that particular message conference; and it still happens on occasion today, although with less frequency, being as FidoNet is now only a shadow of its former self with a lot fewer BBS participants.

On a few occasions, I experienced this myself; but it wasn't because I was disrespectful in any way; I simply wanted to share my Christian faith with others, because it occurred to me that it may have possibly been someone's only chance, -- and maybe even their last opportunity -- to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Sadly, some echo moderators just didn't want to hear anything about it. They made their set of rules; and as

I said, a BBS visitor either chose to abide by those rules, or else. Sadly, even back then, Wicca, and other false belief systems had already taken root within the online community. I particularly noticed this amongst the military personnel who appeared to operate a lot of the BBSes back then.

One thing is for certain; the FidoNet message conferences -- or echoes as they were known -- were dedicated to a variety of topics and interests. Thus, they served as a springboard for sharing quite a diversity of viewpoints. Whether it was technocrats discussing the latest developments in computer technology, or people interested in politics who were engaged in debating the latest issues from a variety of political perspectives, or young kids who were thoroughly absorbed in the latest networked RPG's -- role-playing games -- or like me, religious people who wanted to share their faith with the world, or scientists and academia exchanging views on the latest speculations and theories, or people talking about their pets or hobbies, within the BBS world, it seems that everyone was represented to one degree or another.

Once it became physically possible to exchange message data packets via the Internet -- and thus cut down on the cost of long distance phone calls between FidoNet hubs and adjoining networks -- FidoNet grew even more, and began to expand to other countries. As a result, it became necessary to divide the online world into different zones, each one of which had their coordinators, North America being Zone 1. Back during its heyday, from about the late eighties to the mid nineties, FidoNet was comprised of literally thousands of BBSes around the world. I suppose that an exact number will really never be known, being as BBSes were coming and going all the time, and it was rather difficult to keep the nodelists up-to-date in a realistic manner. I have no idea how many active BBSes continue to exist today, but I am sure that they are not nearly as many as twenty years ago.

Back during the mid to late nineties, while the rising star of the Internet offered new growth opportunities for BBSing and networks like FidoNet, it also signaled FidoNet's slow decline from popularity, and in fact, its eventual demise, due to the simple reason that FidoNet simply could not keep up with the increasingly sophisticated -- and attractive -- technologies which were being developed specifically for the Internet. Whereas BBSes have been limited to message boards, online chat, XYZ modem file transfers, and sub-standard ANSI graphics -- although us old-time BBSers still think that the graphics we used were cool at the time, particularly those which were animated -- the Internet hasn't faced these kinds of limitations.

In addition to providing all of the above -- except for the PC-ANSI graphics -- the high-speed Internet today offers us live or pre-recorded streaming audio and video in the form of news, sports, special events, video conferencing, Internet TV and radio, worldwide web-cams, music, movie trailers and many other forms of entertainment. For added special effects and interactivity, webmasters also offer us Shockwave and Flash movies, Java applets, CGI scripts, as well as a host of other plug-in technologies which further enhance one's Internet experience. Then, of course, there are social networks such as Facebook, Google+, MySpace, Twitter, Tumblr, etc.

Clearly, the volume of information the Internet provides, -- whether the information happens to be factual, propaganda or fantasy -- and the speed with which it delivers the data to us, can't possibly be compared to the archaic FidoNet network by any means. Whether we are looking for knowledge, or merely entertainment, the Internet offers each online user instant gratification -- a luxury which was not afforded to BBSers. The Internet is an exotic -- and dangerous-- electronic world full of motion, sounds and colors which immediately flood our human senses; and it is a cyberworld where one can be whoever he wishes to be regardless of the reality that surrounds him. Sadly, a lot of Internet content does nothing to contribute to the betterment of society because it fails to embrace high moral standards; and as I noted earlier, a large part of it now revolves around making a profit, and nothing more.

Yet, at the same time, I can see God's Hand, and His Wisdom, behind the development of the Internet to some degree. While a certain percentage of Internet content has been devoted to things which in my view should be prohibited, we Christians have not allowed Satan to steal the show entirely. Some of us have availed ourselves of this new technology in order to further the Work of the Lord, in the hope that more people will come to a saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. While I don't have a precise figure, from my involvement in Christian web rings, as well as from my general web surfing, I am given the impression that there are currently thousands of individual web sites which are dedicated to the sharing of our Christian faith in some form. I am reminded of the following verses:

"The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it."  
Psalms 68:11, KJV

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."  
Matthew 24:14, KJV

It was from my humble beginnings as a local BBS, exploring the frontier of FidoNet, that my current online Christian outreach ministry evolved. After serving as a missionary for about fifteen years, first in my native country, and then in several foreign nations as well, I eventually settled in my current locale during the mid 1980's, where I continued in a door-to-door and street ministry for a time. But towards the end of the eighties, I grew rather backslidden in my ways and left my first love for the Lord's Work. Instead of preaching the Gospel of Christ full-time as I had been doing, I became involved in various secular jobs; first working as a radio DJ and a security guard, and then as a pet store manager. After being laid off due to a change in ownership, I started my own aquarium design and maintenance business, which was featured twice in our local newspaper. However, that business faltered, which I now believe was by God's design.

In spite of my waywardness, God wasn't through with me yet. It was through one of those jobs that I was introduced to my first computer: a Macintosh Classic. That was in 1990. By today's standards, the Classic is a very ancient machine;

and nowadays, most people just throw them away, or give them away for spare parts. Back then though, having a black and white nine inch monitor with a CPU speeding along at about fourteen megahertz as I recall, was something to behold; and need I tell you about our "super-fast" 1200 baud modems of the time? Well, by early 1993, I was finally able to buy my very first computer: a Macintosh LC III. This came with a fourteen inch, 256-color monitor, a 25 MHz CPU, 4 megabytes of RAM, and a 160 megabyte hard drive. I even purchased a black and white laser printer to go along with it. Boy was I moving up in the world. Yes, I know. I can hear some of you chuckling from here, as you work on your 3 GHZ machine with a 27" monitor, 8 GB of RAM and a 2 TB hard drive.

It was towards the end of that same year that I first heard about BBSing; and before long, I managed to borrow an Apple modem from a friend of mine. For those of you who complain about the slow speed of today's dial-up connections, imagine if you can, moving along at 300 to 1200 baud with an Apple modem. Of course, at the time, it didn't seem slow, because we had nothing faster with which to compare it; and just being online was a wonder in itself. Eventually, I acquired a 2400 baud modem as a trade-off for a desktop Christmas lights program at a local Macintosh Users Group meeting. It didn't even come with a modem cable, but I was happy. Later, I moved on to a 14.4 modem, followed by a 56K modem. As fast as that seemed at the time, it obviously could not compare to the DSL line that we later acquired, which was followed by the 7 Megabit cable modem connection that we have today.

At the time, I had no idea that I could actually operate my own BBS, so I was happy with just posting messages on the local boards. But even then, God was already beginning to stir up my spirit again, as I just couldn't keep away from preaching the Gospel. It was during early 1994, after having gotten my feet wet in the BBS world, that I finally bought the Hermes BBS software package, and started my own board, which eventually became known as "The Treasure Trove BBS", or "TTT BBS", due to its Christian content. The name of my BBS was based on the following verse that is found in the Gospel of Matthew:

"Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."  
Matthew 13:52, KJV

Before long, I joined a local Christian BBS network, the name of which I can no longer remember. It was through that BBS network that I also became familiar with FidoNet; and eventually, I began my own FidoNet message conference. That FidoNet echo was actually the beginning of my worldwide online Christian outreach ministry. In fact, it was at that time that I began writing my first rudimentary articles. In short, the BBS world was my missionary frontier at the time, and I shared my faith with a passion; and made some quick online enemies as well as a result of it.

During the same time that all of these events were occurring in my own life, the Internet was also growing and gaining in popularity; and as I mentioned earlier, it was just a matter

of time before BBSing and FidoNet would be overshadowed by the same. The Lord knew that it was in my heart to spread the Christian Gospel as far and as wide as possible via this new medium; and after proving myself faithful with the BBS for about three years, He finally opened the doors in late Spring of 1997, when I finally acquired the financial means to set up my first Christian web page. I had finally broken into the still relatively new frontier of Internet Christian evangelism, and more people would be given the chance to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

By today's standards, my site was a rather pitiful endeavor. I knew very little about HTML coding in those days; and so, design-wise, the site was not much different from primitive ANSI graphics. However, with the Lord's help, I have learned, and have slowly improved my website design skills, as well as expanded my online presence; so that today my site -- which is now known as Endtime Prophecy Net - offers an interesting and inspiring assortment of options and materials, including a wide selection of Bible-based commentaries, as well as many useful Bible study tools -- such as a number of dictionaries and encyclopedias, an online King James Version Bible, Hebrew and Greek lexicons, a custom-designed search engine, hundreds of topic-specific King James Version Bible verse lists -- and the Endtime Prophecy Net Messageboard, which I just recently resurrected after a hiatus of two years.

As some of my older friends will already know, in addition to the Endtime Prophecy Net website, for quite a few years, I also operated a small Christian mailing list known as EDGE -- or Endtime Discussion Group Exchange -- and the "Armageddon" file server. The "Armageddon" FTP file server was in effect a modern BBS system which took advantage of a regular GUI -- or Graphical User Interface -- as opposed to the archaic PC-ANSI graphics that were used on my BBS. The "Armageddon" FTP file server offered file downloads -- primarily of a Christian nature -- live chat and newsgroups. It was accessible by both Macintosh and Windows users, simply by using the free FreeShare client -- which was available from software sites such as VersionTracker -- or by using the now-discontinued Hotline client.

In September of 2010, I embarked on a new journey, and a new technological adventure, when I delved into the world of what are known as topsites. Topsites are basically links sites on which visitors to member sites can vote for sites, in order to raise that site's position on a topsites list. Prior to this point, my primary web design experience had been with standard HTML 4.0 code, as well as limited experience with using javascripts and PERL scripts. However, in order to set up my new topsites list -- Top Christian Sites -- I had to learn entirely new skills, including the basics of PHP, and setting up a MySQL server. After hours, days and even weeks of frustration, as I endeavored to grasp these new concepts, and confronted this new learning curve head-on, my topsites list -- Top Christian Sites -- finally went online. After a few years of running it, I took it down in 2012, as I recall.

As I look back now, I can truly see how the Lord has guided me, and provided for me, as I have sought to do His Will. I am reminded of verses such as the following, where the Lord promises to provide for us, when we seek first His Kingdom,

by being faithful witnesses of His Word to the world:

"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:"

Isaiah 59:1, KJV

"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart . . . I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

Psalms 37:4, 25, KJV

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Malachi 3:10, KJV

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Matthew 6:33-34, KJV

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened . . . If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

Matthew 7:7-8, 11, KJV

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

Matthew 21:22, KJV

"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows."

Luke 12:6-7, KJV

"And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after:

and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you."  
Luke 12:22-31, KJV

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"  
Romans 8:32, KJV

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."  
Philippians 4:19, KJV

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."  
1 John 5:14-15, KJV

So I am extremely thankful for what God has done for me, as well as through me. As the old saying goes, little is a lot if God is in it; and it isn't until we take that first small step of faith, that God can reveal the next step in His Plan to us. His blessings come through our obedience to His Will, as the previous verses clearly demonstrate. If you wish to learn more about this subject, I encourage you to read some of the other article that I have written, such as "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God" and "Are You a Burning Ember for the Lord?".

While some conservative Christians view the Internet -- and computers in general for that matter -- as something evil and of Satan which is to be avoided, I must ask such people: Who are we to question the methods God makes available to us in order to get the job done? It seems to me that in the final waning hours of the current worldly system, the Lord would be rather interested in seeing as many people as possible, come to the knowledge of Salvation. Furthermore, it seems to me that He would be willing to use whatever means are available to us, in order to accomplish such an important goal -- such as using computers and the Internet. As I mention in other articles, such as "Is the Message of Salvation Meant for All Men?", the Apostle Peter wrote:

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."  
2 Peter 3:9, KJV

The fact that God is even willing to reach down into the privacy of people's homes, via their personal computers, in order to try to deliver the Gospel message to them another time, and give them another chance -- for some people, maybe even a last chance -- is in my view, a very powerful sign of His Love and Mercy. Even when organized religion has failed to reach some people; even when popular radio and television evangelists have failed to catch their ear; even when Gospel tracts and street evangelism hasn't gotten through to them; God is still trying to reach those people on a very personal one-on-one level, in the privacy of their own homes; perhaps



even in the privacy of their own bedroom or study den where their computer is located, late at night, when no one else is watching, and no other distractions are present.

You see, under such conditions, there is no need to put on the false image that some of us like to display in public. It is sinful, human nature which causes us to create this false impression of ourselves, and to build this wall of defenses around ourselves, in order to preserve our pride, and protect our inflated egos. We feel that we must meet the expectations of others, or else prove to ourselves that we are better than others; and so we pretend to be someone who we are really not.

However, in the privacy of our own homes, we can lower our defense mechanisms, and we can just be ourselves. We can be honest with ourselves; and it is often precisely in such a moment of human vulnerability, when we think that we're safe, that God can strike our hearts with the hot, piercing truth of His Word, when we least expect it. For example, perhaps we "accidentally" come across a particular web site; or out of curiosity, we decide to log on to a certain server, and wham! . . . the Lord delivers the full Salvation message to us once again, hoping that perhaps this time, we will be wise enough, and maybe humble enough, to receive it. As the Apostle Paul informs us:

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12, KJV

God knows us, even better than we know ourselves; and He knows the appointed time He has chosen for our Salvation. He knows when we are finally ready, and willing, to receive the free Gift of Salvation which He offers us. As I have stated before, in some cases, the Lord has to allow certain people to experience many hardships during their lives, in order to break their pride, and bring them to a point where they can be honest with themselves, as well as with Him, and truly admit that they are sinners who are in need of forgiveness and Salvation. Until such a moment of spiritual tenderness arrives, all of the preaching in the world will fall upon deaf ears. Why is God being so merciful to such people when they have resisted His Spirit all of their lives? Why is He giving them so many chances -- and even one last chance -- to accept the Sacrifice of His dear Son? Perhaps the answer is best summed up in verses such as the following:

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"

Hebrews 9:27, KJV

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

2 Corinthians 5:10, KJV

"If thou, LORD, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" Psalms 130:3, KJV

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Revelation 20:12-15, KJV

You see, God knows the score even before it has been fully declared, because He owns the Books. As such, He knows what awaits us if we refuse to humble ourselves, and accept the Sacrifice of His Son as Atonement for our sins. As wise King Solomon once wrote:

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."

Proverbs 16:18, KJV

So I tend to believe that it is because of the tragic end which He knows awaits those people who continue to cling to their pride, that the Lord is making every effort possible to reach them with the Gospel before it is too late. God is willing to give them one last chance at Salvation, and that includes reaching out to people via the Internet. Look at it this way. Just like human parents, the Lord is a man of His word. If He warns us that He is going to punish us if we do not behave, then obviously, He has no choice but to fulfill His word if we continue on in our belligerence. Thus it is that we find verses like the following in the Bible:

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

John 3:36, KJV

"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

1 John 5:12, KJV

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God . . . For our God is a consuming fire."

Hebrews 10:31, 12:29, KJV

Please go to part two for the conclusion of this article.

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THE INTERNET : OUR FINAL FRONTIER; YOUR LAST CHANCE? : PT 2

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Path Of Life And Path Of Death: We Must Choose The Right Path, Is The Internet Our Final Frontier For Christian Witnessing?, Control Of Information In China And Muslim Countries, Gospel Is Prohibited In Saudi Arabia, Israel Is Closed Frontier For Christian Gospel, Christian Restrictions In USA, Orwellian World In Which Information Is Restricted And Manipulated, The Battle Over Net Neutrality, Big Business And Junk Mail/Spam, Domestic Spying And Carnivore, Dangers Of An Online Presence, Endtime Persecution Against Christians Is On The Rise, Is The Internet Possibly Your Final Chance At Receiving Salvation?

As the Apostle Peter candidly wrote, God truly desires to save as many people as possible, but to a certain degree, He leaves it up to us to make the right choice. He lovingly and patiently shows us the way to Salvation, but He won't force us to walk down it if we don't want to. His Holy Spirit will incessantly work on our hearts, but as Jesus clearly stated, we must choose the path we will follow, as we see here:

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."  
Matthew 7:13-14, KJV

The writer of the Book of Proverbs certainly seemed to be aware of the dangers of choosing the wrong path. Thus he wrote:

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."  
Proverbs 14:12, KJV

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."  
Proverbs 16:25, KJV

"Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established."  
Proverbs 4:25-26, KJV

The Epistle to the Hebrews seems to offer very similar advice when it states:

"And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."  
Hebrews 12:13, KJV

Returning to the importance of the Internet as an effective form of Christian outreach, and the issue of whether or not it might be our final frontier insofar as being a witness of our Christian faith is concerned, if we stop to consider some of the recent developments regarding our personal liberties, specifically with regards to how some developments have been

having a very direct effect on our rights as Christians, then personally, I can only conclude that the Internet may in fact be the final frontier for modern Christian evangelism. As one by one the governments of foreign countries continue to close their doors to Christian missionaries, our online witness via the Internet may prove to be all the more important, as it will allow us to continue to reach out to some people in the privacy of their own homes, until even that is restricted. It may give some people one last chance to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It may be our final frontier as Christians.

In my view, there is sufficient evidence that this is so. For example, as many of you will already know, in China, Internet access is already being tightly controlled and restricted; so that if a person desires to acquire Internet access there, he must go through a government-operated ISP, where he is certain to see hear and read only those things which the Chinese authorities deem suitable and appropriate for the Chinese masses. In fact in recent news, the giant search engine company, Google, has been engaging in battle with Chinese authorities. It appears that they have finally reached some kind of a compromise. However, if the current oppressive trends continue in China, it won't be long before the Chinese people will have been given their last chance to hear the Christian Gospel by way of the Internet, and that Christian evangelical frontier will be closed.

The same kind of oppression is occurring in Muslim countries as well which are ruled by powerful conservative governments, quite often being dynastic families, such as in the nations of Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Syria. While Internet access is available in some Muslim countries, it is only available to those people which the governments feel can be trusted with the information that they will find online, and all kinds of filters are implemented in order to prevent the citizenry from being exposed to Western ideas and practices which may question, or threaten, Islamic ideology and Muslim orthodoxy.

It may surprise you to know that while Muslims are free to practice their Islamic faith in the United States, in some Muslim nations -- such as Saudi Arabia -- the overt practice of non-Muslim faiths is strictly prohibited. Saudi Arabia is governed according to the Qur'an, which means that Sharia -- or Islamic law -- rules the land. Equally important are the sayings and traditions of Muhammad, which are referred to as the Sunnah. Due to the fact that Saudi Arabia is governed by a very strict form of Sunni Islam known as Wahhabi, there are very rigid restrictions placed on non-Muslims who enter the country, such as Christians. In light of the controversy we have all been hearing about surrounding the proposed Muslim mosque and center in New York City, the following startling facts may cause your jaw to drop:

- \* Christian proselytizing and public preaching in Saudi Arabia is illegal.
- \* It is illegal to distribute Bibles in Saudi Arabia.
- \* No Christian churches are permitted in Saudi Arabia, even though approximately 30,000 Americans currently reside in the nation, many of whom are Christian.

- \* It is illegal for Christian clergy to enter Saudi Arabia for the purpose of conducting religious services, not even in private.
- \* Christians who are detained for practicing their religion may suffer imprisonment, be punished with lashes, and ultimately be deported. Some are even tortured.
- \* Even wearing Christian symbols in public may result in attracting the wrath of the Saudi religious police.

If there is one thing that the previous facts make clear, it is that if a Christian frontier for witnessing exists for the nation of Saudi Arabia -- and similar closed Arab and Muslim countries -- surely it is online via the Internet. So again, we see that the Internet may possibly be the only chance, and the last chance that some Arabs and Muslims will receive, to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Communist China and Muslim countries are not the only places where restrictions have been placed on Christian evangelistic endeavors. As I explain in the series "Holy Qur'an and Islam: A Doctrine of Devils?", the Jewish state of Israel likewise prohibits public Christian evangelism, based on the so-called Anti-Missionary Law -- or Bill 5738-1977 as it is technically known -- which the Israeli Knesset passed almost thirty-three years ago on December 25, 1977, as if to make a point. Based on this law, if the Israeli government chooses to enforce it, a Christian can be faced with up to a five-year prison term if he or she endeavors to convert a Jewish person to the Christian faith; particularly if there is any evidence that any form of persuasion was used. Even distributing Christian tracts will attract the ire of orthodox Jewish authorities.

The irony of this situation is that year after year, the Jews convince thousands upon thousands of gullible U.S. Christians to purchase tour packages to the so-called "Holy Land", so that they can see where Christ and His Disciples walked, and vicariously feel as if they are truly experiencing a part of Biblical history. The ugly truth of the matter is that Israel is in fact a closed frontier insofar as Christian evangelism is concerned. They may continue to deceive some Christians by referring to themselves as the "Holy Land", but Israel -- and the vast majority of Jews who live there -- are antichrist. What really irks me about this is the fact that some American Christian leaders support and encourage these tours. They are helping the Israelis to milk U.S. Christians.

What may surprise some people, is the fact that even in the United States of America -- a nation which constantly boasts of its many freedoms -- there's a rising tide of persecution directed against Bible-believing evangelical Christians. As you may already know, the United States is home to a number of Jewish-controlled groups whose primary goal seems to be to stop Christian evangelism in its tracks, and to make the USA as antichrist as Israel is. These groups include the American Civil Liberties Union, the Anti-Defamation League Of B'nai B'rith, the American Jewish Congress, People For The American Way, and others. These organizations were either founded by Jews, and/or are run by or funded by Jews. Under the disguise of supposedly upholding US law -- such as the misinterpreted separation clause that is found in the U.S. Bill of Rights --

they are slowly turning America into another secular nation.

As a direct result of the endeavors by these Jewish groups, in increasing numbers, crucifixes, mangers, monuments of the Ten Commandments, and other symbols of our Christian faith, are being removed from government-owned land; restrictions are being placed on prayer and other Christian activities within the American public education system; hard-working people are being reprimanded, or dismissed, from their jobs when they refuse to do certain things which are contrary to their Christian faith; etc. Yet when Christians rise up in protest against the obvious hostile discrimination against our faith, we are reminded of the so-called separation of Church and State by the very organizations that I mentioned a moment ago. Ironically, as I write this, Muslims are in a legal battle to construct a Muslim center and mosque just a few blocks from the site of the 9-11 World Trade Center attacks, and it appears that they may soon get past all of the legal hurdles and stiff public opposition, because, as we all know, Arab petro-dollars talk.

Undoubtedly, what is happening in the aforementioned places is only a foreshadow of worse things to come. I have no doubt that in coming years, frontier after frontier will continue to close to the Christian Gospel. Furthermore, as each year passes, and as Internet services become even more interwoven into the fabric of our lives, the danger of the free flow of information being curtailed further, becomes an ever-present possibility. The previous examples are clear proof of this. Assuming that this is indeed the future that we face, doesn't it make sense that we should use the Internet to give people one last chance to hear the Gospel of Christ while it still remains possible to do so? Or, like some Christians, should we just say "Computers are evil! The Internet is evil!"? I know what I will do, and what I am already doing. How about you?

A few decades ago, some people scoffed at the suggestion of an authoritarian government controlling our lives similar to George Orwell's infamous Big Brother of "1984" fame. This is no longer so. It is happening all around us this very day, if we will only open our eyes to the truth. From closed-circuit cameras constantly surveilling us on city streets all across the nation, to Internet data packet sniffing and automated email snooping, to illegal wire taps, where will it all end? I don't doubt that many of you reading this already foresee the day when radio, television, tabloids and magazines, and perhaps even books, will become things of the past. At our current pace, in a very short time, everything having to do with information will be piped into our homes via the Internet.

In fact, if you can currently afford the luxury of broadband, such as a DSL or cable modem connection, or better, then in large part, you are already living the future. Within a few short years, everything in our homes will be controlled by a powerful computer sitting on the desktop or perhaps embedded in the walls of our homes. Devices and applications such as X10, Insteon, Xtension, MyHome, PowerHome, HomeSeer, Indigo, etc., are already making this possible. Soon we will all be piped into one main source; but the problem is that when we reply upon only one source, whether it is for information or

for any other service, it inevitably leads to the danger of being manipulated and controlled by whoever the supplier may be.

Obviously, monopolies are nothing new under the sun. We are all abused by them on a daily basis. But at the current rate, who knows; in short order, some people may be working like George Orwell's character Winston Smith in "1984". In other words, they will be historical revisionists for Big Brother, ensuring that we only know and believe what the government wants us to know and believe. Contrary opinions will simply be eliminated by the tap of a mouse.

It is because of these perceived dangers, that some people have already begun to sound the alarm, and are declaring that the Internet must remain free of governmental control, and of Big Business control as well. In other words, there's an on-going effort to maintain what has been termed as "Net Neutrality", so that everyone continues to have full access to all online resources -- without any restrictions -- due to economic interests by greedy Big Business, or as a result of certain governments who only want us to see things their way.

Sadly, I think that they may be sounding the alarm a little too late. The invisible hand of Big Business, which in large part actually controls the government, has already realized the huge potential of the electronic Golden Goose, and they are already doing their best to try to control it; and you can bet that they will continue to squeeze it more and more, for all that it is worth.

If you doubt that this is so, consider how much junk mail you receive now, as compared to a few years ago. If you have a high profile on the Internet, such as through owning one or more registered domain names, this makes you even more a target of unsolicited, and annoying, commercial spam. If it weren't for sophisticated email programs which allow us to set up filters, and ISP-based filtering systems, we would all go crazy . . . or else end up closing our accounts in frustration.

As many of us have already personally experienced, with the proliferation of commercial spam, not to mention the fact that we can rarely visit a website without being bombarded with hordes of ads for everything under the sun, annoying pop-ups, and bogus links which may actually lead to places we would rather not go -- such as pornographic sites -- the situation is really out of control. Add to that the threat of identity theft, as well as the unintentional downloading of trojans and viruses, is it really any wonder that some new computer users might be hesitant to embrace the online world?

But my point is, the danger of the Internet being controlled is real. For example, since 9/11, in the so-called name of "fighting against global terrorism", the American government has taken drastic steps to not only curtail the rights and freedoms of ordinary American citizens through questionable executive orders and bills, which could be activated, should the need arise, but it is now common knowledge that it has also waged an intensive domestic spying campaign against its

very own citizens. This spying campaign has by no means been limited to traditional methods such as physical surveillance and phone taps. As I mentioned a moment ago, modern spying has now evolved to include the intentional sniffing of online electronic communications -- such as our email -- by means of such controversial programs as "Carnivore", which has since been assigned a more generic name, so as to not draw further attention to its true purpose.

Governmental control of the Internet aside, from a business perspective, things aren't much better. It may not be long before Internet email taxes, and other profit-making tactics, make the Internet inaccessible to all but the rich and the elite; or, as some people have suggested, two version of the Internet may evolve; one for the rich -- with high speed and services -- and another for the poor -- which offers degraded speed and services.

But returning to the issue of our online Christian witness, I suspect that it may only be a matter of time before our evangelical activities will likewise be curtailed. Stop and think about it. If overseas missionary journeys are already in decline due to governmental restrictions in some nations, and due to the increasing danger that missionaries now face from radical groups in some countries, what makes you think that the same thing can't happen with our online activities? As we have already seen, some countries -- such as China and Syria -- have already begun to restrict what their users can access online, and there are undoubtedly other nations which do it as well. If -- as many Christians believe -- sometime in the future, a totally godless government takes control of the world, do you honestly believe that it will allow us to continue preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ online? Do you think that it will allow us to continue to expose it for what it actually is?

So it is my view that our Christian frontier on the Internet may eventually be closed as well. Hopefully though, it will be the final frontier to close, and for now, many people will continue to get another chance -- perhaps a last chance -- to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If you personally doubt my conclusion, perhaps it is due to the fact that while you may know that Christians are currently being persecuted in other countries, you fail to realize that American Christians are also being persecuted, under the guise of upholding American law, as we discussed earlier. Even if you don't agree with my logic, as stated in this article, as I also point out in the series called "Civil Disobedience and Christian Persecution", Jesus clearly stated that we Christians would be persecuted for His name's sake, as we see by the following verses:

"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."  
Matthew 10:22, KJV

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake."  
Matthew 24:9, KJV

"But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and



into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls."

Luke 21:12-19, KJV

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me."

John 15:18-21, KJV

Please notice that Matthew 24:9 comes right before the verse that I quoted earlier, in which Jesus stated that the Gospel will be preached in all nations, and then the End will come. This gives us a time reference for when this persecution will occur. In other words, my understanding is that once the Lord feels that we have accomplished our purpose here as witnesses of our faith, He is going to allow the persecution to begin, in order that the wicked can fill their cup of iniquity. This is all in accordance with the Scriptures, and it is also what will make God's Judgments so righteous when they begin to fall in earnest upon this sinful, unbelieving world.

With each passing year, I believe that the level of serious persecution and discrimination against Christians believers will continue to rise; even in the so-called "Christian" USA due to the endeavors of our antichrist enemies, such as the aforementioned Jewish-controlled organizations. As I explain in a number of my 666/Mark of the Beast articles, we will be increasingly viewed in a negative light, mocked, despised and hated, as the deceptive spirit of antichrist takes control of the unbelieving world. As a result, we will become ostracized from society, and social outcasts, due to our Christian faith. In the United States, even now Bible-believing Christians are being accused of being close-minded, biased, prejudiced, out of sync with the times, anti-semitic, and even a danger to society.

Given enough time -- and it may occur sooner than we think -- some of our Christian beliefs -- such as our rejection of the gay and lesbian lifestyle -- may eventually be labeled a hate crime. There are already laws in the United States which make this possible. Furthermore, our Christian-based web sites may eventually be shut down if our Christian views are deemed to be hateful; and in worse-case scenarios, we may possibly even be imprisoned if we refuse to renounce our beliefs. You say that it can't and won't happen? It has already happened in other countries. Under the right conditions, it could happen in the USA as well.

So my message today is a double one. First, if you happen to be a Christian, and if you have any level of computer skills, please don't underestimate the power of the Internet. Perhaps you don't possess the means or the desire to be a missionary in a foreign field, but the Internet can be your frontier for your personal witnessing endeavors, right from the comfort of your own home. Please consider taking advantage of it while we still have the freedom to do so, because it may not last. Who knows; by being a faithful witness of your faith, you may possibly give someone in your own country, or in a foreign land, their last chance to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Second, if you are a person who has not yet come to Christ, I pray that this message, or one similar to it, will cause you to finally open your heart to the Lord. I hope that you will take this chance -- perhaps your last chance -- to make the right decision to accept God's love, mercy and forgiveness, through the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. He is reaching out to you right now, even at this very moment. Are you willing to humble yourself, admit your sinful condition, and accept the free Gift of Salvation which He freely offers you? I hope so, because you may not get another chance.

With these thoughts I will bring this article to a close. I trust that you have found it informative and enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter or Google+, I would really appreciate if you would take the time to click on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this article, or which are related to this article, and which are likewise located on the Endtime Prophecy Net web server:

All Are Given a Chance, But . . .  
Are You a Burning Ember for the Lord?  
Civil Disobedience and Christian Persecution  
Do You Want Love and Light, or Rod and Wrath?  
Holy Qur'an and Islam: A Doctrine of Devils?  
Is the Message of Salvation Meant for All Men?  
Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God

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