



Forcing God's Hand: Why Millions Pray for a Quick Rapture ... and Destruction of Planet Earth

Grace Halsell

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This is an enlarged new edition of Grace Halsell last book, *Forcing God's Hand: Why Millions Pray for a Quick Rapture... And Destruction of Planet Earth*. This edition includes transcript of CBS 60 Minutes program "Zion's Christian Soldiers" aired October 6, 2002 and additional articles on the subject written by the author.

"Halsell exposes Falwell's Christian tours as having only one purpose: to raise money for Falwell and Israel, under the guise of preparing the pilgrims for the approaching Armageddon. An excellent book."

Book Description

In her startling new book, *Forcing God's Hand: Why Millions Pray for a Quick Rapture and the Destruction of Planet Earth*, Grace Halsell explores the danger of a new religious doctrine sweeping America. Adherents to this doctrine are said to constitute the fastest growing movement in Christianity today. Its leaders proclaim that God wants--even demands--that Planet Earth be destroyed in our generation.

Cult members do not look like the so-called "crazies"--those such as Jim Jones or leaders of the "Branch Davidians" or "Heaven's Gate," who led followers to death declaring the end is near. Yet, Halsell writes, "They accept the same theology: we can do nothing about the environment, it's useless to work for peace, rather we must build more weapons for Armageddon."

Those proclaiming that we must wage Armageddon do not, however, expect to suffer. As the book points out, Pat Robertson, Hal Lindsey, Tim LaHaye and almost 100,000 other U.S. Fundamentalists broadcasting on 2,000 Christian radio and TV stations assure adherents that while the world will be destroyed, they will be given a free Rapture ticket. They need not suffer a moment of agony. As Jerry Falwell puts it, "I'm not worried. You know why? I ain't gonna be here."

Cult leaders assure followers, now said to include one out of ten Americans, that they will be wafted up to heaven for a special grandstand seat where, in comfort, they will watch the final holocaust, the agony and death of billions of men, women and children.

Forcing God's Hand explains the popularity of this End Time doctrine. A Tennessean, Cyrus Scofield, popularized the idea of a Free Rapture, a theology originally imported from England less than 200 years ago. The theology holds that Christians must look to the biblical land of the Jews for their salvation; that the land itself is more important to Christians than the message of Christ. Scofield taught that Christ was held hostage until Jews carried out a preordained plan: they were to leave their native lands, including Russia, Europe, Africa and America, and settle in Palestine. They were to eradicate, with the help of Christians, the most sacred Islamic shrine in Jerusalem, a mosque holy to a billion Muslims around the world; and once Christ returned, the Jews must convert to Christianity. His doctrine, called dispensationalism, was encoded into the Scofield Reference Bible.

His dispensationalist Reference Bible is used by virtually all TV and radio preachers. Their certitude in Armageddon, along with their offer of an escape hatch, makes converts of a growing number of mainstream,

middle to upper-middle class Americans. Dispensationalists attend a variety of Protestant churches, including those known as charismatic. They represent 15 to 20 percent of the 16-million member Southern Baptist Convention. They also are members of so-called Bible churches and megachurches, such as those attended by Special Prosecutor Kenneth Starr in McLean, Virginia, and U.S. Congressman Tom DeLay in Sugar Land, a suburb of Houston.

Dispensationalism is taught throughout the U.S., at large and influential seminaries including the Dallas Theological Seminary, where Hal Lindsey studied, the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, the Philadelphia College of the Bible, the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, as well as 200 other colleges and institutes. Currently there are more than 100,000 students in Bible school.

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