



A winnable war against the Evil Empire.

A bold plan to expose
Christianity for what it is.



RONALD REAGAN
National Security
March 23, 1983

Let me share with you a vision of the future which offers hope. It is that we embark on a program to counter the awesome Soviet missile threat...Let us turn to the very

strengths in technology that spawned our great industrial base and that have given us the quality of life we enjoy today.

What if free people could live secure in the knowledge that their security did not rest upon the threat of instant U.S. retaliation to deter a Soviet attack—that we could intercept and destroy strategic ballistic missiles before they reached our own soil or that of our allies?

I know this is a formidable, technical task, one that may not be accomplished before the end of this century. Yet current technology has attained a level of sophistication where it's reasonable for us to begin this effort.

My fellow Americans, tonight we're launching an effort which holds the promise of changing the course of human history.

* * *

And thus, on March 23, 1983, was born the Strategic Defense Initiative, or SDI. The initiative, which became derisively known as "Star Wars," was lampooned by every political cartoonist who ever wielded a pencil. Many scientists considered Reagan's "shield in space" a cosmic joke, sheer techno-fantasy. It was vilified by the press. Even some of Reagan's closest advisors pleaded caution. After Reagan's speech, Secretary of State George Shultz told him, "I can see the moral ground you want to stake out. But I don't want to see you put something forward so powerfully, only to find technical flaws or major doctrinal weaknesses." Edmund Morris, author of the Reagan biography *Dutch*, writes of this exchange—

The Secretary's memoirs are typically mute here as to what Reagan said in reply. Very likely he just sat and listened. As Martin Anderson once remarked, his obstinacy was absorbent: he accepted criticism, but never reflected it back.

Stoic in the face of ridicule and doubt, Ronald Reagan doggedly embraced SDI as humanity's great hope. "We came here to change things," he would say, "not to follow opinion polls."

At least one person took Reagan seriously. Arnold Kramish, a fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington and a veteran of the Manhattan Project, thought Reagan's SDI speech had been a historic pronouncement, and wrote a *Washington Post* Op-Ed piece to that effect—

...What he did turn toward is a goal, not a certainty, to try to erase the specter of nuclear retaliation and annihilation from the animus of the populations of the world. It is a bold and risky course, but why should anyone be faulted for any conceptual attempt to resolve these burning issues? How is it that...eminent scientists, betraying the scientific spirit of free enquiry, should dictate that humankind should not even *think* of ways to improve its condition? Where are the scientists of yesterday who were great through the virtue that they recognized that they were merely part of the human condition, sought to improve it, but knew their fallibilities?

Reagan's bent, to always be in there trying, at least dated back to his days as Governor of California. In 1971, Reagan submitted a radical program of welfare reform to the California Legislature. From *Dutch*—

"I want to know what each of you thinks of our chances of getting this thing through," Reagan said to senior staff members. Winter sunlight slanted into his office. As usual, he sat with his back to the park view outside, diffused through more than a ton of armored glass: shaven lawns, camellia shrubs, and a gnarled and ancient elm.

Before him lay eighty proposed policy changes, exhaustively researched by a gubernatorial task force. There was a brief silence. Somebody answered, "None."

Other voices chimed in. "We shouldn't try." "No way can you reform welfare in the state of California."

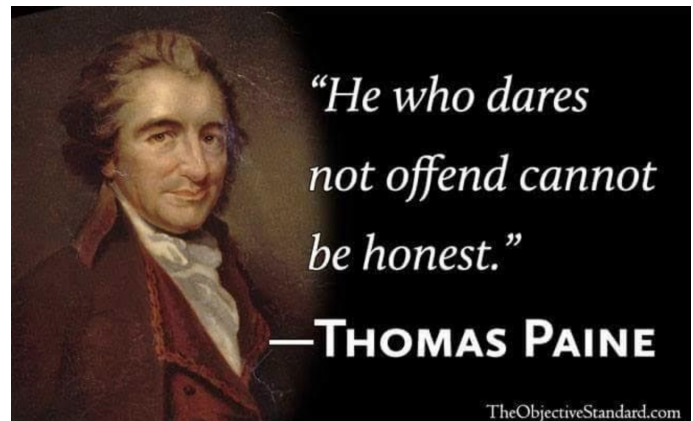
Reagan gazed around his sun-filled office, unmoved by the pessimism on every face. "Well, we're not going to get any reform unless we try."

The California Welfare Reform Act finally became law on August 13, 1971. Reagan did not exaggerate when he called it "probably the most comprehensive such initiative

in American history." It would save three hundred million dollars a year through sheer operational efficiency.

* * *

Let me share with you a vision of the future which I believe offers hope. After the Romans Series is finished, I will begin writing a book—published in parts in the ZWTF—that I believe will counter and perhaps even crush the spreading threat of the false doctrine of eternal torment—at least among thinking minds. As has been amply shown throughout history, the pen is mightier than the sword. Strong, honest, popularly-written literature has, more than war, dramatically affected public and world opinion. Witness Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses*, Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *The Diary of Anne Frank* and Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*.



I have struggled for thirty years developing a popular yet Scripturally-honest writing style. It is not the writing that takes time, it's the "how-to-write" that requires years of experimentation and practice. This is especially true when dealing with Scriptural themes, as it is so essential to make the complex simple.

It struck me around 1990 that every treatise I had ever read on vital truth was verbally impenetrable by the common man, and popularly unusable by Oprah or Larry King. From that time to this, it has been my goal to put the truth on a modern platter, to bring it alive to the modern mind, to reach a new generation with the truths of God before this gap in which I stand (the gap between the old believers and the new) narrows into nonexistence.

The problem with books on the salvation of all is that not only are they too scholarly for the common reader, the titles are positively stated; the titles announce the greatness of God and His plan. We find titles like, *Christ Triumphant*, *The Restitution of All Things*, *Hope Beyond Hell*, *God All in All*, *The Savior of All*, and so forth. Not that these books are bad; they're remarkably fine and invaluable. But if such a book is meant for a wider audience, that is, if such a book is to be evangelistic in nature, it must follow Paul's formula for evangelism as found in 2 Timothy 4:2, namely, "expose, rebuke and entreat." Exposure and rebuke provide the shock therapy that rouses the general public from its slumber. Jesus used it when He publicly called the Pharisees "whitewashed tombs" and "a brood of vipers." Paul used it when he called the Circumcision "dogs," "the maimcison," and "idle-bellies." Peter did it at Pentecost. Every great revival of truth has come on the heels, not of entreaty, but of exposure and rebuke.

VIDEOS:

Of my 1,063 videos on YouTube, here are the top three.

Note the titles:

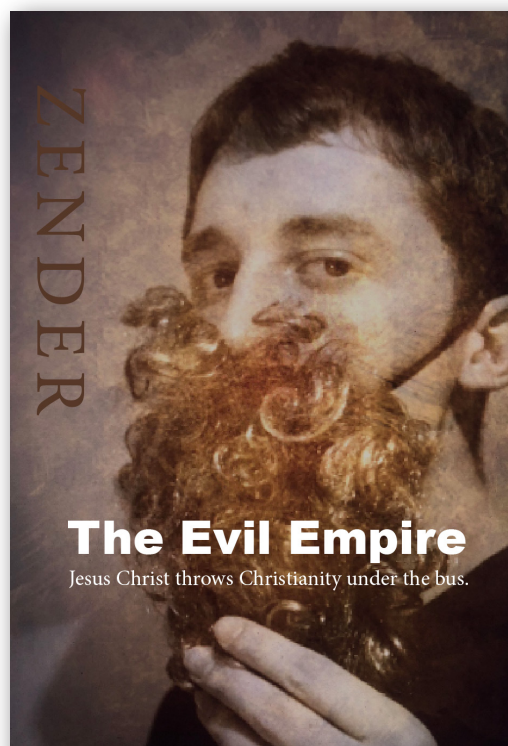
1. **"God Hates Organized Religion": 21,254 views**
2. **"Eternal Torment Believers Are Nuts": 20,924 views**
3. **"Christianity: An Evil Empire": 19,611 views**

This is practical evidence that Paul's formula for evangelism ("expose, rebuke and entreat"—*in that order*) works.

I propose to you a book that exposes and rebukes on the cover. This is what people *want* to see; it's what they *need* to see; it's what *I* would want to see. In approaching such a unique new project, one must begin with the premise

that no one cares about God. Few authors start here. Accepting this realistic premise, one can then make better decisions about how to present the truth to a world-at-large that, like the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers on Mars Hill, simply wants to hear something new. Because, you see, no one cares about the eons or the three Greek words translated hell. But they just might be interested in seeing Christianity brutally and sometimes even humorously criticized by the so-called founder of the religion Himself: Jesus Christ.

I propose a book titled, *The Evil Empire*, with the subtitle, "Jesus Christ throws Christianity under the bus." Putting my fabled messiah complex to good use,



I will write it *as* Jesus Christ. Our Lord and Savior is astounded at what Christianity has become. Frankly, He's pissed. He wonders how He has become so popular when He was such a nothing—a criminal, even—back in the old Nazareth/Jerusalem days. In *The Evil Empire*—at times a collection of musings and at other times a manifesto—Jesus Christ recalls many of the highlights of His earthly ministry. Only in the second half of the book does He become theological (while remaining conversational), and only in the final third of the book does He delve into the topic of eternal torment and the societal havoc wreaked over the centuries by this diabolical deception. Thus, the topic of eternal torment

and the salvation of all will have been snuck up upon, the entreaty and the true light coming only after Jesus Himself has colloquially and entertainingly dissed the world's most popular religion that, unfortunately, has hijacked His name.

My goal is to write the book serially to you, my readers, in the ZWTF. I anticipate the series running for around six months. I will then put the material in a book (the proposed cover of which you see on the previous page) publish a few hundred copies under the Starke & Hartmann imprint, and then land a literary agent for it, who will subsequently locate a mainstream publisher who will take it to the world.

I realize that the task with which I have burdened myself is formidable. As there are so many other Zender books (ten new titles by the end of the year) that are lined up for you, the body of Christ, *The Evil Empire* is a task that will not be accomplished by the end of the year. As I've said, I must finish the Romans Series first, which itself will be published in four volumes—God knows when. By the end of next year, I hope to see *The Evil Empire* under cover.

As for the audaciousness of this concept and its execution, I beg your indulgence. Who will fault me for at least a conceptual attempt to resolve these burning (what an appropriate word for the doctrine of eternal torment) issues that vex our times and our people? Even if the plan were *merely* conceptual, it is the conviction that shakes enemy camps. But I will move from conceptual to actual, by the grace of God. We as a body have the resources, we have the God-breathed talent, we have the faith. So what if it is a vast struggle? Let's move.

Let us no longer betray the evangelistic spirit of free enquiry, or attempt to dictate that one of our own should not even think of ways to improve the human condition and its apprehension of God. Bring forward, all of you, the evangelistic spirit of yesterday, embodied by men and women who were great through the virtue of recognizing that, though they were but part of the human condition, they could yet seek to improve it, holding all the while a realistic appraisal of their own fallibilities.

I believe that my current level of writing skill (honed through thirty years practice and experimentation) has attained a level of "common sophistication" where it becomes reasonable for me to begin this task of jumping the chasm between the conceptual and the actual. Friends in faith, today I am launching an effort which holds the promise of changing public opinion about God.

* * *

From *Dutch*—

Night fell over the elemental landscape around Reykjavik. In electing to meet Gorbachev here rather than in London, Reagan had unwittingly chosen a theater of epic symbolism. Iceland after dark, in October rain, is the world stripped to its essentials, geography reduced to geometry...Here, about halfway between Washington and Moscow, the North American and Eurasian land plates grind together and ram apart, in a rift clearly visible northeast of Reykjavik. At Thingvellir, on the very lip of the rift, the world's first parliamentary republic established itself against the rule of the





gods in A.D. 930. Now Reagan and Gorbachev were returning, more than a thousand years later, to argue essentially the same issues that had divided those early Christian and pagan chiefs: treaties versus weaponry, democracy versus totalitarianism, human rights versus tribal values...

...The tension in the room was tremendous. Their respective airplanes had been on hold since noon. It had been a battering day of back-and-forth negotiation, with both principals and support teams (waiting equally tensely upstairs) aware that Höfði House was on the brink of becoming the most momentous Cold War site since Yalta. As matters stood, the two superpowers had agreed in principle to ten years of strict observance of the ABM treaty...As a bonus, Gorbachev had even offered to scale down the Warsaw Pact's huge conventional-arms superiority over NATO. Reagan thought to himself, *We have negotiated the most massive weapons reductions in history.*

But now, smiling, Gorbachev demanded something in return. "This all depends, of course, on you giving up SDI."

Reagan had been bracing for this ultimatum for more than twenty-four hours. What the General Secretary meant, in Soviet treaty parlance, was, "The testing of in-space components of anti-ballistic missile defense is prohibited, except research and testing conducted in laboratories."

"I've said again and again that SDI wasn't a bargaining chip," Reagan said, annoyed by the smile.

"It's 'laboratory' or nothing," Gorbachev said at last. He

reached for his briefcase.

There was a long silence. Reagan slid a note over to Shultz: *Am I wrong?* The Secretary whispered, "No, you're right."

"The meeting is over," Reagan said. He stood up. "Let's go, George, we're leaving."

Gorbachev—incredibly, still trying to look amused—accompanied him out of the study, while the hall staircase drummed to the shoes of hastily descending aides. Everybody could see from Reagan's clamped lips (and Shultz's utter dejection) that disaster had struck. They got into their raincoats under the chandelier.

"You planned from the start to come here and put me in this situation!" Reagan said.

"There's still time, Mr. President. We could go back inside to the bargaining table."

"I think not."

They strode out into a wet glare of television lights. Reagan headed straight for his car.

"Mr. President," Gorbachev said, no longer smiling, "you have missed the unique chance of going down in history as a great president who paved the way for nuclear disarmament."

"That applies to both of us."

"I don't know what else I could have done."

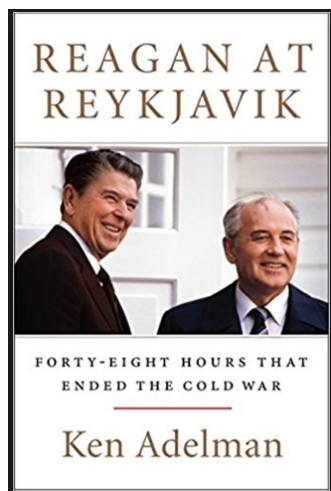
"You could have said yes," Reagan said.

* * *

REVOLUTION THROUGH CONFIDENCE AND A WILL TO WIN

Three years before, Reagan's "evil empire" speech had convinced Yuri Andropov more than any number of bombs ever could that the United States was morally ready to fight the century's ultimate war. In Reykjavik, it was Ronald Reagan's stubbornness over SDI, many believe, that convinced the Soviets they could never compete against a technically-superior U.S. arms program; they knew that our "Star Wars" defense system would render their offensive missiles obsolete. Reagan's tenacious holding to a high idea demoralized the Soviets.

"Ronald Reagan was tackling world gangsters of the first order of magnitude," said Genrikh A. Trofimenko, a former Brezhnev adviser and U.S. expert at the Soviet Academy of Sciences, in 1992. "Ninety-nine percent of Russian people believe that you won the Cold War because of your President's insistence on SDI." Also in 1992, Zbigniew Brzezinski was asked when the cold war was won. "This may surprise you," said Brzezinski, "but I think it was won at Reykjavik."



"Ronald Reagan was tackling world gangsters of the first order of magnitude."

— Genrikh A. Trofimenko

In 1994, George Shultz wrote in *Washington Post Book World*, "Years later...I asked [Gorbachev] what he considered the turning point in U.S.-Soviet relations during his tenure in office. He answered without hesitation, 'Reykjavik.'"

The lesson here is that persistent and strenuous application of what we hold to be effective, along with a will to win—*will be effective*. It is the boldness and confidence concerning "a high idea" that rocks enemy

camp. Even a bluff, put forward with confidence and an underlying will to win, shakes opposing forces. Should any consider my plan to write a popular book designed to rock enemy encampments to be so much "pie-in-the-sky," I remind them of "Star Wars." Whether or not the U.S. actually had the technology to install such defense systems *at the time* was immaterial. Gorbachev knew we had the will. Reagan communicated to him that will. Reagan was not only a true believer, he was a man of action.

If someone wants to put up a better plan, I'm listening. Or this: could it be that such a book will soon incite a modern showdown between the traditional and the true picture of God? What if! One man's flinty ideology collapsed a superpower and brought about fundamental change of opinion. Why can't another man's flinty theology do the same? Should we not try?

You say, "But Gorbachev helped. The time was right in the world, in Russia, for these things to happen. Reagan was the right man at the right time." I agree. Though some would later paint Gorbachev as a "flimflam" man, his doctrines of *perestroika* ("reconstructing") and *glasnost* ("transparency, free speech") at least opened lines of communication. So look around you. See what is happening today. Unless you happen to be at a Christian Bible study, this is a remarkable era of free speech, when anyone with a message commands access to the masses via the Internet. Even mainstream publishing seems open to controversy. Let's take this boon by its throat it while it lasts. Paul would.

Please note that I'm envisioning a revolution, not a reformation. I have no desire to reform the Christian religion, nor is it my call to do so. This religion must be exposed, not reformed, for the benefit of those repulsed and spiritually damaged by her hypocrisies. Thus, I seek to revolutionize the concept of God in the minds of people. As an evangelist, I would hope to do it in the minds of as many people as possible. Like Paul, I would mount Mars Hill and give it a shot. I would make a fool of myself for Christ, if that's what it takes. Revolution, by definition, is "a complete, pervasive and radical change." This happened to me, personally, thirty-five years ago. It has been my ardent desire for this to happen for as many others as possible, in this life. When King Agrippa said to Paul in Caesarea that Paul was about to turn him into a believer, I side with Paul when he answered the king, "May I ever wish to God, that briefly as well as greatly, not only you, but also all who are hearing me today, become such a kind as I am also."



If it hadn't been for your faithfulness to 2 Timothy 4:2 (exposure and rebuke), I'd still be on the fence about God's sovereignty.

And this from Don Stidham of Michigan:

The tapes of the excerpts from that debate in your *Sovereignty Series* have been played over and over again. I have recently been emboldened to share my convictions.

Think again about the common Russian folk I wrote about last week who were convicted of soul following Reagan's "evil empire" speech. It got to them. Reagan's exposure of their own flawed government brought them to a realization of the truth. And this, while Reagan's own countrymen were whining about him starting "a rhetorical war."

Exposure and rebuke (2 Timothy 4:2) are hard yet necessary elements of evangelism. If you can't do it, you can't be an effective evangelist. Not everyone can do it. But those who can't should at least stop criticizing those who can and get out of their way. Someday soon, perhaps many more people will be grateful for a tough stance against doctrinal error, the same stance that some even in the body of Christ would readily criticize. *But not you.*

While reading *Dutch*, it struck me that the Russians gave more credence to Reagan's tough-guy stance than did Americans. Recall the air-traffic controllers' strike of 1981. The controllers took a no-strike oath, then twelve thousand of them proceeded to walk off the job in defiance of federal law. Reagan? He fired them, inciting national outrage. Moscow, on the other hand, was impressed. An AP photograph appeared in their papers showing the leader of the air-traffic controllers' union being taken to prison in chains. "That," remarked Sovietologist Richard Pipes, "was the kind of image totalitarians understood. It showed that the President was no mere cowboy, but a sheriff capable of swift action."

"Dammit, the law is the law," said Reagan in a widely-quoted remark.

Well, it is. I feel the same way about Scripture. Truth is truth, and we better be defending it and promoting it. For many years I took heat for my treatment of the Clay Kent Debate, the now-infamous showdown in South Carolina between God's sovereignty (me) and His almost-sovereignty (Kent). I was accused of "picking on an old man." Well? I would not let him out of his hypocrisies. Yet it was my firm stance (some would say nit-pickedness; others would call it rudeness) in Fairview, and later in Newport News, that helped others see the black-and-white truth. I received this in a letter shortly after the debate from subscriber Pierrette Doyan of Canada:

Was I reading right? Was I really reading these words in a book written in 1890 by a long-forgotten man named Thomas Allin? Was there really such a man once existent who, believing in the full work of Christ, dared to envision that truth as a centerpiece of practical change? Today, scholarship and vision seem rare bedfellows. Yet here was a man—keen of intellect, deep of comprehension—who still opened the window to sniff the air, who still stopped along the highways of humanity to watch the people move—all along never forgetting the truth, never ceasing to wonder how the truth would affect these people if they were ever to hear it, never disallowing himself the joy of imagining something new over the horizon.



“A cruel Deity watching unmoved to all eternity the agonies, moral or physical, of His creatures, will seem to our children but an evil dream.” —Thomas Allin

I quote now from Thomas Allin’s *Christ Triumphant*, written in the late nineteenth century—

Our day has seen a complete revolution in the ideas men form of punishment and its end: in few things has the advance been more marked over the past than in our recognition of the true object of penalty. But let me ask, to whom is due this marked change for the better in our ideas of punishment? Surely to God, Who guides and orders by His providence all human things. This being so, it is wholly incredible to assign to the *divine* punishments this very character of mere vindictiveness, which men have in all enlightened systems abandoned.

At length we are on the verge of a truer conception of penalty: we are beginning to dwell most of all on the amendment of the criminal. The main idea is not the wrong done to the injured person, nor the wrong done to the criminal himself by his crime. This is the reformatory age on which we are now entering with steady, if slow, steps. Need I add that the relation of all this to theology is the closest possible? When we seize on—as perhaps the central

idea of sin—the wrong done by the sinner to himself, and not merely the offense against God, true as that is, we can better estimate the true function of punishment as retributive indeed, but in its essence remedial.

...the considerations just stated illustrate well the growth of morality. What of those ages in which war was the chief occupation, and the chief glory of civilized (?) human beings? Men living in such a state were wholly incapable of rising to true Christian teaching. They held half, or more than half, their neighbors in bondage as mere chattels. They tortured their criminals: they burned them, or boiled them alive, their foes they massacred.

Now precisely through such channels as these very much of current theology has filtered down: it is, in fact, an anachronism. But if our awakening be slow it is sure. Is it credible that, when torture has been banished from human justice, divine justice shall stand alone in consigning offenders to torture without any end? A cruel Deity watching unmoved to all eternity the agonies, moral or physical, of His creatures, will seem to our children but an evil dream.



“Many, even if unconsciously, reject religious authoritarianism for the fresh air of spiritual freedom.”

Consider what Mr. Allin is telling us. He is rightly calling the doctrine of eternal torment an anachronism. Humanity has advanced in nearly every branch of knowledge and endeavor, save that of God. Curiously, our knowledge of the Deity is stuck on medieval torture tables. We have rockets that travel to Mars, computers that fit into our back pockets, and machines that substitute for the human heart. We have over-developed in social and criminal “justice,” to the point of rewarding our shiftless and coddling our thieves. And yet our God (our God of tradition, not of Scripture) still straps His own children to the rack and burns them—for *eternity*.

My visual image of what Allin describes is that of a rubber band. I envision a rubber band, one end free, the other end thumb-tacked to an old, wooden wall. The rubber band represents progress in our thoughts of God, stretching forward. The rubber band stretches and strains as it moves farther into the future. But the tack holding the other end of the band remains stuck to the board. This tack is the doctrine of eternal torment. It is the anachronism, the one part of the flexible structure that lags behind. But the pulling increases; it has to. Decades pass. Social progress carries on. The tension mounts as the band becomes taut. Now, something has to give. The band cannot give, for it represents the human race, created in the image of God with that hole in its soul that desperately *needs* God. As tension mounts, the outcome is now inevitable. The laws of physics murmur of a change. The tack begins first to

vibrate, then to loosen. It is only a matter of time before it lets go completely of the wall.

I choose to believe that we are going to see, perhaps in the near future, the tack of eternal torment let go of the wall. Many, even if unconsciously, reject religious authoritarianism for the fresh air of spiritual freedom. I do not expect this to happen for those inside tradition-locked Christian churches, for so darkened are their hearts that they will seek shelter in the tiny hole that the tack has vacated. I do expect, and will work to bring about, a change in society-at-large, in the minds of the thinking men and women of this world (those whom Allin calls “artisans”), who will be legislating our governments and our practical lives in the years to come—should there even *be* years to come. But note this: I will work in this evangel as though there *are* years to come—not only as a teacher for you, but as an evangelist for the world.

Allin’s sentence echoes in my head: *A cruel Deity watching unmoved to all eternity the agonies, moral or physical, of His creatures, will seem to our children but an evil dream.*

Why can’t this happen? I say it can. I share with you Thomas Allin’s words to show you that our vision has been cramped, our gospel contained. Now you know why, in my video series, I have been speaking of living in the relative and winning against our enemies. I despise the fatalistic attitude of *God will be all-in-all in the end so why should we even try to do anything?* Between this and surrendering ourselves to the present, Goliath-like might of our enemies, we have conceded defeat before our ship has left port. We have had one way of thinking, and it is this: “We are doomed to evangelistic failure in this life. The enemy is too big. It is too strong. We are too small to attack them, let alone to win.” A marvelous attitude! A powerful creed! It is for this very attitude—fear in the face of giants—that Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years. It is this very attitude that finally had no other choice but to push forward a precocious little shepherd boy against the champion of the Philistines.

Anyone wishing to contribute financially to this cause may do so via the link below. But more than your financial help, I need your moral support. We are a tiny army, but we are on the side of God, armed with truth and a testimony. If we fail, let us fail spectacularly.

—MZ

(Next week: *A winnable war against the Evil Empire, Part 2.*)

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