

1“I did not come with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified”(1 Corinthians 2:1-2)

Amway - Whence Cometh It?

The “King James” English is used in the title to alert the reader to the fact that this paper is written from a Christian perspective, that is, from the standpoint of one examining all things according to his or her relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. I once said, when becoming an Amway distributor in my pre-Christian days, “God has sent Rich DeVos and Jay Van Andel to earth to show the world how business should be done.”

Is this not the "American Dream" opportunity in its finest glory?

I was young, ambitious, dissatisfied, naive, idealistic, covetous, ignorant, and foolish. I aspired to make my fortune and to change the world. Chance and circumstance brought Amway into my life and for the next year I dived right in. I was impressed, excited, enthused, and so motivated by what I had seen and heard at Amway pep rallies and conferences that I was prepared to do almost anything to be part of this "new wave," this wonderful opportunity, and to succeed.

NOTE: The truth spoken here applies not only to the Amway or the Britt International organizations, but to any and all multi-level and other business entities which promote financial independence and prosperity using religion and God to do so.

Coupled with the verbal caution that this was not a "get-rich-quick scheme" and that one had to work very hard to get anywhere in Amway was the constant promise of economic and psychological dreams come true, having anything heart could desire in this world.

This included fine homes, cars, yachts, planes, motor homes, resorts (owned), awards, dining out, leisure life, sports, financial, social and occupational independence, long and luxurious vacations, more than a comfortable retirement, college or university education for my children, all the things money could buy. All this while a self-operating organization worked for me, even in my absence. Perhaps the icing on the cake was that I could deduct everything from my income taxes, having my cake and eating it too, finally easing somewhat that feared Revenue Canada dilemma.

Is this not the stuff this world's dreams are made of? Is this not the "American Dream" opportunity in its finest glory? No more death, no more taxes?!

If only people got half as excited about the Lord Jesus Christ, Who redeemed them with His precious blood, as they do about Amway, Rich DeVos, PV, BV, LOC, SA8, networking, financial and occupational independence, free enterprise, tropical vacations, leisure life, big houses, and all those things of this world!

Is this not therefore a cult? If any religious group went out with such enthusiasm, trying to recruit and to sell their product or even give it away, would it not be condemned as a cult? Are not the Moonies and the Mormons and the "Jehovah's Witnesses" condemned by many as "cults" for similar reasons?

Amway is a religion, consuming lives, preached as the answer to our woes.

One may say that they are spreading false doctrine and false Christian notions and practices, adding to and taking away from the Scriptures, thereby making themselves "cults." But I see no difference here. Countless numbers of times I have heard the Lord referred to in Amway, finding even myself doing it though I was not yet a believer. One will find it so in many speeches and private conversations.

I have no doubt that Amway is a religion, one consuming lives in very real terms, zealously preached and defended by multitudes of its members, whether directly or indirectly, as the answer to all our woes. Indeed, I thought and spoke so.

Rich DeVos, in his book, *Compassionate Capitalism*, says, speaking of the world's woes, "And compassionate capitalism is the best if not the only way that we can bring hope and healing to the world." I was amazed in reading those words. How does a professing believer make such a statement?

Certainly great good seems to be done in and through Amway. Divorce rates are purportedly down among Amway distributors, marriages "healing," Biblical morals and ethics are preached, charities and "good" causes are supported. (But did not the Pharisees do these things and more? Were they therefore accepted of God?) Debts are overcome by some (though increased by others), the environment is somewhat considered, quality and guaranteed satisfaction are promised and relatively speaking, delivered.

But from a true believer's perspective, Jesus Christ is the One and Only Hope. Did He not say concerning these last days that "except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened"? Does Amway really think that **they** are or will be that vehicle by which the Lord will intervene? I perceive great yet subtle error with Amway.

Jesus also said that "as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Are Amway people the chosen or elect of God simply because they are Amway?

Many of those people were also "set for life," not knowing that they were set for death instead. Many of them were out preaching "the good life," "sponsoring," building, vacationing, retiring, doing all those things that the worldly-minded are wont to do. Yes, the earth was filled with violence then. We picture brutality and murder in the physical, and there was such, but the word "violence" includes in its meaning "unjust gain" (Strong's Concordance). This paper will tell you that there is great violence in and by Amway and the Lord is not one bit pleased.

Amway is often touted by leaders and followers alike to be "recession-proof." Are Amway people the chosen or elect of God simply because they are Amway? Are they safe and secure from the judgment of God which comes upon the whole world in these last days because they are into networking?

Throughout the Bible, in both Old and New Testaments and throughout history since, God sent sword, famine, pestilence and wild beast for judgment of sin and wickedness. In the days of Noah, He destroyed almost every living thing (including sons of God), and He said that it would be in these last days as in the days of Noah, that there would be severe judgment. Are Amway people immune to God's judgment simply because they have an independent business, because they are free enterprisers, entrepreneurs?

Is it, as they say, that if they need more money, they can simply go out and work harder, sell more product or sponsor more people to duplicate themselves? Can they indeed "write their own pay cheque" as they declare?

What does James say to believers about this? "Go to now, you that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away. For that you ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now you rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil" (James 4:13,14).

Yes, all things in business relative and constant, Amway has certain significant advantages (as well as disadvantages) in comparison to other businesses and business methods or systems. But the Lord is Lord, and with Him, nothing but He remains constant...nothing...not even Amway.

And in this last day, even those things which have weathered centuries and even millennia of volatile and chaotic history, those greatest of institutions of this world, shall not only be shaken, but utterly cast down to rise no more. Their glory shall be taken away. It is time now, as in the past, for the big things to come down. It is time for the hills to be levelled and the valleys to be filled. It is a day of the humbling of the great things of this world, Amway included. Is not Amway great in this world? Who can question that it is?

Is this not tantamount to building an altar of worship to an idol?

Even Heaven itself is shaken in this last day, as the Hebrews writer says, "See that you refuse not Him that speaks. For if they escaped not who refused him that spoke on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaks from Heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now He has promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only but also Heaven. And this word, 'Yet once more', signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain" (Hebrews 12:26,27).

"Amway" is short for "The American Way," the way of democracy and free enterprise and presumably "God-fearing." Surely who can argue that democracy and free enterprise are not better, at least in some ways, than communism or socialism or so many

other "isms"? The proof is in the pudding. If we compare certain aspects of our systems of government and business to that of some other systems, we shine.

But let me add some perspective. Much of our capitalism has been very ungodly, selfish and has hurt many, socially, economically, politically, environmentally, spiritually. Whether it be people in the "third world" who have labored for cheap wages, or distributors in Amway, exploited by the stronger, democratic "free enterprisers," our systems are not **the** answer, as DeVos would have us to believe.

Why is a system paid homage to? Why is an edifice built to free enterprise as Amway has done? Is this not tantamount to building an altar of worship to an idol? What is the difference? Because they don't literally call it a god, is it therefore not a god and their worship of it not idolatry? Why is it that free enterprise is preached? Is that what John or Jesus or any of His disciples preached?

For the year I was in Amway until the Lord took me out, I not only made nothing but it cost me (not that I should expect a profit in my first year or two). Then I discovered that many others who had talked me into Amway and who had promised me so much wealth and who purposely exhibited the impression that they were financially successful, had made absolutely nothing either. Many a direct distributor (not just distributors), many of them in the business for years, had dropped out, having worked hard, late into many evenings holding product demonstrations, selling, recruiting, helping recruits, going to rallies and conferences, etc., finally packing it in.

I am told that out of 3 million distributors presently in Amway (besides the millions that have come and gone and are now forgotten since the beginning of Amway in 1959), only about a fifth of them make money. Steve Butterfield, in his book *Amway: The Cult of Free Enterprise* (published by Black Rose Books, Buffalo\Montreal), suggests that 97% of distributors make no money. From my experience, I would be inclined to believe Mr. Butterfield. And of course the law of nature is such that some make, some don't, some make more and others less. No problem.

In its rise to power and success, Amway has strewn its path with many a corpse.

But the problem I do find is that there has been a lot of intensive effort on the part of many who have nothing to show for it despite being promised the sun and stars "if they only work hard or smart enough." You and I have seen countless numbers work far less and earn far more at other occupations without all the hype and promise. Through it all, Amway prospered but the workers did not.

So then what happened with the drop-outs? "They were lazy, or didn't work hard enough," we were told, or, "they maybe worked hard but they didn't work smart," or, "they didn't help their downlines as they should have," or, "they didn't go to enough seminars and rallies," or, "they didn't apply the right formula," or any number of other reasons. It is **never**, I repeat, **never** Amway's fault.

I tell you this day that in its rise to power and success and glory, I perceive that Amway has strewn its path with many a corpse. These corpses are people who have suffered financially,

socially, psychologically and spiritually, traumatized with guilt, with a "loser-complex." I wonder if any other company has had such a great number of casualties as has Amway. It is highly doubtful.

Violence! Amway, your judgment comes and does not linger. And your judgment is more severe than that of many others because you use the Name of the Lord and pretence to get gain.

There is no allowance made for the dropout in Amway. There is no good reason or excuse for him. He is a loser. He lacked vision, he was negative or lazy, he didn't attend enough rallies, he wasn't committed, he didn't have enthusiasm, he didn't catch the vision, he didn't "let Amway get into him." Worst of all, if he had the capabilities and still quit, he had no regard for those he left behind. He was selfish and irresponsible.

I hate to think of the mental burdens so many people have carried away with them after spending years of hard work and high hopes in Amway. I was only there for less than a year and it impacted me to some extent. Frankly, it occurs to me that this paper might be used to help a few souls get de-programmed, consoled, healed, made free. Truth and truth alone makes free.

When in Amway, I was led to think that there was really no excuse or good reason for anyone to not be an Amway distributor. "Who," I thought, "could be so stupid as to not see the wonderful opportunity in Amway afforded to all walks of life?" There was no room for plumbers or carpenters or rocket scientists or doctors or sales clerks or garbage collectors or welders or farmers. They should all be in Amway and sooner or later should leave what they are doing and go Amway all the way.

I saw many an unhappy child in Amway.

There was also no room for the weak-minded or the dull or the unenergetic. It reminds me of the movie *Logan's Run* where all of humanity was ultimately underground, worshipping and controlled by a computer, leaving the sun, greenery and weather behind forever, robbed of all things natural and once normal. The aged and infirm had all been eliminated.

There are some prevalent myths concerning Amway and I will mention only a few here. The job of debunking these myths was done quite capably by Steve Butterfield in his insightful and discriminating book mentioned earlier.

One of these myths was "having time for family." I recall that distributors were urged to "show the plan" as often as was possible, that the law of averages was on their side the more often they showed the plan to prospects and helped new recruits to do the same.

Now when one shows the plan, it is obviously not advisable to have children interrupting. I constantly saw children left at home or with babysitters so that **both** parents conducted their business, often in the evenings when others were available from work to be free to listen and participate. Understandable.

I and many other Amway distributors, especially directs, spent a lot of time, energy and money organizing and attending rallies and conferences. To many of these, children simply did not come. Extra seats on planes and rooms in motels and hotels were costly (tax-deductible or not), children were distracting or had to go to school (rallies couldn't wait for the summer holidays), etc. Often they didn't attend even if the rally was in their home town.

So with children at school during the day and the parents busy at night, where is the family time? It was the hope of some distributors that once they had built their business to the size they wanted, they could give their children that quality family time that was promised. It never happened. I saw many an unhappy child in Amway. More accurately put, their parents were in Amway and the children were out of it. Nor was their unhappiness because they weren't in Amway but because their parents were.

Friends of ours had a ten-year old daughter who said to them, "You love Amway more than you love me." We saw her in about six years time utterly rebelling against them. She had never been given that attention she needed. Nine years later, we heard that she was a drug addict with drug babies which her parents had to take care of in their old age because the daughter, in her mid-twenties, was running around with the men, often attracting the police to her parents' home at all hours of the night. After years of enthusiasm and work, as Ruby directs, these people dropped it all. What a legacy of Amway!

Amway says, "Family first." Sounds noble, but
God wants God first.

Certainly one may argue that it wasn't necessarily Amway's fault. There are always many factors and nothing is so "cut and dry." My point is that I saw many families neglected rather than nurtured, according to the promise implicit and explicit, while parents were "building the business." The fact too is that Amway promotes the idea that it is a "couple's business" so that both mother and father must be involved, leaving no parent with the children.

But what if there was family unity? So what? Does that make Amway morally and spiritually viable, acceptable to God? Many evangelicals in Amway consider the Mormons to be a cult yet Mormons promote family, and their lifestyle, eating habits included, seems to be giving them longevity of life. The same holds true for Seventh Day Adventists. The Orientals, though Buddhists and of other eastern religions, honor their elderly, taking care of them in their own homes to the grave, which is more than can be said for what is often the case in Western culture. Nor have many of these in the east had democracy or free enterprise. So must one worship Amway and free enterprise or be Chinese or Buddhist or Mormon for these things?

Amway says, "Family first." Sounds noble, but God wants God first. Jesus said, "Don't think that I've come to send peace on earth: I didn't come to send peace, but a sword. For I've come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that doesn't take his cross, and follow after Me, is not worthy of Me" (Matthew 11:34-38). It is a false doctrine to suggest that Jesus preached family unity. He never did.

The Lord says, "He that finds his life shall lose it, and he that loses his life for My sake shall find it" (Mt. 11:39). But Amway says, very boldly, very brashly, "Find your life! Get a life! Think of yourself, your future, your family and their future! He that doesn't provide for his house is an infidel!" They take the Scriptures and interpret their meaning to suit their agenda but the interpretations are in direct contradiction to the meaning and purpose that the Lord intended.

Another myth is that Amway is so concerned and responsible about the environment. My wife and I and many other families have not used most commercial cleaning agents in our homes for years. If Amway was so interested in the environment and health of all, they would be teaching all to use baking soda, salt, vinegar, borax, lemon juice, washing soda, olive oil, rubbing alcohol, white flour and ammonia as cleaning and polishing agents instead of "compassionately capitalizing" on far more expensive and still relatively detrimental chemical cleaning and polishing agents.

"Ain't it great?!" was the oft-repeated expression among Amway people as they greeted one another with hearty handshakes and energetic smiles. The air was often electric and indeed it was exciting to be among Amway people. Make no mistake of that. I enjoyed myself, and to this day have not regretted the experience. In Amway, I came out of boredom, found hope I didn't have before, had something to live for (relatively speaking), met many friends, learned many things. I even suspect that in the sharing of the Lord by a few people while I was in Amway, I eventually came to know the Lord. Seeds were sown, I think, though I'm not sure. (More on that later.)

The spirit of goodwill was utterly void in the highest of distributors.

What about the unconditional satisfaction guarantee? I discovered the hard way that the satisfaction guarantee wasn't all it was promised to new distributors. Customers usually didn't have a problem but distributors did.

When becoming a direct, I was then brought into more inner circles and informed of some realities quite hidden from the general public. One of these was that we directs should "eat" the returns, sparing Amway Corp. the trouble, unless there was defect, in which case, it ought to be sent to Amway to alert them to problems. I found such to be curious and unsettling.

My directs were party to this, so were their Diamond directs and their Double Diamond directs above them, as well as directs running alongside, outside of our "leg." But when it came to packing in two to three thousand dollars worth of inventory because I was leaving the business (most of that inventory current), my directs would not accept it. And their Diamonds would not accept it though we all lived in the same city area.

I had to pack it and ship it from Winnipeg to Amway in London, Ontario fully discounted not only for PV but for handling, besides shipping. While it is therefore technically true that Amway does give a refund, in my case it came at considerable cost and I took a beating. The spirit of goodwill was utterly void in the highest of distributors. The hype was all sham when it was down to the wire. The reality behind the scenes was quite disconcerting. I did not complain, I did not think, I just took it on the chin and was gone, not because of virtue so much as ignorance.

The situation was not such because I had a bad personal relationship with any, at least not from my end. In fact, I truly thought I had some very good friends. But there certainly was a shadow cast upon us with my decision (not a light one) to leave.

Now "Why didn't they take my inventory?" is the question. Was it because they didn't have the money? That's very possible. Or was it because their inventory flow wasn't as good as they liked

me to think? Again, very possible. Or was it that their PV would be adversely affected for the month, leaving them with less discount on their total purchases? Most likely.

So where then is this "giving" and "helping" and "hand-up-ing"? I had become financially distressed and needed to make some changes very soon or declare personal bankruptcy, already in a position to do so. I needed help. I was not looking for a hand-out. I would have been so glad to receive a "hand-up" as I was so often reminded by all those above me that Amway distributors purportedly gave to others.

If there was ever a conditional love, it is that of Amway.

I discovered as I do now declare in this writing, that the "hand-ups" were there only if to my pockets; the hand-uppers were instantly given opportunity to be "hand-inners." There was no true giving whatsoever, not by any, all the way up the line to Amway Corp itself. Clearly, the system is set up to profit and there is no provision made for the down-and-outer. The code of ethics is preached for profit, without mercy. Ain't it great!

That there is true love in Amway is the greatest myth of all. Amway preaches love, love of God and love of neighbor. I know their love. I have experienced it for myself, witnessed it showered on many others, have heard of it from yet others and I have read Steve Butterfield's book which describes very accurately and eloquently the love of Amway in another section of Amway from the one I was involved in. The two are identical and confirm what I saw and do declare, not that I need confirmation. I dare say that what I speak of is universal in Amway and people in any part of Amway as distributors will be able to identify, by the grace of God.

It is a selfish love, a greedy love, a self-serving love, which of course, is not true love. "I love you, you listen to me, believe me, do as I say, produce and you will continue in my love. Otherwise I'll have nothing more to do with you than I absolutely have to. If you can't see a golden opportunity when it stares you in the face, you are a loser and I don't company with losers because I am a winner. Eagles don't hang out with turkeys."

If there was ever a conditional love, it is that of Amway. I gave up my friends and family for Amway, being taught to part company with them if they didn't "believe" in Amway's marvellous opportunity lest they should dampen my spirit, hold me back, be a negative influence on me. It was Amway or the highway. It is "I AM way." If there was no money in it for Amway, there was no allowance, no mercy, no understanding, no tolerance, no patience, only contempt, howbeit contempt with a forced "I AM way" smile.

The trigger to writing this paper was a new neighbor arranging to show us how to "set up an independent wholesale\retail business and make \$50,000 a year part-time." I asked him if it was Amway and he hesitantly acknowledged that it was. I thought, "No, I've been there," but I also thought, "Perhaps I need to keep an open mind, listen to what he has to say, maybe things have changed over the many years and maybe it's time to do something here." (It was time to do something after all, after 27 years, but I didn't realize it was this paper.)

Amway is a church, and they have made the house of God a den of thieves.

He spoke glowingly about principles, ethics, love, God, family, doing right, etc. They had their meeting with us and we listened. He got back a week later to see where we were at. We had talked of Biblical matters before but when we got to speaking of Biblical matters that last evening, he surprisingly and abruptly became angry and stomped out, cancelling everything that had been planned for the future between us. When asked, "What did we say to upset you?" the only thing he would say was, "Leave it to\with me." The only things we could tell were:

- 1) that we were not panning out as a prospect as he had hoped,
- 2) we spoke of the Lord and quoted Scripture, and
- 3) perhaps most importantly, we told him that we did not go to church anywhere, yet we spoke of the Lord and quoted the Bible. "Churchgo-ers" have a hard time with that. "How dare you talk about God without going to church! Just who do you think you are?! You're a cult of some kind, aren't you? I'm out of here right now!" He did say, "You're full of it," and refused to hear us out or listen to any Scripture that might shed light on what we were saying and why. "You can make the Bible say anything," he said, as if anything we read from the Bible had no valid interpretation by us whatsoever and that only his church had it all right.

This is an unusual and bizarre case in the extreme reaction, but the common message and the similarities are there, namely that though many churchgo-ers will not accept your speech of God while you are outside the religious system (those without the mark of the beast are not allowed to buy nor sell), you can talk of God while in some church or in Amway. The two are one; Amway is a church, a religious system, make no mistake of that, and they have made the house of God a den of thieves.

More accurately, they have made a den of thieves to parade as, or to be intimate with, the house of God, for mammon's sake. Because men are religious, they think to believe in and to please God. But there is great difference between religiosity and true faith, between religion and reality. In fact, the two are diametrically opposed to each other, the one being CHRIST-ian, the other ANTI-CHRIST-ian. ("Anti" does not mean "against" so much as "instead of.") "In vain do they worship Me with their lips but their hearts are far from Me," said Jesus.

My question was "Is this love the kind Amway teaches or is it the kind churches teach?" My answer is that both teach this love. It is a conditional love. It is self-righteousness in full strength. It is the love of this world, Satan's love which appears good and which men savor.

Amway propagates a counterfeit love over the earth.

"Believe as we do or we hate you, though we may insist otherwise and dutifully, condescendingly show ourselves friendly." It is a separatistic love, not based on the difference between good and evil, right and wrong, but on perceived quality of character and personality,

on goals, on one's response to the other's doctrine, methodology, philosophy, or aspirations. No room for the weak or the poor or the stranger here unless these allow the knight from Amway Castle to transform them through SA8 and PV.

Yes, "birds of a feather flock together;" yes, we company with those of like interests; but if interests are amoral, must there be a despising of those with differences, except where it might pay to be friendly? This is not love but the opposite. It is diabolical, the savorings of men and an offence to God Who is Love.

Amway propagates a counterfeit love over the earth as some invasive alien creature posing as a benefactor, laying eggs in secret places, impregnating people themselves, only to take over human beings and transform them into zombie-like creatures of its own kind, claiming to be from God, yet totally opposed to what God intends for mankind.

But what is the big deal? What is the charge? Why should I single out Amway? Are they as bad as, or any worse than the multitudes of other business organizations out there? Worse. Without a doubt.

The essence of the problem is that there is a mixture, an unholy mixture called a holy one. Most businesses don't have that, and will even take credit for their evils. Though they may make pretence, they do not take upon themselves the Name of the Lord in vain to do so. That is the heinous difference.

Among other things, Amway is deceitful above many. "Whatever you do, when you go sponsoring, don't tell them it's Amway; don't tell them it's selling soap; don't tell them it's selling period." Whether spoken or otherwise, apprentices are told to be evasive, cagey, deceptive. They are taught to play hard to get.

"Well, my appointment book is filled right up for two weeks (looking at an empty one). How about two weeks from tomorrow?" When asked what they do, a typical answer is (in concentrated form), "I set up independent, part-time, wholesale businesses to be worked out of the home with no investment necessary." My, how important sounding!

One soon learns, if having gotten involved, that there is no independence, "part-time" is often short-lived or mythical altogether, "out of the home" means one is seldom home, and indeed the investment becomes substantial, **not only** in money, but in commitment, energy, time, sleep, freedom, private life, other activities, social and family relationships.

Amway delivers the very opposite of that which it promises.

Amway lies. They call it discretion, wisdom, tact, practicality, anything but the truth, a lie.

Amway is deceitful. When trying to impress distributor candidates, Amway leaders often quote their own PV cheques or that of others. "So-and-so's cheque from Amway last month was \$2800. Not bad for part time, eh? Ain't it great?" What they don't tell you is that the month before, it was only \$700 and this month it was or will be \$900.

They make it sound like a steady, consistently increasing income which is usually not the case. As importantly, they do not tell you that at least half and as much as all, yes, all of that

paycheque may have to be paid out to distributors below for their PV. After all, it was their volume that got that paycheque coming in the first place.

But they quite often appropriately fail to disclose that matter or they do so with muffled, casual tones in an insincere attempt to "be open and honest," much like the function of very fine print in advertisements. After all, "Big" and "Lots" speak loudly. Who cares what "Profitless" has to say? Amway delivers the very opposite of that which it promises. Amway lies.

Amway is deceitful. "Never let anyone know if you're having a bad day. Frowners never win and smilers never lose. They don't need to know your troubles. Be enthusiastic, cheerful, positive; be an example; display success. Remember the boy who goes by the graveyard on his way home at night, terrified. He starts to whistle as though he isn't afraid, and pretty soon he isn't afraid and he's home safe and sound. Dress in your best, no matter what you are doing or where you are going. You may run into a prospect who eventually turns Diamond for you. And don't tell people what you're making or how many distributors you have. It's none of their business." (That may be true, but why promise prospects so much more than what you are able to do yourself?)

No room for reality, for honesty, for revealing your humanity. Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb but if it was up to a Direct, he would have said, "Ain't it great?" If I have learned anything, it is that people are at times encouraged in their spiritual walk to see me weak and human and honest about it, rather than witnessing some spiritual giant to whom they cannot relate.

They think their righteousness comes by the outward acts and appearances.

I recall my directs once going through a very difficult time. They lost a newborn baby. She bared her heart for a short time with me. Though I was clued out, young, single, so insensitive, and not a believer at the time, their honesty and reality spoke to me far more than all their hype and "enthusiasm" ever did or could. I would have done more for them then than ever. Amway can only think of itself in its own image and has refused to be honest, and that, in the name of integrity.

Now I must say something that will anger many (as though I haven't already). Over the years, we have been exposed to many different "Christian" groups and churches and I have had the strong, abiding impression that none are as utterly self-righteous as are the Dutch or Christian or Netherland Reform. Somehow they have a spirit of putrid self-righteousness that knows no doubt or shame.

Not every one of them is like that; I know some that don't seem that way, but generally speaking such has been the case. They see themselves as the "rightest" of all. They can't even stand **each other**. There are almost as many Reformed Reform churches as there are of anything ever formed and they are still Reforming. At the drop of a hat (a woman's hat perhaps), or with a wrong look, they split and build a new Reformed Church.

I have also seen that when any person or people place any emphasis on outward matters, self-righteousness and a judgmental spirit are automatic. The Reform people dress a certain way, keep their hair a certain way and function religiously in certain ways, apart from others. They call it holiness or right living. I call it filthy rags, used menstrual ones, that is.

They think their righteousness comes by the outward acts and appearances. If they smile or wave or say something about God to you, anything, they've done their duty and have demonstrated that they are the righteous ones and are guaranteed a place of honor in Heaven when the time comes. Theory, dress and Reform church membership are quite enough.

Who needs the righteousness of God, though they think that is what they have? I tell you, if any need reforming, it is the Reformed. If they are the fruit of the Reformation, may I make a radical suggestion? Let's reunite with the Catholic Church! I speak with tongue-in-cheek. At least Catholics, generally, aren't trying to be something they're not.

I believe it is God Who has sent me a Netherland Reform Amway distributor in these recent days to demonstrate the essence of Amway and provoke me to write this paper. Amway people (those very involved) are a self-righteous bunch indeed. Where did this start? In some "leg" of Amway? Did it creep in from the outside? No. It came from the original seed. It came from the top. It came from Reform people. It came from the founders of Amway.

They preach truths (not truth) as a means to the end of worldly profit.

In Amway, Mystery Babylon the Great is in all her fulness and glory. She is the Great Whore and Mother of harlots. She is a mixture, such an unholy one, appearing so beautiful, so powerful and wise. Truly, she is all these things and more, by the world's definitions.

But she takes that which is God's and merchandises those things for her own sake. So too do her children. They preach truths (not truth) as a means to the end of worldly profit. She, as the harlot, "loves," entices the unsuspecting, simple and lusting to partake with her, promising pleasures of all sorts...all the lusts of the flesh fulfilled. These things she does in the name of love, and attaches God's Name to it all.

One of the primary "gifts" Mystery gives her followers, clients, victims is power and recognition, the spotlight. Amway people, by virtue of persuading many to sell soap and to persuade others to do so, and by becoming noted for doing so, become counsellors, motivators and psychoanalysts to one and to all.

They become experts in business, public relations, marriage and family life, morals, Biblical principles, character-building, education, politics, economics, personal finances, public speaking, the environment, social behaviour, religion, you name it. With a Direct Distributor's pin or even less, they become all these things, and with a Diamond pin, they simply become more of what they have become.

Provided Amway gets the glory, they have full opportunity on stage and in many a living room to speak forth their glory and wisdom. PV has had more power to transform people into heroes and preachers and "prophets" than anything else I've ever witnessed.

God took 40 to 80 years to form and prepare Moses for his calling but Amway can do the job in far less time and expand on one's capabilities and qualifications far beyond what Moses had. Mystery Babylon has marvellous ways of inflating an ego to wondrous proportions. And it is all called, or comes under the banner of, "love." Truly, she is the harlot and the mother of harlots. She is manifest in Amway.

Mystery makes one to feel and to look good...very good, but the end, dear readers, leads to death itself. It is naught but a trap, a hideous one in which one loses all...finances, independence, security, family, self-respect, Godly values...all the very things Amway promises one will have in "the business." All these things perish even, if not especially, for the ones who apparently gained them all. One can be rich in this world and so very poor. Often the richest are the poorest. "How hard is it for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven!" It is one thing to forsake all for Christ. It is abomination to do so for mammon, for Amway or for any other person or thing. Such is idolatry.

The people in Amway who shared with me about the Lord were not consumed with Amway and are no longer in it (many of them having been Directs) but the people which were consumed with Amway, though professing to know the Lord or seeing themselves as serving God and doing good, did not much desire to speak to me about the Lord except where it would profit them in their conscience and image. I suspect some of those are still in Amway, "successfully."

Success in Amway is not what life is about at all...far from it.

There were others too who revelled in their success, drinking deep, saying it was God Who should get the glory and praise but it seems to me, in retrospect, that it was questionable as to whom they referred. Was it God the Creator as revealed in Jesus Christ or was it Mammon?

One fellow (a Diamond or so at the time) held Sunday services and after church would sponsor people into Amway! Giving people the old "hand-up" treatment. One night he was crossing the road from his home to his Amway office and warehouse and was struck and killed by a drunken driver. Accident? No.

Their sponsors, who paraded minks and jewelry at an Amway fashion show and luncheon, also tasted tragedy, the wife dying prematurely of disease. Happenstance? No.

I do not condemn these people. I do point out the fruits and that success in Amway is not what life is about at all...far from it. People, you may plan out your nest eggs, your retirement, your independence in this world but not your independence of God and of His righteousness.

God solemnly promised that none of these kinds of things would happen to those who believed and obeyed Him. Persecution? Yes. Martyrdom? Yes. Weariness, troubles, sorrows and sufferings of many sorts? Yes. But not accidental and miserable deaths by disease. Such are not the lot of faithful followers of the Lord.

Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." I see Amway serving mammon in the Name of God. I see many in Amway using God and goodness for gain.

They boast about giving people not a hand-out thereby humiliating them but rather a "hand-up" so that they can learn to help themselves. Fine. But I do not believe that true giving is with profit in mind. If one wishes to recruit and gain from it, fine, but don't bring God into the picture saying how great good has come by being in Amway and by giving.

One may or may not receive mammon while worshipping God but do not give people the impression that they will receive God by worshipping mammon. Amway preaches fulfilment through Amway, through economic independence. That is both heresy and blasphemy. It is a lie.

"Seek first the Kingdom of God; have faith; preach the Kingdom of God."

Fulfilment is never in externals. Jesus said that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of that which he possesses. The apostle Paul suffered the loss of all things for Christ. Was he unfulfilled? Where was HIS "nest egg"? I'll tell you where it was, along with his heart. It was in the Kingdom of Heaven, with the Lord whom he loved and served faithfully. His fulfillment was not of this world.

According to Amway, Jesus should have come sponsoring people (perhaps particularly the poor) into a capitalistic organization "full of compassion," teaching them all how to run an independent business out of their homes, reaching out to the whole world through a business vehicle. Instead, He called upon people to lay down their lives, literally lose them in many cases, to be hated and persecuted by the world.

Their first message was not, "Hey! We can get you financial independence and freedom; we can get you a wonderful home and car and vacations and early retirement; we can get you family harmony and unity." But what was the message? "Seek first the Kingdom of God; have faith; preach the Kingdom of God; preach the gospel; forsake all, deny yourself; take up the cross; die; forsake family, possessions, ambitions and, you'll know the truth and the truth will make you free, and when the Son of man makes you free, you will be free indeed!"

The rich young ruler could well have been a Triple Diamond Direct who was teaching many to have their financial independence. He kept the law from his youth, he said. He had his own righteousness which is by the law. Was he involved in "compassionate capitalism" or did he fall short of the glory of and acceptance with God because he did not have a networking business to share with others? Did he fail because he did not have a myriad of quality products for home and personal care to sell to others and which he could sponsor them to sell?

What an emphasis Amway places upon putting away a nest egg for the future! But what did the Lord tell the rich young ruler to do? "One thing you lack: Go, sell all that you have and give it to the poor, and you'll have treasure in Heaven..." I think that Amway preaches the very opposite. "Don't help the poor so that you'll have treasure in Heaven, forsaking any opportunity to have treasure on earth. Rather, help the poor so that you can prosper here and now, in this world. Opportunity knocks. Profits from recruiting and residual sales are your way to easy living."

Speaking of easy living: Though Amway devotees declare with their mouths the truth that there is no such thing as a free lunch or that Amway is not a get-rich-quick scheme, yet there is that constant message of getting something for nothing. They tell you of how once you get the business going, you can holiday anywhere you please for as long as you please.

Look up what God is saying to such people in

Luke 12:20.

They tell you that your tax burden will be so much lighter because even your daily living expenses and pleasures can be written off as business expense. They tell you that direct labor is the poor and foolish man's way of eking out a livelihood. The carrot of financial freedom and happiness is ever dangled and pursued, make no mistake. Sadly, many in pursuit of something for nothing have gotten nothing for something. And the something many got turned to dust in their hands when they got it. Gaining the world and losing the soul. Isn't that the way the laws of God work?

Jesus spoke of a man who concentrated on his nest egg. This man's granaries were full so that he had no more room to store his abundance. Talk about financial freedom! (Or is it bondage)?

He said, "I'll tear down the old granaries and build bigger ones wherein I can store it all. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have much goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry." Look up what God is saying to such people in Luke 12:20. In case that "bug" of leisure life or independence has bitten you too hard, here is what the Lord said: "You fool, this night your soul shall be required of you: then whose shall those things be, which you have provided?" No, he may not have been helping others but he may have been more innocent than those in Amway in that he was not serving to destroy and to rob as many either.

Amway says, "Work hard, sacrifice and you'll get there. Find out the secrets of recruiting from your uplines...they know how to do it." But God says, "...the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; but time and chance happens to them all."

David once said, "I was once young and now I am old, and I have yet to see the righteous forsaken or his seed begging bread" (Amway or no Amway, I might add).

Oh yes, the argument of those who justify themselves before men is repeated over and over. It goes like this: "It is not money but the LOVE of money that is the root of all evil." A truth is used defensively by those who have deceived themselves by the deceitfulness of riches into thinking that they do not love money. But dear reader, how is it that all those things that money buys are ever promised and preached and calculated and emphasized and shamelessly displayed in the Amway business, right from the start?

While the one side preaches to take stock of one's financial future, the other side speaks on this wise: "Take no thought as to what you'll eat or drink or wear (for after all these things do the Gentiles (unbelievers) seek), for your Heavenly Father knows you have need of all these things."

Jesus also said, "Take therefore no thought for tomorrow: for tomorrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof."

**Beware, you who think Amway is the answer.
"No man can serve two masters."**

Amway says, "Lay up treasures on earth and help others to do the same. Here's how!" The Gentiles (unbelievers) seek these things and readily embrace such a message. But what does the Lord say? "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust do corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust do corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Amway people truly think that they are enlightened beyond the rest of the world. They can't understand why so many people are so dull, so obtuse, so "negative." And truly, there are many of those kinds of people. Aren't we all dull and negative, at one time or another, in certain varied ways? The Lord quoted Isaiah as having prophesied so.

But beware, you who think that Amway is the answer. "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore your eye be single, your whole body shall be full of light. But if your eye be evil, your whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters..."

I see in Amway the attempt of the impossible to the detriment of many...serving two masters. Truly, only one can and is served. In Amway, it is not the Lord God.

It is often heard said in Amway that "you will not get into Amway until Amway gets into you." Indeed, often there is reference to the spirit of Amway. There is such a spirit. When, in zeal, one gives himself or herself totally to Amway (or anything for that matter), he enters into a spiritual territory not of possessing, but of being possessed.

Because of giving one's self over, this unwitting idolatry gives Satan the license to send in a controlling spirit that takes over that person's mental and spiritual faculties. Some call it "selling one's soul to the Devil." This is not necessarily a conscious act; at least in most cases it isn't, but just as real and evil.

**A man's life does not consist in the abundance
of that which he possesses.**

One of that spirit's favorite expressions is "Ain't it great!" Trying to talk to such a one at that point, in terms contrary in any wise to Amway, is quite fruitless and hopeless. One only stirs up in such a victim disgust, indignation, condescension, "pity," cynicism, scorn, fear, resentment and the like. Then only the Lord Jesus Christ can deliver, with repentance.

I say to you, dear reader, that there are many such people in precisely that need in Amway. Some of these are "successful" outwardly (Satan does bestow temporal reward, being the prince of this world). But they are inwardly sad and empty, never satisfied, though adamantly insisting otherwise, saying, in the spirit of Amway, covetously, to deceive and to snare, "Ain't it great!" That spirit is also a contagious one but one must give him or herself to it willingly, wholeheartedly, to catch it.

Dear reader, the truth is what makes one free. If you will only become honest with yourself, others and with God, you are on your way to deliverance and restoration. Do not continue to entertain hopes that somehow you can achieve enough in Amway to make you happy. It simply is not true.

A man's life, said Jesus, does not consist in the abundance of that which he possesses. There simply is no such thing as fulfilment in this world or in what it has to offer. It is an unbreakable, irrevocable, undeniable law. Believe Jesus and believe the Bible. He alone gave up all for you so that you would be delivered from just the sort of bondage you find yourself in right now. He alone is worthy of your worship. He will never leave nor forsake you. He IS security itself and everything else you may need or desire.

In Him only is there perfect escape from both death and taxes. Concerning death, He promised, saying, "I am the Resurrection and the Life...whosoever lives and believes in Me shall never die (John 11:25,26). Concerning taxes, when collectors confronted Peter on paying taxes, the Lord sent him to catch a fish which, He said, would have a gold coin in its mouth. With that coin, Peter was to pay the taxes for both the Lord and himself (Mt.17:24-27). Peter obeyed; the taxes were paid, even though the taxes weren't really forthcoming. The Lord preserves and provides.

When Amway and America are gone, the Lord will still be there.

As a non-Christian, I said, "God has sent Rich DeVos and Jay Van Andel to earth to show the world how business should be done," not understanding what I was witnessing. I would now have to say that God has been mixed with business for mammon's sake. Therefore is the wrath of God to be poured out upon Amway.

I do not say nor do I believe that Rich and Jay or any others set out deliberately to deceive and to make merchandise of people (it may be so), but I do say that these kinds of things slowly creep in without notice as we set out in pursuit of the things of this world. The Bible speaks of the deceitfulness of riches and of how our hearts end up where our treasures are.

I would that God would grant all mercy and repentance for His glory and all of our good. I warn all who value their souls and who would please God, rather than themselves and man, to repent, and to put their trust in the Lord for their needs both present and future. When Amway and America, after which Amway is named, are gone, the Lord will still be there. And He is, as He promised, sufficient for all things.

Victor Hafichuk

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