

# HARPER'S

M A G A Z I N E

AUGUST 2005



COURTESY THE ARTIST

"Irving Pointing to God," a photograph by William Lamson, whose work was exhibited last month at Pierogi Gallery, in Brooklyn.

[Revelation]

## JUDGMENT DAY

From an email sent on May 10 by Ted Haggard, the pastor of New Life Church, to members and supporters of the church. Soon after the email was sent, members of the church were featured on NBC's Dateline and an ABC special with Barbara Walters.

I wanted you to see this email about some upcoming media attention so you can help me. Why? Because it indicates the importance of all of our doing a good job. The Lord has sovereignly placed all of us, as a congregation, in a position where we are representing born-again, Bible-believing Christians to groups outside our normal spheres of influence. Here are a few tips:

1. If a camera is on you during a worship service, worship; don't dance, jump, etc. Secular people watching TV are touched by authentic worship, but jumping and dancing in church looks too bizarre for most to relate to. Remember, people watching TV news are not experiencing what you are experiencing. They are watching and thinking. Worship indicates sincerity, dancing and jumping looks like excessive emotionalism.

2. If reporters want to interview you, talk with them, but use words that make sense to them. Speak their language. Don't talk about the devil, demons, voices speaking to you, God giving you supernatural revelations, etc. Instead, tell your personal story in common-sense language. (I was a drunk but God changed me and now I'm sober, I'm grateful, etc.)

3. Don't be nervous. Be friendly and open. Reporters typically don't have an agenda, they authentically want to know what we do and why we do it. For example, Barbara Walters is working on a story about heaven and will interview me and get some supporting shots from the church. She might not use any of it, but she wants to put together an interesting story. Since we believe in heaven, we are, in fact, a good source. So, if she talks with you, don't be spooky or weird. Don't switch into a glassy-eyed heavenly mode, just answer, "Heaven is real. It's the place where God will be fully present with his people. He will reward people in heaven. Heaven is better than Colorado Springs." Say it straight and clear. Don't worry. (Yeah, sure!)

Saints, I need your strength. I would love to see you all on Sunday so we can just have a wonderful family time together. I LOVE you! And I love being your pastor.