

ART *for* GOD[®]

Stephen S. Sawyer



"Worshipping a God whose greatest accomplishments ended 2000 years ago belittles God and the religions created to serve him. You must see Jesus alive today breaking traditions and challenging dogmatic truths as he has always done to liberate us from our ever enlightened comfort zones of false humility, faithless worship and artificial service to others in His name"

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God can't always get a biblical scholar to take the same chances to reveal truth as he can a normal man like Stephen. Being committed to living an honest life that is reflected and conveyed, as spiritual truth, in his paintings drives Stephen like a man possessed. "Possession is nine-tenths of the law." Stephen laughed. "I gave my life to God. He is mine and I am His."

Using the word 'contemporary' may actually belittle what has been accomplished through Stephen's work. There is a prophetic awareness of where the body of Christ is going in his work that is unlikely matched by another brush.

The "New Thing" that has been proclaimed from the pulpits for years *is* here although it doesn't look the way some thought it would nor think it should. Nevertheless, it is here and Stephen is part of it and in fact is leading the way when it comes to Christian art.

Ongoing publicity about Stephen's work is growing and reaching an international level. Thousands of people recognize what is seen on his canvases and in his words contains vast amounts of simple truths that were taught and lived by Jesus of Nazareth.

Stephen is giving the voice of God a face.



For church and conference speaking engagements, to schedule an interview or related subject please contact:
Barbara Zimmerman, ART *for* GOD Publicity and Promotion / Telephone: 859-873-0120 / E-mail: PR@art4god.com

For fund-raising assistance or to be part of the FIELD REP program please contact:
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The New York Times

LARGE TYPE WEEKLY

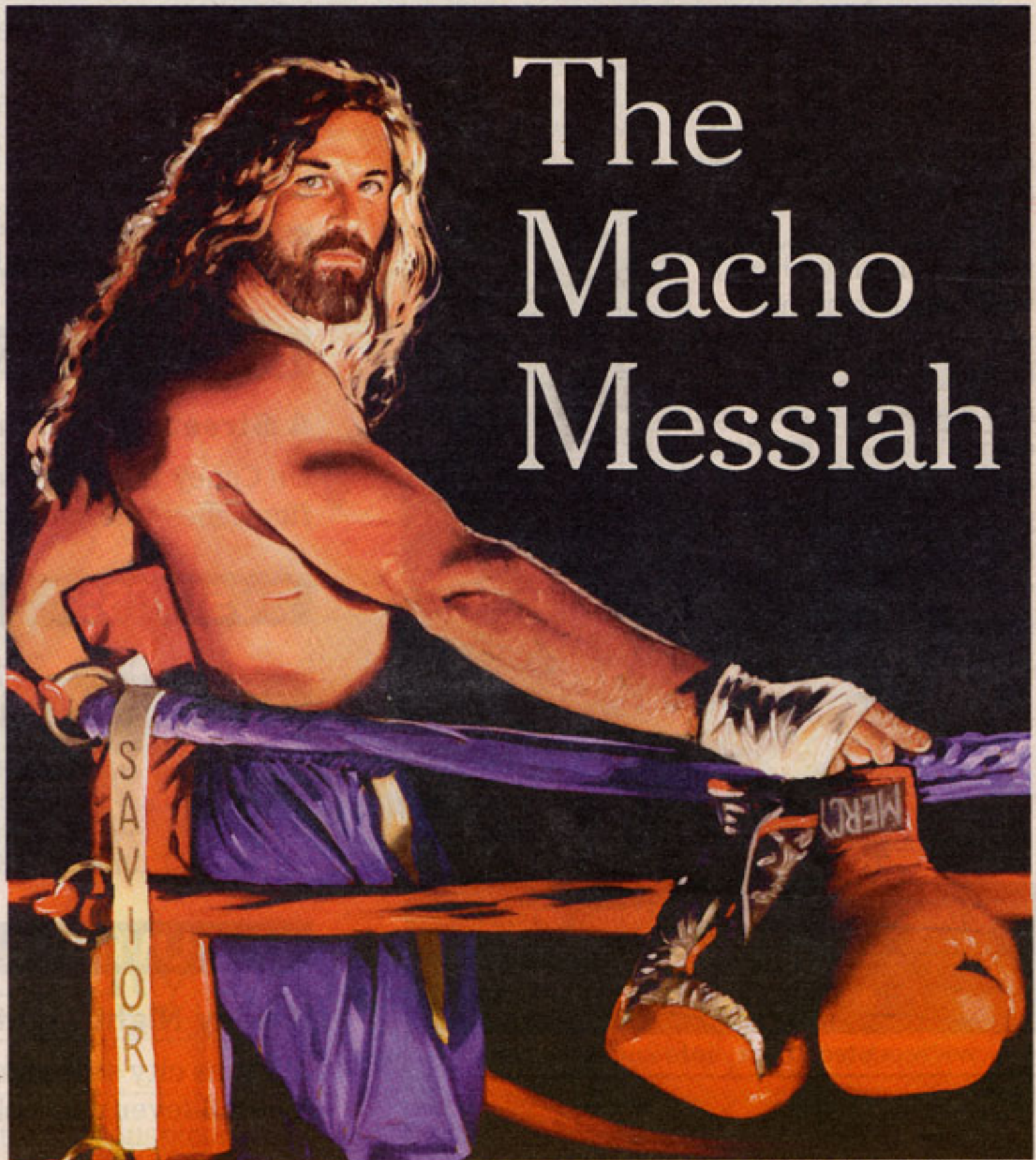
APRIL 5-11, 2004 \$3.00

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Religion
And Politics
Combine
To Alter
The Image
Of Jesus **10**

“Undefeated,”
a portrait of
Jesus Christ
in oil on canvas
by Stephen S.
Sawyer.



Stephen S. Sawyer/Art for God

Soldiers for Hire Finding
Plenty of Action in Iraq **3**

Help for People Whose Illness
Is Thinking They Are Ill **20**

REVIEW / Books

What Would Jesus Say?

AMERICAN JESUS

By Stephen Prothero

(FARRAR, STRAUS, GIROUX, 364 PAGES, \$25)

By DAVE SHIFLETT



THE ANNUAL plea to put more Christ in Christmas now rings from pulpits and select cable channels, and perhaps from religious paraphernalia merchants as well. A bit more holiday traditionalism couldn't hurt, especially since this

year's Hollywood version of Santa Claus is something of a drunk lecher, and skinny to boot. There's also the special joy of infuriating the nation's crèche strafers, which is one of the season's more blessed and beatific gifts.

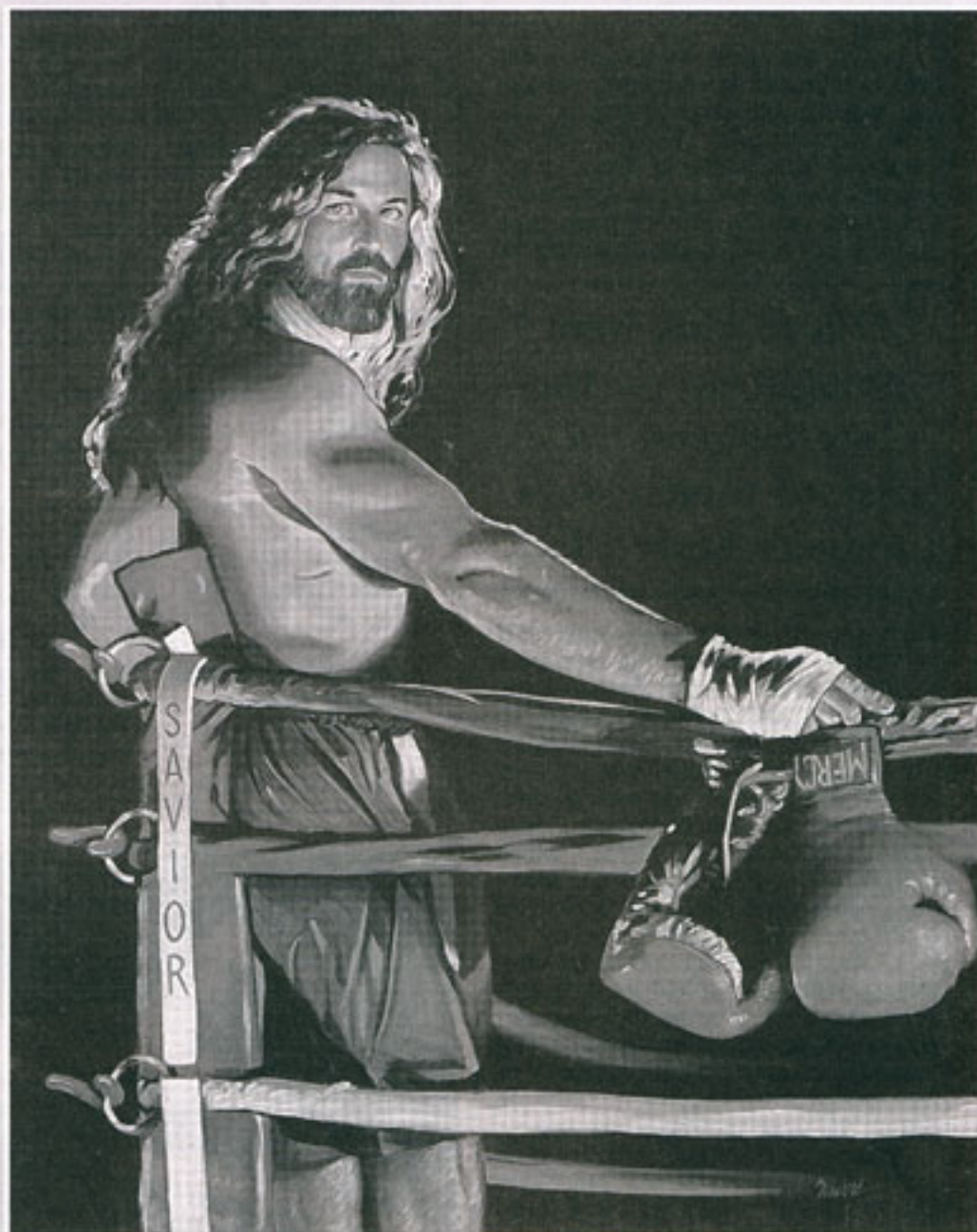
But as Stephen Prothero notes in "American Jesus; How the Son of God Became a National Icon," be careful what ye wish for. Jesus, Mr. Prothero reminds us, comes in many guises and tends to closely resemble his various advocates—be they meek or ferocious, capitalist or commie, celibate or libertine.

In the beginning, explains Mr. Prothero, who chairs the religion department at Boston University, Jesus was acknowledged by believers as the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. But he played a decidedly second harp to the First Person, and often to the Third. Jonathan Edwards did not thunder about sinners in the hands of an Angry Jesus, nor did early colonials go about wondering whether he would drive a four-horsepower coach or make do with a borrowed mule.

A Pair of Scissors

But as Americans shed King George III they were also in the process of turning away from the Stern Father and looking toward the more gentle and much more personal Son. Many began removing Jesus from his traditional New Testament trappings and in the process recast him in their own image. And they were greatly pleased.

Among the early makeover artists was Thomas Jefferson, who called Jesus "the first of Human sages" and famously lifted his "true sayings" from the New Testament with the help of a pair of scissors and a strong desire to rescue Jesus from St. Paul, among others. In our day the Jesus Seminar has attempted the same feat by voting on the supposed authenticity of this and that passage, which critics say merely reflects current theo-



novelist Walker Percy sniped that Mr. Barton had presented the Gospels "as a sort of primitive Dale Carnegie course," though perhaps envy was an additional source of irritation. "Barton's book topped the nonfiction best-seller list in 1925 and 1926 and has remained in print ever since," writes Mr. Prothero. Another ad man, graphic artist Warner Sallman, created the "Head Of Christ" in 1940 and also did quite well: 500 million copies had been produced by the turn of the century, making it "the most common religious image in the world."

Mr. Sallman's creation was not only highly valued by his bankers. It was, by design, a departure from then-popular "effeminate" portrayals of Christ that detractors said resembled a "bearded lady" and went hand in hand with preaching that over-em-

Detractors objected to effeminate portrayals that made Christ look like a bearded lady.

phasized meekness. Billy Sunday, the baseball star turned evangelist, harvested many a hosanna by attacking girly-man representations and the accompanying "gospel of gush": "Lord Save us from the off-handed, flabby cheeked, brittle-boned, weak-kneed, thin-skinned, pliable, plastic, spineless, effeminate, sissified, three-carat Christianity." His words would be echoed by black leaders and intellectuals, including Albert B. Cleage Jr. of the Black Christian Nationalist Movement, who preached that Jesus was nothing like the "weak little mamby-pamby white Jesus" portrayed in middle-class Sunday schools, blue eyes and all. Marcus Garvey also insisted Jesus was black, as did Malcolm X.

Jesus has even been embraced by a few Jewish rabbis (who enjoyed plenty of bad press for their efforts), Indian mystics and feminists—one of whom created a bare-breasted female JC who might have made Herod's sap rise. Writers of all types love him: The Library of Congress, says Mr. Prothero, has around 17,000 books about Jesus, twice as many as the next most popular historical figure, William Shakespeare. He has been made a front man for socialists, industrialists and the Klan—the latter produced an image of

logical passions, one of which holds that Jesus is just about as truly Divine as Bette Midler.

Jefferson accomplished the job with a much smaller outlay of time and expense-account money, getting the job done in two or three evenings after spending business hours running America. The "true sayings," he later explained, were "as easily distinguishable as diamonds in a dung-hill," and he appears to have found the results deeply persuasive. "I am a Christian," he wrote Benjamin Rush, "in the only sense in which he wished any one to be; sincerely attached to his doctrines in preference to all others; ascribing to himself every human excellence, and believing he never claimed any other."

While widely denounced as an atheist by preachers and political hacks alike, Jefferson begged to differ, explaining his

faith to Unitarian physics professor Benjamin Waterhouse as being composed of three elements, as summed up by Mr. Prothero: "1) That there is one God, and he is all perfect; 2) That there is a future state of rewards and punishments; 3) That to love God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself, is the sum of religion." Mr. Prothero concludes that these days Jefferson would find himself at the most conservative fringe of the Unitarian Church—a lonely place, to be sure.

Gush

One wonders how the great agrarian might react to some of Madison Avenue's various Christian-image makeovers. In 1925, for example, an advertising man named Bruce Barton wrote "The Man Nobody Knows," which cast Jesus as a successful businessman and athlete. The late

TROUT: Licenses to cost more
Page C1



MASTERS: Mickelson tied for lead
Page D1



EASTER: Find the eggs
Page F3

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This oil on canvas painting titled "The Warrior King" is by artist Stephen S. Sawyer. It shows a masculine Jesus in a boxing ring. It's part of Sawyer's **Undefeated** series.

ART4GOD.COM



Coming of the warrior Jesus

Easter sees growing popularity of more macho Messiah

By DAVID D. KIRKPATRICK
The New York Times

Writers and artists have been imagining the Second Coming of Jesus for almost 2,000 years, but few have portrayed him wreaking more carnage on the unbelieving world than Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins.

In their new apocalyptic novel, "Glorious Appearing," based on LaHaye's interpretation of Biblical prophecies about the Second Coming, their Jesus appears from the clouds on a white horse with a "conviction like a flame of fire" in his eyes. With all the gruesome

detail of a Hollywood horror movie, Jesus eviscerates the flesh of millions of unbelievers merely by speaking.

"Men and women soldiers and horses seemed to explode where they stood," LaHaye and Jenkins write. "It was as if the very words of the Lord had superheated their blood, causing it to burst through their veins and skin." The authors add, "Even as they struggled, their own flesh dissolved, their eyes melted and their tongues disintegrated."

LaHaye and Jenkins did not invent

fire and brimstone. But some scholars who study religion say that the phenomenal popularity of their "Left Behind" series of apocalyptic thrillers — now the best-selling adult novels in the United States — are part of a shift in American culture's image of Jesus. The gentle, pacifist Jesus of the Crucifixion is sharing the spotlight with a more muscular warrior Jesus of the Second Coming, the Lamb making way for the Lion.

Manly trend: Scholars who study religion in American culture say the trend

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Stephen S. Sawyer

God's Portrait Artist

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Stephen Sawyer

*Recent Newspaper/Magazine Articles and Interviews
about Stephen Sawyer's work.*

Tuscaloosa News (May 04), The Today Show 9 (April 7, 04)
Religion News Service (May 04), RTL European TV(April 04)
The Edmonton Journal (April 04), Chicago Tribune (April 04)
New York Times (April 4, 04), Salt Lake City Tribune (Feb 04),
Wall Street Journal (Dec 19, 03) Shepherd's Guide Cover 2003/04
Homelife Magazine (cover July 03)AP Wire, March 03 (twice)
The Christian Guide (cover June-Aug 2003)



USA Today 2003, Knoxville News Sentinel (2003)
National Examiner 2003, Sacramento Bee 2002

"Love it or Hate it...Artwork brings praise and criticism, but ultimately discussions about Christ." Atlanta Constitution /
"Show of Strength" The Lexington Herald Leader / "Painter's portraits of Jesus pack a punch" Houston Chronicle
"Faith inspires his masterpieces" The Tennessean / "Artist's work puts a different face on Jesus" The Fresno Bee
"ART for GOD, Artist Portrays different view of Jesus" Hilton Head, Island Packet

Fresno, CA / 1-29-00 / The Fresno Bee // La Crosse, WI / 1-22-00 / La Crosse Tribune // Columbus, OH / 1-11-00 / The Columbus Dispatch
Hilton Head SC / 1-22-00 / The Island Packet // Macon GA / 1-22-00 / The Telegraph // Fredericksburg, VA / 1-22-00 / The Free Lance-Star
Ft. Myers, FLA / 1-24-00 / The News-Press // Grand Forks, ND / 1-22-00 / Grand Forks Herald // Wilkes-Barre, PA / 1-29-00 / Times Leader
Savannah, GA / 2-5-00 / Savannah Morning News // Juneau, AK / 2-8-00 / Juneau Empire // St. Joseph, MO / 1-22-00 / St. Joseph News Press
Houston, TX / 2-12-00 / Houston Chronicle // Indianapolis, IN / 2-5-00 / The Indianapolis Star // Nashville, TN / 2-5-00 / The Tennessean
Portland, OR / 1-22-00 / The Oregonian // Hunstville, AL / 1-22-00 / The Hunstville times // Corpus Christi, TX / 1-22-00 / Caller-Times
South Bend, IN 1-21-00 / South Bend Tribune // Atlanta, GA / 1-29-00 / The Atlanta Constitution // Lexington, KY 1-15-00 / Herald Leader

Television/Radio Interviews with Stephen about ART for GOD

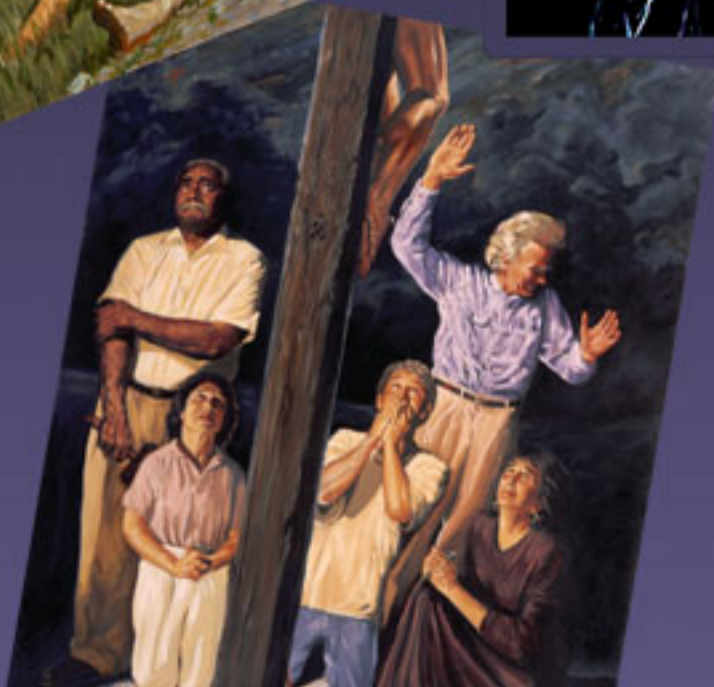
The Christophers Close-Up (June 2003), News12CT "Daytime Edition", News12NJ's "Daytime Edition", KTKZ-AM
Radio's "(Mary Jane) Poppoff TBS Profiles (June 2003), NBC EXTRA Good Friday 2003,
KPDO Portland, GoodNews Broadcast, XM Babylon Radio, WKES/WKZM Radio/Ruth Dinwiddie
Joey Reynolds Show National Radio, "The Karen Grant Show" (KSRK Radio), KFAX- Radio/Craig Roberts,
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Live the Life Radio with Dr. Tim Clinton, American Association of Christian Counselors - 225 radio stations
nationwide: UNI Radio, Dennis Crowley - 1,000 radio stations nationwide / 4.75 million listeners ...continuing list available



To inquire about a speaking engagement or interview contact: Barbara Zimmerman / PR@ART4GOD.com / 859-873-0120

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Luke 9:62 "No one having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God."