



Harold Camping

An Unrepentant False Prophet

by John S. Torell

On February 7, 2011, I decided to call Family Radio in Oakland, California, to ask if the radio network could be handed over to me as a minister, once Harold Camping and his staff had been taken off the earth because I wanted to be sure that the programming continued after May 21, 2011.

Harold and his staff have for several years been pushing very hard that this is the final day of this earth and it is the judgment day for all unbelievers when the Christians will be removed to heaven. Once the judgment is over, the earth will be destroyed and there will be a new creation.

This is not the first time Mr. Camping has predicted the end of the world but a third such prediction. He wrote a book in the early 1990's called "1994?" where he set the date for Jesus' return to September 6, 1994.

BACK TO 1992

When I heard that Harold Camping was teaching that Jesus would come back September 6, 1994, I decided to call Family Radio and speak to someone in management. I asked if it was indeed true that Mr. Camping was telling his listeners that Jesus would be coming back on September 6, 1994 and that this was the end of the world. The person confirmed it was true and that they were getting ready for it. I then asked, "Is it possible that Mr. Camping can sign over Family Radio to me as a pastor, so that I can take it over when Jesus comes?" The answer was a firm "NO."

I then asked, "Why do you ask for money to expand the network beyond September 6, 1994, if you are so sure that Jesus is coming back?" The person speaking with me said, "Not all of us here believe that Jesus is coming back on that date." I then asked, "Why isn't Mr. Camping removed from the station?" The answer was that this was the wish of many of the employees, but the Board of Directors was firmly in

the grip of Mr. Camping and no one could do anything. That was the end of my phone call.¹

Harold Camping was wrong and the staff was right, but he was not bashful and once his date of Jesus return had passed, he started to tell the listeners that he had made a mathematical error and set a new date in October. He explained that this was tied to one of the feasts in Israel, but once October had passed, Harold ignored the whole matter and hoped that people would forget about it as he continued droning on the "Open Forum" program. Here is what he said when Jesus did not return on the expected date and the subsequent predictions:

1. September 6, 1994 (Subsequently extended a few days, given the slight variations in the ancient calendars).
2. September 15, 1994, the Jewish Day of Atonement?
3. September 25, 1994, the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles?
4. October 4, 1994, the actual birthday of Jesus as calculated by Camping?
5. December 25, 1994, our traditional celebration of Christmas and Christ's incarnation and birth, based on the statement in Revelation 11:10 that the enemies of God's people would 'send gifts one to another?'
6. February 25, 1995, the Jewish feast of Purim?
7. May 3, 1996, when he was so sure of this date that he devoted several *Open Forum* programs to explain how the 'four watches' (alluded to

¹ Harold Camping: A Man with no Shame, John S. Torell, p.5
www.eaec.org/bibleanswers/Harold-Camping-A-Man-With-No-Shame.htm

in Mark 13:35) extended the date until September 6, 1994.

8. His current teaching, that September 6, 1994 was the right date after all, but it was for the beginning of the Great Tribulation, not Judgment Day. Simple arithmetic would put the return of the Lord no later than 2008.”

Very few people listening to Family Radio in 2010 remember all the fancy footwork that Mr. Camping did in 1994. He changed the dates of the return of Jesus eight times and finally settled on the year 2008, but this is not something he wants to remember or anybody else for that matter. The year 2008 came and went, and true to his arrogance, it didn't bother Camping that he was wrong yet again. Once a person has become a liar, it is easy to lie again, and so he set the new date of Jesus' return to May 21, 2011.²

I do not know if Christians are dumb or forgiving but Family Radio survived and everything was fine until Harold decided that it was time once again for Jesus to come back. For a complete background please see my article “Harold Camping: A Man with no Shame.”



Picture from Family Radio's website

INFORMATON ABOUT FAMILY RADIO

I have been contacted by people knowledgeable of the inner workings of Family Radio. Through e-mail and telephone calls, I learned that even though Family Radio is a non-profit religious corporation, registered with the State of California and the IRS, **its membership is unique in that the only members are those who are members of the Board of**

Directors. The Board of Directors consists of three people: Harold Camping as the president, William Thornton, who is the supervisor of Family Radio printing department and another staff member. There are no elections since there are no non-director members even though the State of California requires that the membership elect annual board members. No one has successfully challenged Mr. Camping on this issue and thus he is illegally holding the office as president and has made himself in effect an individual proprietor.

The biggest irony is that the person who controls all aspects of Family Radio's legal right to own and control its 50 to 60 radio stations lives in Sacramento. Her name is Peggy Renschler. She was Carl Auel's personal secretary when he managed KEBR. She is the one-and-only authorized person before the Federal Communications Commission (of course under Camping's signature) to determine the future destiny of the LEGAL (not financial, but legal) right of the chain of stations to operate.

I consulted with the founder of Family Stations, Inc., the man who wrote the Articles of Incorporation, Richard H. Palmquist, who told me, “No one has successfully challenged Mr. Camping on this issue, though several have tried. Mr. Camping inappropriately holds the office of President of a corporation, when in fact Family Stations, Inc., has become, in effect, a de facto extension of Harold Camping's person. Mr. Camping's authority over the corporate structure has the effect of the corporation's assets being so completely under Mr. Camping's control that the radio stations, the equipment, the entire work of Family Stations, Inc., is controlled by Mr. Camping in the same manner as it would be controlled if it were Mr. Camping's personal property. This one-man structuring would be legal for a business entity, as such corporations require only one member. However, non-profit tax exempt corporations must include accountability to a membership.”

He is absolutely ruthless when it comes to the people working under him, and any person who questions him or opposes him is fired on the spot. People working at Family Radio are constantly afraid of losing their jobs and so Harold Camping is able to do whatever he wants.

There are some outstanding people working at the corporation and it is their skill that makes the radio programs possible: Richard H. Homeres, Bobbi

² Ibid, p.1

Hamlin, Charles Menut, Larry Milliken, Mike Zeimann, Seth Pitzer, Craig Hulsebos and Bill Sadlier.

From what I understand, Craig Hulsebos is the supervisor of the Family Radio employees. This group has the power to topple Harold if they act in unison but fear and intimidation have them divided. Since Mr. Camping is the president and general manager, he has total control over the finances, and he is the one that hires or fires a person.

Any of the employees could file a legal complaint with the Secretary of California, Corporation Department, and an investigation would show that Camping is illegally holding Family Radio hostage.

Any legal resident in the State of California can file a complaint against Harold Camping, but it will require the help of an attorney and there is a large cost of money involved. Our ministry does not have the finances to file a complaint.

FIRST CALL TO FAMILY RADIO

My first call on February 7 ended up with an answering machine. I left my name and number but never received a call back. I called back the next around 3:30 in the afternoon and spoke to a woman who would not give her name. I asked to speak to Craig Hulsebos and was told that he had gone home for the day but he would be back in the morning. I then asked to speak to Mr. Harold Camping and was told that he had gone home as well.

I then asked this woman if she believed the world was coming to an end on May 21, 2011? Did she believe this will be the final judgment of the unsaved and that all Christians will be taken away by Jesus? She told me without hesitation that she did not possess the theological training to answer my questions. I then asked if she was making any preparations for May 21, but she would not answer the question.

I asked about the possibility of taking over Family Radio on May 22 after all of them had left. She told me that this was something only Mr. Camping could answer. I then asked her if Harold Camping takes phone calls to which she replied affirmatively.

This woman had been instructed on how to answer questions like these since it is likely that a number of people are calling Family Radio and asking questions. It is obvious that she does not believe that

Jesus is coming back on May 21 or she would have told me so.

SECOND CALL

My second telephone call took place the next day in the morning of February 9. It was not the same woman who answered from the previous day and I asked to speak with Craig Hulsebos and was transferred to what I thought would be a direct line. A woman who claimed to be his secretary answered and asked what I wished to speak about? I told her that I wanted to have a private conversation with her boss but she stonewalled me and asked again why I was calling. It was obvious she was not going to let me speak with him. So I told her that I wanted to talk about the future. The conversation got very interesting when she said, **“Mr. Hulsebos would be very uncomfortable talking to you about this SINCE HE IS WALKING A VERY FINE LINE.”**

I realized that the woman had said more than she intended and this was as close as I would get Craig Hulsebos so I began to talk with her and offered my services to take over Family Radio and keep it going since they were all going to leave on May 21. “That is not possible,” she told me, “There will be earthquakes and all kinds of calamities on the earth on that day.”

I then told her that I did not believe that Jesus was going to come back on May 21 because Harold Camping had predicted Jesus’ return in 1994 and in 2008 and I had the books to prove it. She paused when I asked if she believed that Jesus was coming back on the May 21 and replied that it was possible but her voice lacked the conviction and it was obvious that she does not believe what Mr. Camping is teaching. She then tried to justify him by saying that “God used Mr. Camping to start Family Radio and God is not going to let His work be destroyed.” I corrected and told her that Richard Palmquist was the man whom God gave the vision for Family Radio and that Harold came in later. “That’s right,” she said, “Harold had the money and the heart to go with it.” I reminded her again that Harold had been wrong twice and this was his third prediction. She did not quite know what to say and just said, “Pray for us.”

I changed the subject a little and told her that even the children’s programs had been changed to teach that Jesus is coming back on the May 21. “Isn’t that

cute,” she said. I told her that I did not think it was cute and asked her what they were going to tell the children on May 22? “That is in God’s hands and there is nothing we can do,” was her reply.

I then proceeded to tell her that Harold Camping was destroying Family Radio and that people will lose all respect for him and Family Radio when May 22 rolled around and that they would lose all financial support. But she defiantly told me, “There is no problem, we have lots of money.” Now this isn’t what she is supposed to tell people outside Family Radio and she had worked herself into a corner. She was speaking the truth because Mr. Camping has sold off assets and is sitting on millions of dollars.

I told her that I have been a Family Radio listener since 1969 and that I listen to it all the time. My wife and I love the music but we turn off the radio every time Mr. Camping comes on and she replied, “That’s fine, you have freedom to do that.”

I shared with her that I really miss the program “Unshackled” from Pacific Garden Mission (PGM) in Chicago. She told me that PGM had changed the program so that it was no longer compatible with the policies of Family Radio. She agreed that the program was good but it simply did not line up with the changes in Mr. Camping’s policies. Up to that time Family Radio carried a number of great programs free of charge to enhance their own programming. But Mr. Camping didn’t like that each program ended with a call for people to contact the ministry that had produced the program; instead, he wanted all inquires to go to Family Radio, who it turn would pass on the information if they felt like it. It was all about control and PGM and the other ministries were discontinued when they did not go along with it.

I then proceeded to tell her that the only preachers left on Family Radio were dead and in this way they could not argue with Mr. Camping. She broke out in laughter upon hearing that and agreed that only dead preachers like Bob Cook and Pastor Spencer are allowed on Family Radio.

In wrapping up the conversation, I told her that we are a group of people who would like to save Family Radio, if she could pass that on to Craig Hulsebos? She promised to do that and I stressed it was important to draw up plans now so that Family

Radio can continue after May 21. Surprisingly she said, “Don’t worry about it, Mr. Camping has plans in place and it is all prepared.” She then emphasized the importance to pray for Family Radio. Up until now she was in no rush to end the conversation and kept talking to me but someone must have come into her office because she started to end the call without warning.

CONCLUSION

Craig Hulsebos doesn’t agree with Harold Camping that Jesus is coming back on May 21. His secretary made that clear when she told me that “he is walking a very fine line.” The secretary does not believe Harold either. Most likely the same is true for the rest of the staff. Mr. Camping is sitting upon millions of dollars and yet the fundraising continues even though there are only four months until judgment day! The only conclusion I can draw is that he has been taken over by evil spirits and is insane and the people working at Family Radio are petrified, divided and unable to oust him to stop the lying.

Harold Camping has made contingency plan for the time after May 21. Since he lost most of the listeners from 2008 and back, he must believe that he can again “do some fancy footwork” and come up with an explanation why Jesus did not come back, and then set a new date again. After all, he is now 90 years old and he probably does not think that he will be around much longer, so if he is wrong or not does not matter once he is dead. He is not thinking about all of the people he is deceiving who will have their belief system shattered.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

1. If you are a Family Radio listener, stop sending them money and call and write them and tell them that you do not believe what Harold is teaching.
2. If you have the money, file a complaint with the Secretary of California, Corporation Department that Family Radio is not in compliance with state regulations.
3. Pray that God will remove Harold Camping one way or the other.