

O Timothy

“Keep that which is committed to thy trust...”

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

Volume 33 - Issue 2 - February 2016



“Worship Wars justifies the use of music by charismatic one-world churchers such as Matt Redman, Stuart Townend, and Darlene Zschech. Warnings about using the music of these people is dismissed almost out of hand. To Bakss, it is no more dangerous or wrong to use Hillsong United’s ‘Oceans’ than Luther’s ‘Mighty Fortress’ or to use Darlene Zschech’s ‘Shout to the Lord’ as Charles Wesley’s ‘And Can It Be.’” **Page 2.**

Digging in the Walls: A month’s worth of news items, republished from Friday Church News Notes. **Page 16.**



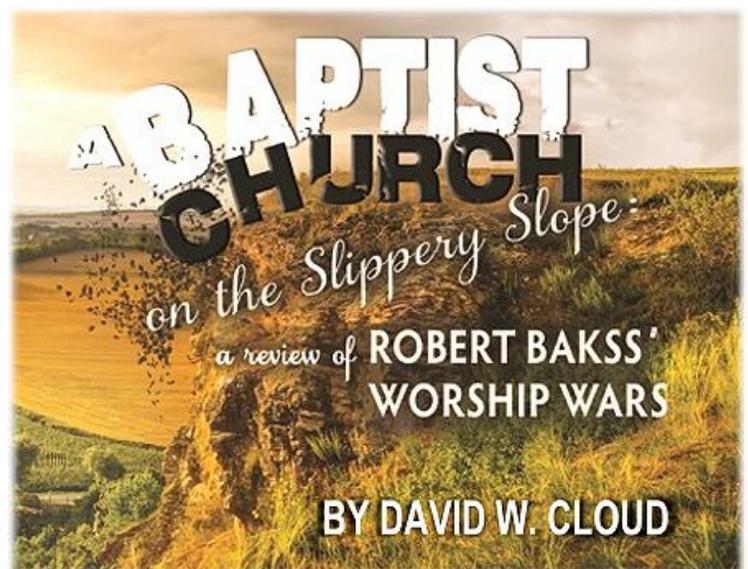
A BAPTIST CHURCH ON THE SLIPPERY SLOPE A Review of Robert Bakss’ Worship Wars - By David Cloud

“The music styles that have captured the ears of our culture today ought to be harnessed as a powerful medium to convey Bible truths” (Robert Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

“Personally, I don’t like to listen to some of the extreme forms of worship music around today. However, I do not condemn the artists who use them outside of formal worship settings, on CDs, or especially the Internet and radio, Christian Rap, Heaven’s Metal, Holy Hip-Hop, and other forms, ARE PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE means of communicating with the devotees of those styles” (Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

This is a review of *Worship Wars: What the Bible Says about Worship Music* (2015) by Robert Bakss, Pastor of Lighthouse Baptist Church, Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia.

In February 2015, Bakss preached at Steve Chappell’s Heart and Soul Conference, as well as at Doug Fisher’s Leadership Conference in San Diego. On February 4, 2015, Bakss preached at Lancaster Baptist Church in Lancaster, California.



In August 2015, a missionary sent us some links showing that Bakss and his youth are rocking out with a contemporary praise band, complete with drum kit and bass guitar. See the following

video clips as documentation. These were excerpted from Lighthouse Baptist Church's web site.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vYHCSEKBhdw>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpgbbutMzHo>

In forty-two years of ministry, *Worship Wars* is the most dangerous book I have read by an Independent Baptist pastor.

Worship Wars is a full-blown defense of contemporary worship music and the use of rock & roll.

Worship Wars is a rejection of the position that there is a "slippery slope" connected with the use of contemporary music. Bakss says, "I disagreed ... on this 'slippery slope' argument."

Worship Wars justifies the use of music by charismatic one-world churchers such as Matt Redman, Stuart Townend, and Darlene Zschech. Warnings about using the music of these people is dismissed almost out of hand. To Bakss, it is no more dangerous or wrong to use Hillsong United's "Oceans" than Luther's "Mighty Fortress" or to use Darlene Zschech's "Shout to the Lord" as Charles Wesley's "And Can It Be."

Worship Wars is an invitation to use the writings and arguments of Pentecostals, ecumenists, and other heretics, which has long been a New Evangelical practice.

Worship Wars is an invitation to young people to experiment with the world's music.

O TIMOTHY Magazine

Volume 33 Issue 2

David W. Cloud, Editor

Subscription information on
back page of the magazine

Copyright 2011 by D.W.Cloud
Way of Life Literature
PO Box 610368, Port Huron, MI
48061

866-295-4143 (toll free)

fbns@wayoflife.org

<http://www.wayoflife.org>

Bethel Baptist Church
4212 Campbell St. N.
London, Ontario, N6P 1A6 Canada
519-652-2619

It is apparent that Pastor Bakss has at least skimmed over all sides of the issue, but the only side he seems to understand is the wrong side. It is obvious that he has drunk deeply from the wells of New Evangelicalism and worse.

Pastor Bakss claims that God is displeased with the "worship wars" and the only one who is winning in this debate is the devil. He writes, "Worship Wars--who really wins?--Not God!"

He even claims that the stance against contemporary worship music is of the devil.

There are a thousand warnings we could give from this book, but we will limit them to the following twelve things:

First, *Worship Wars* is dangerous because instead of dealing with the fundamentals of this debate, the book is filled with red herrings (facts and arguments of no consequence to the real issue) and straw men.

We will mention some of these during the course of the review.

For someone who happens to like red herring, this book will be a true feast.

Second, *Worship Wars* is dangerous because the author presents the music issue as a matter of personal preference.

This is the author's fundamental position, and it is repeated throughout the book. The following statement is typical:

"Everybody has a different preference of style. Some people like a full band, some people like acoustic sets, some want it deafening and yet others can't stand it if the volume is too loud. There is no shortage of opinions on 'how' worship should be done. ... Hymns versus Choruses, Traditional versus Contemporary, Old versus New ... When we boil it down, all the debates we are having about worship are really all about us. ... Whenever we make a judgment call about the music and worship it is usually based on our personal preferences. ... The Bible is silent on the style of music God likes" (Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

There are many statements along this line in *Worship Wars*.

The author defends rock music and belittles the stance that associates rock music with the world, the flesh, and the devil.

For example, Bakss quotes the following warning by former contemporary worship leader Dan Lucarini:

"Avoid any preference or style that can be associated with evil. ... The apostle Peter warns us to avoid fleshly lusts, desires that are forbidden to us, that come out of our sinful nature. ... When we bring rock music styles into the church, we violate this principle of abstinence from the appearance of evil. We are guilty of embracing a form of evil, because

CCM imitates the same worldly music and performance styles that are used alongside all kinds of immorality” (Dan Lucarini, *Why I Left the Contemporary Music Movement*, cited by Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

After quoting Lucarini, Bakss shoots down this biblical stance, backed by solid evidence (which, as usual, Bakss omits), by characterizing it as “generalization” and “preference.”

Bakss says,

“... a generalisation is made that all rock music styles are ‘evil,’ therefore they must be completely abstained from. However, this is all based on Dan Lucarini’s personal belief that all rock music is somehow connected only with immoral performers and musicians. The same prejudicial reasoning could be applied to any style of music that is performed by unregenerate, immoral artists, whether it be jazz, classical, pop, bluegrass, country, folk, soul, rock, etc.” (Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

That rock music exemplifies the world as defined in 1 John 2:16 has been documented by hundreds of preachers, teachers, musicians, and researchers. I have documented this in the 725-page book [Rock & Roll’s War against God](#) and summarized it in the 70-page [What Every Christian Should Know about Rock Music](#), both of which are available as free eBooks from www.wayoflife.org.

“Sex, drugs, and rock & roll” is not just a cute saying. It is a true statement about *the fundamental character* of rock music. You could add several things to the saying to make it even more true. It could be “sex, drugs, rebellion, moral license, narcissism, and rock & roll.”

Of course, this does not mean that everyone who listens to rock music is involved in sex and drugs. To define the essence of rock music, we look at its creators, its most prominent artists, its historic fruit.

The book *Rock Facts*, which is published by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland, Ohio, an organization that knows a thing or two about rock, acknowledges that rock is not just a type of music, **IT IS A LIFESTYLE**.

“... rock and roll has truly become a universal language ... rock and roll also refers to an attitude, a feeling, a style, a way of life...” (*Rock Facts*, 1996, p. 7).

And the rock & roll “way of life” is all about moral relativism.

In his interviews with *Playboy*, John Lennon said, “The whole Beatles idea was to do what you want.”

The philosophy of rock & roll was encapsulated in hits in the 1960s by prominent bands.

- the Rolling Stones (“I’m free to do what I want any old time”)
- the Animals (“It’s my life and I’ll do what I want”)
- the Mamas and the Papas (“You got to go where you want to go/ do what you want to do”)
- the Isley Brothers (“It’s your thing/ do what you want to do”)

Bakss’ statement that the rejection of rock is based on over-generalization and mere personal opinion is a breathtaking *defense of the use of any type of music* by a man who claims to be a Bible-believing pastor.

By degrading the music issue to one of mere “style” and personal opinion, the pastor is giving a bright green light to young people to dabble with the world’s music.

For those who understand the transformational power of rock & roll, nothing could be more dangerous than what Pastor Bakss is promoting in this book.

The author of *Worship Wars* is an expert at confusing apples with bananas. He likens rock music to classical music.

But whereas some classical music is written by wicked men and whereas all classical music cannot be recommended, *AS A GENRE* classical music is not openly identified with end-time rebellion.

Where did Bach, Handel, Beethoven, or Mozart shout, “It’s your thing, do what you want to do”?

But as for rock music, it was born of evil and carried along by evil and has always preached an evil philosophy of “do your own thing,” which is the heart and soul of end-time apostasy as described in 2 Timothy 3.

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be LOVERS OF THEIR OWN SELVES, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy” (2 Timothy 3:1-2).

As a genre, classical music has never openly and universally represented evil and preached rebellion, but *as a genre* rock music most certainly does preach this.

Bakss has no musical boundaries. He claims that the use of “Death Metal and Acid Rock” is “a preference issue.” He says that while he personally believes “the current association makes it [death metal and acid rock] unsuitable to use for godly purposes,” in the end THIS IS A “PREFERENCE” ISSUE and “IT MAY COME IN TIME.”

He defends every “extreme form of worship music,” including metal and rap.

Bakss says,

“That is not to say that every popular style of music with Christian words would be suitable for corporate worship. Some musical styles are going to be suited to a niche sub-culture of the society and may be good as evangelistic tools, personal edification or in a concert setting, but not easily reconcilable with the purposes of corporate worship in a congregation of multi generations. Personally, I don’t like to listen to some of the extreme forms of worship music around today. HOWEVER, I DO NOT CONDEMN THE ARTISTS WHO USE THEM OUTSIDE OF FORMAL WORSHIP SETTINGS. ON CDS, OR ESPECIALLY THE INTERNET AND RADIO, CHRISTIAN RAP, HEAVEN’S METAL, HOLY HIP-HOP, AND OTHER FORMS, ARE PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE MEANS OF COMMUNICATING WITH THE DEVOTEES OF THOSE STYLES. It is a language, if you will, as completely foreign to me as Swahili, but an effective communication tool in those particular sub-cultures. ... Personally, I do not consider rap music a suitable medium for corporate worship, but I do concede this style has had evangelistic value with a select target group of people. Christian Contemporary rapper Lecrae has undoubtedly been used of God to reach thousands of people with the gospel who relate to the rap style of music” (Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

Bakss gives no evidence for the amazing statement that rapper Lecrae has “undoubtedly been used of God.” In fact, Lecrae brashly refuses to be called a “Christian rapper.” He wants the support of churches, but he doesn’t want any limitations from churches. Does Pastor Bakss know Lecrae? Has he taken a good look at his life and music? Has Bakss scripturally evaluated even a few of these alleged thousands of converts? Why would a Baptist pastor mention in a positive sense a rapper who works with and closely associates with some of the filthiest, most godless people in the music business?

Is this the example that Bakss wants to put before young people in Baptist churches? Obviously so, but I pray that thousands of Independent Baptist pastors will lift their voices against such a thing.

It is things like this that are scattered throughout the book that cause me to say that Bakss’ *Worship Wars* is the most dangerous book I have ever read by a fundamental Baptist preacher.

I would ask who cut the following verses out of the Bible? Every one of these Scriptures contains principles that are relevant to the music issue today.

“Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful” (Psalm 1:1).

“Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil *men*. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away” (Proverbs 4:14-15).

“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3).

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*” (Ephesians 5:11).

“Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart” (2 Timothy 2:22).

Though he says he doesn’t personally relate to death metal or rap, Bakss is fine with those who do relate to them.

His message is, “You like heavy metal and hip hop? Go for it, baby! It’s all about you and your taste and your *ministry*.” This sounds exactly like the apostasy described in 2 Timothy 4:3-4!

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but AFTER THEIR OWN LUSTS SHALL THEY HEAP TO THEMSELVES TEACHERS, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

This prophecy describes a “follow your own lusts” Christianity, and this is precisely the Christianity that is prevalent in the contemporary Christian music field.

What shocking ignorance coming from a fundamental Baptist pastor!

What bewildering lack of true wisdom and spiritual discernment!

What a terrible message for a pastor to give to young people!

They can say about me whatever they want to say, but I will continue to do everything I can to keep young people away from the influence of men like this.

The pastors, teachers, and deacons of the Southern Baptist churches in which I grew up had more spiritual sense than this, and sadly, that isn’t saying much!

Third, *Worship Wars* is dangerous because the author misrepresents and belittles the stance against contemporary worship music which was held by all of his forebears.

The following statement is typical:

“We hear cries of ‘Oh no, now they have an amplified guitar in the church! Crucify someone, repent, the end is near!’ ... ‘The songs are displayed on a screen and not in the hymnbook--sacrilege!’ ‘The pastor is using a headset microphone, not a lapel microphone, what’s next?’” (Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

I don’t know anyone who calls for crucifying someone because of an amplified guitar or calls it sacrilege to display the words of a hymn on a screen or use a headset microphone.

This is straw man warfare.

It’s a simple matter to set up a poor straw man, then knock him down and gloat over his pathetic remains, and those who don’t make an effort to check the facts will assume that the straw man warrior is a great warrior indeed.

Fourth, *Worship Wars* is dangerous because the author presents the lie of musical neutrality and gives a full-blown recommendation for rock/pop/jazz/rap.

One of the chapters of Bakss’ book is “The Beat Strikes Back,” and he sets himself up as the defender of the “big beat.”

He is on the war path against the thousands upon thousands of poor, misguided preachers, teachers, and Christian parents who have warned about rock & roll for the last 70 years and who have tried to keep their young people away from it.

Bakss is an enemy of all who preach against rock, insinuating that they are pathetic defenders of vain tradition and personal opinion, obscurantists whose time is past.

The following statement reveals the type of brainwashing that Bakss has given over the past few years to prepare his church for the changes he wanted to bring. He admits that members have left, but he has brought some of them, at least, along for the ride.

Bakss writes,

“One night in church whilst speaking on the subject of music, I sat at an electric keyboard and played with a feature on the keyboard that can create a percussion rhythm (no notes or melody). I was able to play about a dozen music styles--jazz, Latin, country, rock, pop, etc. ... Music styles are basically blank slates on which we impose our creative ideas of all kinds--good, neutral and bad. No style is right or wrong per se, and personal choice

becomes the central issue when discussing merits of different styles. ... In addition to the wonderful heritage of godly hymns, there are many excellent songs in contemporary worship music. ... IT SEEMS THE BEAT OF THE MUSIC HAS ALWAYS BEEN GIVEN A BAD RAP IN WORSHIP MUSIC DEBATES. NOW IT’S TIME THE BEAT STRIKES BACK!” (Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

The author criticizes Frank Garlock and Kurt Woetzel, authors of *Music in the Balance*, for claiming that the back beat is wrong.

Bakss even trots out the argument that it is “racist” to connect the rock beat with African paganism. He writes,

“I erroneously believed that any musical instrument and styles that were traceable to an African heritage were based in voodoo and demonic pagan practices. ... We must be careful of becoming racist and developing ‘beat hate’” (Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

Pastor Bakss needs to listen to rock & roll drummer Rocki (Kwasi Dzidzornu) who recorded with such famous bands as the Rolling Stones, Spooky Tooth, and Ginger Baker. Rocki first learned his drum licks at the feet of his father, a voodoo priest and chief drummer in a village in Ghana, West Africa, and he perceived that 60s rock god Jimi Hendrix’ music had exactly the same character and spirit as his father’s. In his biography of Hendrix, David Henderson relates the following:

“One of the first things Rocki asked Jimi was where he got that voodoo rhythm from. When Jimi demurred, Rocki went on to explain in his halting English that MANY OF THE SIGNATURE RHYTHMS JIMI PLAYED ON GUITAR WERE VERY OFTEN THE SAME RHYTHMS THAT HIS FATHER PLAYED IN VOODOO CEREMONIES. The way Jimi danced to the rhythms of his playing reminded Rocki of the ceremonial dances to the rhythms his father played to Oxun, the god of thunder and lightning. The ceremony is called voodoooshi. As a child in the village, Rocki would carve wooden representatives of the gods. They also represented his ancestors. These were the gods they worshiped. They would jam a lot in Jimi’s house. One time they were jamming and Jimi stopped and asked Rocki point-blank, ‘You communicate with God, do you?’ Rocki said, ‘Yes, I communicate with God’” (*Scuse Me While I Kiss the Sky*, pp. 250, 251).

By Bakss’ reasoning, the black rock & rollers Rocki and Jimi were racists because they saw an intimate connection between African native music and rock & roll.

In an attempt to refute the stance of Dr. Garlock’s *Music in the Balance*, Bakss quotes extensively from Gregg Strawbridge, a pedo-baptist Reformed theologian of All Saints Church in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. In March 2015, Strawbridge supported the heresy of infant baptism in a public debate with James White. Though well educated, intelligent, and skilled in music, Strawbridge is as lacking in spiritual discernment on the music issue as he is on the baptism issue.

Bakss also quotes often from John Frame, a “Christian philosopher and Calvinist theologian” who holds “the JD Trimble Chair of Systematic Theology and Philosophy” at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida.

Dr. Garlock was right about the music issue in the 1970s and 1980s and 1990s, regardless of whether every study he cited was correct and regardless of whether every jot and tittle of his argument was sound. He was right in 1971 when he published *The Big Beat*, and he was right in 1973 when he published *Symphony of Life*, and in 1992 when he published *Music in the Balance*, and in 2002 when he published *Pop Goes the Music*.

Dr. Garlock was right. He knows music as well as any man writing on the subject, and he helped a lot of churches and Christian families. I have no doubt that a great many young people were saved from the world and churches were saved from compromise by Dr. Garlock’s teaching. The fruit was good and godly.

Dr. Garlock taught something that is obviously close to God’s heart, considering its emphasis in Scripture, which is that God’s people must learn to make “the difference between the holy and profane” (Ezekiel 44:23). This is a fundamental Scriptural principle in regard to every aspect of the Christian life and ministry, including music, one of the most powerful influences on earth.

Where Dr. Garlock went wrong in recent years was by backtracking on his former position against CCM. His former stance was, “If a church starts using CCM it will eventually lose all other standards” (Bob Jones University chapel, March 12, 2001). Dr. Garlock’s new stance is less dogmatic. It allows for “cautious” use of contemporary worship music. He specifically recommends Townend/Getty. Garlock, BJU, and Majesty Music have let the camel’s nose into the tent, and the fruit will be terrible. (I am citing, among other things, Garlock’s “Postlude” to *Why I Don’t Listen to Contemporary Christian Music* by Shelly Hamilton, Majesty Music: 2013, pp. 95-96. For more on this see “[Dr. Garlock Misses an Important Point](#),” Feb. 3, 2015, www.wayoflife.org.)

Bakss goes to some length to belittle and attempt to refute the idea that a strong back beat and other types of body-jerking dance syncopations are inherently associated with sensuality and evil.

I would like to ask him a couple of questions:

First, Pastor Bakss, why do the rock & rollers themselves say that their music, referring to every aspect of it, including the rhythm, is sexy?

In his history of blues music in Memphis, Tennessee, author Larry Nager observed that “...the forbidden pleasures of Beale Street had always come WRAPPED IN THE PULSING RHYTHMS of the blues” (*Memphis Beat*).

Nager is describing the backbeat and other types of dance syncopation that form the basic element of rock & roll. Beale Street was infamous for its bars, gambling dens, and warehouses. Those were the “forbidden pleasures.” It is not an accident that those wicked activities were accompanied by certain styles of pulsing rhythms. And the old blues and boogie woogie and jazz rhythms were not always loud and boisterous. Like rock music, there were soft blues as well as hard, but soft or hard, the pulsing rhythms enveloped forbidden pleasures.

Famous bluesman Robert Johnson knew that his guitar music had a licentious affect on women. He said, “This sound [the blues] AFFECTED MOST WOMEN in a way that I could never understand.”

B.B. King, one of the most famous of the bluesmen, made the same observation in his autobiography: “THE WOMEN REACTED WITH THEIR BODIES FLOWING TO A RHYTHM coming out of my guitar...” (B.B. King, *Blues All Around Me*).

These musicians claim that certain rhythms have a sexual effect.

Consider some other examples. These testimonies come from expert witnesses in the field of rock & roll:

“Rock music is sex. THE BIG BEAT matches the body’s rhythms” (Frank Zappa of the Mothers of Invention, *Life*, June 28, 1968).

“That’s what rock is all about--sex with a 100 megaton bomb, THE BEAT!” (Gene Simmons of the rock group KISS, interview, *Entertainment Tonight*, ABC, Dec. 10, 1987).

“Rock ‘n’ roll is 99% sex” (John Oates of the rock duo Hall & Oates, *Circus*, Jan. 31, 1976).

“Rock ‘n’ roll is pagan and primitive, and very jungle, and that’s how it should be! ... the true meaning of rock ... is sex, subversion and style” (Malcolm McLaren, punk rock manager, *Rock*, August 1983, p. 60).

“Perhaps [my music] is sexy ... but what music with a BIG BEAT isn’t?” (Jimi Hendrix, cited from David Henderson, ‘*Scuse Me While I Kiss the Sky: The Life of Jimi Hendrix*. p. 117).

“The THROBBING BEAT of rock provides a vital sexual release for adolescent audiences” (Jan Berry of Jan and Dean, cited by Ken Blanchard, *Pop Goes the Gospel*).

"The great strength of rock 'n' roll lies in ITS BEAT ... it is a music which is basically *SEXUAL, UN-PURITAN* ... and a threat to established patterns and values" (Irwin Silber, Marxist, *Sing Out*, May 1965).

"Everyone takes it for granted that rock and roll is synonymous with sex" (Chris Stein, lead guitarist for Blondie, *People*, May 21, 1979).

"Because it is primitive enough and has no bull, really, the best stuff, and it gets through to you ITS BEAT. Go to the jungle and THEY HAVE THE RHYTHM and it goes throughout the world and it's as simple as that" (John Lennon, *Rolling Stone*, Feb. 12, 1976, p 100).

"Rock and roll aims for liberation and transcendence, eroticizing the spiritual and spiritualizing the erotic, because that is its ecumenical birthright" (Robert Palmer, *Rock and Roll an Unruly History*).

"Rock and roll is fun, it's full of energy ... IT'S NAUGHTY" (Tina Turner, cited in *Rock Facts*, Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and Museum).

"Pop music revolves around sexuality" (Adam Ant, *From Rock to Rock*, p. 93).

"Rock 'n' roll is sex. Real rock 'n' roll isn't based on cerebral thoughts. It's based on one's lower nature" (Paul Stanley, cited by John Muncy, *The Role of Rock*, p. 44).

"Rock ... expresses the body, hence sexuality, with A DIRECTLY PHYSICAL BEAT and an intense emotional sound ... it is THE BEAT that commands a directly physical response. ... We respond to THE MATERIALITY OF ROCK'S SOUNDS, and THE ROCK EXPERIENCE IS ESSENTIALLY EROTIC" (Simon Frith, *Sound Effects*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).

"... rock music has one appeal only, a barbaric appeal to SEXUAL DESIRE" (Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, p. 73).

"Rock and roll was something that's *hardcore, rough and wild and sweaty and wet and just loose*" (Patti Labelle, cited in *Rock Facts*, Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and Museum).

"The SEX IS DEFINITELY IN THE MUSIC, and sex is in ALL ASPECTS in the music" (Luke Campbell of 2 Live Crew).

"Rock is visceral. IT DOES DISTURBING THINGS TO YOUR BODY. In spite of yourself, you find your body tingling, moving with THE MUSIC" (Rocker Tom McSloy, "Music to Jangle Your Insides," *National Review*, June 30, 1970).

This is a loud warning to those who have spiritual ears to hear.

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17).

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11).

The difference between secular rock & rollers and Pastor Bakss and other Christian defenders of rock is that the secular rockers have no agenda to make rock seem innocent in its essence and acceptable before God, whereas that is precisely the agenda of preachers who defend rock. The rock & rollers and secular social historians are simply being honest and candid about the fundamental essence of rock.

Second, I would like to ask Pastor Bakss this: if rock music doesn't have an inherent sensual, unholy quality, why do unholy rock & rollers always choose that very type of music to achieve their unholy goals?

Why do rockers always choose *that style of music* and not some other style of music? If the *style* of rock & roll party music does not have an inherent fleshly party element to it, why can't it be replaced effectively with some other type of music? Why has this never happened in 60 years?

Why does any form of rock music fit the bar, the night club, the gambling den, the whorehouse, the strip club, but a "traditional" style of Christian music would never fit that scene?

The fact is that rock & rollers know exactly what they are doing. They use a style of music that is designed to affect the body in a sensual and even sexual way, a style of music that encourages an atmosphere of moral license and narcissism.

This has been stated repeatedly by the rockers themselves.

We don't need to cite scientific studies about plants or mice. And debunking such studies, as Bakss attempts to do, does nothing to overthrow our fundamental arguments. Our stand against rock & roll doesn't depend on such things.

As we have demonstrated in the video series [Music for Good or Evil](#), rock rhythms come in many forms, but there is an extremely sensual element to all of them. (We also point out that there are different types of syncopation, and syncopation in itself is not wrong. Dr. Garlock often emphasized this point to good effect.)

Fifth, Worship Wars is dangerous because the author recommends one-world church musicians.

Examples are Matt Redman, Mark Hall (of Casting Crowns), Rick Muchow (former worship leader at Rick Warren's Saddleback Church), Darlene Zschech, Stuart Townend, Chris Tomlin, Derek Prince, and Hillsong United.

These people are quoted repeatedly in *Music Wars*, and I could find no warning about them.

But there should be. Consider three examples of what Pastor Bakss should have told his readers. These three individuals are cited in a positive manner in *Worship Wars*.

MATT REDMAN supports the Worship Central training school sponsored by Alpha International, the radically ecumenical charismatic organization that was birthed from the “laughing revival” at Holy Trinity Brompton, London. The founder of Alpha, Nicky Gumble, says, “Alpha runs in every arm of the Church. It’s growing the fastest in the Catholic church. ... What unites us is infinitely greater than what divides us. ... In every different part of the body of Christ--Presbyterian, Baptist, Lutheran, non-denominational, Catholic, Pentecostals, Bulgarian Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox--Alpha crosses all divides” (“The Alpha Course: An International Phenomenon,” WillowCreek.org, March 2012). In a 2011 interview, Matt Redman listed the Beatles as his all time favorite music influence and said, “I love it now that my five kids even get into their music” (www.louderthanthemusic.com/document.php?id=2526). I wonder if Pastor Bakss’ kids follow Redman’s example and “get into the Beatles.” In fact, I wonder if Bakss himself gets into the Beatles. To illustrate that Matt Redman has no boundaries to his associations, no separation whatsoever, at the 2011 National Worship Leader Conference, he joined hands with Leonard Sweet who promotes a wide variety of New Age heresies. Sweet’s “New Light” doctrine is described as “the union of the human with the divine” (*Quantum Spirituality*, p. 235). At the 2010 Fantastical Church Music Conference at Baylor University, Redman joined hands with Rob Bell, who denies the infallible inspiration of Scripture, believes practically everyone will be saved, denies the eternal judgment of hell, and mocks the gospel of salvation through the blood of Christ.

DARLENE ZSCHECH, praised in *Music Wars* as the writer of “Shout to the Lord,” is the former worship leader at Hillsong Church in Sydney, currently co-pastor of another Pentecostal church. One of her (and Hillsong’s) major themes is ecumenical unity. She says, “There is a new sound and a new song being proclaimed across the earth. It’s the sound of a unified church, coming together, in one voice to magnify our magnificent Lord” (from the album cover to *You Shine*). In 2003, Zschech participated in Harvest ’03 in Newcastle, New South Wales. The ecumenical rock concert brought together Presbyterian, Assemblies of God, Anglican, Seventh-day Adventist, Church of Christ, and Roman Catholic (Hughie Seaborn, “[Hunter Harvest -- Rock Evangelism](#)”). Zschech and Hillsong performed for the Roman Catholic World Youth Day in Sydney on July 18, 2008. Pope Benedict XVI was present

and conducted papal Mass, which is a blasphemous heresy. On July 3-4, 2015, Zschech and Hillsong joined hands with the pope at the Convocation of the Renewal of the Holy Spirit at the Vatican. In an interview with *Christianity Today*, Zschech said, “I’ve been in the Catholic Church, in the United Church, the Anglican Church, and in many other churches, and when worship is offered in truth, this sound emerges--regardless of the style. It’s the sound of the human heart connecting with its Maker” (christianitytoday.com, June 4, 2004). She doesn’t explain how worship can be “in truth” in the context of denominations that teach grievous doctrinal error and false gospels.

This is the one-world “church,” and contemporary worship music is one of its most powerful elements.

STUART TOWNEND, another worship artist uplifted in Robert Bakss’ *Music Wars*, is charismatic in theology and radically ecumenical in philosophy, supporting the Alpha program which bridges Pentecostal, Protestant, Baptist, and Roman Catholic churches. In July 2012, Townend joined the Gettys and Roman Catholic Matt Maher on NewsongCafe on WorshipTogether.com. They played and discussed “The Power of the Cross,” which was co-written by Getty-Townend. The 10-minute program promoted ecumenical unity, with Maher/Townend/Getty entirely one in the spirit through the music.

These are Pastor Bakss’ new mates, as they would say in Australia. He recommends these people and their mates repeatedly in *Worship Wars*, with no warning whatsoever.

He loves them so much that he has attended Hillsong conferences in Sydney to get his dose of Christian rock.

When asked by a *Sydney Morning Herald* reporter why Hillsong is so successful (meaning big and rich), Houston replied, “We are scratching people where they are itching” (“[The Lord’s Profits](#),” *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 30, 2003). That is right out of 2 Timothy 4:3, which is a warning of apostasy. It describes people who itch for a new kind of Christianity and the heaps of preachers who will scratch this illicit itch. “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.”

I attend CCM churches and conventions at times, but I do it only to warn about it. I do it to get my facts right for warning materials such as [The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians](#).

By his own testimony, Pastor Bakss attends to enjoy it. He thinks he has liberty from God to mingle with this confusion.

Bakss is building bridges to very, very dangerous spiritual waters, and to think that there will be no negative consequences in his own family and church, and in the churches he is influencing, is spiritual insanity.

Sixth, *Worship Wars* is dangerous because the author presents the battle against contemporary worship music as merely another in an age-long series of misguided music wars.

For this, Pastor Bakss quotes Elmer Towns, a decidedly unsound voice in this debate. Towns, co-founder with Jerry Falwell of Liberty University, has long promoted the blending and merging of churches and has long supported contemporary worship music as a common denominator of “successful churches.”

Towns has gone out of his way to belittle the current battle against contemporary worship music.

He cites such historical music battles as resistance to the use of musical instruments, resistance to annotated music, resistance to harmony, resistance to paraphrasing the Psalms in psalm, and resistance to singing in the common language rather than Latin.

“Music has played a central, but contentious role throughout church history. ... Being aware of the changes and movements of the past, however, should encourage us to be more humble about our own PREFERENCES and more open to other STYLES of music used to worship God and point people to Christ” (Towns, cited by Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

To characterize the battle against contemporary worship music as simply the latest in a long line of traditionalist resistance to good change has been very effective in breaking down resistance, but it is a gross lie.

Contemporary Worship Music is not like anything from the past because it is the music of the end-time, one-world “church.”

To use instruments or not to use instruments, to sing harmony or not to sing harmony is a completely different issue than to use contemporary worship music or not to use it.

The world of contemporary worship music is the world of end-time apostasy. It is the world of charismaticism (with its false prophecies, gibberish tongues, phony signs, fallings and shakings, sensuality and feeling orientation, and kingdom now theology), of female preachers, of immodest dress, of modern textual criticism, of acceptance of every sort of corrupt Bible versions, of ecumenism, of unity with Rome, of *The Message* and *The Shack*, of shallow gospels and false gospels, of love

for the pop culture, of acceptance of a thousand heretics and heresies.

The heart and soul of the issue in regard to contemporary worship music is that it is a bridge to the world of end-time apostasy and one-world churchism. We have documented this in [*The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians*](#), [*Baptist Music Wars*](#), and [*The Foreign Spirit of Contemporary Worship Music*](#), all of which we have made available as free downloads from the Way of Life web site, www.wayoflife.org.

That contemporary worship music represents the realm of end-time apostasy and one-world churchism is incontrovertible.

The fact that Pastor Bakss doesn’t mention this anywhere in his book, except in scant passing and in order to misrepresent and belittle it, is evidence either of his extreme and most willful ignorance or his desire to downplay the evil of contemporary music to make it appear more acceptable and its enemies more unreasonable.

Bakss gives absolutely none of the tons of documentation that we and others have provided to prove that contemporary worship music represents the one-world “church.” He doesn’t even refer to it. He is guilty of removing the heart and soul of his opponent’s argument before “refuting” it. I know this for sure, because I am quoted frequently in *Worship Wars*, and I have looked in vain in *Worship Wars* for the substance and evidence of my arguments that can readily be found in my books and articles.

I welcome the testing of my teaching. What I ask of my readers is to “prove all things; hold fast to that which is good,” but I don’t welcome mishandling of my teaching.

Seventh, *Worship Wars* is dangerous because the author doesn’t understand the ecumenical nature of contemporary worship music.

In my estimation, the greatest danger of contemporary worship music is the fact that it represents the ecumenical world and it is a bridge to the one-world “church” being created by the ecumenical movement.

That is what I have repeated and emphasized in my books and articles.

After quoting my warning that “Contemporary Christian Music is ecumenical music,” Bakss dismisses it with the following statement:

“This claim is a misnomer, because the same could be said of fundamentalist churches using the same music

styles and singing the same songs as mainline religious denominations such as the Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans, Uniting Church, etc. Just because churches sing the same worship songs as other groups, it is no indication they have joined up with the ecumenical movement of the one world church" (Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

Here Bakss again shows his inability to distinguish between apples and bananas.

In my books and articles I have given extensive documentation to prove that contemporary worship music is the world of ecumenism. This is *their admitted* position. They believe in ecumenism; they promote ecumenism; they glory in ecumenism; they believe that disunity in "the body" is contrary to Christ's will. They believe this fervently. To them, "separation" and "fundamentalism" are almost dirty words.

All of the contemporary worship musicians mentioned by Pastor Bakss in *Worship Wars* are ecumenical in this sense.

I don't know of *any* prominent contemporary worship musicians who don't believe in an ecumenical position as we have defined here. If there is such an individual, he or she is in the most extreme minority. Most of them practice association with and joint ministry with Roman Catholics.

This is irrefutable.

This is why we say that the contemporary worship music movement is the one-world "church" movement.

When a Baptist church uses a hymn by Martin Luther or Fanny Crosby or John Wesley, that church is not practicing ecumenism and that church is in no danger of becoming Lutheran or Methodist.

But when a church joins hands in fellowship and ministry with Lutherans and Methodists and Pentecostals and Episcopalians and Catholics and calls for unity in "the one body," referring to all denominations, THAT is ecumenism, and that is the contemporary worship movement.

And ecumenism most definitely endangers a Baptist church's stance.

I don't know of one Baptist church that became Lutheran from singing Luther's hymns, but I know of dozens that have become contemporary in philosophy by using contemporary music.

We have published a 560-page book documenting the ecumenical stance of CCM. It is entitled [The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians](#). It is updated frequently, and we have made it available as a free eBook from www.wayoflife.org.

Pastor Bakss says that he does a lot of reading, and I don't doubt it. What I recommend is that he stop reading Towns and Swindoll and Thomas and Frame and Stetzer and read something that will help protect his flock from the wolves that will soon devour them.

Eighth, *Worship Wars* is dangerous because the author believes the test of music is the individual's "heart" and personal response.

This is the standard position within the field of contemporary Christian music.

The chief test boils down to one's own heart and feelings and experience.

Bakss says, "The real issue is, 'What are you DOING with the music? Is the music influencing you to worship God and glorify Him?'" (emphasis in original)

He says, "Worship music is a matter of PREFERENCE and if you can, in good conscience, sing and/or perform a particular song or music composition that creates AN HONOURABLE RESPONSE WITHIN YOU (e.g. a good attitude, a worshipful attitude, responses that would be honouring to the Lord) then I don't think it can be argued against" (Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

The Bible warns that "the heart is deceitful above all things" (Jer. 17:9), and, "he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" (Prov. 28:26).

The passions of the heart must be continually and always tested by the clear teaching of God's Word.

The proper test of music is not merely whether my heart is pleased with it and whether I feel that I am being passionate for God when I enjoy it or any such thing. A proper biblical test involves many things. We have laid out some of these in the book [Baptist Music Wars](#), such as the following:

- Is the music conformed to the world?
- Can the music be identified as "the lust of the flesh" or "the lust of the eyes" or the "pride of life"?
- Is the music associated with end-time apostasy? Is it a bridge to the one-world "church"?
- Is the music doctrinally unsound?
- Does the music lead to a lack of sober-mindedness and spiritual vigilance?
- Does the music fail to make a clear distinction between the holy and the profane?

If the answer to any of these is yes, it doesn't matter whether or not I like the music or whether it warms my heart or tingles my skin or makes me feel like I am worshiping God. It is still wrong!

Ninth, *Worship Wars* is dangerous because the author belittles the dress issue.

Bakss mentions dress several times, but only to belittle the importance of “dress standards.”

He has to stoop so low that he makes a false implication that dress is my personal focus and hobby horse.

“... it is another vague generalisation to believe that churches no longer stand on the fundamentals of the faith once they begin to utilise contemporary Christian music. The implication made by Cloud is not dealing with the doctrines of Fundamentalism, but rather the man-made standards of dress code and music” (Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

This statement, first of all, is a bait and switch tactic. I don’t know of anyone who has said that churches that use CCM will leave “the fundamentals of the faith.”

And I have never said that changing dress standards is evidence of leaving the fundamentals of the faith or that a changing dress standard is the essence of being on a “slippery slope.”

The slippery slope of transformation that we have warned about involves many things. It does involve a change in dress standards. But it also often involves a change in the stance on Bible versions, at the least a toleration of the modern versions, a downgrading of the stance on separation (while still giving lip service to separation) and a more positive emphasis (which is the heart of New Evangelicalism), an increasing promotion of New Evangelical writers, a change in the philosophy of world missions, toleration of errors such as theistic evolution, acceptance of contemplative prayer, and many other things.

These changes are already evident in many of the churches that Bakss lists as having remained “successful” because they transitioned to contemporary music. Examples are Thomas Road Baptist Church of Lynchburg, Virginia, Landmark Baptist Church of Cincinnati, Ohio, and Temple Baptist Church of Detroit (now Northridge Church).

Take Thomas Road, for example. Jerry Falwell joined hands in ministry with Roman Catholics, endorsed Chuck Colson’s ecumenical book *The Body*, heaped awards on Billy Graham, the prince of ecumenism, and tried to rescue the nutty, thieving Pentecostal ministry PTL Club. Falwell’s Liberty University has featured Catholics and Mormons as convocation speakers, hired a homosexual advocate to teach choreography, allowed a homosexual to enroll in the seminary, promoted Roman Catholic-style contemplative prayer in the courses *Evangelism and Christian Life* and *Foundations in Youth Ministry*, and featured emerging church preachers Rich Wilkerson Jr., and Erwin McManus as chapel speakers. Today the student application at Liberty University does not require a testimony of

the new birth. There is no compulsory church attendance and no doctrinal statement that teachers must sign.

This type of slippery slope goes far beyond the “dress issue.”

But the dress issue itself is no small matter, and to belittle it is evidence of weak biblical thinking and spiritual compromise. The fact that the CCM crowd cares little to nothing about the dress issue is a loud warning sign.

Bible believers can disagree over exactly where to draw the lines of dress, but it is impossible to take the Bible seriously and not take the issue of modest dress seriously.

The dress standard issue is a moral issue, and the Bible says a lot about it. It warns about the “attire of an harlot” (Prov. 7:10). Each godly generation must understand what this attire consists of and avoid every hint of it. The Bible warns that the man, in particular, is very visual in his sexuality (Job 31:1; Prov. 6:25; Mat. 5:28). It instructs us that God did not accept Adam and Eve’s fig leaf aprons but rather clothed them in robes (Gen. 3). It teaches us that nakedness, in a biblical sense, consists of such things as uncovering the thigh (Isa. 47:2).

The Word of God teaches us that even the woman’s hair and head covering is a real issue pertaining to the God-made distinction of the sexes (1 Cor. 11:1-16).

The radical moral change in Western society in the 1960s was accompanied by a change in dress standards. Immodest fashions broke down moral absolutes.

The inventor of the mini-skirt, Mary Quant, said that it “was a way of rebelling.” She said dress style should be “arrogant, aggressive, and sexy.” She knew exactly what she was doing. Her goal was to destroy the biblical standard of morality in society, and she did it by means of fashion.

And it wasn’t only *immodest* fashions that changed society. *Unisex* fashions went hand-in-hand with feminist ideology and encouraged the breakdown of sexual distinctions and had a significant role in the spread of and acceptance of homosexuality.

The issue of “dress standards” *can* be merely an issue of self-righteousness and hypocritical “Phariseeism” in the wrong hands, but the issue itself is biblical and important and the widespread belittling of it among Fundamental Baptists and others is evidence of deep spiritual compromise.

I have often warned about the dangers pertaining to “dress standards” when there is a wrong emphasis on the “externals.” The following excerpt from my book [*The Hyles Effect: A Spreading Blight*](#) is typical:

"It is important to be informed and exhorted about spiritual dangers, which is why the New Testament epistles contain so many warnings about error. But the solution to the problem we discuss in this report is to move beyond criticizing error and to labor to do something right.

"The solution is to dedicate ourselves to building spiritually-healthy, Christ-centered, Bible-based churches that stand unhesitatingly for the whole truth of God's Word and are separated from worldliness and apostasy, but that are pastored by godly men of genuine Christian character who are kind shepherds rather than pontificating lords, who rule by God's will rather than self-will -- churches that are careful about salvation and are in no hurry to pronounce people saved when the evidence is lacking; churches that are careful in receiving members; churches that love people; churches that practice discipline when it is necessary; churches that feed the people on a solid diet of Scripture rightly divided; churches that are training the people to be disciples of Christ and followers of God, not man; churches that are building godly homes; CHURCHES THAT KNOW THAT EXTERNAL SEPARATION IS ESSENTIAL BUT IT MUST REFLECT INNER SPIRITUAL REALITY AND THAT MERE BUSYNESS AND EXTERNAL STRICTNESS WITHOUT TRUTH IN THE INNER PARTS IS VAIN RELIGION; churches that pray; churches that worship God in spirit and in truth and do not conform their worship to the pattern of the world; churches that have an aggressive vision to preach the gospel to every soul but not by carnal means that are akin to worldly salesmanship campaigns" (Cloud, [The Hyles Effect](#)).

Tenth, *Worship Wars* is dangerous because the author says the devil is the author of the stance against rock music and contemporary worship music.

Bakss writes,

"... if I was the devil and wanted to implement a Satanic stroke of genius regarding music, I would convince Christians that popular music styles, which could carry their message to the masses, were somehow evil and unfit for use, thus giving Satan the advantage in the race to win hearts and minds. I would seek to thwart the growth of the doctrinally pure churches that had soul-winning fervour. I would not want them to utilise an added ingredient that would aid their cause even further -- contemporary music" (Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

If the devil is the author of the stance against contemporary Christian music, and if God wanted His people and churches to use rock/blues/jazz/soul/rap all along, then *ALL* of our forefathers were following the devil and blinded to God's will.

For a full half century, from the inception of Christian rock in the 1960s until just a few years ago, practically *EVERY* fundamental Baptist preacher took that "demonic" stand.

Bakss would have us believe that it was left for this generation of fundamental Baptists to discover the truth about the acceptableness of and godly usefulness of rock & roll.

Bakss' amazing statement about the devil's involvement in the stance against Christian rock comes at the end of a chapter in which he compares the largest churches of the 1960s with the largest churches of the 21st century.

He observes that the largest churches of the 21st century that were also large churches 45 years ago, have remained large by "transitioning" from "traditional" to "contemporary" music. In particular, he names Akron Baptist Temple of Akon, Ohio; First Baptist Church of Dallas; Canton Baptist Temple, Canton, Ohio; Landmark Baptist Church of Cincinnati; Temple Baptist Church of Detroit (now Northridge Church); First Baptist Church of Van Nuys, California; and Thomas Road Baptist Church of Lynchburg, Virginia.

What Pastor Bakss fails to tell his readers is that these churches have also "transitioned" toward a New Evangelical position and some are even now transitioning further toward an emerging position.

It is not possible, logically, to claim that there is no connection between the transition to contemporary music and a change in philosophical stance.

Eleventh, *Worship Wars* is dangerous because the author recommends Gary Thomas.

Chapter 19 of *Worship Wars* begins with a recommendation of *Sacred Pathways* by Gary Thomas.

"In 2013 I taught a series of messages entitled 'Wired for Worship'. As part of this series I spoke on the subject 'Everyone is Wired Differently'. The inspiration for these thoughts was from a book, 'Sacred Pathways,' by Gary Thomas. The book strips away the frustration of a one-size-fits-all spirituality and guides you toward a path of worship that frees you to be you. I found the book liberating to read and decided to develop a message based on the principles he wrote about that help remove the barriers that keep Christians locked into rigid methods of worship and praise" (Bakss, *Worship Wars*).

Nothing could be more dangerous than this unhesitating recommendation of Gary Thomas and his *Sacred Pathways*.

In *Sacred Pathways*, Thomas presents an unscriptural nine-fold temperament doctrine, which has no basis in Scripture rightly divided, and recommends contemplative prayer, including centering prayer, probably the most dangerous of all contemplative practices.

"In general however, centering prayer works like this: Choose a word (*Jesus or Father*, for example) as a focus for contemplative prayer. Repeat the word silently in your mind for a set amount of time (say, twenty minutes) until your heart seems to be repeating the word by itself, just as naturally and involuntarily as breathing" (Thomas, *Sacred Pathways*, p. 185).

Centering prayer has zero scriptural authority, and it is dangerous in the extreme. The believer is taught to pray to “our Father which art in heaven,” not to the God that dwelleth in the center of his being.

To seek a direct “experience” with God in the center of one’s being, to try to create a “peaceful” state by means of a mantra, is a recipe for spiritual delusion.

We have documented how this type of thing has repeatedly been a bridge to pantheism, panentheism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and even goddess worship. (See the free eBook [Evangelicals and Contemplative Prayer](#), www.wayoflife.org.)

Gary Thomas is recommending the contemplative mysticism that was borrowed from Rome’s dark monasticism and is now sweeping through evangelicalism at a breathtaking pace.

I have been warning about this for ten years.

Now we see a contemplative manual recommended by an Independent Baptist pastor who is fishing in all sorts of dangerous waters.

This is the type of error and spiritual danger that is everywhere present in the world of contemporary worship music.

Twelfth, *Worship Wars* is dangerous because the author doesn’t understand contemporary worship music’s emphasis on experience.

As I read this book, I was repeatedly struck with the thought that the author doesn’t understand his subject properly. He throws out a lot of material, a lot of facts, a lot of quotes, and even a lot of Bible studies, but he lacks spiritual discernment and a proper background to understand the essence of contemporary music.

In the chapter on “Pull of Worship Music,” Pastor Bakss deals with what he calls the “emotional part to the worship wars.”

He goes to some length to prove that it is not wrong for emotions to enter into worship.

This is another red herring. It misses the point. Man is an emotional being, and obviously emotions come to play in worship.

And to sing loud or to be exuberant in worship is not wrong in its place.

But this simply is not the issue in regard to the charismatic aspect of contemporary worship music. The issue is that the music is made (for the large part) by charismatics who have

the objective of creating a sensual worship atmosphere and experience.

The charismatic aspect of contemporary worship music is no sideline. It is so prevalent that Jerry Huffman, late editor of *Calvary Contender*, rightly observed that CCM could stand for Charismatic Christian Music.

We have documented these things in the video presentation [The Transformational Power of Contemporary Praise Music](#) and in the book [Baptist Music Wars](#), both available for free at www.wayoflife.org.

To have a feeling while worshipping the Lord is one thing, but to focus on a feeling, to try to create feelings, to use music to create a mystical atmosphere in which the worshiper has an alleged direct revelatory *experience* with God, is quite another thing.

In “traditional” worship, a feeling is not the objective and focus. Feelings come and go. They can’t be the basis of anything solid.

In contemporary worship, though, a feeling and sensual *experience* is very much the objective and focus.

Contemporary worship music in its original setting is largely a rock & roll feeling-fest. It is designed to create an emotional experience, a sensual experience, as opposed to a sacred music style that focuses on edifying through the mind and heart.

Graham Kendrick, one of the biggest names in contemporary worship, says, “The old way of preaching and singing began to give way to an expectation that ... God would visit us, and we’d EXPERIENCE HIS PRESENCE IN A TANGIBLE SORT OF WAY” (interview June 11, 2002 with Chris Davidson of Integrity Music).

Secret Place Ministries exemplifies the contemporary worship philosophy in that they “long for an ENCOUNTER WITH THE PRESENCE of God” (SecretPlaceMinistries.org).

The objective of the extremely influential Worship Central school of contemporary worship operated by Alpha International is “to ENCOUNTER GOD.”

Gateway Worship, which has a large influence in the contemporary praise movement, has the objective of bringing people into a “sense and EXPERIENCE OF GOD’S PRESENCE.”

We see that contemporary worship music is designed to produce an experience. It’s all about a feeling, a sense of encountering God’s presence, which is why it incorporates the

backbeat, beat anticipation, and other forms of modern dance syncopation that have a powerful sensual effect and that have the ability to create an experiential sensual atmosphere.

This is extremely dangerous. How does God's Spirit *feel*? This is pure charismatic mysticism. Where is the biblical justification for "feeling the Spirit"?

We are warned repeatedly about the danger of spiritual deception. We are to walk by faith, not by sight. We are warned about "another spirit" and are instructed that the devil is exceedingly subtle in his deceiving power (2 Cor. 11:3).

We are told that the devil transforms himself into an angel of light and his ministers as "ministers of righteousness" (2 Cor. 11:13-15). We are to be "sober and vigilant" (1 Peter 5:8).

It is biblical warnings like this that caused me to pull away from the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement after I was saved in 1973. I was led to Christ by a godly Pentecostal man who encouraged me to seek Pentecostal experiences, but when I tested this by Scripture, the Lord showed me (among other things) the danger of the "let go and let God" approach, which is fundamental to the charismatic movement.

I learned from Scripture that one must retain a sober, testing mindset at all times, and when you do that, you will be exceedingly wary of "feelings" that purport to be "God."

Contemporary worshipers are taught to release themselves to the music, and in light of the warnings of God's Word, I refuse to do any such thing.

MercyMe's popular "Word of God Speak" is an example of the charismatic mysticism that characterizes CCM. (MercyMe's music is cited in a positive manner in Bakss' *Worship Wars*, though not this particular song.) Following is an excerpt:

"Word of God speak, would you pour down like rain, washing my eyes to see your majesty. To be still and know that you're in this place, please let me stay and rest in your holiness. ... Finding myself in the midst of you, beyond the music, beyond the noise. All that I need is to be with you and in the quiet I hear your voice."

The "Word of God" here is not the Bible; it is a mystical feeling, a direct revelation. It is found in the "quiet," "beyond the noise." It is an experience of the "presence" of God.

This "open yourself to the flow of the Spirit," which permeates CCM, has led to all sorts of unscriptural doctrines and practices. It is this type of mysticism that led CCM songwriter Jack Hayford, author of the popular worship song "Majesty," to say that while he was driving past a Catholic church God told him not to criticize it.

True biblical worship is not based on *feeling*. It is not an emotional *experience*. It is giving thanks to God and serving Him obediently **NO MATTER HOW I FEEL AND NO MATTER WHAT THE EXPERIENCE OR CIRCUMSTANCE**.

Note the attributes of true worship from Hebrews 13:15-16:

- offering thanksgiving to God in all circumstances
- obedience to God's commands
- communicating to those who have needs

Consider the example of Abraham going up Mt. Moriah to sacrifice Isaac. That was one of the purest acts of worship recorded in Scripture, but there was no music, no dancing, no emotional high.

Consider the example of Job sitting in the ash heap scraping his boils, mourning the loss of his children and wealth, *and glorifying the Lord*. This is another one of the purest acts of worship ever offered by man to God, yet it was an experience with no musical soundtrack and no emotional high, and any *feeling* that happened to be involved was negative.

True Christian living and worship is faith-oriented rather than feeling- or experience-oriented.

"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For **WE WALK BY FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT:**)" (2 Cor. 5:6-7).

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but **HOPE THAT IS SEEN IS NOT HOPE:** for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. 8:22-25).

The fruit of the feeling/experience orientation of CCM is already evident in Pastor Bakss' church.

His book contains testimonies of his church members. The first one is from a 15-year-old girl named Maggie.

"Ever since I started youth, worshiping God became so real for me. Through worship I was able to express my love toward God. I went from not singing at all to lifting both hands and belting out to words no matter how bad I sounded. I learnt just how much God loves me and how much He has done for me through worship songs. I will never stop singing and praising God because when you do, **YOU FEEL SURROUNDED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT**. I have become aware of what **THE HOLY SPIRIT FEELS LIKE** because of everyone singing at youth. **THE HOLY SPIRIT JUST FILLS THE ROOM** and all you can do is

surrender everything to God” (Maggie, cited by Bakss, Worship Wars).

Bakss includes these testimonies to demonstrate that his new philosophy is producing “good fruit,” but in truth the fruit is confusion and error.

Bakss’ youth are already addicted to trying to *feel* God. They confuse the effect of powerful music with the presence of the Holy Spirit. They equate yielding to the music and yielding to their emotions with yielding to God.

The long-term fruit of this error is yet to be seen. It will be in full bloom after Pastor Bakss is gone, and it will eventually unite this Independent Baptist church to the one-world “church.”

Pastor Bakss boldly rejects the concept of a slippery slope that the late Pastor Graham West and others have warned about.

But the “slippery slope” exists, and all of the red herrings in the world can’t change it.

CHAPPELL’S POSITION LEADS TO BAKSS

For the moment, Pastor Bakss doesn’t represent the majority of Independent Baptists. He is a good ways down the slippery slope and has actually crossed the bridge to the dangerous waters of CCM.

From my perspective, currently the majority position is represented by that of Paul Chappell and Lancaster Baptist Church of Lancaster, California.

This is the position that accepts “cautious” dabbling with CCM but still issues warnings about CCM in general.

This is the position that Majesty Music and Bob Jones University have recently publicized. (See “[Dr. Garlock Misses an Important Point](#),” Feb. 3, 2015, www.wayoflife.org.)

If I understand their position correctly, Paul Chappell and Majesty Music would disagree with Bakss that hip hop and metal rock are acceptable under some conditions.

They would disagree with his stance that music is morally neutral and with his

whitewashing of the essence and effect of the rock back beat, and they would disagree with his justification of the emotionalism and experience orientation of charismatic music.

But they agree on one major, fundamental principle, and that is that a Bible-believing church can safely and legitimately dabble with contemporary worship music, even the music of Stuart Townend and the Gettys.

For the present, Chappell’s dabbling goes beyond that of Majesty Music and Bob Jones, but this won’t be true in a few years. In this issue, a little leaven does indeed leaven the whole lump. (For about 25 examples of the use of contemporary worship music by Lancaster Baptist Church, Lancaster, California, see “[Analyzing Lancaster’s Music](#),” Oct. 29, 2014, www.wayoflife.org.)

By using CCM, however “selectively,” they are all building a bridge to a world that is very dangerous and harmful to the faith once delivered to the saints.

If you build a bridge, people will cross it to investigate the other side.

Bakss has crossed it and likes what he sees. Many of Paul Chappell’s music people, church members, and graduates have also crossed it.

The carelessness, ignorance, and lackadaisical attitude of the average Independent Baptist preacher on the music issue assures us that it won’t be long before Bakss’ position will be acceptable by the majority of Independent Baptists.



DIGGING IN THE WALLS

God commanded the prophet Ezekiel to dig in the walls of Israel's temple and observe the evils being done in secret by apostate religious leaders of that day. "Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall ... And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. So I went in and saw. ..." (Ezek. 8:7-10).

Ezekiel was then instructed to preach against the errors of the leaders and to tell the people the things he had witnessed.

"Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man. ... Then I spake unto them of the captivity all the things that the Lord had shewed me" (Ezek. 11:4,25).

The hour in which we live is very similar to that of Ezekiel's day. Many of those who profess to be the people of God are apostate. It was prophesied in the New Testament Scriptures that such would be the case in the closing hours of our age. This will culminate in the brief worldwide rule of an utterly apostate Harlot "church" (2 Tim. 3-4; 1 Tim. 4; 2 Pet. 2-3; Jude; Rev. 17).

As in Ezekiel's day much of the apostasy of our hour is hidden from the view of the average Christian. We intend by God's grace to "dig in the walls" of modern ecumenism and to expose and cry out against the things we find. In this section we also report on secular events which are relevant to Christians. May God give us ears to hear, minds to understand, and hearts to obey. Is the truth of God not worthy of defense?



JEWIS CONTINUE TO RETURN TO ISRAEL (Friday Church News Notes, January 1, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Jewish immigration to Israel continues at a rapid pace. Fear of growing anti-semitism in Europe and other places, combined with economic incentives, is driving the immigration from a human perspective, but from a biblical perspective it is a fulfillment of prophecy. For the second consecutive year, the largest group has come from France. A total of 7,238 French citizens immigrated to Israel in 2015 under the Law of Return ("France is Israel's largest source of aliyah," *The Times of Israel*, Dec. 22, 2015). This is 10% more than 2014, which was the highest number from France since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Some 19,000 French Jews have immigrated since 2012. Jews continue to return from Russia as well, numbering more than 11,000 in the last two years. Nearly 3,000 per year emigrate from the United States. "And he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off! Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, O my people, and bring you into the land of Israel" (Ezekiel 37:11-12).

THIRTY PERCENT OF SOUTHERN BAPTISTS ACCEPTING OF HOMOSEXUALITY (Friday Church News Notes, January 1, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -

According to a new Pew Research poll, 30 percent of Southern Baptists agree that "homosexuality should be accepted by society" ("Nearly Third of Southern Baptists," *Pulpitandpen.org*, Dec. 18, 2015). I have long said that Southern Baptist churches are the major reason why "the South" is so morally corrupt. A large percentage of Southerners are Southern Baptist, a percentage large enough to set the moral tone for the region, and that percentage was much larger when I was growing up. What you have in the "Bible Belt," for the most part, is a worldly lifestyle covered with a thin veneer of churchianity. The average Southerner can talk a good talk about knowing the Lord, but his walk doesn't match his talk. This is not a new thing. Much the same condition prevailed in my youth. When the rock & roll culture blasted on the scene with Elvis in the 50s and the Beatles in the 60s, Southern Baptist kids were right in the middle of it, loving every aspect of it, including the dating, the dancing, the "petting," and the vain pursuit of worldly "cool." Growing up in Southern Baptist churches, I can only recall a bare handful of sincere Christian young people who obeyed God and separated from the world. My younger sisters have the same memory, as we have discussed many times over the years. Those who walk in lock-step with the world will adapt the world's thinking. "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Corinthians 15:33).

NEW HAMPSHIRE LAW WOULD GET GOVERNMENT OUT OF MARRIAGE LICENSING BUSINESS (Friday Church News Notes, January 1, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Get Government Out of Marriage: New Hampshire Bill Would Nullify Both Sides in Practice," Tenth Amendment Center, Dec. 14, 2015: "A bill has been filed in the New Hampshire state House that would end mandatory government licensing of marriages in the state,



effectively nullifying in practice both major sides of the contentious national debate over government-sanctioned marriage. HB1596 acknowledges the right of two individuals to marry and that because of this ‘it is improper for the government to license a right.’ The bill reads, ‘The state of New Hampshire is compelled to return to the practice of certificate of notice of intent to marry and a certificate of marriage which existed until 1997 and which provides interested parties the opportunity to object to a proposed marriage.’ Instead of having to get a state marriage license, couples would provide a certificate of notice of intent to marry and a certificate of marriage. ... The marriage certificate would record that the marriage ceremony took place and records the person who solemnized the marriage. The certificate would be completed by the bride, groom, the officiant, and the clerk of the town or city. The certificate would then be used to register the marriage.”

ROME SAYS JEWS ARE SAVED, SHOULD NOT BE TARGET OF EVANGELISM (Friday Church News Notes, January 1, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - An official report published by Rome says that Jews (and everyone else) are saved, and Jews should not be the target of evangelism. The document, “The Gifts and Calling of God are Irrevocable,” was published by The Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, one of Rome’s many ecumenical ventures that began with the Second Vatican Council. The fifth chapter of the report “emphasizes that through Jesus Christ--and through his

death and resurrection--all people have a part in salvation, all are saved. Although Jews cannot believe in Jesus Christ as the universal redeemer, they have a part in salvation, because the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.” The sixth chapter deals with evangelism, and urges Catholics to “refrain from attempts at conversion or mission toward Jews” (“Summary of ‘The Gifts and Calling of God,’” *Vatican Information Service*, Dec. 10, 2015). If Jews are saved by means of the covenants of God without faith in Jesus Christ, why did Christ Himself call upon them to repent and believe (Luke 13:1-5), and why did He warn them of eternal judgment when they rejected Him (Matthew 11:20-24)? The Roman Catholic Church is the heart and soul of Mystery Babylon, and she is uniting with all of her daughters today. Note that this latest document says that ALL men have a part in salvation. It is impossible to be more ecumenical than that. “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will *let*, until he be taken out of the way” (2 Thessalonians 2:7).

MOTHER TERESA SET FOR SAINTHOOD (Friday Church News Notes, January 1, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - With the declaration that a second miracle has occurred, Pope Francis had given clearance for Mother Teresa to be canonized next September, the 19th anniversary of her death. Sainthood requires the documentation of two miracles attributed to the deceased individual. The first, in 1998, was the cure of a stomach tumor in an Indian woman. Though the bishop declared this a miracle performed by the dead nun, the woman’s husband said he believed that medicine had cured his wife. The second case, in 2008, was the “inexplicable” recovery of a Brazilian man who woke from a coma after his wife prayed to the dead nun. By her own admission, Mother Teresa found only darkness in her spiritual life and practice. This is documented in the shocking book

Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light, the Private Writings of the Saint of Calcutta (2007), which contains statements made by the nun to her confessors and superiors over a period of more than 65 years. In March 1953, she wrote to her confessor: “... THERE IS SUCH TERRIBLE DARKNESS WITHIN ME, as if everything was dead. It has been like this more or less from the time I started ‘the work.’” In 1979 she wrote: “THE SILENCE AND THE EMPTINESS IS SO GREAT -- that I look and do not see, -- Listen and do not hear.” Her private statements about the spiritual darkness she encountered in contemplative prayer continued in this vein until her death, and they are the loudest possible warning about the danger of the Catholic contemplative mysticism which is sweeping through evangelicalism. Contemplative practices, such as the Jesus Prayer, breath prayers, visualizing prayer, centering prayer, and *lectio divina* are

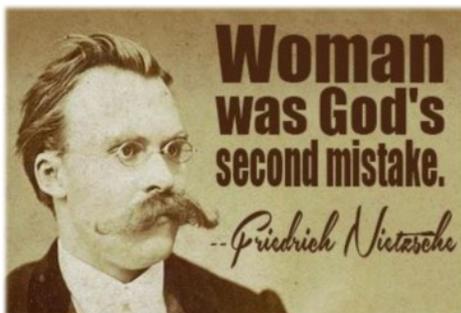


exceedingly dangerous. They are vehicles to bring practitioners into contact with demons. Many who practice these things end up believing in a pagan concept of God such as pantheism (God is everything) and panentheism (God is in everything). Through these practices people typically become increasingly ecumenical and interfaith in thinking. See *Evangelicals and Contemplative Prayer*, available in print and free eBook editions from www.wayoflife.org.

A TRUE SAINT (Friday Church News Notes, January 1, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The Roman Catholic doctrine of

sainthood proves its heretical nature. Nowhere do we find Christians in the New Testament churches praying to saints. The Bible instructs us to pray to God the Father through Jesus Christ, the one Mediator between God and men (1 Tim. 2:5). To pray to a mere man or woman is blasphemy. In the New Testament the term "saint" is applied to all born again Christians, not to a special class of deceased Christians. See Acts 9:13, 32, 41; 26:10; Rom. 8:27; 12:13; 15:25, 31; 16:2, 15; 1 Cor. 6:1, 2; 14:33; 16:1, 15; 2 Cor. 8:4; 9:1, 12; 13:13; Eph. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:2, 4; Phile. 7; Heb. 6:10; 13:24. Even the carnal Christians at Corinth are called saints (2 Cor. 1:1). Born again Christians are not saints because they are sinless and special; they are saints because they have a sinless Savior and He has removed their sin before God (Rev. 1:5, 6; 1 Pet. 2:9, 10). In the sight of God, through Jesus Christ, the believer is "holy and unblameable and unproveable" (Col. 1:22). This is why we can be called saints. Praise the Lord's holy name!

GOD OR INSANITY (Friday Church News Notes, January 1, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Three months after publishing the final in a series of books blaspheming God and Christ and biblical truth and exalting man as god, the prominent philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) went insane and lived as a pathetic recluse for the last eleven years of his life, nursed by his sister. His final book was titled *The Antichrist*. The following comment on Nietzsche's life is excerpted from Kevin Swanson, *Apostate: The Men who Destroyed the Christian West*, 2013:



"When the self-consistent humanist finally comes to the realization that there is no essential meaning in what he says, he is forced to abandon rationality completely, and opt for insanity. If according to his worldview, the brain is just another natural process in a purely material world then what are these immaterial ideas? If the brain is a collage of chemical reactions similar to the chemical processes that happen when grass grows in the yard, why should we take the ideas coming from the mind of these men seriously? Without an immaterial God as the absolute Source of wisdom and knowledge, there is no possibility for meaning or human rationality. The most self-consistent brilliant philosopher will either turn to God or turn insane."

N. IRELAND PASTOR ACQUITTED OF OFFENSE AGAINST ISLAM

(Friday Church News Notes, January 8, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - A pastor in Northern Ireland has been acquitted of charges that stemmed from remarks against Islam that he delivered in a sermon a year and a half ago. The judge ruled that the 78-year-old pastor's words were "offensive" but not "grossly offensive," therefore not falling under the purview of the 2003 Communications Act. In a sermon in May 2014, Pastor McConnell of Whitewell Metropolitan Chapel of northern Belfast defended Miriam Ibrahim who was in jail and was facing 80 lashes of the whip or possibly death because she converted to Christianity and married a Christian man. Pastor McConnell said, "People say there are good Muslims in Britain--that may be so--but I don't trust them. Islam is heathen, Islam is satanic, Islam is a doctrine spawned in hell." Because the sermon was streamed online, McConnell was subsequently charged with violating the Communications Act that forbade "sending, or causing to be sent, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that was grossly offensive." The judge said,



"The courts need to be very careful not to criminalise speech which, however contemptible, is no more than offensive. It is not the task of the criminal law to censor offensive utterances" ("Pastor McConnell not guilty," *BBC News*, Jan. 5, 2016). After the trial, Pastor McConnell said his only regret was the response from the Muslim community that he was "out to hurt them." Sammy Wilson, Democratic Unionist Party MP, who appeared as a character witness for McConnell, told *BBC Radio Ulster's Talkback*, "Anyone who is engaged in public debate or speech ought to be happy at the result today. We live in a free society and in a free society, people should be free to express the beliefs that they hold." He added that if Mr. McConnell had accepted a police caution, it would have introduced "a chill factor" into issues of public speech.

CATHOLICS, PENTECOSTALS, AND SOUTHERN BAPTISTS IN "BEAUTIFUL UNITY"

(Friday Church News Notes, January 8, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Last week, Southern Baptist President Ronnie Floyd participated in the the Onething 2015 interdenominational conference in Kansas City, hosted by the International House of Prayer (IHOP). In his speech to the rockin' mixed multitude, the Baptist pastor said, "My being here isn't an endorsement of your theology or your endorsing my orthodoxy. ... We're not in total agreement about life, ministry or the Bible. ... Yet my being here is a clear indication that people must come together and pray" ("Southern Baptist President Leads," *Charisma News*, Jan. 4, 2016). Pastor Floyd has no biblical authority to



pray with a mixed multitude representing different theologies and even different gospels. IHOP is a radical charismatic outfit that believes it will release the judgments described in the book of Revelation and usher in the return of Christ by its “spiritual warfare.” As we have documented in the book [End-Time Confusion](#), IHOP is built on lying prophecies and false “signs and wonders.” They are deceived by demons masquerading as angels of light. One of the worship leaders at Onething 2015 was Matt Maher, a Roman Catholic who prays to Mary and believes that his musical calling is to create ecumenical oneness. Other Catholic charismatics were in attendance. Leslie Bertucci posted, “As a Catholic Charismatic, I wept tears of joy so many times this week as I had the privilege of worshipping the living God with so many diverse brothers and sisters in Christ.” Ryan Baptista added, “There was a beautiful unity across denominations this week.” Ronny Floyd is disobeying the Word of God and is therefore helping create a “one world church.” The Bible commands God’s people to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3), but Pastor Floyd did not do this. If he were an earnest contender, he would not have been invited in the first place. The Bible commands God’s people to mark and avoid those that create divisions by false doctrine (Romans 16:17). Floyd ignored this and the Bible’s many other separation commands. Further, the Bible commands God’s people to have the same mind and judgment (1 Cor. 1:10). The unity spoken of in Scripture is always a unity in truth. This forbids the type of “unity in diversity” that is promoted by IHOP. The spiritual

blindness and deep compromise of the Southern Baptist Convention was on full display by Floyd’s presence at Onething. (For more about IHOP, including an eyewitness report of their 24/7 prayer room, see [End-Time Confusion: The International House of Prayer](#), available in the free eBook section at www.wayoflife.org.)

SECULAR REPORTER EXPLAINS HILLSONG’S POPULARITY (Friday Church News Notes, January 8, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Hillsong is one of the world’s most influential groups of megachurches and produces some of the most influential contemporary worship music. Hillsong is a multimillion dollar brand, and its leaders know exactly what they are doing by conforming Christianity to the Western pop culture. A reporter for the ultra-hip, “metro-sexuality” *GQ* magazine defined Hillsong’s popularity in a recent report on Hillsong New York City. After identifying Hillsong as the church of choice for the likes of Justin Bieber, Kendall Jenner, Selena Gomez, and Bono, and after interviewing Hillsong attendees, she says: “And all around the church, that is the story the congregation tells from beneath their hats: that finally there are clergymen who look familiar, who offer messages that relate to their actual lives, who accept that they’ve lived in New York long enough to know **it won’t fly to smear gay people, or tell women to go home and have kids, or expect young, bright, beautiful, maybe-cool people to dress humbly and plainly and ignore the thrills of modern life in a mega-city.** This church is the one, finally, that really is different” (Taffy Brodesser-Akner, “What Would Cool Jesus Do?” *GQ*, Dec. 17, 2015). Taffy’s report makes it clear that she doesn’t understand the gospel, thinking that baptism is regeneration, but then again, a visit to Hillsong probably didn’t help her much in the theology department, that not being their strong suit. She definitely understands worldly cool,

though, and she recognizes that Hillsong’s draw is its compromise with the pop culture and its refusal to preach against the elements of worldly cool that people love the most. If Hillsong suddenly started preaching repentance and the whole counsel of God and proclaiming the command of God’s Word to separate from “the thrills of modern life in a megacity,” they would just as suddenly be *mega nothing*. I suggest that they start with this one: “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*” (Ephesians 5:11).

SECULAR REPORTER UNDERSTANDS THE MOTIVATION FOR CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANITY (Friday Church News Notes, January 8, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - In a recent report in a magazine that epitomizes the cutting edge of the Western pop culture, the writer explains the motivation for contemporary Christianity. “Hip” pastors aren’t fooling the world for a minute. Here is what the reporter said about Hillsong New York City: “I was witnessing the logical conclusion of **an evolutionary convergence between coolness and Christianity** that began at the dawn of the millennium, when progressive-minded Christians, **terrified of a faithless future, desperately rended their garments and replaced them with skinny jeans and flannel shirts and piercings in the cartilage of their ears, in a very ostentatious effort to be more modern and more relatable**” (Taffy Brodesser-Akner, “What Would



Cool Jesus Do?” *GQ*, Dec. 17, 2015). She nailed it. Cool Christianity is about trying to be acceptable to the world, but hip pastors aren’t trend-setters; they are pathetic followers of whatever the world happens to be wearing/hearing/doing. If an “old-fashioned,” pre-21st century, dinosaur “fundamentalist” Christian happens into a cool mega-church, he or she is the one who is really dressed differently, the one really going against the stream, the one really marching to a different tune, the one not being conformed to peer pressure. The uber-cool female reporter for *GQ* understands exactly what that crowd is up to. They aren’t fooling anyone but themselves, if that. Cool Christianity is not about truth; it’s about being accepted by this generation and it’s about love for the sensuality of the world. Cool and Christ are contradictory masters, and you can’t love both. That decidedly non-cool James, from the first century, could tear up any megachurch with one message. “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4).

SECULAR REPORTER DESCRIBES THE POWER OF CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP MUSIC: HOT-BREATHED AND SEXY (Friday Church News Notes, January 8, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - While researching Hillsong New York City, a reporter for *GQ* magazine



experienced the power of Hillsong’s worship music. Taffy Brodesser-Akner described the experience as follows: “The music of Hillsong is a catalog of Selena Gomez-grade ballads, with melodies that all resemble one another, pleasingly, like spa music. ... **Lyrically, it’s a hymn, and yet the singing is hot-breathed and sexy-close into microphones. It made my body feel confused**” (“What Would Cool Jesus Do?” *GQ*, Dec. 17, 2015). What the reporter experienced is the confusion of combining the holy with the sensual. From my late 60s and early 70s “hippie” days, I understand all too well the sensual power of rock & roll, even in its “soft” forms. After I came to Christ in 1973 at age 23, the Spirit of God dealt with me about separating from the “lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John. 15-17), which is a perfect definition of the music I had loved since the early 60s. It was not an easy decision or a quick one, but one day, probably in early 1974, I shut off my car radio and turned my back on rock & roll for good. I have never regretted it, and through the years I have re-examined that decision before the Lord and have been reaffirmed and strengthened in my resolve. I made that decision because rock is sensual and worldly. By its lyrics and music, it has, from its inception, promoted rebellion to God’s “strict” path of holiness. More than any other one societal influence, rock has promoted selfishness, stirred up rebellion, broken up homes, created alienation, encouraged moral relativism. I lived rock & roll, and I have studied rock & roll. The *GQ* reporter unknowingly wrote one of the most candid and accurate descriptions of contemporary worship music that I have ever read. “Hot-breathed and sexy” (apart from the marriage bed, Hebrews 13:4) has nothing to do with biblical Christianity, and the fact that CCM can be described as making someone’s “body feel confused” is an irrefutable witness to the fact that it is *not* holy. “Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and



adulterers God will judge” (Hebrews 13:4).

THE HEATHEN RAGE (Friday Church News Notes, January 8, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Psalm 2 is one of the Bible’s amazing prophecies. It describes the atheism and moral rebellion of the end times. “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, *saying*, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us” (Psalm 2:1-3). Rage against God and His holy laws is the chief characteristic of the humanistic philosophy of the past three centuries, the philosophy that has largely overthrown the influence of Christianity in Western culture. In *The Age of Reason*, Thomas Paine (1737-1809) called the Bible “a book of lies and contradictions” and said it is more likely “the word of a demon than the word of God.” Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) rejected a God who punishes those who displease Him. Bentham was an apologist for homosexuality and exhorted governments not to legislate against “drunkenness and fornication.” Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) called himself “the most terrible opponent of Christianity.” Nietzsche concluded his autobiography *Ecce Homo (Behold the Man)* with the blasphemous words, “Dionysus vs. the Crucified” (not long before he went insane). John Dewey (1859-1952), father of “progressive education” and co-author of the *Humanist Manifesto*, called God “a faded piece of metaphysical goods”

(Dewey, *“The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy,”* 1916). Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980), father of existentialism and perhaps the most influential philosopher of the 20th century, was an atheist whose “life was one continuous celebration of debauchery.” In his autobiography, Sartre blasphemed the Holy Spirit, claiming that he caught Him and threw Him out of his life. Rage against God’s holy laws is also the chief characteristic of the western pop culture that has spread throughout the earth. The rage is expressed continually through movies, television, literature, the news media, the fields of education, fashion, and art. The rebellion is seen in pagan religions, communism, evolution, militant atheism (e.g., the American Atheists paid for billboard ads in September 2012 calling the God of the Bible “sadistic” and Jesus a “useless Savior”), and the homosexual rights movement.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FAMILY IN AMERICA (Friday Church News Notes, January 15, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -



According to the latest Pew Research study, “traditional” two-parent households now account for less than 50% of American families. Whereas in 1960, 73% of children lived with two married parents in their first marriage, today only 46% are in this situation. Whereas in 1960, 83% of people younger than 50 were in their first marriage, today 67% are. Whereas in 1960, 9% of children were living in a single-parent home, today 26% are. Whereas in 1960, just 5% of births occurred outside of marriage, today out-of-wedlock births stand at 40%. And

the racial divide in these social ills is great. Whereas 84% of Asian children and 78% of white children are living in a two-parent married household, only 38% of black children are in this situation (and only 22% of those are parents in their first marriage). There are many reasons for this dramatic change in American society, but three major ones are the apostasy and compromise of the churches, the public school system and its atheistic, amoral John Dewey agenda, and the pop culture with its “me, me, me” philosophy. But God’s people don’t have to flow with society or be destroyed with its destruction. We are pilgrims in a strange land, and we must march to a different tune. By God’s grace, my wife and I are planning to celebrate our 40th anniversary this year. Our children have good marriages. Our grandchildren are being raised for Christ in good churches. None of our children or grandchildren ever attended public school. The churches we lead and are associated with are producing the same good fruit. Divorce is almost unheard of among our church members unless they come to us already divorced. Many say we are too “strict,” but we aren’t stricter than God’s Word requires. We give liberty where God gives liberty, but there is no liberty for God’s people to flirt with the wicked things of this world, and the fruit of holy separation is good and generational. “And have NO fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*” (Eph 5:11).

POPE CALLS BAPTISM “THE DATE OF REBIRTH AS CHILDREN OF GOD” (Friday Church News Notes, January 15, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Speaking from the a window of the Papal Palace overlooking St. Peter’s Square on January 10, Pope Francis urged his audience to celebrate the day of their baptism. The sermon was in celebration of Angelus, the feast of the baptism of Christ. The pope said that baptism “is the date of our rebirth as children of God” and the occasion when the Holy Spirit “destroys original sin” and “liberates us

from the dominion of darkness, which is sin, and brings us into the realm of light” (“Do you celebrate the day of your baptism?” Pope Francis asks,” *EWTN News*, Jan. 10, 2016). The pope concluded with a prayer to Mary that she would help the baptized to live out their baptism “with joy and fervor.” The majority of “evangelicals” would see this as a false gospel. Yet Pope Francis is widely upheld as a great man of God among evangelicals, including a large percentage of contemporary worship musicians. How can a man of God hold a false gospel? New Evangelical compromise of the late 1940s produced this spiritual confusion and blindness.



The same compromise is pervading Independent Baptists today, and it will produce the same results, yet we wonder what percentage of fundamental Baptist church members (or even pastors) could pass a simple test on New Evangelicalism, such as the following:

- Who was the man who coined the term New Evangelicalism?
- In what year did that happen?
- What was the occasion when the term was coined?
- What are four major principles of New Evangelicalism?
- What are three ways that New Evangelicalism spread?
- What are three prominent schools that promoted New Evangelicalism?
- What evangelist did more than any other one man to popularize New Evangelicalism?
- Other than this evangelist, who are four prominent Christian leaders who have popularized New Evangelicalism?
- What are three major organizations that have popularized New Evangelicalism?

(The answers to these questions can be found in [New Evangelicalism: Its History, Characteristics, and Fruit](#), available in print and free eBook editions from Way of Life, www.wayoflife.org.)

ASSASSINATION PLOT AGAINST NETANYAHU FOILED (Friday Church News Notes, January 15, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -



The following is excerpted from “Plot to Assassinate,” breakingisraelnews.com, Jan. 8, 2016: “Two Israeli Arabs were indicted on Friday for planning to assassinate Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Hazam Sanduka, 22, an Arab resident of Jerusalem’s Old City, and Fahdi Abu Kia’an, 19, an Israeli Bedouin from the Negev, were arrested last month as part of a Hamas cell and charged with assisting an enemy at wartime, contact with a foreign agent, plotting a terrorist attack and manufacturing explosives. Prosecutor Anat Greenbaum wrote in the indictment that they had helped Hamas operative Ahmad Jamal Mousa Azzam. Azzam, a resident of Qalqilya in Samaria, rented an apartment in the Abu Dis neighborhood of East Jerusalem. Azzam and Sanduka acquired ingredients to make explosives and planned on carrying out several attacks. Sanduka, who had worked in a security firm in the past, initiated the plan to plant explosives under the stage in Jerusalem’s Payis Arena where Netanyahu was scheduled to speak. They also planned a large attack in Jerusalem for earlier this month. The plans were directed by Hamas in Gaza and the two men were in constant contact with the terror organization. Kia’an was identified as a supporter of the Islamic State (ISIS) and planned on transporting weapons from

Judea and Samaria to the interior of Israel in order to carry out attacks against Israelis. He had also agreed to carry out a mass suicide attack by driving a car loaded with explosives.”

MODERN PHARISEES STILL PERSECUTE “MESSIANIC JEWS” (Friday Church News Notes, January 15, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -

The following is excerpted from “Jesus Removed from Headlines in Israel,” *Israel Today*, Jan. 4, 2016: “Recently, I reported exciting news about a series of Hebrew-language testimonies promoting faith in Jesus by Messianic Jews on the front page of the popular *Walla! News*, one of Israel’s largest news corporations. With sadness, I must now report that the video series about Jesus has been cancelled, and all references to Jesus and Messianic Jews have been removed from the site. *Walla!* had taken a bold and calculated risk broadcasting a Messianic



campaign that promotes interest in Jesus to their massive Israeli audience. We expected that there would be serious resistance to the unprecedented promotional by Messianic Jews on mainstream Israeli media. ... According to Erez Soref, president of the Israel College of the Bible and one of the project’s initiators, here’s what happened: ‘*Walla! News* received intense threats from some within the Ultra-Orthodox community, which banded together threatening to sue the company because of the exposure *Walla! News* provided to the name of Yeshua and to Messianic Jews. *Walla! News* received additional threats from Ultra-Orthodox representatives, threatening a major consumer boycott ... *Walla! News*

decided to remove the interviews from the site on Friday, the 25th of December.”

DRACONIAN LAWS AGAINST OFFENDING TRANSEXUALS IN NEW YORK CITY (Friday Church News Notes, January 15, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -

The following is excerpted from “You Could Be Fined \$250,000,” InfoWars.com, Dec. 29, 2015: “According to brand new rules that were just issued by the New York City Commission on Human Rights, you could potentially be fined \$250,000 if you purposely offend someone that is transgender. This includes such offenses as calling a transgender woman ‘him’ when she wants to be called ‘her,’ or not allowing a transgender woman to use the women’s bathroom. These guidelines are particularly focused on the behavior of landlords, employers and businesses, but they will undoubtedly create a chilling effect on speech all throughout New York City. Needless to say, these new regulations will result in a flood of litigation as transgender individuals exercise their new ‘rights.’ According to the New York City Commission on Human Rights, employers must now use ‘an individual’s preferred name, pronoun and title’ when referring to that person. And some of the pronouns that were given as examples by the Commission were only recently introduced to the English language and many people don’t even know how to pronounce them. The following comes from the new “guidelines”: ‘The NYCHRL **requires employers and covered entities to use an individual’s**

	Subject	Object	Pronoun	Pronunciation
Gender Binary	she	her	hers	as it looks
	he	him	his	as it looks
Gender Neutral	they*	them*	theirs*	as it looks
	ze	hir	hirs	zhee, here, heres
	ze	zir	zirs	zhee, zhere, zheres
	xe	xem	xyrs	zhee, zhem, zheres

*used as singular

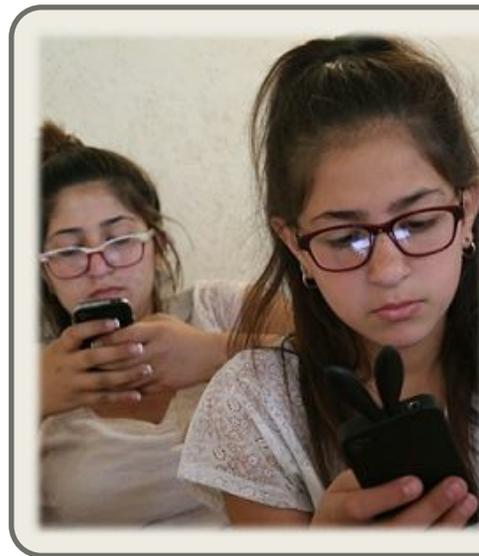
preferred name, pronoun and title (e.g., Ms./Mrs.) regardless of the individual's sex assigned at birth, anatomy, gender, medical history, appearance, or the sex indicated on the individual's identification. Most individuals and many transgender people use female or male pronouns and titles. Some transgender and gender non-conforming people prefer to use pronouns other than he/him/his or she/her/hers, **such as they/them/theirs or ze/hir**. All facilities in New York City will now also be required to allow transgender individuals to use whatever bathrooms and locker rooms they prefer.' ... So what would stop some sick pervert from pretending to be transgender just so that he can go into the women's locker room at the gym? Presumably nothing. ... This is just another example of our society's growing obsession with political correctness. And if you think that it is bad now, just wait until the next

generation takes over. Our colleges and universities have become political correctness indoctrination centers. One survey found that 62 percent of our colleges and universities have implemented 'speech codes' that 'severely departed from First Amendment standards,' and students are going to ridiculous extremes to try to insulate themselves from any language that could possibly be considered 'racist,' 'sexist' or threatening."

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON ON RACIAL PREJUDICE (Friday Church News Notes, January 15, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from black American leader Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery* (1901): "It is now long ago that I learned this lesson from General Samuel Chapman Armstrong, and resolved that I would permit no man, no matter what his color



might be, to narrow and degrade my soul by making me hate him. With God's help, I believe that I have completely rid myself of any ill feeling toward the Southern white man for any wrong that he may have inflicted upon my race. I am made to feel just as happy now when I am rendering service to Southern white men as when the service is rendered to a member of my own race. I pity from the bottom of my heart any individual who is so unfortunate as to get into the habit of holding race prejudice."



ISRAELI CHILDREN AND THE SMARTPHONE (Friday Church News Notes, January 22, 2016, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - According to a new report, 83% of Israeli children aged 8-15 are in possession of a smartphone, and 93% use their mobile devices for at least four hours every day ("Israeli kids and their smartphones," *Israel Today*, Jan. 8, 2016). Half say they are online within 15 minutes after waking, "connecting with friends via social networks like Facebook, Whatsapp,

Instagram, and Snapchat." Half also say they receive in excess of 100 Whatsapp messages daily. Other surveys show that Snapchat is used by 60% of smartphone users aged 13-34. It is used to send a photo, video, or drawing that disappears in 1-10 seconds (user determined). The messages are called "snaps" and over a billion are sent daily. "It is popular for 'teasing/sexting' as teens think the pic cannot be saved." Our youth discipleship course [The Mobile Phone and the Christian Home and Church](#) deals extensively with electronic media.

Aim of O Timothy Magazine

- Exalting the Lord Jesus Christ; His eternal perfect, and preserved Word; and the Gospel of his Grace. (2 Peter 3:1-2, 18)
- Standing for the whole counsel of God. (Acts 20:27; Jude 3)
- Challenging Christian workers to uphold the truth and resist the apostasy of our times. (1 Timothy 6:20-21)
- Exposing the spirit of error and compromise within Christendom (Hosea 4:6a; 2 Tim. 3)
- Upholding the New Testament Church (1 Tim. 6:13-14). O Timothy is a ministry of Bethel Baptist Church of London, Ontario.
- Challenging churches to fulfill the Great Commission of world evangelism (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 13-14)
- Standing for the Received Text of the Holy Scriptures, the Authorized Version in the English Language, and sound translations of the TR in the languages of the world. (Ps. 12:6-7)



O TIMOTHY MAGAZINE

Way of Life Literature
 P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061-0368
 866-295-4143 (toll free),
fbns@wayoflife.org (e-mail)
<http://www.wayoflife.org> (web site)
 ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 PORT HURON, MI
 Permit No. 1061

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

- **NEW ONLINE EDITION - FREE!** - To subscribe, go to www.wayoflife.org, click on the **Bookstore** tab and then click on **O Timothy**. Follow the directions from there.
- **UNITED STATES:** The annual subscription is US \$10 for the US. Make checks payable to Way of Life Literature and designate the amount for O Timothy. Please use the form below for ordering.
- **CANADA:** The annual subscription for Canada is \$26.25 Canadian (GST included). Checks or money orders should be made payable to Bethel Baptist Church and designated for O Timothy. Payments should be mailed to Bethel Baptist Church, 4212 Campbell St N, London, ON N6P 1A6.
- **PHILIPPINES:** *O Timothy* magazine began publication in the Philippines in January 2005. It is distributed on a free will offering basis in the Philippines at this time, as long as the Lord provides the needs. We take up an annual offering to pay the expenses. If you are interested in receiving the magazine in the Philippines, contact us c/o: Pastor Medel Barrera, Berean Bible Baptist Church, Blk. 11 Lot 42, Gardenia Valley Molino Bacoar, Cavite, Philippines The phone # is 0916-555-4723
- **INTERNATIONAL:** The annual subscription for other countries is US \$45. Contributions must be sent in US Funds by International Money Order drawn on a major New York bank. Make the drafts payable to Way of Life Literature and designate the amount for O Timothy subscription.

SUBSCRIPTIONS (O Timothy is a monthly publication)

USA - One Year Subscription.....\$10 US
 CANADA\$26.25 Canadian (GST Included)
 FOREIGN.....\$45 US
 PHILIPPINES.....(see contact information above)

DATE _____
 NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY, STATE, ZIP _____
 COUNTRY _____
 PHONE, EMAIL _____

PRINTED IN CANADA