

O Timothy

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

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

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“A major way to avoid having worldly families is to be very careful about receiving members in the first place. In my experience, most Independent Baptist churches are very careless on this point. They are so eager for new members that they don’t ‘vet’ them properly, especially those coming from other churches. For our part, we are very careful on this matter.” Page 9.

Digging in the Walls: A month’s worth of news items, republished from Friday Church News Notes. **Page 13.**



FUNDAMENTAL BAPTISTS AND THE BACKSTREET BOYS - *By David*

Brian Littrell (b. 1975) is a contemporary Christian music artist who won a Dove Award in 2006 for the song “In Christ Alone.” It was written by Shawn Craig and Don Koch

He is also a founding member of the wildly popular and very worldly secular band the Backstreet Boys, which began in 1993.

And there is nothing holy about the Backstreet Boys. In fact, it’s pretty much all about sexuality. The guys and girls who watch their videos and attend their concerts are not given any reason to think about a holy God, to say the least. Their music and videos are a perfect fit for the biblical description of worldliness: “the lust of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:15-16).

Backstreet Band member Nick Carter has a background in drug and alcohol abuse, and in January 2016, he was



arrested for an altercation at the Hog's Breath Saloon in Key West, Florida.

Backstreet Band member A.J. McLean entered rehab in 2001 "to battle alcoholism." He discussed his alcohol and drug abuse on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* in 2003.

In April 2016, the Backstreet Boys announced a nine-show deal for Las Vegas.

Also in 2016, three Backstreet Boys members joined N Sync to act in a new movie, *Dead7*, written by Nick Carter. The incredibly violent, disturbing movie is about cowboys and zombies. "The pop stars wield guns and swill whiskey as they team up to fight off a zombie invasion."

Littrell doesn't appear in the movie, but he is still a member of the Backstreet Boys.

When the filthy rock star Prince died in April 2016, Brian Littrell Twitted, "First and only of his kind.... Wonderfully talented, Prince dead at 57 Doves crying." Littrell's wife, Leighanne, Tweeted, "RIP Prince...wow, so young...so many memories connected to your music. You will be terribly missed" (brianlittrell.com).

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

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"Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth *it* not" (Proverbs 29:24).

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

Littrell claims to have been born again at age eight, and he attributes his success to God, saying that his faith has always been "the utmost important thing in his life" (Sarah Miller, "Backstreet Boy Brian Littrell Goes Solo," andPOP.com).

But his Christianity is the worldly, ecumenical, one-world church brand that exalts unity at the expense of truth and decries "division" and "judgmentalism."

Bible-believing churches are using the music being produced by these people and are thus building a bridge to the most dangerous world that exists in "Christianity" today. And it is a bridge that many of the people will cross, especially young people.

For example, Littrell's "In Christ Alone" was featured at the 2016 Baptist Friends International's conference at Temple Baptist Church/Crown College where Clarence Sexton is the pastor. A pastor friend observed,

"How long do you think it would take the average teen or young person sitting in a church service to Google Littrell and be influenced by him? Temple Baptist/Crown is no different than Chappell and West Coast. It is well nigh past time to draw the line against disobedient brethren."

Littrell's crowd is the enemy of any "fundamentalist" type church. If a church believes in separation from the world and wants to keep its people away from the world, is jealous over the lives of its young people in this regard, is opposed to rock music, has modest dress standards, practices reproof and rebuke in preaching, warns about New Evangelicalism, contemplative prayer, and such things, that church is considered by the CCM crowd today legalistic, judgmental, Pharisaical, narrow-minded, overly strict, and basically weird.

Such churches are the brunt of their jokes.

Why would pastors of fundamentalist-type churches bring the influence of these enemies into their churches? What are they thinking?

Personally, I consider all of the Littrells and Zschechs and Hillsongs and Gettys and Townends of the CCM world to be enemies of the work God has given me. I am jealous over the lives of the young people in the churches we have planted. I am jealous over the lives of my own kids and grandkids. I don't want them to be influenced by people who think it is fine to perform at Las Vegas and to fall in love with Prince and his filthy music (as Littrell does), who praise the Beatles and Bono (as Getty does), who join hands in ministry with New Agers like Leonard Sweet (as Getty does), who consider charismatic nonsense to be the works of the Spirit of God (as Townend does), and who accept Mary-venerating Catholics as true brethren (as Getty and Townend do in the case of Matt Maher).

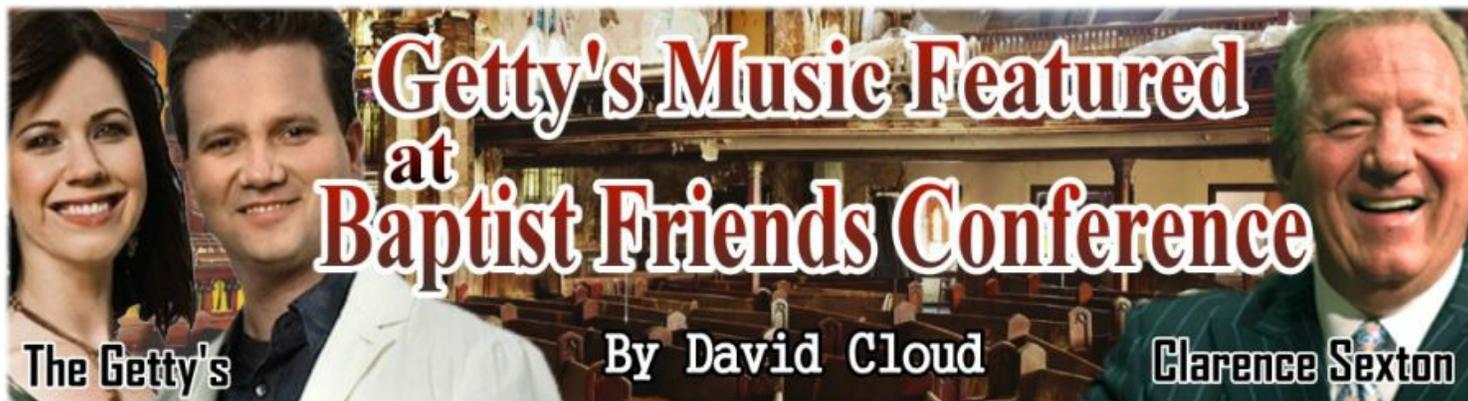
Why are so many pastors so careless about these things and resist getting a proper education even though information about the Littrells and Zschechs and Gettys and Townends of the CCM world is readily available. We have personally provided a large amount of carefully researched information in the [Directory of Contemporary Worship Music](#) and made it available as a free eBook download.

It is indeed well nigh past time to draw the line against disobedient brethren. It is a matter of spiritual safety. It must be done, not only for the sake of the present but also for the sake of the future.

If a church or school uses CCM, even by "adapting" it and by trying to "take the rock out of Christian rock," I will not associate with it. Period. I know where this practice will lead as surely as I sit here and write this report. To use CCM, even "carefully" and "selectively," is a wrong-headed, unscriptural bridge-building exercise, and I, for one, refuse to engage in it, and I intend to do everything I can to keep my people from the influence of this great and very dangerous compromise.

Independent Baptist churches that refuse to draw lines of separation today from disobedient and compromised brethren who foolishly justify the use of CCM and contemporary Southern Gospel will irretrievably be drawn down the path of compromise.

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



The Baptist Friends International annual conferences (hosted by Temple Baptist Church/Crown College where Clarence Sexton is pastor) are increasingly moving to contemporary Christian praise music.

This year the attendees heard Backstreet Boys' Brian Littrell's "In Christ Alone," the Getty's "How Deep the Father's Love," and the contemporary T4G rendition of "Before the Throne," which was "redone by CCM Sovereign Grace rocker Vicki Cook." A preacher friend wisely observes, "Cook's new tune destroys the original 1800s Bancroft hymn tune which was wonderful. I

believe the CCM crowd is trying to bridge the gap by redoing theologically rich hymns to the new CCM rock tunes."

Of all of the contemporary worship musicians that are finding their way into fundamental Baptist churches, the Gettys are the greatest influence.

At least eight of the Getty's songs are included in Majesty Music's *Rejoice Hymns*. Twenty-nine of their songs are featured in *Hymns Modern and Ancient*, published by Heart Publications, a ministry of Steve Pettit Evangelistic

Association (Pettit is the current head of Bob Jones University) and compiled by Fred Coleman who heads up Bob Jones University's Department of Church Music. Both Crown Baptist College and West Coast Baptist College, the two largest independent Baptist Bible colleges, perform Getty material in their services.

Among all of the contemporary worship musicians, I consider the Gettys perhaps the most dangerous, because what they are offering is wrapped in a package that is attractive to gullible "fundamentalists." From Keith and Kristyn Getty's Irish brogue and their physical attractiveness, fairly conservative appearance, and effervescent cheerfulness to their foot-tapping, Emerald Island-tinged music and the spiritual depth of their lyrics. They aren't writing the typical CCM 7-11 music (7 words sung 11 times); their lyrics have scriptural substance.

But that "conservative-appearing" package is a bridge to truly great spiritual danger.

The Gettys represent the exceedingly dangerous world of contemporary worship music as certainly as does Graham Kendrick or Darlene Zschech and Hillsong, and any bridges that Bible-believing churches build to the Gettys are bridges to the one-world church and even to secular rock.

THE GETTYS ARE A BRIDGE TO THE WORLD AND TO THE ONE-WORLD CHURCH

The Getty's ecumenical, one-world-church goal is to "bring everyone together musically" (www.keithgetty.com). They want to "bridge the gap between the traditional and contemporary" (<http://www.gettymusic.com/about.aspx>).

In a July 2013 interview, Keith Getty mentioned vile rocker Sting and homosexual rocker Elton John in a positive light, with not a hint of warning. The interview was with Dan Wooding of Assist Ministries and was broadcast on Frontpage Radio from Nashville -- <http://www.assistministries.com/FrontPageRadio/FPR06.09.13KeithGettyMono.mp3>.

The Gettys list the Beatles as a major musical influence, and I have never heard them warn God's people to stay away from the Beatles.

Thus any bridge that Bible-believing churches build to the Gettys is a bridge beyond to the world of secular rock, because the Gettys speak in positive terms of that world instead of reproving the unfruitful works of darkness in accordance with Ephesians 5:11.

While the Gettys worship music is fairly conservative in its rhythm, they are not opposed to rock & roll. They themselves rock out at some venues. And while they don't write hard rock worship songs, they don't speak against this practice, either. In fact, Keith Getty says that he is glad for edgy, rocking renditions of his music by artists such as Newsboys, Ricky Skaggs, Owl City, Alison Krauss, and Natalie Grant, because "it is an honor" for him to witness popular modern musicians record them, and "it's also interesting to hear their interpretation of it and useful for the song because it helps the song get played more" ("The Gettys Exclusive: Famed Hymn Writers Talk Irish Christmas Tour," *Christian Post*, Dec. 2, 2014).

The Gettys are also a bridge to a wide variety of theological heresy.

In the same 2013 interview Keith Getty heaped praise on Bono of the Irish rock band U2, calling him a "brilliant theological thinker" and saying that Bono "cares for a lot of the things that Christ asks us to care about." Getty had absolutely nothing to say about Bono by way of warning. Bono rarely even attends church, and when he does it is often a terribly heretical "church" like Glide Memorial United Methodist in San Francisco (Bill Flanagan, *U2 and the End of the World*, p. 99). Bono's biographer said that he has been a frequent worshiper at Glide. Cecil Williams, former pastor of Glide, doesn't believe in heaven, began performing homosexual "marriages" in 1965, and hosted church "celebrations" that included dancing with complete nudity.

That is Bono type Christianity, and the fact that Keith Getty has no public warning about it is inexcusable.

Bono says that he believes that Jesus died on the cross for his sins and that "he is holding out for grace," but Bono's "grace" is a grace that does not result in radical conversion and a new way of life; it is a grace without repentance; it is a grace that does not produce holiness, in contrast with Titus 2:11-15. Nowhere does Bono warn his myriads of listeners to turn to Christ before it is too

late and before they pass out of this life into eternal hell. In fact, he says that heaven and hell are on this earth (*Bono on Bono: Conversations with Michka Assayas, 2005*, p. 254).

Bono says that the older he gets the more comfort he finds in Roman Catholicism (*Bono on Bono*, p. 201). But he has nothing good to say about biblical “fundamentalism,” falsely claiming that it is a denial that God is love (*Bono on Bono*, p. 167) and calling it vile names (p. 147). The problem is that Bono defines “love” by the rock & roll dictionary rather than by the Bible, which says, “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3).

Bill Flanagan, a U2 friend who has traveled extensively with the group, in his authorized biography describes them as heavy drinkers and constant visitors to bars, brothels, and nightclubs (Flanagan, *U2 at the End of the World*, p. 145). Bono admits that he lives “a fairly decadent kind of selfish-art-oriented lifestyle” (Flanagan, p. 79). Many of Bono’s statements cannot be printed in a Christian publication. Appearing on the Golden Globe Awards broadcast by NBC television in 2003, Bono shouted a vile curse word. Bono told the media that he and his bandmates planned to spend New Year’s Eve 2000 in Dublin, because “Dublin knows how to drink” (Bono, *USA Today*, Oct. 15, 1999, p. E1). In 2006 Bono said: “I recently read in one of St. Paul’s letters where it describes all of the fruits of the spirit, and I had none of them” (“Enough Rope with Andrew Denton,” March 13, 2006). On October 27, 2008, *Fox News* reported that the married Bono and his rocker friend Simon Carmody partied with teenage girls on a yacht in St. Tropez. The report, which was accompanied by a photo of Bono holding two bikini-clad teenagers on his lap at a bar.

This is the man that Keith Getty publicly calls a brilliant theologian and praises for caring about things that Christ tells us to care about! Doesn’t Christ care about truth and holiness and a pure gospel and repentance and sound doctrine and separation from the world, Keith? Aren’t these absolute fundamentals? Doesn’t the Bible say, “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (1 John 2:4)? Doesn’t the Bible say, “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)?

(For more about Bono see the report “[The Rock Group U2](#)” at www.wayoflife.org.)

In the same 2013 interview, Keith Getty claimed C.S. Lewis as a major theological influence. Yet Lewis rejected the fundamental doctrines of the infallible inspiration of Scripture and “penal substitutionary atonement” and believed in purgatory and baptismal regeneration (“C.S. Lewis Superstar,” *Christianity Today*, Dec. 2005).

Lewis rejected the historicity of Jonah and Job. He believed in prayers to the dead and confession to a priest. He held to theistic evolution, believing that “man is physically descended from animals” and calling the Genesis account of creation “a Hebrew folk tale” (Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*). He denied the eternal torment of hell and claimed that followers of pagan religions can be saved without acknowledging Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour (Lewis, *Mere Christianity; The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*). (For more about Lewis see the free eBook [Evangelicals and C.S. Lewis](#) at www.wayoflife.org)

This is a man that Getty honors as a major theological influence and about whom he has nothing negative to say. No warnings. No separation. No clear spiritual discernment in these very, very important matters.

The Gettys have a close working relationship with Stuart Townend, who is radically charismatic and ecumenical. Not only do they write and publish songs with Townend, but they also tour together, joining hands in perfect harmony, for example, in the Celtic Islands Tour 2012.

In July 2012, the Gettys joined Townend 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. Fundamental doctrinal differences are so meaningless that they are not even mentioned. Spiritual abominations such as the papacy, the mass, infant baptism, baptismal regeneration, and Mariolatry were ignored. Jude 3 was despised and Romans 16:17 completely disobeyed for the sake of building the one-world church through contemporary Christian music.

This is the Christianity of the Gettys.

(See “Stuart Townend” and “Matt Maher” in [The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians](#), which is available as a free eBook from Way of Life Literature, www.wayoflife.org.)

In October 2012, the Gettys joined hands with emerging heretic Leonard Sweet at the National Worship Leader Conference in San Diego. Sweet calls his universalist doctrine “New Light” and “quantum spirituality” and “the Christ consciousness” and describes it in terms of “the union of the human with the divine” which is the “center feature of all the world’s religions” (*Quantum Spirituality*, p. 235). He defines the New Light as “a structure of human becoming, a channeling of Christ energies through mindbody experience” (*Quantum Spirituality*, p. 70).

Sweet says that “New Light pastors” hold the doctrine of “embodiment of God in the very substance of creation” (p. 124). In *Carpe Mañana*, Sweet says that the earth is as much a part of the body of Christ as humans and that humanity and the earth constitutes “a cosmic body of Christ” (p. 124). Sweet lists some of the “New Light leaders” that have influenced his thinking as Matthew Fox, M. Scott Peck, Willis Harman, and Ken Wilber, all prominent New Agers who believe in the divinity of man, as we have documented in the book *The New Age Tower of Babel*. Sweet has endorsed *The Shack* with its non-judgmental father-mother god, and he promotes Roman Catholic contemplative mysticism and dangerous mystics such as the Catholic-Buddhist Thomas Merton.

(For documentation see [Contemplative Mysticism](#), which is available in print and eBook editions from Way of Life -- www.wayoflife.org.)

Any bridge that Bible-believing churches build to the Gettys is a bridge beyond the Gettys to heretics such as C.S. Lewis and Bono, to the Roman Catholic Church, to the incredibly dangerous charismatic movement, to the filthy world of secular rock, to emergents and New Agers like Leonard Sweet, and to every element of the end-time one-world “church.”

The Gettys, safe and sound? You must be kidding me!

THE GETTY’S AND THE INTERNET AGE

We are living in the age of end-time technology, which means that one can no longer use songs and hymns without the listeners being able to enter into communication with the authors with great ease. Whereas even 30 years ago, it was difficult to contact and be directly influenced by authors of Christian music, that has changed dramatically with the Internet.

Today if people in a Bible-believing church hear songs by Jack Hayford or MercyMe or Graham Kendrick or Stuart Townend or Darlene Zschech or Keith Getty, songs heard in “adapted form” in many Bible-believing churches, they can easily search for that group or individual on the web and come into intimate contact with these people -- not only in contact with their music (typically played in “real” rock & roll style as opposed to the watered-down soft-rock ballad versions performed in churches that are beginning to dabble with contemporary praise music), but also in contact with their ecumenical/charismatic/separatist-hating/one-world church philosophy.

Let’s say someone hears the choir or individuals perform “In Christ Alone” or “The Power of the Cross” by the Gettys. He likes the music and decides to check the authors out on the web. He comes across the Gettys rocking out at their concerts and begins to question his church’s stand against rock music. He sees the Gettys associating with anyone and everyone and begins to question biblical separation. He begins to think, “The Gettys seem so sincere and Christ-loving; maybe I’ve been too hard-nosed in my Christianity; maybe the separatist stance is all wrong; perhaps I should lighten up.” He comes across Keith Getty’s July 2013 interview with Assist Ministries and hears Getty speak highly of Bono and C.S. Lewis, so he decides to take a look at these people, and by so doing he begins to question fundamental Bible doctrines. After time, through the influence of the Gettys, the soul who was once a contented member of a Bible-believing church, raising his children in a Bible-believing path, is on the high road to the emerging church and his children and grandchildren will end up who knows where.

The same could be said for the influence of Townend or Kendrick or MercyMe or Zschech or Hillsong or hundreds of other prominent contemporary worship

musicians, because they hold the same philosophy and represent the same bridge to spiritual danger.

Men such as Clarence Sexton and Paul Chappell and Ron Hamilton and Frank Garlock, who should know better but who are defending the use of contemporary praise music either by word or example, will answer to God for the souls that cross the bridges they are building to the dangerous world that is represented by this music.

THE GETTY'S AND THEIR CROWD ARE ENEMIES OF ANY FUNDAMENTALIST-TYPE CHURCH

The Gettys and their crowd are the enemy of any "fundamentalist" type church. If a church believes in separation from the world and wants to keep its people away from the world, is jealous over the lives of its young people in this regard, is opposed to rock music, has modest dress standards, practices reproof and rebuke in preaching, warns about New Evangelicalism, contemplative prayer, and such things, that church is considered by the CCM crowd today, including the Gettys, to be legalistic, judgmental, Pharisaical, narrow-minded, unloving, overly strict, and basically weird. In the CCM crowd, such churches are the brunt of jokes.

Why would pastors of fundamentalist-type churches bring the influence of these people into their congregations? What are they thinking? What is their objective?

Personally, I consider the Gettys and Townend to be enemies of the work God has given me. I am jealous over the lives of the young people in the churches we have planted. I am jealous over the lives of my own

kids and grandkids. I don't want them to be influenced by people who speak positively of Sting and Elton John and Bono and C.S. Lewis, who consider charismatic nonsense to be the works of the Spirit of God, who accept Mary-venerating Catholics as true brethren, and who associate with men who hold New Age doctrine.

Why are so many pastors so careless about these things and resist getting a proper education even though information about the Hillsong's and Getty's and Townend's of the CCM world is readily available.

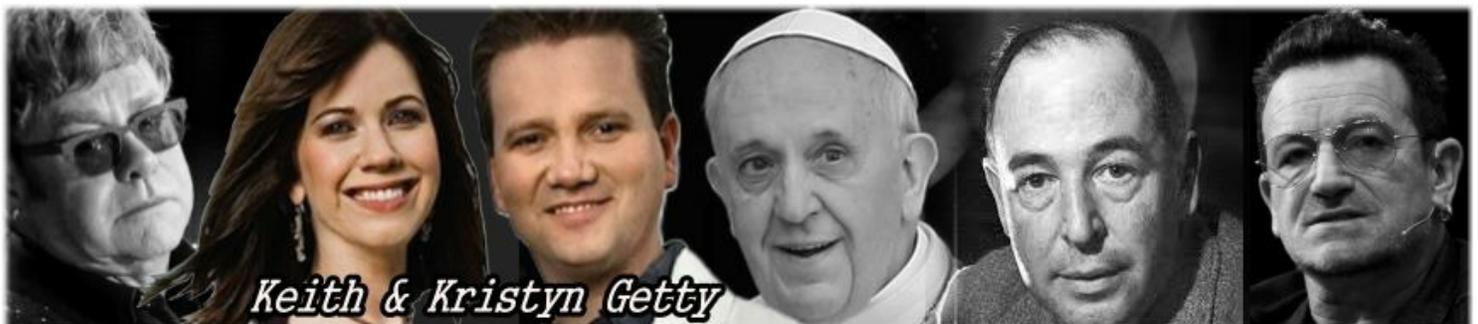
It is, indeed, well nigh past time to draw the line against disobedient brethren. It is a matter of spiritual safety.

It must be done, not only for the sake of the present but also for the sake of the future.

If a church or school uses CCM, even by "adapting" it and by trying to "take the rock out of Christian rock," I will not associate with it. Period. I know where this practice will lead as surely as I sit here and write this report. To use CCM, even "carefully" and "selectively," is a wrong-headed, unscriptural bridge-building exercise, and I, for one, refuse to engage in it, and I intend to do everything I can to keep my people from the influence of this great and very dangerous compromise.

Independent Baptist churches that refuse to draw lines of separation today from disobedient and compromised brethren who foolishly justify the use of CCM and contemporary Southern Gospel will irretrievably be drawn down the path of compromise.

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





Many Independent Baptist churches are using the music of Hillsong, one of the most prominent and radically charismatic/ecumenical producers of contemporary worship music.

One of their most popular songs is “Mighty to Save,” and it is sung throughout the world on any given Sunday in churches of every doctrinal persuasion, from Pentecostal to Catholic.

A great number of Independent Baptist churches are showing their biblical ignorance and lack of spiritual discernment by using this music. It presents a vague spirituality and touches the emotions but cannot possibly bring true spiritual edification and conviction because it does not present sound Bible truth.

The following is an analysis of Hillsong’s “Mighty to Save” by former Pentecostal Hughie Seaborn of Australia:

“Though the song is called ‘Mighty to Save,’ it fails to include anything in the lyrics that remotely resembles the Gospel, which the Bible assures us is the only message that is truly mighty to save a lost sinner (Romans 1:16).

“The song does include a message in the lyrics, however, that the Bible warns us to be on the lookout for. There’s a false gospel in there that is classically Hillsong, a modified gospel that is mighty to save no one.

“For example, the song says, ‘So take me as you find me/All my fears and failures/Fill my life again/I

give my life to follow/Everything I believe in/Now I surrender.’

“This is the dangerous, sweet-sounding, soothing, easy-believism message that fills the professing churches of our day with the unregenerate. ‘*Take me as you find me*’ is the attractive message that promotes the idea that Jesus receives lost sinners just the way they are, ignoring that we are required to repent of our wickedness and believe the Gospel (Acts 17:30; 20:21; 26:20). Hillsong doesn’t like to mention that ‘legalistic,’ hateful word ‘repentance,’ and they don’t like to mention ‘sin,’ either. Rather, they talk about fears and failures. Interestingly, my fears only subsided as I grew in the knowledge of the Word of God, but the consequences of some of my pre-salvation ‘failures’ are still with me to this day.

“The lyrics go on to say, ‘*I give my life to follow everything I believe in. Now I surrender.*’ What is that supposed to mean? In my simple way of thinking, it means that I give my life to follow everything I believe in. When I got saved, though, I was actually told by God’s Word that my life was a big mess for the very fact that I was following ‘everything I believed in.’ My life took a drastic 180-degree turn because I was willing to reject ‘everything I believed in’ and replace it with everything God believes in, which is the commandment of Scripture” (Hughie Seaborn).

“*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD*” (Isaiah 55:8).





At a recent Bible conference in the Philippines, some pastors asked for suggestions about how to deal with worldly families in the church membership. One of the questions was as follows: “What can I do as a pastor if I have families that won’t obey in their homes my teaching about music and other standards?”

The following is a slightly expanded edition of the reply I gave to that:

1. Set the right example in your own life and family.

Don’t be a hypocrite by preaching one thing and living another, or by preaching one thing and allowing your own family to live in a different way. I know many pastors who have weakened their authority and harmed churches by doing this.

I think of a pastor who preached against dating but allowed his son and the son of his associate pastor to date girls in the church.

I think of a pastor who preached against contemporary music but allowed his son to form a contemporary gospel group.

I think of a pastor who preached against skipping church services for sports and other such things, but allowed his own son to miss mid-week prayer meetings for wrestling matches.

I think of a pastor who preached against bossy, unsubmitive wives, but his own helpmeet was the epitome of a bossy wife!

We hear too often about lying pastors, thieving pastors, lazy pastors, porno-addicted pastors, adulterous pastors, and even child molesting pastors.

Church members need pastors that will be the examples that God’s standards in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 call for, and I thank the Lord that I personally know many such men.

2. Guard the door to membership.

A major way to avoid having worldly families is to be very careful about receiving members in the first place. In my experience, most Independent Baptist churches are very careless on this point. They are so eager for new members that they don’t “vet” them properly, especially those coming from other churches.

For our part, we are very careful on this matter. We are not in a hurry to receive members. Anyone can attend our services and activities, as long as they don’t cause trouble, and they are welcome to listen and learn, but joining our church is not so easy.

What we are looking for, first of all, is genuine, born-again salvation (with evidence, 2 Corinthians 5:17). Before we baptize an individual, we first agree as leaders that the person has shown evidence of salvation. Then we meet privately with the individual and have him tell his (or her) testimony. We ask any questions that are deemed appropriate and try to clarify any matter that isn’t clear. If the leaders are not in agreement, we kindly ask the individual to wait a little bit until things are clear in his mind and in ours. When we believe the individual is saved, we have them take a couple of classes on baptism and then they are baptized.

When receiving members, we also look for likemindedness in doctrine and practice. We have an extensive church covenant that lays out these matters in some detail, and we require that every new member read that and profess agreement. We want to get to know all prospective members, so we can have a sense of whether they are going to be faithful and whether they really are on board. I base this philosophy on passages such as 1 Corinthians 1:10 which require that the church body have “the same mind, and the same judgment.” If this were not possible, God would not demand it, and it is the church leaders who must create it and maintain it.

I talked with a young preacher recently who started a new work about a year ago. He said that after hearing me preach

at a conference this January he realized he has been too quick to baptize people and to receive people as members from other churches. He said that he realizes that a large percentage of those he baptized were not saved, since there was no biblical evidence, and this had been puzzling him. And he realizes now that much of the trouble he has had from members could have been avoided had he been more careful and patient about receiving members.

I encouraged him that it is good that the Lord has shown him these things now when the church is young, so that he can correct the problem and build a stronger foundation for the future.

Guarding the door of church membership in this fashion doesn't solve all problems by any means, as we know all too well, but it does solve many problems.

3. Have high standards for all workers.

There is great pressure on pastors today to lower the standards, and it appears that most are bending to the pressure.

When I talk about "standards," I am not talking about a mere external rule. I am not talking about Phariseeism that produces whited sepulchers. I am talking about a true walk with Christ that evidences in obedience and separation.

Maintaining high standards for workers is not only pleasing to God, because He has high standards (1 Cor. 4:2), but it also has many practical benefits.

One of those is that it is a way to limit Christian service to those who are faithful, have a good testimony, and are separated from the world, and it challenges all of the church members to rise to a higher standard of living.

If a church member isn't faithful to services or doesn't dress properly or doesn't follow the church's standard of music or doesn't have a serious Bible study life, that is a sad business and it requires continuing attention, but God gives His people a certain amount of liberty to make decisions about their Christian lives. He beseeches His people to surrender wholly to Him and to separate from the world (Rom. 12:1-2), but He does not demand it in such a way that it is the sin unto death if it doesn't happen.

At the same time, in our church, the unsundered, unfaithful, unseparated church member is not qualified to have a church ministry, whether it be teaching, music, ushering, giving announcements, leading prayer, taking up

the offering, or anything else. All such ministries are reserved for those who meet God's standards in Scripture.

Having standards for church workers is an important part of raising the level of Christian living for the entire church. It is not possible for a church to have worker-type standards for every member, but it is possible to require specific standards for those who serve in a ministry. A person doesn't have to teach Sunday School or participate in the music ministry, etc., but if he does, it is not unreasonable for the church to require him to meet specific standards.

One of the ways that new members learn how to live for Christ is by observing the church leaders and workers, and if *they* do not live right, the entire church is affected. If the Sunday School teachers, for example, are not required to maintain high standards, the students will learn from their poor example, but if Sunday School teachers are required to maintain standards their students will follow their example and will grow in Christ.

4. Preach hard and get the message down to where the people live.

Church discipline involves many things. It is both positive and negative. It is both proactive and reactive.

As the late James Crumpton observed in his excellent book on church discipline, an important aspect is the kind of preaching described in 2 Timothy 4:2 -- "reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine." (Dr. Crumpton's book *New Testament Church Discipline* is one of the free eBooks available at www.wayoflife.org.)

This is the type of preaching that does not draw back from rebuking the very sins that the people in the congregation are doing. It is the type of preaching whereby the Word of God is applied to the people's daily living, including the father's role in the family, the mother's role, the husband's business, the wife's, the child's, life at the schoolhouse, life at the workplace, entertainment, and every other aspect of daily living.

5. Teach with depth.

A spiritual church that separates unto the Lord from the world requires Biblical depth. The people must be built up in the Word of God. It is "able to build you up" (Acts 20:32). It is quick and powerful" (Heb. 4:12). It is able to cleanse the young man's way (Psa. 119:9), to bring prosperity and good success (Josh. 1:8), and to bring forth spiritual fruit (Psa. 1:1-3).

We do everything we can to establish all of our people on a solid foundation of Biblical knowledge.

We have a serious discipleship course that is extensive and practical. There is a memory verse program built into the course, and each lesson features review questions. It helps the child of God know how to apply the Bible to his daily life in matters such as Christian growth and spiritual victory, knowing God's will, making wise decisions, tests of entertainment, and being wise with money.

We have expository preaching and teaching.

We have a serious teaching ministry to the youth. Instead of spending time with a lot of sports and games, we do such things in our multi-day youth conferences as teach through the Epistle of Romans, teach 10 hours on the Tabernacle, teach a series on evolution and science, teach on highlights on Bible times from archaeology, and teach about how to use mobile phones and technology safely.

We aim to help each of our young people have an effectual daily Bible study.

We operate a full-time Bible college to train our more serious young people. This is a 2 Timothy 2:2 ministry, whereby those who are trained in turn train others, and they are given constant opportunities to do that.

We are getting ready to start weekly Bible classes for the church members that will be taught by our Bible college students. They will be assigned a course to teach and given 12 hours to teach it (two hours a week). So they have to shorten the courses they are learning in Bible college.

When combined with love for the Lord and earnest prayer, this kind of Bible teaching ministry has the potential to raise the spiritual level of the entire church so that the lukewarm part of the congregation becomes the minority and even the extreme minority.

6. Disciple the men.

Men need discipling that is geared directly to them, to their roles as leaders, to their particular needs and problems.

In our church we have a weekly men's meeting. It is only a half hour, but it has been a great help in discipling the men and creating a stronger sense of unity in the church. When the men are being the spiritual leaders they should be and they are in unity with the church leaders, it is a great help

to the wives and young people, and it raises the spiritual standard of the church.

We invite our teens to attend the men's meeting beginning at age 13. That is the age of the Jewish *Bar Mitzvah*. This means "son of the law" and is the age according to Jewish tradition when a boy can participate in the synagogue worship. Jewish *Bar Mitzvah* holds no Biblical authority, but we like the concept. We want our youth to identify as men rather than as "teens" according to the foolish pop culture. We want to do everything we can to break down the ungodly "generation gap."

7. Have a Titus 2 ministry for the women.

Women also need a ministry geared to their special needs, and that is described in Paul's epistle to Titus.

"The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, *To be* discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Titus 2:3-5).

My wife and other mature women in the church oversee this ministry, and it is absolutely essential for a spiritually healthy congregation.

8. Personal counseling and reproof.

It is not enough to reprove, rebuke, exhort, and teach from the pulpit. It must also be done on an individual and family basis.

Our church leaders often meet privately to help the members, to counsel them, to reprove and warn them when necessary.

If a man is neglecting his family or not being a good spiritual leader in his home, we meet with him and talk to him and try to help. We discuss the relevant issues. We give proper counsel. We express our love to him. We pray with him.

We do the same with moms and teenagers and anyone else in the church membership.

And more often than not, the merciful Lord gives strength, healing, and restoration. We have seen a lot of spiritual victory through private ministry to individuals.

God's Mercy and the Psalms ~ By David Cloud

God's mercy is mentioned 135 times in Psalms, beginning in Psalm 4:1.

This theme rises to a great crescendo in Psalm 136, which repeats the expression "for his mercy endureth for ever" in all 26 verses. The Psalmist recounts some major aspects of God's deeds and character (goodness v. 1, God of gods and Lord of lords vv. 2-3, doer of great wonders v. 4, Creator of the heavens vv. 5-9, judge of Egypt vv. 10-12, divider of the Red Sea vv. 13-15, leading Israel through the wilderness v. 16, conquerer of the Canaanite kings vv. 17-20, giver of the land to Israel vv. 21-22, protector of Israel vv. 23-24, provider of sustenance to all creatures v. 25). But in the midst of all this, and as the basis for all of this, is God's eternal mercy, for which men should give thanks.

Consider some lessons about God's mercy:

Mercy is one of God's names and titles (Psa. 59:10). It is a fundamental essence of His character (Psa. 103:8). It is what motivated Him to provide redemption for His fallen creatures.

Mercy is combined with truth (Psa. 85:10). Truth is Christ (Jn. 14:6), and Christ's sacrifice is the basis for mercy. It was on the cross that mercy and truth met together and righteousness and peace kissed each other. Because God's perfect righteousness was satisfied, there can be peace between God and the believing sinner. This is the meaning of "propitiation."

The demand of God's righteous law was *satisfied* by the blood and death of Christ (Rom. 3:24-26).

God's mercy is for those who keep His covenant (Psa. 25:10) and trust in Him (Psa. 32:10) and fear Him (Psa. 33:22). This is a description of the sinner who trusts in the blood of Christ.

God's mercy is great.

- It is multitudinous (Psa. 5:7; 69:13, 16; 86:5). God's mercy is spoken of in the plural 17 times (Psa. 6:4; 25:6).
- God's mercy follows the believer all of his days (Psa. 23:6) and compasses him about (Psa. 32:10). He is surrounded by God's mercy; he walks in the midst of it.
- God's mercy is tender (Psa. 25:6). This is repeated 10 times. The Hebrew word *racham*, translated "tender mercies," refers to compassion, affection. It is used for Joseph's strong affection for his brothers that caused him to weep (Gen. 43:30) and the affection of a mother for her child (1 Ki. 3:26).

- God's mercy is great unto the heavens (Psa. 57:10; 103:11). There is no known end to the heavens as far as man is concerned, from an earthly perspective. It is so great that it is beyond comprehension, and that is how great God's mercy is. There is no end to it. It is infinite. This is the measure of the greatness of Christ's atonement!
- God's mercy is personal (Psa. 59:17). David spoke of "my mercy." All of God's actions toward His saints are intimate and personal. He "knows" us and deals with us according to his great knowledge. He knows exactly what each saint can bear (1 Cor. 10:13).
- The saint is crowned with mercy (Psa. 103:4). A crown is for a king, and the believer is a king as an adopted child of God and will rule and reign with Christ.

God's mercy is obtained through prayer (Psa. 25:6, 16, etc.). It is available but it is not to be presumed. Compare Heb. 4:12.

God requires that His people show mercy to others (Psa. 18:25). Mercy is a mark of the righteous (Psa. 37:21). Compare Mat. 18:21-22; Lk. 11:4; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12.

God's mercy is needed forever (Psa. 52:8) and it will be built up forever (Psa. 89:2). Thirty-six times we are told that God's mercy is eternal (100:5; 103:17; 106:1; 107:1; 118:1, 2, 3, 4, 29; 36:1-26; 138:3). Mercy is the only basis whereby a sinner can come near to God, and there will never come a time when mercy is not needed even though the saints will no longer sin in their resurrection glory.

Mercy is the subject of the saint's songs (Psa. 59:16) and it will be the subject of the saint's songs forever (Psa. 89:1).

God's mercy is based on His Word (Psa. 119:58). The one who wants to obtain God's mercy must understand and believe His Word pertaining to Christ. Faith in God's mercy comes by hearing God's Word (Rom. 10:17).

The earth is filled with God's mercy (Psa. 119:64). Even in its fallen condition, the earth is filled with evidences of God's mercy. Every good thing is a token of God's mercy: the laws of physics such as gravity, the resources that fill the earth for man's benefit (e.g., minerals, trees, plants, animals, fish), the oxygen cycle, the hydrological cycle, plant-animal ecosystems, pollination, good bacteria, worms that aerate the earth, scavengers that remove dead bodies, etc.

The saint must be patient in waiting for God's mercy (Psa. 123:2).

DIGGING IN THE WALLS

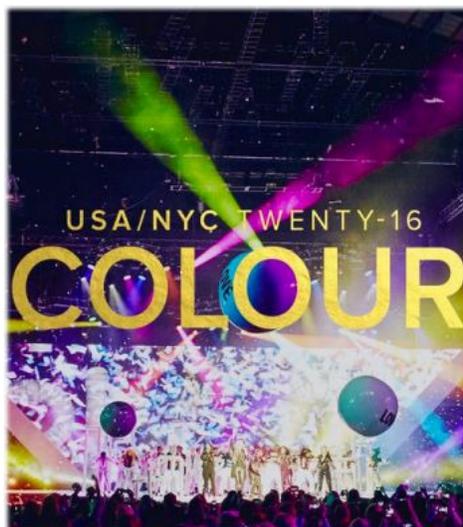
God commanded the prophet Ezekiel to dig in the walls of Israel's temple and observe the evils being done in secret by apostate religious leaders of that day. "Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall ... And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. So 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?



HILLSONG WOMEN'S CONFERENCE FEATURES A NAKED COWBOY (Friday Church News Notes, June 3, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "Hillsong NYC," NowTheEndBegins.com, May 25, 2016: "Hillsong United has been on a roll lately, and all of it bad. For quite a few years now, we have been reporting classic Hillsong events to you like the gay worship leader, the ultra sleazy 'Silent Night' mockery, complete with Roaring Twenties flappers in a nightclub setting, and the image of Baphomet laced into their women's conference marketing. Now they have kicked things up to a whole new 'low-vel.' In a world saturated with sex and sexual images, the Church is supposed to be the place where that is not allowed to enter. Not at Hillsong. Take a look at the following smartphone video of the closing night of the first-ever Hillsong Women's Conference in NYC. It's quite the eye-opener. ... Now where do you see Jesus in any of this slop? Answer, you don't. Look at the stage, and what do you see? A naked cowboy, scantily-dressed 'cheerleaders,' an Elvis

impersonator, a bearded male Statue of Liberty, various humans wearing furry animal costumes, and for good measure they get everyone all jacked up waving the American flag and shouting 'USA! USA! USA!' ... Hillsong United and their various tentacles have made a mockery of Christianity and the Bible with worldly 'shows' like these. They should be ashamed of themselves, but sadly, they are quite proud of what they have accomplished. ... This is what passes for 'church' in our Laodicean end times 'christian' gatherings. It looks more like John Bunyan's word picture of the godless 'Vanity Fair' so well illustrated in his classic *The Pilgrim's Progress*."

TWO APOSTATE "CHURCHES" UNITING (Friday Church News Notes, June 3, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The Church of England and the Church of Scotland have agreed to unite. Both are apostate, so it is a good fit. They deserve each other. Both are dying, so they can die together in liberal bliss, clueless about what is happening. They will doubtless welcome the Antichrist to Britain's shores one day, and possibly not so



far in the future. Some media sources made the point that the Church of Scotland “allows ministers who are in same-sex marriages and the Church of England does not” (“Church of England and Scotland,” Christianheadlines.com, May 25, 2016). But the Church of England is filled with homosexual “ministers” who live with their partners. In fact, in 2013, it dropped its ban on “gay clergy in civil partnerships.” The Church of England’s Archbishops of Canterbury have been uttering rank unbelief for more than 60 years. In 1953, William Temple, in his book *Nature and God*, said, “... there is no such thing as revealed truth.” In 1961, Michael Ramsey said, “... heaven is not a place for Christians only. ... I expect to see many present day atheists there” (*London Daily Mail*, Oct. 2, 1961). In 1982, Robert Runcie said he was an agnostic as to why Jesus suffered on the cross (*Sunday Times Weekly Review*, London, April 11, 1982). I was in London that day and read this unbelieving nonsense in the newspaper that morning over breakfast. In 1996, George Carey lashed out at fundamentalists who place the Bible “above and beyond human inquiry” (*Christian News*, Dec. 9, 1996). On September 14, 2008, the Church of England officially apologized to Charles Darwin for rejecting his theory of evolution, and on May 16, 2009, the bells of the Anglican Cathedral of Liverpool thrice pealed out John Lennon’s atheistic anthem “Imagine.”

PRESIDENT OBAMA’S SHAMEFUL HIROSHIMA SPEECH (Friday Church News Notes, June 3, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from “Congress



Must Censure President Obama over Hiroshima Speech,” Breitbart, May 27, 2016: “President Barack Obama told the world on Friday in Hiroshima that the American decision to drop nuclear bombs on Japan in 1945 arose from humanity’s worst instincts, including ‘nationalist fervor or religious zeal.’ ... The speech--delivered on the eve of Memorial Day weekend--was billed by the White House as anything but an apology, but Obama’s words betrayed his true sentiments. Obama, a native of Honolulu who grew up near Pearl Harbor, said nothing about the fact that Japan started the war; nothing about the fact that the Japanese were responsible for the slaughter of millions of civilians throughout Asia and the Pacific; nothing about the fact that the Japanese refused to surrender after hundreds of thousands had already been killed in conventional bombing. Obama implied that Americans had not yet considered the human cost of the atomic bomb: we had to ‘force ourselves to imagine the moment the bomb fell’ and ‘force ourselves to feel the dread of children confused by what they see,’ he said. He described the moral dilemmas of nuclear warfare as if no president,

and no American, had considered them before. But he left out the moral case for ending the war, and the hundreds of thousands of deaths avoided because of Hiroshima. The contrast to President Harry S. Truman could not have been clearer. Reflecting on the decision to bomb Japan years later, Truman declared: ‘That bomb caused the Japanese to surrender, and it stopped the war. I don’t care what the crybabies say now, because they didn’t have to make the decision.’ As he has done before, Obama cast a moral equivalence between different civilizations, implying that Americans were just as bad as the Imperial Japanese, or anyone else.”

ATHEIST LOSES LAWSUIT AGAINST CHURCH (Friday Church News Notes, June 3, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Atheist Loses,” Breitbart, May 24, 2016: “Atheist activist Patrick Greene lost his lawsuit today against Abundant Life Fellowship Church in Corpus Christi, Texas--a church represented by First Liberty Institute--admitting that his lawsuit was ‘baseless,’ and submitting to a court



order never to bring such a frivolous lawsuit in the future. ... Greene's lawsuit claims that a church's erecting of a cross on private property is unconstitutional because a local mayor and city council members attended the church's groundbreaking ceremony. ... As detailed in the previous report, Greene has a record of repeatedly bringing lawsuits that many consider 'vexatious,' meaning predatory lawsuits that have no merit, but are designed to threaten and harass defendants into abandoning actions that are perfectly legal in order to avoid or end the lawsuit. During a court hearing on Tuesday morning before Judge Missy Medary of the 347th District Court of Nueces County, Greene entered into a court-approved settlement agreement. ... He is bound by the court's order to stop bringing frivolous lawsuits in the future, lawsuits which are designed to prevent Americans from freely exercising or expressing their faith."

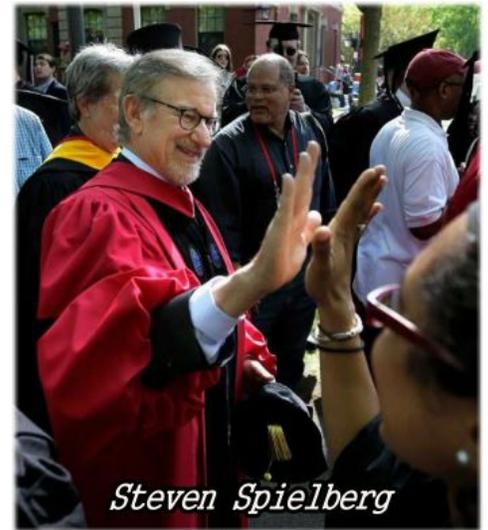
TEENS SPENDING MOST OF THEIR TIME ONLINE (Friday Church News Notes, June 3, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)



- According to a study by Common Sense Media, teens are spending nine of their waking 15 hours consuming media online. That is nearly double the time that adults spend online ("A study says," *Business Insider*, May 27, 2016). Children eight to 12 spend nearly six hours a day online. Psychologists are discovering manifold problems with this scenario, such as impeding the ability to concentrate and build a large vocabulary, but the moral and spiritual dangers are even greater. The book [*The Mobile Phone and the Christian Home and Church*](#), a new youth discipleship course, gives many tips for parents in protecting their families from moral dangers in the smartphone age. It is available in print and free eBook editions from www.wayoflife.org.

STEVEN SPIELBERG URGES HARVARD GRADS TO "CREATE A WORLD THAT LASTS FOREVER" (Friday Church News Notes, June 3, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- Speaking at Harvard University's graduation service last week, Hollywood director Steven Spielberg urged graduates to "create a world that lasts forever" (*Business Insider*, May 27, 2016). No one but God can create a world that lasts forever. Harvard grads cannot make *themselves* last forever, let alone create an eternal world. Only the Creator God is eternal, and only those who know Him in Jesus Christ by the salvation He has so graciously purchased will enjoy an eternal world. Harvard was founded upon this principle, but it has left this great wisdom far behind. Today it foolishly ridicules the truth it once believed. "For God so loved the world, that he



Steven Spielberg

gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:16-18).

AN ASTRONAUT FOR BIBLICAL CREATIONISM (Friday Church News Notes, June 3, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- Colonel Jeffrey Williams (b. 1958), U.S. astronaut who has spent many months on the International Space Station (ISS), is an unabashed believer in biblical creationism. He has captured more photographs than any astronaut in history and has published a selection in *The Work of His Hands: A View of God's Creation from Space*. The author says that in this book he reflects on the "vivid lessons about the meticulous goodness of divine providence, God's care for His creation, and His wisdom in ordering the universe." On his current mission, Williams is



scheduled to surpass the record of 520 cumulative days in space set by Scott Kelly. In a 2015 interview with the Institute for Creation Research, Col. Williams said, “I came to Christ in the late ’80s. I’ve studied the Scriptures since 1988. I didn’t want to jump on a bandwagon; I didn’t just want to be a follower of a religious organization. I wanted to understand what the faith was, and all of my life, since 1988, every day I study the Scriptures to try to understand [them], and one of the things that I’ve found is the complete internal consistency within the overall Scriptures and that the truth of Scripture is affirmed by every other piece of extra-biblical evidence. ... I don’t find a conflict with true science--genuine science with integrity--and the Scriptures. I have found that in all cases where there is a conflict, it’s not a conflict with the science, it’s a conflict with the presupposition going in. So it’s more of a philosophical thing. If you study those things, philosophy, science, and religion have always intersected. The lines dividing them

have never been clear, and they often get blurred. If somebody perceives science to be in conflict with, for example, the early chapters of Genesis, it’s not the science, it’s the presupposition that goes into it. If you have a presupposition that excludes the possibility of a God, that excludes the possibility of supernatural acts, and that [believes] everything has to be explained just with natural processes, then you’ve basically limited what you can let the objective observation of science tell you. That’s where the issue comes in. I presuppose God. And I presuppose the truth of the S c r i p t u r e ” (www.icr.org/article/above-all-earth/).

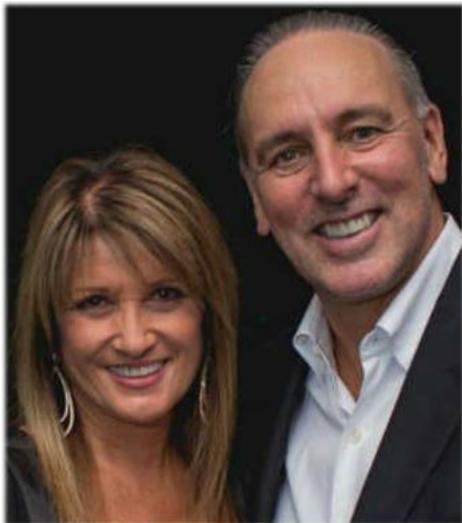
MISS USA EMBODIES ANCIENT GODDESS CHARACTERISTICS (Friday Church News Notes, June 10, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295 4143) - The 2016 Miss USA contestant winner, Deshauna Barber, embodies both major aspects of ancient goddess worship. Her very



participation in the Miss USA contest embodies the sexuality aspect, and her philosophy embodies the feminist power aspect. In the question segment of the contest, she said, “As a woman in the United States Army, I think it was an amazing job by our government to allow women to integrate to every branch of the military. We are just as tough as men. As a commander of my unit, I am powerful. I am dedicated. And it is important that we recognize that gender does not limit us in the United States Army.” Before the contest, Deshauna tweeted, “It’s time to show that we as women are versatile, strong and can be anything we set our minds to.” These statements made a great media soundbite for this generation. Deshauna is doubtless a talented young woman who excels in her work as an Information Technology analyst officer, but her philosophy is not true. Human beings are not capable of anything they put their minds to. Further, the woman cannot do everything the man can do, nor can the man do everything the woman can do. They were created for different roles in this present world. “And he [Christ] answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female” (Matthew 19:4). (For more on goddess worship see the chapter on ancient Babylon in *Bible Times & Ancient Kingdoms*, available from Way of Life Literature.)

HILLSONG’S APOLOGY FOR THE NAKED COWBOY (Friday Church News Notes, June 10, 2016,

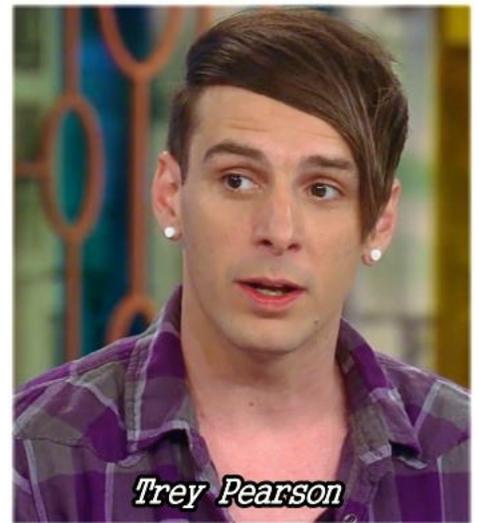
www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - In last week's *Friday Church News Notes*, we reported on the appearance at the March Hillsong Women's Conference in New York City of "a naked cowboy." Though he wasn't entirely naked, he appeared to be wearing only a cowboy hat, boots, and a guitar. He was joined on stage by "scantily-dressed 'cheerleaders,' an Elvis impersonator," and others. Hillsong Senior Pastor Brian Houston of Hillsong Sydney issued a public statement claiming that his wife, Bobbie, "was clearly unaware that this was going to happen" and that Hillsong New York's pastors, Carl and Laura Lentz, "were not part of the decision" ("Brian Houston Responds," *The Christian Post*, June 5, 2016). Hughie Seaborn, a former Pentecostal who lives in Australia and has followed the antics of Hillsong for decades, makes the following observation: "In the same way he lied about any knowledge of his father, Frank's, paedophilia, Brian is lying again. This time about Hillsong New York's leadership, including his wife Bobbie, having any knowledge of a naked cowboy appearing at the Women's Conference. The video clip clearly



shows that the Naked Cowboy was choreographed into the performance. None of the other participants in the debacle was shocked to see a naked cowboy coming onto the stage. He didn't have to shove anybody out of their place and steal their position. The Hillsong leadership are all complicit in this diabolical event, including his kids and his wife Bobbie, who you might remember produced a series of sexually explicit 'teaching' tapes back in 2001 entitled 'Kingdom Women Love Sex,' which were available from Koorong 'christian' Bookshop for \$21.95. Watching this short video clip tells us a lot about the downward progression of Christendom, not just in America, but in the world, when you see a couple of thousand professing Christian women all screaming and acting like lunatics--even before any naked cowboy appears. They all bring reproach upon the name of Christ." Final Note: It turns out that Hillsong's "naked cowboy" is Hillsong New York City's own youth pastor Diego Simila.

ANOTHER CCM ARTIST "COMES OUT" (*Friday Church News Notes*, June 10, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- Trey Pearson, lead singer of the popular Christian rock band Everyday Sunday, has "come out" as "gay." He joins Marsha Stevens, Ray Boltz, Jennifer Knapp, Anthony Williams, Kirk Talley, Clay Aiken, Doug Pinnock, Ty Herndon, and others. Everyday Sunday's 2001 namesake album has sold 250,000 copies, and Pearson has toured with Toby Mac, Switchfoot, MercyMe, Jeremy Camp, and other big name contemporary Christian artists. In a June



2016 cover story interview with *614 Magazine*, the married father of two said, "I grew up in a very conservative Christian home where I was taught that sexual orientation was a matter of choice," and though he was attracted to other males, he attempted to suppress his feelings. His "coming out" is presented in terms of "being true" to himself. The *614 Magazine* cover story was titled "Gay, Christian Rock Star: This Is Who I Am." After counseling with emergent apostates like Rob Bell, Pearson says that "there is absolutely no conflict with accepting who I am and following Jesus," because "God wants me to be healthy, authentic, whole, integrated, and my truest self." For the Selfie generation, it's all about ME, as prophesied in Scripture ("lovers of their own selves," 2 Timothy 3:1-2). Trey's vow to be faithful to his wife unto death is thrown aside, because his desire to be faithful to himself trumps everything. He claims to be "free" now and to be pursuing "health and wholeness." In reality, he is in great and terrible bondage because he is being reconciled to his fallen nature. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications,

thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Matthew 15:19). To say that one should be true to “feelings” of homosexuality is no different than saying that a man who is attracted to women other than his wife should be true to those “feelings.” The Bible plainly identifies such “feelings” as sin, and there is nothing right, godly, or honorable in yielding to them. The emergent program categorizes “loving, committed same-sex” relationships as honorable and as acceptable before God, claiming that Scripture only condemns abusive and idolatrous acts of homosexuality, such as ancient temple prostitution, but this is nonsense. The Bible plainly teaches that apart from the union of holy marriage, sexual activity is sin, and there is not a hint anywhere in Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, that a holy marriage can consist of a same-sex union. “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge” (Hebrews 13:4). The Lord Jesus Christ pointed to Genesis 2 as God’s abiding standard for marriage. “And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:4-6).

SCHOOL CALLS SHERIFF TO STOP SEVEN-YEAR-OLD BOY FROM DISTRIBUTING BIBLE VERSES (Friday Church News Notes, June 10, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)



- The following is excerpted from “School Calls Sheriff,” Smobserved.com, June 3, 2016: “A public school in Palmdale directed a Los Angeles Deputy Sheriff to call on the family of a seven-year-old child in order to forbid him from handing out Bible verses and stories on a public sidewalk outside of the school. The deputy told the family that ‘someone might be offended.’ The child, who attends Desert Rose Elementary, had originally been receiving short notes with Bible verses from his mother, Christina Zavala, packed with his lunch. After sharing the notes with his friends, he received requests from his friends for their own Bible verses. His mother complied and provided additional Bible verses for her son's friends and included short stories for context. When one child shared one of these notes with the first-grade teacher, telling her, ‘this is the most beautiful story I’ve ever seen,’ the teacher intervened. After publicly rebuking the Zavala boy, she called Mr. and Mrs. Zavala and, invoking separation of church and state, told them that their son was not allowed to share Bible verses on school grounds. The teacher was unimpressed with Mrs. Zavala’s correct interpretation of the

Establishment Clause and stated that if they wanted to share Bible, it would have to be outside the school gates. Accordingly, Mrs. Zavala and her son proceeded to hand out Bible verses and stories to her son’s friends at the school gate for a brief period after school let out. According to the Zavala’s, many children congregated to receive the stories. On May 9, 2016, when Mr. Jaime Zavala came to pick up his son and distribute Bible verses, he was approached by School Principal Pagliagro. Pagliagro told Mr. Zavala that it was ‘against school policy’ to hand the Bible notes out at the school gate and they would have to move onto the sidewalk, which was a ‘public place.’ Jaime and his son complied and soon returned home. It was at 4:30pm on that day that the LA Deputy Sheriff knocked on their door, telling them the school had called to report that the child and his parents had been sharing papers at school and that this was not permitted. Mr. and Mrs. Zavala then approached Liberty Counsel, a non-profit litigation, education, and policy organization who specialize, in part, in matters of religious freedom. Liberty Counsel undertakes to educate school districts in correct interpretation of the clause establishing separation of church and state. The Palmdale School District has been served a letter from Liberty Counsel informing them that pupils of public schools have the right to exercise freedom of speech, including but not limited to, distribution of printed material. Expression can only be prohibited that is obscene, libelous or slanderous, and constitute a clear and present danger of commission of unlawful acts. It is not uncommon for schools to misconstrue their duty and, in the process, restrict students’ freedom to exercise religion.”



SMILEY FACE BIBLE FOR THE TWITTER GENERATION

(Friday Church News Notes, June 10, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- *Bible Emoji: Scripture 4 Millennials* is a smiley face Bible for the Twitter generation. It replaces about 10 percent of the text with emoji symbols. God is signified by a silly yellow smiley face with a blue halo. The creator of Bible Emoji says he wants users to “have a game reading it.” There is no fear of God here, no reverence. Everything is cheapened and brought down to the level of the shallow pop culture.

BARRELEYES (Friday Church News Notes, June 10, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is from CreationMoments.com, May 25, 2016: “Almost all sighted animals that aren't insects see with eyeballs. But that is not true of a fish named barreleyes, and that's for a good reason. Barreleyes has that name because instead of eyeballs, the fish sees through tubes. The fish live a third of a mile below the surface, so studying them in detail was not possible until the last few decades.

Barreleyes can move its eyetubes in different directions, depending on what it wants to look at. Even stranger, the eyetubes are inside the forehead and do not come into contact with the water at all. How can it see if its vision organs are inside its head? It has a transparent forehead filled with transparent liquid. What is the purpose of such a strange arrangement? Scientists believe that barreleyes eat siphonophores, which are jellyfish-like creatures that sting. The transparent forehead protects its eyes from getting stung. Barreleyes' uniquely designed eyes are impossible to explain with gradual evolutionary modifications of regular fish eyes. Yet, they are well designed for barreleye's unusual way of



making a living. As Scripture reminds us several times, nothing is too hard for God. As we read Scripture's record of what God has done in the past and what He has promised He still will do, especially for His people, this reminder is a comfort.”

MUSLIM SLAUGHTERS ATTENDEES OF A “GAY BAR” (Friday Church News Notes, June 17, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- On Sunday, June 12, Omar Mateen slaughtered 49 and wounded 53 in an attack at a “gay bar” in Orlando, Florida. Following are some facts about this case: The Pulse nightclub is advertised as “Orlando’s hottest gay bar,” promising patrons “an unforgettable night of fun and fantasy.” Mateen had been known to attend the bar and had a profile on a “gay dating” app. Mateen is the son of Muslim immigrants from Afghanistan. His father has a YouTube channel supporting the Taliban. According to Pew Research, 99% of Afghan Muslims support Sharia law. Nearly 30,000 of them were permanently resettled in the U.S. between 2001 and 2013. More than 91% of recent Middle East immigrants in the U.S. are on food stamps and nearly 70% are on cash welfare. Mateen attended the Islamic Center of Fort Pierce for more than 13 years. He travelled to Saudi Arabia twice on Islamic pilgrimages and took an on-line course from the Fundamental Islamic Knowledge, a group that promotes terrorism. He was investigated by the FBI in 2013 and again in 2014. A former classmate said Mateen celebrated the destruction of the Twin Towers on 9/11. In telephone conversations with Orlando law enforcement during the assault, Mateen made a “pledge of allegiance to ISIS.” The Islamic State’s Jihadist radio claimed Mateen as “one of our soldiers of the caliphate in America.” An FBI source said that Mateen called the agency before the attack and claimed to be a follower of IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Mateen’s wife said he had scoped out Disney World as a possible target. In March, Sheikh Farrokh Sekaleshfar, an expert on Shariah or Islamic law, spoke at the Hussein Islamic Center of Sanford, Florida, near Orlando, on



“How to Deal with the Phenomenon of Homosexuality.” He said, “We know there’s nothing to be embarrassed about this, death is the sentence. We have to have that compassion for people. With homosexuals, it’s the same. Out of compassion, let’s get rid of them now” (“The United West,” *Breitbart*, Apr. 6, 2016). Both Sekaleshfar and the Hussein Center have tried to distance themselves from these remarks since the shooting. But Abu al-Aynal-Ansari, a senior official in the Gaza Strip, told NewsTalk 990 AM in Philadelphia the night of the Orlando attack, “When the Islamic State throws gays from the roofs, it is not a sanction that they decided upon. This is our Sharia.” The Pulse bar was a “gun free zone.” Mateen purchased his guns legally and was compliant with all gun laws. In fact, he was registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture as a private security officer with a Class G firearm license and a concealed carry permit, having completed 68 hours of training, multiple criminal background checks and medical examinations. Mateen’s shooting spree was stopped when he was killed by men wielding guns. The One World Trade Center building in New York

and the Eiffel Tower in Paris were lit in rainbow “pride” colors to honor the dead.

WOMEN BURNED ALIVE IN MUSLIM “HONOR KILLINGS”

(Friday Church News Notes, June 17, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Lahore woman torches teenage daughter,” *Dawn*, June 8, 2016: “A woman set her daughter to fire for marrying the man of her choice here on Wednesday, police said. The 18-year-old girl died on the spot. The victim, a resident of Mast Iqbal Road, had eloped with a man she liked and who her family disapproved of, said Station House Officer (SHO) Sheikh Hammad Akhtar. Two days before the incident, the family coaxed the deceased to come back home on the pretext that they will send her off with their consent. However, when once she returned, her mother doused her with petrol and set her alight. ... Earlier this month, a 19-year-old school teacher was set on fire in Murree for refusing to marry a man twice her age. Last month, police arrested 13 members of a local tribal council who allegedly strangled a local girl and set her



body on fire for helping one of her friends elope. The charred body of 17-year-old Ambreen Riasat was found in a burned van in the tourist resort of Donga Gali on April 29. Nearly 1,000 women are killed each year in Pakistan in so-called ‘honour killings’ for allegedly violating conservative norms on love and marriage.” Meanwhile, the Taliban in Afghanistan ripped out a man’s eyes and skinned him alive in retaliation for the death of one of its commanders at the hands of a distant relative of the victim (“A young man is skinned alive,” *Washington Post*, June 11, 2016).

BAPTISTS AND EVANGELICALS SUPPORT CONSTRUCTION OF A MOSQUE

(Friday Church News Notes, June 17, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Baptists and evangelicals have joined hands with Muslims to support the building of a mosque. After the planning board of Basking Ridge, New Jersey, denied a building permit for the mosque last December, the Muslims filed a federal lawsuit. They are joined by two agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention (the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission and the International Mission Board), plus the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty and the National Association of Evangelicals. According to the *New York Times*, “A leading opponent of the mosque project, who has said that Islamic Shariah law is ‘one of the greatest threats to American values and liberties,’ led a relentless campaign of challenges to virtually every aspect of the project” (“Muslims Sue,” *New York Times*, Mar. 10, 2016). Brent Walker of the Baptist Joint Committee for Reli-



gious Liberty says that this is a simple issue of religious liberty. “We really felt it was important to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our Muslim brothers and sisters” (“Baptists join diverse faith groups to support mosque-building effort,” *Baptist News*, May 26, 2016). The “leading opponent” previously cited is correct. Islam is not just “another religion.” It aspires to world dominion, and its mosques are outposts for this dominion. According to Islam, the world is divided into *Dar al-Harb* (the world of war or the non-Islamic people) and *Dar al-Islam* (the world of peace or the Muslim world). “The presumption is that the duty of jihad will continue, interrupted only by truces, until all the world either adopts the Muslim faith or subjects to the Muslim rule” (Gene Gerganus, *Peril of Islam: Telling the Truth*, pp. 59, 60). According to Islam, humanity is divided into those who accept Muhammad as the prophet of Allah and those who do not. Those who do not are the Kafirs (pronounced kā’fir). *Kafir* is the word that is used in the Quran, and it is a strong word. It is the word for Allah’s enemies. It is the word for those who resist the truth of Islam. Kafirs are unclean, evil, cursed, ignorant liars, and part-

ners of Satan. (See [The Bible and Islam](#), which is available in print and as a free eBook from [Way of Life Literature](#).)

STAY-AT-HOME MOMS MOST SATISFIED (Friday Church News Notes, June 17, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- A large survey by *Redbook* magazine finds that 90% of stay-at-home moms are happy, the largest percentage of any profession. The survey, called *Mom Gig*, found that 34% are happy, whereas 56% are either “very” or “extremely” happy. The happiest are moms with four or more children. More than 60% of stay-at-home moms contribute to the household income, with 25% running a home business. “Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. ... She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest



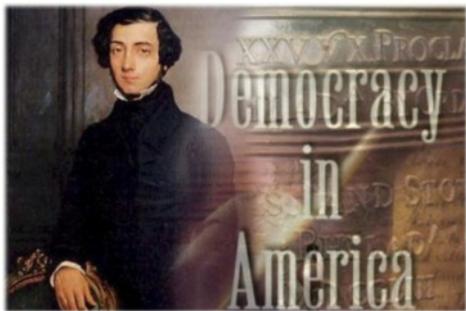
them all” (Proverbs 31:10-12, 27-29).

RADICAL ECUMENISM AND ONE-WORLD CHURCH ON DISPLAY AT UPCOMING WASHINGTON D.C. EVENT (Friday Church News Notes, June 17, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)



- The “Together 2016” event scheduled for Washington, D.C., in July, will display the extreme ecumenism and one-world church philosophy of contemporary worship music. Pope Francis will deliver a video message to the crowd. He will be joined by Hillsong United, Kari Jobe, David Crowder, Kirk Franklin, Jeremy Camp, Lacrae, Michael W. Smith, Passion, Casting Crowns, and Matt Maher (Catholic CCM artist). Bible-believing churches that use and adapt contemporary worship music are foolishly building bridges to this most dangerous spiritual world in direct disobedience to God’s Word. “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33). (For more on this see *The Transformational Power of Contemporary Praise Music*, available on DVD or as a free eVideo download from www.wayoflife.org.)

DE TOCQUEVILLE'S PROPHECY (Friday Church News Notes, June 17, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)



- "Society will develop a new kind of servitude which covers the surface of society with a network of complicated rules, through which the most original minds and the most energetic characters cannot penetrate. It does not tyrannise but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people, till each nation is reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd" (Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 1835).

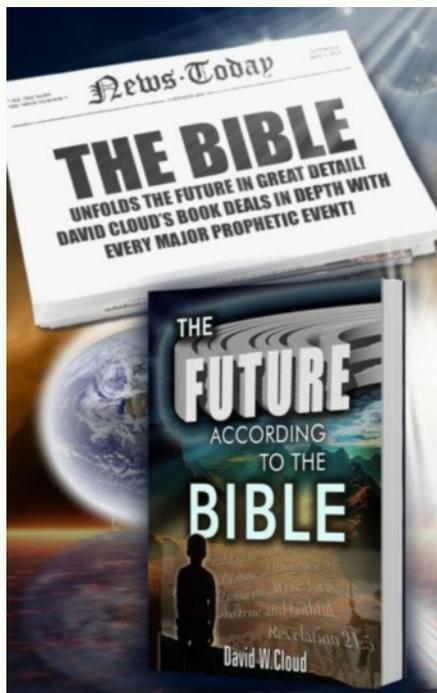
FASTEST JAWS IN THE WORLD

(Friday Church News Notes, June 17, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from CreationMoments.com, May 20, 2016: "If an octopus thinks you have found him in his lair, he will squirt ink in your face and hope, in your surprise, you don't see him fleeing. On the other hand, challenge a bull, and you will have more fight on your hands than you want. Other creatures will evaluate the situation to determine whether fight or flight is the best response. The trap-jaw ant has a unique approach to this problem of fight or flight. He can fight, flee or do both at the same time with the same movement. The ant has a unique mandible. It is this jaw that is the secret of the ant's response to a challenge. If the ant



faces a threat and decides to attack, it will strike at the threat with its mandibles and in the movement propel itself up to nine inches from the threat almost simultaneously. If the ant decides to flee, it simply does so by snapping its jaws shut against the ground on which it stands. Its jaw snaps closed at the speed of over 136 miles per hour. While it is sometimes necessary to protect ourselves from earthly dangers through fight or flight, neither of these will work for the spiritual dangers we face. For those we must trust the strong arm of our risen Savior."

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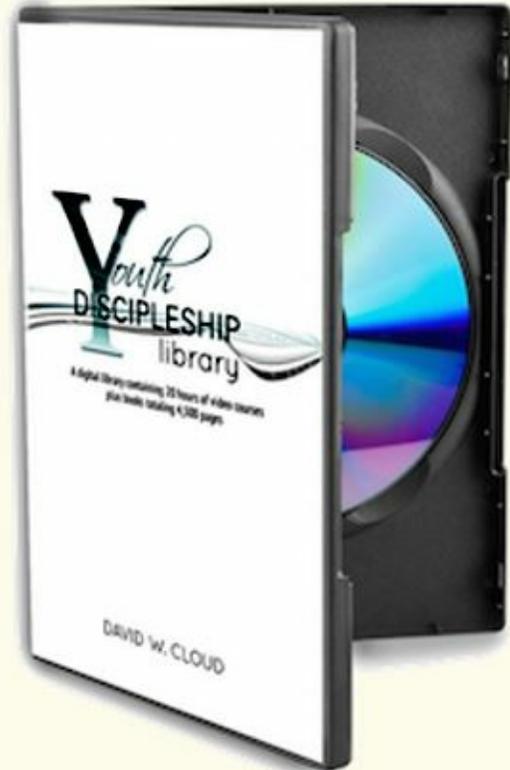
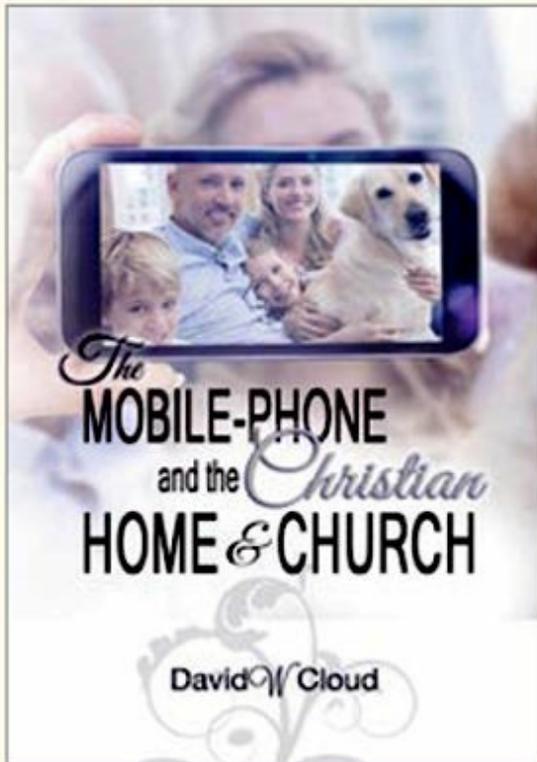
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I am scheduled to speak from my new course *The Mobile Phone and the Christian Home and Church*. We will emphasize the necessity of the church, the

home, and the youth working together to build a wall of spiritual protection against the hurricane force winds of apostasy and worldliness that are raging in our day.

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For more information see <http://icbc.org.au/youth-discipleship-meetings-ingleburn/>



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- 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 Bible 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)



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