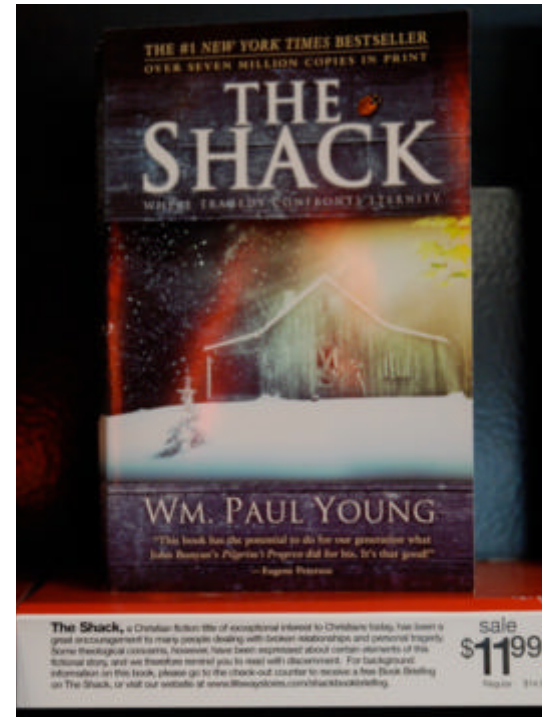


# Friday Church News Notes

## Lifeway Wants It Both Ways with “The Shack”

Lifeway Christian Stores, which are affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, are selling “The Shack,” a novel that depicts God as a woman who doesn’t judge people. The Lifeway bookstore in Huntsville, Alabama, has a notice that says, “This book may contain thoughts, ideas, or concepts that could be considered inconsistent with historical evangelical theology. Therefore, we encourage you to read it with extra discernment.” By means of this disclaimer, Lifeway intends to make money from this popular book while avoiding responsibility for its heresies, but it won’t work. The Bible warns that if we do not disassociate strictly from those who preach false christs, we become partakers of their evil deeds (2 John 7-11). Lifeway is not only associating with William Young and his heresies by selling the book, but they are actually putting funds into his coffers to enable him to promote his wretched heresies. The Lifeway warning says the book “MAY contain” thoughts contrary to sound theology and urges readers to use discernment, but they don’t identify any particular heresies and a large percentage of their customers doubtless lack the Bible knowledge and spiritual discernment required to discern truth from error. This is like serving up a dish contaminated with poison to children and warning them to eat with caution! The Lifeway bookstores are filled to the brim with psychology, self-help, self-esteem, romance novels, ecumenical and charismatic literature, undependable Bible versions, and all sorts of “Christian” rock music. On a visit to a Lifeway store in Huntsville last year I found that they had many titles by emerging church authors, including Rob Bell (*Velvet Elvis*), Brennan Manning (*The Ragamuffin Gospel*), Erwin McManus (*The Barbarian Way*), Donald Miller (*Blue Like Jazz*), and Shane Claiborne (*The Irresistible Revolution*). Lifeway will stand accountable before God for polluting the minds and hearts of their customers with unscriptural material and for refusing to carry sound material from fundamentalist Bible-based publishers that they could and should be stocking but which they refuse to stock because it is “controversial.” (For more information see the reports “What Is the Emerging Church” and “The Shack’s Cool God” at the Way of Life web site.)



To read the entire disclaimer, got to <http://www.lifewaystores.com/lwstore/shackbookbriefing.asp>

### AUTHOR OF *THE SHACK* DENIES SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT AND HELL FIRE



In an interview on March 13 with Kendall Adams of KAYP radio, William Young, author of *The Shack*, denied substitutionary atonement and hell fire, two cardinal doctrines of the biblical Christian faith. When asked, “I take it that you wouldn’t agree that the cross was a place of punishment for sin,” Young replied, “No. I don’t; I [don’t hold] a penal substitution point of view.” Young also said, “I don’t think that hell is physical fire and that kind of stuff and it is not an issue of separation from God.” *The Shack* is very popular among emerging type churches, but it presents a false god. For more on this see “The Shack’s Cool God” at the Way of Life web site.

### PROMISE KEEPERS FOR WOMEN

Promise Keepers, which staged massive ecumenical stadium events in the 1990s, is now targeting women. Its one event for 2009 is scheduled for July in Boulder, Colorado, and women are invited for the first time in the organization's history. Promise Keepers almost went out of business after founder Bill McCartney left five years ago, but he came back onboard as the CEO last fall and plans to rebuild the organization's influence. He says, "Boulder is going to be the epicenter of an extraordinary move of God. It's going to go around the world ...we feel like it will relaunch the ministry" ("No Longer for Men Only," *The New Man*, June 9, 2009). McCartney's focus is still on ecumenical unity. He says, "This is the very heart of God, to bring the church together for the difficult days ahead." In fact, the heart of God as revealed in Scripture is for the churches to remain true to His Word and to mark and avoid those who teach error (Romans 16:17).

### COUNTRY MUSIC THEOLOGY

We have warned many times about the moral danger of country music, and the reason is that so many of God's people even in strong Bible-believing churches listen to this trash. A popular song that hit the charts this year is "People Are Crazy" sung by Billy Currington. The lyrics describe a conversation between an old man and a younger one in a bar. The old man had lived an unrighteous life, drinking, smoking, divorcing, womanizing, but he and his philosophy of life are applauded in the song. It is repeated in the chorus as follows: "God is great, beer is good, and people are crazy." The song ends with the younger man putting those words on the old man's tombstone. Beware of country music. It is of the world, the flesh, and the devil, but its thin veneer of "God and country" makes it palatable to some backslidden Christians. "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11).

### SOUTHERN BAPTIST LEADER SAYS "MISSIONS TRUMPS DOCTRINAL DIVIDES"

Speaking at the Southern Baptist Pastor's Conference in Louisville, Kentucky, Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, said that "missions trumps doctrinal divides." He said, "The victories of faith in the life of the convention did not happen because men and women loved doctrine. They happened because they loved Jesus" ("Chapman: Missions Trumps Doctrinal Divides," Baptist Press, June 23, 2009). The Bible never downplays doctrine after this fashion. When the Lord Jesus Christ gave the Great Commission, He commanded that we preach the gospel, baptize those that believe, and then "teach them to observe ALL THINGS whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20). The apostle Paul reminded the elders at the church of Ephesus that he had preached "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). Paul instructed the preacher Timothy to keep the New Testament commandments "without spot" (1 Timothy 6:14). That refers to the details. There is no authority in the Scripture for dividing doctrine into "cardinal" and "peripheral" or "secondary." While we know that not all doctrine has equal importance, all of it has some importance, and who are we to say that some of the teaching of the Word of God is "peripheral"?

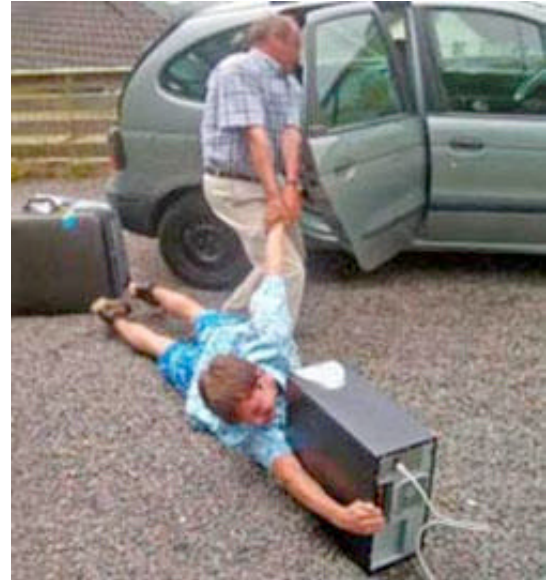


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## INTERNET CUTTING INTO FAMILY TIME

A new survey has found that Internet usage is eroding the time that family members spend together. The Annenberg Center for the Digital Future reported that 28 percent of Americans interviewed in 2008 said they spend less time with members of their household, which is triple the number that said that in 2006 (“Family Time Eroding,” Breitbart.com, June 15, 2009). People are spending more time on cell phones and social networks such as Facebook and MySpace. Michael Gilbert, a senior fellow at the Annenberg Center, rightly observed: “It can’t be a good thing that families are spending less face-to-face time together. Ultimately it leads to less cohesive and less communicative families.” He said that “the Internet is so engrossing, and demands so much more attention than other technologies, that it can

disrupt personal boundaries in ways other technologies wouldn’t have.” Christian families must resist the onslaught of communication and entertainment technology by controlling it in a wise manner rather than allowing themselves to be controlled by it. Who said that children need their own cell phones, televisions, computers, and iPods? The world says that, but God’s Word warns that “evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Cor. 15:33), and Christian parents must do everything within their power to disconnect their children from the ugly pop culture and to win their hearts for Christ.



### PARENTS WHO CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR CHILDREN’S DELINQUENCY BY INEFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE

The following is excerpted from *Training Your Children to Turn out Right*, an excellent book by David Sorenson (Northstar Ministries, 1820 W. Morgan St., Duluth, MN 55811, 218-726-0209, [www.northstarministries.com](http://www.northstarministries.com), [dhs.northstar@charter.net](mailto:dhs.northstar@charter.net)) -- “As a pastor, I have visited in thousands of homes. I have witnessed the following scenario played out numerous times. ... Mom (or, sometimes Dad) would say to Junior, ‘It’s time to go to bed.’ (Or some other parental directive.) Junior ignored his mother and continued to watch TV. ... After a few moments, she would say, ‘Junior, I told you to go and get ready for bed.’ He replied, ‘Aw, I don’t want to.’ Mom let that go by. A few moments later, Mom became a little hot about the matter. She raised the volume of her voice and said, ‘I TOLD YOU TO GET READY FOR BED.’ Junior replied, ‘But Mom, I want to watch my program.’ Mom tolerated that counter for a few more moments. She then announced, ‘THIS IS THE LAST TIME I AM GOING TO TELL YOU. GO AND GET READY FOR BED!’ Junior, by now himself getting exasperated at being shouted at, shouts back, ‘I TOLD YOU, I DON’T WANT TO!’ Finally, Mom shouts, ‘I’M WARNING YOU. MARCH RIGHT NOW, OR I AM GOING TO WHIP YOU.’ Variations of that scene go on by the thousands every single day in America. The real culprit was not Junior. He knew from considerable experience that Mom could be ignored. Mom was too lazy to get up and deal with the situation. she, in fact, was in her own way contributing to the delinquency of Junior. ... One might say, ‘If I handled the situation described above as recommended, there would be a pitched battle.’ Well, you had better get on with the battle and win the war while it can still be won. The day is coming when you will not be able to win the battle or the war” (*Training Your Children to Turn Out Right*, 1995, pp. 69, 70).

## PASTORS ARRESTED IN CHINA

The following is excerpted from “More Than 30 House Church Leaders Arrested,” ChristianNewsWire.com, June 12, 2009: “On June 9 more than 30 house church leaders were arrested while gathering in a house church in Langzhong city, Sichuan province. Thirteen leaders were given 15 days of administrative detention, and five of the leaders were placed under criminal detention. The other leaders were released. The Christian leaders were gathered in Pastor Li Ming's house church at 5:30 p.m., in Lanzhou city, when several dozen officials in six to seven police vehicles from the local Domestic Security Protection Squad surrounded the site, then arrested all of the Christians and searched the house. ... The five leaders who received criminal detention are likely to face a formal criminal indictment or up to three years of re-education through labor. They are: Pastors Gao Guofu, Pastor Li Ming, Zhang Guofen, Gu Lianpeng and Yu Zhipeng. Pastor Li Ming was sentenced to three years of re-education through labor in recent years because of his Christian faith.”

## CHRISTIAN MAN MURDERED FOR DRINKING TEA FROM A MUSLIM CUP

“International Christian Concern ([www.persecution.org](http://www.persecution.org)) has learned that radical Muslims running a tea stall beat a Christian man to death for using a cup designated for Muslims on May 9. The young man, Ishtiaq Masih, had ordered tea at a roadside stall in Machharkay village, Punjab, Pakistan, after his bus made a rest stop. When Ishtiaq went to pay for his tea, the owner noticed that he was wearing a necklace with a cross and grabbed him, calling for his employees to bring anything available to beat him for violating a sign posted on the stall warning non-Muslims to declare their religion before being served. Ishtiaq had not noticed the warning sign before ordering his tea. The owner and 14 of his employees beat Ishtiaq with stones, iron rods and clubs, and stabbed him multiple times with kitchen knives as Ishtiaq pleaded for mercy. The other bus passengers and other passers-by finally intervened and took Ishtiaq to the Rural Health Center in the village. The doctor who took Ishtiaq's case told ICC that Ishtiaq had died due to excessive internal and external bleeding, a fractured skull, and brain injuries. Makah Tea Stall is located on the Sukheki-Lahore highway and is owned by Mubarak Ali, a 42-year-old radical Muslim. ICC's correspondent visited the tea stall and observed that a large red warning sign with a death's head symbol was posted which read, ‘All non-Muslims should introduce their faith prior to ordering tea. This tea stall serves

Muslims only.’ The warning also threatened anyone who violated the rule with ‘dire consequences.’ A neighboring shopkeeper told ICC on condition of anonymity that all Ali's employees are former students of radical Muslim madrassas (seminaries). Ishtiaq's family said that they immediately reported the incident to the police and filed a case against Ali. However, the murderers are still freely operating the tea stall.”

**CONCLUSION:** The Friday Church News Notes is designed for use in churches and is published by Way of Life Literature's Fundamental Baptist Information Service. Unless otherwise stated, the Notes are written by David Cloud. Of necessity we quote from a wide variety of sources, but this obviously does not imply an endorsement. We trust that our readers will not be discouraged. It is God's will that we know the times (1 Ch. 12:32; Mat. 16:3) and that we be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. The News Notes remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the Lord's coming. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ? “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Rom. 13:11-14). This material is sent only to those who personally subscribe to the Fundamental Baptist Information Service mailing list. To SUBSCRIBE, UNSUBSCRIBE, or CHANGE ADDRESSES go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/wayoflife/subscribe.html>. Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org).