

Friday Church News Notes

Rick Warren's Traitorous Ecumenism

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Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Church in southern California, recently took his radical ecumenical agenda before the annual convention of the Islamic Society of North America. He urged Muslims to join him in "interfaith projects." Though Warren told his church that he was imitating Jesus by speaking to the Muslim convention, in fact he became a traitor to Jesus. In a letter to the "Saddleback family," Warren said, "If you want to have a Christ-like ministry, you have to associate with the people Jesus did--unbelievers!" It is true that Jesus associated with unbelievers, for He "came to seek and to save that which is lost" (Luke 19:10). Jesus ate with sinners and dined with Pharisees, but He didn't appear before a conference of Pharisees and Sadducees or pagan religionists and call upon them to join Him and His followers in a joint ministry of social works. Rather, Christ proclaimed that He is the only way of salvation and warned that those who tried to come to God by another way are thieves and robbers (John 14:6; 10:1-11). He preached repentance and reprovved men for not repenting (Mark 1:15; Luke 13:1-5; 10:13; 11:32). He warned constantly of eternal hellfire (e.g. Mat. 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 11:23; 13:40-42; 23:33; 25:41; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 10:15; 16:23). Rick Warren is not following in Christ's footsteps, because he refrains to preach like Christ preached. If Warren were walking in Jesus' shoes, he would not be invited repeatedly to speak at major world forums. Jesus was only popular with the crowds until they heard His message (John 6:60-66); after that CONTINUED, PAGE 2

ANGLICAN BISHOP SAYS HOMOSEXUALS SHOULD REPENT

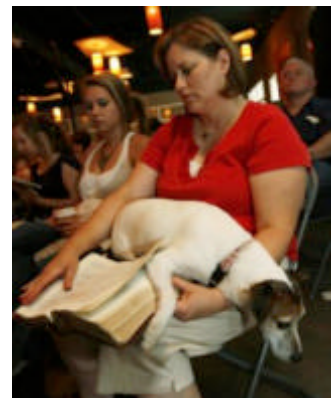
Michael Nazir-Ali, Anglican bishop of Rochester, England, told the *Sunday Telegraph* that the Bible defines marriage as the union of a man and a woman and that homosexuals must "repent and be changed" ("Church of England Bishop Says Gays Should Repent," *USA Today*, July 6, 2009). Nazir-Ali supports the new Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, a coalition of conservative parishes from around the world that reject the theological liberalism of mainstream Anglicanism. Nazir-Ali said that those who depart from Biblical teaching "don't share the same faith."



A CHURCH WHERE DOGS ARE WELCOME

City Community Church in Austin, Texas, welcomes literally "everyone and his dog" to its services. Jamie Patterson, a church member, says, "It's fun to be able to have a church that incorporates your lifestyle and what's important to you" ("Church Opens Doors to Furry Creatures," *KXAN.com*, July 6, 2009). Contemporary churches let people keep the modern idols of fashion, pop music, sports, and an unnatural affection for pets. When the Lord Jesus Christ commanded that the gospel be preached to "every creature," He wasn't referring to animals. Man is set apart from the animals in that he alone is made in God's image and he alone has a living soul that will exist eternally either in heaven or hell (Genesis 1:26; 2:7). When animals die, they are simply dead. As for dogs in particular, the Bible has nothing good to say. Though dogs were worshipped along with cats in idolatrous Egypt, the Jews did not value them. "Among the Jews, to compare a person to a dog was the most degrading expression possible, 1 Sa. 17:43; 24:14; 2 Sa. 9:8. The state of dogs among the Jews was the same that now prevails in the East, where, having no owners, they run about the streets in troops, and are fed by charity or caprice,

or live on such offal as they can pick up. As they are often on the point of starvation, they devour corpses, and in the night even attack living men, Ex. 22:31; Ps. 59:6, 14-15; 1 Ki. 14:11" (*American Tract Society Dictionary*). The term "dog" is often used in the most derogatory sense in Scripture (e.g., for male prostitutes in Deuteronomy 28:18, for Christ's crucifiers in Psalm 22:16, and for false teachers in Philippians 3:2). Twice the Bible emphasizes the dog's folly by its habit of returning to its own vomit (Prov. 26:11; 2 Pet. 2:22). A dog is unacceptable as an offering to God (Isa. 66:3). Jesus said that dogs have no capacity to appreciate that which is holy (Mat. 7:6). Dogs will not be in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 22:15).



INDIA COURT RULES THAT ANTI-HOMOSEXUAL LAW IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL

On July 2 the Delhi High Court in India ruled that the city's law against homosexuality "is a violation of basic human rights safeguarded under the Indian Constitution" ("India Gays Win Landmark Ruling," *Los Angeles Times*, July 3, 2009). The court called for decriminalizing all "sexual relations between consenting adults" and urged the government to strike down a British-era anti-sodomy law that forbids "carnal intercourse against the order of nature" and includes homosexuality in the same category as pedophilia. Homosexual activists expect the decision to influence courts across the country, and major newspapers hailed the ruling. *The Hindustan Times* ran a banner headline "It's O.K. to Be Gay," and *The Asian Age* welcomed "a sexual revolution in India." This revolution began in modern times with a multi-front attack upon the Bible--by theological modernism, by evolution, by humanistic philosophy, by Freudian and Jungian psychology, and many other godless isms. Since the 1950s, sexual freedom was been at the forefront of the rock & roll culture. As Debra Harry of Blondie said in 1979, "The main ingredients in rock are ... sex and sass" (*Hit Parader*, Sept. 1979, p. 31). The sexual revolution is a revolt against God and His holy laws and was prophesied in Scripture 3,000 years ago. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed [Christ], saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure" (Psalms 2:1-5). God will have the last laugh at man's folly, but there is still time to be saved from eternal destruction through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.



Pro-homosexual protesters wear signs that say "Prejudice and Bigotry are not Family Values"

WARREN, Cont.

they called for His crucifixion! Rick Warren complains frequently that he is persecuted by "fundamentalists" who oppose his contemporary, ecumenical philosophy, but like compromisers everywhere, he confuses godly reproof with persecution. In the recent pastoral letter, Warren said, "Every time I speak to any non-Christian group, I get criticized by well-meaning believers who don't really understand how much Jesus loves lost people. They are more concerned with their own perceived purity than the salvation of those Jesus died for." This is slanderous. Warren's conservative Christian critics understand how much Jesus loves lost people, but they also understand that lost people are not going to be saved by an ecumenical social agenda but by the preaching of the gospel, and the fact is that Rick Warren did not preach the gospel to the Islamic Society of North America.



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CODEX SINAITICUS DIGITIZED

Codex Sinaiticus, the oldest extant near-complete copy of the New Testament, has been digitized and placed on the internet. The fourth-century Bible gets its name from the Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai, where it was discovered in the 19th century by German textual critic Constantin Tischendorf. Today the surviving pages of the codex are located in four places, the British Library (347 pages), the University Library in Leipzig, Germany (43 pages), the National Library of Russia (six fragments), and the Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai (12 pages and 40 fragments). For the past 150 years modern textual criticism has favored the Sinaiticus and its bed-fellow, Codex Vaticanus of the Vatican Library, and a small number of other manuscripts of similar character over the vast majority of the roughly 5,500 Greek manuscripts and lectionaries extant. Writing in 1883, John Burgon observed, "...especially B [Vaticanus] and Aleph [Sinaiticus], have within the last twenty years established a tyrannical ascendancy over the imagination of the Critics, which can only be fitly spoken of as a blind superstition" (*The Revision Revised*, p. 11). This handful of Egyptian manuscripts preferred by modern textual critics was called by John Owen in the 17th century "the spurious brood" and by John Burgon in the 19th century the "little handful of suspicious documents" (*The Revision Revised*, p. 78) and the "little handful of singularly licentious documents" (*Ibid.*) and "those eccentric exemplars" (*The Traditional Text of the Gospels*, p. 31). Since the discovery of the Egyptian papyri in the 20th century, the number of Alexandrian manuscripts has increased; but compared to the vast number that support the Traditional text represented by the old Protestant versions such as the King

James in English, they still represent a very tiny and "eccentric" minority, that not only disagree with the majority but also with one another. Codex Sinaiticus includes two heretical writings, the Epistle of Barnabas and the Shepherd of Hermas. The Epistle of Barnabas is filled with heresies and fanciful allegorizing, claiming, for example, that Abraham was familiar with the Greek alphabet and that water baptism saves the soul. The Shepherd of Hermas is a gnostic writing that presents the Adoptionist heresy that the Christ Spirit came upon Jesus at his baptism. Sinaiticus also exhibits gnostic influence in John 1:18, where "the only begotten Son" is changed to "the only begotten God," thus perpetuating the ancient Arian heresy that disassociates the Son Jesus Christ with God Himself by breaking the clear connection between God of John 1:1 with the Son of John 1:18. We know that God was not begotten; it was the Son Who was begotten in the incarnation. (For more about the Sinaiticus and modern textual criticism, see the book "Faith vs. the Modern Bible Versions," which is available from Way of Life Literature.)



Jewish Persecution of Christians in Israel

The following is excerpted from "Watch Out, Missionaries," *The Jerusalem Post*, July 2, 2009: "The word 'nigger' features prominently in the videos taken by Eddie Beckford and his wife Lura, a Messianic Christian couple living in the desert town of Arad. The videos, going back to 2005, show anywhere from a handful to a mob of local Gur Hassidim harassing them and other Messianics in town. Eddie Beckford, 61, is a black American, hence the racial slur. 'Nigger, go back to Harlem!' chants one gleeful man in the midst of hundreds of shouting, singing, fired-up hassidim who surrounded Beckford's storefront chess-club-cum-Christian-mission on Shabbat, June 17, 2005. ... They curse in English, usually accented. The police keep the crowd a short distance away from the club; otherwise they do nothing. The term 'bastard' is also popular with the Gur Hassidim seen in the videos, but it's usually in reference to Jesus. ... About two months after the video was taken, the club, near the entrance to the town's market, was burned down in the middle of the night. ... Members of the Arad congregation, which numbers about 50, say they've had their tires slashed dozens of times. They've been surrounded, threatened and cursed by Gur Hassidim in the market, on the streets or in their homes for about five years. In all this time they can only recall one arrest of a suspect, and he was released immediately. ... [One Jew who has participated in the protests] said he wasn't against Christians, just against missionaries who proselytize Jews, insisting that this was against the law. (In fact, it isn't. Israeli law only forbids proselytizing minors or 'bribing' potential converts with money or material favors.) 'This is not their land, this is the land of the Jews,' he said. 'All these missionaries have to be removed.' From Arad? I asked. 'From Israel,' he replied."



CHINA'S ONE-CHILD POLICY AND THE ELDERLY PROBLEM

The following is excerpted from "China's Elderly Will Overwhelm the Nation," *The Los Angeles Times*, July 6, 2009: "The one-child rule imposed 30 years ago has created too few young people to support the quickly expanding aging population. China's working-age population--the engine behind its prolific growth--will start shrinking within a few years. Meanwhile, the ranks of elderly are projected to soar. By the middle of this century, fully a third of China's population will be age 60 or older, compared with 26% in the United States. China's projected 438 million senior citizens will outnumber the entire U.S. population. ... Shanghai provides a window into China's demographic future. Already China's largest city, it's also its grayest. More than one-fifth of its population is at least 60 years old. That percentage is projected to nearly double to 40% by 2030. ... So many residents have reached retirement age that city officials are urging local companies to persuade their aging staffs to stay on the job longer. The government has injected \$618 million into the public pension system over the last two years to keep it solvent. ... Despite its dazzling economic growth, China is still a low-income country. Its per-capita GDP in 2008 was just over \$5,000, one-ninth that of the United States. Only about a third of China's workforce is covered by a pension system; most of those covered are urbanites. ... Introduced in 1979 by China's paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, China's one-child policy aimed to slow the nation's population growth and boost living standards. ... The policy is estimated to have prevented between 300 million and 400 million births to date. From the beginning the program was controversial, criticized for boosting abortions, sterilizations and infanticide. It is also blamed for China's gender gap. The cultural preference for boys has resulted in 32 million more males than females under the age of 20, according to one study."

AL SHARPTON SAYS MICHAEL JACKSON NOT STRANGE

At the Michael Jackson Memorial on July 7 the entertainment industry paid tribute to the late "King of Pop." The weirdest remark of all at this very weird event was made by racial pot-stirrer Al Sharpton, who told Jackson's children, "There wasn't nothing strange about your daddy" ("The Most Memorable Moments from the Michael Jackson Memorial," Yahoo.com, July 7, 2009). We wonder whether the double negative was spoken out of purpose or ignorance? As it stands, Sharpton is on record as saying that Michael Jackson was strange, but it appears that he was trying to say emphatically that he wasn't. Be that as it may, the fact is that Jackson's legacy was to redefine entertainment and push the moral envelope farther than ever, and the wicked entertainment industry applauds him for it. Beware of the pop culture and its rebellion. It is a God-hating machine that seduces people, drugs them with its sensual pleasures, devours whatever faith they might have, and leads them giddily to eternal hell. As Brian Snider commented to me, rock & roll destroyed Michael Jackson.



*Sharpton and Jackson while Jackson
was still alive.*

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.