

# Friday Church News Notes

## “Newsweek Says “We Are All Hindus Now”

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In its August 31 issue, *Newsweek* magazine says, “We Are All Hindus Now.” The article reports, “[R]ecent poll data show that conceptually, at least, we are slowly becoming more like Hindus and less like traditional Christians in the ways we think about God, our selves, each other, and eternity. ... The Rig Veda, the most ancient Hindu scripture, says this: ‘Truth is One, but the sages speak of it by many names.’ A Hindu believes there are many paths to God. ... Americans are no longer buying [the Jesus is the only way] doctrine. According to a 2008 Pew Forum survey, 65 percent of us believe that ‘many religions can lead to eternal life’-- including 37 percent of white evangelicals ...



Stephen Prothero, religion professor at Boston University, has long framed the American propensity for ‘the divine-deli-cafeteria religion’ as ‘very much in the spirit of Hinduism. ... It’s about whatever works. If going to yoga works, great--and if going to Catholic mass works, great. And if going to Catholic mass plus the yoga plus the Buddhist retreat works, that’s great, too.’”

NOTE FROM BROTHER CLOUD: In our estimation, this is a correct observation. Christianity in America is a mile wide and an inch thick. There is little biblical substance to it. At its heart is the judge not, rock & roll philosophy of live and let live, but this is covered with a thin veneer of Christianity and ill-defined “spirituality.” Typical American Christianity rejects the Bible’s absolute authority and exclusiveness. It is more akin to New Age than Bible, and in fact, New Age philosophy is essentially Hinduism.

## PALESTINIAN CLERIC DENIES ISRAEL’S TEMPLE

Sheik Taysir Tamimi, one of the most influential Muslim leaders in Israel, denies that a Jewish temple existed in Jerusalem, claiming that Jerusalem has always been an Islamic city (“Chief Palestinian Justice Says Temples Never Existed,” *WorldNetDaily*, Aug. 27, 2009). The “Temple Denial” doctrine was invented about a decade ago by Israel’s enemies in Palestine and has spread throughout much of the Muslim world, but it is nonsense. The doctrine flies in the face of the Bible, and archaeological research has provided evidence of the first and second temples. Further, the oldest arch in Rome, the Arch of Titus, which was dedicated in 85 A.D., features actual depictions of the articles removed from the temple by Rome’s army in 70 A.D. The candlestick and silver trumpets are plainly visible to this day. Tamimi claims that descriptions of the Jewish temple in Roman writings are forged, but the Arch of Titus certainly was not forged. Its history is well known. (For more on this see “Temple Denial vs. Archaeology” at the Way of Life web site.)



## UNITY REMAINS TOP PRIORITY FOR WCC



Olav Tveit, the newly elected general secretary of the World Council of Churches, says that ecumenical unity remains the organization’s primary task (“Church Unity,” *Christian Post*, Aug. 28, 2009). Citing Jesus’ prayer in John 17, Tveit called for “Christian solidarity in this world.” He said he is committed to fostering unity between Protestants, Roman Catholics, Pentecostals, and Evangelicals. He also called for closer relations between the WCC and Islam. Jesus’ prayer in John 17 has nothing to do with ecumenical unity. It is a prayer, not a command, and it was answered 2,000 years ago! Those who are born again and are committed to the truth of God’s Word possess a spiritual unity that cannot be created by man-made programs. Jesus prayed for those who receive and keep God’s Word (John 17:6, 8). That certainly does not apply to the grossly apostate World Council of Churches! See our report “The World Council of Churches” at the Way of Life web site.

## BURY ME WITH MY CELL PHONE

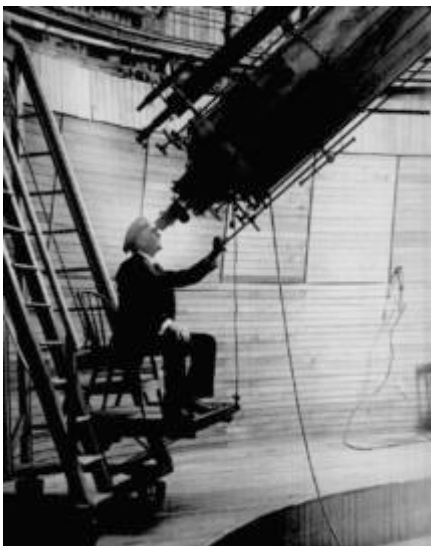
There is a growing custom of people being buried with their cell phones. Noelle Potvin, a counselor for a funeral home in Hollywood, California, said, "It seems that everyone under 40 who dies takes their cell phone with them" ("Bury Me with My Cell Phone," MSNBC.com, Dec. 16, 2008). The practice has been observed in other countries, as well. According to Frank Perman, owner of a funeral home in Pittsburg, the custom has grown over the past five years and is expected to increase exponentially. Some consider it a way to stay connected. Los Angeles funeral planner Pam Vetter says, "I've seen people leave cell phones on and tell me they're going to call their loved one later." The wife of John Jacobs continues to pay the monthly bill for the cell phone that was left in his casket in 2005. She had his cell number carved onto his tombstone. The desire to reach

beyond death is in every man, and when men do not believe the Bible they grasp at other possibilities and techniques. When the famous escape artist Harry Houdini in 1926, he promised his wife, Bess, that he would try to contact her from beyond the grave. Each year she held a séance on Halloween night, the night of his death, seeking to contact her departed husband. In 1936, the disappointed Bess held the final Houdini séance. Thank the Lord that eternal life is possible, but it does not come through technology or occultism or blind faith. It is a reality for those who receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (1 John 5:13).



## PERCIVAL LOWELL, THE MAN WHO SAW CANALS ON MARS

One of the most interesting examples of how that man can see what he wants to see, how that a man's will affects his mind and vision, is the case of Percival Lowell, who died in 1916. He was born into a wealthy, high-society family in Boston, graduated from Harvard, was a brilliant mathematician and successful businessman, traveled widely in the Far East, learned several languages, and kept company with many affluent, influential people. Charles Darwin's "On the Origin of Species" was published when Lowell was a boy, and he accepted the theory of evolution wholehearted. His imagination was stirred by Italian astronomer Giovanni Schiaparelli's 1893 book "Life on Mars" and of the report of supposed existence of "channels." Seeing this as proof that life existed on other planets and therefore that the Bible is wrong, Lowell set out to bring this "evidence" home for the evolutionary crowd. He used his wealth to construct an astronomical observatory with a 24-inch



telescope in the American west near the Grand Canyon. It was completed in 1894, and from then until his death 22 years later he studied Mars and published his reports and books. Eventually he "saw" and named 700 canals on the red planet and came to believe that the Martians were building the canals in an attempt to save their planet. He deduced many fascinating details about the lives of the Martian aliens. Buried near his telescope, Lowell left his wealth for "the study of our Solar System and its evolution." The one small problem with all of this is that there are no canals on Mars and no Martians. In the 1970s NASA's Viking space vehicles orbited Mars and actually landed and roamed around on it, hunting for life, and found no clear evidence thereof of any kind, let alone canals. How could an intelligent, well-educated man see 700 canals that do not exist? He wanted to see them. It is the same phenomenon that allows any evolutionary atheist to see evidence for Darwinian evolution when none exists. The Bible explains it as the deceit of the fallen human heart and spiritual blindness. It is possible to believe a lie and to believe it with all of one's heart. I am so thankful to the Lord for opening my blind eyes 36 years ago and showing me the truth in Jesus Christ. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9). "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Corinthians 4:4).

## Street Preachers Arrested in Georgia

The following is excerpted from “Cops Versus Preachers on Public Sidewalk,” WorldNetDaily, August 27, 2009: “A street preacher is accusing police of violating his constitutional rights after officers arrested him for not having a parade permit while he spoke out against homosexuality on a public sidewalk in Manchester, Ga. Chris Pettigrew and Pastor Billy Ball and of Faith Baptist Church in Primrose, Ga., were arrested multiple times Aug 24 after they held signs on a public street corner telling people to repent and declaring homosexuality a sin. They held signs that stated: ‘Repent ye, and believe the gospel, Mark 1:15,’ and, ‘Three gay rights: AIDS, hell, salvation.’ ... Pettigrew said officers from the Manchester Police Department were initially cordial when they told him he must have a permit to stand on the sidewalk with his sign. ‘We simply said, We can’t do that. It’s our constitutional right to free speech. We’re not impeding any kind of traffic. We’re peaceably assembled, so we’re going to do what we came to do, he said.’ At that moment, another officer arrived, joined the others and told the men they must obtain a permit to remain on the sidewalk. Displeased with their answer, Pettigrew said, ‘they handcuffed us and took us

to the city jail in Manchester.’ Later, while Pettigrew and his comrades remained in jail, Pastor Ball and another man arrived at the street corner to share his message. So, police arrested Ball. ... ‘If I were holding a sign that said, Two large pizzas for \$5, I don’t think I would have gotten a second look from police. I firmly and adamantly believe we were singled out and arrested because of the content of our speech,’ Pettigrew said.”



## A PERSONAL TESTIMONY ABOUT AA

The following was sent to me from William H. Lavender, II, and is used by permission: “Great article on the roots of Alcoholics Anonymous (“AA: Christian or Occult Roots?” Aug. 20, 2009, Way of Life Literature). My Father was heavily involved in AA in the early to mid-1980’s, my mother in Alanon. Both had rejected church attendance after we moved in 1979 from the town in which they were active church members. Dad went back to drinking which turned into weekend binges and my mother started smoking and using foul language. When their marriage relationship began to sour, Dad started going to AA instead of turning back to Christ. During that time, my late brother and I were encouraged to attend Ala-teen. After two sessions, I rejected it as nothing more than a platform that encouraged rebellion against one’s parents. It definitely not expounding any Christian faith, contrary to its advertisement. In short, AA and its auxiliaries were the final nail in the coffin (so-to-speak) in the disintegration of our family. Both of my parents claimed Christ as their Savior but were beguiled into thinking that they were part of something that could solve their problems, instead of returning to their first love--Christ and His Word. My brother, who passed on recently from an apparent overdose of prescription pain killers, became caught up in the AA program as an adult. My mother passed away in 1993, never seeing the inside of a church after 1982. My father and brother finally started going back to church regularly last year. Even though my brother has passed away, my Father is still attending church. I would hope that all the saints of God would realize that AA is not an acceptable substitute for Christ and His Word when needing answers to life’s problems and gaining victory in one’s personal battles with some vice.”



## THE WIKIPEDIA HIT PIECE ON HENRY MORRIS

Wikipedia is a “collaborative” internet encyclopedia that provides a forum for people to publish both truth and lies. From its inception in 2001, Wikipedia has grown to become a hugely influential publication. As of 2009, it receives 65 *million visitors a month*. The Wikipedia philosophy is that there is a great latent pool of knowledge in the world that should be tapped to create a wonderful public encyclopedia, but there is also a great latent pool of ignorance and bias, and Wikipedia taps the latter as often as the former. They even admit that “newer articles more frequently contain significant misinformation, unencyclopedic content, or vandalism,” but this is not only true for newer articles. Instead of assigning individuals of known expertise to write articles and attaching their names to the articles, as with reputable encyclopedias, Wikipedia lets every Tom, Dick, and Harry contribute, and the reader rarely knows who wrote what. The thing is an absolute mess, but its influence is vast because it is free and its returns are high on the search lists. Take, for example, the entry on the late Dr. Henry M. Morris. The analysis of his publications is nothing more than a cheap hit piece. His most vicious detractors are quoted. How would you like it if your biography was written by your enemies? This Wikipedia report contains not one line of positive credit to the massive amount of truly scientific work that Morris and his highly educated co-laborers did. Typical of the information found in the article is this comment on Morris’s book *Evolution and the Modern Christian*: “T.E. Fenton, Professor of Agronomy at Iowa State University, wrote ‘scientific value of the book is nil.’” As for Morris’ book *The Long War against God*, Wikipedia merely quotes a Randy Moore’s criticism of Morris for saying that evolution is satanic and responsible for racism, abortion, and a decline in morality. What Wikipedia omits is the fact that Morris extensively documented this very thing! Every person should read this important book, in fact. Wikipedia does not offer even one positive example of Morris’s devastating critiques of evolution. Instead, the readers are left with the false impression that the man was a careless crackpot and that it would be a complete waste of time to read his books. One thing Wikipedia gets right is its assertion that Morris was the father of modern

Christian science. Thank God for that. Thirty years ago there was little in the way of material defending the Bible against the onslaught of evolutionary myths. Today there is a rapidly growing wealth of such material, and Henry Morris was at the forefront of this movement and bore the heat of the battle. Knowledgeable biblical creationists need to sign on as editors of Wikipedia and bring some semblance of “balance” to its incredibly biased reports.



### 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, go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/wayoflife/subscribe.html>. TO UNSUBSCRIBE OR CHANGE ADDRESSES, go to the very bottom of any email received from us and click "Manage My Subscription." Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org).