

Friday Church News Notes

Saddleback Rocks Out for Easter

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Rick Warren has announced that The Jonas Brothers rock group will be performing at Saddleback Church's Easter celebration at Angel Stadium on April 4. It is also the megachurch's 30th anniversary. The Jonas Brothers is a boy band with a following of thousands of carnally-infatuated young girl fans. The band members are professing Christians, but their music is worldly. Their song "Burnin' Up" says, "Baby, who turned the temperature hotter? Cause I'm burnin' up, burnin' up for your baby. ... I fell so fast/ Can't hold myself back/ High heels, red dress/ All by yourself, gotta catch my breath." There is nothing biblical or wholesome about that type of thing. The Bible forbids God's people to be conformed to the world (Romans 12:2) and warns that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God" and "whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). Those powerful words are ignored in the average church today. The modern explosion of conformity of churches to the world has walked hand-in-hand with the progress of contemporary Christian music, beginning in the 1960s. It was then that A. W. Tozer stated: "For centuries the Church stood solidly against every form of worldly entertainment, recognizing it for what it was. For this she was abused roundly by the sons of this world. But of late she has become tired of the abuse and has given over the struggle. If she cannot conquer the great god Entertainment, she may as well join forces with him and make whatever use she can of his powers. So today we have the astonishing spectacle of millions of dollars being poured into the unholy job of providing earthly entertainment for the so-called sons of heaven. Religious persons now carry on 'services' so carnal, so pagan that they can hardly be distinguished from the old vaudeville shows of earlier days. And for a preacher or writer to challenge this heresy is to invite ridicule and abuse from every quarter. When the Church joins up with the world, it is no longer the true church but a pitiful hybrid thing, an object of contempt to the world, and an abomination to the Lord. We must have a new reformation. There must come a violent break with that irresponsible, amusement-mad, paganized, pseudo-religion which passes today for the faith of Christ and which is being spread all over the world by unspiritual men employing unscriptural methods to achieve their ends." If men of God were saying this 50 years ago, what should preachers be saying today!



Jonas Brothers featured on the cover of Rolling Stone magazine with the headline, "God! Girls! Guitars!" That's a combination that will not go together, no matter how much the world wants it to.

COUPLE LET OWN CHILD DIE WHILE RAISING A VIRTUAL REALITY CHILD



In South Korea, a couple allowed their three-month-old infant to starve to death while they raised a "virtual reality child" on the web. The baby was left to fend for itself while they played a fantasy role-playing game called *Prius Online* in marathon stretches at an Internet cafe ("Baby Dies While Couple Raises Virtual Child," CNN, March 7, 2010). The report says that *Prius* is a "game in which players nurture an online companion, Anima, a young girl with mysterious powers who grows and increases her skills as the game progresses." South Korea is a high-tech country with one of the world's fastest broadband networks, and 24-hour gaming Internet cafes known as PC Bangs "dot every urban neighborhood." Online gaming is huge all over Asia, and young people have died in marathon gaming sessions. Technology as a major phenomena of the end-times was prophesied in Daniel 12. It can be used for good or for evil, but since this world currently belongs to the Devil (the "god of this world," 2 Corinthians 4:4) and since the "mystery of iniquity" is working powerfully these days, evil is an ever-lurking danger. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

MACARTHUR CALLS FOR “SEPARATION” BUT MOCKS SEPARATISTS

In a message to thousands of pastors at the recent Shepherds’ Conference, John MacArthur called for separation from the world but also used the occasion to malign fundamentalists. He said, “The church, if it is to be anything, it is to be absolutely distinct from culture, absolutely distinct from the world, absolutely distinct from unbelievers. ... Paul demands a total break. ... You can’t marry the church to the culture. Don’t fornicate with the world” (“MacArthur Tells Christians: Don’t fornicate with the World,” *Christian Post*, March 5, 2010). That’s a great challenge as far as it goes. The problem is that MacArthur undermines it by countenancing worldly Christian rock and refusing to draw clear lines in such things as dress and entertainment and by yoking together with compromisers. He has long participated in the deeply ecumenical National Religious Broadcasters and has spoken on the same platform with Roman Catholics. He has



spoken in meetings with Billy Graham and Luis Palau and has not reproved their ecumenical evangelism heresy whereby they have turned thousands of “converts” over to the Roman Catholic Church. In other words, he talks about separation but refuses to practice it. He is so worried that someone will identify him as a fundamentalist that he cannot preach and practice separatism in a strict fashion. He has to fudge. In the same message he labeled fundamentalism as “cruel and unbiblical” because it builds “high walls in terms of conduct and relationships” and vilifies those who cross the walls. Building walls of conduct and relationships is exactly what the Bible demands when it calls for separation (e.g., Romans 12:2; 16:17; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:21; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; 2 Timothy 3:5; 1 John 2:15-17), but as for vilifying those who cross the walls, that is a gross mischaracterization. For example, I don’t vilify ecumenical evangelists or Christian rockers; I biblically reprove them, and there is nothing cruel about that! Warning of sin and error is not cruel! MacArthur said, “I’m not by nature this narrow-minded kind of separatist who wants to chew up and spit out everybody who crosses the lines that I draw.” Good, neither am I! I have been a fundamentalist for 36 years, and the vast majority of fundamentalist preachers I know do not fit that description. It is a vicious straw man, and I deeply resent it. Sure, separatist preachers are just men and some are more spiritual than others, but in my experience the majority are simply trying to obey the Bible and please the Lord that saved them, which is exactly what MacArthur claims to be doing. If anyone is vilifying anyone, it is MacArthur vilifying fundamentalists. The man has taken some good stands in the midst of his compromise (e.g., warning against the charismatic movement and the emerging church), and he should stop vilifying fundamentalists and rather humble himself to learn from them.

CLIMATEGATE CORRUPTION, STENCH “OVERWHELMING”

The following is excerpted from OneNewsNow, March 4, 2010: “A Republican senator from Oklahoma is going on the offensive against global warming. Senator Jim Inhofe, the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, recently released the committee’s investigation into the ‘ClimateGate’ scandal. On his Senate website, Inhofe says he knew global-warming alarmists were “cooking the science to support the flawed U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change agenda.” He also claims he was right in 2003 when he said blaming global warming on carbon dioxide and other manmade gases is the ‘greatest hoax ever perpetrated on the American people.’ Climate Depot executive editor Mark Morano comments that Inhofe’s report is very comprehensive. ‘Senator Inhofe has alleged criminal activity on the parties,’ Morano notes. ‘He’s calling for the head of the U.N. to testify, [and] he’s calling for Al Gore to come back and defend his climate claims. This is a huge development because this is going to turn into testimony. You’re going to have congressional hearings on this, investigations. It’s going to keep it in the public eye.’ The journalist finds it amazing how the mighty have fallen. ‘This was an insular industry that didn’t answer to anyone,’ he comments, ‘and now they’ve been cracked open like an egg--and the corruption and the stench is overwhelming.’ According to Morano, more global-warming scandals could develop as a result of Inhofe’s Senate committee report.”



CANADA CHURCH LOSES CHARITY STATUS OVER MORAL STAND

The following is excerpted from LifeSiteNews, Jan. 21, 2010: “The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has revoked the charitable status of Kings Glory Fellowship (KGF), a Christian church in Calgary. CRA cites a number of issues with KGF’s application, but the decision is based, in part, on the ground that certain KGF Board members have spoken out strongly against abortion, and other moral issues. ‘The members of the Board of Directors espouse strong negative views about sensitive and controversial issues, which may also be viewed as political, such as abortion, homosexuality, divorce, etc.,’ wrote CRA agent Dian Prodanov in an October 29th letter. These ‘political’ views make the church ineligible because, according to the agent, a registered charity ‘may only engage in non-partisan political activities as long as it devotes substantially all (usually 90% or more) of its resources to charitable activities.’ KGF’s pastor, Artur Pawlowski, is also the founder and pastor of Street Church Ministries, which has made headlines because of its battle with the city of Calgary to uphold its right to preach to and serve the city’s poor. In December, a provincial court judge sided with Pawlowski and SCM, striking down several city infractions against them. Further, the judge found that ‘the City’s attempts ... to limit the scope of the efforts by the accused to minister to his congregants, fall precariously close to being excessive and, to any reasonable observer, an abuse of power.’ Prodanov cited numerous problems with KGF’s application, such as a lack of detail about various expenditures, but Pawlowski called these other reasons

‘smoke screens.’ ‘The main point is that they don’t like my opinions about different controversial issues, and I speak about them openly on radio, in paper, and on TV,’ he said. ‘So that’s what happens when you express your views as a pastor. They want to muzzle us up.’”



EMERGING CHURCH LEADER BRIAN MCLAREN PROMOTING “HOMOSPIRITUALITY”

The following is excerpted from “Brian McLaren’s New Book, *A New Kind of Christianity--Assaulting Truth with a Vengeance*,” John Lanagan, Lighthouse Trails, March 7, 2010: “In Brian McLaren’s latest book, *A New Kind of Christianity*, the reader is cordially invited to join the author in a heretical assault upon God and the Bible. Indeed, as McLaren enthusiastically demonstrates, it is not possible to attack one without attacking the other. Acknowledging the work of fellow emergent travelers such as Phyllis Tickle, Tony Jones, and Doug Pagitt, McLaren tells us ‘something is trying to be born among those of us who follow Jesus Christ’ (pg. 13). In fact, writes McLaren, ‘what is trying to be born today echoes the Great Reformation in many ways’ (pg. 257). ... What does McLaren’s ‘reformation’ offer? An errant eschatology. A New Age ‘christ.’ The ascent of homospirituality into the temple. (2 Kings 23:7). All made possible, of course, through creative misinterpretation of God’s Word. The author has brought us his *Great Deformation*, a theology that plays to the flesh even while being portrayed as a spiritual journey. One of the major

themes in *A New Kind of Christianity*, homosexuality, cleverly defines Christians who speak out against the homosexual lifestyle as suffering from ‘fundasexuality’ (pg. 174-5). However, you are only a ‘fundasexualist’ if you speak out loudly against this sin. McLaren decrees, ‘The term does not apply to the quiet, pious, respectful fundamentalism of straightforward, sincere people, but rather to the organizing, angry, dominating fundamentalism that declares war on those who differ’ (pg. 174-5). In other words, when it comes to homosexuality, a good Christian is a silent Christian. ‘Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter’ (Isaiah 5:20). As my wife and I have both repented of this particular sin, it is difficult to comprehend Brian McLaren’s smiley-faced rebellion. But make no mistake: McLaren and others are being used to facilitate homospirituality, which may even assume an elevated, even sacred, status.”

BRIAN MCLAREN REJECTS THE DOCTRINE OF HELL

In a recent interview, emerging church leader Brian McLaren blatantly rejected the doctrine of hell. He said, “On hell, here’s the issue. That six-line narrative I talk about in the book, as interpreted by many people, suggests that every person who does not say the sinner’s prayer, personally accept Christ as their savior will spend eternity--which means absolutely forever without ever any abatement or termination--in conscious torment. So every second will be like they’re burning in fire, every second they’ll be in absolute agony, every second. And so a lot of us find that is not something you can just lightly swallow. ... You think about someone who went through the Holocaust. They were so horribly treated by the Nazis and then the Nazis kill them and then they go to something even worse just because they weren’t Christians. A lot of us say, when we read Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and really when we read most of the Bible, the image of God that we see does not seem like an eternal torturer. ... We’re asking that because we get a vision of God in Jesus Christ that just doesn’t seem to match with that” (“Interview: Brian McLaren on Sin, Hell, New Kind of Christianity,” *Christian Post*, March 8, 2010). The fact is that the Jesus presented in the Gospels preached the doctrine of eternal hell for unbelievers in no uncertain terms. It was one of the major themes of Christ’s preaching! But when a man is willfully blind and has rejected the gospel that his own godly grandfathers preached (McLaren’s paternal grandfather was a Plymouth Brethren missionary in Angola

and his maternal grandfather was a faithful member of a Brethren assembly in New York), he can read the Bible all day long and never understand it. That is the frightful truth about Brian McLaren and his buddies in the emerging church that have “divorced the old God and married the new,” to use the words of a follower of *The Shack*.



They call themselves “Emerging” as if it is something new, but Brian McLaren’s doctrine has been preached by heretical liberals long before he came on the scene.

Conclusion

Friends in Christ, do not be discouraged by any of this. 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. These things remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the coming of the Lord. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ day by day? “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 list. To SUBSCRIBE or UNSUBSCRIBE or CHANGE ADDRESSES go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbis/subscribe.html>. Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org. David Cloud is the director of Way of Life Literature and author of the Friday Church News Notes.