
FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES

IRISH VOTERS APPROVE GAY “MARRIAGE”

In a major sign of the times, by a margin of 60%, voters in the Republic of Ireland (not to be confused with Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom) backed a measure to amend its constitution to allow gay “marriage.” Ireland is a Roman Catholic country. Leo Varadkar, a Cabinet minister, said, “We’re the first country in the world to enshrine marriage equality in our constitution and do so by popular mandate. That makes us a beacon, a light to the rest of the world, of liberty and equality. So it’s a very proud day to be Irish” (“Ireland Has Voted,” CNSNews.com, May 23, 2015). Mr. Varadkar doesn’t believe the Bible. The move to legalize gay “marriage” is not light, but darkness. Marriage was created by a holy God as the first human institution, and it cannot be shaped by human whim like a nose of wax. The God who created marriage is not dead, and every man will give account to Him. The supporters of gay “marriage” frame the issue in terms of human rights and equality, but the issue is actually

about the nature of marriage. This proud generation thinks it is wise enough to change 6,000 years of human tradition, but the result will be confusion and the destruction of all standards of morality. “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).



U2 PROMOTES HOMOSEXUAL “MARRIAGE”

The rock band U2 posted an Instagram note in support of same-sex “marriage” in Ireland’s recent referendum. The note said, “In the name of love vote yes.” The phrase is a reference to their song “Pride (in the Name of Love)” which is supposed to be about the life and death of Jesus Christ. Three members of the band (Bono, The Edge, and Larry Mullen, Jr.) profess to be Christians and have a great influence in evangelicalism, the emerging church, and the contemporary worship movement. Phil Johnson calls Bono “the chief theologian of the Emerging Church Movement” (*Absolutely Not! Exposing the Post-modern Errors of the Emerging Church*, p. 9). Eugene Peterson, author of *The Message*, says that Bono is a prophet like John the Baptist (foreword to *Get Up Off Your Knees: Preaching the U2 Catalog*). Brian

McLaren and Tony Campolo say that Bono is moving the world toward the kingdom of God (*Adventures in Missing the Point*, 2003, pp. 50, 51). Bill Hybels interviewed Bono at Willowcreek Community Church’s Leadership Summit in 2006, and Rick Warren invited Bono to Saddleback Church to help launch his P.E.A.C.E. program. But when judged biblically, U2 is destitute of spiritual truth, and the fact that the band is wildly popular with contemporary Christians is a fulfillment of the apostasy described in 2 Timothy 4:3-4. Joseph Schimmel observes that “Bono has led people into a version of Christianity that is slippery, undefinable, and liberal” (*The Submerging Church*, DVD, 2012). The members of U2 rarely attend church, and “Sundays find them in a pub rather than in a

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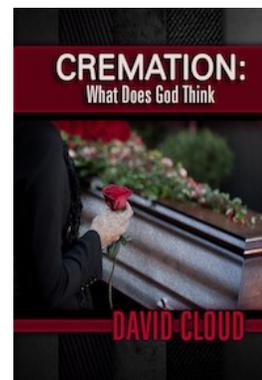
U2 PROMOTES HOMOSEXUAL “MARRIAGE”

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pew” (*U2: The Rolling Stone Files*, p. 14). In a wide-ranging interview with music reporter Michka Assayas, Bono never gives a scriptural testimony of having been born again (*Bono on Bono*). Bono says that he believes Jesus is the Messiah and that He 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, a grace that does not produce holiness. Nowhere does he warn his myriads of listeners to turn to Christ before it is too late and before they pass from this life into eternal hell. In fact, the only thing he says about heaven or hell is that both are on earth (*Bono on Bono*, p. 254). The members of U2 do not believe Christianity should have rules and regulations. “I’m really interested in and influenced by the spiritual side of Christianity, rather than the legislative side, the rules and regulations” (*The Edge, U2: The Rolling Stone Files*, p. 21). Yet there are more than 80 specific commandments in the book of Ephesians alone, the same book that says we are saved by grace without works. Though salvation is by grace, it always produces a zeal for holiness and obedience to God’s commands, for we are “saved unto good works” (Ephesians 2:8-10). According to Titus 2, the grace of God teaches the believer to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Bono says that the older he gets the more comfort he finds in Roman Catholicism (*Bono on Bono*, p. 201). Though he speaks positively of Romanism, Bono has nothing good to say about “fundamentalism,” falsely claiming that it is a denial that God is love (*Bono on Bono*, p. 167) and calling it vile names (p. 147). 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).

CREMATION REACHES 50% IN U.S.

In 13 states in America, more than 50% of the dead are cremated. Nationwide, the rate is nearly 50%, which is double what it was just 15 years ago. In 1965, the rate was only 4% (“Cremation in America,” May 20, 2015, Slate). According to the cover story in the December 5, 1995, issue of *USA Today*, the rising acceptance of cremation has coincided with a drop in “religious barriers to cremation.” It is interesting that a secular newspaper sees the connection between religion and cremation. Historically, Christian burial has been a testimony of faith in the bodily resurrection, whereas cremation has been practiced among Hindus and others who deny the bodily resurrection and who believe in reincarnation. Historically, wherever the Gospel of Jesus Christ has found acceptance, pagan practices such as cremation have been rejected. The increase in cremation in North American society



has paralleled the rejection of the Bible. As paganism increases its steely hold on American hearts, and as spiritual compromise and apostasy destroy the power of churches, cremation

becomes increasingly popular. (For more on this see *Cremation: What Does God Think?*, which is available as a free eBook from www.wayoflife.org.)

SCHOOL APOLOGIZES TO STUDENT FOR CENSORING BIBLE VERSE

The following is excerpted from “Nevada School Apologizes,” Breitbart, May 24, 2015: “A Nevada public charter school apologized to a sixth grade student for censoring her from using a Bible verse in a school PowerPoint presentation, according to the Liberty Institute, the North Texas-based religious liberties law firm which has represented the family involved in the matter. Twelve-year-old Mackenzie Fraiser attends Somerset Academy in North Las Vegas and was told by her teacher in February that she could not use the New Testament passage John 3:16 for the assigned ‘All About Me’ project, which had to include an ‘inspirational saying’ according to documentation provided by the Liberty Institute. When the girl’s father, Tim, a pastor, learned about the situation in late April, he contacted the school. Then, he received a letter from Assistant Principal Jenyan Martinez advising him that when Mackenzie submitted the project ‘the matter became one of having a captive audience that would be subject to her religious beliefs,’ which in her understanding would violate US Department of Education (USDE) policy. [In] a demand letter authored by Liberty Institute Senior Counsel Jeremy Dys on Wednesday, May 20, in which the firm sought an apology from Somerset Academy for the youngster ... they gave school officials 10 days to redress the project to avoid legal action. Despite the principal’s interpretation of USDE policy, Dys cited in his letter that ‘it is a bedrock constitutional principle that students retain First Amendment freedoms while at school. ... Private student speech, such as student class assignments, is protected by the Constitution and the government must remain neutral toward the private expression of religion by students.’ ... Moreover, Dys underscored that the US Department of Education (USDE) ‘affirmed this longstanding position of neutrality toward the free exercise of religion by students – including such expression as part of a student’s written or oral classroom assignments...’ Fraiser had the constitutional right to express her beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and

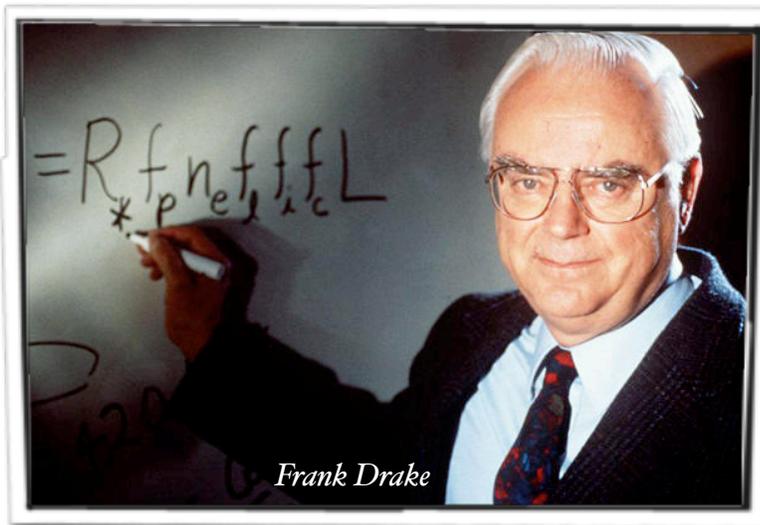
oral assignments free from discrimination based on the religious content of their submissions. ... He also stated, ‘Contrary to Assistant Principal Martinez’s incorrect--and unlawful--assumption, when a student speaks within the classroom, her speech does not automatically become government speech. Decades of Supreme Court jurisprudence and the United States Department of Education guidelines come to precisely the opposite conclusion: absent other factors not present in this situation, student assignments constitute private student speech that cannot be censored by school officials (teachers, administrators, etc.) based on the religious content of their submissions.’ ... Two days later, a letter of apology from Somerset Academy followed on Friday, May 22 in which they acknowledged that the teacher and the public charter school administrator ‘acted in good faith at all times’ but they were wrong.”

ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIX-DAY WAR

May 17 marked the 48th anniversary of the end of Israel’s Six Day War in which she regained control of east Jerusalem. The occasion was marked by a march through the city with thousands gathering at the Western Wall to thank God for the return of Jerusalem to the Jewish nation (“Israelis Mark Jerusalem’s Reunification,” *Israel Today*, May 17, 2015). Meanwhile the Palestinians vow to “liberate” Jerusalem from “the Zionists” and to make East Jerusalem the capital of a Palestinian State. How will this stalemate ever be resolved? According to Bible prophecy, the Third Temple will be built and will be desecrated by the Antichrist (Mat. 24:15; 2 Th. 2:3-4). The building of it will probably be possible by a peace pact that will be made with Israel and the Muslims.

THE DRAKE EQUATION

The following is from CreationMoments.com, May 22, 2015: “How many times have you seen headlines proclaiming that ‘Sixty billion planets in the Milky Way could support life’ or ‘one hundred billion planets in our galaxy may harbor complex life’? It seems that the numbers change with each new announcement. Where did those numbers come from in the first place? It all started when astronomer Frank Drake, a firm believer in extraterrestrial life, hosted the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence Institute’s very first meeting back in 1961. He wanted to inspire the other scientists in attendance, so he developed an equation which has been described as a ‘probabilistic argument used to estimate the number of active, communicative extraterrestrial civilizations in the Milky Way galaxy.’ The Drake Equation, as it has come to be called, sounds mathematical and scientific, but when you examine the equation, you will see that it is based on conjecture after conjecture, guess after guess. In fact, most scientists today totally reject it, calling it a guesstimate or meaningless. Nevertheless, we



keep seeing headlines about the fifty or sixty or one hundred billion planets out there which are capable--or even likely--of having life. After all, if life evolved on Earth, surely it evolved on any planet capable of supporting life. But as scientist Donald DeYoung points out in his book *Astronomy and the Bible*, the first variable in the Drake Equation actually turns out to be zero. So when you multiply all the variables together, you end up with not billions but a big fat zero!”

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.