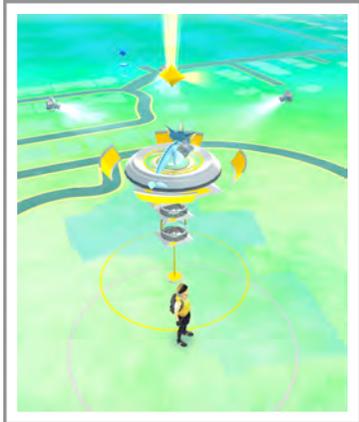

FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES



“Welcome to Trinity Baptist Church... otherwise known as a Pokémon GO Gym”

CHURCHES EMBRACING POKÉMON AS “OUTREACH”

Pokémon Go has become a craze. Almost overnight it has become the most popular mobile game in American history, increasing the stock market value of part owner Nintendo more than 50%.

“Pokémon Go, the newest iteration of the nearly 20-year-old Pokémon franchise, engages players in an ‘augmented reality’ where they try to find and capture Pokémons hidden throughout the real world. The *Australian Business Review* has suggested that it may be a ‘watershed moment’ in the development of virtual reality” (“Pokémon Go craze drawing gamers to church,” *Baptist Press News*, July 15, 2016). The game “uses the mobile phone’s camera to create the

perception that the Pokémon characters are actually in front of the players.” Two men recently fell off a cliff near San Diego while engaged in the game. Some churches are even embracing it as an “outreach” tool. For example, Trinity Baptist Church of Yukon, Oklahoma, a SBC congregation, held a *Pokémon Go* activity on July 17 at which they “searched for Pokémons together.” Pastor Dave Dolphin says, “Everything can be something you can leverage to turn people toward the Gospel.” Pastor Kevin Glenn of Calvary Baptist Church in Las Cruces, New Mexico, said, “My conviction is that there are elements of creativity in the cultural products of our time. We can find redemptive analogies in them.” Sure, we should preach the gospel to Pokémon Go players, but it is confusion to use something with direct occultic associations as any sort of tool of evangelism and to encourage the use of such things. It would be like preaching the gospel with Tarot cards. The Bible is very clear on this. The following Scriptures, among many others, expose the error and

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MAN CLAIMING TO BE SOUTHERN BAPTIST EMBRACES “QUEER” THEOLOGY

Jeff Hood, graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and self-proclaimed “Southern Baptist pastor,” promotes acceptance of homosexuality and calls God “Queer.” In 2014, he spoke on “Embracing the Power of the Queer.” The forum was the Cathedral of Hope, an “inclusive, progressive Christian church” in Dallas, Texas, which is a member of the United Church of Christ. Using filthy language, Hood said it doesn’t matter if Adam and Eve were real people. Other statements he made: “Friends, you are perfect! ... Some people talk about reading your Bible. Sometimes I tell people, ‘You just need to read yourself.’ ... Jesus was the most queer person on earth. ... It is OK to be queer, no matter what that means for you” (“Southern Baptist Minister Embraces Homosexuality,” *Pulpit & Pen*, June 9, 2014).



Jeff Hood

CHURCHES EMBRACING POKÉMON AS “OUTREACH”

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rebellion of the contemporary “engage the culture” philosophy. “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*” (Ephesians 5:11). “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you” (2 Corinthians 6:17). How successful would Dolphin, Glenn, etc., be in their “engage the culture” venture if they started obeying God’s Word to reprove the works of darkness and to refuse to touch the unclean thing?

Pastor David Brown, First Baptist Church of Oak Creek, Wisconsin, who made the effort to investigate *Pokémon* and apply the test of God’s Word to it in 1999, says, “The name *Pokémon* is derived from POCKET MONster. ... One of the first things I did was to find out who produced the Trading Card Game. Here is an exact quote right from the Web page of the producer - ‘The *Pokémon* Trading Card Game is a new collectable Card Game that is made and distributed by *Wizards of the Coast*. The same company that made the best-selling game ... *Magic: The Gathering*.’ *Wizards of the Coast* also owns TSR, the producers of *Dungeons & Dragons*. When I discovered who owned the American *Pokémon* Trading Card Game rights, I knew it was not just an innocent card game for elementary school children. [The *Pokémon* rap mantra says]: ‘I will travel across the land/ Searching far and wide/ Each *Pokémon* to understand/ The power that’s inside/ Gotta catch them all.’ ... To be sure it is a game, but a game that does not glorify God! When God says something is wrong, it is wrong regardless of what form it is in. Not only that, but many of the kids who play this game *are* seduced into believing the principles that the game subtly teaches” (Dave Brown, “The Problem with *Pokémon*”).

In the official literature, the main characters of the game are described as headstrong, stubborn, quibbling, hormonal, having a fascination with and trying to “score” with the opposite sex, self-centered, vindictive, obnoxious, and prone to cross-dressing! *Pokémon* promotes the search for occultic power. The cards are called “energy cards.” Players engage in “pretend” occultic warfare. Currently there are 729 species of *Pokémon* monsters. Two of them are named *Abra* and *Kadabra*, long associated with magic. The *Abra* card promotes the ability to read minds. The *Kadabra* character has a pentagram on his forehead. What an incredibly dangerous, wicked influence for children!

There is nothing innocent about *Pokémon*. It is a clever attempt at demonic mind-control. It is no accident that *Pokémon Go* often leads people to church properties. “Many churches have been included, along with other public places, as Pokestops and gyms in the game. Gyms are places where players can battle one another and help one of three teams gain supremacy in the location. Pokestops are places where players can pick up free items that help them in the game” (*Baptist Press News*, July 15, 2016). The creators of the app doubtless know that most churches are spiritually powerless; most of the church youth aren’t born again; and the *Pokémon* demons will have more influence on church kids than the churches will have on *Pokémon* players. For more about the dangers of *Pokémon* see “The Problem with *Pokémon*” by David Brown, <http://logosresourcepages.org/Occult/more.htm>



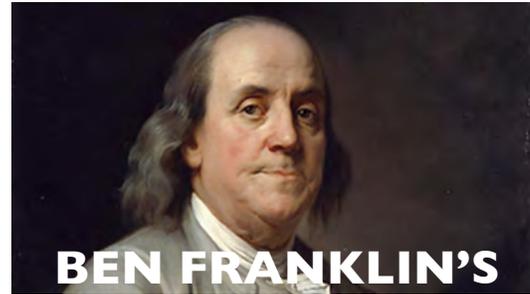
WORLDLY JUNK AT JOHNNY HUNT'S CHURCH



Johnny Hunt

Johnny Hunt pastors a mega Southern Baptist Church (First Baptist of Woodstock, Georgia), and the church's 25th anniversary in 2011 featured a rewrite of Hunt's favorite "hymn," "Under the Boardwalk," a 1960s hit by the Drifters. It's a song about a man frolicking on the beach

with his girl. The original lyrics include, "Out of the sun/ we'll be havin' some fun/ people walking above/ we'll be falling in love/ under the boardwalk ... On a blanket with my baby is where I'll be." This is the type of philosophy that has driven the immoral global pop culture. First Baptist Church's music department rewrote the words to "honor" "our beloved Pastor Johnny," complete with a goofy dance routine ("Puttin' on the Ritz for Johnny Hunt," *Pulpit & Pen*, July 10, 2016). First Baptist Church's 30th anniversary this year featured a "1920s Costume or Black Tie" ball at the Delta Flight Museum. What a vile thing it is to turn the holy church of Christ into a sensual, dance party, to make the serious things of God into a nonsensical spectacle as vain as a child's soap bubble. Pastor Hunt, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, will be held accountable for this. He was the main speaker at the Southwide Baptist Fellowship in 2003, a fellowship of independent Baptist pastors. That year a man wrote to me, saying, "I visited Hunt's church and got up and left because of the wild, party-like atmosphere in their 'worship' service."



BEN FRANKLIN'S PROPHECY OF THESE TIMES

At the Constitutional Convention in 1787, Benjamin Franklin made a speech in favor of the constitution and the new American Union, and in so doing he prophesied of these present times in the nation's history. He said, "I think a general government necessary for us, and there is no form of government but what may be a blessing to the people, if well administered; and I believe, further, that this is likely to be well administered for a course of years, and can only end in despotism, as other forms have done before it, when the people shall become so corrupted as to need despotic government, being incapable of any other. ... Thus I consent, Sir, to this Constitution, because I expect no better, and because I am not sure that it is not the best. The opinions I have had of its errors I sacrifice to the public good" (*The Works of Benjamin Franklin*, Vol. 5, 1904, pp. 156, 157).

MYSTERY BABYLON

The following is excerpted from H. Grattan Guinness, *The Approaching End of the Age: Viewed in the Light of History, Prophecy and Science*, 1879: "The last words of the angel to John, seem to leave no possibility of mistake as to the city. 'The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth ... and the woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.' There was but one great city, which in John's day reigned over the kings of the earth. It was ROME; and Rome is the only city which was great then, has been great, in one way or other, ever since, and is so still. And Rome was seated on seven hills, 'the seven mountains on which the woman sitteth.' Her common name with the classic writers of St. John's age is 'the seven hilled city.' ... The medals and coins of the day, represent Rome as a

woman sitting on seven hills; and her titles show with sufficient clearness, how thoroughly she reigned. She was styled 'the royal Rome,' 'the mistress of the world,' 'the queen of nations.' Her sway was all but universal. She was the metropolis of that fourth great empire which Daniel had foretold would break in pieces and subdue all things, 'dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly,' and at the time of the Apocalyptic visions, her power was at its height. ... We previously saw that she must represent a church, now we know what church. The harlot is the Church of Rome; for simple minds there seems no escape from this conclusion. And it is a singular and notable fact, that no other city but Rome, has ever given its name to a church, which has embraced many kindreds and nations."



INFORMATION

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.