
FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES

THE DANGER OF INTERNET HERESY

"INSTEAD OF SPENDING THEIR TIME STUDYING THE BIBLE BY MEANS OF PROPER TOOLS AND STAYING WITH SOUND BIBLE TEACHERS, THEY SURF AROUND THE INTERNET AND DABBLE WITH ERROR AND NUTTINESS AND QUACKERY."

The Internet is the greatest communication tool that has ever existed, and it has incalculable potential for broadcasting truth as well as error. U.S. President Trump has popularized the term "fake news," and he is right. The world is full of fake information, not only fake political information, but every other type of information. The Internet is a dream come true for flat earthers and health food quacks and disinformation campaigners and heretics of every stripe. While truth barely gets a hearing in this fallen world, error resonates widely. The Bible tells God's people how to protect themselves in any age. Technology changes, but the principles of spiritual protection are the same. The most fundamental principle of protection is to be well grounded in God's Word ("skillful," Hebrews

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TEACHER FIRED FOR NOT CALLING TRANSGENDER STUDENT BY "CORRECT" PRONOUN

The following is excerpted from "Virginia high school teacher fired," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, Dec. 6, 2018: "A Virginia high school teacher was fired Thursday for refusing to use a transgender student's new pronouns, a case believed to be the first of its kind in the state. After a four-hour hearing, the West Point School Board voted 5-0 to terminate Peter Vlaming, a French teacher at West Point High School who resisted administrators' orders to use male pronouns to refer to a ninth-grade student who had undergone a gender transition. The board met in closed session for nearly an hour before the vote. ... Vlaming, 47, who had taught at the school for almost seven years after spending more than a decade in France, told his superiors his Christian faith prevented him from using male pronouns for a student he saw as female. The student's family informed the school system of the transition over the



Peter Vlaming

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5:12-15), to test everything by God's Word, and to avoid things that are false. This is set out in a nutshell in 2 Timothy 2:15-17. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." Every fundamental principle of protection from heresy in the Internet age is found in this passage. Protection requires being a serious student of God's Word. You won't be able to discern error until you are well grounded in the truth. And protection requires shunning false teachers. Shunning is the opposite of reading their blogs and visiting their social media pages and watching their YouTube channels. 2 Timothy 2:18 warns that false teaching has the power to

"overthrow the faith." It is very dangerous. Further along in the same passage, we find that false teaching engenders questions and strifes (2 Ti. 2:23). It destabilizes the Christian life. A great many people have written to me after becoming confused by things they have read on the Internet. Typically, these are people who are not skillful in God's Word, but instead of spending their time studying the Bible by means of proper tools and staying with sound Bible teachers, they surf around the Internet and dabble with error and nuttiness and quackery. The resources for becoming a skillful Bible student are available for those who are willing to invest sufficient time and energy. There is no easy path or shortcut. I think of many people who have gone through most or all of the *Advanced Bible Studies Series* published by Way of Life Literature. I think of a man who has studied through the *Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible & Christianity* three times. That alone is a serious Bible education. Beware of Internet heresy!



GOOGLE'S "CREEPY LINE"

The following is excerpted from "The Creepy Line" by John Stossel, Townhall.com, Dec. 5, 2018: "[A] new documentary, 'The Creepy Line,' argues that companies like Google and Facebook lean left and have power they shouldn't have. The title 'Creepy Line' refers to a comment by former Google chairman Eric Schmidt, who said when it comes to issues like privacy, Google policy 'is to get right up to the creepy line but not cross it.' But the documentary argues that Google crosses that creepy line every day. Google's power comes from its dominant search engine. We assume that whatever appears at the top of our searches is the 'best' or most popular result. But is it? 'It is a company that has an agenda,' the writer of 'The Creepy Line,' Peter Schweizer, says in my latest video. ... 'Their ability to manipulate the algorithm is something that they've demonstrated,' says Schweizer, and last election Google put positive stories about Hillary Clinton higher in Google searches. ... Human 'content monitors' do some of that censoring, and some of them despise conservatives. A former Facebook employee reported that the human censors sometimes ignored stories trending among Facebook users if the stories came from a conservative website. ... 'The Creepy Line' makes a compelling case that a small number of people at a few Silicon Valley companies have tremendous power to do creepy things."

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summer. Vlaming said he had the student in class the year before when the student identified as female. Vlaming agreed to use the student’s new, male name. But he tried to avoid using any pronouns--he or him, and she or her--when referring to the student. ... Speaking in his own defense, Vlaming said he loves and respects all his students and had tried to reach a solution based on ‘mutual tolerance.’ That effort was rejected, he said, putting him at risk of losing his job for having views held by ‘most of the world for most of human history.’ ‘That is not tolerance,’ Vlaming said. ‘That is coercion. ... I am being punished for what I haven’t said.’ ... It’s not clear if Vlaming’s firing will lead to a wrongful-termination lawsuit. Vlaming said he was interested in pursuing a legal appeal, but he wanted to consult with his attorney before announcing further steps.”

THE “WANDERING PEOPLE” RETURNING TO ISRAEL/SOCIAL MEDIA-POWERED HATE

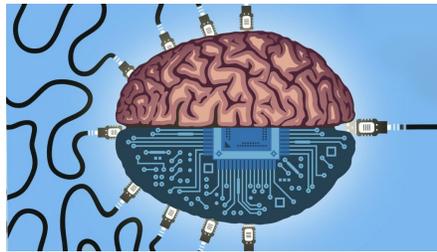
The following is excerpted from “Europe Is Finished,” *Times of Israel*, Dec. 6, 2018: “A top British lawyer and his partner immigrated to Israel this week, citing rising anti-Semitism in Europe. ‘Europe in my view is finished. Every day you see people being attacked in one way or another across Europe,’ Mark Lewis told Israel’s Channel 10 news, which accompanied his arrival, together with partner Mandy Blumenthal, at Israel’s Ben Gurion Airport. ‘You see people murdered in museums in Belgium, people murdered in schools in France, people attacked in England. There is only one place for Jewish people to go,’ Lewis added. Lewis, 54, one of the UK’s leading libel lawyers, said he has been increasingly subjected to hate speech and threats for being Jewish, including being subjected to regular abuse and death threats online. The decision to leave Britain did not come

easily, the couple has said, but they feel it was inevitable. ‘We’re a wandering people, and it’s time to wander again. People just don’t want to see it,’ Lewis said of his fellow British Jews. Lewis said while anti-Semitism was a fringe phenomenon in the past, it has become more prominent due to social media. ‘Social media has caused so much harm,’ he said. ‘Fifteen years ago there was still anti-Semitism but it was an obscure thing. Fifteen years ago somebody painted a swastika on my garage door in Manchester, that was a message. But it was a one-off, it was something you could almost laugh off. Now with the effect of social media, it’s almost every day.’”



A SKEPTIC'S ERROR- MINDS AREN'T COMPUTERS

The following is excerpted from "A Skeptic Gets It Wrong," Tom Gilson, *The Stream*, Dec. 8, 2018: "A commenter who goes by 'swordfish' got human minds and thinking badly mixed up recently, claiming minds and computers are a lot alike. In a comment on last week's atheist



meme article, he wrote, 1) Computers can process anything which can be represented in a computer's memory, which includes ideas. 2) The human brain could be said to be just processing electro-chemical reactions. Is he right? ... Now, as a Christian I'm committed to the belief that the physical world isn't all there is. God is spirit, and He has made us in His image, so that there's more to us than just the bodies we walk around in. But there are plenty of people who disagree. Like swordfish, they think all reality can be explained by matter, energy and the laws of nature by which they interact--just that, and nothing else. The problem is, if they're right, they're wrong. Or at least they have no reason to think they're right. There are many ways to show that's the case. One way is to run the comparison between human minds and computers, and see how it comes out. That's how I answered swordfish. ... Consider the statement, 'It's raining outside, therefore the roads will be wet.' Humans process that in terms of ideas. We start with what we know about 'rain,' 'wet,' and 'road,' and we run through the logic in our

minds. We reach our conclusion based on what the words mean, and based on reasons that connect them to each other. But what does a computer do? In raw terms, computers process voltages, which are purely electrical things, their status controlled by natural law. Some of

those voltages are associated with terms like 'rain,' 'road,' and 'wet.' That's because hardware designers and programmers have designed computers so they can represent terms like that. But the computer doesn't have any idea what those words mean. It has no clue what 'wet' is, or any of the rest. So there's the first reason computers can't process ideas like humans do: Computers don't have ideas. They don't know meanings of words. They can only have voltage states, designed by humans to represent words. ... The computer doesn't think, 'the road must be wet because that's what happens when it rains.' It arrives at its output due to physical laws, not because of logical reasons. ... if swordfish is right, and if minds operate like computers, then minds don't operate according to reasons. And if minds don't operate according to reasons, then even swordfish has no reason to think he's got good reason to think what he thinks. Which is absurd. It's impossible. When a conclusion is that absurd, you know there's something wrong with the thinking that led to it."

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.