

# O Timothy

*“Keep that which is committed to thy trust...”*

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

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*“Some people who have told me that they are looking for a strong church and would join it if they found one, are self-deceived. I know this to be true because such people have attended my Bible conferences in good churches and they live within driving distance of these churches, but they won’t join them...While it is important to find the best church possible, you are never going to find a church that is “perfect”* **Page 3.**

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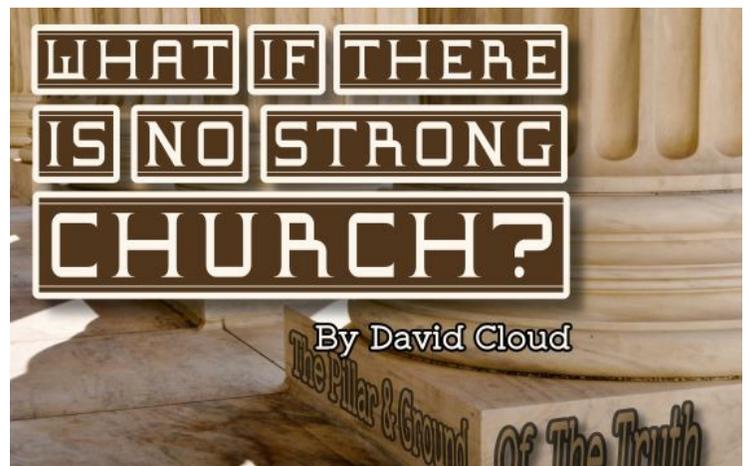
## WHAT IF THERE IS NO STRONG CHURCH? - By David Cloud

Entirely rewritten and enlarged for May 31, 2017 (first edition March 4, 1996)

I hear from many people who tell me there is no really sound church in their entire area, and in at least many cases, I know this is true. They can’t find a church that is strong in God’s Word and prayer and holiness and separation from the world and ecclesiastical separation and serious discipleship, a church that isn’t at least dabbling in contemporary music and moving quickly in that direction and thus building bridges to the “greater church.”

Following are a couple of examples:

“I am so discouraged that it is hard for me to go on. I live in -----. I have been here for over 14 years and I have searched my heart out, trying to find an independent Baptist Church that stands against sin, preaches against sin, is actively seeking to win the lost to Christ, is still using the KJV. They are dead and



lifeless. And most of all they all believe in using quick prayerism and easy believism, without true repentance, faith, and Holy Spirit conviction. I have a real problem being a member of any of these churches. I want to

serve the Lord so badly, but no church that takes a stand. I would first of all appreciate your prayers, and secondly any advice you may have for someone in my condition.”

“I am attending a church of small size, with a pastor who says he is fundamental, but in actual practice, he is new-evangelical. He does not name the names of false teachers. He won’t correct any members in error. He will sound no alarm about ecumenism, apostasy, etc. In my estimation, there are only two or three of the families in the church that care anything about separation from the world and apostasy, and those cannot speak freely the whole counsel of God because the leaders won’t allow it. This is the best church within my area. There are two churches 40 miles away that claim to be fundamentalist but promote Dobson-style psychology and other things that a true fundamentalist cannot countenance.”

Following is my advice for those who are in this situation:

1. Be sure that you understand the importance of the church.
2. Be careful that you are not looking for a perfect church.
3. Commute to a strong church.
4. Relocate to a place that has a strong church.
5. Attend the best church that is available and put the situation into the Lord’s hands.

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David W. Cloud, Editor  
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Copyright 2011 by D.W.Cloud  
Way of Life Literature  
PO Box 610368, Port Huron, MI  
48061

866-295-4143 (toll free)  
[fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org)  
<http://www.wayoflife.org>

Bethel Baptist Church  
4212 Campbell St. N.  
London, Ontario, N6P 1A6 Canada  
519-652-2619

6. Be wise in dealing with pastors.
7. Give full attention to your own spiritual life.
8. In some cases, a new church can be established.

### **BE SURE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHURCH**

It is important to be reminded of, and convinced of, how important the church is. Men have corrupted churches, but men did not create the church. The church is God’s institution. The Lord Jesus Christ said, “I will build my church” (Mat. 16:18).

The New Testament church is called “the house of God, the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15), and in the context, that refers to an assembly that has pastors and deacons.

The book of Acts is the record of the establishment of the first churches under the leadership of the apostles. In Acts, we see the church as the divinely-ordained headquarters of world evangelism. The Lord’s commission of world missions is given in Acts 1:8. The method of carrying out that commission is found in Acts 13-14, and this is the pattern for the entire church age. Here we see a properly established church sending out missionaries to found new churches that, in turn, accomplish the same thing.

Most of the New Testament was written to churches to instruct them about how to increase in their knowledge or and service to Christ.

When Christ gave His final Revelation, He delivered it to seven churches of that day (Rev. 1:4), and seven times He said, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches” (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). Christ spoke to the believers through the churches and their leaders.

There is no doubt that God has exalted the church and that it is not His will that believers neglect it. The Word of God warns, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Heb. 10:25).

A child of God that wants to obey God should leave a church that is departing from God’s Word, but he can

never be content with not being a committed member of a New Testament church.

### **BE CAREFUL THAT YOU ARE NOT LOOKING FOR A PERFECT CHURCH**

I meet and hear from two types of people in regard to the church issue. First, there are those who live in an area in which there truly is no sound church, and they have to do the best they can in that situation. Second, there are people who are not satisfied even with a good church and are on a never-ending search for a church that is ideal by their standards.

Even the early churches founded and pastored by the apostles had problems. In fact, there were very serious problems in many of the early churches.

Consider the church at Corinth. The members were carnal and divided. They refused to discipline one of their own although he was living in open fornication with his father's wife! They were taking each other to court. They were getting drunk during the Lord's Supper. They were misusing the spiritual gifts. They allowed false teachers to discredit the Apostle Paul.

What a church! Yet Paul was thankful for the grace God had given them (1 Cor. 1:4).

The seven churches mentioned in Revelation also had many serious problems, including spiritual coldness, false teachers, and immorality.

We must keep the big picture in focus. Every church has strengths and weaknesses; to focus exclusively on the weaknesses can cause us to forget the strengths. 1 Thessalonians 5:21 says to prove all things AND to hold fast that which is good. We must not "throw the baby out with the bath water"!

There simply is no perfect situation in this present life.

If you leave a church, you should move to a better one, not a weaker one.

It is a good practice to sit down and count your blessings. What are the things that attracted you to the church in the first place?

The seven churches mentioned in Revelation also had many serious problems, including spiritual coldness, false teachers, and immorality.

*Some* people who have told me that they are looking for a strong church and would join it if they found one, are self-deceived. I know this to be true because such people have attended my Bible conferences in good churches and they live within driving distance of these churches, but they won't join them. For example, I recently preached a conference at Grace Baptist Church in Oxford, Pennsylvania, pastored by Steve Rogers, and though I personally recommend this ministry, some people who live in that area and say they love my writings and preaching find an excuse not to join it. I have no sympathy for that.

I have concluded that some people who say they love my preaching would not long be content if I had pastoral authority over their lives. They like my preaching only so long as I am a distant figure and they can pick and choose what they want to hear from me. For one thing, I am very strong on the importance of the assembly and on faithful, committed church membership. This is absolutely a fundamental issue with me. But by their actions it is clear that they don't agree with this part of my teaching.

While it is important to find the best church possible, you are never going to find a church that is "perfect" by any standard. You are certainly not going to find a church that in practice is exactly what I preach and teach other than the church where I am in a leadership position. Every preacher is different, and there will be differences between preachers and churches.

Our book *Keys to Fruitful Church Membership*, which was first published in 1999, deals with this issue in a very practical way. Recently revised and expanded, it is available in a print edition and as a free eBook from [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).

### **COMMUTE**

I know many people that travel an hour and more to attend a good church. I know one couple who drove three hours one way. Some drive (or ride a bus or walk) in on Sunday morning and stay the entire day, then travel home after the evening service.

We find this to be a very reasonable thing to do. It is not uncommon today for people to commute hundreds of miles each week to work, and the church is more important than one's job.

In South Asia, I know of some dear believers who WALK four hours and more to church, and I know many believers who walk one to two hours to attend church.

They put to shame many Christians in North America who wouldn't dream of driving in a comfortable automobile on good roads for an hour or an hour and a half to attend a good church.

Commuting a significant distance is a small price to pay for the blessings of a strong church. Many parents have testified to me that being in the right church was a major reason why their grown children are serving the Lord today. I met a grandfather in Chesterton, Indiana, who told me that his children and now his grandchildren are serving the Lord. He said that he moved to that area many years ago when his children were young and he had bought a house. Afterwards he found Fairhaven Baptist Church and knew this was where the Lord wanted him to raise his family, but it was more than an hour's drive from his house. He put the house on the market and commuted to church every service. He thought his house would sell quickly, but it took more than two years, if I remember correctly, yet he continued to commute to a good church rather than settle for a mediocre one. The sweet fruit of this wise decision has already continued to the third generation.

## RELOCATE

Assuming there is no sound church within commuting distance, we recommend that you relocate. In my estimation, in light of the Bible's teaching, the church should be the most important consideration in determining where to live.

Of course, one must follow the Lord's leading in such matters; but the fact is, as we have seen, that He has made it plain that the church is His ordained means of fulfilling the Great Commission and He wants every Christian to be a fruitful member of a sound New Testament church.

The church directory we maintain at the Way of Life web site can be helpful in determining where to relocate. But

please understand that in most cases we do not have personal knowledge of these churches. Each church on the directory has successfully filled out our questionnaire, but that doesn't mean it is a good church. We have also discovered, to our amazement, that it is not uncommon for church officers to be less than honest in answering the questionnaire!

If someone is serious about relocating for the sake of a good church, we might be able to make a recommendation. But don't contact us about this if you are merely interested and curious. It takes time to make recommendations, and I will only make the effort to do that for people that I deem to be very serious about relocating.

And we would warn against trying to put God's will into a small box. If you want God's will, you have to put His will absolutely first. One man said that he MIGHT be interested in moving IF I could give him the names of good churches in a couple of states that he listed. That is to allow God to work only within the parameters of *your* will. It is saying, "Lord, I will go where you want me to go, so long as it is within this little geographical parameter." If you want God's perfect will, you must be ready to go *anywhere* He leads and do *whatever* He says.

I realize that not everyone can move. There are many situations in life. But I am convinced that if God's people made this the priority it should be, that more people would relocate. I have been recommending this for decades, but I can count on the fingers of one hand the number of people I know of who have done this.

## ATTEND THE BEST CHURCH AVAILABLE

If there is no strong church within commuting distance and you cannot move, attend the best church available, assuming there is one that is not too deeply compromised, and be faithful as unto the Lord and put the situation into His hands.

Remember that it is pastors who have the greatest accountability for the doctrine and policy of the church.

It is important to understand that the pastor's responsibility is not your responsibility. I am not recommending blind, unquestioning loyalty. The believer is to prove all things (Acts 17:11; 1 Th. 5:21). You should

voice your concern to the pastors about anything that you believe to be wrong, and a godly pastor will listen carefully and prayerfully. But God has given pastors the responsibility to make decisions.

And I am not saying that a Christian should submit to a church that is teaching false doctrine or that is plainly departing from the Word of God, that is permeated with worldliness, that has capitulated to contemporary worship and a contemporary philosophy, and such. There are many Independent Baptist churches I would not personally join, and that number is increasing each decade. But there are different kinds of and degrees of church problems and errors, and one must have godly wisdom to discern what is most important in church matters and what is less important, and about when to leave and when to stay.

Again, for more about this see [Keys to Fruitful Church Membership](#). Also see [The Pastor's Authority and the Church Member's Responsibility](#). These are available as free eBooks from [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).

## BE WISE IN DEALING WITH PASTORS

It is important to learn how to deal with pastors in a wise and biblical way.

“And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves” (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13).

Following are some suggestions about dealing with pastors:

1. Guard your heart and attitude
2. Give pastors the benefit of the doubt
3. If you are a man, don't hesitate to approach the pastor if you perceive that something is wrong scripturally.
4. Women must be especially cautious in dealing with pastors.
5. Be wise in how you approach the pastor about perceived problems or errors.
6. Be sure that you are contending for clear Scriptural truth and not for your own preferences and opinions.
7. Guard against allowing a church problem to poison your attitude toward the church as a divine institution.
8. Keep your eyes focused on Christ rather than man.
9. Pray for your pastors and other church leaders.

10. If you have a problem or question, go directly to the pastors or to the people involved.
11. Follow the “royal law.”
12. Don't forget that pastors have greater authority and greater responsibility.

### 1. Guard your heart and attitude.

We are to esteem the church leaders highly in love for their work's sake.

“And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves” (1 Th. 5:12-13).

We need to have a cool head and a warm heart, not a cool heart and a warm head! When we attempt to correct others, we must guard our own hearts and do so in the spirit of meekness (Gal. 6:1).

2 Timothy 2:24-25 describes the spirit in which we are to seek to correct others:

“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.”

The late evangelist Mel Rutter would say, “Be as firm as the rock in your position but as sweet as the honey from the rock in your disposition.”

The difference between leaving a church over legitimate doctrinal concerns and leaving in rebellion toward pastoral authority will be evidenced in two ways, according to James 3:14-18.

“But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”

First, the difference will be evident in one's attitude. Contrast the “bitter envying and strife” of verse 14 with the godly attitude described in verse 17: “peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

Second, the difference will be evident in the fruit that issues from the situation. Contrast the fruit of verse 16 -- “envying and strife ... confusion and every evil work” -- with the fruit described in verse 18, which is “the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”

The long-term consequences will demonstrate the secrets of the heart. On the one hand, those who are seeking to strengthen the church and are opposed to things that are truly ungodly and unscriptural and who leave a church on that basis alone and not because of their own self-will or carnality, will go on to serve Christ fruitfully in stronger churches.

On the other hand, those who are merely striving for their own self-will and who are causing trouble in a carnal manner usually hop from church to church, causing trouble everywhere they go, losing their testimony and usually their children, often going from a strong church to a weaker church. When someone moves to a church that is weaker doctrinally and spiritually, it demonstrates that the issue was not actually about truth and righteousness, but was a personality conflict or something of that sort.

## **2. Give pastors the benefit of the doubt, and do everything you can to be an obedient church member.**

The Bible uses very strong language about the church’s submission to pastoral authority.

“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves...” (Heb. 13:17).

Those are strong words. *Unless the pastors are leading contrary to the Bible in a very clear and obvious manner, the church member must submit to them as unto God.* It is like a wife’s submission to a husband.

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord” (Eph. 5:22).

Every wife knows that if she submits to her husband she is submitting to an imperfect man. Sometimes she will disagree with his decisions, but the godly wife is not merely submitting to her husband, she is submitting to the Lord who gave her that husband. Her eyes are on Christ. She is like Sarah of old who called her husband “lord” because she trusted in God (1 Pe. 3:5).

Likewise, the church member does not submit merely to a man. The church member submits to the Lord who has established the office of the pastorate and who has put that man into the office and who has commanded obedience.

Too many church members think it is their duty to advise and correct the pastor in all matters if they think he is not doing his job properly, even in matters that do not pertain to scriptural error. But it is wise and scriptural to let pastors be pastors.

I am not saying that it is wrong to give suggestions to pastors or to challenge their decisions. God’s people are to prove all things (1 Th. 5:21), and pastors are not above discipline (1 Ti. 5:19-20). Blind obedience is not scriptural or godly, but cultic. What I am saying here is that after I have shared my thoughts or concerns with those in authority over me and they decide against my position, I must leave the matter in the Lord’s hands and submit with a right attitude. This is always true unless the pastors are clearly acting contrary to Scripture.

Giving pastors the benefit of the doubt is an important principle. It means that when the pastor’s interpretation or application of Scripture is contrary to mine, I should submit to his unless it is clear that his cannot be supported by Scripture rightly divided. It means that *as far as possible scripturally* I should support him.

Oftentimes it is possible to apply different Scriptures to a situation, and in such a situation the leader’s application should stand. For example, one time I told one of my Bible college students that since it was common knowledge that he had cheated on a test to gain a tenth grade certificate in the national educational system, he should not try to build on that foundation to get his 11th-12th grade certificate. My thinking was based on the fact that he had gotten the certificate unlawfully, and the law of restitution says that we should try to make things right when we have sinned against men (Lev. 6). Plus I cited Philippians 2:15 and Psalm 15:4 and noted that believers need to demonstrate honesty in a corrupt generation, even to their own hurt.

Some other men in the church disagreed with that decision, quoting Scriptures that say the past is under Christ’s blood and that “everyone cheats before he is saved.”

All of these Scriptures could be applied, but which one should stand in that particular situation? I believe the Lord will give the senior leader the best wisdom in such matters.

Also, in that situation I was looking at things that others could not see or were not considering, such as this young man's particular situation, his need to focus on his Bible studies rather than looking back, and the overall work of the Lord in the churches we are building and the future of that work. This is a reminder that a church leader often knows things and sees things that the average church member doesn't. This is why the Lord's people should let the Lord lead their pastors and not try to force the pastors to be under the authority of the people.

I would also suggest that you might not be able to serve with good conscience in every aspect of the church's ministry, but you might still be able to remain a faithful member of the church. I know of members who have quit the music ministry or quit a Sunday School position because of issues that they could not with good conscience support, but they were able to remain faithful members of the church because it was the best church in their area and they were not in a position to relocate at the time.

### **3. If you are a man, don't hesitate to approach the pastor if you perceive that something is wrong scripturally.**

Not only is it acceptable to "prove all things" (1 Th. 5:21) and to act as a Berean to "search the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11), it is a spiritual duty to do so. God's people are not to be simple or gullible. "The simple believeth every word: but the prudent *man* looketh well to his going" (Pr. 14:15).

The church is a body, and every member has an important function. The edification and protection of the body is a ministry of the entire body. The leaders have a special role in this, but every member is to contribute ("according to the effectual working in the measure of every part," Eph. 4:11-16).

It has been said that the only thing that good men have to do to allow evil to prosper is to do nothing. That is true in the church. If the men stand idly by and allow the

church to go into error, allow it to go down the slippery slope of spiritual compromise without protest, they are guilty before God and will give account for their role in the apostasy, which was their silence.

### **4. Women must be especially cautious in dealing with pastors.**

Nowhere do we see that it is a woman's job to correct pastors. In fact, they are forbidden to teach men.

"But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (1 Ti. 2:12).

The only exception to this is when we see a woman working together with her husband in the informal context of the home.

"And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly" (Acts 18:24-26).

Aquila and his wife Priscilla brought Apollos into their home and helped him come to a sound doctrinal stance. The Bible says "they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God," referring both to Aquila and Priscilla. This is an example of a wife involved in informal teaching of the Bible in the home under her husband's headship. As a newly saved 23-year-old Christian man, I was helped like this by a godly woman in the first church I joined. She had no authority in the church and had no teaching ministry to men as such, but she and her husband opened their home to young people and created a godly atmosphere for spiritual healing and discipleship. In that context, in casual conversation, she was able to help me and other young men by sharing favorite verses, describing her own experiences with the Lord, and recommending good reading material.

But this is not an example of a woman trying to correct a church leader. Apollos was a new Christian. He was not a church leader.

It is a man's job to approach church leaders about matters that seem to be wrong.

Oftentimes women have written to me about spiritual matters and have tried to correct me about something they perceive to be wrong, and they will include their husband's name on the email, but it is the husband who should deal with a preacher about such matters rather than the wife. If the husband is not willing to do this, the wife should keep silence. This is the principle we see in the following Scripture:

“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church” (1 Co. 14:34-35).

I don't think it is wrong for a woman to recommend to a pastor or a preacher that he read some report or book or check out some web site, but that is as far as it should go, because she simply is not given permission in Scripture to correct leaders.

### **5. Be wise in how you approach the pastor about perceived problems or errors.**

Always be respectful and kind. If you are upset, wait until you have calmed down and can deal with the matter in a godly way. An elder is not to be rebuked, but is to be entreated as a father (1 Ti. 5:1). This refers to elders in age as well as elders as a ministry position. (An elder, referring to a pastor, is to be rebuked only if he sins and the sin has been proven by witnesses 1 Ti. 5:19-20, and he should be rebuked in that context by proper representatives of the church, such as other elders or the deacons.)

Approach the pastor at the right time. For example, don't try to talk to him just before he is scheduled to preach or just after he preaches or at some other time when he might be distracted. Make an appointment.

Approach the pastor to listen carefully and not only to talk. Approach the conversation with the mindset that you might be wrong about the matter and the willingness to hear another side.

### **6. Be sure that you are contending for clear Scriptural truth and not for your own preferences and opinions.**

If I think that something is wrong in the church, I must ask myself, “Does the Bible plainly say that this is wrong

or is this merely something that I personally do not like or agree with?” Many church problems arise because of personality conflicts and self-will and the attempt to exalt personal preference and tradition to the place of Scripture.

Romans 14 speaks to this issue. Here Paul is addressing those things about which the Bible does not speak in this dispensation. The two examples that he gives are dietary rules and holy days. These are things about which the New Testament faith is silent.

Unlike during the Mosaic dispensation, there are no laws in the New Testament about what we are to eat (1 Tim. 4:4-5). Likewise, there are no laws in the New Testament about keeping the sabbath and about maintaining certain holy festivals and special days after the Old Testament fashion.

Since the New Testament does not contain laws on these things, they are areas of Christian liberty. In such things, each believer is free to do as he sees fit before the Lord, but he cannot push his preferences on others and judge others according to his preferences.

The church member who has a problem with something in the church and disagrees with something the leaders are doing needs to ask himself if his thinking on the issue is based on clear Scripture or if it is based merely on his personal preference and human thinking.

### **7. Guard against allowing a church problem to poison your attitude toward the church as a divine institution.**

This is similar to the previous point, but it deserves a separate paragraph. It is not uncommon for someone who discovers a serious and legitimate church problem, especially a sin or error on the part of the pastors, to become embittered against the church as a divine institution. Eventually he or she sees nothing but problems and errors in churches. Everything is wrong. We must be careful not to allow the devil to do this in our lives, and we resist it by counting the good things as well as the bad and by not forgetting that Christ is the one who established the church and made it the pillar and ground of the truth for this age (Matthew 16:18; 1 Timothy 3:15). Consider Paul's attitude toward the church at Corinth. In spite of its serious errors, he thanked the Lord for them on many points (1 Cor. 1:4-9; 2 Cor. 1:11, 14).

## 8. Keep your eyes focused on Christ rather than on men.

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:2).

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory” (Col. 3:1-4).

Some believers are said to carry permanent “spiritual scars” because of being in churches that are led by pastors that abuse their authority. Others leave church altogether and use this as their excuse. The problem in this is that such folk have their eyes upon and their trust more in men than on Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus will never disappoint us, but men will always disappoint us in one way or the other. Pastors are only imperfect men at their best. They make mistakes. They sin. They can be selfish and partial and shortsighted. They should live up to their calling, of course, but that doesn’t always happen.

## 9. Pray for your church, the pastors, and other church leaders.

“Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith” (2 Thessalonians 3:1-2).

Pray much for your church and for the pastors and other spiritual leaders. Every preacher needs prayer. The apostle Paul constantly asked the people to pray for him. I am convinced that pastoring is the most difficult job in the world, and it cannot be done properly without God’s supernatural supply, and this supply is largely given in answer to prayer.

Effectual prayer does two things. It brings change, because God answers and works through it; and it also helps keep my heart tender toward those for whom I am interceding.

## 10. If you have a problem or question, go directly to the pastors or to the people involved.

Oftentimes I have discovered that my perception of a matter was wrong or that the information I had received was wrong or that I did not have all of the necessary information. By discussing a matter directly with those concerned right from the beginning, we can avoid coming to wrong conclusions and possibly causing strife over nothing.

## 11. Follow the “royal law.”

“If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well” (James 2:8).

Christ’s royal law teaches us to treat the church leaders with the same patience, kindness, and mercy by which I would want to be treated if I were in their place.

It is called the “royal law” because it is the law of the King of kings, and it is the law that permeates His kingdom.

## 12. Don’t forget that pastors have greater authority and greater responsibility in the church.

This bears repeating. It is something that has often helped me personally in my relationship with pastors.

The fact that the pastor has greater authority and responsibility means that pastors must make decisions that the average church member does not make and that they will answer to God for those decisions.

There is a time to leave a church over things that are seriously wrong, but we must also learn to put many things into the hands of the Lord and do what He has told us to do, which is to submit to the church leadership and be a blessing and be fruitful and seek to glorify Christ. Each church member needs to focus on his own part.

Don’t confuse your job with that of the pastor. As a non-pastor, you don’t have the work of the pastor (visiting the sick, burying the dead, being on call for any need, watching for souls, the care of the church, feeding and protecting the church, bearing the brunt of the devil’s attack against the church).

As a non-pastor, you also do not have the responsibility of the pastor. He will give account for more (James 3:1). This has helped me many times when I have not agreed with some decision that the pastors have made. I have laid

the matter before the Lord and told the Lord that though I do not agree with this decision, it is not my decision to make and I will leave the matter in His hands and do my part to be a blessing to His church.

### **ABOVE ALL, YOU SHOULD GIVE FULL ATTENTION TO YOUR OWN SPIRITUAL LIFE**

No matter how strong or weak the church itself might be, the believer's first priority is his or her own Christian life and home.

What I recommend is that each believer focus like a laser on taking everything to a new and much higher level in his or her own spiritual life and home.

It is right to critique the church by God's Word and not to blindly accept what is happening, but the first question I need to ask is what am I doing to build up the church and to make it strong spiritually? How strong is my personal Christian life? My home? Am I perfectly faithful to prayer meetings and evangelistic programs? Do I pray for the church and its leaders earnestly and persistently? Have I rolled up my sleeves and found something to do in the house of God?

Seek a powerful revival in your own life, and that will have a mighty effect on your family and perhaps even your church.

Turn your eyes on Jesus. Set your affection on things above. With the old songwriter, heartily sing,

*I'm pressing on the upward way,  
New heights I'm gaining every day;  
Still praying as I onward bound,  
'Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.'*

*Lord, lift me up, and let me stand  
By faith on Canaan's tableland;  
A higher plane than I have found,  
Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.*

Following are suggestions toward this end:

Free up time for God (Eph. 5:16). Spiritual growth and progress requires freeing up more time for life's most

important business. As the old hymn says, it takes time to be holy:

*Take time to be holy,  
Speak oft with thy Lord;  
Abide in Him always,  
And feed on His Word:  
Make friends of God's children,  
Help those who are weak;  
Forgetting in nothing  
His blessing to seek.*

*Take time to be holy,  
The world rushes on;  
Spend much time in secret  
With Jesus alone:  
By looking to Jesus  
Like Him thou shalt be;  
Thy friends in thy conduct  
His likeness shall see.*

*Take time to be holy,  
Let Him be thy guide,  
And run not before Him  
Whatever betide;  
In joy or in sorrow  
Still follow thy Lord,  
And looking to Jesus,  
Still trust in His Word.*

*Take time to be holy,  
Be calm in thy soul;  
Each thought and each motive  
Beneath His control;  
Thus led by His Spirit  
To fountains of love,  
Thou soon shalt be fitted  
For service above.*

Bible study, prayer, witnessing, loving one's wife, serving one's husband, disciplining and training one's children, and educating oneself in godly things require time. Lots of time. The growing, fruitful Christian is very wise about the use of time.

Fill up your life with God and His business. Have a single eye for the things of God (Mt. 6:22). This means to have only one Master, which is Christ (Mt. 6:24). It means to seek "first" the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Mt. 6:33).

Put away vain activities so you will have time for more important things (e.g., inordinate time spent on social media, video games, novels, inordinate amount of time spent on unprofitable talk - Pr. 14:23, sports). Even wholesome things must be weighed in the balance of God's perfect will, so that my time is spent in the most profitable way possible.

I think of a preacher who grew up near Kruger Wildlife Reserve in South Africa. He absolutely loves the park. It is a wholesome place to visit, and it is God's amazing creation. But he told me that he has to be careful so that he doesn't spend too much time there and thus neglect the ministry. This is a wise Christian.

Develop an appetite for the spiritual, for truth and righteousness. It is like weaning away from junk food. If I have a keen appetite for junk food, I won't have an appetite for wholesome food, and the only way to get a new appetite is to leave off the junk.

The same is true in the spiritual life. If I love fiction, I won't love good doctrinal books. If I love to rush onto the Internet first thing in the day and allow my mind to be captivated by vanity, I won't love to study the Word of God and meditate on it effectively.

Seek the Lord more passionately. The Christian life is a personal, intimate relationship with God. It is Christ in me (Col. 1:27). The believer is part of Christ's bride and of His very body (Eph. 5:25-30).

Learn of Him (Mt. 11:28-30). Delight in Him (Psa. 37:4). Seek Him (Pr. 8:17; Jer. 29:13). Abide in Him (Jo. 15:5). Love Him (De. 6:4-5).

Become a more fruitful Bible student. Delight in it and meditate in it day and night (Psa. 1:2). Measure everything by it (1 Th. 5:21). Cast down every wrong imagination (2 Co. 10:5).

We suggest the [\*Effectual Bible Student\*](#), a 12 hour course on Bible study and Bible interpretation which is available for free from [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).

Carve out enough time in your daily schedule to become a serious Bible student. It is guaranteed to be a life-changing thing. Obtain and use the Bible study tools that

we recommend in the [\*Effectual Bible Student\*](#). Take a serious survey of the Bible, then proceed on to studying other Bible courses to steadily increase your knowledge of Scripture.

Become a more effectual prayer warrior. Nothing is more important in the Christian life than the Bible and prayer. Our course on prayer entitled [\*An Effectual Prayer Life\*](#) is scheduled for publication in August 2017.

Become a more effectual ambassador for Christ. Keep good gospel tracts with you and distribute them as you meet people and use that as a way to try to strike up a conversation about Christ. Keep a contact prayer list and pray for your contacts by name. Follow up on your contacts with phone calls and texts. Participate faithfully and heartily in any organized evangelism program in the church.

If you are a married man, seek and study to be a more effectual husband and father. Study this business and put into practice the things you learn.

If you are a married woman, seek and study to be a more effectual wife and mother.

Pursue holiness more diligently.

Pursue God's will more diligently.

Pursue separation from the world more diligently.

We have published dozens of books and video materials to help God's people in these pursuits, such as the following:

[\*Advanced Bible Studies Series\*](#) (the equivalent of a Bible Institute education)

[\*Believer's Bible Dictionary\*](#)

[\*Biblical Separation\*](#)

[\*The Discipling Church\*](#)

[\*The Effectual Bible Student\*](#)

[\*Holiness: Pitfalls, Struggles, Victory\*](#)

[\*Keeping the Kids: A Family Discipling Course\*](#)

[\*The Mobile Phone and the Christian Home and Church\*](#)

[\*One-Year Discipleship Course\*](#)

[\*Sowing and Reaping: A Course in Evangelism\*](#)

[\*Things Hard to Be Understood: A Handbook of Biblical Difficulties\*](#)

[\*Unshakeable Faith: A Christian Apologetics Course\*](#)  
[\*Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible & Christianity\*](#)

If you are passionately, 100% pursuing Christian growth and spiritual revival, you will have wisdom to make good decisions about church matters. You will have power in prayer to see God change things. You will have a godly spirit rather than a critical spirit. You will bear fruit before the Lord regardless of the condition of the church.

### **IN SOME CASES A NEW CHURCH CAN BE ESTABLISHED**

This is not a simple or easy matter. It is a difficult and dangerous situation not to be in a proper church.

It is dangerous spiritually because God has ordained that Christians be under the authority of duly constituted church leaders (Hebrews 13:7). They are to watch for our souls (Hebrews 13:17). They are to instruct us and protect us from error (Ephesians 4:11-14). They are to have the oversight over us (1 Peter 5:2).

It is not enough to say that Jesus Christ has the rule over my life. The Lord has ordained that God-called men have the rule over me under God. If God has not called me to be a church leader, then I am to be in submission to church leaders. There is no alternative in the will of God, except in certain abnormal situations in which there is no sound church and no possibility of starting one.

A New Testament church is not merely a group of believers meeting together to have a Bible study or to listen to a recorded sermon or an Internet broadcast. These things aren't wrong, assuming the doctrine is sound, but that is not a church. A New Testament church must not only have proper doctrine, but also proper leadership, proper ordinances, and proper organization. The epistles to Timothy and Titus were Paul's instructions on how to form New Testament churches. (See 1 Timothy 3:15; Titus 1:5.) Titus was ministering on the island of Crete and some had been saved. Naturally, these would have been meeting together for fellowship and teaching, but that was not enough. Titus was instructed to "set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city" (Titus 1:5). Some things

were lacking, and those things had to do with duly qualified and ordained leadership and the proper organization of the assembly.

Not just anybody can start a church. Not just anybody can lead a church. It is probably the most difficult job in this world. First of all, this work is the work of a man. Second, it is the work of a God-called man. Third, it is the work of a biblically trained man (Titus 1:9). Fourth, it is the work of a qualified man according to God's standards (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1). Fifth, it is the work of a duly ordained man (Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23).

As we have seen, the normal scriptural pattern for church planting is for churches to start churches. That is the pattern that we see in Acts 13-14. The Holy Spirit called two men in the church at Antioch; the church ordained them; and they went out and started new churches in many places. This is the pattern for the entire church age.

If you don't have such a man or men to lead a new church, you can only wait and pray earnestly that such will come to your community. I have no doubt that God has oftentimes sent men in answer to the prayers of godly saints who were discouraged with the existing churches and were beseeching the Lord for a biblically and spiritually strong church. I personally know of such cases.

### **CONCLUSION**

I can't emphasize enough the place of fervent, effectual prayer in this matter. If I were in a situation where there was no strong church within commuting distance and I could not move, I would attend the best church available and I would make the matter a matter of truly earnest, focused prayer. I would pray together with my wife. I would meet with any other concerned parties and pray about the matter. I would seek prayer partners who would pray with me about this, as Paul often did for situations in his life (e.g., 2 Th. 3:1). I would show fervency in the matter (Jas. 5:16). I would fast and pray one day a week (Mt. 17:21). I would plead with the Lord on the basis of His Word, arguing before Him that He is the One who established the church and He is the one who shows us its importance in Scripture and that my community desperately needs a strong church where souls can be saved and lives changed and marriages built and youth disciplined. I would persist in this business until the Lord answered (Mt. 7:7).

Having acknowledged and even emphasized that there are no perfect churches and that one must sometimes endure things that one considers to be wrong, let me give a warning about staying in a compromised church, and that warning has to do with your family. If you have children and you stay in a compromised, worldly church, you will very likely lose your children either to a worldly form of Christianity (“rock and roll Christianity,” as I call it) or entirely to the world, meaning the children will reject Christianity entirely.

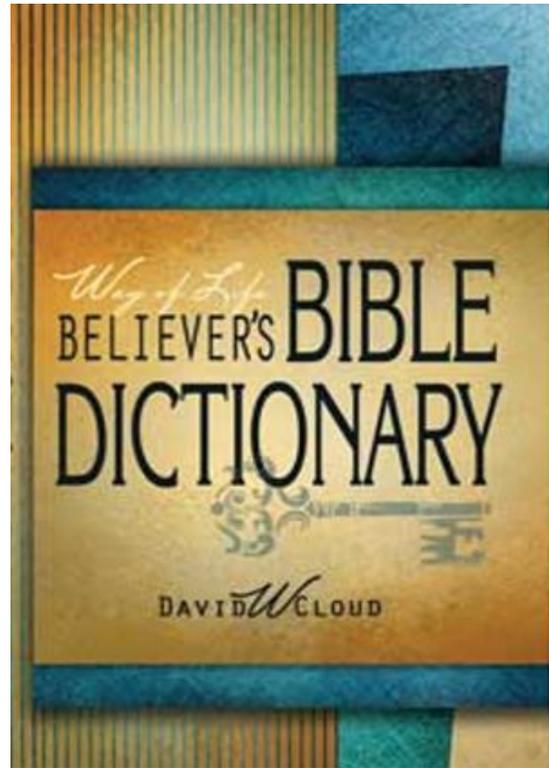
The bottom line is this: The church is the body of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27) and the members must be added by the Holy Spirit. You must earnestly pray that God will add you to the church of His choosing, and then be faithful to that church and serve Jesus Christ through it. Put your eyes on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church, not upon sinful, frail, imperfect men. Seek to be the most fervent, fruitful Christian you can be.

Ultimately, the individual believer must make these hard decisions with the Lord’s guidance.

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

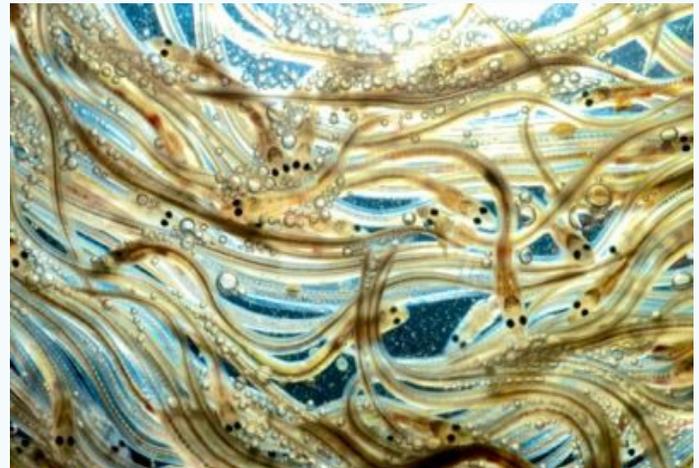
## Bible Believers Dictionary

by David W. Cloud



Available From Way of Life [Online Store](#)

**THE EEL** (Friday Church News Notes, April 7, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - “The prevailing scientific opinion is that all American and European eels lay their eggs under a mass of seaweed 1,500 feet deep in the Sargasso Sea. The pinhead-size eggs hatch to release transparent, ribbonlike creatures with no eyes or mouths. Billions of these tiny, blind creatures are programmed to travel 1,000 to 3,000 miles across the ocean. They get into the Gulf Stream and are carried toward Europe or America. Traveling farther north, they gradually lose their transparency and their eyes and mouths appear. The eels that are not eaten slowly develop hearts and stomachs. Next they swim up rivers and eat everything in sight, dead or alive. They gradually turn yellow and grow up to three feet long. For the first five to eight years, eels are sexless, after which they develop both male and female organs. Once mature, their noses become pointy, they start back downstream, and their skin turns silvery. Apparently they never eat again,



because no silver eel has ever been found with food in its stomach. The eels swim thousands of miles to their birthplace in the Sargosso Sea. At this time the eel either becomes a male or a female as one of its sex organs shrivels up. Once they reproduce, the eels die” (*A Closer Look at the Evidence*, Creation Moments, December 9).

## DIGGING IN THE WALLS

*God commanded the prophet Ezekiel to dig in the walls of Israel's temple and observe the evils being done in secret by apostate religious leaders of that day. "Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall ... And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. So I went in and saw. ..." (Ezek. 8:7-10).*

*Ezekiel was then instructed to preach against the errors of the leaders and to tell the people the things he had witnessed.*

*"Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man. ... Then I spake unto them of the captivity all the things that the Lord had shewed me" (Ezek. 11:4,25).*

*The hour in which we live is very similar to that of Ezekiel's day. Many of those who profess to be the people of God are apostate. It was prophesied in the New Testament Scriptures that such would be the case in the closing hours of our age. This will culminate in the brief worldwide rule of an utterly apostate Harlot "church" (2 Tim. 3-4; 1 Tim. 4; 2 Pet. 2-3; Jude; Rev. 17).*

*As in Ezekiel's day much of the apostasy of our hour is hidden from the view of the average Christian. We intend by God's grace to "dig in the walls" of modern ecumenism and to expose and cry out against the things we find. In this section we also report on secular events which are relevant to Christians. May God give us ears to hear, minds to understand, and hearts to obey. Is the truth of God not worthy of defense?*



### JIMMY CARTER SAYS UNBELIEVERS AND SKEPTICS MIGHT BE IN HEAVEN

(Friday Church News Notes, April 28, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, a Baptist Sunday School teacher, said recently that he doesn't know whether or not Hindu leader Mahatma Gandhi is in hell because of his rejection of Jesus as only Lord and Saviour. When asked by journalist Nicholas Kristof whether he believed that men like Gandhi go to hell because they don't have a personal relationship with Jesus, Carter replied, "I do not feel qualified to make a judgment. I am inclined to give him (or others) the benefit of any doubt" ("President Carter, Am I a Christian?" *The New York Times*, April 15, 2017). Kristof further asked Carter if skeptics who doubt Christ's virgin birth and resurrection are Christians, to which Carter replied, "I do not judge whether someone else is a Christian. Jesus said, 'Judge not.'" Jimmy Carter is a long-time Sunday School teacher at Maranatha Baptist Church in Plains, Georgia, but he is not a Bible believer. The judgment as to who is saved or lost, who goes to heaven or hell, is not Jimmy Carter's or any other man's to make. God has already made that judgment and stated it in the Holy Scriptures in words too plain to be misunderstood. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that

hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:11-12). In the interview, Carter grossly misused Matthew 7:1 ("Judge not that ye be not judged"). In the context, Christ warned of hypocritical judgment in particular, not of judgment in general. In the same passage, Christ taught His people to beware of false prophets, which requires a keen exercise of judgment in the sense of proving all things by God's Word. Carter also said in the interview that he doesn't believe in a six-day creation.

### RISKS TO CIVILIZATION

(Friday Church News Notes, April 28, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) -

A couple of years ago, the University of Oxford published "the 12 most likely ways human civilization could end." These are extreme climate change, nuclear war, global pandemic, ecological collapse, global system collapse, major asteroid impact, a super volcano, synthetic biology (an engineered pathogen), artificial intelligence (rogue robots), unknown consequences (a combination of risks producing an unexpected result), and bad global governance. Thankfully, we don't have to guess about the future of the human race or depend on scientific guessing. One of the manifold ways that the Bible proves itself as God's infallible Word is its amazing prophecies. Many of these foretold Jesus' entire earthly life, including His birth in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), His rejection by the Jewish nation (Isaiah 53:3), His unjust trial (Isaiah 53:8), His crucifixion by the piercing of His hands and feet (Psalm 22:16), the soldiers gambling for His garments (Psalm 22:18), the mocking crowd (Psalm 22:13), His bones not broken (Psalm 22:17), and His tomb donated by a rich man (Isaiah 53:9). These prophecies were written down between 1000 BC (Psalms) and 700 BC (Isaiah), and the copies of the Hebrew Scriptures discovered in the Dead Sea caves in the 1950s and dating to 100-200 BC prove that the prophecies predated Jesus' birth. Bible prophecy does not end with the earthly life of Jesus. It tells us that there

will be a time of tribulation that will exceed all of the troubles this world has experienced thus far, followed by the return of Jesus Christ to judge man's rebellion and establish His eternal kingdom. The final two chapters of the Bible describe the eternal city of God called the New Jerusalem, which will be the home of the blood-washed saints of all ages.

**A WARNING ABOUT PETER RUCKMAN** (Friday Church News Notes, April 28, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - There are independent Baptist churches that are a great blessing to this dark world, but some are cultic. And one of those is Bible Baptist Church of Pensacola, Florida, founded by the late Peter Ruckman. This twice-divorced, thrice-married pastor exalted the King James Bible as "advanced revelation" superior to the Greek and Hebrew from which it was translated. He claimed that God shut the door of revelation in 1611 (*The Monarch of Books*, p. 9). In the books *The Salient Verses* and *The Unknown Bible*, Ruckman claimed to have discovered hundreds of advanced revelations in the Bible that no other man has found. He stated on page 347 of *The Unknown Bible*, "Do you realize that in these last two chapters, you have learned a dozen things that were unknown to the greatest Bible teachers in the world?" These new teachings include the idea that angels are 33-year-old males, that all believing women will receive 33-year-old male bodies at the Rapture, that when the believer is born again his soul is literally cut loose from the inside of his fleshly



body, that demons are winged creatures ranging in size from that of flies to eagles, and that the soul is an invisible bodily shape. In his tract *Millions Disappear: Fact or Fiction?* Ruckman claimed that men are saved in different ways in different ages, by faith plus works in the Old Testament and in the Tribulation and by works alone in the Millennium. In his book *Black Is Beautiful*, Ruckman described his belief in space aliens. He suggested that some of the medieval plagues were caused by UFOs, that a B-52 bomber was downed by a UFO and that aliens disemboweled the crew members, that a crew member of a US Navy ship was transported into the future, that the CIA operates underground alien breeding facilities (p. 256), that there are web footed aliens, blue aliens with blue blood (pp. 85, 86), black aliens with green blood (p. 244), grey aliens with clear blood (pp. 310-11), and that Adam originally had water in his veins instead of blood (p. 185).

**ECUMENISTS AND NEW EVANGELICALS ARE CONFUSED ABOUT THE DIRECTION OF LOVE** (Friday Church News Notes, April 28, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - The ecumenically-minded crowd, which is (often unwittingly) building the one-world church, does not understand biblical love. *They are confused about the definition of love* (e.g., its intimate association with knowledge and judgment and obedience, Phil. 1:9-10; 1 John 5:3). *They are also confused about the direction of love*. The first direction of love must be toward God. "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Mat. 22:37-38). I must love God enough to take a stand for His Word, to fear God more than I fear man. We agree with Charles Haddon Spurgeon when he said: "On all hands we hear cries for unity in this, and unity in that; but to our mind the main need of this age is not compromise, but conscientiousness.

'First pure, then peaceable.' It is easy to cry 'a confederacy,' but that union which is not based upon the truth of God is rather a conspiracy than a communion. Charity by all means; but honesty also. Love, of course, but love to God as well as love to men, and love of truth as well as love of union. It is exceedingly difficult in these times to preserve one's fidelity before God and one's fraternity among men. Should not the former be preferred to the latter if both cannot be maintained? We think so" (Spurgeon, "The Down Grade - Second Article," *The Sword and the Trowel*, April 1887, Notes, p. 16). The second direction of love must be toward those who are in spiritual danger. The Lord Jesus instructed Peter to "feed my sheep" John 21:16-17. I need to love the Lord's sheep more than I love wolves.



**CORN AND GOD** (Friday Church News Notes, April 7, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - In a simple kernel of corn we can see the wisdom and power and goodness of God toward man. One corn kernel typically produces a stalk bearing two cobs, each with 400 to 600 kernels per cob. Thus, it multiplies itself 1,000 fold and more in one generation. If you replant the 1,000 seeds from one corn stalk and each grows to maturity--each stalk bearing two cobs with an average of 500 kernels per cob (2,000 x 500)--you get one million kernels of corn. That's just the second generation. And if you plant those one million kernels and each stalk grows to maturity, you get a billion corn seeds in just three generations! This is an example of the blessing with which God has filled the world for man's benefit. Corn is self-

pollinating, in that each stalk has both male and female flowers. The females are the ears that send out strands of silk that grow out of the top of the ear. (The flower is composed of the kernel, which is the ovule, and the silk, which is the stigma.) Each kernel of corn is individually pollinated by a strand of silk, which is covered with fine, sticky hairs that catch the pollen. The male flowers on the tassels release their pollen into the air. The pollen is held in anthers which contain large numbers of pollen grains, and when released the grains usually settle within 20 to 50 feet of the stalk. Thus it is advised to plant corn in blocks rather than in long rows. Each tassel contains from 2 to 5 million pollen grains, which translates to 2,000 to 5,000 pollen grains for each silk of the ear shoot. The emergence of the silk and the release of the pollen must be precisely timed. The pollen shed usually begins two or three days prior to silk emergence and continues for five to eight days, and it is shed in late morning after the dew has dried off the tassels (Ohio State University Agronomy Facts). The pollen shed is intelligent, responding to climatic conditions, stopping when the tassel is too wet or too dry and beginning again when temperature conditions are favorable. By this means the pollen is rarely washed off the silk by rain since it doesn't release during wet conditions. When the pollen comes into contact with the silk, it starts the growth of a pollen tube down the length of the silk and enters the female flower in 12 to 28 hours.

**MORE SOUTHERN GOSPEL WORLDLINESS** (Friday Church News Notes, May 5, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - Jimmy Fortune of the famous Southern Gospel group The Statler Brothers has issued a new album of worldly hits by anti-Christ secular rockers, including the Beatles, the Eagles, John Denver, Simon & Garfunkel, and the Righteous Brothers (who were anything but righteous). A friend well commented, "Southern gospel again shows its love for rock & roll and worldly music with this CD. They don't



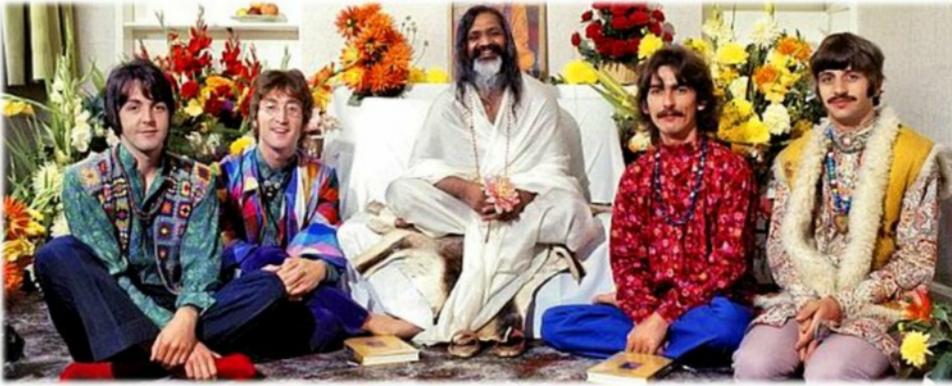
try to hide their love for worldly, vile rock & roll. As a matter of fact, they revel in it." The album, *Jimmy Fortune Sings the Classics*, is a Gaither Music Group project and is published by Gaither Records. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:15-17).

**LIKE MANY INDEPENDENT BAPTISTS, PROMINENT CCM ARTIST CHARACTERIZES BIBLICAL REPROVERS AS "HATERS"** (Friday Church News Notes, May 5, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - Darlene Zschech, one of the most influential CCM artists, calls biblical reprovers "haters," which is the position taken today by many Independent Baptists. In a recent interview, Zschech was asked about her appearance with the Pope at the 2015 Vatican conference on the Renewal of the Holy Spirit, to which



she replied, "I caught so much flak for going and doing that. ... I don't go into these places to talk about people's theology. I go wherever I'm invited to exalt Christ and to lift up His name. What I've found all over the world is that every time you do that, yes, there are going to be haters, and you're going to get people who don't understand, but I have a commissioning and a very refined purpose in my heart that knows that Jesus works anywhere that He is announced" (Interview with Darlene Zschech by Doug Doppler, Mar. 25, 2017, [www.worshipmusician.com](http://www.worshipmusician.com)). To this CCM artist, it is "hate" to reprove sin and error. If a Bible believer reproves her for being a pastor or for charismatic heresies or for being conformed to the world or for yoking together with false gospelers, all of which are clearly forbidden in Scripture, they are "haters" in her book. This is precisely the thinking of large numbers of Independent Baptists, and the problem can be laid directly at the feet of the pastors. It is frightful that massive numbers of Baptist pastors do not properly educate and warn their people. Recently I was informed of a wife of a Sunday School teacher in an Independent Baptist church who loves *The Shack* and recommends it to others in the church. When a concerned member confronted the teacher about the false god and gross heresies presented in the book, he laughed it off, saying it is no big deal and it's not his business what his wife reads. The "pastor" of this church typically avoids such controversies in his preaching and personal ministry. Jeremiah tells us that this is not a new problem. "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings" (Jeremiah 23:21-22).

**THE BEATLES AND HINDUISM** (Friday Church News Notes, May 5, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) -



Countless contemporary Christian musicians (e.g., Matt Redman, Leslie Phillips, Phil Keaggy, DC Talk, Caedmon's Call, Derek Johnson, John Ellis, Russ Breimeier, Randy Stonehill, Jars of Clay, Michael W. Smith, MercyMe, Josh Wilson, Third Day, Matt Maher) have praised the Beatles, but they have been at the forefront of promoting pagan darkness since the 1960s. In 2009, the two surviving Beatles headlined a benefit concert to promote Transcendental Meditation (TM) among children. The concert benefited the David Lynch Foundation, which is dedicated to "consciousness-based education and world peace." The objective is to raise funds to teach one million children to meditate. Joining Ringo Starr and Paul McCartney were Sheryl Crow, Donovan, Eddie Vedder of Pearl Jam, and others. Though some try to deny it, TM is a Hindu practice and is based on the concept that the universe is God and man can recognize his alleged unity with "God" through mysticism. The TM practitioner uses a mantra to put himself into an altered state of consciousness. On the David Lynch Foundation's website a little girl describes her experience with TM as "quiet and comfortable and I feel connected to everything and everyone." The practice of TM was brought to America by the Hindu guru Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and popularized by the Beatles when they visited his lectures in Wales in 1967 and his ashram in India in 1968. George Harrison joined the Hare Krishnas and died in the Hindu faith. Maharishi developed TM from the Hindu Vedas. He called TM "a path to

God" and "the spontaneous flow of knowledge." The Beatles have done more to further the devil's program in these last days than any other music group. It is unconscionable for a Christian to pay homage to these people and to their demonically-inspired music, thereby encouraging Christian young people to think that rock & roll is innocent fun, yet this is exactly what large numbers of contemporary Christian musicians do. The Beatles continue to exercise a vast influence, and young people need to be warned to stay away from them and from the world of licentious rock and roll & pagan New Age philosophy that the Beatles promoted. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 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 Cor. 6:14-17).

**TEXAS LAWMAKER TEARFULLY IMPLORES GOD FOR FORGIVENESS OF AMERICA'S MANIFOLD SINS** (Friday Church News Notes, May 5, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) -

The following is excerpted from "Texas Lawmaker," ChristianNews.net, Apr. 29, 2017: "Rep. Randy Weber delivered a prayer at Wednesday's 'Washington—A Man of Prayer' event, which was organized to honor the life of America's first president, George Washington. It commemorates the events of April 30, 1789, when, after being sworn in at Federal Hall, President Washington, accompanied by Congress, proceeded to St. Paul's Chapel where, as one of his first official acts, the president offered a prayer of dedication to God on America's behalf, the event website outlines. ... During the 'Man of Prayer' event, as Weber took the podium, he asked—like Christ taught His disciples to pray in Matthew 6:9-13—that the Lord's will would be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. 'Lord, Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on Earth here in the halls of Congress. In our nation's capital, Lord, may Your will be done.' Weber then proceeded to outline the ways that God's will is not being carried out in the United States. 'You say in Your word [that] the man who meditates on Your word is like a mighty oak tree. Blessed is he who meditates on it daily,' he outlined, referring to Psalms 1. 'But Lord, we have endeavored to kick Your word out of public schools. We have endeavored to take the Bible out of classrooms, the Ten Commandments off the walls. Father, we think we're so smart. We've replaced Your word and Your precepts with drug-sniffing dogs, with metal detectors, with uniformed police officers in our schools. Father, we've trampled on Your holy institution of holy matrimony and tried to re-write what it is, and we've



called it an alternate lifestyle. Father, please, please forgive us,' Weber prayed, becoming tearful, his voice breaking. 'Lord, we have gone to killing the most innocent among us. Your servant Moses warned in Deuteronomy 30:19 for us to choose life so that we and all our descendants might live. [B]ut Father, we're killing our descendants and we're calling it a choice. O God in Heaven, forgive us, please. Lord, forgive our sins. Father, help us to get back on Your precepts, on Your path, to a true understanding of Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, Lord, let that please be us. Don't remove Your hand of protection from us, Father, please. Lord, forgive us our manifold sins. In Your great mercy, bring us back to You.'"

**HILLSONG BOLDLY PROMOTES UNITY WITH ROME** (Friday Church News Notes, May 12, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbs@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbs@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - Hillsong publishes the most influential contemporary Christian music today, and Hillsong is also at the forefront of building a "one world church" through ecumenical unity. Recently the senior pastor of Hillsong Phoenix made the following statement via video: "I'm Dr. Terry Crist, the senior pastor of City of Grace [Hillsong Phoenix], and the Chair for the [Arizona] Governor's Council of Faith and Community Partnership. And I want to congratulate Dr. Gary Kinnaman, Joe Tuscany, [Catholic] Bishop [Thomas] Olmsted, and [Catholic] Bishop [Eduardo] Nevares for their extraordinary work in bringing together Catholics and evangelicals. Something powerful happens when we rally around the person of Jesus. Our church is a member of a global family of churches called Hillsong. Our primary church is located in Sydney, Australia ... And it's been beautiful to see over the last few years how that Catholics around the world have lifted the songs of our church and have begun singing them universally. Songs like 'Shout to the Lord,' 'Mighty to Save.' ... So many times we focus on what divides us

instead of the Man who unites us. Jesus is that God-man who calls us all to Himself, and when we respond to that something transcendent happens, something that unites us, so much deeper than just mere agreement. And out of that unity comes a shared mission" ([https://videos.files.wordpress.com/gplP36St/roman-catholic-hillsong\\_dvd.mp4](https://videos.files.wordpress.com/gplP36St/roman-catholic-hillsong_dvd.mp4)). Only an apostate would say that Jesus is pleased with unity of a mixed multitude Christianity composed of those who hold different doctrines and even different gospels. The Scripture boldly warns about the danger of false gospels, false christs, and false spirits (2 Corinthians 11:1-15). This again affirms the warning that using contemporary worship music builds dangerous bridges to the "broader church" or the "one-world church." This is plainly forbidden by Scripture (e.g., Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 15:33; 2 Timothy 3:5). It is so very sad that so many Baptist pastors are ill informed on this issue and even sadder that they are not willing to become properly educated. Instead they are busy justifying their compromise and denigrating and blacklisting the few remaining voices of warning. These are not wise and good shepherds of God's flocks. Please join me in praying daily and fervently for pastors to be raised up who are called of God, qualified, passionate for Christ and truth, men of scriptural vision, prayer warriors, men who will lead the churches in serious discipleship rather than entertainment, who will lead churches to be strong in God's Word, strong in prayer, wise and careful in evangelism, men who will seek to build strong homes



that can effectually discipline the children and disciple the youth.

**MARIJUANA GOES MAIN STREET** (Friday Church News Notes, May 12, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbs@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbs@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - "Marijuana Goes Main Street," a *Time* magazine special edition report first published in 2015 and updated for 2017, deals with the status of legal marijuana in America. Like the legalization of "same-sex marriage," the legalization of marijuana is a reflection of a dramatic change in the moral and spiritual condition of the nation. The facts are amazing and (for a marijuana critic) shocking. Since 2012, ten states have legalized recreational marijuana and others have decriminalized the possession of small amounts of marijuana. (Canada is expected to legalize marijuana in 2017.) The sale of marijuana in the U.S. reached nearly \$7 billion in 2016 and is expected to grow to \$20 billion within five years. Venture capitalists are funding new companies, and the industry is expected to create new billionaires. Not surprisingly, the *Time* magazine report is written from a strong pro-marijuana bias. Critics are belittled. Skipped over lightly are proven dangers such as addiction, psychosis, marijuana as a gate-way drug, long-term, even permanent, effects on learning, cognition, and personality, bronchitis and respiratory infections, and "amotivational syndrome" (lethargy and loss of interest in achievement). We are convinced that the legalization of recreational marijuana is a foolish experiment that will have serious repercussions. The fact that marijuana use in modern culture can be traced to the lascivious world of jazz, blues, and rock & roll is warning enough for those who have ears to hear. I know this all too well, having been a drug user before I was saved, beginning with my time in Vietnam in the Army in 1970-71. After I was discharged, I was immersed in the hippy drug culture, joining many of my generation on the Beatles' very stupid Magical Mystery Tour. Alcohol is a powerful drug, but marijuana changed my

thinking more than alcohol. It is a psychoactive drug with hallucinogenic properties. It is not an innocent play thing. It can mess with the depths of a man's soul. Not everyone has bad experiences with the drug, but a lot do. It affects people differently, but depression, intense anxiety, and paranoia are common side effects, and acute psychosis is not infrequent. It was definitely a "gateway" drug for me and for a lot of my friends. In 2013, the American Medical Association recommended *against* legalization, warning that "cannabis is a dangerous drug and as such is a public health concern. ... Heavy cannabis use in adolescence causes persistent impairments in neuro-cognitive performance and IQ, and use is associated with increased rates of anxiety, mood, and psychotic-thought disorders" (cited from Ruth Marcus, "The perils of legalized pot," *The Washington Post*, Jan. 2, 2014). The rush to legalize marijuana is driven by the lascivious pop culture, the entertainment industry, an educational system devoted to moral relativism, a society that celebrates unrestrained self-expression, and the gross lack of wisdom typically reflected in mainstream media reporting. God's command that His people be "sober" is repeated 12 times in the New

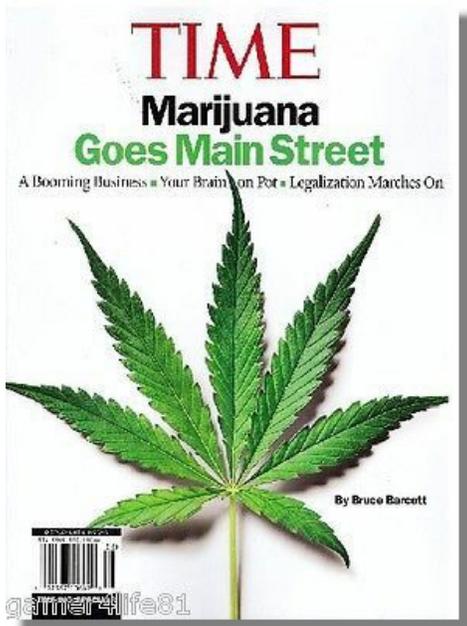
Testament Epistles. It means to be in control of one's mind and spirit so that nothing but God is in charge. "Sober" is the opposite of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs or anything else. One can be drunk on music, fashion, video games, professional sports, or anything that has captured the heart. "Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Thessalonians 5:6). "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer" (1 Peter 4:7). "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). The speed with which so many fundamental Baptist churches are spiraling toward a contemporary stance, I predict that it won't be long before some accept the use of alcohol and marijuana.

**NORTH KOREA THREATENS ISRAEL WITH "MERCILESS, THOUSAND-FOLD PUNISHMENT"** (Friday Church News Notes, May 12, 2017, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - After Israel's Defense Minister recently called North Korean leader Kim Jong-un a madman, North Korea's response proved him right. In an interview with the Hebrew news site *Walla*, Defense Minister Avigdor Liberman not only called Kim a madman but also said that North Korea, Iran and Syria are an "insane and radical" gang. North Korea responded that Israel is a "disturber of peace in the Middle East, occupier of the Arab territories and culprit of crimes against humanity" and threatened Israel with "merciless, thousand-fold punishment" ("North Korea Threatens Israel," *The Jerusalem Post*, Apr. 29, 2017). Since the 1970s, the North Koreans have been supplying arms to Israel-hating Muslim nations in the Middle East. It supplied MIG-21 pilots to Egypt during the 1973 Yom Kippur War. It was North Korea who built the plutonium nuclear reactor in Syria that was destroyed by Israeli bombers in September 2007 in Operation Orchard.



At least 10 North Korean workers were killed in the strike. North Korea is also supplying Iran with military technology, including miniature submarines and missiles. North Korea has supplied arms to the PLO and Hezbollah and supported a Palestinian state. We would advise Kim Jong-un not to mess with Abraham's seed Israel because God has said, "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:3).

**ISRAEL'S DAVIDKA MORTAR** (Friday Church News Notes, May 12, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - In May of 1948, the fledgling nation of Israel was overwhelmingly outnumbered and short of everything necessary to win a modern war. At the beginning of the conflict which followed the United Nations Partition announcement of February 1947, only one soldier in three had a rifle of any type. The Haganah, which was organized into the Israel Defense Force (IDF) and put under control of the new nation, had begun making weapons and bullets in secret facilities long before the start of the war. One of the homemade weapons used at the beginning of the war was a mortar called the *Davidka* ("little David"). Though notoriously inaccurate, it was extremely loud and thus served to terrify Israel's enemies. It whistled and shrieked in flight and exploded with a truly thunderous noise. Designed at the Mikveh Israel agriculture school near Tel Aviv by David Leibovitch, about 15 of the weapons were manufactured. The *Davidka* was instrumental in liberating





Safed in May 9-10, 1948, when the Arabs, superior to the Jewish forces in numbers and arms and fortified in strong defenses, abandoned the town, believing that they were being attacked by an atomic bomb. They knew that Jews had helped build America's nuclear bomb, and a rumor spread through the Arab population that Israel had built a small edition of it. Davidka mortars are on exhibit at the Israel Defense Forces History Museum (Batei HaOsef), the Givati Division House Museum (Beit Hativat Givati), near the Town Hall at Safed, and at the Davidka Square (Kikar HaHerut or Freedom Square) in Jerusalem.

**SOLOGAMY: SELF-MARRIAGE** (Friday Church News Notes, May 19, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) -

Sologamy or self-marriage, the most extreme example of self-love in an age of self-love, has been growing over the past few years. Sologamy began about 15 years ago in California and has spread across America and to other nations. The practice, which so far has no legal recognition, can be strictly private or it can feature a full-blown wedding ceremony. One of the major promoters of sologamy is Sasha Cagen, a self-



esteem life coach and author of *Quirkyalone: A Manifesto for Uncompromising Romantics* (2004). The website IMarriedMe.com features self-wedding planning kits, including self-wedding rings that are worn "to remind you every day to love yourself." A Canadian company, Marry Yourself Vancouver, offers consulting and photography. Sologamist Erika Anderson, who wore a white wedding gown when she married herself before family and friends, was interviewed recently by WUSA9 of Washington D.C. She said, "I would describe it as women saying yes to themselves. It means that we are enough, even if we are not partnered with someone else" ("People are marrying themselves," WUSA9, May 12, 2017). Sologamy is not limited to feminists. In 2007, Liu Ye married himself in a traditional Chinese wedding ceremony in Guanzhou attended by 100 guests. His "bride" was a cutout photo of himself wearing a red bridal gown ("Chinese Man Marries Himself," *Digital Journal*, Jan. 29, 2007). The media reported that "a psychologist described the groom/bride as abnormal." Indeed. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves..." (2 Timothy 3:1-2).

**TEACHER GETS JOB BACK AFTER BEING FIRED FOR GIVING AWAY A BIBLE** (Friday Church News Notes, May 19, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from Todd Starnes, "Teacher fired for giving student a Bible gets job back," *Fox News Opinion*, May 12, 2017: "It was way back in 2014 when I first introduced you to Walt Tutka, of Phillipsburg, New Jersey and a member of Gideon's International. ... Mr. Tutka also happened to be a substitute teacher in Phillipsburg, New Jersey. But he was fired from that job after he gave a student a Bible. The student happened to be the last person entering through a door. Mr. Tutka told the youngster, 'The first shall

be last, but the last shall be first.' The student later inquired on several occasions about the origins of the quote. Tutka showed the student the verse in his Bible, which led to the student asking for a personal copy of the Bible. And being a good Gideon, Mr. Tutka gladly supplied the child with a copy. It did not seem to matter to the school district that the student had asked for a copy of the Good Book. First Liberty Institute took on Mr. Tutka's case--and eventually scored a victory with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. They agreed that the school district had discriminated against Mr. Tutka on the 'basis of religion and retaliation.' And on the eve of First Liberty's deadline to file a federal lawsuit, the school district agreed to a settlement. That means Mr. Tutka can once again become a substitute teacher--effective today."

**CHINA'S NEW SILK ROAD** (Friday Church News Notes, May 19, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org) [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - Since 2013, China has been pushing a New Silk Road project that will increase its trade with the Middle East, Europe, and elsewhere. The plan spans 65 countries across four continents and features billions of dollars in layout for new infrastructure, including shipping ports and railroads. It is being called a new "golden age" of globalisation, but it is more like a ramping up of the global economy that has been building since the turn of the 20th century. Early this week, Chinese president Xi Jinping led a two-day "Belt and Road" summit attended by 29 heads of state, including Russia's Vladimir Putin and Turkey's Recep Erdogan. Xi announced that China is pledging \$125 billion for new infrastructure. He called for "openness" and friendly trade, but communist China has not been known for either trait, and this reality is not lost on many nations. Of the G7 (USA, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom, and Japan), only Italy attended Xi's summit. "Privately, western diplomats voice concerns about China's true intentions and how much

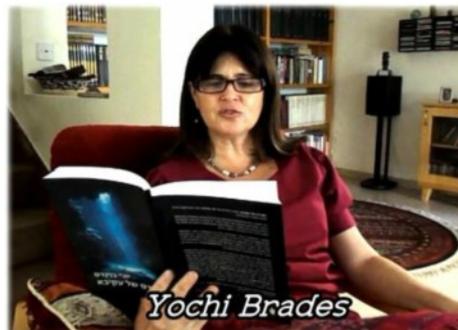


involvement non-Chinese companies will be allowed to have in Belt and Road projects” (“China’s Xi lays out \$900bn Silk Road vision amid claims of empire-building,” *The Guardian*, May 14, 2017). India, too, is strongly opposed to China’s plan, calling it a “colonial enterprise” that will infringe on other countries’ sovereignty. The modern global economy is a sign of the times, prophetically, helping set the stage for a one-world government, one-world culture, and one-world “church.” And it could be part of the preparation for the kings of the east to meet their Waterloo at the battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16:12).

### ATTITUDES TOWARD JESUS CHANGING AMONG INFLUENTIAL JEWS

(Friday Church News Notes, May 19, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - The May 2017 issue of *Israel Today* features a report (“Influential Israelis Speak about Jesus”) describing a change in attitude about Jesus among influential Jews. The article begins with these words, “For nearly 2,000 years, Jews have unwaveringly rejected Jesus, often with deep loathing. But over the last 50 years, since the Six Day War in 1967 and the restoration of Jerusalem to the Jewish people, attitudes toward Jesus are changing dramatically.” Two examples are given. The first is **Yochi Brades**, the daughter of prominent Hassidic Rabbi Yitzhak Rabinovitz, a scholar in her own right trained in ultra-Orthodox schools, and the author of widely used courses on Jewish thought and bestselling novels. She admits that she was taught to call Jesus “Yeshu,” meaning, “May his name

and memory be blotted out,” which reflects the historic position of rabbinic Judaism dating back to the Pharisees of Jesus’ day. But now she says, “I love Yeshua. My study on the 1st century origins of Christianity led me to understand that he is not responsible for the persecutions and anti-Semitism Christians committed in his name against the Jews. Yeshua lived as a Jew and died a Jew. A good Jew. A faithful Jew. A righteous Jew who followed God’s laws.” The other testimony is from **Amnon Rubinstein**, former Dean of the Law Faculty of Tel Aviv University, founder of the Shinui political party, former Minister of Education, and 2006 recipient of the Israel Prize. Rubinstein says, “Yeshua said, ‘Do not think that I have come to abolish the law.’ The historical Yeshua did not take one thing away from Judaism; he only added to Judaism his vision concerning the Kingdom of Heaven. If he would be resurrected in our days, Yeshua would prefer to pray in a small synagogue and not in one of the magnificent cathedrals built in his name.” It is obvious that these individuals haven’t gotten their views of Jesus from the New Testament but from modernistic “Jesus scholars” who have slathered the New Testament as deeply with their own tradition as Jewish rabbis have slathered the Old Testament. It is correct to say that Jesus did not found the Christianity that has become a major world religion and that Jesus is not the author of anti-Semitism. In fact, he warned that false teachers would arise and teach lies in his name. He warned that multitudes of Christians who would profess his name would be false (Matthew 7:21-23). The church that Jesus founded, which is described in the



pages of the New Testament, is a simple assembly of believers with no elaborate ritual or grand cathedrals, and unlike Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants, true churches of Christ have never persecuted anyone, including Jews. But Jesus was not merely a great and righteous Jew. He claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God, and He proved that claim by fulfilling Messianic prophecy and rising from the dead. Jesus was not crucified for being a good Jew and a lover of Mosaic law. He was crucified for claiming to be the Son of God. We would strongly advise Jewish people to study the New Testament for themselves. Read it carefully and prayerfully, seeking the truth from God. “When the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God” (John 10:31-33).

### KEN HAM’S CHRISTIAN ROCK CONCERT

(Friday Church News Notes, May 26, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - Toward the end of April, Ken Ham of Answers in Genesis (AiG) interviewed the CCM group Casting Crowns at his Ark Encounter museum and boldly promoted Christian rock to his supporters (“Casting Crowns at Ark Encounter,” Apr. 27, 2017, YouTube). During the interview, Mr. Ham said he was looking forward to hosting a Christian rock concert at the Ark Encounter featuring Steven Curtis Chapman. Following is a discerning comment on this by former Pentecostal Hughie Seaborn, who, like Ham, is Australian. “It doesn’t surprise me that Ken Ham would cosy up to Casting Crowns rock group. It was good to hear the leader, Mark Hall, actually come out and plainly say in public that ‘We’re rockers. We’re just rockers for Jesus.’ Ken was OK with that. He even chucked



the name of Steven Curtis Chapman in there for good measure, advertising an upcoming rock concert they're going to have at the Ark. The problem is that every young person who Ken Ham influences, and who sees this video on their iPhone (most likely while sitting in a good church whose Pastor is OK with Ham, but who is trying to keep the rock out) will be OK with these 'rockers for Jesus' now, as well. Ken Ham has always been ecumenical and happy to promote himself and his ministry in any apostate and heretical church that will allow him to sell his materials to their members and sign them up as ministry supporters. But just like how the CCM crowd has used their music to tear down walls and build bridges across to any group who claims to believe in Jesus, Ham has used science and the truth of Creation to achieve exactly the same results. There's a Scripture that warns that not only are we to avoid and warn about people who promote outlandish error, but also people who promote truth, if that truth in any way leads us away from our allegiance to the God of the Bible and into serving false gods. It's a very scary warning from God in my way of thinking, because it also tells us that God is carefully watching us and proving us to see which way we might be influenced to turn (Deuteronomy 13:1-5). I first met Ken Ham and his team of scientists back in the late 80s in a Pentecostal Assemblies of God (AOG) church I was attending at that time. They were all very happy there running their Creation conference. ... They used to hold meetings in SDA churches as well. ... I had a quick look at the Casting

Crowns' song 'The Word is Alive' that Mark Hall mentioned, saying that being at the Ark reminded him of the truth of God's Word. Ken Ham then offered that the thing he likes about Casting Crowns' songs is that the words teach biblical truth. I read the words of the song, and I saw the same thing that is repeated in most other CCM songs. It's always about how wonderful we are, but about how hurt, lonely, afraid and victimised we are, and how God's hart just longs to make it all better and lovely so we can feel good and enjoy our lives. Example: 'The Word is alive /And it cuts like a sword through the darkness /With a message of life to the hopeless and afraid /Breathing life into all who believe.' According to this Christian rock song, our problem is not that we are lost sinners whom God commands with a message that we are to repent of our evil ways, but that we are nice people who feel hopeless and afraid, maybe because we got rejected by our latest girlfriend, or someone posted something negative on Facebook about us, or our parents won't let us run the house, or something. But, the song assures us that God will breathe new life into us if we just believe. Believe what? Well, believe that God's word is alive apparently. ... I was talking with a visiting missionary at our church just a couple of weeks ago and he mentioned Ken Ham positively to me in our conversation. When I confessed to him that I have some serious problems with Ken Ham's ministry, his eyes went real wide like I had uttered a profanity or something. Unfortunately, that's the reaction one gets from most professing fundamentalists today."

**KENTUCKY APPEALS COURT SIDES WITH CHRISTIAN PRINT SHOP** (Friday Church News Notes, May 26, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Kentucky appeals court," *World*, May 15, 2017: "The owner of Hands on Originals, a Lexington, Ky., print shop, did not violate a local nondiscrimination ordinance when he refused to create

T-shirts for an annual gay pride festival, the Kentucky Court of Appeals ruled Friday. The 2-1 decision is the second to uphold Blaine Adamson's right to engage in 'viewpoint or message censorship.' A local gay and lesbian advocacy organization asked Adamson to create T-shirts promoting the organization's 2012 Pride Festival. Adamson declined, saying he could not promote that message as a Christian. The organization filed a complaint against Hands on Originals with the Fayette County Human Rights Commission, which ruled in 2014 the company violated a county ordinance prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Adamson appealed, and five months later the Fayette Circuit Court reversed that ruling. But the Human Rights Commission continued to press its case, claiming Adamson's refusal to serve the gay advocacy organization constituted discrimination against a protected class of citizens. 'Today's decision is a victory for printers and other creative professionals who serve all people but cannot promote all messages,' said Jim Campbell, an attorney with Alliance Defending Freedom who represents Adamson. The plaintiffs, Pride Community Services Organization (formerly Gay and Lesbian Services Organization) and the Lexington Human Rights Commission, are considering an appeal to the Kentucky Supreme Court. ... But the court made clear it would not accept as a defense the refusal to accommodate an activity predominantly associated with a specific group of people. In listing examples of discrimination in public accommodation, the court cited *Craig*



*v. Masterpiece Cakeshop*, in which a gay couple sued Denver, Colo., bakery owner Jack Phillips for declining to make a cake for their same-sex wedding celebration. Phillips lost his case at every level but has appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. ‘Holding that a cake-maker’s refusal to sell a wedding cake to a homosexual couple, because the cake-maker knew the cake would be used to celebrate a same-sex marriage and the cake-maker was opposed to such unions, is the equivalent of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation,’ the Kentucky court said.”

**PRESIDENT TRUMP SAYS A DEAL WILL BE REACHED BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS** (Friday Church News Notes, May 26, 2017, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - President Donald Trump, a businessman who prides himself in his mega deal-making ability, thinks he can make the mother of all deals by bringing lasting



peace between Israel and the Palestinians. In an interview with the newspaper *Israel Hayom*, Trump said, “I think that there is a great opportunity to reach a deal [between Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas]. I am working very hard so that finally the Israelis and Palestinians will have peace, and I hope that this can happen quicker than anyone ever imagined. It is a great opportunity

and it is good for everyone. We have the right people working on it, [Ambassador] David Friedman and [Middle East envoy] Jason Greenblatt.” One of the many things that Trump is missing on this issue, and it is a gross oversight, is that the Palestinians don’t want peace. They want the destruction of Israel. They have made this clear ever since Israel began expressing aspirations for a modern state in the early 20th century. Even when Israel has given “land for peace,” as with her unilateral disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005, that land has been used as a staging ground for attacks on Israel and has done absolutely nothing to bring peace. Between 2005 and 2014 alone, more than 12,000 rockets were fired into Israel from the Gaza Strip, killing 47 and wounding more than 1,900. The attacks have been supported by most Palestinians. Those are the people Trump wants to bring to the “negotiating” table.

## Aim of O Timothy Magazine

- Exalting the Lord Jesus Christ; His eternal perfect, and preserved Word; and the Gospel of his Grace. (2 Peter 3:1-2, 18)
- Standing for the whole counsel of God. (Acts 20:27; Jude 3)
- Challenging Christian workers to uphold the truth and resist the apostasy of our times. (1 Timothy 6:20-21)
- Exposing the spirit of error and compromise within Christendom (Hosea 4:6a; 2 Tim. 3)
- Upholding the New Testament Church (1 Tim. 6:13-14). O Timothy is a ministry of Bethel Baptist Church of London, Ontario.
- Challenging churches to fulfill the Great Commission of world evangelism (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 13-14)
- Standing for the Received Text of the Holy Scriptures, the Authorized Version in the English Language, and sound translations of the TR in the languages of the world. (Ps. 12:6-7)



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