

O Timothy

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

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

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“The job the Lord has given His people as ambassadors of Christ is to preach the gospel to every person on earth. The gospel is defined in a nutshell in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. This is the message that must be proclaimed and explained. A sinner does not have to become a theologian to be saved, but he does have to understand and receive the gospel.” Page 4.

Digging in the Walls: A month's worth of news items, republished from Friday Church News Notes. **Page 12.**



THE HISTORY OF HOW EVANGELISM WAS CORRUPTED AMONG INDEPENDENT BAPTISTS ~ By David Cloud

The following is excerpted from [THE DISCIPLING CHURCH: THE CHURCH THAT WILL STAND UNTIL JESUS COMES](#). New for March 2017. This church manual aims to establish churches on a solid biblical foundation of a regenerate church membership, one mind in doctrine and practice, serious discipleship, thorough-going discipline, and a large vision for world evangelism. We examine the New Testament pattern of a discipling church, and we trace the history of Baptist churches over the past 200 years to document the apostasy away from the biblical pattern to a mixed multitude philosophy. We also document the history of “sinner’s prayer” evangelism which has affected the reality of a regenerate church membership. The book deals with biblical salvation with evidence, care in receiving church members, the church’s essential first love for Christ, the right kind of church leaders, the right kind of preaching, training church members to be Bible students, the many facets of church discipline, building strong families, youth ministry, training preachers, charity, reproof, educating the church for spiritual protection, maintaining standards for workers, the church’s prayer life, the church’s separation, spiritual revival, the church’s music, and many other things.



The last chapter documents some of the cultural factors that have weakened churches over the past 100 years, including the theological liberalism, public school system, materialism and working mothers, the rock & roll pop culture, pop psychology, the feminist movement, New Evangelicalism, television, and the Internet. There is also a list of recommended materials for a discipling church. Dr. Don Jasmin, editor of *The*

Fundamentalist Digest, says, “The book [The Discipling Church](#) is well named. It is loaded with Scriptural exposition, Scriptural explanation, and Scriptural edification. This spiritually rich volume covers almost every phase of a genuine Biblically discipling church. Every pastor should procure this spiritually enriching treasury, one which a preacher will readily consult for valuable assistance and counsel in seeking to maintain a Scripturally balanced N. T. ministry.” 550 pages. Available in print and eBook editions.

Independent Baptists Prior to the 1970s

Prior to the 1970s, Independent Baptist churches were spiritually stronger, and one reason was that they were more careful about salvation.

Consider some prominent examples:

J. Frank Norris, 1930s and 1940s - Norris stated plainly that repentance is “turning to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy” and that the “proper evidence” of the new birth “appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.” He warned about those who instructed people to make mere “decisions” for Christ and invited sinners merely to come forward for prayer. Of this kind of preaching, he said it “did not have enough gospel in it to save an ant” (J. Frank Norris, *What Do Fundamental Baptists Believe*, an address delivered at the annual meeting of the American Baptist Association at First Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas, 1935). In the 1940s, Norris preached an entire week on the subject of hell without giving

an invitation. Only after a full week of such preaching did he give an invitation, and more than a hundred and fifty were saved. He believed in plowing the ground of sinner’s hearts with the law of God to prepare the soul for genuine conviction, repentance, and saving faith.

John R. Rice, 1940 - “To repent literally means **to have a change of mind or spirit toward God and toward sin. It means to turn from your sins**, earnestly, with all your heart, and trust in Jesus Christ to save you. You can see, then, how the man who believes in Christ repents and the man who repents believes in Christ. The jailer repented when he turned from sin to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ” (*What Must I Do to Be Saved?* 1940).

Baptist Bible Fellowship International, 1950 - “We believe that Repentance and Faith are solemn obligations, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God; thereby, being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, **we turn to God with unfeigned contrition**, confession and supplication for mercy at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all-sufficient Saviour” (Baptist Bible Fellowship, Articles of Faith, 1950).

Harold Sightler, 1963 - “Recognizing his guilt, there is a **turning from sin**. There is a turning to God. The actual word ‘repentance’ means a turning completely around: a change of course; a change of mind. ... **To think of repentance that does not cause the sinner to turn gladly from his sins is impossible**. ... I know that we have a shallow religious movement in our times that will allow men to profess faith in Christ and at the same time continue to live in the world. Such a shallow religious faith is not real. These are mere professors and have no part with God in salvation” (*Chastening and Repentance*, 1963).

B.R. Lakin, 1964 - “Repentance toward God--that’s **turning away from all your sin** and everything you know to be wrong, and **turning right about face**, then trusting Jesus Christ as your complete Redeemer” (*Prepare to Meet Thy God*, 1964).

Lester Roloff, 1965 - “Repentance is a godly sorrow for sin. Repentance is a forsaking of sin. **Real repentance is putting your trust in Jesus Christ so you will not live like that anymore**. Repentance is permanent. It is a lifelong and an eternity-long experience. You will never love the devil again once you repent. **You will never flirt with the devil as the habit of your life again once you get saved**. You will never be happy living in sin; it will never satisfy; and the husks of the world will never fill your longing and hungering in your soul. **Repentance is something a lot bigger than a lot of people think. It is absolutely essential if you go to heaven**” (Repent or Perish, 1965).

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Highland Park Baptist Church c. 1965 - “Here are some things the sinner must do to be saved. He must want to be saved (Isa. 1:18-19). He must be willing for God to save him (Rev 22:18). He must acknowledge himself a sinner (Ps. 51:3; Lu. 15:17). **He must repent - turn his back on sin and turn to God** (Acts 20:21; Lu. 13:2). He must believe on Christ and His finished work of Redemption (Act 16:31; Joh. 1:12; Ro. 10:10; Joh. 3:16)” (*Handbook for Our Members*, Highland Park Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee, c. 1965, p. 32).

Oliver B. Greene, 1960s - He preached 25 radio messages in a row on *the wrath of God*. He said, “True repentance is sorrow for sin committed against a holy God and **not only sorrow for sin, but turning from sin, forsaking sin and turning to God**. Sin nailed the Savior to the cross and certainly that fact alone is sufficient reason why **all who have genuinely repented hate sin and forsake sinful ways**” (*Commentary of Acts of the Apostles*, Acts 2:37-38).

Leon Maurer, 1970 - “**A rotely memorized prayer or some repeated statement without true repentance and faith never saves anyone**. He must be very serious about it and really mean it. ... Consider a case where the person being dealt with is going to repeat a prayer after the soul winner as he calls on the Lord to save his soul. Here is a pattern which can be followed merely as an example: ‘Lord, I realize I am a sinner. I am lost in my sin. **I turn from my sin. I repent of my sin.** Right here and now I do trust the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour...’ (*Soul Winning: The Challenge of the Hour*, The Sword of the Lord, 1970).

When these men talked of turning from sin, everyone in those days knew what they meant. They weren’t talking about reformation or a works salvation. They were talking about something that occurred in the heart. They were talking about a radical change of mind that put them on a different path.

Independent Baptists after the 1970s

Soul winning changed dramatically in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

There was a frenzy for bigness, and this was the motivation for a change in soul winning doctrine and methodology.

The *Sword of the Lord* promoted the “biggest” and “the fastest growing” concept. This is the way that preachers were often introduced at Highland Park Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee, in the 1970s and 1980s.

A new evangelistic program was introduced and spread rapidly. I experienced this program at Highland Park as a student at Tennessee Temple from 1974-1977.

Jack Hyles was by far the most influential teacher of the new soul winning and church planting methods, but it was The Sword of the Lord that gave his teaching a very wide promotion. In 1962, The Sword of the Lord published Hyles’ *Let’s Go Soul Winning* and *Let’s Build an Evangelistic Church*.

Second in influence, beginning in the late 1970s, was Curtis Hutson, who became the editor of The Sword of the Lord upon the death of John R. Rice in 1980. Hutson’s book *Winning Souls and Getting Them Down the Aisle* (Sword of the Lord, 1978) was very influential. Hutson’s mentor was Jack Hyles.

Jack Hyles taught that every church problem could be solved by his soul winning program:

“Soul winning is the basic secret of every other problem in the church. For example, here a church is having cold services. There is no warmth. There. The Lord does not meet with them. Now how do you overcome it? Get to winning souls. If somebody walks down the aisle every Sunday and professes their faith in Christ, that will warm the service up a great deal. Here is a church having trouble with its business. It doesn’t have enough folks who know business. It is having trouble handling its legal affairs. It doesn’t have enough wisdom. The Bible says, ‘He that winneth souls is wise.’ So God gives extra wisdom to those who win souls” (Hyles, *Let’s Build an Evangelistic Church*, p. 34).

This program, which I call “Quick Prayerism,” has the following characteristics:

1. The emphasis of soul winning changed from an emphasis on repentance to an emphasis on “going to heaven when you die.”

This was the heart and soul of Jack Hyles’ soul winning program.

“It may be done thusly. ‘Now, Mr. Doe, let me ask you a question: Do you know that if you died this minute you would go to Heaven?’

“No, I don’t believe I do.’

“Let me ask you this: Would you like to know? Don’t you think it would be fine if you could know that if you died you would go to Heaven?’

“Yes.’

“Well, let me ask you this: If I could take the Bible and explain to you how you could know beyond any shadow of a doubt, that you could know right now, and you could see it and you could understand it, would you believe it? Would you do what the Bible says?’

“Do you see what I’m trying to say? It is good to get him committed that he will do it; then you have gone a long

way toward getting him saved before you ever present the plan. So these three questions:

1. 'Do you know that if you died today you would go to Heaven?'
2. 'Would you like to know?'
3. 'If I could show you how you could know, would you do it?'"

(Hyles, *Let's Go Soul Winning*, Sword of the Lord Publishers).

The most atrocious example of this we have seen is *My John 3:16 Book: Lola Mazola's Happyland Adventure*. The cover depicts a gleeful child on a roller coaster holding a Bible. Children are taught that heaven is an exciting place, sort of like an eternal Disneyland, and they can go there "when they die" by saying a sinner's prayer. It includes a "commemorative certificate" that is signed and dated to proclaim the child's eternal security. The cover says, "Best-selling author Robert J. Morgan has told this story to children for years and personally witnessed hundreds of them in turn express faith in Jesus."

Not once in the book of Acts do we find a preacher saying, "Do you want to go to heaven when you die? If so, you need to do this..." There is not a hint of that type of thing in Scripture.

Preachers in the New Testament promised eternal life through Jesus Christ, but they never used the "do you want to go to heaven" approach in evangelism. The emphasis is on knowing and serving Christ in this present life. The emphasis is on discipleship in the here and now rather than obtaining a ticket to heaven. It is on doing works meet for repentance (Acts 26:20). It is on being ordained to walk in good works (Eph. 2:10). It is on living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world (Titus 2:12).

2. The "sinner's prayer" became the focus of soul winning.

The emphasis and aim was to get the individual to pray a sinner's prayer.

An example of a sinner's prayer is the following from the gospel tract *God's Simple Plan of Salvation*:

"Dear Jesus, I know I am a sinner; I know I deserve hell for my sins. I believe You died for me, and I am trusting You to save me from hell and give me the gift of eternal life. Thank you Jesus for saving me. Amen."

The sinner's prayer can be traced to about the middle of the 20th century. The American Tract Society was founded in 1825 during the Second Great Awakening, but it was not until 1955 that it published its first tract containing a sinner's prayer.

Billy Graham popularized the sinner's prayer in his gospel tracts, beginning in the 1950s with *Steps to Peace with God*. The sinner's prayer was also popularized by Bill Bright and Campus Crusade for Christ.

It was Jack Hyles who popularized sinner's prayer soul winning among Independent Baptists. This was the emphasis of his soul winning books and annual Pastor's Schools. He said, "You must try to get them to pray."

At a recent Bible conference, some men challenged me, saying, "What about the sinner's prayer? Do you believe in using the sinner's prayer?"

My reply is simple: "Show me the sinner's prayer in the New Testament."

Jesus Christ never led an individual in a sinner's prayer, and Paul never led anyone in a sinner's prayer.

In our evangelism course [Sowing and Reaping](#), we urge people to do their own studies of the following passages to learn how to deal with people in a biblical way. Study these passages and write down every lesson you can find about evangelism.

- Nicodemus - John 3:1-16
- The Woman at the Well - John 4:1-43
- The Rich Young Ruler - Mark 10:17-27
- Zacchaeus - Luke 19:1-10
- The Ethiopian Eunuch - Acts 8:26-39
- Lydia - Acts 16:14-15
- The Philippian Jailer - Acts 16:23-40
- The Athenians - Acts 17:14-34

Instead of focusing on a sinner's prayer, biblical evangelism has the following characteristics:

Biblical evangelism presents the gospel (Mark 16:15-16; Ro. 1:16). The job the Lord has given His people as ambassadors of Christ is to preach the gospel to every person on earth. The gospel is defined in a nutshell in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. This is the message that must be proclaimed and explained. A sinner does not have to become a theologian to be saved, but he does have to understand and receive the gospel. To understand the gospel, the individual must come to understand the character of God as a holy judge. He must understand that he is a sinner according to the Bible's definition, meaning that he is not good and has *no* righteousness that is acceptable to God. He must understand who Jesus Christ is and the significance of Christ's death as an atoning sacrifice. He must understand that Christ rose from the dead. He must understand what it means that Christ died and rose "*according to the Scriptures.*" We have dealt with what it means to believe the gospel earlier in this chapter.

The soul winner's job is to explain the gospel. How long this takes depends on the listener's religious background, receptivity, and other factors.

Biblical evangelism is bringing sinners to wholehearted faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 8:36-37). Salvation is not a prayer; it is a personal relationship with God in Christ. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

Biblical evangelism urges sinners to call on Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour (Romans 10:9-13).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Here salvation is described as confessing the Lord Jesus with the mouth, believing from the heart that God has raised Him from the dead, and calling on Him.

The word "Lord" is mentioned three times in this key passage. To say that a person can receive Christ as Saviour and not as Lord has no biblical support. Jesus *is* Lord, and every soul will bow to Him as Lord, either in salvation or in judgment.

To believe on Christ savingly after the fashion of this passage (to confess Him, to believe unto righteousness, to call upon Him) requires that the individual understand and believe the gospel that Paul preached in Romans 1-3: man's totally lost and condemned condition before a holy God and his inability to save himself by good works and law keeping (Ro. 1:18 - 3:20) and Christ's work of atonement for man's behalf on the cross (Ro. 3:21-29).

To call on the Lord in the sense of Romans 10:13 is not a "sinner's prayer" in the way that sinner's prayer evangelism has been taught. It is simply a personal receiving of Jesus Christ.

A sinner's prayer might be helpful to some people who don't know what to say to the Lord in calling on Him for salvation. My wife was helped by a sinner's prayer when she got saved as a teenager. But a sinner's prayer is not the goal of evangelism.

To get the sinner to receive the living Christ is the goal. If a sinner's prayer is used at all, it must be used very carefully and wisely at the right time and with the right person.

And if a sinner's prayer is used, it must be a good sinner's prayer that helps the individual express biblical repentance and faith. Many of the sinner's prayers that we have seen totally neglect repentance.

3. The biblical concept of plowing the soil of man's heart with the law to prepare it for Holy Spirit conviction and salvation was discarded for a quick salesmanship program.

When we refer to plowing the soil, we refer to sowing the seed of the gospel, carefully explaining it, using the law to show the sinner his plight, praying over it, and patiently waiting for the fruit that comes only by God's Spirit.

The law of Moses was given to show man his fallen condition and to lead him to the Saviour (Ga. 3:24-25).

In Romans 1-3, we see Paul's use of the law in this manner. He spends nearly two full chapters exposing man's fallen condition and God's righteous judgment upon all men before he mentions anything about the grace of God in Christ's atonement.

This is the true "Romans Road"! It is careful to get the sinner totally and thoroughly lost before it tries to get him saved.

The "old" Baptists believed in plowing the soil with the law to cause the sinner to see himself as exceedingly sinful and undone. We have seen how that J. Frank Norris preached a full week on hell before giving a salvation invitation and Harold Sighter preached 25 messages in a row on the wrath of God. But this careful, patient preparation is done away with in the "Quick Prayerism" program.

Jack Hyles taught dozens of psychological tricks. Consider how he used prayer to manipulate individuals:

"There are several ways to do this, but you must try to get them to pray. If he is really ready, say, 'Could I pray for you, and while I pray, would you pray and ask God to save you today?' Maybe he is not quite that ready. Maybe you don't know. You could say, 'Could I pray that you will get saved?' Maybe you don't think he will let you pray for him to get saved. Then you say, 'Could I have a word of prayer with you before I go?'"

"Anyway, to get your head bowed is good. If you are talking to him, he might interrupt, but if you are talking to the Lord, he won't. You can preach him a little sermon in the prayer. If you can't win a fellow to Christ, and if he won't let you present the plan to him, the best way to tell him how to be saved is to tell the Lord and let the sinner hear you."

"I go into a home and say, 'Sir, would you like to know how to be saved?'"

"No, don't have time for it. The wife's sick and I'm busy."

"Could I have a prayer for your wife before we go, that she will get well?"

"With his wife lying there sick, a man would be a fool not to let the preacher pray for her. He says, 'Well, O.K.'

"I pray, 'Dear Lord, bless this wife and make her well, and help this man to know that Romans 3:10 says, 'As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.' And if people die in their sins, according to Romans 6:23 'the wages of sin is death.' O dear Lord, show him that Romans 5:8 is true when it says that 'God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners...'

"Pray him the plan. He won't interrupt you. You can get by with a lot of things talking to the Lord that you wouldn't talking to him. ...

"I stop abruptly in my prayer. I pray a simple prayer. Never pray a big prayer. You must pray a prayer so simple that he won't mind his prayer following yours.

"But you can pray this, 'Dear Lord, here is a fellow who needs to get converted. I pray You will help him get saved. May he receive Christ. You love him, dear Lord...' 'Now fellow, will you pray?' You pray like that, and he can pray his little prayer in a minute.

"I always stop in the middle of my prayer. I say, 'Dear Lord, lead this man to be saved. You led me here and I pray that he will be saved today. May his wife have a Christian husband and the little children a Christian daddy. May this be the day of his salvation.' Now while our heads are bowed in prayer, 'Mr. Doe, would you be willing today to ask God to forgive you and tell Him you want to get saved?'

"See, you stop in the middle of your prayer and lead him to pray. Let me say this: Fifty per cent of the time when you get this far the lost person is going to pray" (Hyles, *Let's Go Soul Winning*).

That is cheap psychological manipulation. It is tricky. It is dishonesty. If you tell a man that you want to pray for him, but your goal actually is to preach to him and get him to pray a sinner's prayer, that is deception. We see no hint of this in the Gospels or Acts.

Consider the following example of this methodology. Carl Hatch was called "the world's greatest soul winner" by *Sword of the Lord* editor Curtis Hutson and by Jack Hyles:

The Carl Hatch Squeeze

I don't ask anybody if they want to be saved. If you want a positive answer you must ask a positive question. If you want a no answer ask a no question. If you want a yes answer ask a yes question. **Soul winning is positive. And in soul winning you use a lot of psychology.**

For instance, if you are lost and I say, "Mr. Smith, let me ask you a question. You don't want to go to hell, do you?"

He will answer, No.

I say, "Wonderful, you want to go to heaven, don't you?" He will say, Yes. I will reply, "Sure you do. Sure you do.

Sure you do. I thank God for a man that doesn't want to go to hell."

Did you get that? I am reinforcing the fact that he wants to go to heaven. I'm keeping everything positive.

I don't say, "Can I show this to you?" or "Do you mind if I read the Bible to you?" That's negative and you will probably get a negative answer. I just say, "I'm so glad you don't want to go to hell and I will just take a minute here to show you some verses. I don't have long and I know you don't, either. There's three things that you need to know. First, Jesus died for you. Isn't that wonderful? Two, Jesus loves you. Isn't that wonderful? Three, Jesus wants you to go to heaven. Isn't that wonderful? And I'm so glad that you want to."

See, I am being positive.

He may say he has a lot of questions, but unsaved people don't have questions. **Don't get on unsaved people's questions. Tell them that you will answer their questions later**, but first you want to read a few verses of Scripture. Unsaved people don't have questions. If you get them saved, that answers all of them.

Let me tell you how to deal with someone who has a dumb spirit who bucks getting saved. You share the gospel and get them to the point of praying the sinner's prayer, but they stop. How do you get that type of person saved? Now, this will work in most cases. If he is a man, put your hand on his shoulder and say, "Mr. Jones, I want to have prayer for you. I'm thrilled you want to go to heaven. God has been good to you. Bow your head with me. Then I pray, "Lord, I'm so thankful for this man that doesn't want to burn in hell. I'm so thrilled he wants to go to heaven and not take his kids to hell. I thank you for this man. And I pray you will help him to see that need."

While our heads are still bowed, I say, "Mr. Jones, if you want heaven as your home and Christ as your Saviour, pray this prayer. Lord Jesus." And **if he doesn't repeat that and tries not to pray, I squeeze his shoulder.** I use this technique. If I am dealing with the president of the bank, I take his hand and when it comes time for him to pray, I squeeze his hand. We've titled that the Carl Hatch squeeze. **It works.** If I am dealing with a woman, I ask her to put her hand on the Bible, and when it comes time to pray I just tap her hand gently. **It works; it works!**

(This is from a Carl Hatch soul winning seminar at Texas Baptist University. Hatch was called the world's greatest soul winner by *Sword of the Lord* editor Curtis Hutson and by Jack Hyles.)

This is a damnable practice that has turned biblical evangelism into cheap salesmanship.

Hatch didn't take the time to deal carefully and clearly with any part of the gospel. Who is God? Who is Jesus Christ? What is sin? What does it mean that Christ died for my sins? What does it mean that He died according to the Scriptures? What does it mean that He rose from the dead?

And Carl Hatch didn't even hint at repentance. He was simply offering people a ticket to heaven.

4. The presentation of the gospel is brief and quick.

Jack Hyles' soul winning books encouraged evangelists to try to lead a complete stranger in a sinner's prayer after just a few minutes. Many times he described leading people in a sinner's prayer in 10 or 15 minutes.

One afternoon I went soul winning with a pastor who was trained in this method. He is a man of God, but he has unthinkingly adopted the methodology he was taught. At each door he would go through Hyles' plan. He would ask the individual if he or she would like to go to heaven when he died and if he would listen while he told him how to do that. None of them even let us into the house, as I remember, and they really showed zero interest in Jesus Christ. But when they didn't actually close the door, the pastor would quickly go through the most basic points of the "Romans Road" (e.g., you are a sinner, the wages of sin is death, the gift of God in Christ is eternal life). After that presentation, which took only a few minutes, he said, "Do you have any questions?" None did. And then he said, "Would you like to pray now to receive Christ as your Saviour?" None of the people were interested enough even to let us into their houses and they had no questions, but he was ready to lead them in a sinner's prayer in such a circumstance. That is Quick Prayerism. And these were mostly university students who were steeped in evolution and humanism. Later I asked the pastor why he didn't even hint at repentance in his presentation, and he said that he hadn't thought about it.

Following is the full content of Jack Hyles' Romans' Road:

I always use the following: "Now, Mr. Doe, there are only four things you must know to be saved. First, you must know that you are a sinner. For example, Romans 3:10 says, 'As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.' Let me illustrate. If there is none righteous, that means I'm not righteous, doesn't it? (Notice, I didn't get him unrighteous first; I got me unrighteous. Never put the sinner below you. You always let him know that but for the grace of God you would be in the fix he is in. You get yourself lost first.) So if there is none righteous, I'm not righteous. If there is none righteous, then Mr. Doe, you are not righteous. Also, it says, 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' Now if all have sinned, that means I've sinned-- right? That means your wife has sinned, and that means you have sinned."

If he still acts like he is not a sinner, you just list a few sins and you will catch him. A lot of times I say this: "You do realize that you are a sinner? For example, the Bible mentions some sins such as evil thinking, bad literature, ugly disposition, etc." Somewhere along that line there will be something that he does. Show him that he is a sinner.

Second, show him the price on sin. Romans 5:12: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin..." What kind of death? All death, both spiritual and physical death, the sum total of death. "... and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." And Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death..." So there is a price on sin. What is that price? Death. What kind of death? That includes the second death of Revelation 20:14, and that second death is the Lake of Fire. So ultimately a person who is a sinner must pay for it by going to Hell. That is the basic price on sin.

Third, the next thing we must do is show that Jesus paid the price. So I say this: "Mr. Doe, God looked down from Heaven and saw that you were a sinner. He saw that you were in debt. He saw that you and I deserved to go to Hell. He wanted to save us and made a plan to do it. He came to the world Himself. His name was Jesus. He was God in a human body. For thirty-three years He lived here in this world. He did not commit one single sin. This is important. Mr. Doe, suppose that Jesus Christ had sinned one time only. The price on sin being death or Hell, where would Jesus have had to go when He died? The answer is Hell, but He did not sin. He did not commit one sin, but He went to the cross, and on the cross He suffered spiritual death when He said, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' He suffered the same thing that a lost person will have to suffer in Hell. I'll go farther than that. I believe that He suffered as much in that moment on Calvary as the sum total eternal suffering of all the lost people who will ever go to Hell to stay forever. Actually He was paying our price for our sins. He was becoming our substitute."

Fourth, "If we will receive that price as our hope for Heaven and receive Him as our Saviour from sin, He will make us His children and take us to Heaven when we die" (Hyles *Let's Go Soul Winning*).

This is not even the complete gospel, because Hyles says nothing about Christ's resurrection. Compare 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.

But even if it included the resurrection, it is an extremely shallow presentation of the gospel. It might be enough for someone who has grown up in a Bible-believing church in the Bible Belt of America and has been taught the principles of the Bible all his life. But it isn't enough for an individual who has never heard the gospel. It isn't enough for an atheistic Humanist, a Hindu, a Buddhist, or a Muslim. It's too shallow, too basic, too quick.

Consider the fact that man is a sinner. No one can be saved if he does not believe and acknowledge that he is a sinner, and that he is *such a sinner* that he absolutely *deserves* eternal hell.

When asked if they believe they are a sinner, many people will answer in the affirmative simply because they know that they are not perfect, but at the same time, they do not believe that they are so wicked as to deserve God's wrath. Most people will admit that they aren't perfect, but they also think of

themselves as basically good or at least that their good can outweigh the bad. They know they have done wrong, but they don't think of themselves as deserving of hell. In their minds, they redefine "sin" to be a lack of perfection or a lack self-esteem or (if Catholics) they divide sin into "categories" of mortal and venial, or some such thing.

They do not believe that they are sinners from conception (Psalm 51:5) and that even their very righteousness is as filthy rags before a holy God (Isaiah 64:6).

An example of *not* plowing the ground sufficiently was told to me by a pastor friend who had the following experience at Lancaster Baptist Church in Lancaster, California:

"We went out with their staff on Saturday morning for soul winning. We were immediately partnered up with some of the veterans. The first door we went to, we spoke to a friendly Catholic guy and to my surprise, the guy got 'saved' before my very eyes as ----- took him from a few scripture passages to the sinner's prayer so smoothly that I was caught off guard. I caught myself and while ----- was recording this man's contact details and writing it down, I asked the man whether (1) he believed that he was a good person and (2) that it is possible to go to heaven by being a good person. This man who had just got 'saved' told me 'YES.' I looked around and the other two men beside me said nothing and did nothing. We went to a few more places and eventually reached a home with a Roman Catholic young lady who came to the door. She said she was a professing Christian. Even though she said that all churches were the same ----- gave her assurance of salvation by quoting 1 John 5:13."

It is unconscionable to deal with people in such a shallow way. The "Catholic guy" acknowledged that he is a "sinner," but he didn't mean by that that he was deserving of hell. He didn't mean what the Bible means. He still thought of himself as basically a good person deserving of heaven because of his "good deeds"!

Obviously he wasn't ready to get saved and should *not* have been led in a sinner's prayer. It was all too hasty and shallow.

One time I was on visitation with a man in Oklahoma City when a woman invited us into her house. Her teenage children were in the living room, so we accepted the invitation and my partner began to talk to her. Though it was soon evident that her language was Portuguese and her English was *very* rudimentary, he proceeded to give her the Romans Road and lead her in a sinner's prayer. I suggested that we should try to obtain a Portuguese Bible and find someone who speaks her language.

Jack Hyles told of a man in Texas who supposedly led a hitchhiker to Christ even though the man was deaf and dumb and couldn't read.

"He picked up a hitchhiker and tried to witness to him. The hitchhiker shook his head. He then talked real loud, but the hitchhiker pointed to his ears and shook his head. So this new convert started writing the Gospel out and the hitchhiker pointed down and shook his head. He couldn't read, he couldn't hear, he couldn't talk. So this soul winner, who went to the third grade and couldn't even spell Jesus, stopped the car and got out, took his Bible, pointed to the Bible, pointed to his heart, pointed to Heaven, made a motion to open your heart and let Him come in, got on his knees and began to pray. The deaf and dumb fellow got on his knees and mumbled a bit, got up with a smile of Heaven on his face, pointed to the Bible, pointed to Heaven and pointed to his heart" (*Let's Build an Evangelistic Church*).

This isn't biblical evangelism; it is blind mysticism.

This evangelistic methodology is so brief and quick that it is expected to produce salvation during the few minutes of a gospel invitation in a church service or an evangelistic meeting. Earlier we mentioned the practice of the old Highland Park Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Every Sunday morning people would come forward for "salvation," be dealt with in the front of the auditorium, be led in a sinner's prayer, and then be baptized after answering a few simple questions in the affirmative. ---

I have always thought that this program is unscriptural and even ridiculous. At the very least, seekers should be taken to another room and dealt with carefully, for as long as it takes, and there should be no pressure whatsoever.

5. Quick Prayerism immediately pronounces people saved and gives them assurance just because they have prayed a sinner's prayer, with zero evidence to back it up.

This is what Hyles taught:

"Then you say, 'Dear Lord, thank You that this man has trusted Jesus. And if the Bible is true and he has been sincere, he is Your child. Help him to see it now. In Jesus' name. Amen.'

"God bless you, brother. 'Let me ask you this question now: According to this Book, where would you go if you died right now?'

"To Heaven.'

"Do you believe this Book? When you get to the judgment seat, are you willing to trust your eternity on what this Book says?'

"Yes, sir.'

"That means you are God's child. Now, suppose somebody asks you tomorrow, 'Mr. Doe, Are you a Christian?'-what are you going to tell them?'

"I'll tell them yes.'

"If somebody says, 'When did you become a Christian?'-- what are you going to tell them?"

"Yesterday" (*Let's Go Soul Winning*).

We believe in eternal security and we believe in assurance of salvation, but the assurance must come from the Lord, as He is the only who knows the hearts. See Romans 8:16; Galatians 4:6; 1 John 5:10. The Lord knows those that are His. The believer's part is to demonstrate his salvation by departing from iniquity (2 Ti. 2:19).

6. Quick Prayerism does not look for evidence and the vast majority of professions are empty.

Quick Prayerism produces a large number of professions, but a large percentage are empty.

I was discussing the doctrine of repentance with a missionary some years ago in England. He had told me that many people were being saved through their soul winning outreach, but when I asked about the church services, he said that they had a small number of people in the services and admitted that most of the people being "saved" were not interested enough even to attend the services. I challenged him about the claim that the people were actually being saved. I asked, "How can you say they are saved when there is no evidence of it in their lives?" He became agitated and strongly countered that I had no right to judge the salvation of people who were making professions through his ministry. He said, "You cannot know who is saved." This man had recently attended Hyles Pastor's School, and he said the featured topic that year was repentance!

The idea that you cannot tell if someone is saved is heresy. It is possible, of course, for a person to show false signs of salvation and to deceive people, as Judas did. And we are not saying that a genuinely saved person will suddenly be sinlessly perfect or that every true believer is equally zealous to serve Christ or that a saved person makes "Jesus Lord of his entire life." But the Bible is clear that if someone is genuinely saved, there will definitely be evidence in his or her life. I don't know of one example of conversion in the New Testament that did not result in a dramatically changed life. Do you?

For several weeks in 1977, my wife and I followed up on a Phoster Club soul-winning program in a fundamental Baptist church. Though the Phoster Club ladies reported many salvations and had a stack of cards representing "decisions for Christ," we did not find even one person who demonstrated biblical evidence. In fact, most of the people we tried to follow up on didn't even invite us into the house for a talk.

Churches reported thousands of souls saved annually, though these numbers were not reflected in the active membership.

Jack Hyles claimed that his church saw more people saved on May 3, 1998, than were saved and baptized on the day of Pentecost. He estimated that around 15,000 people were saved and 5,112 were baptized on that one day.

But the Wednesday night crowd, which is the truest indication of the real church, was not more than several hundred, and that included the Hyles-Anderson students.

First Baptist Church's Spanish department reported 35,000 professions from 1977-1987, but the average attendance was never more than 1,400 (www.firesofevangelism.org/Origin.html).

Longview Baptist Temple in Longview, Texas, claims that more than one million people were won to Christ in 25 years, which is an average of 40,000 a year (www.lbtministries.com/Pastor/Meet_Our_Pastor.htm).

Yet on an average mid-week service, which is the truest reflection of an American church's active membership, you will find only a few hundred people in attendance. Literally hundreds of thousands of these souls that have been "won" are nowhere to be found.

When we were given the "decision" cards to follow up a county fair ministry in Oklahoma in the late 1990s, of the hundreds of professions that were recorded we could not find *even one* person who gave any evidence of salvation or was even interested in attending church.

A pastor friend followed up on the more than 100 "salvation decisions" that were made at a county fair ministry in Kentucky in 2011, and he *did not find one soul* who was even interested enough in Christ to attend church.

Quick Prayerism with its empty statistics is not something that is practiced only by Independent Baptists.

In the 1990s, the Assemblies of God had an evangelistic outreach called "Decade of Harvest," and out of 3.5 million professions, only five out of 100 actually joined a church, and much fewer than that proved to be true disciples of Christ.

The same is true for the Southern Baptist Convention. SBC Evangelist Jim Elliff says, "Our largest pizza supper may bring in a hundred new 'converts,' but we will likely get only a few of those on the roll. [And even the vast majority of these will not become faithful church members.] In other words, if you compare all who we *say* have become Christians through our evangelistic efforts, to those who actually *show signs* of being regenerate, we should be red-faced" ("Southern Baptists, An Unregenerate Denomination," ccwtoday.org).

7. Repentance was redefined to justify this program.

There was a change in the doctrine of repentance. We have seen that former Independent Baptist preachers taught a clear doctrine of repentance as a turning, a surrender, a change of mind that results in a change of life, but this changed.

(More examples can be found in the book [Repentance and Soul Winning](#), available from Way of Life Literature.)

Instead of repentance and faith as two different things, as Paul taught (Acts 20:21), repentance and faith become one thing. Repentance became faith.

Instead of turning to God from sin and false religion, repentance became *turning from unbelief to belief*.

Instead of repentance as something that always produces evidence (Acts 26:20), repentance became something that *might not be seen*.

Consider some examples:

Curtis Hutson - “The problem and confusion is not preaching repentance but attaching the wrong definition to the word. For instance, to say that repentance means to turn from sin, or to say that repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of action, is to give a wrong definition to the word” (*Repentance: What Does the Bible Teach?* Sword of the Lord, 1986, p. 16).

Jack Hyles - “So, yes, there is a repentance from unbelief in order to believe. ... With your will you believe and rely upon Christ to save you. In order to believe, you have to repent of unbelief. That which makes a man lost must be corrected” (*Enemies of Soulwinning*, 1993). Hyles taught that repentance *does not* mean “to turn from sin.”

Bob Gray - “10,446 professions of faith in 1995. ... Repentance is not a doctrine. The word ‘repent’ is not even found in the book of John. It is obviously assumed by God that ‘repentance’ is a part of ‘believing.’ ... Repentance is not turning from your sins. ... Repentance is to change one’s mind from unbelief to belief in Christ” (“A Message from the Pastor,” *The Soulwinner*, January 1996, Longview Baptist Temple, Longview, Texas).

Fred Afman of Tennessee Temple - “The many false conditions of salvation [include] water baptism and repentance” (“The Way of Salvation,” Sunday School class, Highland Park Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee, May 1996; quoted from Chris McNeilly, *The Great Omission*, pp. 25, 26).

Tolbert Moore - “If someone says: repent for sins and you are not saved, what do they mean by that? ... repentance in the true sense of the word really means to turn from being an unbeliever and to become a believer” (“Repentance and Lordship Salvation,” *The Gospel Preacher*, September 1996).

In the 1980s, The Sword of the Lord stopped publishing Leon Maurer’s *Soul Winning: The Challenge of the Hour* and John Rice’s *Here Are More Questions*, in which Rice said that repentance is to turn from sin. Further, *The Sword Hymnal* was purged of many references to repentance.

8. The doctrine of eternal security was corrupted.

The biblical doctrine of eternal security is never divorced from a life-changing salvation experience.

Consider the following passages carefully: John 10:27-30; 1 Co. 15:1-2; Col. 1:21-23; 2 Ti. 2:19; Heb. 6:8-11; 10:38-39; 1 John 3:1-3.

But in the 1970s, eternal security was divorced from a change of life and the evidence of an obedient walk. The typical soul winning program aimed to lead someone in a sinner’s prayer and then give him “assurance of salvation” immediately, even if there was no evidence that the person was even sincere in the prayer, even if the person would not so much as invite the soul winner into his house.

Once my wife was taken on “soul winning visitation” by a supposed expert who led a man in a sinner’s prayer. While the expert was writing down the man’s information, the man told my wife, “I don’t really believe that stuff.” Yet he was given “assurance” and reported as a convert.

As we have noted, granting assurance of salvation is the work of the Spirit of God (Ro. 8:16; Ga. 4:6; 1 Joh. 5:10). We can show the individual where assurance can be found, which is in God’s Word, but we can’t give the assurance. The Lord knows those that are His, and the believer’s part is to demonstrate his salvation by departing from iniquity (2 Ti. 2:19).

9. There was a focus on “child evangelism.”

A huge emphasis was placed on winning little children to Christ and baptizing them. The Vacation Bible School program was geared toward this. It was at a VBS that I made a profession of Christ and was baptized when I was 10-11 years old.

In the Southern Baptist Convention, there was a 96% growth rate from 1970 to 2010 *in baptisms of pre-schoolers*. Consider the statistics for 2013: A full 60% of SBC churches baptized

zero youth between ages of 12-17 and 80% baptized zero or just one young adult ages 18-29. But there was an explosion in the baptisms of “five and under” (*Annual Church Profile*, 2013).

That is Baptist infant baptism!

A child can believe on Jesus Christ savingly, but it is doubtful that a pre-schooler can do this.

We know that there were no small children baptized on the day of Pentecost, because all of the 3,000 that were baptized “continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). That is not the description of a five-year-old child.

I grew up under this type of ministry and philosophy, and the fruit was wretched. It played a major role in building mixed multitude churches. The vast majority of the children that got “saved” at a young age either fell away to the world in adolescence or stayed in the church as nominal, lukewarm, worldly Christians.

Church planters actually tried to build churches on child evangelism, driven by bus ministries and gimmicks, which is not what we see in Acts 13-14, and this is a passage of Scripture specifically given as the preeminent example of missionary church planting for the entire church age.

An early Independent Baptist missionary to Thailand in the 1980s, a Hyles-Anderson graduate, reported impressive

numbers of salvations and attendees to his services, but the majority turned out to be children that he was enticing with gimmicks.

Shallow, unscriptural soul winning and neglect of repentance have produced incredibly weak churches. It has produced churches that are mixed multitudes instead of churches of disciples.

If professing Christians are rebels against God’s Word and refuse to obey the preaching, refuse to be faithful, refuse to separate from the world, are insubordinate to pastoral authority, it is probably because they aren’t saved. As we have seen, the Bible is very clear on this point. See, for example, John 8:47; 10:27; Titus 1:16; 1 John 2:3-4.

Most churches are far too careless about salvation. They pronounce people, including children, saved on a mere profession with no regard for biblical evidence.

Long ago I rejected this tradition. My sole authority for faith and practice is the Bible, and in the Bible we see an emphasis on genuine spiritual conversion with evidence.

One of my early books was [*Does Salvation Make a Difference?*](#) For 40 years I have warned about the carelessness I have witnessed both in Southern Baptist and Independent Baptist churches. We want to follow the Bible, not anybody’s church tradition; the biblical example is Acts 2:41-42. This is a description of a church of true disciples.



EIGHT-LEGGED THIEVERY

(Friday Church News Notes, October 27, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from CreationMoments.com, Oct. 13, 2017: “Out of more than 30,000 species of spiders, there are three species that make their living through thievery. Several years ago that number was raised from two with the discovery of a tiny, thieving species on the island of Taiwan. The other two species live in South America and are known to steal only silk from the webs of other spiders. This strange little spider from Taiwan steals much more than just silk and is described as looking like a tiny drop of mercury with legs attached. It preys on the webs of giant wood spiders, whose webs can be more than three feet across. Many spiders eat

their own webs for the purpose of recycling the silk to repair a tattered web. But this newly discovered little thief eats the webs of the giant wood spider. Researchers say that these little spiders can, on the average, make a wood spider's web 21 percent smaller. They have also been seen stealing small insects from the wood spiders' web as well as wood spider eggs. They are able to do this because they are small and rather sneaky. They do spin their own webs when they are ready to lay eggs, and they also spin their own silk to cover their eggs. While it is wrong for us to steal, theft is apparently the way God has chosen to feed these spiders in a fallen world. That our world is corrupted by our own sin should remind us that God is our ultimate provider. He has even



prepared forgiveness and eternal life for us through the holy life and innocent suffering and death of His own Son, Jesus Christ. Notes: S. Milius, ‘New Spider: Unusual suspect steals web,’ *Science News*, v. 154, p. 53.”

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?



ANCIENT BEE HIVES DISCOVERED IN ISRAEL

(Friday Church News Notes, October 27, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -

Twenty times the Bible describes the ancient land of Israel as a land flowing with "milk and honey" (Exodus 3:8, etc.). Many modern historians and archaeologists have claimed that this honey was the product of dates or figs rather than managed bee hives, but in September archaeologists led by Hebrew University professor Amihai Mazar uncovered a 2,900-year-old honey bee industry in the Jordan Valley in northern Israel. The well-preserved clay hives, thought to be the oldest in existence, are each 2.5 feet long and one foot in diameter. They were stacked three high in orderly rows. One hundred and eighty have been found, and just 30 of the hives could have produced up to one half ton of honey per year ("Oldest Bee Hives Discovered in Israel," *Patterns of Evidence*, Oct. 12, 2017). Mazar says, "You can tell that this was an organized industry, part of an organized economy, in an ultra-organized city" ("Archaeologists Find 3,000-year-old Beehives," *Haaretz*, Sep. 4, 2017). The hives are so well preserved that old beeswax and the remains of bees could be analyzed, including workers, drones, pupae, and larvae. The industry was sophisticated. Each hive had a removable plug at one end for honeycomb extraction and a small hole in the other for the bees to enter and exit. Carbon dating of grain found near the hives posits them to the time of Israel's divided kingdom, and they were found in Tel Rehov (Rehov in the KJV, about three miles south of Beit Shean and two

miles west of the Jordan), where the prophet Elisha is thought to have lived ("World's Oldest Beehives," *BreakingIsraelNews.com*, Sep. 26, 2017). An altar to fertility goddesses was found alongside the hives, opening a window into the idolatry of Israel's northern kingdom as described in Scripture. This discovery gives an archaeological background for Ezekiel 27:17, which says that Israel sold honey to the Phoenicians. The Bible's historical accuracy has been externally verified *countless* times. There is no ancient book that can compete with its accuracy, even from an honest secular perspective. (For more see [Bible Times & Ancient Kingdoms: Treasures from Archaeology](#), a 572-page book accompanied by 50 PowerPoint presentations packed with about 4,200 high quality color photos, drawings, historic recreations, and video clips, available from [Way of Life Literature](#).)

NEW MUSEUM OF THE BIBLE IS "BROAD, ECUMENICAL, AND NONSECTARIAN" (Friday Church News Notes, October 27, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - A board member of the new Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C., says it is "broad, ecumenical, and nonsectarian" ("Sneak Peek," *The Washington Post*, Oct. 16, 2017). The goal, he says, is to "present facts and let people make their own decisions" about whether or not the Bible is true. But if a museum leaves out or downplays the central event and theme of the Bible, which is the resurrection of Jesus Christ as infallible evidence of His Sonship, it is most emphatically *not* presenting the facts. After reporters



Michelle Boorstein, Julie Zauzmer, and Sarah Bailey were given a “sneak peek” at the \$500 million museum which is set to open in November, they observed that “there is very little Jesus ... the story of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection is almost absent” (Ibid.). While Jesus is downplayed, there are “art and exhibits dedicated to the Virgin Mary.” Originally, there were plans to “discuss historical evidence that demonstrates proof of the stories in the Bible,” but that was dropped. David Trobisch, Director of Collections, told *Christianity Today* there will be nothing in the museum “that would offend someone who is unchurched ... We don’t take any political or cultural positions” (“Inside the Museum of the Bible, CT, Oct. 20, 2017). The museum’s director, Seth Pollinger, says, “Our goal isn’t to give answers but to arouse curiosity,” but that isn’t what the Bible itself and Christ Himself has commanded. God’s people are to preach the gospel, which involves proclaiming dogmatic truth and giving answers. The museum is funded by Steve Green, chief executive of Hobby Lobby, who says, “The museum has fence posts--limits. It doesn’t overtly say the Bible is good--that the Bible is true.” This is open disobedience to the very Bible that Green claims to revere. It could be that the Green family couldn’t raise the massive funding for the museum without such great compromise, but better no museum than a museum that does not give people *all* of the facts to enable them to understand that the Bible is nothing other than or less than the infallible Word of God. Believing the Bible is not blind religious faith. There are countless evidences of its divine inspiration and historical accuracy, but the visitors to the Museum of the Bible apparently will not see these evidences. The chief “infallible proof” is Christ’s resurrection, which was witnessed by hundreds of people and which converted trembling men and women into world-shaking witnesses. Shame on the Green family.

BILL HYBELS TO RETIRE AND BE REPLACED BY CO-ED PASTOR



TEAM (Friday Church News Notes, October 27, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Bill Hybels, founder of Willow Creek Community Church near Chicago, is retiring in October 2018, to be replaced by Heather Larson as “Lead Pastor” and Steve Carter as “Lead Teaching Pastor.” Willow Creek had female elders from its inception in the 1970s, but in 1997 all staff members were given one year to submit to this stance or step down. That year John Ortberg, one of Willow Creek’s “teaching elders,” wrote a paper saying that the Bible “teaches the full equality of men and women in status, giftedness, and opportunity for ministry” (“Femme Fatale: The Feminist Seduction of the Evangelical Church,” *World* magazine, March 29, 1997). This is open rebellion to the clear teaching of God’s Word. Willow Creek was one of the first “seeker sensitive” megachurches. Early on it advertised itself like this: “There is no hell-fire and brimstone here, no Bible-thumping, just positive witty messages.” Its main worship center in the community of Willow Creek west of Chicago cost \$73 million and seats over 7,000. About 25,000 people attend weekend services at the church’s eight campuses.

HAMAS CHIEF SAYS “NO ONE IN THE UNIVERSE CAN DISARM US” (Friday Church News Notes, October 27, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Yahya Sinwar, Hamas leader in the Gaza Strip, said recently that “no one in the universe can disarm us” and they are debating “when to wipe out Israel” (“Hamas Chief,” *The Times of Israel*, Oct. 20, 2017). This was stated in a

meeting on October 19 to discuss the U.S. demand that the terrorist group disarm and recognize Israel before being allowed to be reconciled with the Palestinian Authority. Hamas has a standing army of 25,000 and a large arsenal of weapons, but its days are numbered. It is spouting the same arrogant nonsense that destroyed the Edomites and Moabites, neither of which currently exist as a people. “The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt *thyself* as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD” (Obadiah 1:3-4). Obadiah says that Edom’s pride deceived her. The proud thinks that all is well and that things will work out, but in fact he is headed to destruction (Proverbs 16:18). Pride was the original sin of the devil (1 Timothy 3:6; Isaiah 14:13-14). It is the sin of all men who rebel against God and His laws. The pride of life is a major characteristic of this fallen world system (1 John 2:16).



Pride will be a prominent trait of the antichrist (Revelation 13:5-6). And pride will characterize those nations that join the antichrist in his ventures against God. In the day of the Lord, man’s pride will be punished (Isaiah 2:12; 13:10; Malachi 4:1).

POPE DENOUNCES CAPITAL PUNISHMENT (Friday Church News Notes, October 27, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Speaking to an audience convened to mark the 25th anniversary of the *New Catholic Catechism* on October 11, Pope Francis denounced the



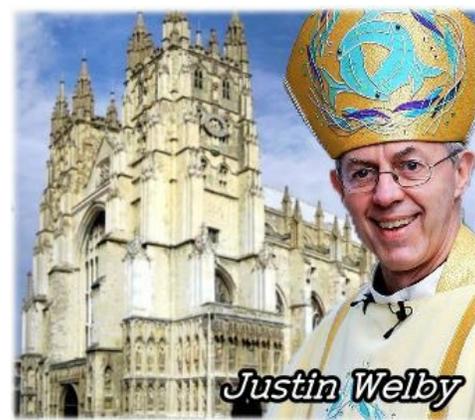
death penalty as “an inhumane measure” and “contrary to the Gospel” (“On the death penalty,” *Boston Globe*, Oct. 18, 2017). He said that “church doctrine” has been wrong on this issue for “2000 years.” In 2016, the pope called for “a world free of the death penalty” (“Pope Francis calls for,” *Crux*, Jun. 21, 2016). Instead of renouncing the papacy itself and a thousand other Roman Catholic heresies that are stated in the *New Catholic Catechism*, the misguided pope chooses to renounce something that is plainly supported by Scripture. The Catholic Church long abused the death penalty by putting Bible-believing Christians, Jews, and others to death under the Inquisition, but an abuse of a good thing does not destroy its value. The death penalty for heinous crimes is both justice and a deterrence. “Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man” (Genesis 9:6). “But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil” (Romans 13:4).

CENTENNIAL OF THE BALFOUR DECLARATION (Friday Church News Notes, November 3, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org,



866-295-4143) - This week the British government recognized the centennial of the 1917 Balfour Declaration with a series of events that culminated in a dinner featuring UK Prime Minister Theresa May and Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In the face of Palestinian protests, May remained steadfast in her commitment to the celebration, saying, “It is one of the most important letters in history. It demonstrates Britain’s vital role in creating a homeland for the Jewish people. And it is an anniversary we will be marking with pride” (“Theresa May vows to mark Balfour centennial ‘with pride,’” *The Times of Israel*, Oct. 25, 2017). The Balfour Declaration pledged the British government’s support for a Jewish homeland. Issued in November 2, 1917, by Arthur James Balfour, the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, it said, “His Majesty’s government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.” In less than a year, the British had driven the Ottomans out of “Palestine,” sounding the death knell of 700 years of Muslim control of the land and paving the way for the Jews’ return. The British remained in Palestine as an occupational force and in 1922 were given a Mandate by the League of Nations to rule “Palestine.” Britain became increasingly pro-Arab and anti-Israel over the next quarter century, backtracking on the promise of the Balfour Declaration, and when Israel established her state in May 1948 it was in spite of England and not with her help.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND’S APOSTATE ARCHBISHOPS (Friday Church News Notes, November 3, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -



The Church of England has never been scripturally sound, and it has moved ever farther away from God’s Word. Consider some statements over the last 65 years from the Archbishop of Canterbury, the highest position in the Anglican Church. In 1953, William Temple, in his book *Nature and God*, said, “... there is no such thing as revealed truth.” In 1961, Michael Ramsey said, “... heaven is not a place for Christians only. ... I expect to see many present day atheists there” (*London Daily Mail*, Oct. 2, 1961). In 1982, Robert Runcie said he was an agnostic as to why Jesus suffered on the cross (*Sunday Times Weekly Review*, London, April 11, 1982). I read this interview over breakfast in London that morning, and nearly spilled my coffee. In 1996, George Carey lashed out at fundamentalists who place the Bible “above and beyond human inquiry” (*Christian News*, Dec. 9, 1996). In 2008, Rowan Williams led the Church of England in issuing the following statement: “Charles Darwin, 200 years from your birth, the Church of England owes you an apology for misunderstanding you and, by getting our first reaction wrong, encouraging others to misunderstand you still” (“Church Makes ‘Ludicrous’ Apology,” *The Daily Mail*, Sept. 13, 2008). In a 2014 interview, Williams said that he practices a combination of Buddhist/Catholic/Orthodox meditation practices (“Rowan Williams: How Buddhism Helps Me Pray,” *The Telegraph*, London, July 2, 2014). Last month, Justin Welby told a reporter for *GQ* magazine that he cannot answer the question as to whether or not gay sex is sinful.



NORTH KOREA'S HELLISH PRISON CAMPS

(Friday Church News Notes, November 3, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -

The following is excerpted from "Kim Jong Un's Hellish Prison Camps," *The Daily Caller*, Oct. 26, 2017: "Hundreds of thousands of people are languishing away in dozens of hellish prison camps, many of which the rogue North Korean regime denies even exist. A new Committee on Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) report based on satellite images and defector testimony reveals young North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un's vast network of camps for political prisoners and other individuals identified as enemies of the state. These facilities, where 'forced labor with deliberate starvation, inadequate medical care and poor hygiene conditions cause the deaths of thousands of inmates annually,' are located across the country, according to David Hawk, a North Korea expert and the author of the report on the country's prison system. ... Amnesty International suggested that as many as 200,000 people could be suffering in North Korea's prison facilities. Tough physical labor, cruel interrogations, torture, and death have been reported at these camps. ... The rogue regime has short- and long-term prisons, as well as political prison facilities, for a variety of different criminals. ... Defectors--including former guards and prisoners--have described the tragic and horrible details about the Hoeryong prison camp. Ahn Myong-chol, a former guard at the camp, 'estimated that between 1,500 and 2,000 prisoners, mostly children, died annually of malnutrition during his years there.' 'Those who die

are the lucky ones,' Lim Hye-jin, the first former female guard to speak openly about her experiences, introduced earlier this year. She described rape, torture, abuse, and public executions. In one instance, a guard set a woman on fire because she annoyed him. Lim revealed that once, when two brothers broke out of prison, the prison guards murdered seven of their family members on the spot, and numerous other prisoners were beaten severely. After they were recaptured, the two brothers were beheaded. 'They called everyone to watch as a warning not to flee. The other prisoners then had to throw stones at them.'"

OXFORD BANS CHRISTIAN GROUP FROM FAIR

(Friday Church News Notes, November 3, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -

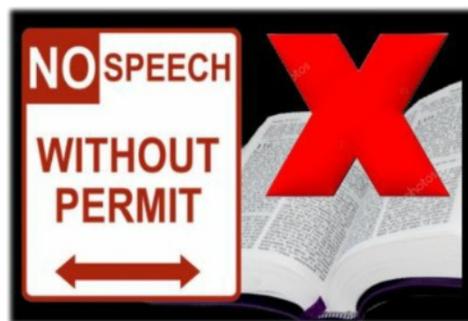
The following is excerpted from "Oxford bans 'offensive' Christian group from fair," OneNewsNow, Oct. 18, 2017: "The Oxford University campus at Balliol College was to conduct its 'Freshers' Fair'--otherwise known as freshmen orientation--when organizers banned the Christian Union from participation, contending that it would alienate members of the freshman class and would signal the presence of an atmosphere of homophobia on the campus. This controversial decision prompted a response from Simon Calvert of the United Kingdom Christian Institute (UKCI). 'The idea that this little group of earnest Christian students at Balliol represented some kind of threat to the other students is as ridiculous as it is offensive,' Calvert argued in a UKCI press release. 'You've really got to ask

yourself how these people can be so ignorant of the Christian faith, which has given us in this country so many rights and freedoms that countries around the world with no Christian heritage just don't have.' Students organized a protest on the basis of free speech and freedom of religion. Organizers are now convinced that it would be best to allow Christians in the future."

GOSPEL MUSIC ASSOCIATION AWARDS "THE SHACK" MOVIE

(Friday Church News Notes, November 3, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -

At its annual Dove awards, the Gospel Music Association selected *The Shack* as the "inspiration film of the year." *The Shack*, authored by William Paul Young, is a fictional account of a man who is bitter against God for allowing his daughter to be murdered and who returns to the scene of the murder, an old shack in the woods, where he has a life-changing encounter with God. The "God" that he encounters, though, is not the God of the Bible. Published in 2007, it has sold more than 20 million copies internationally. With the release of the movie, the book has again risen to the top of the charts. William Young is not a member of a church and is even reticent to call himself a Christian, describing himself as "spiritual but not religious" ("After *The Shack*, a Crossroads: William Paul Young," *Publishers Weekly*, Sept. 21, 2012). Yet the novel has been endorsed by Pat Robertson's 700 Club, CCM artist Michael W. Smith, Gayle Erwin of Calvary Chapel, James Ryle of the Vineyard churches, Andy Crouch, a senior editor of *Christianity Today*, Gloria Gaither, Mark Lowry (former singer with the Gaithers), Eugene Peterson, author of *The Message*, many Southern Baptists (such as Wade Burleson, pastor of Southern Baptist Emmanuel Baptist Church of Enid, Oklahoma), and others. Fundamentally, *The Shack* is about redefining God. In a 2007 interview, Young told about a woman who wrote to him and said that her 22-year-old daughter came to her





after reading the book and asked, “IS IT ALL RIGHT IF I DIVORCE THE OLD GOD AND MARRY THE NEW ONE?” Young therefore admits that the God of *The Shack* is different from the traditional God of Bible-believing Christianity. He says that the God who “judges sin” is “a Christianized version of Zeus.” In *The Shack*, Young depicts the triune God as a young Asian woman named “Sarayu” (supposedly the Holy Spirit, but the name is from the Hindu scriptures and represents a mythical river in India on the shores of which the Hindu god Rama was born), an oriental carpenter who loves to have a good time (supposedly the Son of God), and an older black woman named “Elousia” and “Papa” (supposedly God the Father). Young’s god is the god of the emerging church. He is cool, loves rock & roll, is non-judgmental, does not exercise wrath toward sin, does not send unbelievers to an eternal fiery hell, does not require repentance and the new birth, puts no obligations on people, doesn’t like traditional Bible churches, and does not accept the Bible as the infallible Word of God. (For a more extensive review of *The Shack*, see “[The Shack’s Cool God](#)” at www.wayoflife.org.)

QUEEN ELIZABETH I’S CORONATION AND THE ENGLISH BIBLE (Friday Church News Notes,



November 3, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - “Queen Elizabeth passed through London to the august ceremony in great state [1558]; and emblematical pageants were erected in different parts of the city. In Cheapside, one was exhibited which must have been peculiarly gratifying to the friends of the Reformation, from the manner in which it was received by the queen. It exhibited Time coming out of a cave, and leading a person clothed in white silk, who represented Truth, his daughter. Truth had the English Bible in her hand, on which was written VERBUM VERITATIS [the Word of Truth]. On the approach of Elizabeth, Truth addressed her, and presented her with the book. The queen kissed it, held it in her hands, laid it on her breast, greatly thanked the city for their present, and added that she would often and diligently read it” (James Townley, *Illustrations of Biblical Literature Exhibiting the History and Fate of the Sacred Writings*, 1842, Vol. II, p. 287, citing Burnet’s *History of the Reformation*).

LETTERS TO GOD (Friday Church News Notes, November 10, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Hundreds of letters arrive annually in Jerusalem addressed simply to “God.” They are collected by the Israel Postal Service, and once a year they are taken to the Western Wall of the Temple Mount (“Letters to God,” *Israel Today*, Nov. 2017). Before that, though, each one is opened and read by the Israel Ministry of Religious Affairs. Not surprisingly, most reflect gross biblical ignorance. The writers are seeking God’s blessing in general or requesting God’s help with some mundane problem. A person in South Africa asked for “food, a car, a livelihood, and a just divorce.” A woman requested that God would ask her deceased father to forgive her and be reconciled to her. A woman from Arizona wrote, “Actually, I believe in Jesus, but that doesn’t make any difference, I would also like to receive



blessings from You, O God.” Obviously she doesn’t have a clue who Jesus is or who God is, for that matter. Jesus said, “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9), and, “I and my father are one” (John 10:30).

ANGLICAN CHURCH BANS “ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS” (Friday Church News Notes, November 10, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - A Church of England congregation banned “Onward, Christian Soldiers” at a service this weekend so as not to “offend” non-Christians. St. Peter’s Church in Oadby, Leicester, dropped the song from the annual Remembrance Sunday service which commemorates British war dead (“Church Bans Singing ‘Onward Christian Soldiers,’” *Christian Post*, Oct. 29, 2017). The song was previously sung as a tradition. Some members planned to stay outside the service and sing the song in protest, but it is an exercise in vanity, in our opinion, since it’s obvious that it has been a very long time since any true Christian soldiers have occupied pews in that “church.”





JOHN DENVER'S APPOINTMENT WITH THE GOSPEL (Friday Church News Notes, November 10, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "John Denver's Opportunity Lost?" by Bill Fay, Baptist Press, Feb. 4, 2010: "One day in a frequent flyer room, I looked over and saw John Denver. It was pretty obvious with his distinct features and signature guitar that it was him. I went over and said, 'John!' He jumped up, stuck out his hand and said, 'I haven't seen you in a while.' I said, 'No sir, we've never met. But I am a man who's prayed for you for over five years, and I have a message for you from your dead father, Dutch.' You see, years earlier, in the height of my pagan lifestyle, John Denver's father was the co-pilot on the Learjet that used to fly me around the country to do my illegal mob business. His father--whose hand I held when he surrendered his life to Jesus Christ--made me promise that one day I would share with his son. I said, 'Dutch, if God provides the moment, the privilege is mine.' Now it looked like the moment was going to come. I met with John in a private room in the Denver airport for the better part of two hours. I took him line by line through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There wasn't a single verse of Scripture he did not understand--nor was there a single verse of Scripture that he would accept. Finally, I said, 'John, when did you make up your mind Jesus Christ would never become your Lord and your Savior?' He could remember the date, the time and the place. A godly Sunday School teacher, like some of you, said to him Jesus Christ was The Way, The Truth and The Life. I left with a

saddened heart, tears in my eyes."
CONCLUDING NOTE FROM BROTHER CLOUD: John Denver's folk-rock music had an impact on me as a lost person. His song "Rocky Mountain High" refers to being "born again" through communion with nature (probably with a little help from drugs), and apparently, that's the only "born again" that John Denver ever experienced. He died at age 53. When the song was released in 1972, I was hitchhiking across America in a restless search for a nameless "something." On that journey I encountered Hinduism and joined the Self-Realization Fellowship Society, but it was empty. I had studied Christian Science, and it, too, was empty. I traveled the length of America the beautiful, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and explored California from the seashore to the Sierra Nevadas, but gorgeous scenery and a nature high and "foot loose" travel didn't satisfy. Thankfully I found the new birth in Jesus Christ the summer of 1973, and I've never looked back. Before, I served the creature more than the Creator, but the creation was made to enjoy, not worship, and there is no deep satisfaction there. The Creator is far more lovely than the creation, and man's purpose is to know and love Him.

LESSONS FROM PRENATAL SURGERY (Friday Church News Notes, November 10, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - *The New York Times* recently reported on a prenatal surgery to repair a defect called spina bifida (the spinal column doesn't close properly). Doctors had urged the parents, Lexi and Joshuwa Royer, to abort the baby, citing the likelihood of a "decreased quality of life." Instead, they opted for prenatal surgery. During the three-hour procedure, the doctor opened Mrs. Royer's abdomen, eased the uterus out of her body, inserted a fetoscope and surgical tools through slits, and operated on the 24-week-old. The amniotic fluid was drained and carbon dioxide inserted



to keep the uterus expanded, allowing the surgeon to see better and cauterize tissue. There are many lessons that can be drawn from this event. First, we commend the Royers for not aborting their baby. The Bible teaches that God is the author of conception (Genesis 29:31; 30:22; Ruth 4:13) and He forms the baby in the womb (Psalm 139). Second, the mother's willingness to risk her life for the baby's well-being, an act of selfless love, reminds us that we are made in God's image and retain a semblance of that image, though fallen. One of the doctors assisting with the surgery observed that "fetal surgery is one of the few operations with a 200 percent risk of mortality." Third, modern medical technology itself is evidence that man is made in God's image and is not part of the animal kingdom. Fourth, belief in God gives people a different and better perspective on life. Mrs. Royer's mother said that even though they know that the baby will probably have some degree of disability, "[W]e're strong believers in God and we're at peace; this baby is going to be so loved; we just don't care" ("Reporting from the Operating Room as Doctors Perform Fetal Surgery," *The New York Times*, Oct. 24, 2017).

BRITISH GOVERNMENT WANTS "PREGNANT WOMAN" LANGUAGE TO BE INCLUSIVE (Friday Church News Notes, November 10, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Men Get Pregnant Too, British Government Declares!" *The Daily Caller*, Oct. 23, 2017: "The phrase 'pregnant woman' needs to be more inclusive and termed



‘pregnant people’ in a U.N. treaty, the British government announced on Monday. The British government’s suggestion on proposed amendments to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights claim the wording excludes pregnant transgender people. The treaty says ‘pregnant women’ are protected and not subject to the death penalty, reported *The Times*. The current terminology excludes transgender people who have given birth, The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) claims. ‘We requested that the U.N. human rights committee made it clear that the same right extends to pregnant transgender people,’ FCO officials told *The Times*. There are two transgender men on record in the U.K. who have given birth after having a sex change. The biological women kept their womb and ovaries during the change, according to the Sunday report. ... The British government is also considering to remove a census question asking citizens to identify gender and biological sex for the 2021 census.”

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY HAND WASHING STUDY (Friday Church News Notes, November 10, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - A scientific study this year by researchers



at Rutgers University found that even 10 seconds of hand washing with soap has a major benefit in the removal of harmful bacteria. The study, published in the June issue of the *Journal of Food Protection*, used 20 participants and measured the degree of bacterial removal under various washing circumstances. The conclusion is that the temperature of the water made no significant difference, but a simple routine of washing with soap makes a big difference. The soap does not kill the bacteria; the washing process removes them from the hands. The conclusion: “Overall, the length of lather time and volume of soap used did not make a large difference, but a minimum of 0.5 mL of soap and 10 seconds of lather time is recommended based on our findings. Lotion use by the volunteers had an effect on the results; microbial reduction was greater for volunteers that used lotion regularly.” Ten seconds of lathering with soap is equal to singing one stanza of “Happy Birthday to You.”

MIDDLE AGE DEPICTIONS OF DINOSAURS (Friday Church News Notes, November 10, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Two depictions of dinosaurs from the Middle Ages can be found at a Buddhist temple at Angkor in Cambodia and on the tomb of Bishop Richard Bell at Carlisle Cathedral in England. The depiction at the Ta Prohm temple in Angkor, dating to about AD 1200, is of a creature that looks exactly like a stegosaur, though other theories of what the carving depicts have been proposed. “The simplest explanation is that the carving at Ta Prohm is a stylized representation of a dinosaur of the Stegosauridae family. In other words it is an artist’s version of what the creature looked like, not a scientist’s version. However, the main elements for a stegosaurian dinosaur are clearly depicted: namely the strongly arched back and dinosaurian body, and, crucially, the plates along the back of the animal. No other creature known, fossil or living, has a row of such characteristic



plates along its back” (“Did Angkor Really See a Dinosaur?” *Creation Magazine*, April 2013). The brass decorations of Richard Bell’s tomb, dating to AD 1496, contain a depiction of what appear to be two dinosaurs. “On one engraving the creatures have an unmistakable resemblance to certain dinosaurs. Yet how could that be, since the bishop’s tomb was sealed and decorated over three centuries before the fossil bones of such creatures were systematically dug up, described and named? ... Although dinosaurs appear to be extinct today, it would not be very surprising if some kinds had survived until quite recently. ... [The engraving] shows two dinosaurs engaged in a struggle (or perhaps courtship). [One is] like recent reconstructions of sauropod dinosaurs, e.g. *Apatosaurus*. It is portrayed with its neck positioned horizontally, instead of raised aloft as palaeontologists (scientists who study fossils) believed until quite recently. Similarly, its tail is suspended, rather than lying on the ground as all but the most recent sauropod reconstructions incorrectly show” (“Bishop Bell’s Brass Behemoths,” *Creation Magazine*, September 2003).

SPECTACULAR PHOTO OF ISRAEL FROM SPACE (Friday Church News Notes, November 17, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - U.S. Astronaut Randy Bresnik, current commander of the International Space Station, took a spectacular photo of Israel on November 11. Looking from the northeast, it shows the nation of Jordan (which was created by Winston Churchill in 1921), then all of Israel from the south slope of Mt.



Hermon in the north to Eilat on the Red Sea (the tip of the Gulf of Aqaba is visible on the extreme left of the photo). Beyond Israel is nearly all of the Sinai Peninsula, with the Nile delta, the Suez Canal, and the Gulf of Suez in the distance. Haifa on the west slope of Mt. Hermon west of the Sea of Galilee is clearly seen. Also visible are Tel Aviv and Joppa on the coast and Jerusalem a bit west of the north end of the Dead Sea. The view will be very different in Christ's kingdom, as the desert will blossom as the rose, and the glory of Jerusalem and the Millennial Temple will be visible. NASA uses Nikon cameras.

SHOUTING THE BILL NYE LINE

(Friday Church News Notes, November 17, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - A homeschooling group in Canada has been criticized for inviting creationist Ken Ham to speak at an upcoming program. After the Alberta Home Education Association (AHEA) announced its invitation of Mr. Ham as one of three keynote speakers for its April 2018 convention, an anti-creationism activist has loudly denounced the group as "anti-science" ("Top U.S. creationist's invitation," www.cbc.ca, Nov. 8, 2017). The activist,



who says that he rejected creationism after studying "the facts," calls Mr. Ham a "science denier" because he denies evolution. The activist wants to spare children from "being kind of behind in life" by following "backwards teachings," which is the view popularized by Bill Nye. We find it interesting that evolution would be equated with science, and we would ask to be shown the scientifically proven facts for the following evolutionary claims: That everything came from nothing; that the *nothing* that existed before everything wasn't actually *nothing*; that a well-ordered universe arose from disorder; that life sprang from non-life; that mind-bogglingly complex things such as the living cell and the human brain came about by the processes of natural selection and genetic mutation. We would like for someone to explain the scientifically proven basis for believing that design points to a designer in the realm of human life, but not in the realm of biology. And we would like to be shown why it is considered scientific to shut down inquiry and allow only one position to be heard.

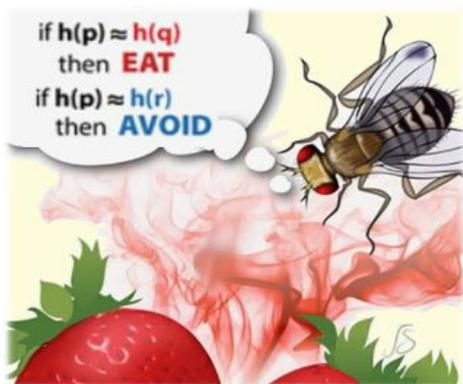
NORTH KOREA'S INTERNET

(Friday Church News Notes, November 17, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "North Korea's internet is as weird as you think it is," Associated Press, Nov. 10, 2017: "The free flow of information is anathema to authoritarian regimes, and with the possible exception of the African dictatorship of Eritrea, North Korea is still the least Internet-friendly country on Earth. Access to the global Internet for most is unimaginable. Hardly anyone has a personal computer or an email address that isn't shared, and the price for trying to get around the government's rules can be severe. But for Kim Jong Un, the country's first leader to come of age with the Internet, the idea of a more wired North Korea is also attractive. It comes with the potential for great benefits to the nation from information technology--and for new



forms of social and political control ... Pyongyang's solution is a two-tiered system where the trusted elite can surf the Internet with relative freedom while the masses are kept inside the national intranet, painstakingly sealed off from the outside world, meticulously surveilled and built in no small part on pilfered software. ... There are very few actual sites on Kwangmyong [the name of N. Korea's intranet, meaning 'light']. An official at the Sci-Tech Center said they number 168. They are spread across separate networks for government agencies, schools and libraries, and companies. ... Versions of Red Star [N. Korea's computer operating system] that have made it out of North Korea and into the hands of foreign coding experts also reveal some rather sinister, and for most users invisible, features. ... Red Star uses a trace viewer that takes regular screenshots of what is being displayed. The screenshots can't be deleted or accessed by the typical user but are available for checking if a trained government official decides to take a look. ... The most common online experience for North Koreans isn't on a laptop or desktop. It's on a smart phone. A decade ago, only a small cadre of select regime and military officials had access to smart phones. ... now there are an estimated 2.5-3 million mobile phones in North Korea, a country of 25 million. ... Like the walled-off intranet, North Korea's phones deny access to the outside world. ... Wi-fi use is banned for North Koreans, and tightly restricted and monitored to block surreptitious piggybacking on foreigners' signals."

BLIND LUCK SMARTER THAN TOP PROGRAMMERS (Friday



Church News Notes, November 17, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - New research has discovered that fruit flies have an “incredibly smart method to categorize smells which lets them recognize differences with a very fine level of accuracy” (“Patterns in Fruit Fly Brains Could Soon Power Your Netflix Recommendations,” *Science Alert*, Nov. 11, 2017). The research was done by a team from the University of California San Diego (UCSD) and the Salk Institute for Biological Studies. Fruit flies are able to identify and categorize odors and associated behaviors (e.g., good to eat, must avoid) with great precision. Its brain has 2,000 neurons that “give each smell a distinct ID,” but only the top 5 percent of those are stored so that the fly can quickly sort through a great number of odors and associations. It turns out that this method is more effective than that which is currently used by services like Netflix and Spotify and YouTube to power their retrieval systems (e.g., labeling and sorting movies). “In a series of tests on three standard datasets commonly used by computer scientists, the fly method significantly outperformed basic locality-sensitive hashing.” Saket Navlakha of Salk says, “Pieces of this approach had been used in the past by computer scientists, but evolution put it together in a very unique way” (Ibid., *Science Alert*). Evolution put it together? Evolution put together a brilliant algorithm in the the brain of a fruit fly? This “evolution” thing must be very God-like. Natural selection and mutations couldn’t possibly explain such a thing.

PRAYER AT THE RIVER JABBOK (Friday Church News Notes, November 17, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - A couple of years ago I stood at the Jabbok River in Jordan not far from Israel’s border and considered Jacob’s experience there 3,700 years ago. It was at the river Jabbok that Jacob wrestled with the angel of the Lord all night (Ge. 32:22-30). Compare Hosea 12:4--“He had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him.” Jacob knew that “the man” in this scene was the Lord (Ge. 32:30). He knew that he was wrestling with God. The Bible says that Jacob saw God face to face. Jacob was supplicating with God (Ho. 12:4). It was the wrestling of prayer. *It is a lesson of getting hold of God for blessing and help.* Jacob refused to let the Lord go unless He blessed Him (Ge. 32:26). Unlike his brother Esau, Jacob valued spiritual things. He *wanted* God’s help and blessing. Though a schemer by nature, Jacob looked to God in his trouble. *This is also the example of persistence in prayer.* Jacob refused to let go. Compare Luke 18:1. It is a picture of asking and continuing to ask, seeking and continuing to seek, knocking and continuing to knock (Mt. 7:7). *This is the lesson of fervency in prayer.* Jacob wept (Ho. 12:4). He was not just talking with God; he was wrestling with God; he was holding on to God. Compare Jas. 5:16. *This is also a lesson about God’s amazing character.* God *allowed* Jacob to wrestle with him all night. Can man really wrestle with the omnipotent God? Only if God allows it, but God has humbled Himself to relate with man *as Man*. This is the mystery of the incarnation. A man *can* wrestle with



God in prayer and can “prevail” if he does so in faith and in accordance with God’s will. It was at Jabbok that God changed Jacob’s name to *Israel*, meaning “having power with God” (Ge. 32:27-28). By nature, Jacob was a schemer, sinful and weak and self-centered, but he was a man of faith and prayer and that is what made him *Israel*.

CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANS LOVING THE WORLD PASSIONATELY (Friday Church News Notes, November 24, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - We received some timely information and video clips this week from Jeff Royal that dramatically illustrates the worldliness of many contemporary churches. The first video clip Jeff sent is of “Christian entertainer” Tim Hawkins singing “On Eagles’ Wings” during a concert late last year. Hawkins says he used to sing this song at church youth camp. It is a combination of “Amazing Grace” by John Newton and “Peaceful Easy Feeling” popularized by the secular rock band the Eagles. Hawkins sings it as a tribute to the late Glenn Frey, founding member and lead singer of the Eagles. This is an illicit and wicked merger of Christ and the world. “Peaceful Easy Feeling” is about romance and fornication. The lyrics begin, “I like the way your sparklin’ earrings lay against your skin so brown; I want to sleep with you in the desert tonight with a billion stars all around.” The singer is not talking about holy matrimony, friends! John Newton represented the “old” born again conversion Christianity that dramatically changes one’s life and turns one *from* love of the world *to* love of the holy Christ. But Tim Hawkins represents a “new” Christianity that is described in 2 Timothy 4:3-4, a live after your own lusts Christianity. The second video clip that Jeff sent was of a church using “On Eagles’ Wings” in a worship service. There was nothing righteous about the Eagles; their influence on society was evil. Some of their hit songs are “Witchy Woman,” “Chug All Night,” “Take the

Devil,” “Tequila Sunrise,” “Good Day in Hell,” “Journey of the Sorcerer.” After the Eagles broke up in 1980, Frey pursued a solo career with hits such as “Sexy Girl” and “The Heat Is On.” God plainly commands His people to not love the world (1 John 2:15-17), to be not conformed to the world (Romans 12:1-2), to not be the friend of the world (James 4:4), and to have no fellowship with the darkness of the world (Ephesians 5:11), but contemporary churches *brazenly* ignore these warnings. In fact, love of the world is one of their chief characteristics. They love the world’s music, the world’s attitude, the world’s fashions, the world’s entertainment, and the world’s “judge not” philosophy. They sing of “grace,” but it is not biblical grace. It is Antinomian license. The true grace of God is defined in Titus 2:11-14. The true grace of God doesn’t save the sinner so that he can love the world; it saves the sinner so that he will “deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.” Contemporary Christian Music is a major bridge to the “contemporary church,” and pastors that are not properly educating their people on this issue and effectually fighting this battle are bridge builders.

TRUMP STATE DEPARTMENT C O M M E M O R A T E S “TRANSGENDER DAY” (Friday Church News Notes, November 24, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “State Dept. Marks ‘Transgender Day of Remembrance,’” CNSNews.com, Nov. 20, 2017: “The State Department on Monday commemorated Transgender Day of Remembrance, honoring



transgenders who died through ‘acts of violence.’ ‘On Transgender Day of Remembrance, the United States honors the memory of the many transgender individuals who have lost their lives to acts of violence,’ Secretary of State Rex Tillerson [a member of a Congregational church] said in a statement. ‘Transgender individuals and their advocates, along with lesbian, gay, bisexual and intersex persons, are facing increasing physical attacks and arbitrary arrests in many parts of the world. Often these attacks are perpetrated by government officials, undermining the rule of law,’ Tillerson added. He said, ‘[the] transgender person should not be subjected to violence or discrimination, and the human rights they share with all persons should be respected.’ Tillerson said the U.S. is ‘committed to advancing the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons.’” **CONCLUDING NOTE:** When homosexuals get special rights, Bible-believing Christians lose their rights to freedom of religion and freedom of speech.

CHILDREN BAD FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (Friday Church News Notes, November 24, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - In an opinion piece for NBC News, Travis Rieder presents a case that the number of children should be restricted in order to save the world from climate change. He writes, “A startling and honestly distressing view is beginning to receive serious consideration in both academic and popular discussions of climate change ethics. According to this view, having a child is a major contributor to climate change. The logical takeaway here is that everyone on Earth ought to consider having few children” (“Science Proves Kids Are Bad for Earth,” *NBC News*, Nov. 15, 2017). A couple of years ago, the *Boston Globe* ran an article entitled “Here’s why China’s one-child policy was a good thing” by Sarah Conly. The thesis is that world population is increasing too rapidly and “trying to support this many people will

Science proves kids are bad for Earth.
Morality suggests we stop having them.



bring about environmental disaster.” This crowd has been predicting disaster since Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*, but Carson was a false prophet, and the doomsayers who have followed in her misguided footsteps are also false prophets. There is climate change, but it is not disastrous. Their gloomy predictions fail, but instead of admitting error and apologizing, they rush to issue yet another prediction of doom. One thing this crowd has in common is a strongly-held philosophy of evolution. They believe the universe, including man, happened by chance. But this would mean that there is no ultimate purpose in life, and no absolute basis for “ethics.” Talk of “ethics” by evolutionists is a ridiculous exercise in vanity. If the earth evolved, it is a meaningless sphere in a meaningless universe populated by meaningless creatures. It will die one way or the other, why not by global warming? The opinion piece by Rieder is published by a segment of *NBC News* called “Think.” We would challenge them to think much deeper. It is impossible to understand life apart from a knowledge of the Creator as revealed in Scripture. There we find the truth that “the earth *is* the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein” (Psalm 24:1).

HILLSONG PASTOR REFUSED TO CONDEMN ABORTION (Friday Church News Notes, November 24, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - In a recent interview, Carl Lentz, co-pastor of Hillsong New York, refused to condemn abortion as sin. When Lentz was asked whether he believes abortion is wrong. He replied, “That’s the kind of



conversation we would have finding out your story, where you're from, what you believe. I mean, God's the judge. People have to live to their own convictions" ("Hillsong Pastor," ChristianHeadlines.com, Nov. 7, 2017). This is moral relativism. The man is not a Bible preacher; he's a psychological therapist. Every preacher is commanded to reprove, rebuke, and exhort (2 Timothy 4:2). All of God's people are commanded, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11). As for God being the judge, how true that is. He *is* the Judge, and He has already judged on this issue. Consider some clear and simple biblical truths: First, God is in control of conception (Genesis 20:18; 29:31; 30:22). Second, God forms the child in the womb (Psalm 139:13-16). Third, God forbids man to shed innocent blood (Deuteronomy 19:10-13; 2 Kings 21:16). Fourth, the unborn is not a "fetus"; it is called a "child" and an "infant" in the Bible (Genesis 25:22; Job 3:16). Fifth, God's law requires punishment if an unborn child is harmed (Exodus 21:22-23). The Bible teaches that the unborn child does not belong to the mother; it belongs to the Creator. The infant in a woman's womb is a separate body and a separate life. In an interview with CNN in 2014, Laura Lentz, Carl's wife and "co-pastor," spoke to the issue of homosexuality by saying, "It's not our place to tell anyone how they should live, it's--that's their journey." In their haste to be the world's friend, Hillsong has made itself the enemy of God (James 4:4). They are the poster child for the apostasy described in 2 Timothy 4:3-4. "For the time will come when they will

not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

ATHEIST CONVENTION CANCELLED FOR LACK OF INTEREST

(Friday Church News Notes, November 24, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - According to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the third annual Global Atheist Convention has been cancelled for lack of interest. Scheduled for February 2018 in Sydney, the convention was to feature Salmon Rushdie and Richard Dawkins. Rushdie and Dawkins fail to distinguish between dead "religion," including dead Christianity, and the truth of Jesus Christ, whose resurrection from the dead was witnessed by hundreds and has dramatically changed the lives of multitudes of people such as the apostle Paul, formerly a persecutor of Christians.



The lack of enthusiasm for the convention is not surprising. The proposed theme was "Reason to Hope," but what "hope" is in atheism? Its gospel is "you came from nothing; you are nothing; your life has no ultimate meaning; and you are going nowhere."

PREPARING OIL FOR THE TEMPLE MENORAH

(Friday Church News Notes, November 24, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The Mount Zion Group is preparing special olive oil in preparation for the Third Temple. "The oil-making is part of an ongoing effort by the Mount Zion



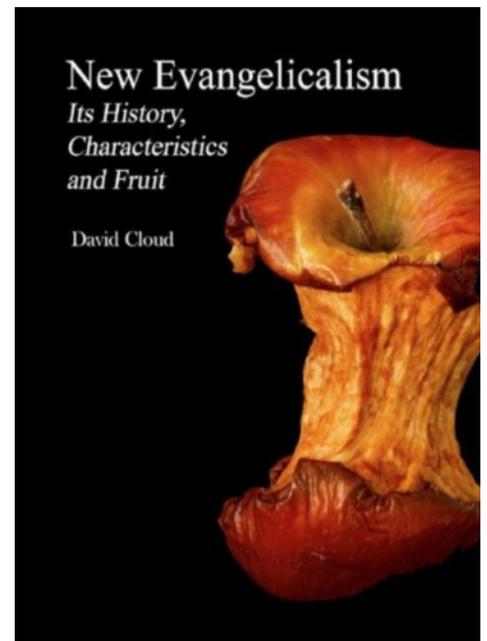
Association to recreate Temple rituals and become familiar with them in every detail, so they can be reinstated without delay, should the need arise in the near future" ("Sanhedrin/Mount Zion Group Prepares Oil," BreakingIsraelNews, Nov. 16, 2017). The oil is made from trees in Amona in the territory of the tribe of Benjamin. The oil is made by beating, as per the instructions in Exodus 27:20, as opposed to the normal method of crushing and pressing. Olive oil comes from the olive seed, not from the meat or pulp. Beating the olives produces oil in less quantity but of a superior quality. About 450 pounds of olives produces 25 quarts of oil. The preparation for the Third Temple is in high gear. The Temple Institute and others will tell you that they do not know how it will be built, but they are sure that it will be built and they sense that the time is drawing near. Not believing Bible prophecy, they do not know that the Third Temple will be occupied by the Antichrist. See Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-9. Revelation chapter 11 describes the measuring of the temple during the ministry of the Two Witnesses who will prophesy during the first 3.5 years of the Antichrist's reign during which a peace covenant will be in effect.

PRACTICAL BOOK ON NEW EVANGELICALISM WITH REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TRAINING

(Friday Church News Notes, November 17, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Church members are confronted with New Evangelical philosophy on every hand, including through nationally-syndicated radio personalities, the local

bookstore, and Internet blogs. To be ignorant of the insidious and pervasive nature of New Evangelicalism is to be unprepared to identify and resist it, yet, large numbers of Bible-believing Christians know little or nothing about it. Hosea 4:6 warns, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...” Large numbers of formerly “fundamentalist” churches have capitulated to a New Evangelical philosophy in the past 15 years. The book [*New Evangelicalism: Its History, Characteristics, and Fruit*](#) documents THE HISTORY AND SPREAD of New Evangelicalism since the 1950s and describes THE PRINCIPLES of New Evangelicalism in a practical manner so that church members can understand what it is. These principles include the following: New Evangelicalism is characterized by a repudiation of separation, by a love for positivism, by a repudiation of the more negative

aspects of biblical Christianity, by a judge-not philosophy, by a dislike of doctrinal controversy, by exalting love and unity above doctrine, by a desire for intellectual respectability, by pride of scholarship, by an attitude of anti-fundamentalism, by the division of biblical truth into categories of essential and non-essential, and by a general mood of softness and tolerance, of a desire for a less strict Christianity, and of a weariness with theological fighting. The book also describes THE APOSTATE FRUIT OF NEW EVANGELICALISM, which is admitted even by some of its own leaders. Its apostasy is seen in the questioning of biblical infallibility, in its ecumenicalism, in a dramatic downgrade in Christian morality and embracing of the world, and in its tolerance of heretics. The third edition, August 2017, includes an extensive set of review questions as a teaching tool. I have used this book and the review questions to help prepare



people for church membership when they are coming from a weak background. 219 pages. It is available as a free eBook at www.wayoflife.org.

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- 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)
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