

O Timothy

"Keep that which is committed to thy trust..."

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

Volume 38 - Issue 1 - January 2021



"America has been heavily influenced by the Bible, but she has never been a truly biblical nation or a truly godly nation. From the 17th century, America has always been a mixed multitude, and genuine born again Christians have been a small minority. What America has been above all else is a land of freedom: an unprecedented haven of personal liberty to pursue one's individual dream." Page 2.

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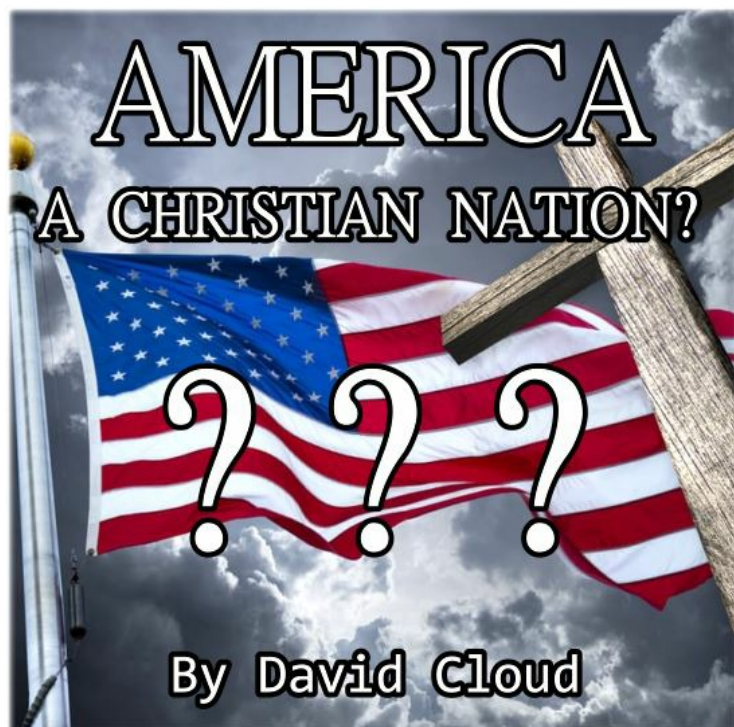


AMERICA A CHRISTIAN NATION? ~ By David Cloud

America is a nation deeply influenced by Christianity and the Bible, but this does not add up to a "Christian nation."

I love America, and I love American history, and I have read widely on this subject, including many dozens of biographies of America's most influential early leaders as well as more recent ones.

It can surely be said that America is a *Christianized* nation in the sense that there has always been a strong Christian influence, using the term "Christian" in a general sense. America has been a nation of churches, a nation of Bible owners, a nation of Bible readers, a nation that has witnessed powerful spiritual revivals, a nation of far-flung, unprecedented and unequalled missionary enterprise, a nation in which the president takes his oath of office with his hand on a Bible. America is a nation whose founding institutions and authoritative documents have been deeply influenced by the Bible.



(We have documented the Bible's powerful influence on America in the new book [The Bible and Western Society](#), available in print and in a free eBook edition from Way of Life Literature.)

But America was never a Christian nation in the sense that she was a nation in which true Bible-believing Christians ever formed a large percentage of the population, or in the sense that she was a nation submitted to God's Word, or that she was a nation that existed for the glory of God.

America has been heavily influenced by the Bible, but she has never been a truly biblical nation or a truly godly nation. From the 17th century, America has always been a mixed multitude, and genuine born again Christians have been a small minority.

What America has been above all else is a land of freedom: an unprecedented haven of personal liberty to pursue one's individual dream.

Many came to America for religious freedom, but more came purely for personal freedom and economic opportunity.

For this reason it has rightly been said that "the United States is both the most religious nation on earth and the

most secular, the most devout and the most commercial" (John Gordon, *An Empire of Wealth*, p. xvii).

And this was true from its inception. The first Americans were "a colony of adventurers" who represented a bewildering assortment of nationalities and religious views and who came for all sorts of reasons. The first colonies were at least as much about commerce as about God.

Even those who came to America for religious freedom, such as the Pilgrims, came for economic opportunity as well. America has always been pre-eminently a nation of enterprise and commerce.

The Jamestown Colony was founded by the English government as a profit-seeking, joint-stock corporation. The first settlers arrived in 1607, and within a mere eleven years, 20,000 pounds of tobacco were being grown and shipped to England, and within twenty-two years that had leaped to an amazing 1.5 million pounds.

Maryland was formed as a grant from King Charles I. Its Toleration Act of 1649 was the first passed by a colonial assembly to guarantee the religious rights of all Christians, including Roman Catholics and Jews. But religious liberty was only a small part of that enterprise, and Bible-believing Christians have never formed a large percentage of the citizenry of that part of America.

The colony of Carolina quickly became an economic powerhouse, driven by sugar, tobacco, rice, indigo, and deer skins, driven by a mixed multitude of citizens, both religious and profane. It wasn't a very godly place and it's hard to say how it could have been called a Christian colony by any biblical measure.

The first governor of South Carolina, John Yeamans, was a ruthless, covetous man who had murdered a rival and married the man's widow.

New York originated as a Dutch colony in 1621 called the New Netherlands. It was religiously tolerant but definitely not godly and biblical. It was all about unbridled capitalism. So busy were the early citizens engaged in making money that they didn't get around to building a church house for 17 years. The colony seal was a beaver encircled by wampum, which was the Indian form of money. It might as well have been the symbol for mammon! Manhattan was a real Babel with 18

O TIMOTHY Magazine

Volume 38 Issue 1

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Subscription information on
back page of the magazine

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languages spoken by the 1640s, representing a mixed multitude of religion and no religion.

Pennsylvania was established as a haven of religious liberty by the Quaker William Penn, but it was just as much about unbridled enterprise. Penn said, “Though I desire to extend Religious freedom, yet I want some recompense for my trouble.” There was some real godliness and biblical reality in the colony, but that was not the only theme and perhaps not even the dominant one. Pennsylvania was a land of liberty and opportunity for all who could make the most of it. There was more “dog eat dog” than true Christian godliness.

The Puritans who first settled New England to build a “city on a hill” were there to obey God’s commandments, there can be no doubt. They were the Bible readers and the Bible educators and the Bible printers, but they never formed any sort of majority in American society at large.

Many other parts of the nation were more like the wild west even during the colonial era. In fact, the word “cowboy” was invented in South Carolina to describe rowdy black slaves who branded and herded cattle.

Consider the Revolutionary army under George Washington. In July 1779, the great general bemoaned the fact that even though many orders had been issued against swearing, “it prevails, if possible, more than ever” (Jerry Newcombe, *George Washington’s Sacred Fire*).

How does that reflect the moral character of a nation that can truly and honestly be called “Christian”?

In the very lifetime of George Washington, American politics had degenerated into the selfish, petty, power-hungry, covetous, divisive thing it has been ever since.

“In July 1799 Governor Jonathan Trumbull of Connecticut with the backing of many Federalists urged Washington once again to stand for the presidency in 1800. Only Washington, Trumbull said, could unite the Federalists and save the country from ‘a French President.’ Finally Washington had had enough. ... he talked about the new political conditions that made his candidacy irrelevant. In this new democratic era of party politics, he said, ‘personal influence,’ distinctions of character, no longer mattered. If the members of the Jeffersonian Republican party ‘set up a broomstick’ as candidate and called it ‘a true son of Liberty’ or ‘a Democrat’ or ‘any other epithet that will suit their purpose,’ it still would ‘command their votes in toto!’ But, even worse, he said, the same was true of the

Federalists. Party spirit now ruled all, and people voted only for their party candidate. Even if he were the Federalist candidate, Washington was ‘thoroughly convinced I should not draw a *single* vote from the anti-Federal side.’ Therefore his standing for election made no sense; he would ‘stand upon no stronger ground than any other Federal character well supported’” (Gordon Wood, “The Greatness of George Washington,” *The Virginia Quarterly*, Spring 1992).

The Bible has had a unique influence on America, but the Bible has never been the final authority in American government or culture.

As Pastor Dave Halyaman observes: “There was corruption, bickering, and a God-denying population in American in 1790. There MAY have been more dedicated believers then, but the major power-brokers before, during, and at the end of the Revolutionary War were still corrupt, humanistic men who put ‘nation’ before God.”

In fact, the idea that America is a Christian nation has brought reproach to the name of true Christianity throughout the world, because while many people have assumed that America is indeed a “Christian nation,” it has been obvious that America doesn’t act Christian as a nation and that the average American doesn’t live according to the precepts of the Bible.

While doing evangelistic work on a university campus in South Asia, I found that one of the chief arguments proposed against the gospel of Jesus Christ is America’s gross moral failings (some only perceived, but many real).

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN NATION?

Where in the New Testament do we even find the authority and pattern for a “Christian nation”?

The apostle Paul described three groups of people in the world today: Jews, Gentiles, and the church of God (1 Cor. 10:32). Gentiles are all of the people that aren’t Jews, and in the context of Paul’s statement, they are the unsaved Gentiles that aren’t part of the church.

The church of God is not a nation. It exists in the world today as Bible-believing congregations. In the apostolic writings we don’t read about a “a church of Asia” or “a church of Judea” or “a church of Macedonia” or “a church of Galatia,” but there were “churchES of Asia,” “churchES of Judea,” “churchES of Macedonia,” and “churchES of Galatia.”

The New Testament mentions Gentile governments as instruments of God (e.g., Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:12-15), but there is no mention of, or authority for, a “Christian nation.”

There never has been a time since 1776 when the majority of America’s citizens have been born again. Consider the following description of the state of Vermont soon after the Revolutionary War which was written by Nathan Perkins, a Congregational missionary who toured the state:

“About one quarter of the inhabitants and almost all of the men of learning are deists. I have rode more than 100 miles and seen no meeting house! ... Not more than 1/6 part of the families attend family prayer. About 1/2 would chose to have no Sabbath--no ministers--no religion--no heaven--no hell--no morality” (Willard Randall, *Ethan Allen: His Life and Times*, p. 619).

Not every state was in the same spiritual condition as Vermont in those days, but still, Vermont was very much a part of the newly-formed nation of America.

Does that add up to a “Christian nation”?

We must not confuse the founding of Plymouth Colony in the 17th century, which was established somewhat upon biblical principles*, with the broader America that existed during the colonial period or with the founding of the nation in the 18th century. (* Even the biblical principles of the original Christian colonies were corrupted by Reformed Theology, Replacement Theology, the church-state heresy, and the spirit of persecution that Protestants had brought out of Rome. See *The Protestant Persecution of Baptists*, a free eBook available at the Way of Life web site, www.wayoflife.org.)

THE NATION’S FOUNDERS

Most of the nation’s founders were Christian in name, but the evidence demonstrates that most of them were not born again. Many, in fact, were skeptics who were under God’s curse for their blatant unbelief and their rejection of Almighty God, the Fall, and Christ’s Divinity, Atonement, and Resurrection. They were wise men in a worldly sense, and even good in a worldly sense, and they were deeply influenced by the Bible. The Lord raised them up and gave them the wisdom to create a unique nation that has been a bastion of liberty and a

headquarters for world evangelism and a helper of the nation Israel for nearly two and a half centuries.

America’s founders accomplished many great things from a worldly perspective, and it would be a powerful thing if their lives and writings were given more serious attention today throughout the nations and even in America’s own public schools. We can continue to benefit from the farsighted wisdom of these men.

Men such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Hamilton, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams should be upheld as the great men, pioneers, heroes, brilliant thinkers, and inventors that they were, and the fact that America’s educational system today slights and nitpicks and even viciously criticizes its own founders, judging them by the vapid principles of modern political-correctness, straining at gnats and swallowing camels, is evidence of the nation’s deep apostasy.

At the same time, most of America’s founders were not strong Bible-believing Christians, and some were, in fact, enemies of the cross of Jesus Christ. This has continued to be true throughout America’s history. Very few of America’s presidents, for example, have been born again Christians when measured by the standard of God’s Word.

How does this add up to a “Christian nation”?

Consider some examples among the founding fathers:

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Consider Thomas Jefferson, one of America’s greatest founders, the principal author of the Declaration of Independence, the first Secretary of State under George Washington, the third President of the United States, purchaser of the Louisiana Territory, and instigator of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

He said, “I am a Christian,” but this was only in the sense that he believed vaguely in the moral precepts of Jesus. He rejected such fundamentals of the Christian faith as the Trinity, Jesus’ deity and virgin birth, the Fall, the Blood atonement, and bodily resurrection, and the judgment of hell.

Jefferson wrote to John Adams and blasphemously compared Christ’s virgin birth with a pagan myth. “And

the day will come when the mystical generation of Jesus, by the supreme being as his father in the womb of a virgin, will be classed with the fable of the generation of Minerva in the brain of Jupiter” (Letter from Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, April 11, 1823).

Jefferson made his own “bible” by cutting out of Scripture everything pertaining to the divine and miraculous in Jesus’ life. This work began under the title “The Philosophy of Jesus of Nazareth” and was concluded in 1820 with the title “The Life and Morals of Jesus Christ Extracted Textually from the Gospels.”

This “Jefferson Bible” was compiled with extractions from the moral teaching of Jesus.

Jefferson wanted to extract “the authentic Jesus” from Scripture, but his Jesus was a false christ with no saving power, a mere great moral teacher who did not die for man’s sins and did not rise from the dead.

Jefferson claimed that the true teachings of Jesus were hidden in the “rubbish and dross of his biographers,” thus brazenly denying the New Testament’s own claim to divine inspiration.

Jefferson said that the Gospel writers added mythical accounts to Jesus’ actual actions and words. He called many parts of the Gospel accounts “so much ignorance, so much absurdity, so much untruth and imposture” (Jefferson’s letter to William Short, April 13, 1820, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, edited by Andrew Lipscomb, 1907).

Jefferson’s “bible” left out references to angels, prophecy, the Messianic genealogies, Christ’s deity, the virgin birth, and the Trinity. It blasphemously ends with Jesus’ dead body lying in the tomb, a blatant denial of the resurrection, without which we have no hope of salvation and eternal life. Jefferson’s unbelief and skepticism is no light matter.

Jefferson said that it is possible to believe that Christ was as “a man, of illegitimate birth, of a benevolent heart, enthusiastic mind, who set out without pretensions of divinity, ended in believing them, and was punished capitally for sedition by being gibbeted according to the Roman law” (Letter to Peter Carr, August 10, 1787). This was one of two views that Jefferson said might be legitimate (the other being that Jesus was the virgin born

Son of God) and instructed Carr not to “be frightened from this inquiry.” Jefferson didn’t care whether or not the young man rejected God’s Word. Belief or unbelief, it was all the same to this Founding Father.

Jefferson said his Bible was “an abridgment of the New Testament for the use of the Indians,” though it was never published in his lifetime or used for that purpose. Even had it been published for the education of Indians, it would have been a wicked work, as he removed the gospel, which alone is the power of God unto salvation” (Romans 1:16), and left only the Bible’s moral precepts, which are true and good, but which are powerless to save a fallen sinner.

Thomas Jefferson, one of America’s most prominent founders, was an enemy of Jesus Christ and His Cross.

Exactly what was “Christian” about that?

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Consider the brilliant, clever, and far-seeing Benjamin Franklin, who has been called “the first American” for the powerful influence that he had on the founding of the nation.

Franklin had sympathy toward “Christianity” as a system of morality, but he was an enemy of Christ’s atonement and of the divine inspiration of Scripture. In other words, he had a form of godliness but denied the power thereof, which is the essence of the end-time apostasy from which God’s people are to turn away (2 Timothy 3:5).

Franklin was not a bold skeptic. He did not brashly and publicly attack divine Revelation in public as Thomas Paine did, but he was a skeptic nonetheless.

Franklin wanted to maintain peace with men of all religious persuasions and did not want to rock the boat. At the end of his life he wrote to a friend and shared his disbelief in Christ’s divinity, but he concluded by asking him not to publish the letter, because, “I have ever let others enjoy their religious sentiments, without reflecting on them for those that appeared to me unsupportable and even absurd. All sects here [in America], and we have a great variety, have experienced my good will in assisting them with subscriptions for building their new places of worship; and as I have never opposed any of their doctrines, I hope to go out of the world in peace with them all” (H.W. Brands, *The First American*, p. 707).

Franklin was a pragmatist. On the one hand, he did not believe in the Bible's divine inspiration and did not believe in man's fall and salvation through Christ's atonement. On the other hand, he saw the necessity of maintaining religion and morality as the foundation for a healthy society. For this reason, he was somewhat ambivalent toward deism. He shared the deist's rejection of a divinely-inspired Bible, but he feared its consequences if men took deist doctrine to heart and followed its natural consequences, fearing the moral consequences on society.

Toward the end of his life Franklin tried to discourage a skeptic from publishing a dissertation against "organized religion" purely on the basis of pragmatism. He said, "Think how great a proportion of mankind consists of weak and ignorant men and women, and of inexperienced and inconsiderate youth of both sexes, who have need of the motives of religion to restrain them from vice, to support their virtue, and retain them in the practice of it till it becomes habitual. ... If men are so wicked as we now see them with religion, what would they be without it?" (*The First American*, p. 658).

When defending the Presbyterian heretic Samuel Hemphill, who was condemned for denying fundamental Bible doctrines and suspended from the ministry, Franklin wrote that no one in this world can know "where lies true orthodoxy," so the only thing that matters is "morality" (p. 143). He said, "I think vital religion has always suffered when orthodoxy is more regarded than virtue" (*The First American*, p. 153).

To reject the heart of the biblical Christianity, which is salvation through Jesus Christ, is to reject it all and is to destroy the power of true morality.

In fact, though Franklin praised "morality," he wasn't very moral. This is for the reason that true morality cannot be lived apart from supernatural salvation through faith in Christ's cross. Franklin was a womanizer from his youth to his old age and had a child out of wedlock. "As much of his adult life would demonstrate, Franklin possessed a lively libido, which now hindered faithfulness to one so far away, when other females were close at hand" (*The First American*, p. 64).

Ben Franklin's ultimate authority was his own mind rather than God's infallible Word. He was a proud man who exalted his puny intellect above God's Revelation.

Franklin's closest drinking buddies were such ribald anti-God skeptics as Charles Darwin's grandfather Erasmus and the movers and shakers among the Christ-denying Unitarians. He was drawn to the company of bitter skeptics such as Emmanuel Kant, David Hume, and the French poet Roucher.

While in France, Franklin was a member of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters, among the members of which were "the freest-thinkers in the realm."

Franklin was a great fan of the blasphemous French skeptic Voltaire. Instead of bringing his grandson Benny Bache to the feet of Jesus, Franklin sought Voltaire's blessing on the boy (*The First American*, p. 563). Not long before Voltaire died, Franklin publicly embraced and kissed the proud, morally filthy skeptic at a session of the French Academy of Sciences.

Franklin participated enthusiastically in a eulogy following Voltaire's death. It was held in a hall dressed in black and lit by candles. Franklin took his Masonic crown and laid it at the foot of a large painting of Voltaire (*The First American*, p. 565).

"Franklin attacked the notion of the immortality of the soul. He identified the soul with consciousness and the ability to treat ideas absorbed by the senses ('The soul is a mere power or faculty of contemplating on and comparing those ideas'), and then argued that when consciousness ended, the soul in some way attached itself to a new body and new ideas. 'But that will in no way concern us who are now living, for the identity will be lost; it is no longer that same self but a new being'" (*The First American*, p. 73).

"Temperamentally, Franklin was a skeptic rather than a rebel. ... When it surfaced during his teens, at a time when his reading was rapidly expanding his intellectual horizons, it made him increasingly dubious of biblical revelation. Why should God speak to one insignificant desert tribe, to the exclusion of the vast majority of the human race? Yet unwilling--and in those pre-Darwinian days intellectually unable--to dispense with divinity entirely, Franklin gravitated toward the mechanistic approach of deism. One book written against deism by the chemist Robert Boyle in fact pushed Franklin further in a deistic direction. 'The arguments of the deists which were quoted to be refuted,' he wrote, 'appeared to me much stronger than the refutations'" (*The First American*, p. 94).

“Franklin codified his new thinking in what he called his ‘Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion,’ dated November 20, 1728. Borrowing from Cato, he declared, ‘I hold: If there is a Power above us (and that there is all nature cries aloud, through all her works), He must delight in virtue, and that which He delights in must be happy.’ As the deists did, Franklin measured the immensity of the universe against the minuscule of the earth and the inhabitants thereof, and concluded from this that it was ‘great vanity in me to suppose that the Supremely Perfect does in the least regard such an inconsiderable nothing as man.’ Moreover, this Supremely Perfect had absolutely no need to be worshipped by humans; He was infinitely above such sentiments or actions. Yet if worship filled no divine purpose, it did serve a human need. ‘I think it seems required of me, and my duty as a man, to pay divine regards to *something*’” (*The First American*, pp. 94, 95).

Franklin believed in a type of reincarnation.

“When I see nothing annihilated, and not even a drop of water wasted, I cannot suspect the annihilation of souls, or believe that he will suffer the daily waste of millions of minds ready made that now exist, and put himself to the continual trouble of making new ones. Thus finding myself to exist in the world, I believe I shall, in some shape or other, always exist; and with all the inconveniences human life is liable to, I shall not object to a new edition of mine; hoping, however, that the errata of the last may be corrected” (*The First American*, p. 657).

At the end of this life, Franklin wrote the following to a friend who inquired as to his religious beliefs:

“As to Jesus of Nazareth, my opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think the system of morals and his religion, as he left them to us, the best the world ever saw or is likely to see; but I apprehend it has received various corrupting changes, and I have, with most of the present Dissenters in England, some doubts as to his divinity; though it is a question I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an opportunity of knowing the truth with less trouble. I see no harm, however, in its being believed, if that belief has the good consequences, as it probably has, of making his doctrines more respected and better observed, especially as I do not perceive that the Supreme takes it amiss, by distinguishing the unbelievers in his government of the world with any peculiar marks of his displeasure” (*The First American*, p. 706).

In regard to the preaching of Revivalists such as Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield, Franklin “was fairly

certain he was neither beast nor devil, and his view of fire and brimstone was purely scientific” (*The First American*, p. 147).

Franklin liked Whitefield at a personal level and printed his sermons, but “for Franklin this was principally a profit-making enterprise” (p. 148).

“Yet though Franklin supported Whitefield’s good works and defended his right to preach, he drew the line well short of his own conversion. Whitefield spared no effort on behalf of Franklin’s soul, but Franklin rebuffed them all. He was as skeptical of organized religion as ever, even religion that challenged prevailing orthodoxy” (*The First American*, p. 149).

At age 60, Franklin told George Whitefield that his hope was in “God” but it was a vain hope that was not based on the Bible but upon his own human reasoning. To reject Jesus Christ as God and only Saviour is to reject the God of the Bible.

“Throughout, however, Franklin’s God remained as reasonable as Franklin himself. ... Franklin replied [to Whitefield]: ‘That being who gave me existence, and through almost threescore years has been continually showering his favours upon me, whose very chastisements have been blessings to me, can I doubt that he loves me? And if he loves me, can I doubt that he will go on to take care of me not only here but hereafter? This to some may seem presumption; to me it appears the best grounded hope: hope of the future, built on experience of the past’” (*The First American*, p. 380).

This sounds reasonable, but in reality it is a brash rejection of the clear teaching of Scripture, which says that God is holy and fallen man can be reconciled to Him only through the atonement made by Jesus Christ.

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18).

Benjamin Franklin insisted on knowing God on his own terms and rejected his personal need of the Saviour.

Benjamin Franklin was most definitely a Christ-rejecting rationalist.

RICHARD HOOKER

Richard Hooker was a 16th century Anglican theologian who had a great influence on the American founders through his own writings and through his influence upon men such as William Blackstone and John Locke.

His view of “natural law” as the basis for human government, which was called “self-evident truth” by Thomas Jefferson, was heretical rather than sound doctrine.

While there is a law written in man’s heart, even in his fallen condition (Rom. 2:12-13), and it is enough to condemn him before God, it is corrupted by sin (Jer. 17:9). It is also corrupted by the invention and spread of false religion, and it is highly undependable. To know God’s moral laws properly, man is dependent on the written Revelation in Scripture.

Hooker “drew from Augustine and Aquinas” to describe the “law of nature” as “a moral law universally agreed upon by all men and able to be known from man’s reason.” He wrote,

“... those laws are investigable by reason, without the help of revelation, supernatural or divine. ... the knowledge of them is general, the world hath always been acquainted with them. ... It is not agreed upon by one, or two, or few, but by all. ... but this law is such that being proposed no man can reject it as unreasonable and unjust. Again there is nothing in it but any man, having natural perfection of wit and ripeness of judgment, may by labour and travail find out. And to conclude, the general principles thereof are such as it is not easy to find men ignorant of them. Law rational, therefore, which men commonly use to call the law of Nature, meaning thereby the law which human nature knoweth itself in reason universally bound unto, which also for that cause may be termed most fitly the law of reason, this law, I say, comprehendeth all those things which men by the light of their natural understanding evidently know, or at leastwise may know, to be beseeeming of unbeseeing, virtuous or vicious, good or evil for them to do” (Hooker, *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, 1593).

Hooker’s teaching is contrary to Scripture and even to human society as it existed in his own lifetime. For example, every sin was justified in Hindu society in the 16th century. They had “natural law,” but they did not

thereby find out a semblance of absolute moral truth. Every sin was justified, including idolatry, lying, stealing, murder, human sacrifice, infanticide, and the burning of widows. Such things conformed to the pagan’s “natural law” and religion.

To emphasize “natural law” in the way that Hooker and others did is to detract from the authority of Scripture.

This was also the error of John Locke.

ALGERNON SIDNEY

Algernon Sidney was an English political philosopher of the late 17th century who was put to death for allegedly plotting to overthrow the king.

Whether or not he was guilty of this, his writings certainly undermined the king’s authority, and they had a large influence on the American founders. His *Discourses Concerning Government* (1698) has been called “a textbook of revolution.” The Founding Fathers often mentioned the influence of John Locke and Algernon Sidney together. Thomas Jefferson cited Sidney as one of the influences on the Declaration of Independence and often recommended both Locke and Sidney. John Adams recognized the influence of Locke and Sidney in *A Defense of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America* (1787).

“In addition, Locke and Sidney were influential among the clergy and often cited in political sermons in Boston during the revolutionary era. Revolutionary clergyman Rev. Jonathan Mayhew, for example, was greatly influenced by Locke’s writings” (Angela Kamrath, *The Miracle of America*).

Sidney argued that “since all men are equal, earthly political power resided with the people--hence the concept of popular sovereignty” (Kamrath). In summarizing Sidney’s position, Kamrath says that he argued that “God does not assign absolute rulers or forms of government over men, but rather the choice of rulers and government belongs to the people or multitude, made up of men who are all equal in position. Earthly civil power is given by God to the people” (*The Miracle of America*).

Sidney cited Scripture and appeared to hold it as authoritative, but a careful analysis of his thinking shows

that he used Scripture as a “pretext” rather than a text. He did not interpret it properly within context.

He wrote, “The creature having nothing, and being nothing but what the Creator makes him, must owe all to him, and nothing to any one from whom he has received nothing. Man therefore must be naturally free unless he be created by another power than we have yet heard of. ... This liberty must continue, till it be either forfeited or willingly resigned.”

There is no biblical support for this. It is human reasoning. It ignores the fall and God’s judgment.

Sidney cites the Tower of Babel and the families that went forth from there after the confusion of the tongues. He said that since God did not assign any one group to rule over the others, this means that man is free. “But because I cannot believe God hath created man in such a state of misery and slavery. ... I am led to a certain conclusion, that every father of a family is free and exempt from the domination of any other, as the seventy-two that went from Babel were.”

Note that he says, “I cannot believe that...” His human reason was his final authority. To cite Genesis 5 as the standard for human government in all ages is to ignore the plain teaching of the rest of Scripture.

Sidney wrote, “The only sort of kings mentioned there [in Scripture] with approbation, is such a one ‘as may not raise his heart above his brethren’ (Deuteronomy 17).”

But Sidney was wrong. He overlooks or slights the fall and God’s judgment on sinful man. God put kings over the nations, and not just good kings but evil as well.

God chose cruel, arrogant, boasting Nebuchadnezzar and gave him authority over a large part of the world, as Daniel explained (Daniel 2:37-38). In the same chapter of Scripture we see that God raised up the wicked kingdoms of Persia, Greece, and Rome, with their unrighteous and unjust and often vicious rulers. This is because of mankind’s rebellion and stubbornness in the face of divine light.

Sidney’s fundamental error was the same as that of Richard Hooker and John Locke. He used human reasoning rather than Scripture to determine what rights God has given to men and then argued from that faulty

foundation. In practice, he exalted human reason over Scripture, and this is no small error.

THOMAS PAINE

Consider Thomas Paine, whose *Common Sense* was the best-selling book of the American Revolution and had a massive role in turning the minds of the citizens toward independence from Britain. It sold more than 500,000 copies. “More than any other single publication, *Common Sense* paved the way for the Declaration of Independence” (“Thomas Paine,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*). Paine’s “Crisis” papers, which were published during the war, were equally influential. *The American Crisis Number 1* (Dec. 19, 1776) began with the memorable words: “These are the times that try men’s souls.”

Yet Thomas Paine was one of the most brazen skeptics of any age. In *The Age of Reason; Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology*, Paine attacked the divine inspiration of the Bible and its miracles, exalting human reason as the final authority. He replaced the holy Almighty God of the Bible with a deistic God who is not involved in the affairs of man and is not Judge and Saviour. He rejected the doctrines of man’s fall and of Christ’s deity, virgin birth, blood atonement, and bodily resurrection. He denied both heaven and hell. The book began with the following statement:

“I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish Church, by the Roman Church, by the Greek Church, by the Turkish Church, by the Protestant Church, nor by any church that I know of. MY OWN MIND IS MY OWN CHURCH.”

Paine described the Bible as “fabulous mythology” and “a book of lies, wickedness, and blasphemy” and a “pretended word of God.” He likened the Bible’s miraculous accounts to “Arabian tales, without the merit of being entertaining.” He called the God of the Old Testament “tyrannical.” He labeled the book of Genesis “an anonymous book of stories, fables, and traditionary or invented absurdities, or of downright lies.”

Paine’s blasphemous book, which was dedicated to his “Fellow Citizens of the United States of America,” was rejected and attacked by many, but it also became a bestseller, spreading the heresy of Deism and undermining the faith of many. It helped lay the

groundwork for the skepticism that has flashed through American society since the 19th century.

JOHN ADAMS

John Adams was a chief American statesman, diplomat, and a leader of the independence from Britain. He was a delegate to the Continental Congress and assisted Thomas Jefferson in drafting the Declaration of Independence in 1776. He was the first Vice President under George Washington, and the second President of the United States

Adams was a Unitarian. He rejected belief in the Trinity, in Jesus' divinity, and in the supernatural inspiration of the Bible. He called the doctrine of the Trinity "absurdity."

"David Barton also denied that he quotes history out of context, when Stewart confronted him about a quote from John Adams concerning 'the Holy Ghost,' as is shown in the film, *The Hidden Faith of the Founding Fathers* by Adullam Films. In this quote, Barton makes it appear as if John Adams was speaking favorably about the Holy Ghost in a letter he wrote to Benjamin Rush. In reality, Adams was mocking the idea of 'Holy Ghost authority' and called Christians 'dupes' for believing in it" ("David Barton Approves," *Christian Newswire*, May 12, 2011).

ETHAN ALLEN

Ethan Allen was one of the fathers of the state of Vermont and an influential figure in the American Revolution.

His 1785 book *Reason, the Only Oracle of Man* was a vicious attack upon the divine inspiration of the Bible, which he labeled "a torrent of superstition."

He "employed his special brand of ridicule to mock the idea that the devil was turned loose on two innocent young people in the Garden of Eden" (Randall, *Ethan Allen: His Life and Times*, p. 619). He mocked the doctrines of original sin and hell, exalting human reason as the ultimate standard of truth. When Allen died, Ezra Stiles, then president of Yale College, wrote in his diary, "Died in Vermont the profane and impious Deist General Ethan Allen, author of the *Oracles of Reason*, a book replete with scurrilous reflexions on Revelation. ... And in Hell he lift up his eyes being in torments" (Randall, *Ethan Allen: His Life and Times*, p. 528).

UNITARIANISM

Unitarianism and humanism were permeating America's churches and thinking even before her independence from England.

John Locke (1632-1704) was one of the most influential American writers. He was often recommended by Thomas Jefferson. Benjamin Rush called Locke "an oracle as to the principles ... of government" (*Observations upon the Present Government in Pennsylvania*, 1777).

But Locke was a Unitarian who rejected the Bible as ultimate authority and replaced it with man himself. He exalted human reason above Scripture: "Our observation employed either, about external sensible objects or about the internal operations of our minds perceived and reflected on by ourselves, is that which supplies our understandings with all the materials of thinking. These two are the fountains of knowledge, from whence all the ideas we have, or can naturally have, do spring" (Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, vol. 1).

Locke seemed to defend Christianity, but actually he taught that man is not required to believe that which he cannot understand, thus laying the foundation for the rejection of doctrines such as the Trinity and the Atonement. "Since it is impossible explicitly to believe any proposition of the Christian doctrine, but what we understand, or in any other sense, than we understand it to have been delivered in; an explicit belief is or can be required in no man, of more than what he understands of that doctrine" (*The Reasonableness of Christianity*).

Locke downplayed the role of God in human affairs and exalted man himself. "It was John Locke who set the trajectory towards the secular democracies and republics" (Kevin Swanson, *Apostate: The Men Who Destroyed the Christian West*).

French revolutionary philosopher Voltaire praised Locke as a "sage." Thomas Jefferson quoted from Locke in the *Declaration of Independence*.

It was Locke's influence that resulted in the U.S. Constitution's omission of God. Instead of exalting God, as the Mayflower Pilgrims had done in the very first words of their compact, the framers of the Constitution exalted man: "We the people of the United States..."

By 1800, one-third of the Congregational churches in Boston had become Unitarian. By 1810 “nearly every prominent Congregational pulpit in eastern Massachusetts was held by a preacher of Unitarian doctrine” (www.bibliomania.com/2/3/270/1820/21935/1/frame1.html).

By 1805, Unitarians took control of **Harvard College**. A divinity school was established at Harvard in 1816 and “became the centre of Unitarian thought.” Harvard botanist Asa Gray was Charles Darwin’s most important popularizer in America. Under the leadership of Charles Eliot, from 1869 to 1909, Harvard had a massive influence in spreading Unitarianism, theological liberalism, and Darwinianism. Eliot appointed John Fiske to the post of science and history “specifically to introduce evolutionism in the Harvard curriculum” and “as America’s leading university, Harvard became the example to others, and almost the entire university world quickly followed her down the evolutionary trail” (Henry Morris, *The Long War Against God*, p. 47).

Ralph Waldo Emerson, one of America’s most famous poets, was introduced to Hinduism as a child by his aunt Moody Emerson. Though he was for a while the pastor of Second Baptist Church in Boston, he held Hindu concepts of pantheism and the divinity of man. He wrote, “... the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God” (Emerson, *Nature*), and, “... there is no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins” (Emerson, *The Over-Soul*, 1841). Emerson taught that man is his own ultimate authority. In his message to the Phi Beta Kappa society at Harvard in 1837, entitled “The American Scholar,” Emerson exhorted scholars to free themselves of tradition (such as the Bible) and to maintain a “self-trust.” He taught that man should follow his own heart. “To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men,—that is genius” (Emerson, *Self-Reliance*).

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), another of America’s prominent authors, author of *On Walden Pond*, was a Unitarian. He denied man’s fall, the necessity of the new birth, and Christ’s sacrificial atonement. He rejected God’s Word and exalted human thinking. He sought for “truth” through communion with nature, study of eclectic philosophies, and reflection. He was his own god. In *Walden*, Thoreau said, “No man ever followed his genius till it misled him.” Like Emerson,

Thoreau loved Hindu doctrine. He wrote, “In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita, since whose composition years of the gods have elapsed, and in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial” (*On Walden Pond*).

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-82), another of America’s famous poets, was a Unitarian. He was a professor of modern languages at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, which was a hotbed of Unitarianism and abolitionist thinking fueled by the liberal social gospel. Influential Unitarian Hezekiah Packard was a trustee of Bowdoin in the 1830s and 1840s. Packard’s son Alpheus was a professor of Latin and Greek at Bowdoin from 1824-65. Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852), was the wife of a Bowdoin professor and wrote her book in her husband’s office. She is known as “the little woman who started the big war,” as her book incited anger against the slavery states and provoked hotheads on both side of the issue. Her brother Henry Ward Beecher was the liberal pastor of Plymouth Church in Brooklyn. During Beecher’s career there, he opened his pulpit to Unitarians such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Horace Greeley and even to agnostics such as Mark Twain. Henry Beecher “once argued that a Sharps rifle held a better argument than a Bible for persuading slaveholders--hence these rifles were nicknamed ‘Beecher’s Bibles’ when used to combat the spread of slavery in the Kansas Territory before the American Civil War” (<http://www.embassy.org.nz/encycl/ulencyc.htm>). The Beechers were related to Julia Ward Howe, a Unitarian universalist and the author of the “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” which confused the coming of Christ with the American armies of the North. She misidentified God’s altar with “the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps” and falsely claimed that His gospel was “writ in burnish’d rows of steel.” Julia Ward Howe delivered a pantheistic, universalistic message at the Parliament of the World’s Religions in 1893 entitled “What Is Religion?” (http://womenshistory.about.com/library/etext/bl_1893_pwr_howe.htm).

AMERICA’S INDEPENDENCE SERMONS

America of the 18th century was a nation of sermons. In many of the colonies and states, particularly in New England, a large percentage of the people attended church and heard sermons every week.

“Recent scholarship indicates that at the beginning of the Revolution, in the 1760s and 1770s, the majority of America’s three million colonists were active in churches” (Angela Kamrath, *The Miracle of America*).

Sermons were printed and distributed by the millions.

“For all of the 17th and most of the 18th century, the sermon was the dominant literary form in the American colonies. The sermon played an important role in the Revolution, and, while retreating somewhat in its dominance in the 19th and 20th centuries, remains a significant force in American cultural life” (Joe Fulton, “Sermons,” *Oxford Bibliographies*).

Sermons were preached both for and against the War of Independence, but in a large number of cases, the Bible was used as a pretext to support the preacher’s political views. Scripture was taken out of context and misused.

Consider John Allen’s “An Oration Upon the Beauties of Liberty,” preached in December 1772 and widely distributed in multiple print editions. Allen was a Baptist pastor, and his sermon was one of the most influential of that era and won many to the cause of revolution against Britain. Allen’s text was Micah 7:3 -

“That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up.”

The context of Micah 7 is Israel’s apostasy and wickedness. Israel’s king, judges, and great men were corrupt, seeking bribes and working evil.

Allen applied this to the British government. He applied “and so they wrap it up” to Britain’s “taxation without representation.”

Allen used Micah 7 as a call to arms against oppressive government. Consider his interpretation of “the great man uttereth his mischievous desire” -

“It is no rebellion to oppose any king, ministry, or governor, that destroys by violence or authority whatever, the rights of the people” (John Allen, “An Oration Upon the Beauties of Liberty,” 1772).

The context of Micah offers no biblical support for this interpretation. “People’s rights” are not a major subject of Scripture, to say the least. The Bible focuses, rather, on man’s sin against God, his fallen condition, God’s subsequent judgment of mankind and the working out of

God’s eternal plan of redemption. Fallen man does not “deserve” good government, and he surrendered his “natural rights” when he sinned against God. The sinner has only one “right,” and that is the right to die and be judged for his crimes against God’s law.

Like many others of his day, Allen overlooks the fall and God’s judgment on sinful man. God put kings over the nations, and not just good kings but evil as well. As we have already noted, God chose oppressive Nebuchadnezzar and gave him authority over a large part of the world (Daniel 2:37-38). In the same passage of Scripture we are taught that God raised up the oppressive kingdoms of Persia, Greece, and Rome, with their unrighteous, unjust rulers. This is because of mankind’s rebellion against God.

Micah and the other prophets of Israel did not call for the overthrow of the king of Israel even when the government was oppressive. Likewise, in the New Testament, the apostles and prophets did not call for the overthrow of the Roman government in spite of its injustice, corruption, and heavy taxation.

Whether or not there was biblical support for the American War of Independence, it cannot be found in Micah 7:3.

Allen’s sermon was all too typical of the sermons of that day. There was far too much politicizing of the Word of God.

Many preachers continue to engage in this type of thing in the twenty-first century, twisting the Bible to fit their political views.

Because a nation is a nation of sermons doesn’t mean it is a biblical nation.

AMERICA’S FOUNDING DOCUMENTS

America’s founding documents themselves are an unholy mixture of biblical thinking and enlightenment humanism.

The U.S. Constitution is an amazing document, but it is influenced not only by the Bible, but also by enlightenment thinking that cited the Bible but that was actually founded on human reasoning that did not conform to biblical truth.

The following is by Stephen Douglas Wilson, dean emeritus and chair of the history department of Mid-Continent University:

"No Bible verses and/or expressions from historic Christian works are contained in the document.

"In fact, the major influences on the men who drafted both the Constitution and the Bill of Rights originated from the writings of the enlightenment philosophers of the 17th and 18th centuries who, for the most part, believed that faith could be expressed purely by use of reason and intellect, and that God's intervention in the process was not a necessary element -- hardly a Christian concept.

"For instance, Englishman Thomas Hobbes argued that government should be a contract between those that govern and the people. John Locke, taking up Hobbes' theme in his work, *Two Treatises of Government*, felt that government should look out for the well-being of its citizens and respect their individual rights. He especially promoted the rights of 'life, liberty, and estate' (or property) for all citizens. Interestingly enough, when Thomas Jefferson drafted most of Locke's theme into the Declaration of Independence, he slightly revised Locke and instead wrote that the people had a right to 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' Perhaps Jefferson thought that future American governments should not guarantee that all citizens possess a property entitlement. Locke's phrase, however, does show up in the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution. In that amendment the document states that citizens cannot 'be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process.' When the 14th Amendment applied federal guarantees to the individual states, the phrase and its context was repeated.

"Other enlightenment philosophers also directly impacted the Constitution. Baron Montesquieu in his work, *The Spirit of the Laws*, proposed that government should be divided into branches. Each branch would then maintain 'checks and balances' on the others -- thereby limiting the power of each branch. Cesare Beccaria, along with Voltaire, expressed concerns about how citizens were punished. Beccaria's concerns, published in his work, *On Crimes and Punishments*, advanced the principle that punishments should not be 'cruel or unusual.' He obviously influenced the Eighth Amendment that bans such punishments.

"Enlightenment philosophers, like Voltaire (in the *Treatise on Tolerance*) and others, ironically agreed with the Baptists and other communities of dissenting 18th century Christians and argued against the tyranny of state-supported churches. Voltaire, along with other like-minded philosophers, instead advocated that all faiths should be allowed to worship without state interference. This influence is most evident when the Founding Fathers abolished the religious tests for

federal office seekers and created the First Amendment guarantee for religious liberty. While the constitutional convention operated in a society heavily influenced by a Christian worldview, the U.S. Constitution itself was a product of enlightenment thinking, and the United States became the first modern nation to base itself on enlightenment principles" ("The Constitution and Its Benefits to Christians in America," Baptist Press, March 4, 2013).

AMERICA'S ECONOMY

America's economy has largely reflected selfish greed rather than godliness, and an economy is a reflection of a nation's true character.

The first "home-grown depression" was in 1818, shortly after the nation's founding, when it should have still been in its pristine godliness if indeed it ever were a "Christian nation."

Banks collapsed. Farmers were ruined. Soup houses were established for the unemployed.

The depression was a product of unabashed greed and economic folly. The Second Bank of America had been established in 1816 to bring some semblance of financial order to the nation, but its head, William Jones, had gone through a personal bankruptcy and was therefore a ridiculous choice for the job. Not surprisingly, he ruled over a frenzy of foolish lending sprees and outright embezzlement. But Jones wasn't alone in his lack of character; rather he reflected the character that was generally prevalent among the people at that time. "Philadelphia State Senator Condry Raguent, observed, 'The whole of our population is either stockholders of banks or in debt to them. It is not the interest of the first to press the banks and the rest are afraid to ask. ... An independent man ... who would have ventured to compel the banks to do justice, WOULD HAVE BEEN PERSECUTED AS AN ENEMY OF SOCIETY'" (Peter Bernstein, *Wedding of the Waters: The Erie Canal and the Making of a Great Nation*).

Another observed that the depression was the result of dissipation and vice.

When the U.S. Treasury called on the Bank of the United States to deliver \$3 million in gold to the French as payment toward the amount due on Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase, the bank had to borrow the money from creditors in London, even though it was obligated under

law to keep at least \$7 million in silver or gold on hand at all times.

The first Bank of America was established by Alexander Hamilton, one of America's founding fathers, but he "had no inhibitions about employing his banks to further his political ambitions and to deprive his political enemies of financial accommodations" (*Wedding of the Waters*, Kindle location 3557).

It was Hamilton who established America's economy on the principle of debt, which is so contrary to Biblical wisdom. "The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender" (Proverbs 22:7).

America's economic system has gotten ever more ungodly since its founding.

AMERICA'S POLITICS

American politics has also been an ungodly business since its inception.

In the early 1800s, when some of the nation's founders were still alive, American politics was described as "the great game of political brawling" (Peter Bernstein, *Wedding of the Waters: The Erie Canal and the Making of a Great Nation*, Kindle location 3481).

Some banks refused credit to supporters of Thomas Jefferson. Newspapers were vicious in their opposition to candidates on the opposing political side. The reports were "descents into the gutter." Jefferson's opponents slanderously predicted that his election would result in the "teaching of murder, robbery, rape, adultery and incest."

New York mayor DeWitt Clinton observed, "Our ingenuity has been employed, not in cultivating a vernacular literature, or increasing the stock of human knowledge; but in raising up and pulling down the parties which agitate the community. ... The style of our political writings has assumed a character of rude invective, and unrestrained licentiousness, unparalleled in any other part of the world, and which has greatly tended to injure our national character" (*Wedding of the Waters*, Kindle location 3496).

New York's Tammany party was formed during the lifetime of the founding fathers, and it was known for

"corruption and unabashed stealing from public funds." This was documented by Gustavus Myers in his 1901 *Tammany Hall*.

In 1950s America, which is looked upon nostalgically by many as time when the nation was still Christian, Dwight Eisenhower called politics "a combination of gossip, innuendo, sly character assassination and outright lies" (John Wukovits, *Eisenhower: A Biography*).

That doesn't sound like a "Christian nation" to me.

AMERICA'S GREAT BUILDING PROJECTS

America's major building projects have been glorious, but typically they have been done to the glory of man rather than the glory of God and they have often been shot through and through with corruption.

For example, the Erie Canal, America's first gigantic construction project, required a 25 year slugfest before the ground could be broken in 1817, and the carnal battle royal continued to the very end of the project. The battle consisted of lies, character assassination, and every sort of ungodly tactic and selfish scheme. None of the main players on either side of the project were godly by any biblical definition.

The same can be said of the transcontinental railroad, the Panama Canal, the interstate highway system, and the Apollo moon program, to mention a few.

We conclude that America has been strongly and uniquely influenced by Christianity and the Bible, but America has never been a Christian nation in a biblical sense.

For the other side of this coin, see the book [*The Bible and Western Society*](#), which is available in print and in a free eBook edition from Way of Life Literature.



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?



CO-FOUNDER OF BLACK LIVES MATTER CALLS FOR DEFUNDING POLICE, DECRIMINALIZING DRUGS, AND EMPTYING PRISONS

(Friday Church News Notes, November 27, 2020, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "BLM Co-Founder Calls on Biden," *Townhall*, Nov. 21, 2020: "Black Lives Matter co-founder Patrisse Cullors on Friday penned an OpEd in *Teen Vogue* calling for the next president to back the BREATHE Act, something she calls 'modern-day civil rights legislation.' Of course, the major backers behind the legislation are Squad members Reps. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA) and Rashida Tlaib (D-MI). ... Here's what she said the legislation does: 'It starts by divesting federal resources from vehicles of harm and punishment like policing and incarceration. That means slashing enormous police budgets. That means decriminalizing drug use and repealing other federal laws that have for too long been used to disproportionately criminalize Black women, children, and families. BREATHE will put us on the road to police and prison abolition, letting our loved ones out of federal prison and immigration detention facilities...' According to the proposal, the BREATHE Act would: (1) Dramatically change policing by outlawing 'tear gas, rubber bullets, pepper bullets, pepper spray, flash

bangs, long range acoustic devices (LRADs), Stingrays, lasers,' and any other 'less than lethal' forms of crowd control as well as drones, body cameras, tasers and facial recognition software. (2) Prohibit law enforcement agencies from having joint task forces (like drug enforcement, border enforcement and gang enforcement). (3) No law enforcement officers on public or private schools, colleges and universities, medical facilities, courthouses at every level, Social Security offices or Congressional district offices. (4) Reduce nationwide prison populations across the country by at least 50 percent in five years and 'complete decarceration' within 10 years."

HILLSONG PASTOR FIRED FOR ADULTERY

(Friday Church News Notes, November 27, 2020, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- Prominent Hillsong Pastor Carl Lentz, who has been called the "Apostle of Cool," was fired on November 4 for adultery. Hillsong is a megachurch in Sydney, Australia, that has branched out in recent decades to establish chapters in many parts of the world. Formerly aligned with the Assembly of God, it is now an independent denomination with branches in major cities of 28 countries. All are under the direction of the mother church, Hillsong in Sydney, and the oversight of Brian Houston and a board of elders.



Hillsong is also one of the most influential publishers of Contemporary Worship Music. Carl Lentz and his wife, Laura, were the co-pastors of Hillsong New York City, a hyper-cool church that boasts several celebrities as members or attendees, including pop star Justin Bieber, who in 2014 was baptized by Carl Lentz in the bathtub of a pro-basketball player. The adultery is no great surprise in light of Lentz's personal lifestyle and the history and character of Hillsong. In 2002, Frank Houston (Brian's father), founder of Hillsong Sydney, was fired for sexually abusing a boy, and in 2015 a royal commission censured Brian for covering up his father's immorality. In 2001, Hillsong Sydney's co-pastor, Bobbie Houston, produced a series of sexually explicit teaching tapes entitled *Kingdom Women Love Sex*. In May 2016, Hillsong New York City hosted a Hillsong Women's Conference that featured scantily-dressed "cheerleaders," an Elvis impersonator, and a "naked cowboy" wearing only a cowboy hat, boots, and a guitar. The cowboy was Hillsong New York City's youth pastor, Diego Simla. In 2014, in an interview with CNN, Laura Lentz 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 2017, Lentz and Bieber were photographed in New Zealand drinking heavily and partying in a tavern. Later that year, Lentz refused to condemn abortion as sin, saying, "God's the judge. People have to live to their own convictions" ("Hillsong Pastor," ChristianHeadlines.com, Nov. 7, 2017). In 2019, Yelp identified Hillsong Los Angeles as one of the top ten "gay friendly churches" in the city. "This says something about Hillsong. A

homosexual can walk in, sit down, be entertained, and not have their conscience pricked by the preaching of the biblical gospel and a call to repent of sins and come to Christ" ("Hillsong Listed in Top Ten," Reformationcharlotte, Sept. 3, 2019). In June 2020, Lentz proudly posted a video of his daughter screaming rage at police at a Black Lives Matter demonstration in New York City. "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). (For more about Hillsong and their music see [The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music](#), a free video series available at www.wayoflife.org.)

WHY WON'T TWITTER USE ITS BLUE PENCIL ON RED CHINA? (Friday Church News Notes, November 27, 2020, www.wayoflife.org/fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Why Won't Twitter," Unherd.com, Nov. 20, 2020: "In the dim and distant days before word processing, editors used to wield a blue pencil to make changes to copy. Hence the universal symbol of censorship: to 'blue pencil' a piece of text means to delete, bowdlerise or otherwise interfere with it. How nice to see Twitter keeping up the old traditions.



If they don't like your tweet or consider it suspect then out comes the blue pencil in digital form. Except, instead of taking away from your text, they might add to it with a message of their own. Such labels begin with a little exclamation mark in a circle and then go on to say something like 'Get the facts about COVID-19' or 'This claim about election fraud is disputed.' ... And then there's the grotesque inconsistency. Consider the following tweet from the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations: 'China is a country with multiple religions ... The freedom of religious belief is well protected' (Chinese Mission to UN, Nov. 19, 2020). 'The freedom of belief is well protected.' Yes, apart for the 1 million plus Muslim Uighurs in concentration camps, the ongoing oppression of Buddhism in Tibet, the ripping down of crosses from Christian Churches and the systematic persecution of any group that refuses to submit to state control. So, do we see Twitter adding any little blue messages to the barefaced lies of the Beijing regime? We do not. ... So there we have it: a woke corporation that speaks over President Trump, while simultaneously providing a mouthpiece for President Xi. I guess it helps having the two faces."

NEW REPORT ON NORTH KOREA'S DRACONIAN PERSECUTION (Friday Church News Notes, November 27, 2020, www.wayoflife.org/fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "North Korea jails, executes anyone who owns a Bible," *Christian Headlines*, Oct. 30, 2020: "A new report by a human rights watchdog details horrific violations of religious freedom within North Korea, including citizens brutally tortured for



converting to Christianity and individuals publicly executed for owning a Bible. The 98-page report by the London-based Korea Future Initiative was released this month and based on 117 interviews with survivors, witnesses and perpetrators of the abuses. All total, 273 victims of religious freedom violations were identified, including 215 involving Christians and 56 from followers of shamanism. The age of the victims ranged from 3 to 80-plus. ... Christianity is illegal in North Korea. Citizens are told to treat the supreme leader, Kim Jong-un, as a god. Among the religious freedom violations detailed in the report: A government official was shot and killed at an airfield, in front of a crowd, for possession of a Bible. Public executions 'were designed to instill fear into crowds who had been summoned' and forced to attend. A Christian was tied to a wooden stake at a public market and executed by a firing squad for possession of a Bible. ... Other individuals in the report were arrested for owning a Bible. Christians were tortured by having a liquid with red pepper powder poured down their nostrils. ... The report listed other forms of torture for Christians and adherents of other religions: 'being forced to hang on steel bars while being beaten with an oseungogakja; being hung by their legs; having their body tightly bound with sticks; being forced to perform squat-jumps and to sit and stand hundreds or thousands of times each

day ... being forced to kneel with a wooden bar inserted between their knee hollows; strangulation; being forced to witness the execution or torture of other prisoners; starvation; being forced to ingest polluted food; being forced into solitary confinement; being deprived of sleep, and being forced to remain seated and still for up to and beyond 12-hours a day."

U.S. SUPREME COURT RULES AGAINST NEW YORK GOVERNOR'S COVID RESTRICTIONS ON CHURCHES/SYNAGOGUES

(Friday Church News Notes, December 4, 2020, www.wayoflife.org/fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Supreme Court Rules," *Fox News*, Nov. 26, 2020: "The U.S. Supreme Court on Wednesday night blocked New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo from reimposing strict attendance caps at worship services in areas hit hard by the novel coronavirus. ... The order was also the first in which Justice Amy Coney Barrett played a decisive role. Barrett ... was President Trump's third Supreme Court nominee ... In the hardest-hit areas, which were designated red zones, the state limited attendance in houses of worship to 25% of their capacity or 10 people, whichever is fewer. The majority said his limits violated the First Amendment's protection of the free exercise of religion."

EXPERT CLAIMS GOOGLE SHIFTED A MINIMUM OF 6 MILLION VOTES IN 2020 ELECTION (Friday Church News Notes, December 4, 2020, www.wayoflife.org/fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from

"Google Shifted," *Breitbart*, Nov. 24, 2020: "Psychologist and search engine expert Dr. Robert Epstein appeared on Fox News' *Tucker Carlson Tonight* yesterday to reveal his findings on Google's search manipulation in the 2020 election, which Epstein claims could have shifted a minimum of six million votes in one direction. 'First of all, we had 733 field agents in three key swing states this year: Arizona, North Carolina, and Florida, and we preserved more than 500,000 ephemeral experiences,' said Epstein. ... 'Google search results were strongly biased in favor of liberals and Democrats. This was not true on Bing or Yahoo. The bias was being shown to pretty much every demographic group we looked at, including conservatives. ... Conservatives got slightly more bias in their search results than liberals did. How do you account for that? We also found what seems to be a smoking gun. That is, we found a period of days when the vote reminder on Google's homepage was being sent only to liberals--not one of our conservative field agents received a vote reminder during those days. ... The bottom line at the moment is that these manipulations, the ones that we've so far quantified, could easily have shifted at least six million votes in just one direction. That's the bare minimum at this point, that I'm confident. The maximum we haven't even begun to

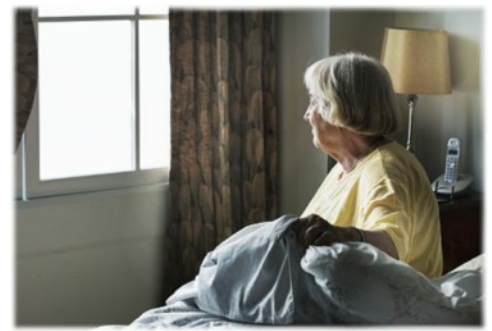


estimate that yet because we have so much data to look at.”

MEDIA’S SUPPRESSION OF ISSUES LIKELY SWUNG ELECTION (Friday Church News Notes, December 4, 2020, www.wayoflife.org/fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “The Stealing of the Presidency,” *NewsBusters*, Nov. 24, 2020: “To measure the true effect of the media’s censorship on the election, the Media Research Center asked The Polling Company to survey 1,750 Biden voters in seven swing states (Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin), six of which (all but North Carolina) were called for Biden (survey details below). We tested these voters’ knowledge of eight news stories--all important topics that our ongoing analysis had shown the liberal news media had failed to cover properly. We found that a huge majority (82%) of Biden voters were unaware of at least one of these key items, with five percent saying they were unaware of all eight of the issues we tested. This lack of information proved crucial: One of every six Biden voters we surveyed (17%) said they would have abandoned the Democratic candidate had they known the facts about one or more of these news stories. A shift of this magnitude would have changed the outcome in all six of the

swing states won by Joe Biden, and Donald Trump would have comfortably won a second term as president. ... The media’s censorship of Biden’s scandals had the strongest impact on this year’s election. ... 45.1% of Biden voters said they were unaware of the financial scandal enveloping Biden and his son, Hunter (a story infamously censored by Twitter and Facebook, as well as ignored by the liberal media). According to our poll, full awareness of the Hunter Biden scandal would have led 9.4% of Biden voters to abandon the Democratic candidate. ... On October 29, the government reported a huge jump in economic growth--33.1% on an annual basis, double the previous record. Yet nearly half of Biden voters (49.0%) said they had no idea about this record-breaking achievement. Armed with that information, 5.6% said they would have changed their vote ... The President took action to start long-stalled pipeline projects and expand drilling offshore and in the Arctic, and it paid off with America becoming a net exporter of oil for the first time in September 2019. More than half (50.5%) of Biden voters said they did not know about this important accomplishment, either. If the information was known by all, 5.8% of Biden’s voters say they would have changed how they voted.”

COVID LOCKDOWNS AND ELDERLY SUICIDE (Friday Church News Notes, December 4, 2020, www.wayoflife.org/fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “A 90-Year-Old Woman Killed Herself to Avoid Another Covid-19 Lockdown,” *The Federalist*, Nov. 25, 2020: “Ninety-year-old Nancy Russell had already been planning to use the MAiD law [Canada’s



euthanasia law, Medical Aid in Dying] ‘at some point,’ according to her daughter, Tory. But having experienced full lockdown of her nursing home, including a two-week confinement of residents to their rooms, followed by bans or tight restrictions on visitors that made socialization impersonal, she knew what was coming with this second round of lockdowns and didn’t want to live through it. ... Russell’s death comes at a time of increased loneliness and isolation for residents of senior care homes amid repeated lockdowns and isolation in the name of protecting them. ... Dr. Susan Woolhouse, a member of the Canadian Association of MAiD Assessors and Providers, told *CTV News* that the lockdowns are ‘accelerating’ requests for assisted suicide. Executive Director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition Alex Schadenberg reports that more than 6,000 assisted deaths were reported in Ontario from mid-June 2016 through October 2020, and nearly a third of those deaths (1,948) were in 2020 alone ... It is, of course, undeniable that the vast majority of COVID-19 deaths are among the elderly. In Ontario, 2,234 long-term care residents have died of COVID-19 to date, almost two-thirds of their total coronavirus deaths (3,519). While Toronto and other parts of North America go into lockdown this holiday season, however, we would do well to reflect on the toll isolation takes on the elderly. For those who are



old and frail, socialization with friends and family is one of the few joys that remain. ... While COVID-19 can be dangerous to the old and frail, those who are so concerned about protecting the elderly shouldn't reduce 'protection' to a negative COVID-19 test and a pulse, lest they quash what makes life worth living. ... we should heed the voices of those most deeply affected by lockdowns and restore their right to decide how they want to spend their few remaining years, despite the risk."

ISIS PLOT TO ATTACK WHITE HOUSE AND TRUMP TOWER THWARTED

(Friday Church News Notes, December 4, 2020, www.wayoflife.org/fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "What We Know about the Plot," *Townhall*, Nov. 26, 2020: "The U.S. Department of Justice recently announced the arrest of a South Carolina man who stands accused of providing material support to the foreign terrorist group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, or ISIS. The man, 34-year-old Kristopher Sean Matthews (aka Ali Jibreel), is accused along with another man of conspiring to carry out terrorist attacks against the White House, Trump Tower in New York City, and other high-profile targets. Matthews pleaded guilty in federal court to a charge of conspiracy to provide material support to ISIS. In pleading guilty, Matthews admitted

to conspiring alongside 22-year-old Jaylyn Christopher Molina (aka Abdur Rahim) of Cost, TX, by sharing bomb-making information with the goal of committing terrorist attacks on behalf of ISIS in the United States and elsewhere."



THE POPE ISSUES ANOTHER HERETICAL DOCUMENT CONTRADICTING GOD'S WORD

(Friday Church News Notes, December 11, 2020, www.wayoflife.org/fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- Pope Francis issued the latest in a long line of papal letters that fly in the face of God's Word, the Holy Bible. Entitled *Fratelli Tutti* ("Brothers All"), the encyclical letter calls for global unity. It builds on the *Document on Human Fraternity* that the Pope signed with Ahman al-Tayyeb, the Grand Imam of al-Azhar in Abu Dhabi, in February 2019. It teaches the heresy of the universal Fatherhood of God. It teaches the heresy that all beliefs bring richness to the human family. It teaches that Jesus Christ is in those who are abandoned or excluded." It calls for open borders. "Each country also belongs to the foreigner inasmuch as a territory's goods must not be denied to a needy person coming from elsewhere." It denounces capital punishment and calls for the "care of the whole planet." It calls for the "subordination of all private property to the universal destination of the earth's goods, and thus the right of

all to their use," which, of course, is communism. It rejects the concept of a "just war," calls for disarmament, promotes the myth that disarmament would produce global peace, and makes the ridiculous claim that war can be stayed "with a word" and "peace can be maintained by peace."

TRANSSEXUAL ELECTED BY REPUBLICANS

(Friday Church News Notes, December 11, 2020, www.wayoflife.org/fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- A transsexual was elected president of the Republican Women Federated in Escondido, California, on Nov. 18. According to his Facebook page, Gina Roberts, a man who identifies as a woman, was sworn in by Congressman Darrell Issa. This is a reminder that Republicans are not the saviors of America. Politics is dirty, compromising business at its best.

PARENTS LOSE CUSTODY OF TEEN DAUGHTER AFTER REFUSING TO COMMIT TO SEX CHANGE

(Friday Church News Notes, December 11, 2020, www.wayoflife.org/fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "Parents Lose Custody," *Reformation Charlotte*, Dec. 1, 2020: "The parents of a 'transgender' teenage girl--born a female, still a female, and will always be a female--has lost custody of their daughter after refusing to commit to hormone therapy to effect a sex change. According to *The Australian*, a judge ruled that the confused teenage girl who wants to 'transition' into a boy--an obviously impossible feat to any sane person--on the balance of probabilities, had suffered verbal abuse 'related to his feelings and expression of gender identity' ("Parents' grief as 'trans teen' taken into care," *The*



HUMAN BRAIN FAR MORE COMPLEX THAN PREVIOUSLY IMAGINED

(Friday Church News Notes, December 4, 2020, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from Brian Thomas, "Your Brain Has More Memory Than the Internet," Institute of Creation Research, Feb. 4, 2016: "New research modeled tiny structures within nerve cells and discovered a clever tactic brains use to increase computing power while maximizing energy efficiency. Its design could form the basis of a whole new and improved class of computer. ... Synapses occur at junctions between nerve cells, like two people holding hands. Each cell can have a thousand 'hands' contacting as many neighbors to form a dizzying 3-D array with billions of connections and pathways. Each junction transfers information between cells by passing along tiny chemicals called neurotransmitters. Groundbreaking imaging published in 2011 revealed many more of these nerve-to-nerve connections than ever imagined, prompting comparisons between the human brain and the number of switches in all the computers and internet connections on Earth. It turns out that the sizes of these connection points, called synapses, shifts with use or disuse—a process called synaptic plasticity. Synapses strengthen when learning occurs or weaken when unused. How do brains do it? They store and transmit information not with the simplistic 0s and 1s of computer code, but with degrees of synapse strength. In other words, they don't transfer information with a single input spike, but recognize 26 distinguishably different



levels of synaptic strength. ... Nerve cells use the size and stability of each synapse to process and record information such as memories. ... Terry Sejnowski, co-senior author of the *eLife* study, told the Salk Institute, 'We discovered the key to unlocking the design principle for how hippocampal neurons function with low energy but high computation power. **Our new measurements of the brain's memory capacity increase conservative estimates by a factor of 10 to at least a petabyte, in the same ballpark as the World Wide Web. What's a petabyte? 8,000,000,000,000,000 bits of information. The mind-boggling levels of organization and necessary regulatory protocols in synapses refute all notions that brains evolved from single cells through merely natural processes. The strategies, algorithms, and design principles brains employ could only have come from an otherworldly Architect whose genius mankind can only dream of copying.**'"

Australian, Nov. 29, 2020). [This is Australia's first case of a child removed because parents resisted cross-sex hormone treatment.] ... [A]ctivist judges and politicians are on the prowl seeking to devour every last semblance of sanity and logical thought. In recent months, Australia has implemented a number of anti-conservative policies that seek to destroy Christianity and the Christian family. Conversion therapy has been banned in most of the country, and [by] the 'Change or Suppression

(Conversion) Practices Prohibition Bill 2020,' practitioners face a \$10,000 fine and up to 10 years in prison. These policies have been criticized by the Australian Christian Lobby which argues that parents are left vulnerable to criminalization for refusing to accept and allow their child's 'gender transition.'"

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS' SPEECH CONTROL (Friday Church News Notes, December 11, 2020,

www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "National Association of Realtors," *Frontpage*, Nov. 30, 2020: "The National Association of Realtors claims to have 1.4 million members. There will be fewer members before long as the association begins purging conservative real estate agents. At the center of the storm was an addition to Article 10 which covers various forms of discrimination. ... Even if you're at home and you post something



opposed to gay marriage or illegal migration, you can lose your business. ... When you're a real estate agent, you no longer have the right to personal opinions. Article 10-5 immediately transformed 1.4 million people into subordinates at the mercy of NAR brass who have the authority to determine what political or religious views they can hold. 'It means that we never take our hands off, no matter where we are, no matter what we do, we are always licensed and we are always a member of the National Association of Realtors,' New York State Association of Realtors President Jennifer Stevenson warned. Never taking your 'hands off' is endemic to socialist tyrannies and has no place in America. ... Anyone can bring an 'ethics' complaint which will lead to a 'hearing' with 'witnesses' and 'counsel.' ... And if they lose that hearing, then not only will they be expelled from the NAR, but the state real estate licensing authority will be told that the agent violated the 'public trust' which can lead to the loss of their license. Say the wrong thing on Facebook and lose your license, your business, and your livelihood."

LITTLE INTEREST IN BIBLE PROPHECY (Friday Church News Notes, December 11, 2020, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - We received the following note recently about the situation in an independent Baptist church: "I'm

using your [The Future According to the Bible](#) in my Sunday School adult class. I love studying future things because I believe it helps ground us in the present. It's interesting, though, how few people attend that class. ... Christians, of all people, need to be aware of the times and understand what is coming. All too often though, they get too wrapped up in this world and the comforts of it. I wish our pastor would deal more with last days events, but that is why not many in our church see it as important. He ... says that's not his 'forte.' ... Christians are not living with the imminent expectation of His return in the Rapture. ... I thoroughly believe that if Christians would simply take the time to discern what Scripture says about the last days/end times and learn to live with the information contained in Scripture in mind, we would be much better evangelists and not so concerned about the things happening in society that we cannot control."

ECUMENISTS WARN OF "DANGEROUS" PRE-TRIBULATIONISTS (Friday Church News Notes, December 11, 2020, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Evangelicals and Catholics Together and the Rejection of End-Time Christians" by Roger Oakland, Light House Trails, Dec. 7, 2009: "[A]nti-Christian sentiment is growing toward those who believe in a biblical



last days/Book of Revelation scenario prior to Christ's return. In a 2005 article, Bishop Mark Hanson of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 'called for Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican and Lutheran churches to come together to combat a fundamentalist-millennialist-apocalypticist reading of Scripture' ['Lutheran leader calls for an ecumenical council to address growing biblical fundamentalism,' Religious News Service, Aug. 11, 2005]. ... Hanson believes that a global ecumenical group made up of Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Anglicans, and Lutherans is the answer to the crisis he sees ['The Church: Called to a Ministry of Reconciliation,' *Lutheran World*, Sept. 2005]. Hanson says that those who believe in a biblical end times and a literal Bible interpretation are holding back the cause of Christ, which he suggests is to unite all of creation and produce a planetary utopia. ... Munib Younan, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jerusalem, believes that those who adhere to an apocalyptic end-time scenario (with a focus on Israel) are spreading 'heresy.' ... He has requested that Lutherans 'alert all Christians everywhere to its dangers and false teachings' ['Christian Zionism Is Heresy,' *The Lutheran*, March 2003]. ... Tony Campolo says Christians that focus on end-time scenarios have been the cause of 'extremely detrimental' consequences. ... Brian McLaren writes, 'An eschatology of abandonment, which is how I would characterize certain streams of the left-behind approach, has disastrous social consequences.' ... Any project geared toward improving the world long term is seen as unfaithful, since we're supposed to assume that the world is getting worse and worse

[Interview by *Planet Preterist* with Brian McLaren, Jan. 30, 2006] ... In essence, McLaren is saying if you believe the Book of Revelation and Matthew 24 are yet to take place, you are a dangerous psychological misfit and are assumed to have no compassion for the suffering, no concern for the environment or the world in which we live.”

TWO LAWSUITS FILED AGAINST DAVE HYLES

(Friday Church News Notes, December 18, 2020, www.wayoflife.org/fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- Two lawsuits have been filed this year against Dave Hyles, son of the late Jack Hyles (1926-2001), longtime pastor of First Baptist Church of Hammond, Indiana. In February, Joy Ryder filed a civil suit accusing Dave Hyles of raping her in the 1970s when he was the youth pastor at First Baptist. He was appointed youth pastor in 1972 when he was 19 years old. Ryder said that “once her family accused David Hyles of sexual abuse, the church covered up his wrongdoings” (“Past Hammond Baptist pastor raped girl,” *Northwest Indiana Times*, Feb. 18, 2020). On December 3, Nanette Miles filed a class action lawsuit in federal court that alleges that she was sexually assaulted beginning at age 13, that at least 10 others “have credibly accused D. Hyles of using his position of power to sexually prey on them,” and that “First Baptist and the College staff members were aware of his reprehensible conduct for years and remained silent” (“Class Action Sex Abuse Case,” *Ministry Watch*, Dec. 7, 2020). In 1989, Dave Hyles’ first wife, Paula, testified publicly as follows: “Did David’s dad know that he was adulterous before we went to Texas [to pastor Miller Road Baptist Church



in Garland]? The answer is definitely yes and there are a hundred people who know that. Why he lies about that I will never know. I went to him twice about things I had heard about Dave. ... His dad’s philosophy is if I didn’t see it I don’t believe it” (Paula Hyles Polonco’s audio interview with Dave Coleman, Nov. 1, 1989). Dave Hyles allegedly committed immorality with at least 19 women at Miller Road Baptist in Garland, Texas, broke apart homes and caused far-reaching damage. He was caught in 1984 when the janitor’s son found a briefcase containing photos of Dave’s wicked escapades. The problem was not limited to Dave Hyles or even to Jack Schaap, who followed Jack Hyles in the pastorate and is in prison for immoral relations with a minor girl. The immorality and the cover up of gross sins at First Baptist of Hammond and at Hyles-Anderson College and at many churches closely affiliated with these institutions has been widespread. It has been reported by major newspapers and television programs and has been a horrible testimony before the world. Christ’s holy name has been dragged through the mud. The name of fundamental Baptist churches has been blackened. The church should acknowledge its culpability and sin. Jack Hyles’ vast influence continues unabated and we see it as a spiritual blight. A preacher friend made the following comment when I asked him for suggestions for the title of my book about Hyles. “I

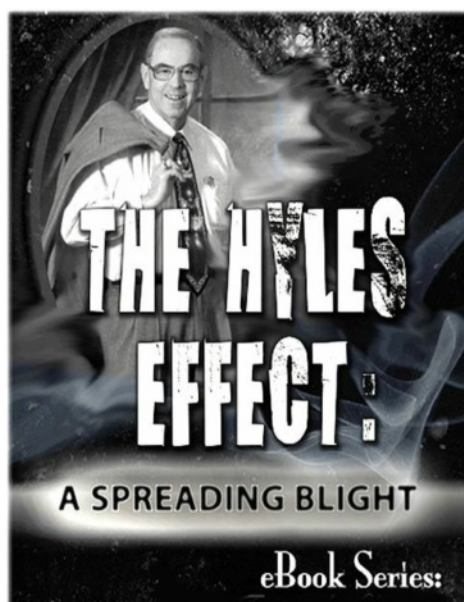
wonder if you could title it along the lines of a disease, a contagion, or an epidemic. That may be an overstatement, but I don’t think so. Hyles’ philosophy has permeated ... Independent Baptist churches. I threw out his books in the 80’s when I started seeing what he was preaching and read his son’s book on youth ministry, BUT what I heard him preach in the 60’s and 70’s STILL messes with my mind.” Jack Hyles is dead, but his influence lives on. For our part, we renounce Hyles and his pomposity and self-promotion and biblical shallowness and circus promotionalism and unquestioning loyalty and quick prayerism and big numberism and great manism and coverup of sin *in no uncertain terms!* One can hide in the crowd in this life and take his “stand” with the weak-kneed majority, but no one can hide at the judgment seat of Christ.

SOUL WINNING AT FIRST BAPTIST UNDER DAVE HYLES

(Friday Church News Notes, December 18, 2020, www.wayoflife.org/fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from *The History and Heritage of Fundamentalism and Fundamental Baptists*: “In 1969, Jack Hyles’ son, Dave, a 16-year-old high school sophomore at the time, organized the Teenage Soul Winning program at First Baptist Church of Hammond, Indiana. Dave’s sister, Cindy, who participated in that, said, “I won thousands of souls before I finished my teen years” (*The Fundamental Man*, p. 271). In six years, the teens reported 100,000 salvation decisions. Elmer Towns described an experience on a Saturday in 1974 with First Baptist’s youth soul winning led by Dave Hyles. More than 200 teens showed up, and Dave

told them, “Last week we won over 1,000 souls to Jesus Christ; let’s do it again tonight.” Towns accompanied 31 young men on a bus to an inner city area in Chicago. The young men told him that they had 21 out the week before and had “won over 200 to the Lord.” That week they aimed for more than 300. “Joe stopped at the first home; nine played on the porch. ‘Hey, would you like to ride a bus to church tomorrow morning?’ He began talking about God. The kids didn’t know much about Him. Within minutes the group swelled to 15 curious Spanish kids. He talked about creation and the message of Calvary. ‘If you were to die tonight, would you go to heaven?’ Joe asked and pointed his finger at each one of the kids. All shook their heads negatively. ‘I want you to bow your heads right here and pray to receive Jesus Christ.’ He did not ask if they wanted to be saved, or if they were ready; he just told them to pray so they would go to heaven. ... Most of them repeated the simple prayer after him. ... As each boy jumps [back] on the bus, he reports how many had been won to the Lord. Twenty-six is the highest number; one is the smallest--total of 261 for the evening. All the guys cheer” (Towns, *World’s Largest Sunday School*, pp. 177, 179). In 1972, at age 19, Dave Hyles became the youth pastor at First Baptist. In 1976, Dave’s book *Successful Church Youth Work* was published by the



Sword of the Lord. The back cover stated that between 1972 and 1976, the youth department had grown to an average of 2,500 in Sunday School, with a high of 5,000 on “a big day.” The book is described as “the successful formula of Dave Hyles” and was advertised by the Sword as “double success!” (the back cover of *Let’s Baptize More Converts*).

THE HYLES EFFECT: A SPREADING BLIGHT (Friday Church News Notes, December 18, 2020, www.wayoflife.org, fbs@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - [The Hyles Effect: A Spreading Blight](#) documents the life and ministry of Jack Hyles, who pastored First Baptist Church of Hammond,

Indiana, for 42 years, and Jack Schaap, who took over the pastorate of the church when his father-in-law died in 2001 until he went to prison in 2012 for having a sexual relationship with a minor and transporting her across state lines for that purpose. But the book is not merely about two men. It is a warning about a cultic model of ministry that has spread very far. Hyles set the pattern for errors that remain rampant. The book is a positive call to build biblical churches. A major motivation in writing it is to challenge young preachers not to be man followers and man pleasers, to walk in the fear of God rather than the fear of man, to be serious Bible students and Bereans, to be passionate for Christ and Truth, and to reject pragmatism: whether it be contemporary church growth pragmatism or emerging pragmatism or fundamental Baptist pragmatism. The book is a warning about Quick Prayerism, promotionalism, big numbers-ism, the abuse of pastoral authority, blind loyalty to man, cover-up and deception and rampant immorality, the neglect of church discipline, and unrepentant heresy. Chapter titles include the following: The Latest Saga, A Personal Testimony, It’s Not Enough to Criticize, A Word about Robert Sumner, Jack Hyles, Jack Schaap, Shooting the Wounded and Other Silly Arguments. 173 pages. Available in print and free eBook editions.

Aim of O Timothy Magazine

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