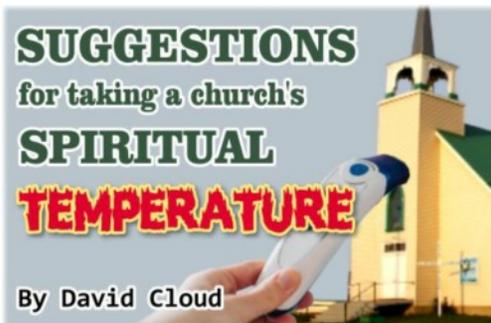


# O Timothy

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

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

Volume 38 - Issue 3 - March 2021



*"Practical suggestions about how to pursue perfection in these evil but opportune times...There is not a church anywhere on earth that doesn't need a continual temperature check, and more so than ever in this present time. There is not a pastor anywhere that doesn't need to examine and re-examine the church in order to press onward and upward."* **Page 11.**

**Digging in the Walls:** A month's worth of news items, republished from Friday Church News Notes. **Page 13.**



## INTERVIEW WITH THE APOSTLE PAUL ABOUT THE TRUMP ELECTION LOSS ~ By David Cloud

We appreciate your willingness, Paul, to be interviewed about the recent American presidential election.

We believers are very thankful to God for how he has used you in all of our lives. You were a Christ hater, as you often testified, but God saved you, and you were called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God. You were given mysteries that had been hidden in God throughout the previous ages of human history. You told of visiting heaven, which you called Paradise, and hearing things that were not lawful to speak at this time on earth.

God gave you great grace to be a good example before us in every area of Christian living. In fact, you commanded us to follow you. You said, "Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me," and, "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample."



You were a natural-born citizen of the Roman Empire and lived under its laws and the authority of the Caesars and their appointed governors. You preached the gospel and planted churches in that political context. We need your God-given wisdom about our situation in these present times.

**QUESTION: Many Christians are very frustrated about the recent election in which President Trump lost to the Democrat Joe Biden. Some have told us that they have lost sleep over the matter. Many are angry, unable to get over it, frustrated with anyone who might disagree with their opinion of the election or of Trump. They are almost ready to break fellowship over this matter and even to reject Bible-believing preachers because of it. What do you have to say about this?**

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

“*This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit,

and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. ... Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, HATRED, VARIANCE, EMULATIONS, WRATH, STRIFE, SEDITIONS, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16-25).

“For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and *that* I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest *there be* debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults” (2 Corinthians 12:20).

**QUESTION: Some Christians are saying it is time to become revolutionaries, yet the U.S. government today is not nearly as corrupt as the Roman government that you served under during your missionary journeys. What would you say to these?**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour” (Romans 13:1-4).

“Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God,

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without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain” (Philippians 2:14-16).

“Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, *but* gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men” (Titus 3:1-2).

**QUESTION: What would you say to professing Christians who whose thinking is like secular and unregenerate religious political conservatives? One preacher told me some time back that he could “wear Rush Limbaugh’s political views.”**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and WALK AS MEN?” (1 Corinthians 3:1-3).

**QUESTION: A great number of professing Christians and churches have very little by way of effectual prayer lives. They admit it. What would you say to this?**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;” (Hebrews 12:12).

“Pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

“continuing instant in prayer” (Romans 12:12).

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” (Ephesians 6:18).

“Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving” (Colossians 4:2).

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

**QUESTION: Many Christians seem to be focused on the evils of politics, sin in high places of government, hidden cabals, secret confederacies. What would say to them?**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” (Ephesians 6:11-13).

**QUESTION: A lot of women are prominent in the conservative political movement. Some have neglected their families for this purpose. What would you say to believing women about this matter?**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression” (1 Timothy 2:9-14)

“That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, *To be* discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed” (Titus 2:4-5).

**QUESTION: A lot of Christians seem to be more concerned about American citizenship than heavenly. What would you say to them?**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country” (Hebrews 11:13-14).

**QUESTION: What would you say to Christians who speak evil of those who are of different political**

**persuasions and seem to want to be on the warpath against them?**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. ... Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:19-21).

**QUESTION: What would you say to Christians who are focused on politics and other such things of this world?**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do” (1 Thessalonians 5:8-11).

**QUESTION: What would you say to those Christians who have one foot in the world?**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*” (Romans 13:11-13).

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2).

**QUESTION: What would you say to those Christians who think it is wise to join hands with unbelievers and unregenerate religionists for political purposes to “save America”?**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple” (Romans 16:17-18).

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

**QUESTION: What would you say to Christians who fill their minds with political conversation of every type, even listening to corrupt language and the world’s music, and who spend a lot of time browsing web sites that feature sensual things?**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1).

“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5).

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*” (Ephesians 5:11).

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and

seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you” (Philippians 4:8-9).

“But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth” (Colossians 3:8).

**QUESTION: Some Christians are surprised and shocked at the evil that characterizes these present times. What do you say to them?**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. ... But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13).

**QUESTION: Christians in America have not suffered much for many generations. They have lived soft, comfortable lives. They seem to think that the loss of religious liberty and persecution is a strange thing. What would you say to them?**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know” (1 Thessalonians 3:3-4).

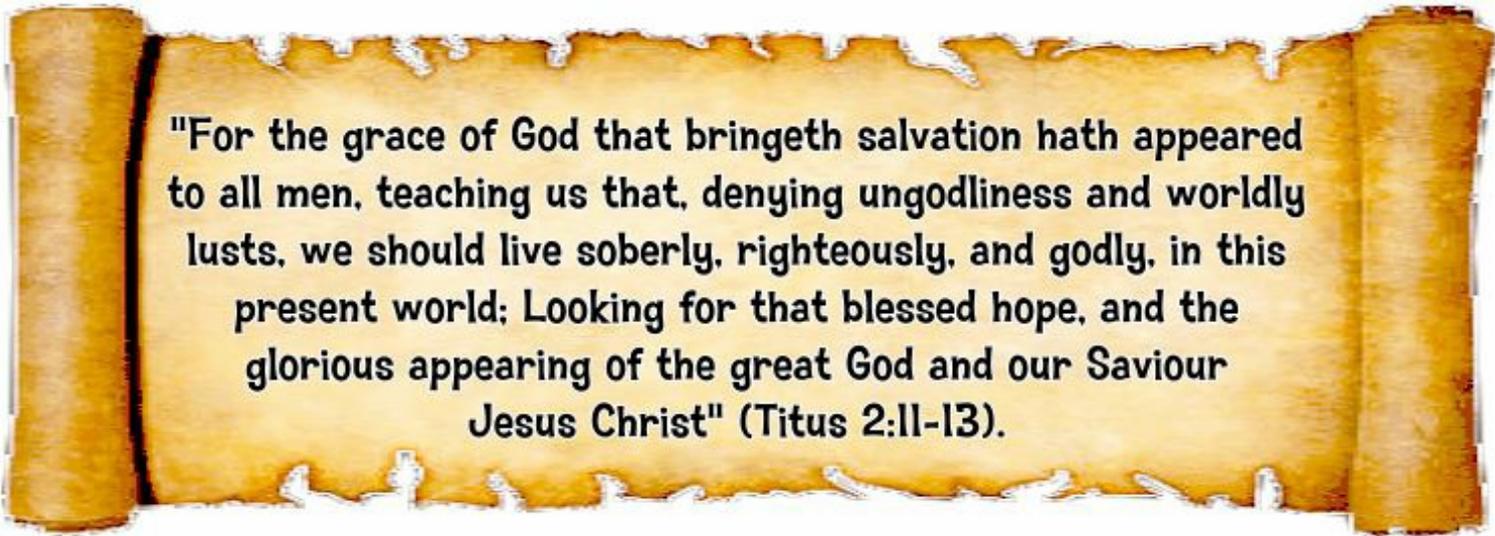
“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ” (1 Timothy 2:3).

“But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of *them* all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:10-12).

“But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions” (2 Timothy 4:5).

**QUESTION: Do you have any final counsel for us?**

**APOSTLE PAUL:** “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. **But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord**” (1 Corinthians 15:51-58).



**"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-13).**

# STUDIES IN ROMANS 13 & SUBMISSION TO GOVERNMENT

By David Cloud

The following is from our yet unpublished commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Church at Rome:

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor” (Romans 13:1-7).

This is the main passage in the New Testament on the believer's relationship with government in this present world. It has a wealth of lessons. “The Christian, by virtue of divine revelation, can have a clearer understanding of the position of the governing authority than an official of the government is likely to have. Let that knowledge guide him in his attitudes and decisions” (Charles Hodge).

## 1. This is a forceful exhortation to “be subject to the higher powers.”

This is the main teaching. Observe how the exhortation is emphasized. First, the verb in verse 1 (“*be subject*”) is present tense, indicating continuous, repeated action, and it is imperative mood, which, when used of God speaking to His people, is a command, an order, a charge.

“Christian soldiers, attention! Do this! Be subject to the higher powers!” Second, “*subject*” is the Greek *hupotasso*, which is translated “submit” (Ro. 10:3), “be under” (1 Co. 14:34; 15:27), and “obey” (Tit. 2:5, 9). It is used for children submitting to parents (Lu. 2:51), wives submitting to husbands (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18; Tit. 2:5; 1 Pe. 3:3), servants to their masters (Tit. 2:9; 1 Pe. 2:18), the younger to the elder (1 Pe. 5:5), the church to Christ (Eph. 5:24). Third, the command is addressed to “*every soul*.” All of God's people are to be subject to the higher powers. Fourth, there is a sharp warning about resisting the authority. “Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation” (Ro. 13:2). Fifth, it is a lengthy exhortation. It is unrelenting for seven verses. Sixth, the higher powers are called God's ministers (Ro. 13:4, 6). They are to be treated as such, even though most of them do not personally know God and are not consciously serving God. We are to submit unto the higher powers “as unto God.”

Thus, to be subject to the higher powers is what God enjoins in a strong, emphasized manner. Though there are exceptions when God's people must not submit to earthly powers, as we will see, the *rule* is to submit. Words could not be plainer. God's people are to be humble, peaceable, well-ordered, law-abiding citizens. They are not to be rebels. Even when they are forced, for conscience sake, to obey God rather than man, they are not rebels but law-keepers. They are a people who are under authority.

Observe exactly what God's people owe to earthly governments:

*First, we owe subjection* (Ro. 13:1-5). As we have seen, this is the Greek *hupotasso*, which is translated “submit” (Ro. 10:3), “be under” (1 Co. 14:34; 15:27), and “obey”

(Tit. 2:5, 9). Subjection, obedience, submission is what God commands. Submission is to consciously, willingly place myself under the authority of another. It is an act of the will. To be subject unto authorities doesn't mean I can't exercise my civil rights. To obey those that have the rule over me means that I am at liberty to operate within the civil laws that I am granted according to my citizenship. In America, there are magnificent rights that have been won at great cost, and American citizens are at liberty before God to exercise those rights, such as freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly. It is not unscriptural for churches to sue civil governments that are invading their constitutional rights and for Christians to join in with protests against abuse of power and for Christians to exercise their right to vote and to participate in the political system, as they are so led of God. But Bible-believing Christians are taught by God to be good citizens and not to be rebels and rabble-rousers.

**Second, we owe subjection for conscience sake** (Ro. 13:5). The subjection is not to consist of external obedience only, but it is to be obedience from the heart as unto God. "For conscience sake" refers to conscience toward God. This is the key to godly obedience toward authorities in this world, which are often ungodly and unreasonable. It is the key for the child to submit to the parent ("for this is well pleasing unto the Lord," Col. 3:20), for the wife to submit to the husband ("as unto the Lord," Eph. 5:22), for the servant to the master ("as unto Christ," Eph. 6:5). This is repeated and emphasized in Peter's first epistle, "Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God" (1 Pe. 2:18-20).

**Third, we owe tribute and custom** (Ro. 13:6-7). Tributes and customs refer to various kinds of taxes, tolls, duties. Both are mentioned in Mt. 17:25. See also Lu. 5:27 ("the seat of custom"). "Render" is *apodidomi*, "to give or to do something necessary in fulfillment of an obligation" (*Complete Word Study Bible*). "The word *apodote* is full of meaning, for literally it is 'give back.' When Jesus was interrogated on the subject of taxes, his questioners used the word 'give' [*didomi*], but in his reply he used 'give back' [*apodidomi*] (Mark 12:14, 17), suggesting that what

is paid to the government in the form of taxes presupposes value received or to be received" (Charles Hodge). Jesus taught the people to pay tribute to Caesar (Lu. 20:22-25). On another occasion, Jesus Himself paid the tribute, even though as the Son of the great King, He should have been exempt of taxes. (This is true whether the tribute in that situation was the temple tax or Caesar's tax.) Christ paid the tribute "lest we should offend them" (Mt. 17:24-27). The principle for God's people is that they should pay taxes even if they consider them unjust so as not to cause offense. Again, this is done "for conscience toward God." It is better to keep a good testimony for Christ and not offend the unsaved than be a tax rebel even for the best of reasons. That the Bible teaches the payment of taxes unjustly raised is evident from the fact that in that time the taxes were taken by the publicans and they were so unjust in that office that they were universally hated. Instead of exacting the exact tax required by the Roman government, the publicans abused their office to rob the people (Lu. 19:8). Yet Jesus taught the people to pay tribute to Caesar even in such a corrupt context. "Both these taxes were collected in Paul's day by the publicans. There were flagrant abuses in the tax system, so much so that the publicans were the worst hated men in the nation. Paul does not enter into the rights and wrongs of the taxation system. He simply tells Christians that a nation's leaders have a right to monetary support; therefore they must pay their taxes" (John Phillips). "The man in authority may be unworthy, but the institution is not, since God wills it. Without financial undergirding, government cannot function" (Hodge).

**Fourth, we owe fear** (Ro. 13:7). This is the Greek *phobos*, which is used 47 times in the New Testament and always refers to fear and never to "reverence." To fear the authority is to fear the power that the authority has for the exercise of his authority. It is obvious that fear is not a wrong motive in such things. Proper fear of God and king keeps one from being "given to change" (Pr. 24:21), meaning given to disobedience and rebellion. In this day of democracy and "people's" rights, God's people must be careful to follow God's Word rather than the mood of the times. We are to have the attitude of "meekness and fear" (1 Pe. 3:15), which is despised by the spirit of these times, but is valued by God. "Fear is a conscientious regard for and awe of those in authority—an attitude certainly not generally conspicuous today" (Phillips). On the other hand, "the fear of man bringeth a snare" (Pr. 29:25). This refers to fearing man more than God, trusting man rather than God. "The fear of man bringeth a snare:

but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe” (Pr. 29:25). “How many have gone to hell because they were afraid of what their friends would say if they trusted Christ! ‘We fear man so much,’ wrote William Gurnall, ‘because we fear God so little’” (*Believer’s Bible Commentary*). That is not the fear that Paul is talking about in Romans 13:7.

**Fifth, we owe honor** (Ro. 13:7). This is the Greek *time*, referring to honor, respect, esteem. Honor is to be shown toward the elderly (Le. 19:32), parents (Eph. 6:2), elders (1 Ti. 5:17; 1 Th. 5:13), masters (1 Ti. 6:1), wives (1 Pe. 3:7), and all the brethren (Ro. 12:10). In Romans 13:7, the honor, respect, esteem is to be shown toward all those who are in authority. Again, the honor God’s people show toward the authorities of this world is honor that is given for *the Lord’s sake*, so it can be given even to the dishonorable. The redeemed must be extremely careful of their attitude toward authorities. We are naturally rebels and complainers and we must walk in the new man and not in the old man in these matters. It is apostates who despise dominion and speak evil of dignities (Jude 1:8), so if we find ourselves despising dominion and speaking evil of dignities, we need to check our spirits and put a halt to that ungodly attitude before it gets out of hand and leads to some evil action.

## 2. God is the Author of all authority.

The Greek is *exousia*, which is permission, right, “the power of authority, the power of one who wills and commands” (Vine). God has ordained the authorities that exist. “For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God” (Ro. 13:1). Even Satan has no authority except that which has been given him, as even he said, “All this authority will I give thee ... for that is given unto me” (Lu. 4:6). God has all authority and is in complete, ultimate control. All authority is from God and it has been delivered to the Son. Jesus Christ has all authority in heaven and in earth (Mt. 28:18), which leaves out nothing. God is the great King over all of man’s affairs. This shows the greatness of our God. No matter how bad or unreasonable the government appears, we can know that God is in control. The fundamental statement of this is in the revelations given to the prophet Daniel. “Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up king” (Da. 2:10-21). Daniel was captive in wicked Babylon when he penned that revelation. The arrogant, cruel

Nebuchadnezzar was on the throne, but Daniel was saying, “God sits on the only throne that really matters, and Nebuchadnezzar rules at God’s pleasure.” God uses human government to accomplish His eternal purposes, and they are raised up and put down according to His plan and by His pleasure. Throughout the prophets, we are told that the nations are in God’s hands and are His instruments. “For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans...” (Hab. 1:6). “O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger...” (Isa. 10:5). “the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia” (Ezr. 1:1). “I am God ... calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man [Cyrus king of Persia] that executeth my counsel” (Isa. 46:9-11). This can be said of every nation, every ruler.

That God is the Author of all power and authority is the biblical view of human history, and it is liberating for the child of God who truly believes it and lives according to it. It is peace in the midst of the storm. As he faces local, regional, national, and world events, the one who believes this does not fear as the world fears, is not troubled as the world is troubled, does not act as the world acts. He knows the times overall are in God’s hand (Da. 2:20), and his time in particular is in God’s hand (Ps. 31:15), and he himself is in God’s hand (Joh. 10:27-29). This is true in times of peace and times of turmoil, times of small trouble and times of great trouble, such as the great war of the 1910s, the Great Depression of the 1930s, the world war of the 1940s, the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 and the draconian global lockdown with its economic devastation. All such things are in God’s hand. The redeemed can dwell in the secret place of the most High and abide under His shadow and can say of the LORD, “He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust (Ps. 91:1-2; see entire Psalm).

## 3. The emphasis of Romans 13:1-7 is on the government as the instrument of law and order, as the rewarder of good and the punisher of evil (Ro. 13:3-4).

This is the proper purpose of human government under God. The men of this world are sinners; all are rebels by nature; and without government, there is anarchy. Government is a blessing, even though there is no perfect and truly godly government in this present world. Even a corrupt government is better than no government. I have spent a large part of my life living in nations where the governments are deeply corrupt. There was no government before the Flood, and “the earth was filled with violence” (Ge. 6:11).

God has put His laws in man's conscience, and even pagan governments that do not have the Scripture understand righteousness. The law of God in man's heart has been corrupted by the fall, but it is very much alive in each man's conscience. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another" (Ro. 2:15). For this reason, governments the world over, in all times, have typically had laws against murder, theft, rape, etc. The first known law code was that of Hammurabi, who was king of Babylon from about 1792-1750 BC. A pillar inscribed with this law was found in the ancient palace at Susa and resides in the Louvre Museum in Paris. Many of Hammurabi's laws were righteous and just, though he was a pagan king.

#### 4. The authorities in this world are "the ministers of God" (Ro. 13:4).

There are great lessons in this truth, and these lessons should be taught to God's people, to teach them their responsibilities, but they also should be taught to the authorities themselves whenever possible, so that the authorities can understand their position in light of God's Word and can exercise their authority in wisdom before God.

First, that the authorities are the ministers of God means they are appointed by God. Regardless of how they come to the position of authority--whether by election, by appointment of another authority, by birth--ultimately they are raised up by God.

Second, that the authorities are the ministers of God means *they are not God*. They must not think of themselves as God. They are not at liberty to do whatsoever they please. They are under authority.

Third, that the authorities are the ministers of God means they are responsible to do God's will and will give account to God. Men of this world typically think of positions of authority as opportunities for self-advancement and self-enrichment, but they will learn, either now or later, that the position of authority is a position of awesome responsibility and that they are stewards of God.

"While 'God's servant' is an honorable title, it contains a reminder that the state is not God and that its function is to administer justice for him in areas where it is competent to do so. Even as God's servant in the spiritual realm can err, so the state is not to be thought of as infallible in its decisions. Yet this does not entitle the individual to flout the state's authority when the decision is not to his liking" (Charles Hodge).

#### 5. The government bears God's sword (Ro. 13:4).

A sword is an instrument of death. The government bears a rod for beating, but it also bears a sword for killing. This refers to capital punishment.

Observe that the one wielding the sword is "*the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil*" (Ro. 13:4). Therefore, Scripture is not giving authority to governments to wield the sword against those who do good. This is not God's will. The killing of murderers has been God's law from the time of Noah, long before the law of Moses. "And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Ge. 9:5-6).

The sword can be used lawfully against rebels who are trying to overthrow right order in this world, such as the Hitlers and their minions.

#### 6. Paul is not addressing the issue of the government as the rewarder of evil and the punisher of good.

This issue is addressed in other passages of Scripture. Paul says in verse 3, "for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil." So obviously he is not addressing rulers who *are* a terror to good works, which so often happens. In Romans 13 we are dealing with government that is *not* acting in rebellion to God and His laws. In the context, the government in question was the Roman. The epistle is addressed to the believers at Rome, Caesar's seat. Paul lived under the authority of Caesar and his governors. Caesar had both good and evil laws by God's standard. Paul was not saying that we should submit to Caesar when he exercises authority against the good.

When the government requires God's people to do evil and forbids them to do good, it is not acting in accordance

with Romans 13, and it should not be obeyed. When the government tells me to lie, cheat, steal, murder, stop preaching the gospel, stop having church, acclaim homosexuality, or anything else that is unlawful *by the clear teaching of God's infallible Word*, I must obey the higher law and trust God to help me and be willing pay whatever temporal consequences are required.

Likewise, when the government gives people *permission* to do evil, such as drink liquor and use marijuana and commit adultery and abort my child and watch pornography and live on a government subsidy instead of working, God's people must live by the higher law, which is God's Word.

Consider some examples of how God's people have resisted authority when it tried to force them to do evil. The Jewish midwives refused to obey Pharaoh's law to kill the infant boys; they feared God rather than the king, and God rewarded them (Ex. 1:15-21). Moses' parents, too, did not obey Pharaoh's law to kill the male babies (Heb. 11:23). David refused to submit himself to the king's death sentence and fled from him instead (1 Sa. 18-27). Jehosheba and

Jehoiada refused to submit to Athaliah (2 Ki. 11:1-20). Daniel refused to obey the Persian law forbidding prayer to anyone other than the emperor (Da. 6). Obadiah refused to obey the royal order against the prophets of the Lord (1 Ki. 16:3-4). Amos refused to obey the order to stop preaching (Am. 7:12-17). Jeremiah did not obey the king's order to stop prophesying, and when the king cut up the prophecy, he wrote it again (Jer. 36:23-32). Ebedmelech the Ethiopian refused to obey the princes that put Jeremiah in the pit (Jer. 38:7-13). Peter and the apostles in Jerusalem refused to stop preaching the gospel even though they were threatened by the authorities. "Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men" (Ac. 5:29). Christ had commanded them to preach the gospel, so they had to obey the higher law. Paul, the author of Romans 13:1-7, did not meekly submit to magistrates who were acting unlawfully; he resisted these magistrates and instructed them in their own laws (Ac. 16:35-40).

Those who refuse to submit to the antichrist's evil laws will be rewarded by God (Re. 14:9-12).

**NASA'S PERSEVERANCE ROVER A SIGN OF THE TIMES** (Friday Church News Notes, February 26, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - NASA'S *Perseverance* rover made a perfect landing on Mars on February 18 after a six-month, 293 million mile journey. The fifth rover to land on Mars, the \$2.7 billion vehicle is about 10 feet long, 9 feet wide, 7 feet tall, and weighs 2,260 pounds. Powered by a nuclear generator, it has a slew of scientific instruments, including a camera with a zoom telephoto lens that can take high-definition video, panoramic color, and 3D images. The rover also carries a little helicopter drone called *Ingenuity* with which NASA will attempt to scout the planet's landscape. *Perseverance* is a sign of the times biblically in two ways. First, its technological ingenuity is a fulfillment of the prophecy of the increase in knowledge in the end times (Daniel 12:4). Second, the evolutionary mythology that drives NASA today is a fulfillment of the prophecy of end-time skepticism (2 Peter 3:3-6). Chris Carbery, CEO of Explore Mars, said, "*Perseverance* is attempting to answer one of the biggest questions in the history of humanity: Is there life elsewhere in the solar system?" This objective is based on evolutionary presuppositions that deny the Creator in spite of overwhelming evidence that the universe did not create itself. Evolution is based on the ridiculous idea



that everything came from nothing, life came from non-life, intelligence arose from non-intelligence, and incredible complexity was an accident. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation. **For this they willingly are ignorant of**, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Peter 3:3-7).

# SUGGESTIONS for taking a church's SPIRITUAL TEMPERATURE

By David Cloud

Some pastor friends helped us put together the following suggestions for taking a church's spiritual temperature.

There is not a church anywhere on earth that doesn't need a continual temperature check, and more so than ever in this present time. There is not a pastor anywhere that doesn't need to examine and re-examine the church in order to press onward and upward.

We are to pursue perfection.

"... that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and **PERFECT**, will of God" (Ro. 12:2).

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, **PERFECTING** holiness in the fear of God" (2 Co. 7:1).

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be **PERFECT**..." (2 Co. 13:11).

"For the **PERFECTING** of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12).

"Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man **PERFECT** in Christ Jesus" (Col. 1:28).

"That the man of God may be **PERFECT**, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Ti. 3:17).

See also Ac. 18:26; Ro. 12:2; 1 Co. 1:10; 2 Co. 13:9; Eph. 4:13; Php. 3:12-15; Col. 4:12; 1 Th. 3:10; Heb. 6:1; 13:21; Jas. 1:4; 1 Pe. 5:10.

We don't achieve perfection in this present life, but it is the will of God that we pursue it.

Stagnation is the path of backsliding and apostasy.

The book [21 Steps toward a Stronger Church in the 21st Century](https://www.wayoflife.org/free_ebooks/21_steps_to_a_stronger_church.php) has a lot of practical suggestions about how to pursue perfection in these evil but opportune times. It is available as a free eBook at the following site -

[https://www.wayoflife.org/free\\_ebooks/21\\_steps\\_to\\_a\\_stronger\\_church.php](https://www.wayoflife.org/free_ebooks/21_steps_to_a_stronger_church.php)



- Does Acts 2:41-42 describe the church?
- Does 1 Peter 2:5 describe the church?
- Does Ephesians 4:11-16 describe the church?
- Does Philippians 2:14-16 describe the church?
- Does 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 describe the church?
- Do the members have a clear personal testimony of repentance and faith, with evidence of regeneration, and do they show this evidence and give this testimony before the church as a requirement for baptism and membership? (Ac. 8:36-39; 16:30-33)
- Is each member familiar with the church constitution, doctrinal statement, and covenant and do they publicly agree to it when joining for membership? (1 Co. 1:10)
- What percentage of the membership are true disciples of Jesus Christ? (Ac. 2:42)
- Are the pastors properly trained and biblically qualified? (1 Ti. 3; Tit. 1)
- Are the pastors serious students of and effectual teachers of God's Word so that the flock is being built up in the Scriptures and learning to handle the Scriptures for themselves? (Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Ti. 3:2; 1 Ti. 4:13-16; 2 Ti. 2:2, 15; 4:2; Tit. 1:9-11; Heb. 5:12-14)
- What are the pastors' first loves? (Re. 2:4)

- What is the condition of the pastors' families? (1 Ti. 3:4-5, 11; Tit. 1:6)
- Is the pastor a humble shepherd or a lording type? (1 Pe. 5:1-4; 3 Jo. 1:9-11)
- Is the preaching according to the description in 2 Timothy 4:2?
- Does the preacher speak as the oracles of God and do the members listen as if they are hearing the oracles of God? What percentage of the church members bring notebooks and pen to take notes and listen intently and on purpose to what is being preached or taught? Is there anything worth writing down?! (1 Pe. 4:11)
- Is the church being effectively warned of worldliness and false teachings? (Ro. 12:2; 16:17-18; 1 Co. 15:33; 2 Co. 11:3-4; Eph. 5:11; Col. 2:8; 1 Th. 5:22; 1 Ti. 4:1-5; 2 Ti. 3:5; 4:3-4; Jas. 4:4; 1 Jo. 2:15-17; 4:1-3; 2 Jo. 1:6-11)
- What are the members' first loves? (Re. 2:4)
- What do the people most like to talk about? (Ps. 37:30-31; 49:3; Pr. 10:20-21; 15:4; 16:21-23; Mt. 12:35; Eph. 4:29; Col. 4:6)
- What is the reality of the daily prayer lives of the people? (Ro. 12:12; Eph. 6:18; Php. 4:6; Col. 4:2; 1 Th. 5:17; 1 Pe. 4:7; Jude 1:10)
- What percentage of the members show up for prayer meetings prepared to and eager to pray?
- What are the contents of the prayer requests (spiritual needs vs. physical and trivial needs)? (Eph. 6:18-19; consider Paul's prayers - Ro. 1:9-12; Eph. 1:16-19; 3:14-21; Php. 1:4-11; Col. 1:9-13; Phm. 1:4-6; 1 Th. 1:2; 2 Ti. 1:3)
- What percentage of church members have daily private devotions? (Ps. 55:17; Da. 6:10; Ac. 10:9; 2 Ti. 2:15)
- What percentage of the church members attend special meetings? (Heb. 10:25)
- What is the level of skill and zeal in personal Bible study among most of the people? (Heb. 5:12-14)
- What is the level of spiritual discernment among most of the people? (Pr. 14:15; Ac. 17:11; 2 Co. 10:3-4; 1 Th. 5:21; Heb. 5:14)
- What is the evangelistic zeal of most of the people? (Mr. 16:15; Ac. 8:4; 2 Co. 5:20)
- What percentage of the people can be described as not conformed to, not in love with, and not friends of the world? (Ro. 12:2; Jas. 4:4; 1 Jo. 2:15-17)
- Does the church take biblical modesty seriously? (Pr. 7:10; 1 Ti. 2:9-10)
- What are the people doing on social media? (Ps. 101:3; Pr. 29:24; Ro. 12:2; 1 Co. 15:33; Eph. 5:11; 1 Th. 5:22; Jas. 4:4; 1 Jo. 2:15-17)
- Is the church well grounded in the music issue so that the people understand and are committed to sacred music as opposed to contemporary? (Eph. 5:18-19; Col. 3:16)
- What type of music do the people listen to in their daily lives?
- What is the spiritual condition of the homes? What percentage of the homes are strong in the Lord?
- How many of the fathers are spiritual heads of the homes? (2 Co. 13:11; Eph. 6:4)
- How many of the mothers are the keepers of the homes? (1 Ti. 5:14; Tit. 2:3-5)
- What percentage of church families have family devotions? (De. 6:4-9)
- Is the church unified in spiritual love? (Eph. 4:1-3, 16)
- Or does backbiting, criticism, and gossip flourish? (1 Co. 3:3-4; 2 Co. 12:20)
- What is the spiritual condition of the youth? What are their first loves? What percentage fit the description of Romans 12?
- Does the church take sin seriously enough to practice discipline when needed? (Mt. 18:15-20; 1 Co. 5)
- Is the church starting new churches or purposefully planning to start new churches and working toward that objective? (Ac. 13:1-4)
- Is the church seeing God call preachers and "full time" workers and is the church training them properly to prepare them for God's great work? (Mt. 9:37-38; 2 Ti. 2:2)
- Does the church have an effectual part in supporting and praying for biblical missionary works (other than a cut and dry missionary budget and photos on the wall)? Are the prayer letters read to the congregation and prayed over? (1 Co. 9:14; 2 Co. 11:8; Php. 4:15; Tit. 3:13-14; 3 Jo. 1:5-8)
- What percentage of the church is actively looking for the blessed hope and living in light of the imminent Rapture? (Ro. 13:12; Php. 3:20; 4:5; 1 Th. 1:9-10; 4:13-18; Tit. 2:13; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pe. 4:7; 2 Pe. 3:12; Re. 1:3; 22:10)



The book [21 Steps toward a Stronger Church in the 21st Century](https://www.wayoflife.org/free_ebooks/21_steps_to_a_stronger_church.php) has a lot of practical suggestions about how to pursue perfection in these evil but opportune times. It is available as a free eBook at the following site:

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**DIGGING IN THE WALLS**

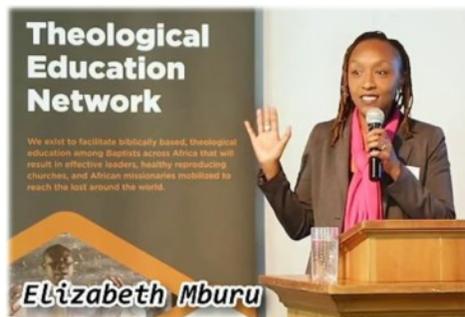
God commanded the prophet Ezekiel to dig in the walls of Israel's temple and observe the evils being done in secret by apostate religious leaders of that day. "Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall ... And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. So 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?



**SUBJECTIVE BIBLE INTERPRETATION TAUGHT AT SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

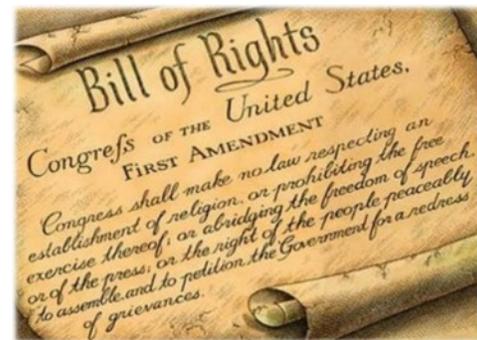
(Friday Church News Notes, February 5, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "Prominent SBC Seminary Teaches that Biblical Interpretation Is Subjective," *Reformation Charlotte*, July 16, 2020: "Like Southern Seminary, Southeastern has abandoned its strong adherence to biblical fidelity and objective truth and exchanged it for social justice activism and woke theology. ... While the school has been engulfed in secular philosophies such as Critical Race Theory for a number of years, standpoint epistemology is relatively new to the scene and has taken a stronghold in the school's curriculum--despite the fact that they will not use the terminology. ... Standpoint Theory, also known as Standpoint Epistemology, teaches that knowledge and insight, at least in part, emerges from one's social status or cultural background. In other words, people from different cultures, upbringings, hardships, and personal experiences have a special ability to glean truth from various sources. ... Recently, the videos of Southeastern Seminary's Southeastern Symposium online conference were released whereby one of the keynote speakers,

Elizabeth Mburu, openly taught these concepts. According to Mburu's bio, she pursued her doctoral studies at Southeastern ... [She said,] 'It seems we, as Africans, are still trying to imitate foreign ways when it comes to reading, interpreting, and applying the Bible in our every day lives. ... So the solution I propose is a contextualized African intercultural approach to the study of the Bible.' ... This is antithetical to how the Scriptures actually teach us to understand the truth--the truth is universal and is to be rightly understood in its original authorial intent. ... [Mburu's lecture] suggests that she believes biblical truth to be subjective, rather than objective. It suggests that she believes that instead of the Holy Spirit revealing the truth as is meant in its original context, that the Holy Spirit instead intends for the Scriptures to mean different things to different people groups." Pastor Tom Buck, First Baptist Church of Lindale, Texas, warns, "SEBTS is teaching a hermeneutic based on standpoint epistemology. Hermeneutics is not static but is 'dynamic'--it changes based upon your cultural context. This view isn't just in error, it's flat out dangerous!" (@TomBuck, Jul. 16, 2020).

**MISSTATING THE HISTORY OF FREE SPEECH IN AMERICA**

(Friday Church News Notes, February 5, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org),



[fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - Referring to the suppression of speech by the major social media companies, syndicated talk show host Dennis Prager says, “This is the first time in American history that free speech is threatened seriously” (“Conservatives wary of Big Tech censorship,” Justthenews.com, Nov. 11, 2020). There is no doubt that we are seeing a serious wave of censorship, but it is *not* the first time in American history that free speech has been threatened. **The free speech of Baptists, Quakers, and others was stifled in Massachusetts and some other colonies for 150 years.** In 1635, Roger Williams had to flee into the wilderness in the dead of winter to escape persecution for saying things that were forbidden by the colonial government. In 1651, Obadiah Holmes was beaten with 30 stripes for saying forbidden things. Many Baptists were imprisoned. Because of the stifling of free speech, the first Baptist church in Massachusetts was shut down in 1680 and a second Baptist church was not formed until 1749. The censorship did not end until Massachusetts formed their state constitution in 1780. Baptists in Virginia also suffered censorship of free speech and the imprisonment of 30 Baptist preachers. **The free speech of anyone supporting the political rights of blacks was viciously stifled in the Southern states during the Democrat-led Jim Crow era,** which lasted 90 years. **The free speech of Bible-believing Christians has been stifled in the American public school system for a very long time.** Try teaching biblical creationism and the biblical view of man and woman and sexuality, for example, and see how long it takes for the government education censors to ban you.



**ECONOMISTS PREDICT 890,000 DEATHS OVER THE NEXT 15 YEARS DUE TO IMPACT FROM THE COVID LOCKDOWNS** (Friday Church News Notes, February 5, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - In a new paper, economists warn that the economic and social costs of the Covid lockdowns will be grave. In “The Long-Term Impact of the Covid-19 Unemployment Shock,” Francesco Bianchi (Duke University), Giada Bianchi (Harvard Medical School), and Dongho Song (Johns Hopkins University) estimate there will be nearly one million deaths over the next 15 years. The abstract reads, “We use our results to assess the long-run effects of the COVID-19 economic recession on mortality and life expectancy. We estimate the size of the Covid-19-related unemployment to be between 2 and 5 times larger than the typical unemployment shock, depending on race/gender, resulting in a 3.0% increase in mortality rate and a 0.5% drop in life expectancy over the next 15 years for the overall American population. We also predict that the shock will disproportionately affect African-Americans and women, over a short horizon, while white men might suffer large consequences over longer horizons. These figures translate in a staggering 0.89 million additional deaths over the next 15 years” (“The Long-Term Impact,”

working paper 28304, National Bureau of Economic Research, nber.org).

**RUPERT MURDOCH WARNS OF THE CANCEL CULTURE** (Friday Church News Notes, February 5, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Rupert Murdoch calls out the ‘awful woke orthodoxy,’” *Just the News*, Jan. 26, 2021: “Longtime head of News Corp. and the Fox Corporation Rupert Murdoch says media organizations are facing widespread ‘censorship’ that in turn is preventing ‘individuals and societies from realizing their potential.’ Murdoch’s frank sentiments came during a pre-taped acceptance speech he gave in response to a lifetime achievement award from the Australia Day Foundation. Murdoch’s media empire reaches tens of millions of Australians each day. [He said,] ‘For those of us in media, there’s a real challenge to confront: a wave of censorship that seeks to silence conversation, to stifle debate, to ultimately stop individuals and societies from realizing their potential. This rigidly enforced conformity, aided and abetted by so-called social media, is a straitjacket on sensibility. Too many people have fought too hard in too many places for freedom of speech to be suppressed by this awful woke orthodoxy.’”





## FACEBOOK CENSORING SPEECH AGAINST THE TRANSEXUAL AGENDA

(Friday Church News Notes, February 5, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143)

- Facebook has been suspending accounts of some who speak against the transsexual agenda. On Jan. 26, Facebook suspended Robert Gagnon for a week for speaking against Joe Biden's new transgender military policy, claiming that he violated Facebook's "Community standards on violence and incitement." Gagnon, author of *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, responded, "There was absolutely no incitement to violence on our part. We abhor violence done to any person. This is just a thinly veiled and pathetic excuse for censorship of any critical views toward trans-tyranny over our consciences, religion, and reason. Only one point of view is being allowed. Trump was not the great danger to the Republic. Left-wing canceling is" ("Disagreeing with Biden's Transgender Policy is 'Incitement,'" *PJMedia*, Jan. 26, 2021). Pentecostal preacher/news commentator Michael Brown was locked out of Twitter for 12 hours on Jan. 20 for saying, "Will I get punished by Twitter for saying that, in God's sight, 'Rachel' Levine (nominated by Biden to be his assistant secretary for HHS) is a man?" Apparently this came under

Twitter's ban on "hateful conduct." Brown commented on the suspension, "When biological truth conflicts with transgender activism, biological truth is banned. When biblical truth conflicts with transgender activism, biblical truth is banned" ("Locked out by Twitter," *Townhall*, Jan. 25, 2021).

## DISCIPLESHIP LESSONS IN TAGALOG

(Friday Church News Notes, February 5, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143)

- Missionary Bill Hardecker has recorded 22 discipleship audio lessons in the Tagalog language. Lessons 1-17 are Foundational Doctrines (The Bible, God, Angels, Man, Sin, Salvation, Church, Baptism, Lord's Supper, Witnessing, the Last Days). Lessons 18-22 (and more to come) are on the Christian Life. Each lesson has downloadable study notes that go along with the audio files. They are available online at:

<https://www.sermonaudio.com/solo/mzbmp/sermons/series/132299/>

## ISRAELI LOCUST SLAYERS TRAIN ETHIOPIANS

(Friday Church News Notes, February 5, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "Israeli locust slayers," Israel21c.org, Nov. 29, 2020: "Some call it a plague. Yoav Motro calls it a war. The enemies are huge armies of desert locusts destroying farm and grazing lands across nine East African countries. In Ethiopia alone, the locusts have conquered three million acres since January. Motro, the vertebrates and locust specialist for Israel's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, captained a

successful battle against these winged creatures in Israel in 2013. ... When the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations approached Israel for financial support for Ethiopia in fighting these most destructive migratory pests in the world, Motro felt that wasn't sufficient. 'I said, I have a better idea: to help them help themselves. We can do that by bringing the correct equipment with us and training them to use it.' That's how Motro and three handpicked experts ended up spending two weeks of November in Jijiga (Jijiga) in Ethiopia's Somali region. As the expression goes, giving a man a fish will feed him for the day; teaching him to fish will feed him for a lifetime. Giving him a fishing rod makes it possible. The Israelis handed the Ethiopians a 'fishing rod'--in the form of 27 surveillance drones, 100 motorized backpack sprayers and in-person training--enabling locals to vanquish the locusts on their own in the future. ... Tamir Ashual of the Agriculture Ministry led logistics officer training. Yoav Muller of Muller Professional Pest Control taught the nighttime spraying method developed in Israel. 'It's a novel method based on what we learned in 2013: To attack the locusts at night when they are asleep. That gives us an edge,' Motro tells ISRAEL21c. ... According to the FAO, 40 million to 80 million locusts can converge in a



single swarm over a square kilometer. In one day, they can consume crops that could have fed 35,000 people.”



### HOW THE LEFT IS STEALING AMERICANS' HEARTS AND MINDS THROUGH PUBLIC EDUCATION

(Friday Church News Notes, February 12, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from “How the Left Is Stealing,” Powerlineblog.com, Jan. 27, 2021: “Across the country, leftists in charge of public education are substituting indoctrination for learning. Facts and objective standards are out, liberal shibboleths are the order of the day. My state, Minnesota, exemplifies the trend. Under state law, the Department of Education promulgates standards and benchmarks for K-12 schools in a variety of disciplines. These standards are periodically revised, and this year the Social Studies standards are being rewritten. Under Minnesota’s hard-left governor, Tim Walz, the committee doing the revision consists almost entirely of left-wingers. That committee has released the first draft of its standards. This draft drops almost everything normally regarded as history--the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World War I, World War II, the Holocaust, and any reference to minor figures like George Washington--in favor of political indoctrination like this: (1) systemic

racism in the United States rooted in our founding; (2) developing a ‘respectful awareness’ of the LGBTQ+ community; (3) the Reconstruction period, specifically successful efforts to disenfranchise newly freed Black Americans and connecting this history to persistent discrimination and inequity in the present; (4) an analysis of the ideology of Manifest Destiny and its relationship to whiteness, Christianity, and capitalism. Essentially, liberals want our schools to be hotbeds of anti-Americanism. Unfortunately, just about all of our public school systems are in their hands.” **CONCLUDING NOTE BY D. CLOUD:** There is no way to take back the public school system. Even the staunchest conservative presidents have not attempted to disband the radicalized Department of Education, and that would be only one step toward rooting out the secular atheism that permeates the public school system. America was greater when there was no government school system. It must be abandoned by those who love Christ and truth and should never have been supported by God’s people. “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

### NEO-MARXIST IDEAS HAVE FOOHOLD IN TWO SOUTHERN BAPTIST SEMINARIES

(Friday Church News Notes, February 12, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from “Former ERLC Scholar Says,” *Capstone Report*, March 13, 2020: “A former scholar with the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) warned

Southern Baptists about the dangers of Neo-Marxist ideas like Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Intersectionality during an event in Louisiana. Dr. Craig Mitchell, president of the Ethics and Political Economy Center, rejected the use of CRT and Intersectionality as ‘Analytical Tools,’ and called out Southern Baptist professors for promoting these wicked ideologies. In fact, Dr. Mitchell called for the firing of professors espousing these Neo-Marxist ideas. Dr. Mitchell warned that professors at Southern like Dr. Curtis Woods, the chairman of the 2019 SBC Resolutions Committee that approved the use of Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality as ‘Analytical Tools,’ are promoting these dangerous ideas. Also, Mitchell cited professors like Dr. Walter Strickland of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) and Dr. Jarvis Williams and Kevin Jones of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. ... The *Baptist Message* reported, ‘Responding to the description in the resolution calling Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality useful analytical tools, Mitchell said this is true *only if you’re a Marxist.*’ ... There are several implications from this report: Should we believe public denials of SBC Elites like Danny Akin, president of SEBTS, when they tell us they aren’t drifting to the Left? ... Dr. Mitchell is a real leader. He’s a brave man. He is



a voice in the wilderness urging the Southern Baptist Elites to change their ways.” For a report on Mitchell’s warning see

<https://baptistmessage.com/mitchell-marxist-concepts-have-footholds-at-sebts-sbts/>

### CRITICAL RACE THEORY

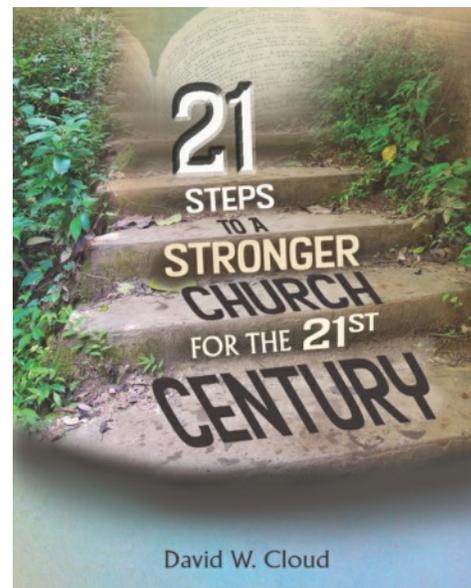
(Friday Church News Notes, February 12, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “4 Main Things Christians Need to Know about CRT,” *Pulpit & Pen*, Aug. 6, 2019: “Invented by Derrick Bell and other attorneys as a spin-off of Critical Legal Theory in American law schools in the 1980s, these theorists were disenchanted with the results of the Civil Rights Movement. Bell, Richard Delgado, and other CRT thinkers viewed classical liberal ideas such as meritocracy (people being rewarded based on their individual merits), equal opportunity, and colorblind justice (like that promoted by Dr. King) to all be factors that cause systemic, invisible, intangible racism. What many people don’t understand is that CRT rejects most of the things that the 1960s Civil Rights Movement fought for, like treating people equally in institutions and under the law. Instead, CRT teaches that if power is to be properly redistributed from the ‘haves’ to ‘have-nots’ (which in their eyes include minority identity



groups), the law may actually need to be biased in favor of minority identity groups. ... CRT is a system that rejects both human biology and Biblical doctrine and teaches that mankind should be separated into various ethnic minority groups. With CRT, people are encouraged to identify with their ethnicity (which CRT thought-leaders inaccurately label ‘race’), rather than with greater and more significant distinguishing factors, like Jesus, their nation, or their community. **It’s also important to understand that Critical Race Theory--although it may seem counter-intuitive--doesn’t just deal with race. CRT promotes division between ‘identity groups,’ dividing people into either the ‘oppressor class’ (usually, White and ‘straight’ men holding to the majority religion) versus ‘victim identity groups’ which can include so-called ‘sexual minorities,’ the disabled, abuse victims, women, the ‘transgender,’ as well as ethnic groups.** CRT is used by homosexuals, the transgender, and women as much as it is used by ethnic minorities. In CRT, ‘whiteness’ refers to anything identifying with power or privilege as it relates to the ‘majority class’ (usually, those who hold ethnic or religious majority). For CRT theorists, to be white is to have privilege, and to have privilege is to be white. The term *Whiteness*, as used in CRT, refers to any majority group that has majority status and--in the world of CRT--that is synonymous with power and privilege.”

<https://pulpitandpen.org/2019/08/06/4-main-things-christians-need-to-know-about-critical-race-theory/>

### 21 STEPS TO A STRONGER CHURCH FOR THE 21ST



**CENTURY** (Friday Church News Notes, February 12, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143)

- In a time when the average Baptist church is getting steadily, shockingly weaker, more carnal, more worldly, moving farther down the contemporary path with each passing year, we are intent on moving in a *much* stronger direction, and we are thankful for the churches that we know of personally that are on the same path. We have no intention of following the crowd, and we are not afraid of being in the minority. The church we see in the New Testament is a church of born again disciples of Christ who are committed to serving Christ. *21 Steps* has two major sections. **First, Looking at a Stronger Church, which examines key Bible passages that provide the pattern for the church for the entire age.** The pattern is not found in the church fathers, the Waldenses, the Lollards, the Anabaptists, the Lutherans, the Anglicans, the Reformed Presbyterianism, the Geneva Calvinists, the Brethren, Pentecostalism, Charismaticism, Fundamentalism, Evangelicalism,

**THE AMAZING BLUE WHALE** (Friday Church News Notes, February 12, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - The following is from creationmoments.com, Oct. 21, 2019: “As far as we know, the blue whale is the largest animal that has ever existed. Every statistic that we find about these giants is overwhelming. A blue whale’s tongue is larger than an elephant. Its flipper can be about six feet long--as long as a man is tall. A baby blue whale is the size of two minivans. Their mouths could hold 400 people. Yet the creatures they eat--krill--are only about half an inch long. They swallow vast amounts of water, then filter it back through their baleen--the strange keratin filter-like structure

that they have in their mouths. They eat four tons of krill a day. That is 4 million of the tiny creatures. Babies consume 50 to 100 gallons of milk per day. The blue whale’s tail is as wide as a soccer net. One of these whales can dive to nearly 1,000 feet, and they can stay there for 30 minutes, without needing a breath. The water that they blow through their blowhole can jet up to 30 feet high. In short, these are magnificent animals, clearly illustrating the greatness and the beauty of God’s creation. We read in Genesis 1:21 that God made them on the fifth day



of creation: “And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly.” The word translated as whales could also refer to other large sea creatures, but it certainly includes these beautiful, amazing giants of the ocean. Ref: *Encyclopedia Britannica*, ‘Blue Whale.’”

New Reformed Calvinism, denominational Baptists, or any of the streams of Independent Baptists. We examine the church as the pillar and ground of the truth of 1 Timothy 3:15; the spiritual house made of living stones of 1 Peter 2:4-5; the regenerate, faithful, growing church of Acts 2:36-42; the purifying church of 1 Corinthians 5:6-8; the turning, serving, watching church of 1 Thessalonians 1:8-10; the church that aims for perfecting every member of Colossians 1:25-28; the ministering body church of Ephesians 4:7-16; and the missionary church of Acts 13. **The second section describes 21 Steps toward a Stronger Church, which are as follows:** The leaders must have spiritual revival; the leaders must be courageous; start with a biblical examination of the church; be ready to engage in a difficult battle; be patient; be

confident of God’s help; pastors must be real leaders; pray for a ministry team; immerse the church in prayer; aim for a regenerate church membership; focus on the real disciples; strengthen the church covenant; set up biblical standards for workers; immerse the church in Scripture; disciple all of the people; deal with sin; emphasize separation from the world; emphasize Bible prophecy; double down on evangelism; have a strong vision for church planting and world missions; aim to incorporate all the elements of a discipling church. 130 pages. Available in print or as a free eBook, [https://www.wayoflife.org/free\\_ebooks/21\\_steps\\_to\\_a\\_stronger\\_church.php](https://www.wayoflife.org/free_ebooks/21_steps_to_a_stronger_church.php)

**WHERE DO YOU FIND YOURSELF?** (Friday Church News Notes, February 12, 2021,

[www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - “If you find yourself loving any pleasure better than your prayers, any book better than the Bible, any house better than the house of God, any table better than the Lord’s table, any person better than Christ, and any indulgence better than the hope of heaven--be alarmed” (Thomas Guthrie).

**PENSACOLA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE BUILDS BRIDGES TO MORMONISM** (Friday Church News Notes, February 19, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - Pensacola Christian College (PCC) has built a bridge to Mormonism via music in the name of “art.” The 5 Browns were featured at Pensacola’s Fine Arts program on Feb. 12 and 13, 2021. The siblings are highly talented



young pianists who perform a wide variety of music on pianos, from classical to blues, jazz, and pop. The larger issue for a Christian school forum is the spiritual and doctrinal one. They “were raised their entire lives in the Mormon faith and have stated that they use their musical tours as an opportunity to share their faith.” When contacted by a concerned father of a PCC student, Pensacola’s president replied, “The purpose of Fine Arts is to provide an educational experience that encourages an appreciation of the arts. This is not a church or worship service, but rather a wholesome cultural event and social activity.” But as a former Pensacola student observed on this matter, “It is impossible not to endorse a group when you are paying them to come and requiring all students to attend (on pain of 25 demerits) and encouraging the students to buy their cd’s and look up their website. This was referenced tonight in the program which also advertised a book written by The 5 Browns. This is creating a bridge for unaware students to be misled into the Mormon faith.” No Christian college has the liberty to disobey God’s Word for the sake of “fine arts” or anything else. All art is to be brought under the headship of Jesus Christ. We are to cast down *everything* that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Co. 10:5).

God’s Word plainly states, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you” (2 Co. 6:14-17), and, “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*” (Eph. 5:11). Through the influence of The 5 Browns, there is a real possibility that some within the Pensacola student body or their associates will be influenced by doctrines of devils. Mormonism teaches a false christ, a false gospel, and a false spirit, but these days Mormons are duplicitously speaking and acting more “evangelical” in order to infiltrate non-Mormon groups, and the naive leaders at Pensacola are playing right into their hands. Since the 1990s, there has been an “Evangelicals and Mormons Together” movement. In 2004 and 2011, prominent evangelicals held dialogues with Mormons in Salt Lake City. The one in 2004, attended by 7,000, was called “Evening of Friendship.” The evangelicals participating in these events were Leith Anderson, president of the National Association of Evangelicals; Craig Williford, president of Trinity International University; Richard Mouw, president of Fuller Seminary; David Neff,

editor-in-chief of *Christianity Today*; Craig Hazen of Biola University; CCM musician Michael Card; and Ravi Zacharias. Craig Blomberg of Denver Seminary co-authored *How Wide the Divide? A Mormon and an Evangelical in Conversation*, which states that the divide between Mormons and Bible-believing Christians is not as wide as formerly thought. Mormon discussions have taken place at Wheaton College and Fuller Theological Seminary. Joel Osteen pastor of the largest church in America, has said that Mormons are Christians (*Washington Post*, Oct. 26, 2011). In 2013, Al Mohler, Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and George Wood, Superintendent of the Assemblies of God, spoke at Brigham Young University the chief training school for Mormon missionaries.

**ALBUM BY HOMOSEXUAL ACTIVIST IS TOP CHRISTIAN EP ON ITUNES** (Friday Church News Notes, February 19, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - The album “Preacher’s Kid” by Grace Baldrige (aka Semler), an “openly queer Christian artist,” was No. 1 on Apple’s iTunes’ Christian chart recently and currently is No. 6. The album features “explicit lyrics” and taunts about anti-homosexual “judgmentalism.” The opening track, “Bethlehem,” says, “I’m a child of



God, just in case you forgot, and you cast me out every single chance that you got, and that's your loss, not mine. I'll be better than fine." Baldrige said the album is "a project about coming out as a queer person of faith ... I want to grab the No. 1 spot on the iTunes Christian music chart and claim it for anyone who has been cast out in the name of God" ("LGBTQ singer-songwriter," Religion News Service, Feb. 10, 2021). In an interview with RNS, she said, "My dad is an Episcopal priest. ... I would describe myself as a faithfully skeptical Christian. I definitely struggle with a lot of doubt. I'm the person that stands up at Communion, going down the aisle, and in my head I'll be like, 'This is a cult, right? This is a little weird.' ... Whether or not you've been burned by purity culture or toxic masculinity that's been enforced and by rigid church teachings, or whether you're a member of the LGBTQ-plus community and told you are not valuable and you do not deserve the same dignity as other people, we are speaking up for ourselves. I think in some ways, through this project, we're able to do so by holding up a little bit of a mirror to Christian media, like, we're here. You can't ignore us anymore. We're No. 1 right now."

**MORE BIG TECH CENSORSHIP OF CONSERVATIVE SPEECH** (Friday Church News Notes, February 19, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - Big Tech censorship of conservative speech continues. **In January, YouTube, a Google subsidiary, banned *The Epoch Times* from earning money off its videos.** Stephen Gregory, publisher



of *The Epoch Times*, said, "This is the latest example of big tech suppression of free speech, a step on the road to communist-style censorship" (FreeRepublic.com, Jan. 26, 2021). "Larry Elder, a prominent, African-American conservative filmmaker who hosts a video series for *The Epoch Times*, confirmed during an interview with the 'Just the News AM' television program that the de-monetization hit him personally, reducing his income. ... Elder said, 'The only answer is not to ... moan and whine about how unfairly we're being treated, not to run to the government to pass more regulations. The answer is to build our own platforms. And we have been asleep at the switch'" (*Just the News*). **On Jan. 12, conservative commentator and Trump supporter Curt Schilling's insurance was canceled by AIG due to his "Social Media profile"** (@gehrig38, Jan. 13, 2021). Schilling, a retired major league baseball star pitcher, has been very vocal about election fraud. **On Jan. 25, Twitter locked LifeSiteNews from two of its accounts for stating that President Joe Biden's Assistant Secretary of Health "Rachel" Levine is a man.** The accounts displayed a simple message which read, "Biden names transgender 'woman' as Assistant Secretary of Health. 'Rachel' Levine is a father of two who divorced his wife in 2013 after 30 years of

marriage." **On Feb. 10, Google-owned YouTube completely removed LifeSiteNews and deleted all of its videos.** LifeSiteNews is an anti-abortion Catholic organization that had 300,000 followers on YouTube. **On Feb. 11, Twitter permanently banned Project Veritas, a much hated and often maligned organization dedicated to expose misconduct and corruption in the media and liberal organizations, such as Facebook and Google ("Twitter bans," *CNN Business*, Feb. 12, 2021).** **On Feb. 11, Facebook-owned Instagram banned Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., nephew of former president John F. Kennedy, for "sharing debunked claims about the coronavirus or vaccines."** Kennedy, founder of Children's Health Defense, is a critic of vaccines he believes to be harmful ("Kennedy Banned," *Summit News*, Feb. 11, 2021). He had 800,000 subscribers when he was de-platformed. Instagram's censors, of course, are the world's premier experts in medicine and have infallible knowledge of this field.

**PARLER BACK AFTER SECURING NEW COMPUTER SERVERS** (Friday Church News Notes, February 19, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Welcome back," *Just the News*, Feb. 16, 2021: "Parler, the upstart social



media platform silenced last month by big-tech censorship, said Monday it is resuming operations under new leadership and with new computer servers. Parler moved to a new computer server farm after Amazon Web Services shut off the social media platform on Jan. 11. Parler's 20 million users can begin using their old app and logins Monday, interim CEO Mark Meckler told *Just the News*. ... Meckler also said the platform is using artificial intelligence and human editors to police for illegal speech that violates its service agreement but otherwise is remaining true to its free speech, no censorship roots. Dan Bongino, a prominent Parler user and shareholder, was one of the first to get back online, posting stories Monday morning about businesses fleeing New York and Amazon workers moving toward unionization in Alabama."

**FORMER U.S. PRESIDENT WARNS THAT POLITICAL POWER IS "A NEVER-DYING WORM IN THE BOSOM"** (Friday Church News Notes, February 19, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - America's ninth president, William Henry Harrison, delivered a two-hour inaugural speech in January 1841 that contained great wisdom. He said, "Republics can commit no greater error than to ... continue any feature in their ... government which may ... increase the love of power in the bosoms of those to whom necessity obliges them to commit the management of their affairs ... **When this corrupting passion once takes possession of the human mind, like the love of gold it becomes insatiable. It is the never-dying worm in his bosom, grows with his**

**growth and strengthens with the declining years of its victim.** ... The danger to all well-established free governments arises from the unwillingness of the people to believe in ... the influence of designing men ... Caesar became the master of the Roman people and the senate under the pretense of supporting the democratic claims of the former against the aristocracy of the latter ... Limited as are the powers which have been granted [to the American government], still enough have been granted to constitute a despotism if concentrated in one of the departments."

**COBB COUNTY, GEORGIA, A CASE STUDY IN THE PRIORITY OF CHURCHES OVER POLITICS** (Friday Church News Notes, February 26, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - Cobb County, Georgia, demonstrates that religion and morality are fundamental to politics and proves the necessity of focusing on the spiritual condition of the churches rather than on politics. Cobb County was ground center for the 2020 U.S. presidential election. It was Cobb County that threw the state to the Democrats in November and elected two Democrats to the Senate in January to guarantee Democratic control of Congress. Cobb County is Southern Baptist territory, and as the churches have, decade after decade,



become more worldly and liberal, the politics has become more liberal, changing from limited-government Republican ("once the heart of Newt Gingrich's GOP revolution of the 1990s") to big-government Democrat, from pro-life to pro-abortion, from pro-traditional marriage to pro-homosexual rights, from pro-American to woke leftism and critical racism. It is in Cobb County that Towne View Baptist Church in Kennesaw, a Southern Baptist congregation, accepted a homosexual couple as members in 2019. When contacted by the couple (John and John Reynolds) about the possibility of joining the church, Pastor Jim Conrad was affirmative. He "felt that God might be leading him in a different direction, consistent with his understanding of Scriptures and a gospel message that was not available to a select few, but to all" ("Georgia SBC church faces banishment," Religion News Service, Feb. 19, 2021). This illustrates the change in the character of churches, which, in turn, has changed the political climate of the area. It is the church that is the pillar and ground of the truth, not politics. America is a nation of churches, and as the churches go so goes the nation. It is time for Bible-believing Baptists and fundamentalists to stop focusing on politics and secessionism and revolution, to let the peace of God rule in their hearts instead of carnal frustration and anger, and to focus on what God has told His people to focus on, which is building sound, life-changing New Testament churches. We can't change the public education system, the universities, the bloated monstrosity of a government, the military, or the mainstream media, but we can, by God's grace and as His co-laborers,

build New Testament churches (1 Co. 3:5-12), and a New Testament church has more power than all of the teeth-gnashing mechanisms of conservative politics. Here is a description of a New Testament church from Philippians: “Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain” (Php. 2:14-16).

### TO UNDERSTAND THE U.S. 2020 ELECTION, GOD’S PEOPLE MUST LISTEN TO THE HOLY PROPHETS

(Friday Church News Notes, February 26, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143)

- **DANIEL** - “Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding” (Da. 2:20-21).

**DAVID** - “Thine, O LORD, *is* the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine*; thine *is* the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all” (1 Ch. 29:11).

**ASAPH** - “Lift not up your horn on high: speak *not with* a stiff neck. For promotion *cometh* neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God *is* the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another” (Ps. 75:5-7). **SOLOMON** - “The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof *is* of the

LORD” (Pr. 16:33).

**JEHOSHAPHAT** - “O LORD God of our fathers, *art* not thou God in heaven? and rulest *not* thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand *is there not* power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?” (2 Ch. 20:6).

**JEREMIAH** - “Who *is he that* saith, and it cometh to pass, *when* the Lord commandeth *it not*?” (La. 3:37).

**PAUL** - “... he is Lord of heaven and earth, ... And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation” (Ac. 17:24, 26). “For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God” (Ro. 13:1).

### WIKIPEDIA CO-FOUNDER SAYS LEFTIST BIAS HAS BROKEN THE PLATFORM

(Friday Church News Notes, February 26, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143)

- We have long observed the consistently liberal slant of *Wikipedia*. Anything pertaining to the Bible is biased toward unbelief. The following statement focuses on *Wikipedia*’s political bias: “*Wikipedia* co-founder Larry Sanger is criticizing the site’s left-wing bias, saying the popular online encyclopedia has become an irretrievably broken platform for



socialism. ‘The days of *Wikipedia*’s robust commitment to neutrality are long gone,’ Mr. Sanger told *Fox News* in a new interview. ‘*Wikipedia*’s ideological and religious bias is real and troubling, particularly in a resource that continues to be treated by many as an unbiased reference work.’ Mr. Sanger, 52, co-founded the site with Jimmy Wales in January 2001. ... The *Fox* analysis cited the two main pages for ‘Socialism’ and ‘Communism’ that span 28,000 words but lack any discussion of the genocides committed by socialist and communist regimes, in which tens of millions of people were murdered and starved. ... In a blog post, Mr. Sanger said examples of bias on *Wikipedia* ‘have become embarrassingly easy to find,’ pointing to the entries for former Presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump. ‘The Barack Obama article completely fails to mention many well-known scandals’ ... the entry about Mr. Trump shows that *Wikipedia*’s neutrality ‘is a joke’” (“Co-founder says *Wikipedia*’s neutrality ‘long gone,’” *The Washington Times*, Feb. 21, 2021).

**SLANG-WHANGING** (Friday Church News Notes, February 26, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143)

- Slang-whanging was the name for a style of newspaper editorializing popular in the early 1800s when some of America’s Founding Fathers were still alive. It was “intensely partisan and often laced with personal invective” and “provided an invigorating spectacle for their readers” (Henry Mayer, *All on Fire: William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery*, p. 40). It referred to “a newspaper columnist who expressed his personal opinions

with great energy and notorious political partisanship.” A slang-whanger was “a noisy, turbulent fellow” (*Bucks County Gazette*, Sep. 24, 1891). William Lloyd Garrison, famous for his abolitionist activities, was skilled in slang-whanging. He “deliberately created for his readers the editorial personality of a tiger who loved nothing more than a



Feb. 16, 2021: “As the country begins to reopen stores, gyms, hotels, and other venues starting next week, Israelis will need to show proof that they have been vaccinated against, or recovered from, COVID-19 before being allowed to enter some events and places. Street-front shops, malls, markets, museums, and libraries will be open to all Israelis. But only those

good fight. ... from the outset he seemed instinctively to know how to pick an editorial quarrel, how to annoy, to agitate...” He engaged in this type of thing long before he founded his abolitionist paper *The Liberator* in 1831. The internet and social media have given millions of slang-whangers a voice never before conceived of, but God’s people should know better. “Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man” (Colossians

4:6). “A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things” (Matthew 12:35).

**ISRAEL’S COVID PASSPORT** (Friday Church News Notes, February 26, 2021, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org), [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org), 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “How Israel plans to operate a Covid ‘green pass,’” *The Times of Israel*,

who have been vaccinated or have recovered from COVID-19 will be able to use gyms, and enter sporting and culture events, hotels, and swimming pools, showing ‘green pass’ proof to gain access. The coronavirus czar, Nachman Ash, said Monday that Israelis will have to use an app as proof, or print out barcoded certificates to prove their status. ... Almost 4 million Israelis have now had at least one vaccination dose and 2.5 million--over a quarter of the population--have received both shots.”

## Aim of O Timothy Magazine

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



**O TIMOTHY MAGAZINE**

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