

O Timothy

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

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

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"A mixed multitude church is not going to be changed overnight. If a church has been overly hasty in proclaiming people saved without clear evidence and has been careless in baptism and receiving members, this will usually be reflected in a low level of spiritual life across a significant portion of the congregation." Page 7.

Digging in the Walls: A month's worth of news items, republished from Friday Church News Notes. **Page 15.**

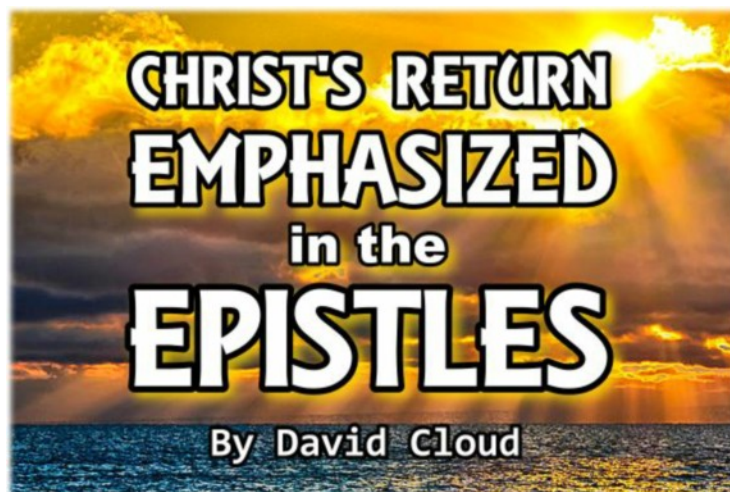


CHRIST'S RETURN EMPHASIZED IN THE EPISTLES ~ By David Cloud

The return of Jesus Christ is emphasized greatly in the New Testament epistles. It is a major theme of the Gospels, as well as the writings of Paul, James, Peter, John, and Jude. Obviously it is God's will that the return of Christ be a major theme of the preaching and teaching in every church, yet I have heard of a great number of so-called Bible-believing churches that rarely touch on this subject and I have communicated with large numbers of professing Christians who know very little about Bible prophecy.

Many churches are failing in the essential matter of educating God's people in a prophetic mindset so that they understand the times and respond properly to current events. It is impossible to know and do God's will without a good understanding of Bible prophecy.

Romans 11:26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.



Romans 13:12 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.

1 Corinthians 1:7-8 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall

also confirm you unto the end, *that ye may be blameless* in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

1 Corinthians 11:26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.

1 Corinthians 15:51-58 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 stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

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Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1:10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.

Philippians 2:16 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 3:20-21 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Philippians 4:5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

1 Thessalonians 1:10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 2:19 For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

1 Thessalonians 3:13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with

them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him.

2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.

2 Thessalonians 3:5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

1 Timothy 6:14 That thou keep *this* commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 4:1 I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.

2 Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

James 5:7-9 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. 9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Hebrews 10:37 For yet, a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

1 Peter 1:7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 4:7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

1 Peter 5:4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

2 Peter 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

2 Peter 3:10-13 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11 *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, 12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

1 John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that,

when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Jude 1:14-15 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

Jude 1:21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Revelation 1:7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

Revelation 3:10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

Revelation 3:11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.



The following is from the the [Way of Life Commentary Series, Revelation](#):

“behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it ... Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly ...” (Re. 3:8, 10, 11)

We believe that these three promises are one.

The “*open door*” is to escape the Great Tribulation described in verse 10. The door refers to the Rapture (1 Th. 4:15-17), whereby the New Testament saints are taken to heaven before the beginning of the Tribulation. The Rapture is held forth as a source of comfort to New Testament saints (1 Th. 4:18). If the Rapture occurred at the end of the Great Tribulation, it would not be a comfort, to say the least! In 1 Thessalonians 5:1-9 we see that the day of the Lord will come upon the unsaved as a thief in the night, but that day will not overtake the believers because they are not appointed to wrath. Two distinctly different groups are described in this passage,

“they” (unbelievers, 1 Th. 5:2, 7) and “ye,” “yourselves,” “we,” and “us” (believers, 1 Th. 5:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9).

The “*hour of temptation*,” which shall come upon all the world” is the day of the Lord described by Isaiah (Isa. 2:10-22), Daniel (Da. 12:1), Joel (Joe. 2:2), Malachi (Mal. 4:1), and Jesus (Mt. 24:21). It is described in detail in Revelation 6-18. It is called “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7), because God’s attention will be upon Israel and the fulfilling of Daniel’s 70 Week prophecy (Da. 9:24-27). The object is “to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy” (Da. 9:24). The first 69 weeks of years have been fulfilled. During those weeks, Jerusalem and its wall were rebuilt after the Babylonian destruction, Christ came and was crucified as the atonement for sin (“cut off, but not for himself”), and Jerusalem was destroyed by Rome. Christ came unto His own, the Jews, and was rejected, and He turned to building the church, calling them out of all nations by the preaching of the gospel. He is visiting the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name (Ac. 15:14). When the church-age saints are taken away, Daniel’s 70th Week will be fulfilled. “And he shall

confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate” (Da. 9:27). During this final week of seven years, the Antichrist will make a deceitful covenant with apostate Israel, and after 3.5 years he will break it and defile the third temple by exalting himself as God. This will be followed by desolations until the return of Christ in power and glory to establish His kingdom. The judgments that will be poured out at that time will bring Israel to repentance.

It is not possible that “*keep thee from the hour of temptation*” could refer to being kept *through* the Tribulation, as mid-tribulation or post-tribulationism teaches.

(1) The preachers who are on earth at that time are clearly identified as Jewish, selected from the 12 tribes of Israel (Re. 7).

(2) The Tribulation is the “time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7); it pertains to Israel, not the church. See also Daniel 12:1, which connects Israel with the “time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time.”

(3) The saints on earth during the Tribulation are not preserved from severe persecution and martyrdom (Re. 6:9-11; 7:9-14).

(4) Christ promises to keep the faithful New Testament saints “*from*” (Greek *ek*) the Tribulation, not “*in*” (Greek *en*) or “*through*” (Greek *dia*) it. *Ek* has the meaning “out of.”

(5) Christ promises to keep the faithful New Testament saints from “*the hour of temptation*.” He promises to keep them from that period of time, not merely to keep them from that temptation. “Illustrations of the use of ‘hour’ where emphasis falls on the experience within the time, not the period itself (Mt. 26:45; Mr. 14:35, 41; Joh. 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1), are not relevant nor are they persuasive even if they were relevant” (Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation*). Compare Christ’s words in John 12:27, “Father, save me from this hour...” (*soson me ek tes horas tautes*). “Of particular interest is the occurrence of the verb *soson*, a word akin to *tereo*, in

referring to deliverance, combined with the phrase *ek tes horas*, the same phrase as in Revelation 3:10. In this other Johannine passage Christ prayed to be saved from the hour of His crucifixion, meaning obviously that, humanly speaking. He wanted to be delivered from the awful agony of that experience. In other words, He wanted to be spared the necessity of living through the time period when it took place. It was not that He prayed for strength to go through it without giving in or feeling its effects. This is a prayer for complete exemption from the hour of crucifixion. This meaning, transferred to Rev. 3:10, shows it to be a promise of complete exemption from ‘the hour of trial.’ In essence, the promise is, ‘I will protect you (at a place) away from the period of misery on earth.’ The contention that Jesus in John 12:27 has already entered into His hour of trial cannot be sustained. The hour referred to was the hour of His impending crucifixion, which was yet future (cf. John 7:30). So the comparable construction and terminology from another Johannine book lend weight to the view of removal from the scene of tribulation” (Thomas, *Revelation*).

(6) The words, “*Behold, I come quickly*” (Re. 3:10) immediately following the promise of keeping from the hour also promise the Pre-tribulational Rapture, as we will see in the study on “Christ’s exhortation to the church at Philadelphia.”

The promise to the church of Philadelphia is God’s promise to every born again believer who is alive when the church age ends and the “time of Jacob’s trouble” begins.

This promise also applies to the open doors that Christ sets before His people in this present life. When God opens a door, no man can shut it. I recall when my wife and I first arrived in Nepal in 1979 to start a church planting ministry. Everything looked impossible. It was against the law to preach the gospel in those days. We could only get a one-month visa. We were all alone. There were no Baptist churches and no other “fundamentalists” of any type in the country. The ecumenical association tried to force us to leave. The hearts of the people were benighted by centuries of pagan idolatry. The situation looked impossible, but God opened a door that no man could shut and by His power and grace we were able to start a self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating church that continues to exist day. Jesus said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Mt. 28:18), and when He opens a door we can be sure that it is open!

THE PROMISE OF SUFFERING IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

“If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” (**Joh. 15:19**).

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (**Joh. 16:33**).

“I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world” (**Joh. 17:14**).

“Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God” (**Ac. 14:22**).

“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together” (**Ro. 8:17**).

“For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake” (**Php. 1:29**).

“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 Th. 3:3-4**).

“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (**2 Ti. 3:12**).

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” (**1 Pe. 2:21**).

“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified” (**1 Pe. 4:12-14**).

“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*” (**1 Pe. 5:10**).

“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you” (**1 Jo. 3:13**).

DYING "SOUND" CHURCHES

By David Cloud



A great many of the churches that are still sound in the Bible, music, etc., are dying, and a major reason is that evangelism has so widely fallen into neglect. There is still a bit of evangelism going on, but there is no serious vision, no leadership, no zeal, no passion, no proper organization, little to no prayer for the most important business of the church, which is gospel preaching. Only a tiny number of members are involved in evangelism. In many cases, the pastor himself has little zeal for it.

The following is from [*21 Steps to a Stronger Church for the 21st Century*](#).

Double Down on Evangelism

A mixed multitude church is not going to be changed overnight. If a church has been overly hasty in proclaiming people saved without clear evidence and has been careless in baptism and receiving members, this will usually be reflected in a low level of spiritual life across a significant portion of the congregation.

Unsaved and carnal people do not respond readily to the type of preaching that will increase the spiritual level of the congregation, to say the least!

What such a church needs is new members who exhibit new life. A pastor who is trying to move a church beyond a mixed multitude condition must give a lot of attention to evangelism, while also being very careful about baptism and receiving members going forward (looking for clear evidence of salvation).

One pastor friend talks about putting out a lot of fishing lines. The more hooks you have in the water, the more likely it is that you will catch fish. Evangelistic fishing lines are things like the following:

- An aggressive, well planned door-to-door visitation program to reach one's entire area
- An effective tract distribution program (obtaining quality tracts, keeping them in stock, teaching the people how to use them, exhorting them to use them, teaching the people to set personal goals of tract distribution)
- Preaching on the streets and in the market places
- Using the church's web site or Facebook for evangelism (gospel material, apologetics material)
- Gospel Bible studies in homes (see the [*Seeker's Bible Study*](#) at the Way of Life web site)
- Gospel ministries to nursing homes, schools, truck stops, prisons, etc.

In a typical church today there won't be many members that will join the pastor in aggressive evangelism, but a man has to start where he is and use whatever resources he has. If he can start by getting one or two people enthused about this business, that is better than none.

The ultimate goal is to get every member involved. Every child of God has been appointed an ambassador of Christ (2 Co. 5:20). Every child of God is to put on his gospel shoes (Eph. 6:15). And the pastor must lead in this and not leave it to someone else. When a preacher starts a new church, he is usually

very visionary and aggressive in evangelism. If that vision has shriveled, it must be revived.

Following are materials that can be helpful for this task:

SOWING AND REAPING: A COURSE IN EVANGELISM. This course is unique in several ways. It is unique in its approach. While it is practical and down-to-earth, it does not present a formulaic approach to soul winning, recognizing that individuals have to be dealt with as individuals. The course does not include any sort of psychological manipulation techniques. It does not neglect repentance in soul winning, carefully explaining the biblical definition of repentance and the place of repentance in personal evangelism. It explains how to use the law of God to plow the soil of the human heart so that the gospel can find good ground. The course is unique in its objective. The objective of biblical soul winning is not to get people to “pray a sinner’s prayer”; the objective is to see people soundly converted to Christ. This course trains the soul winner to pursue genuine conversions as opposed to mere “decisions.” The course is also unique in its breadth. It covers a wide variety of situations, including how to deal with Hindus and with skeptics and how to use apologetics or evidences in evangelism. There is a memory course consisting of 111 select verses and links to a large number of resources that can be used in evangelism, many of them free. The course is suitable for teens and adults and for use in Sunday School, Youth Ministries, Preaching, and private study. OUTLINE: The Message of Evangelism, Repentance and Evangelism, God’s Law and Evangelism, The Reason for Evangelism, The Authority for Evangelism, The Power for Evangelism, The Attitude in Evangelism, The Technique of Evangelism, Using Tracts in Evangelism, Dealing with Skeptics. 104 pages.

https://www.wayoflife.org/publications/video/sowing_and_reaping.php.

SEEKER’S BIBLE STUDY is an evangelistic Bible study. It begins with a study of the gospel in 1

Corinthians 15:3-4, dealing with the Bible, Christ, sin, Jesus’ atoning death, Jesus’ burial and bodily resurrection. This is followed by practical studies on repentance and faith. The last section answers the question, “When Is Jesus Coming?” There are review questions for each section. The *Seeker’s Bible Study* is designed especially to be used as a multi-week, one-on-one course. In our church, we assign a qualified believer to go through the course with every willing visitor. The teacher is instructed to try to grow the class by involving family, neighbor’s, and friends of the original student. The *Seeker’s Bible Study* is available as a free download at: https://www.wayoflife.org/free_ebooks/seekers_bible_study.php.

The teacher’s notes can be found in the file “Seeker’s Bible Study - Teacher’s Notes” at the same page.

https://www.wayoflife.org/free_ebooks/seekers_bible_study.php.

IDEAS FOR EVANGELISM. This book is packed with practical suggestions for evangelism. Following are some of the topics that are covered: The Importance of Pastoral Leadership, Training and Challenging the People, Discipleship, Standards for Church Workers, Training the Church to Be Visitor Conscious, The Church Services, Prayer, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Door-to-Door Visitation, New Move-ins, Religious Surveys, Advertising, Church Papers, Correspondence Courses, Adopt a Bus Kid, Testimony Gospel Tapes, Gospel Tracts, Telephone Calls, Christmas Plays, Targeting Special Community Events, Tragedy Outreach, Campus Ministry, Foreign Exchange Students, Immigrants, Foreign College Students, The Deaf, Ministry to Military Personnel, Creation Science, Evangelistic Bible Studies, Tent Meetings. Fourth edition, 236 pages.

https://www.wayoflife.org/free_ebooks/ideas_for_evangelism.php.

WITNESSING WITH GOSPEL TRACTS.

https://www.wayoflife.org/reports/witnessing_with_gospel_tracts.php.

Child Membership & Baptism Policy

For Children & Youth

By David Cloud

The following is the policy of Fellowship Baptist Church in Kathmandu, Nepal:

A child (meaning anyone under the age of 18) will be received for baptism after the same fashion as an adult. The child must be old enough to understand repentance and the gospel and must demonstrate a good understanding before his elders. He must testify of his repentance and faith in Christ. He must give evidence of his salvation before his parents and before the church. The child must go through the baptism class and show good understanding of biblical baptism.

The child must appear before the church leaders and their wives to give his or her testimony and to answer questions.

A child that is accepted for baptism becomes a church member, but not a full voting member. He is a Junior Member. He or she can take the Lord's Supper and participate in ministries according to his age and ability and qualifications.

At age 18, the Junior Membership will expire and he or she must seek membership under full adult privileges. He does this by approaching the leaders and giving his testimony of salvation before them. He also studies the Church Covenant, answers the review questions, and agrees to it 100%. If approved, he gives his testimony before the church and is received as a full member by vote of the church.

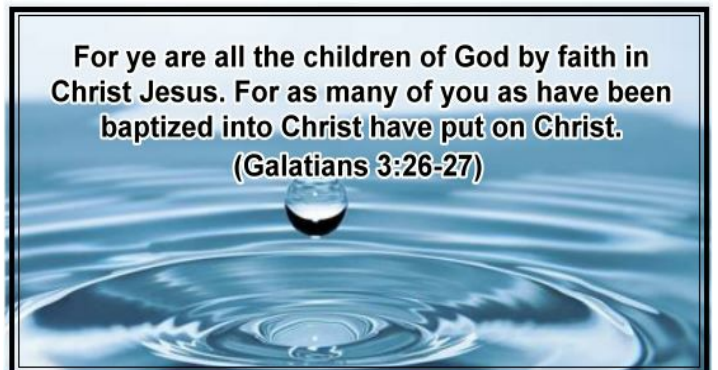
This is meant to be a check point. It is a protection for the individual and for the church. It is common for those who are baptized in childhood to later express doubt about their salvation, This gives each one an opportunity to reexamine his salvation experience to make sure that he has full assurance of faith. If he has doubts, he can settle the matter by professing repentance and faith in Christ and being baptized.

It also gives the youth an opportunity to confirm his personal commitment to church membership when he reaches adulthood.

Decisions made in childhood are made under adult supervision and must be reevaluated in adulthood from an adult perspective.

“When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things” (1 Corinthians 13:11).

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
(Galatians 3:26-27)



Sorrow in the midst of REJOICING

By David Cloud



It is important to understand what God's Word promises for the Christian life in this present world.

Many are surprised, even offended, by troubles, trials, afflictions, and inner turmoil, but God has not promised to remove such things from the lives of His redeemed saints. To the contrary, there are additional troubles that come with the Christian life that aren't experienced by the unsaved (e.g., spiritual warfare, God's chastening), yet there are also additional resources and blessings.

The Christian life experience can be summed up "as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing" (2 Co. 6:10).

There is sorrow in this present fallen world, plenty of sorrow, yet there is continual rejoicing in Christ and because of Christ. Both sorrow and rejoicing can be experienced at the same time.

A theme of Philippians is to rejoice in the Lord always (Php. 4:4). "Rejoice" is used 11 times in this epistle.

"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Php. 4:4).

"Rejoice" is the Greek *chaíro*, which means to be glad and is so translated in Mark 14:11. But "rejoice" doesn't mean what the world means by happy. It is a bigger, more comprehensive word.

The world thinks of rejoicing only in terms of an emotional high, but biblical rejoicing isn't exactly that. One's emotional state can fluctuate even while rejoicing in the Lord.

Consider the context of the epistle to the Philippians.

(1) One can rejoice even when beware of evil workers and false teachers, which is not a happy subject and is not something to smile about (Php. 3:1-2). Paul wasn't laughing when he gave this severe warning, and he didn't intend for the saints at Philippi to laugh when contemplating it and acting on it. So one can be sober and serious while at the same time rejoicing in the Lord.

(2) One can rejoice even in sickness and even when one is sorrowful about earthly events. Paul was sorrowful about the sickness of Epaphroditus, a sickness so terrible that he was nigh unto death. Epaphroditus was sent to Rome by the church at Philippi to carry their offering and to minister to Paul's needs, but in Rome he got deathly sick.

Paul mentions sorrow three times in his description of this sickness. "... but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful" (Php. 2:27-28).

When the believer is sick, or his loved ones are sick, there is sorrow, but there can also be rejoicing because of one's confidence in God's love and presence and promises, and because we know that even death cannot separate us from our Saviour. We sorrow, but we do not sorrow "even as others which have no hope" (1 Th. 4:13).



The following is excerpted from [Spiritual Safety in the Facebook Age](https://www.wayoflife.org/publications/books/spiritual_safety_in_the_facebook_age.php),

https://www.wayoflife.org/publications/books/spiritual_safety_in_the_facebook_age.php

Never has there been an age so sexualized. Ancient kingdoms had naked goddess statues and Aphrodite temple prostitution and Bacchus orgies, but they didn't have color printing, movies, television, MTV, and the internet.

Man's fallen nature has an endless appetite for promiscuity. The first four characteristics of "the flesh" are "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness" (Ga. 5:19), all of which have to do with illicit sexuality.

For the fallen nature, "stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant" (Pr. 9:17). The sinful appetites cannot be filled. "Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied" (Pr. 27:20).

This is why depravity increases as the flesh is fed. It explains bisexuality, homosexuality, sadomasochism, pedophilia, and bestiality. It is why the legalization of prostitution is a bad idea. The Bible says the "whore ... increaseth the transgressors among men" (Pr. 23:27-28).

Proverbs describes the immoral (strange) woman in the 11th century BC. She is wearing the attire of a harlot and has flattering lips (Pr. 7:10-21). Her eyes are painted (Pr. 6:25).

She is out "in the evening, in the black and dark night," finds a young man and says, "Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves" (Pr. 7:18).

In Solomon's day, the strange woman had to lurk in the darkness and find a man, and a man had to find her.

Today, the "strange woman" appears in billions of photographs, movies, YouTube videos, and anyone can communicate with her at the click of a mouse or the touch of a screen. The goddess is omnipresent; the strange woman is everywhere!

The music industry is sexualized. "... that is what rock is all about--sex with a 100-megaton bomb, the beat" (Gene Simmons of KISS, *Entertainment Tonight*, ABC, Dec. 10, 1987).

The fashion industry is sexualized.

The advertising industry is sexualized.

The movie industry is sexualized.

Social media is sexualized.

The news media is sexualized. It is filled with "soft porn" that seems mild by today's standards but is adulterous by God's standards "that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matthew 5:28).

The National Center on Sexual Exploitation (NCOSE) warns, "The pornification of culture (i.e. softcore, hypersexualized imagery) is widespread and evident everywhere, from the grocery store checkout lane to advertising, popular entertainment, unsolicited email, and beyond. ... [P]ornography constitutes a public health crisis."

The sexualization targets an ever-younger age group. In the 1990s, it was younger teens. "*Seventeen Magazine* is

a great example of normalizing hyper-sexualization. If you take a look at their media kit you will find that they ‘sell’ their advertisers access to the teen market beginning at age 12. ... Much of the content focuses around topics like: how to flirt the right way, how to become a greater kisser, and knowing when you’re ready to have sex” (Weinberger, *The Boogeyman Exists*).

Smart phones and social media are lowering the age of sexualization even more. A study by the parenting app Jiminy published in December 2019 found that 15% of 8-year-old girls with smartphones are exposed to sexting, 24% by age 10, 37% by age 13, and 44% by age 16. Nearly 25% of 13-year-old children were asked to send nude photos of themselves (blog.jiminy.me).

The report warned, “Sexting is quickly becoming a normative form of sexual exploration among preteens and teens.

As such, parents should expect the real possibility that their children may be approached by others, known or

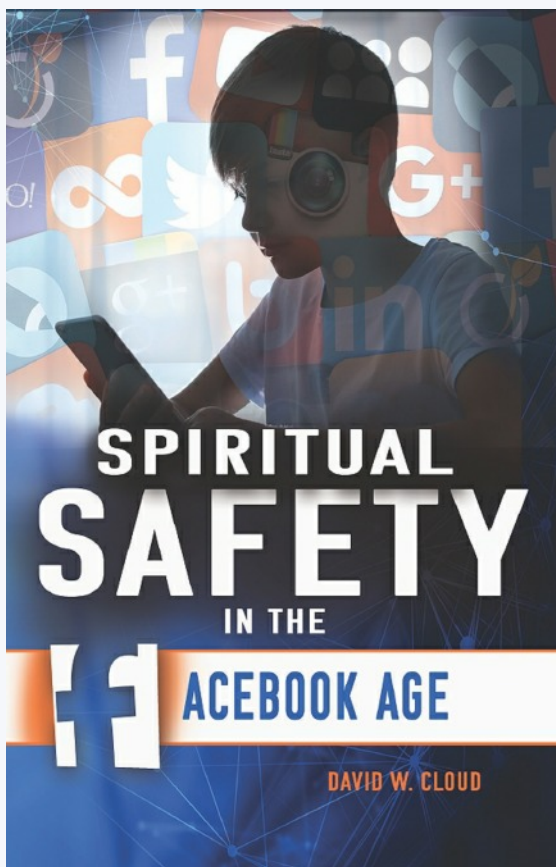
unknown, or approach others in a sexually explicit manner.”

A 2016 study found that among college males, 49% first encountered pornography before age 13 (“Pornography and Public Health,” National Center on Sexual Exploitation).

A 2020 study by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) found that **“viewing pornography has been normalised among children from their mid-teens onwards, with more encountering it on networks such as Snapchat and WhatsApp than on dedicated pornography sites”** (“Porn survey reveals extent of UK teenagers’ viewing habits,” *The Guardian*, Jan. 31, 2020).

The sexualized age has produced unisex and the LGBT movement, which is all about the liberty to do whatever I please with whomever I please whenever I please.

It is obviously a time to be hyper-alert to moral danger, more than at any time in history, both for individuals and for church leaders and for parents.



Spiritual Safety in the Facebook Age

by David W. Cloud

In *Spiritual Safety in the Facebook Age*, we look at social media in general, with special focus on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, Tumblr, Google, and Kik. The first chapter examines the age of apostasy, the age of the Great Commission, the age of scoffing and rebellion, the age of music, the sexualized age, the age of advertising, the age of global commerce, the age of celebrity, the internet age, the age of the smartphone, and the age of social media.

The second chapter documents 14 major dangers of social media, including evil communications, the worldview of the media owners, tracking, addiction, self-promotion, stalking, slander, immorality, heresy, time wasting, and ecumenism.

<https://www.wayoflife.org/publications/books/index>



The following is excerpted from John Phillips' commentary on Ephesians:

When the Lord Jesus "through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God" (Hebrews 9:14), God reached down and rent the temple veil. He thus rendered Judaism obsolete and at the same time opened up the way for all believers - Jews and Gentiles alike - to enter His presence. All distance is gone.

One day a little boy named Willie stood wistfully at the gates of Buckingham Palace. He longed to go in and see the king. Between him and the king, however, were iron gates, rigid protocol, armed soldiers, and watchful police. What he wanted was quite out of the question.

A policeman who was ordering the lad to leave suddenly stiffened and sprang to attention as a well-dressed, confident man approached. A brusque nod from the man and the policeman unlocked the gates and stood aside. "Come with me, sonny," said the man, taking the little boy's hand. "We're going in to see the king."

Into the palace they went. Inside were forty housemaids, fifty footmen (including one man who did nothing but wind clocks all day), and six hundred rooms.

Willie and the man walked on and on - to the north wing, up stairs, along endless passages, to the king's corridor on the main floor, and into the master suite.

(They were a quarter of a mile away from the kitchens!)

The man seemed to know the way and chatted about the rooms they passed: the magnificent ballroom that contained two majestic thrones on a raised dais; the stamp rooms that housed the world's most valuable collection; the Belgian suite with its forty-four rooms for the use of state visitors; the royal wardrobe; the music room; the dining room with a table as large as a skating rink; the dazzling green drawing room.

Finally they arrived in the king's presence, and the man spoke.

"Hello, Father. Here's a little boy who wants to meet you. Meet my friend Willie. Willie, this is the king."

The little boy had taken the hand of Edward, prince of Wales, the king's son. Through him, Willie gained access to the king.

We too have taken the hand - the nail-printed hand - of the King's Son, the Prince of Peace. Through Him and Him alone, Jews and Gentiles alike have access by one Spirit to the Father.



THE BURROWING OWL ~ *By David Cloud*

The little burrowing owl is the only owl that lives in holes in the ground. Their native habitat is the deserts, plains, and fields of western North and South America and Florida. They use abandoned holes dug by prairie-dogs, squirrels, armadillos, or other animals. They also dig their own holes, especially in Florida where the ground is soft and sandy. The holes dug by the owls themselves are six to 10 inches deep with a nest chamber at the end.

The bird is small, about 8 inches tall and weighing only 4-7 ounces. It has brown plumage, spotted with white, yellow eyes, long white legs, and lack the ear tufts common to owls. It has a white band above their eyes and under their beaks. The owl's wingspan is 20 to 24 inches.

The burrowing owl's long legs allow it to run on the ground to escape predators and chase food. "Rather than fly away, they often run or flatten themselves against the ground when disturbed" (Smithsonian's National Zoo & Conservation Biology Institute).

During the breeding season (about February to July), the burrowing owl hunts during the day, but at other times it hunts primarily at night like other owls. They have excellent night vision.

The males and females often form permanent bond pairs and may live in colonies of several pairs nesting in the same area. The males line the nest with grass. They often line the entrance with cattle manure, which masks the birds' scent from potential predators and attracts tasty insects, particularly dung beetles, one of the owl's favorite foods. During nesting season, they decorate the outside of the nest with debris such as paper and bottle caps. They cache food to ensure a good supply during nesting season.

They have a higher resistance to carbon dioxide so they can live in the stuffy condition of their burrows (birdfeederhub.com).

Both parents take turns incubating the eggs, and both care for the owlets after they hatch. "While in the nest,



the owlets' distress cry mimics the sound of a rattlesnake and scares off predators" (Smithsonian).

Mother owls hunt and feed their chicks, preen their babies' feathers to remove fleas or mites, and even bring gifts of found objects for the chicks to play with" (come-to-cape-coral.com).

When the owlets are a couple of weeks old, they begin to spend time outside of the nest. At three to four weeks, they learn to fly and are soon able to survive on their own.

Florida has its own sub-species (*Athene floridana*). They live across the northern part of the state, including the panhandle, as well as in small areas on the Gulf Coast and on the central Atlantic coast. Cape Coral, Florida, has a large population of burrowing owls (roughly 2,500 burrows) and has adopted it as the official city bird. The city marks the burrows with white stakes and places perching stands nearby. Cape Coral owls are accustomed to humans and will often allow them to approach within about 20 feet. If you get nearer, they will start bobbing their heads up and down and will dart into their holes.

The bobbing head has brought them the name "howdy owl," as they seem to be nodding a greeting.

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?



I'M NOT JOINING THE FRETTERS (Friday Church News Notes, July 2, 2021, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The Bible instructs God's people not to fret about the wicked. "Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Ps. 27:1-4). This shows very plainly the error of America's political conservative movement. Fretting permeates politically conservative talk radio, web sites, and social media. These days they are fretting about the border, Biden's cognitive decline, Kamala Harris, gun control, oil pipelines, wokeness, Russian hackers, violence in the cities, inflation, and the infrastructure bill, among many other things. These are genuine concerns, of course, but fretting is not what the believer is to be doing. The questions for God's people are, first, what *can* we do, and second, what *should* we do. Unsaved political conservatives fret because they have no true wisdom and don't,

therefore, understand the fundamental spiritual realities. They have no power (e.g., no political majority; there was no Moral Majority in the 1980s and there is no Wilkow Majority today). And they have no real hope since they aren't born again and don't believe Bible prophecy. Instead of fretting, **God's people, first, are to be trusting God** ("Trust in the LORD"). The promises of God are myriad. He changes the times and seasons (Da. 2:21); my times are in His hands (Ps. 31:15); all things work together for good to those who love Him (Ro. 8:28), etc. **Second, God's people are to be obeying Christ's Great Commission.** After His resurrection, Christ gave the marching orders for this entire age and it is repeated in Scripture five times by way of emphasis (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:44-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8). It is a very, very big job. It entails preaching the gospel to every soul in every nation, building sound churches, discipling God's people in "all things," building the families, training up the children for Christ, discipling youth, educating preachers. When God's people give their full attention to God's business they have God's power. We have been given a spiritual work, and for that business we have mighty spiritual power (2 Co. 10:4-5). If we turn aside to worldly

programs, we have no power and we end up fretting. **Third, God's people are to be praying.** Prayer is one of our mighty weapons. It is mentioned at least 550 times in the Bible, 174 times in the New Testament. Christ taught much about prayer (Mt. 5:44; 6:5-15; 9:38; 17:21; 21:22; 26:41; Mr. 13:33; Lu. 11:5-13; 18:1-6). Paul taught something about prayer in practically every epistle. How much are we to pray? "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph. 6:18). We are specifically instructed to pray for those who are in authority (1 Ti. 2:1-6). We need to pray more, probably 10 times more in most cases. We need more prayer in private, more prayer in the home, more prayer in the church, more prayer meetings and longer prayer meetings, unhurried prayer meetings. **Fourth, God's people are to be meditating in God's Word day and night,** and that gives them an entirely different worldview than the unsaved, even than the most conservative and religious unsaved. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Psalm 1:1-3).

MORE EVIDENCE OF SYSTEMIC RACISM IN AMERICA (Friday Church News Notes, July 2, 2021, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)



Gwen Berry Protests

- Groups like Black Lives Matter and Antifa and their leftist pals in the educational system and beyond claim that America is systemically racist. There can be no doubt about it, as we have documented in the report "Evidence of Systemic Racism in America." The latest evidence to make the news is the presence of great numbers of black athletes who rise to the professional and Olympic level in America and prosper economically and in many other ways. Gwen Berry is a perfect example. She has risen to national prominence as a track and field star, along the way enjoying America's free public educational system, scholarships, and a great many other benefits available entirely without regard to race (further clear evidence of the nation's systemic racism, of course). Since 2011, she has participated in U.S. national trials and championships. Soon thereafter she was invited to join the New York Athletic Club. She represented the U.S. at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Brazil. At the 2019 Pan American Games, she raised her fist at the playing of her home nation's national anthem. She said, "I'm here to represent those who died due to systemic racism" ("Gwen Berry," *Wikipedia*). During 2021 U.S. Olympic trials this past weekend, as a third-place winner, Berry continued her protest against America's racism by turning her back on the U.S. flag during "The

Star-Spangled Banner." There can be no doubt that Berry illustrates what a terribly racist nation America is. Doubtless, too, she would be treated far better in the Marxist states of China, North Korea, Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam, and any number of other nations, but she has chosen to stay in awful America and suffer personal deprivation while fighting for change.

FLORIDA GOVERNOR SIGNS LAW REQUIRING STUDENTS TO LEARN 'EVILS OF COMMUNISM' (Friday Church News Notes, July 2, 2021, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "DeSantis Signs Law," *The Daily Wire*, June 22, 2021: "Republican Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signed three bills into law Tuesday that boosted civics education in the public school system and specifically teaches students the horrors of communism. **'The sad reality is that only two in five Americans can correctly name the three branches of government, and more than a third of Americans cannot name any of the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment,'** DeSantis said. 'It is abundantly clear that we need to do a much better job of educating our students in civics to prepare them for the rest of their lives. The bill also expands our previous efforts in civics to add a requirement for the high school government class that students



Gov. Ron DeSantis

receive instruction on the evils of communism and totalitarian etiologies,' DeSantis said. 'We have a number of people in Florida, particularly southern Florida, who've escaped totalitarian regimes, who've escaped communist dictatorships to be able to come to America. We want all students to understand the difference, why would somebody flee across shark infested waters say, leaving from Cuba to come to southern Florida?' ... The bills that DeSantis signed into law are the following: House Bill 5 requires the Florida Department of Education to create an integrated K-12 civic education curriculum that includes an understanding of citizens' shared rights and responsibilities under the Constitution and Bill of Rights. It further expands required instruction in high school to include a comparative discussion of political ideologies that conflict with the principles of freedom and democracy essential to the founding principles of the United States, such as communism and totalitarianism. ... Senate Bill 1108 requires state college and state university students to take both a civic literacy course and a civic literacy assessment as a graduation requirement, bridging civics education between our high schools and postsecondary institutions." House Bill 233 prohibits the governing boards of colleges and universities from shielding "students, faculty, or staff at state universities from free speech protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution."

COVID DEATHS DOWN TO 300 PER DAY IN THE U.S., 99.2% ARE OF THE UNVACCINATED (Friday Church News Notes, July 2, 2021, www.wayoflife.org,



fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "Nearly all," *Fox News*, June 24, 2021: "Nearly all COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. now are in people who weren't vaccinated, a staggering demonstration of how effective the shots have been and an indication that deaths per day--now down to under 300--could be practically zero if everyone eligible got the vaccine. An Associated Press analysis of available government data from May shows that 'breakthrough' infections in fully vaccinated people accounted for fewer than 1,200 of more than 853,000 COVID-19 hospitalizations. That's about 0.1%. And only about 150 of the more than 18,000 COVID-19 deaths in May were in fully vaccinated people. That translates to about 0.8%, or five deaths per day on average. ... And CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky said on Tuesday that the vaccine is so effective that 'nearly every death, especially among adults, due to COVID-19, is, at this point, entirely preventable.' She called such deaths 'particularly tragic.' Deaths in the U.S. have plummeted from a peak of more than 3,400 per day on average in mid-January, one month into the vaccination drive. About 63% of all vaccine-eligible Americans--those 12 and older--have received at least one dose, and 53% are fully vaccinated, according to the CDC."

LIVING STONES AND FLYING FLOWERS (Friday Church News Notes, July 2, 2021, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is from CreationMoments.com, June 21, 2021: "If, of all the millions of living things on Earth, a *few* creatures happened to look like something they are not and this helped protect them, we might put it down to chance. However, the creation is filled with too many creatures who practice look-alike deception to put it down to chance. Africa's southern deserts have a plant called living stones. In a desert, any vegetation can be a welcome source of food or moisture. In this setting, a plant that doesn't look like a plant has an advantage. And living stones look like nothing more than just another rock in the sand. Wasps can be some of the nastiest insects in nature. An insect in Costa Rica called the mantispid looks very much like the feared wasp, even up close. Then again, the hover fly looks like a wasp and sounds like a wasp because the frequency of its wing beats is almost identical to a wasp. Treehoppers have a very odd body shape that comes to a point on top. Not only do they look like thorns, but they usually stay on bushes that have thorns, orienting their bodies on the branches just like true thorns. This effectively hides them from hungry birds. Larval plant hoppers use a different form of deception. They



attach themselves in groups on branches, orienting their frilly and feathery bodies together so they look like a flower! The clever forethought and planning involved in nature's deceptions rule out any thought that these creatures designed themselves. Author: Paul A. Bartz. Ref: 'Four masters of deceit,' *National Geographic*, Mar. 1980. p. 410."

FAUCI IS HUMANIST OF THE YEAR (Friday Church News Notes, July 9, 2021, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Anthony Fauci has been selected by the American Humanist Association as the 2021 Humanist of the Year. The award by the American Humanist Association is for "community leaders whose lives and contributions to society exemplify the values of humanism." Eighty-year-old Fauci has been director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases since 1984 and is chief medical adviser to President Joe Biden. He has played a prominent role in the Covid pandemic, urging lockdowns, masking, vaccinations, and downplaying China's roll in the virus. He is infamous for the public admission that he deceived the American people in order to promote his vaccination program. He said, "When polls said only about half of all Americans would take a vaccine, I was saying herd immunity would take 70 to 75 percent ... Then, when newer surveys said 60 percent or more would take it, I thought, 'I can nudge this up a bit,' so I went to 80, 85." So he admitted that he was fudging the "science" in order "to manipulate people into behaving how he wants (*The Federalist*, Dec. 28, 2020). Of course, Humanists are bound by no settled moral laws, so lying is no problem. The *Humanist Manifestos*

promote atheism, evolution, science as god, self-determination, moral relativism, globalism, and socialism. The *Humanist Manifesto* of 1933 stated, "Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created. Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as a result of a continuous process. Holding an organic view of life, humanists find that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected. ... We are convinced that the time has passed for theism ... Man is at last becoming aware that he alone is responsible for the realization of the world of his dreams, that he has within himself the power for its achievement." Signatories included John Dewey, who had a massive influence on American education. The *Second Humanist Manifesto* (1973) claimed that "faith in a prayer-hearing God is an unproved and outmoded faith," and called the religious teaching of salvation "harmful, diverting people with false hopes of heaven hereafter." Signed by 120 influential men and women, including Isaac Asimov, Francis Crick, and B.F. Skinner, it called for the right to birth control, divorce, abortion, and suicide and the establishment of global laws and courts. The *Humanist Manifesto* of 2003, signed

by 21 Nobel laureates, said, "We aim for our fullest possible development and animate our lives with a deep sense of purpose ... Knowledge of the world is derived by observation, experimentation, and rational analysis. Humanists find that science is the best method for determining this knowledge as well as for solving problems and developing beneficial technologies. ... Humans are an integral part of nature, the result of unguided evolutionary change. ... Ethical values are derived from human need and interest as tested by experience. ... The responsibility for our lives and the kind of world in which we live is ours and ours alone." Humanism makes man his own god and exalts man's puny mind as the chief authority. It is inherently illogical, on one hand claiming that man is the product of blind, non-guided, non-intelligent evolutionary processes, while on the other hand claiming that man has dignity and purpose. If man is a product of naturalistic evolution, then he came from nothing, is nothing, and is going nowhere. The arrogance and willful skepticism of Humanism is a fulfillment of Bible prophecy and therefore proves the Bible to be true! "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” (2 Peter 3:3-5). In this 2,000-year-old prophecy we see the major characteristics of Humanism: Scoffing at the Bible, denying biblical creationism, living after their own lusts, rejection of supernatural prophecy, and willful ignorance (a great many humanists don’t have even a bare working knowledge of the Bible they scorn). **By the way, Humanists do not believe in freedom of speech and are at the forefront of the draconian cancel culture.** When atheist Richard Dawkins tweeted in April 2021 the mere possibility that transsexuals aren’t really what they claim, the American Humanist Association withdrew his 1996 Humanist of the Year award, claiming that Dawkins’ “latest statement implies that the identities of transgender individuals are fraudulent.” Dawkins merely tweeted, “Some men choose to identify as women, and some women choose to identify as men. You will be vilified if you deny that they literally are what they identify as.” His Humanist pals proved him right.

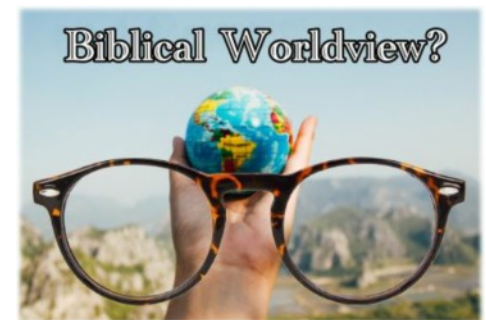
BAPTIST CHURCH ORDAINS TRANSGENDER PASTOR (Friday Church News Notes, July 9, 2021, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Baptist church ordains,” *The Christian Post*, June 16, 2021: “An Indiana congregation affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has ordained who is believed to be the



first confirmed transgender pastor in the denomination’s history. Laura Bethany Buchleiter, a trans-identified individual who identifies as female, was ordained at University Baptist Church of Bloomington in a ceremony held last month. ... [Buchleiter said,] ‘I re-entered Baptist culture through Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, at a time when they were discerning their status as an open and affirming church. It was there that the call to serve the Church was revived.’ ... [T]heological conservatives such a Texas Baptist megachurch pastor Robert Jeffress, have argued that transgender ideology is inherently incompatible with Christianity. ‘It’s not that confusing,’ said Jeffress in a 2016 sermon. ‘In Matthew 19:4, God’s Words are applicable. The Bible says, God made them from the beginning male and female, not male, female and question mark. God has determined how many sexes there are--there are two, not three. ... Gender identity confusion should not be exploited by social activists like those in the [President Barack] Obama administration who want to deny the God-given distinction between the sexes. This is a rebellion against God’s plan.’”

NEW STUDY SHOWS ONLY TINY PERCENTAGE OF AMERICANS HAVE A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW (Friday Church News Notes, July 9, 2021,

www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Top 10 Most Seductive Unbiblical Ideas Embraced by Americans,” Cultural Research Center, June 22, 2021: “The American public flaunts its free will in many ways, not the least of which is by embracing a number of seductive--but decidedly unbiblical beliefs--as part of their worldview. According to new analysis of data from the American Worldview Inventory 2021 from the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University, the ‘Top 10’ most prevalent ‘seductive unbiblical ideas’ embraced by American adults include: the spiritually inclusive idea that ‘having faith matters more than what faith you have’ (62%); all faiths are of equal value (62%); belief in ‘karma’ (57%); the dismissal of absolute truth (67%); the idea that people are ‘basically good’ (69%); sexual relations apart from marriage are morally acceptable (68%). ... The AWVI 2021 shows that even the 6%



of adults who have a biblical worldview harbor many of these counter-biblical ideas as part of their personal philosophy of life. ... [M]illions of Americans have moved away from believing that the Bible contains relevant and reliable moral absolutes for their lives.”

TOZER’S WISDOM ABOUT PREACHERS AND POLITICS (Friday Church News Notes, July 9,

2021, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from A.W. Tozer, *Tozer Speaks*, vol. 1: “After more than forty years of experience, I am prepared to say that I have never heard or read anything of a political nature, by a preacher, that was any good. When a man of God speaks as a prophet, his message is freighted with wisdom and power. When he speaks for a party, God withdraws His power and lets His servant speak without wisdom. As a prophet, he may call to judgment kings and presidents. Let him obey God and stay by his commission, and he will be God’s voice to all men and all parties. Let him seek to identify his prophetic office with politics, or place his power at the disposal of a party, and he violates his office and confuses his own face. Then he speaks as a discredited prophet, and not all his pretensions to omniscience can disguise the babel in his voice! Preachers have been known to go all-out for some newly-come politician because he spoke ‘respectfully of God.’ Later events made them wish they had ... allowed their man to prove his piety before they fastened themselves on his coattail. Christ is not a member of any political party. He stands outside of and above every party. His kingdom was not of this world.”

ALBERTA PASTOR FREED FROM JAIL, CHURCH PROPERTIES UNCHAINED (Friday Church News Notes, July 16, 2021, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Pastor Tim Stephens Freed,” jccf.ca, July 1, 2021: “The Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms is pleased to announce that Pastor Timothy

Stephens of Fairview Baptist Church was released from the Calgary Remand Centre earlier today. Pastor Stephens has been in jail since Monday, June 14. ... The Justice Centre also confirms that Fairview Baptist Church in Calgary, and Grace Life Church near Edmonton, have been unchained and released from government seizure and will be returned to their congregations effective today. Alberta’s public health orders are subject to *Charter* challenges in two separate court actions, both dating back to 2020. ... ‘While refusing to present any medical or scientific evidence in court to justify public health orders, the Alberta government has gained international notoriety by jailing three different pastors,’ states Jay Cameron, Justice Centre Litigation Director. ... On the afternoon of Monday, June 14, the Calgary Police Service (CPS) arrived at Pastor Stephens’ house and arrested him in front of his wife and eight distraught children. ... This June 14 arrest of Pastor Stephens relates to an alleged outdoor church service held on June 6, 2021 in Calgary, with about 200 congregants of Fairview Baptist church. **A police helicopter was deployed to search for and detect this peaceful outdoor gathering, and to collect evidence against**

Pastor Stephens of non-compliance with public health restrictions. ... The Alberta government has failed to produce any evidence that outdoor services are a threat to public health. ... The Kenney government in Alberta, including Health Minister Tyler Shandro and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Deena Hinshaw, have engaged in a months-long systematic attack on peaceful worship, arresting and incarcerating three Christian pastors for the ‘offence’ of peacefully gathering to worship, and barricading the pastors’ churches with an intimidating show of police force of scores of officers. Pastors and congregants were issued tickets totalling tens of thousands of dollars, and churches had their locks changed and double and triple fencing erected around them. Health officials and police worked in consort to spy on congregants and church leadership. ... ‘The Alberta Crown has failed entirely to produce evidence to justify its tyrannical lockdowns, a prerequisite under the Charter to justify lockdowns measures that have inflicted much harm on Albertans in the past fifteen months,’ concludes Cameron.”

FREED CANADA PASTOR SAYS, “DON’T FEAR MAN, FEAR GOD” (Friday Church News Notes,



A MASTER OF DISGUISE (Friday Church News Notes, July 9, 2021, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from CreationMoments.com, June 24, 2021: "Many plants and animals disguise themselves as something they are not in the hope of protecting themselves. However, a true master of disguise must have many disguises. The tiger swallowtail offers no less than three disguises as it grows through its various stages toward adulthood. The newly hatched larva looks for all the world like a bird dropping. This appearance makes the larva of no interest to birds that might otherwise eat it. Three molts later the caterpillar has turned green to match the leaves on which it feeds. In case he is spotted by some birds looking for a nice fat caterpillar for lunch, the caterpillar also has two large spots on its head that look like the eyes of a snake. Birds who are interested in caterpillars usually try to stay as far from snakes as possible. Finally, in the pupal stage, the tiger swallowtail has again radically altered its appearance. The pupa now looks like nothing more than just another broken twig on a tree trunk. The immature tiger swallowtail's bag of disguises reflects a great



deal of knowledge about the behavior of those creatures that threaten it. Each of its three disguises uses a different method to fool those birds that would be interested in the larva. Each disguise has the same specific goal. This master of disguise is no accident of biology. Our Creator's purpose in making Himself evident in the creation is ultimately aimed at bringing each of us into a relationship with Himself. That relationship is based on the forgiveness of our sin through His Son, Jesus Christ. Author: Paul A. Bartz. Ref: 'A one-bug virtuoso starring in three roles,' *National Geographic*, Mar. 1980. p. 402."

July 16, 2021, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Canadian Pastor," *Christian Headlines*, July 6, 2021: "A Canadian pastor who was released from jail last week told his congregation Sunday he was strengthened by the support and prayers of Christians around the world. Tim Stephens, the pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Calgary, was released July 1, more than two weeks after he was arrested for holding church services in violation of provincial COVID-19 health restrictions. ... Tears in his eyes, Stephens told the congregation he was 'encouraged that many of you were strengthened and emboldened in your faith.' ... 'Each day, He sustained me and each day I heard of His work among you and in the

world,' Stephens said. Stephens preached from Matthew 10, in which Jesus told the disciples they would face persecution. ... 'The last 17 nights I've spent in jail,' he said, 'have given me opportunities to declare the glory of Christ, within and without. [There] never has been a time in my life when I've been so hated by people. But never has there been a time in my life when I felt so loved by people [at] the same time. Don't fear men. Shout from the



rooftops that Jesus Christ is King of all kings. ... Fear God. Jesus said [that] God is the one who is going to judge and God is the one who is going to care for you.' In a blog this summer, Stephens acknowledged COVID-19 is 'serious' but argued the 'cure should not be worse than the disease,' pointing to problems of mental health and suicide. His church had not had a 'single transmission' of COVID-19, he wrote."

POTTERY WITH THE NAME "JERUBBAAL" FOUND IN ISRAEL (Friday Church News Notes, July 16, 2021, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Israel Archaeologists Find Biblical Name," *Haaretz*, July 12, 2021:



“Archaeologists digging in southern Israel may have found the name of Jerubbaal, scourge of the Midianites, on a broken fragment of a Judges-era clay pot. The inscription in primitive alphabetic writing from the time of the biblical Judges was found in Khirbat er-Ra'i, near Kiryat Gat in southern Israel. ... The shard with the rare ancient writing was found in a subterranean storage pit that had been lined with stones. ... Khirbat er-Ra'i is being excavated under the direction of Prof. Yossi Garfinkel of the Hebrew University, Sa'ar Ganor at the Israel Antiquities Authority, and Dr. Kyle Keimer and Dr. Gil Davis of Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia. The writing was deciphered by epigraphic expert Christopher Rollston of George Washington University, who discerned the letters yod, resh, beit, ayin, lamed--YRBA'L, i.e., Jerubbaal. The original inscription had been longer but is lost ... based on time and location, the archaeologists surmise that he may have been none other than the biblical figure Gideon (also known as Jerubbaal), son of Joash, the Abiezrite, whose activities are described at length in the book of Judges. ... Sa'ar Ganor of the Israel Antiquities Authority tends to the theory that it [belonged to the biblical Jerubbaal], on the grounds of his interpretation that the syllables 'Jeru' stem from the ancient root of 'rav' in the sense of 'fight' (not rabbi); and

who did he fight? Baal. 'He broke Baal's altar,' Ganor points out, according to the biblical narrative.”
CONCLUDING COMMENT:
 “Jerubbaal” was not a common name. It was a name given to Gideon because of the unique occasion when he broke Baal's altar (Judges 6:28-32). A true worshiper of Baal would not have had that name, and no other Israelite would have had it.

CUBANS PROTESTING TO DEMAND END OF COMMUNISM (Friday Church News Notes, July 16, 2021, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from “Anti-Government Protests Erupt,” *Daily Caller*, July 11, 2021: “Thousands of protesters marched the streets throughout Cuba Sunday retaliating against the country's communist regime. The Cuban Communist Party elected Miguel Diaz-Canel to replace Raul Castro as president during its April 19, 2018 election, Reuters reported. Cubans in over 32 cities protested in retaliation to the communist regime chanting ‘Freedom! Down with Communism!’ and ‘Patria y Vida’ (Homeland and Life) in a live Facebook video. The demonstrators demanded access to food, medicine, vaccines and the end to communism amid a massive

Covid-19 outbreak. ... Footage showed a group of protesters marching in the Malecón waving the American flag while chanting ‘Libertad!’ (Liberty). ... A crowd of protesters gathered outside of the Communist Party headquarters chanting, ‘Cuba isn't yours!’ ... Santiago de Cuba police joined the mass protests, marching alongside the demonstrators, footage showed.” Armando Simon, who was born in Cuba, says, “The Communist regime is bankrupt. It took a beautiful, prosperous country and, as with every country Communists control, ran it to the ground. Through the years, the government has taken out loans and in every case has defaulted” (*The Federalist*, June 2, 2017).

LIFE IN COMMUNIST CUBA (Friday Church News Notes, July 16, 2021, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from “Here's What Life Is Like,” *Daily Caller*, Feb. 4, 2020: “Members of the student activist group Turning Point USA (TPUSA) traveled to Cuba to find out what a full generation of socialism has done for the once-thriving country. ‘Everything you've ever seen about Cuba is a lie,’ TPUSA's Benny Johnson warned viewers in a video published Monday. ... the ‘effects of socialism are



everywhere,’ as Johnson noted, and Cuba’s citizens are suffering ... Cuban citizens, the activists found, are forced to endure hours-long waits for groceries and gas; one option for each food product in grocery stores; no fresh fruit, fresh vegetables or fresh meat; ‘oppressive government surveillance’; streets covered in trash and reeking of filth; broken infrastructure and more. ... ‘These ideas [communism] have devastating consequences wherever they’re tried and the same would be true in our country [America] just as it was in Cuba,’ Kirk said. ‘It’s never been more important for Americans to see the truth with their own eyes.’ ... Johnson said: ‘The effects of socialism are everywhere [in Cuba]-crumbling infrastructure and disgusting living conditions. That is what socialism has brought to Cuba. Maybe the socialists in America should take a short trip, a short 90 mile trip, and come here and say they want this in America,’ Johnson added.”

SMART SQUIRRELS AND MAPLE SUGAR (Friday Church News Notes, July 16, 2021, www.wayoflife.org,



fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from CreationMoments.com, June 29, 2021: “Squirrels often seem to run about without any purpose. However, a naturalist in the State of Maine recently discovered that the squirrel’s activities are well planned and efficient. It was a cold January day when the naturalist was watching a red squirrel who seemed to be nibbling on a sugar maple. Then the squirrel would run to a tree where some of the sap had leaked out and lap at it with his tongue. The naturalist knew that conventional

wisdom said it was too early to tap trees for sugar. He also knew that the sap from the trees is 98 percent water and could not provide enough energy to keep the squirrel going in cold weather. Becoming more curious, he decided to study the squirrels’ activity in detail. He discovered that the red squirrels were systematically tapping the sugar maples with a peculiar bite into the tree. Each bite went through the outer and inner bark and into the xylem where the sap runs. The squirrels were then allowing the running sap to dry until the sugar content was more than 55 percent. Not only were squirrels tapping just the maples, they only tapped them when the weather was right for the sap to run. The mad running up and down the trees actually followed a careful daily schedule of tree visitations that could include over 70 trees! Could it be that humans learned from squirrels to tap sugar maples? Whatever the answer to that question, we know that it was the Creator Himself Who taught the squirrel the processing and use of this sugary winter treat. Author: Paul A. Bartz. Ref: Heinrich, Brendt, 1991, ‘Nutcracker sweets,’ *Natural History*, Feb. p. 4.”

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