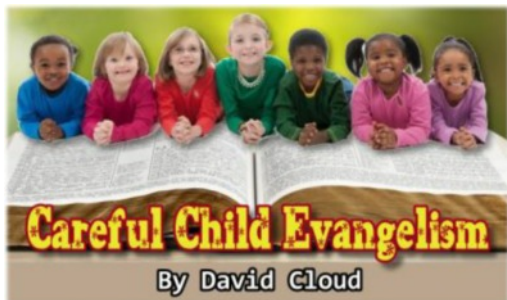


O Timothy

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

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

Volume 39 - Issue 10 - October 2022



"Receiving Christ as Lord and Saviour is not the end of salvation, it is the beginning! (We don't mean to say that salvation is a process; we are simply saying that salvation is a life, not a mere ritual.) Salvation is a life of walking with and serving Jesus Christ. If a child gets saved, it is time for that child to grow and seek God's will.." Page 4.

Digging in the Walls: A month's worth of news items, republished from Friday Church News Notes. **Page 11.**



MORE EVANGELISM ~ By David Cloud

The heart of Christ's Great Commission is to preach the gospel to every soul in every community in every nation. It is a large, unending task. It won't be finished until the Rapture. Christ promised the Great Commission churches, "lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Greek *aion*, age). Christ is passionate about this business until the very end.

The Bible describes gospel preaching as seed sowing. Every farmer knows that more seed he sows, the better chance there is of a large crop. Christ has commanded that the gospel be preached to every soul (Mr. 16:15), so every church should aim to get the gospel to every individual in the immediate community and beyond as aggressively as possible, as far as possible. This requires wise planning by the leaders and zealous participation by the entire church body.

Another metaphor for gospel work is fishing. 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.

The goal should be to get every member involved. As soon as an individual is saved, he is a gospel preacher! 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 as part of his spiritual warfare equipment (Eph. 6:15).

The pastors must lead in evangelism. 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.

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)
- Mass mailings
- Preaching on the streets and in market places accompanied by tract distribution and personal conversations. Musicians can be used to help draw a crowd.
- 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 Bible

studies can be advertised in the church's evangelistic literature and mailings

- Gospel ministries to nursing homes, schools, truck stops, prisons, etc.
- Gospel meetings. Our church has a monthly gospel meeting. On that day, everything is geared to evangelism. We have a gospel message, testimonies, gospel videos, skits, whatever we can think of. After the meeting, we serve refreshments to keep the visitors around so we can talk to them. Our people are taught to focus their evangelistic efforts toward trying to get new contacts to these meetings.

In a typical church today there won't be many members that will join the pastor in aggressive evangelism, but a church leader 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.

- An attractive, well-designed, well-maintained web site and/or social media site that is advertised on all of the church's literature. Our church's gospel web site has multiple gospel tracts, testimonies, apologetics material, gospel videos, a gospel correspondence course, and more.

We need to constantly analyze what we are doing, to see what is working or not working, to see what needs to be changed, to see what could be done better, to see what more could be done or what new things could be done, to see how we can get more people involved.

Effectual evangelism requires lots of prayer. Paul taught this when he said to the church at Thessalonica, "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you" (2 Th. 3:1). The Word of God is glorified when it bears good fruit as it did in Thessalonica, when the people "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Th. 1:9). Paul said this type of fruit is a product of intercessory prayer.

The more prayer, the better. There can't be too much prayer. We need to figure out ways to pray more for evangelism.

A couple of years ago, we instructed our church members to make an evangelistic list of relatives, friends, and contacts for whom they would pray daily. The list is also

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to include prominent contacts of the church family at large, such as unsaved wives or husbands or children and church visitors. New names are added as the Lord leads. By having every member of the church engage daily in intercessory prayer, the amount of prayer for the church's evangelism has increased greatly.

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 a Bible study for unbelievers and non-Christians. It explains the gospel of Jesus Christ, repentance, and faith. It begins with a study of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 which deals with

the Bible, Christ, sin, Jesus' atoning death for sin, Jesus' burial and bodily resurrection. The studies on repentance and faith are extremely practical. The last section answers the question, "When Is Jesus Coming?" The study is designed to be used as a multi-week, one-on-one teaching 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 teacher's notes can be found in the file "Seeker's Bible Study - Teacher's Notes." Both the study and the teacher's notes are available at the following 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





The following is enlarged from the youth discipleship course entitled [THE MOBILE PHONE AND THE CHRISTIAN HOME AND CHURCH](#), available in print as well as a free eBook from www.wayoflife.org.

This study on child evangelism is from chapter two: The Parents, point # 5, “Training teens focuses on a biblical conversion experience.”



Unless young people are saved, they can't be discipled.

This is a frightful fact in light of the shallowness of evangelism in so many churches. The church I grew up in probably didn't have even one saved young person, though we all knew the right things to say. We “talked the talk,” but we didn't “walk the walk,” and the reason was that we prayed a sinner's prayer and made a “profession of faith” and entered the waters of baptism, but we didn't know the Lord by life-changing conversion experience.

Suggestions for dealing with children about salvation

1. Fill their minds with God's Word (2 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 4:12; Psa. 19:7; 119:130).

Of one of his daughters, Pastor Kerry Allen says, “I began a program of memorizing salvation Scriptures with her, and rewarding her for her efforts. In less than one month, with numbers of these same Scriptures at work in her heart, she fell under deep conviction of sin. ... Don't wait until they are teens, you will have lost them by then! ... start memorizing with them as soon as they are able to speak, surely not later than three to four years old. ... begin reading the verses to your child as soon as they are born. They will hear each verse dozens of times before

you even begin memorizing, and that is a great way to begin the process from the very earliest days. Sow the Seed of the Word of God faithfully and consistently every day, and wondrous things will occur!” (Allen, *How Can I Except Some Man Guide Me?*).

Pastor Allen has published 150 salvation verses that can be used for a Scripture memorization program for children and has posted it on the web for free download. See the following link: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/560d69cbe4b08ac155051746/t/561c84e2e4b0faa8c84af748/1444709602246/How-Can-I-complete-book.pdf>

It can also be purchased in print from Bethel Baptist Printing, 4212 Campbell St. N., London, Ont. N6P 1A6, 519-652-2619.

We deal more with filling the home with God's Word later in this course.

2. Teach them the gospel.

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). The gospel is described in a nutshell in 1 Cor. 15:1-4. It must be explained (Acts 8:30-31). Many people grow up in Bible-believing homes and churches and cannot give a clear definition of the gospel.

Missionary Jeremy Johnson says of his children ages one to eight, “We talk with them about salvation when different topics come up. At the dinner table, in casual conversation, etc. We do not push them, but when the conversation arises, we talk about it: Where a person goes when he dies, why people don't go to heaven, what is sin, what did Jesus do for us, does everyone go to heaven, can I get saved by praying a prayer, etc. When they have false ideas or beliefs about salvation or where they would go, we do not overlook it or ignore it, we speak against it and

correct it. We continually try to bring them to an understanding of the truth, yet not pushing them to a decision.”

Practical teaching on the gospel can be found in the first few lessons of the [One Year Discipleship Course](#).

3. Deal with repentance (Lk. 17:3; Acts 17:30; 20:21).

Though I made a profession of faith at age 10-11, the missing element in my life was repentance toward God, and this is what is missing in the lives and hearts of many young people. I “believed in Jesus,” but so do the devils (Jam. 2:19). In fact, the devils tremble, which is far more than the average “Christian” young person does!

I knew about Jesus and believed in Him, but I did not surrender to God’s authority. That is the essence of repentance. The sinner has rebelled against God and broken His law, and he must repent of this. Repentance is not a change of life; it is a surrender to God and change of direction *in the heart*.

Repentance is not a complicated thing. It simply means to come to Jesus, but when you turn to Jesus you have your back to the old life. It is like a man and marriage. He receives one woman as his spouse, and he has his back to all other women. Jesus taught that it is impossible to have two masters (Mat. 6:24).

Two great biblical examples of repentance are the Prodigal Son (Lk. 15:17-19) and the idolators at Thessalonica (1 Th. 1:9).

We deal with how to teach repentance in the evangelistic course [Sowing and Reaping](#), which is available from Way of Life Literature.

4. Don’t pressure them.

The parent/teacher must be careful not to pressure the children. Children are so easily manipulated, and pressure can happen even when the adult thinks he is avoiding it. One grandfather told me how he keeps a record of his grandchildren’s professions of faith in Christ in a notebook, and he shows it to the other grandchildren and asks, “When will I be able to add your name to my book?” This could be a great pressure in a child’s mind, because he or she wants to please granddad and wants to go to heaven.

Invitations given in Sunday Schools and youth meetings can put undue pressure on children. I responded to an invitation at a Vacation Bible School because other kids were responding.

Unwise, manipulative invitations have caused a world of harm and confusion. At the very least, children should be asked to stay behind so they show that they are serious. One missionary says, “In dealing with children in an invitation, we often ask them to stay behind if they want to talk to someone. Children will easily raise a hand for many reasons. But a child who is willing to stay behind or make some kind of an effort to speak to someone is much more serious.”

It is better for parents and teachers to leave this important matter in the Lord’s capable hands as they pray earnestly for Him to perform the work of salvation in the children’s hearts. The Lord can and will reveal himself to each child as He did to Samuel (1 Sam. 3).

5. Discipline them.

“Withhold not correction from the child: for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell” (Proverbs 23:13-14).

God’s Word ties the proper discipline of a child directly together with the salvation of his or her soul. One reason for this is that proper discipline teaches the child a proper fear and respect of authority, which in turn leads to the fear of God. Pastor Allen asks, “If children don’t respect parent’s authority, who stand as God ordained police in the home, how will they ever respect the God whom the parents represent?” Also proper discipline teaches the child about law and sin and punishment, which are fundamental principles of the gospel. Further, the parent’s love and mercy in the midst of discipline instructs the child about God’s love for sinners.

In this light, we can see more clearly why the Bible says that the parent who “spares the rod” and lets the child get away with disobedience and rebellion *hates* the child (Prov. 13:24).

6. Pray, pray, pray (Jam. 5:16).

Nothing is more important in the evangelism of our children and grandchildren than effectual prayer. My

maternal grandmother was a prayer warrior, and her prayers were doubtless instrumental in my conversion. She taught me three “secrets” of answered prayer:

Persistence (Lk. 18:1).

Fasting (Mat. 17:21). There is a study on fasting in [*One Year Discipleship Course*](#).

Prayer partners. Paul taught the importance of this by his frequent, earnest requests for prayer (Rom. 15:30; Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3; 1 Th. 5:25; 2 Th. 3:1). Your first prayer partner should be your husband or wife; pray together for each of your children from the time before they are born; don’t keep problems to yourself; that is often an act of pride, because we don’t want others to know of our imperfections; ask Christian friends to pray for you; be faithful to prayer meeting and ask the church to pray for your situation.

7. Look for the convicting, drawing work of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 12:32; 16:7-11).

Salvation is a supernatural work of God. There is no salvation apart from a convicting, enlightening, drawing work of God. The sinner must respond to the Spirit’s wooing, but there is no salvation apart from the wooing. The soul winner’s job is to look for the Spirit’s work and help the sinner understand it and respond properly to it.

If the child shows a *persistent* desire to be saved (not a mere passing interest), explain how he can be saved and let him call on the Lord in his own way. Missionary Jeremy Johnson describes his dealing with his oldest son: “Our oldest boy had a lot of questions about salvation just after he turned five. When we were back to the States on a furlough, he claimed to make a decision for salvation after a church service, but there was no real change in his life. He quickly changed his mind about having made that decision and actually verbalized his refusal to be saved because he did not want to get baptized. (He was not confusing it as part of salvation, but he did know that if he got saved the next step in obeying Christ is to identify in baptism. Since he knew that obeying in one would lead to the other, he refused and would verbalize it in passing conversations.) Almost a year later, shortly after turning six, he put up his hand during a Sunday morning invitation. I did not call him out, planning to talk with him later. He came to me after the service and wanted to talk, and I said we would talk at home. It was a busy Sunday

with a meal and fellowship time after the service, a busy afternoon, an evening service, and then I had to transport people home. When I arrived home late that evening, my wife said our oldest son wanted to talk with me. I went to his room, and he was waiting to talk to me about salvation. He was anxious about wanting to be saved, his rebellion against baptism was gone, and he wanted it settled. I told him that if he understood and wanted to be saved, salvation was between him and God and not me and he needed to talk to God. Without hesitation, in the middle of our conversation, he dropped his head and began to pray, asking God to forgive him, to save him, and to help him do right. After he prayed, we talked a little more. I actually tried to shake his belief with some questions. Are you saved now? Why are you saved? What if I don’t think you are? The purpose was to see if he understood that salvation was not a decision of words (prayer) but a decision of heart. I explained that only he and God know whether he is saved, because God looks at his heart.”

Pastor Kerry Allen says of his fourth daughter after she memorized verses about salvation, “She approached me in tears, and after further questioning, she stated she was afraid of dying without Christ, and going to Hell. She then readily trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as her Saviour, and shows good evidence of it now” (Allen, *How Can I Except Some Man Guide Me?*). Note that she approached him. She showed evidence of conviction.

8. If a child does profess saving faith in Christ, encourage him or her to seek the Lord and His will (2 Tim. 2:19).

Receiving Christ as Lord and Saviour is not the end of salvation, it is the beginning! (We don’t mean to say that salvation is a process; we are simply saying that salvation is a life, not a mere ritual.) Salvation is a life of walking with and serving Jesus Christ. If a child gets saved, it is time for that child to grow and seek God’s will.

9. Look for scriptural evidence of salvation in the child’s life.

We would observe that tears are not necessarily an evidence of salvation. Tears can be a good thing, if the tears are evidence of godly sorrow and are shed over one’s sin against God, but tears alone, particularly in a young, tenderhearted girl, do not necessarily stand as evidence of repentance and regeneration. Women weep

at weddings and prisoners weep when they think of the trouble they have brought on themselves, but that in itself is not evidence of salvation.

Biblical evidence of salvation includes the following:

a. A conversion experience that changes the life (John 3:3; Mat. 18:3; 2 Cor. 5:17).

b. Personal knowledge of the Lord; the essence of salvation is a personal walk with God in Christ (Jn. 17:3; Mat. 11:28-30; Gal. 4:6).

Salvation is not a reformation or a new religion. It is to know the Lord personally, to walk and talk with Him as Lord and Saviour, Father and Friend. It is to cry, "Abba, Father."

When people express doubt about their salvation, I ask them if they know the Lord and when and how it was that they came to know Him.

Many young church people are like Samuel who knew about the Lord but did not know the Lord in a personal way (1 Sam. 3:7).

Jesus warned about those who profess Him as Lord, but He says to them, "I never *knew* you" (Mat. 7:21-23).

c. Love for and obedience to God's Word (Jn. 8:47).

A person's attitude toward the Bible is one of the clearest evidences of his spiritual condition. Jesus said that His sheep hear His voice and follow Him (Jn. 10:26-30).

After I professed faith in Christ at age 10-11, I had no more interest in the Bible than I had before. I never read it. I had no interest in preaching and teaching. I was at church because my parents took me, not because I had an interest in spiritual things. That is not the condition of a saved person.

d. Love of righteousness (1 Jn. 2:3-4).

Consider the testimony of David Sorenson, a pastor's son. He made a profession of faith at age five in an evangelistic meeting. He was coached to tell others that he was saved, and he did that for 15 years. But he says, "I had no interest in the things of God. I only went to church because my dad was the pastor, and I had to go.

I could not have cared less about the Bible." At age 20 he was saved in Bible College and his life changed radically because he began to love the things he used to hate and to hate the things he used to love.

One thing that will always change is the individual's attitude toward authority. If a child is saved, he will change in his attitude toward the authority of his parents and teachers and church leaders.

e. Divine chastisement (Heb. 12:6-8)

A child of God can and does sin, but there is an indwelling, loving Disciplinarian who chastens him. There is even a sin unto death (1 Jn. 5:16-17).

The saved person will have a sensitivity to sin and a conviction about sin. I think of a child who got saved and afterwards became concerned about sins she had committed and "gotten away with." Before salvation, if her parents were not watching, she would do things behind their backs. For example, she took her father's socks and stuffed them down a hole in the back hallway. The disappearance of the socks was a unsolved mystery in the home, but after she got saved she came weeping to her mother and confessed that sin, though no one had ever caught her. That is an evidence that something real was happening in her life. She stopped being "sneaky." She starting being trustworthy to obey even if no one was watching. Those are simple, but profound, evidences of a spiritually-converted life in a child.

When looking for evidence, we aren't looking for sinless perfection. We must be careful that we not think that the saved individual will suddenly become perfect. When "testing" others, the child of God must not forget how imperfect *he* is! We are simply looking for a regenerated heart and a changed direction in life.

Children will be children, but there will always be a change in thinking and attitude if an individual is saved, whether he be young or old. We must believe the Bible when it says that *profession* is not *possession* (Titus 1:16).

So many children in Christian homes and churches make a profession of faith in Christ but they do not show a change in their lives, and they eventually depart to the world. In many cases, the parents and the church leaders still say they are saved.

Jerry was my best buddy growing up. We went through school together, graduated together, went to Vietnam in the Army about the same time, and came back to America and became drug-using “hippies” together. I came to Christ at age 23, but Jerry never did. He mocked my faith in Christ and refused to listen to me when I tried to talk to him from the Bible. Eventually he got involved in “Native America” spirituality, which is demonism. He died a few years ago at about age 61, and I visited his mother. His mother and father were faithful church goers, and the mom had been a Baptist Sunday School teacher. She told me that she had hope of Jerry’s salvation because he went to church when he was a boy, but there was zero evidence that he was saved.

10. Let God confirm to the children that they are saved (Rom. 8:15-16; Gal. 4:6).

Don’t tell them they are saved. Don’t give them a “spiritual birth certificate” like some churches do.

Don’t remind them of when they professed Christ when they were little. One grandfather told me how that he writes down the date of his grandchildren’s professions of faith and reminds them of it each year. He says, “Each year, I phone them on their salvation date to ask them if they know what important date this is, and then I ask them about their progress in their walk with the Lord since the last year.” It is wonderful for a parent/grandparent to inquire about a child’s walk with the Lord and to encourage the child in his spiritual life, but it is dangerous for a parent or grandparent to tell a child he is saved or “remind” him that he is saved. That is the Lord’s work. Missionary Jeremy Johnson says: “I do not claim to know for certain that either of my older sons are saved. I believe that Scripture clearly teaches that children can be saved and that God wants them to be. We have seen changes in their lives, a desire and concern for others to be saved, and a brokenness over sin. We do not ever tell them they are saved. When asking them about salvation, we do not point to a time or place. We look for what they remember. Both of them, although they cannot remember the exact day (month/day/year), will immediately go to the circumstances and events happening on that day, reminding us of when and where they made that choice. We do not go over this often trying to get them to memorize it. Children are not saved because of their parents’ memory or their parents’ leading; they are saved when they make a choice in their hearts, and if they do they will remember it on their own. If they ever come to

me with doubts, I will try to prayerfully help them examine why, but I will not tell them I know they are saved. Only God knows their hearts.”

11. If the child later expresses doubt about salvation, encourage him to settle it.

A great many young people who grow up in Christian homes make two professions of faith in Christ, one when they are young and another when they reach maturity.

12. Provide a check point.

We have a junior church membership program whereby the children have a check point at age 18. We receive children under 18 who show clear evidence of salvation, and they are junior church members. They can take the Lord’s Supper and participate in some ministries at an age appropriate level but they can’t take part of church business. At age 18 the junior church membership expires, and they must of their own will seek full membership. At that time they are reexamined for salvation. It is a check point to re-evaluate their salvation at a point when they are adults rather than children. If they have doubts, they can express that and settle it before becoming a full church member. This program is intended to help young people not continue to live on a false decision and to protect the church from being filled up with unsaved members.

The Mobile Phone and the Christian Home and Church



A Youth Discipleship Course
by David W. Cloud

[Available From Way of Life Website](#)



Memory Verse Journal MEDITATION PLAN

By David Cloud

“**B**lessed 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).

If there is one thing we can do to strengthen the churches it is to seriously strengthen the biblical depth of the congregation. “For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Heb. 5:13-14). In my experience and observation, the vast majority of church members even in the most conservative churches are not serious Bible students. They are not skillful in God’s Word and do not have their senses exercised. If the people would become skillful in God’s Word, they would be more spiritually minded, more serious in prayer, more faithful to the house of God, more separated from the evil things of the world, wiser in every aspect of living, wiser in building godly homes and training their children, more zealous for the salvation of souls and the fulfillment of Christ’s Great Commission. The Word of God has the power to do all of this.

The goal of the memory verse journal is to help the believer hide God’s Word in his heart (Psalm 119:11) and to meditate on it in an effectual, practical way. God doesn’t want His people to read and memorize the Scriptures in a robotic or parroting fashion. Everything is to be done with understanding. See Psalm 47:7; 1 Corinthians 14:15, 19; Colossians 1:9; 3:16.

Meditating on a verse or passage of God’s Word effectually begins with understanding its meaning. This requires the application of the fundamental principles of

Bible interpretation (e.g., context, comparing Scripture with Scripture, defining the words, literal vs. allegorical, understanding figures of speech) and the wise use of Bible study tools (e.g., dictionary, concordance, *Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, commentary). A basic education in these things can be obtained from [The Effectual Bible Student](#). This 12-hour video course, accompanied by a printed manual, is available for free viewing and download from www.wayoflife.org. It is also available for purchase on DVDs. The more the child of God invests in pursuing this type of education, the better he will understand the Bible.

Memorization and meditation go together. By memorizing a verse, the believer can then meditate on it as he goes about his daily life. He can ask himself, what does this verse mean? What are its main lessons? What does this mean for my daily life?

The journal is accompanied by a five-year weekly memory verse program (one or two verses per week). The verses are carefully selected for edification and exhortation.

The journal and the weekly memory verse program can be used by individuals, families, classes, and churches.

Whoever is overseeing the memory verse journal program should teach the students to do the following things:

1. Print a copy of the worksheet for each week of the program. We print out 52 copies of the worksheet and bind them together with the introduction and memory verse list. That makes a one-year journal.
2. Each week, the first thing is to write out the memory verse. The act of writing has an important role in memorization.
3. Memorize the verse as quickly as possible, the first day preferably. This is so the student can meditate on it

throughout the rest of the week. Memorization and meditation aren't the same, but they are intimately associated.

4. Use the journal daily, trying to add more answers to the questions. Don't be content with spending only a few minutes each week answering the questions. The more you put into this, the more you will get out of it.

5. First answer the questions as best as you can on your own. Only after you have done your best should you get ideas from others.

6. After you have tried your best, don't hesitate to seek help if you don't understand something. Take the initiative to learn. Don't be content with not understanding. Be a zealous Bible student, and it will pay great dividends.

7. Get a partner to whom you can repeat your memory verse each week. You can discuss the journal together and learn from one another.

In our church, each week in the main service we have someone read from their journal from the previous week to give the people ideas about how to answer the questions. We choose individuals who are most capable of performing this task. We urge all of the people to bring the journals to the service and jot down new ideas they get from others. Then, as a congregation we repeat together the verse for the coming week several times.

The above article was previously published as:

"Memory Verse Journal"

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

PEPPERED MOTHS AGAIN AND AGAIN

(Friday Church News Notes, September 23, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from CreationMoments.com, July 26, 2022: "Every so often, we need to return to the topic of peppered moths, which we have featured a number of times before. Previous Creation Moments have explained why Peppered Moths are not an example of evolution, and how, in the 1980s, it was found that the famous photos showing light and dark moths on light and dark tree trunks had, in fact, been staged. The moths do not normally settle on the trunks, so the photos were taken by gluing dead moths on to the trees. What we want to note at the moment is that teachers continue to perpetuate the peppered moth myth. One evolutionist has stated that this is because the concept of what happened to these moths is easy to understand, and more recent studies have suggested that the population of dark moths is indeed higher in urban areas than that of light moths. As creationists have often pointed out, this is not really the point, because, even if the accounts were correct, this is not an example of Darwinian evolution, as no new genetic information has been made. It is, however,



an example of bad experimental technique, led by a desire to prove a particular outcome, rather than genuine investigation. It is disturbing, therefore, to look at that portion of the BBC's website, where they publish notes for high school students. An up to date science review page for students, with the heading 'Evidence for Evolution,' once again publishes the faked moth photos. For us, this constant re-publication of error aptly illustrates the paucity of evolutionary science. Author: Paul F. Taylor. Ref: BBC *Bitesize Science* notes, accessed 4/25/2017."

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?



JACK SCHAAP RELEASED FROM PRISON

(Friday Church News Notes, August 26, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Jack Schaap (pronounced *skop*), former pastor of First Baptist Church, Hammond, Indiana, was released from prison on May 4 after serving nine years (of a 12-year sentence) for a sexual relationship with a teenage church member ("Former pastor released," *The Times of Northwest Indiana*, Munster, May 14, 2022). Schaap, the son-in-law of Jack Hyles, took the pastorate after Hyles' death in 2001. (Schaap's wife, Cindy, divorced him in 2014.) Schaap's sad and frightful case is only a drop in the bucket. Many other women, teenage girls, and even children have been the target of sexual predators at First Baptist, including those polluted by Hyles' son, Dave, when he was a youth leader at First Baptist, beginning in 1969 when he was 16 years old. That year, Dave organized the Teenage Soul Winning program. In six years, the teens reported 100,000 salvation decisions, though the youth Sunday School averaged only 2,500. Dave's sister, Cindy, said, "I won thousands of souls before I finished my teen years" (*The Fundamental Man*, p. 271). In 1976, Dave's book *Successful Church Youth Work* was published by the Sword of the Lord. The book was described as

"the successful formula of Dave Hyles" and was advertised by the Sword as "double success!" (on the back cover of *Let's Baptize More Converts*). It turns out that the charismatic youth leader had more than evangelism on his mind. Dave's first wife, Paula, testified of his serial philandering, as did many others. In 2020, two lawsuits were filed against Dave Hyles by women who claim that he sexually abused them in the 1970s. One is Joy Ryder and the other is Nanette Miles. Miles' class action lawsuit alleges that she was sexually assaulted beginning at age 13, that at least 10 others "have credibly accused D. Hyles of using his position of power to sexually prey on them," and that "First Baptist and the College staff members were aware of his reprehensible conduct for years and remained silent" ("Class Action Sex Abuse Case," *Ministry Watch*, Dec. 7, 2020). In January 2013, *Chicago Magazine* ran a front-page report entitled "Let Us Prey: Big Trouble at First Baptist Church," documenting ten cases of sexual crimes and fornications committed by pastors associated with First Baptist. That is just a drop in the bucket, as has been documented in many reports. This is not a "local church" matter. First Baptist has influenced *thousands* of churches. First Baptist was ground zero for the promotion of the damnable practices of Quick Prayerism and Big-Manism and Big-Numberism and Diotrepheism (blind, unquestioning loyalty to a pastor).

ABRAHAM PIPER PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF LIVE AS YOU PLEASE

(Friday Church News Notes, August 26, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Abraham Piper, son of prominent



author John Piper, uses TikTok as a platform to spout vain words to deceive his 920,000 followers. He calls fundamentalism “a destructive narrow-minded worldview” and preaches the gospel of “live as you please.” He says, “Nothing really matters and this is what gives us the freedom to feel our own meaning, and feel it with ease instead of a sense of fear or guilt.” John Piper’s most influential book is *Desiring God*, which promotes the strange concept of “Christian Hedonism,” according to which man’s highest calling is to pursue his own happiness by pursuing God. “The desire to be happy is a proper motive for every good deed, and if you abandon the pursuit of your own joy you cannot love man or please God” (*Desiring God*). Piper cites C.S. Lewis, “It is a Christian duty, as you know, for everyone to be as happy as he can” (*Desiring God*, Kindle location 1615). In *Desiring God* and *Don’t Waste Your Life*, Piper describes the roots of Christian Hedonism. He is candid in his admission that he got it from the writings of the following very dangerous men: Blaise Pascal (Roman Catholic), C.S. Lewis, Daniel Fuller, and Harold John Ockenga. Piper says that Christian Hedonism “does not mean God becomes a means to help us get worldly pleasures,” but in spite of this disclaimer, Christian Hedonism has played right into the hands of the contemporary philosophy of “don’t let anyone tell you how to live.” Now

we see how that Piper’s own son understands Christian Hedonism. (For more on this, see [John Piper and Christian Hedonism](#), available in print and as a free eBook from www.wayoflife.org.)

ASSOCIATED PRESS GIVES JOURNALISTS PERMISSION TO SAY WOMEN GET PREGNANT (Friday Church News Notes, August 26, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Associated Press,” *PJMedia*, Aug. 20, 2022: “The *Associated Press Stylebook* has updated its guidelines to let journalists know that they have permission to use phrases like ‘pregnant women’ and ‘women seeking abortions’ in their reports. ‘We now have guidance saying that *pregnant women* or *women seeking abortions* is acceptable phrasing,’ the *AP Stylebook* announced on Twitter. ‘Phrases like *pregnant people* or *people seeking abortions* are acceptable when you want to be inclusive of people who have those experiences but do not identify as women.’ ... The AP added ‘pregnant people’ to its guidelines in May, and the newly revised guidelines clarified that the historically and biologically correct term ‘woman’ or ‘women’



was still okay to use. Of course, the AP earned mockery from both sides on this update--with radical leftists angry that the AP has resumed acknowledging biological sex still exists.”

WHAT CONSPIRACY ARE YOU FIGHTING? (Friday Church News Notes, August 26, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Ephesians 6:11-13 - “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.” In Ephesians 6, the apostle Paul describes the hidden powers that rule this fallen world. This is the supernatural conspiracy behind all human conspiracies. Many professing believers are caught up with such things as the Illuminati, the Bilderbergs, Zionism, Majestic-12, HAARP weather manipulation, FEMA camps, the Knights of Malta, Operation Paperclip, Operation Northwoods, Area 51, shadow governments, 9/11 Truth, and QAnon. But Scripture instructs God’s people to look beyond puny, mortal man to the supernatural fundamentals of earthly life. God’s people are taught to wrestle with spiritual wickedness in high places. We are taught to use mighty spiritual weapons rather than the carnal weapons of politics, demonstrations, fighting, anger, cursing, mocking, bitterness, vengeance, and violence. “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God

to the pulling down of strongholds” (2 Co. 10:4).

CALTECH FINDS AMAZING ROLE FOR “JUNK DNA” (Friday Church News Notes, August 26, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Caltech Finds,” *Evolution News*, Dec. 3, 2021: “Scientists at Caltech may have sounded the final death knell for the ‘junk DNA’ myth. ... ENCODE, readers recall, found that 80 percent of the genome is transcribed, even if only a small part codes for proteins. The functions of those non-coding regions were only hinted at. **Now, the windows are opening on organization so all-encompassing for all those non-coding RNA transcripts, it is truly mind-boggling what goes on in the nucleus of a cell.** Using a new survey tool they call RD-SPRITE, Caltech researchers, in cooperation with others at USC and UCLA, mapped the *spatial organization* of all the DNA and RNA in the nucleus. ... ‘These maps reveal higher-order RNA-chromatin structures associated with three major classes of nuclear function: RNA processing, heterochromatin assembly, and gene regulation. These data demonstrate that hundreds of ncRNAs form high-concentration territories throughout the nucleus, that specific RNAs are required to recruit various regulators

into these territories, and that these RNAs can shape long-range DNA contacts, heterochromatin assembly, and gene expression...’ **A new picture begins to emerge of hierarchical organization in the nucleus. No longer does it look like spaghetti in a basketball.** On the contrary, there are territories and compartments throughout the interior. ... In the newly identified territories are found ncRNAs (noncoding RNAs, not destined for protein)--thousands of them--that are doing important jobs: guiding regulators into the right territories where ‘essential nuclear functions’ need to take place. ... **The roles of these transcripts, formerly thought to be useless, have risen to the status of essential players.** What an amazing turnaround! The conclusion of this Caltech paper, which never mentions evolution, appears to nail the case shut for junk DNA, while also adding new levels of awe to the workings inside the nucleus. ... This is a paper to remember. It shows in hindsight the fruitfulness of the ID [Intelligent Design] perspective over the evolutionary one. Evolutionary thinking dismissed these non-coding RNAs as junk. ID thinking would have approached the unknown with the premise, ‘If something works, it’s not happening by accident.’”

HOUR GLASS OF THE ROCKS (Friday Church News Notes, August 26, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from CreationMoments.com, August 2, 2022: “Evolutionary geologists find ages for rocks, using a method known as radiometric dating. For example, uranium-lead dating relies on the change of uranium into lead. The rate at which uranium changes into lead is not linear, but can nevertheless be



measured. This value is called the half-life. If we know the half-life of uranium, and the amount of lead that there was in the rock, when it was formed, then we can calculate the age of the rock, assuming that no lead has been added to or taken out of the rock. Imagine an hourglass. Sand is flowing from the top to the bottom. You could measure how much sand was in the top of the hourglass, and also how much in the lower part. Finally, you would measure the rate at which sand flows from top to bottom. You might think you could use these values to calculate how long the hourglass had been going, but you would be wrong. This is because you do not know if all the sand started in the top, or if the glass was shaken at some time, making the sand go through faster. In the same way, geologists assume that an igneous rock was formed without any lead in it, but it is impossible to know this. They also assume that the half-life of uranium has never changed. But we now have considerable evidence to suggest that the half-life changed rapidly in the past. Author: Paul F. Taylor. Ref: Humphreys, R. (et al), ‘Radioactivity and the Age of the Earth,’ (ICR).”

BLACK PREACHER URGES PASTORS TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST CRITICAL RACE THEORY, BLM (Friday Church News Notes, September 2, 2022, www.wayoflife.org,





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

- The following is excerpted from "College football player turned pastor," *Christian Post*, Aug. 23, 2022: "Pastor John Amanchukwu, a former football player for North Carolina University who is now a preacher, urged pastors to be more courageous in denouncing unbiblical ideas. ... **He warned that America is enduring a 'famine' because there are too many preachers today who 'are afraid to preach the unadulterated Word of God. We have preachers who are less of watchmen and more like wimps. ... And they're preaching a steady diet of easy believism, cheap grace and lies to congregations...**" Amanchukwu said. "What we need more than ever is preachers who are not afraid to stand on the Word of God." Amanchukwu said many pastors struggle with acknowledging that critical race theory has no place in the Church, and insisted that BLM [Black Lives Matter] has not helped the African American community. ... "They say through critical race theory that whites are inherently racist. That's not true. What if a person gets born again? ... we don't need worldly terms to help us deal with biblical racial reconciliation. We have the Word of God. And the Bible tells us to love our neighbors as ourselves." CRT 'causes you to find racism in every action and encounter that you might see in society.' ... **People have passed out victimization to blacks**

as a crown, but only fools put it on. Many wear the garland of victimization as an ornament or trophy. I am not a victim.' ... Amanchukwu told those gathered that he's 'glad' God made him black and warned against making someone else feel guilty because they are white. ... 'But at the end of the day, we all bleed red.' Other topics Amanchukwu discussed included the importance of voting in alignment with one's values. For him, that includes acknowledging that abortion is 'the shedding of innocent blood,' opposing same-sex marriage, and declaring that 'there are only two genders.'"

MENNONITES PASS RESOLUTION REPENTING OF EXCLUDING HOMOSEXUALS

(Friday Church News Notes, September 2, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - At their annual assembly this summer, the Mennonite Church USA passed two resolutions on the issue of accepting unrepentant homosexuals as members. The "Resolution for Repentance and Transformation," repenting of harm done to LGBTQ people and calling for broader inclusion, passed by a majority of 55.7% ("MC USA Delegate Assembly widens the circle for LGBTQ people," Mennoniteusa.org, June 1, 2022). An "organization resolution" updated



the membership guidelines so that pastors are no longer prohibited from performing "same-sex covenant ceremonies." That one passed by a majority of 82.8%. The Mennonites trace their roots to the Anabaptists of Europe and to Menno Simons (1492-1561) in particular. Beginning in the 17th century, large numbers of Mennonites settled in America and Canada. They are divided into about 40 groups, some more conservative than others. The Mennonite Church USA is the largest group with about 530 congregations and is the most "liberal," meaning apostate, in that they follow man's thinking rather than God's Word. (In May 2022, the Lancaster Mennonite Conference, with its 180 congregations, separated from the Mennonite Church USA for its changing views on homosexuality.) There are several conservative, separatist Mennonite groups, including Biblical Mennonite Alliance, Conservative Mennonite Conference, Eastern Pennsylvania Mennonite Church, and Ohio Wisler Mennonite. There are also small numbers of "old order" Mennonites that are similar to Amish, traveling in horse and buggy and practicing plain dressing and shunning.

COURT RULES CALIFORNIA CAN'T FORCE CHURCHES TO COVER ABORTION IN INSURANCE PLANS

(Friday Church News Notes, September 2, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "Victory: California," *Christian Headlines*, Aug. 26, 2022: "A group of California churches won a major religious liberty victory Thursday when a federal court ruled that the state of California cannot force them to cover abortion in their insurance plans. At issue was a rule by the



California Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) that requires companies to offer insurance plans that cover abortion. Three California churches--Foothill Church, Calvary Chapel Chino Hills and Shepherd of the Hills Church--subsequently sued the state after being denied insurance that did not include abortion coverage. On Thursday, U.S. District Chief Judge Kimberly Mueller, an Obama nominee, sided with the churches, ruling that the state had violated the churches' rights under the Free Exercise Clause of the Constitution's First Amendment. That clause says Congress shall make no law 'prohibiting the free exercise' of religion. The state's action, Mueller wrote, imposes a 'substantial burden' on their religious liberty. Alliance Defending Freedom, which represented the churches, applauded the decision."

CHINA "LIQUIDATES" HOUSE CHURCH AS PART OF CRACKDOWN (Friday Church News Notes, September 2, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "China 'Liquidates,'" *Morning Star News*, Aug. 26, 2022: "Authorities in China on Aug. 19 officially 'liquidated' an historical house church in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, as part of a crackdown on churches that refuse to join the state-controlled Three-Self Church, rights advocates said. The

Church of Abundance, which began about 30 years ago, had been targeted as a 'cult' that allegedly collected illegal donations, but officials closed it as an 'illegal social organization'--that is, one that refused to join the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)-controlled Three-Self Church, according to Italy-based religious rights organization Bitter Winter. The closure appeared to be part of Chinese President Xi Jinping's call in December 2021 for action against 'non-Sinicized' and 'illegal' religious groups, Bitter Winter reported. 'Xi Jinping's plan of compelling all Protestant Christians to join the government-controlled Three-Self Church or face arrest and liquidation of their churches as *xie jiao* or illegal religious groups is being ruthlessly implemented,' the group stated. The Church of Abundance was ordered to cease activities or its members and pastors would be subject to arrest and detention. Bitter Winter reported that Church of Abundance Pastor Lian Changnian and his son, Pastor Lian Xuliang, were placed under 'residential surveillance at a designated place.' ... The wife of one of the arrested pastors stated, according to China Aid, that Pastor Lian Xuliang had a large bruise from a beating on his forehead. 'His eyes were bloodshot, and there was dried blood in the corner of his eyes,' she stated. 'His face-mask also had blood streaks. His arms and hands were bruised and swollen. There was undoubtedly physical abuse by these



so-called law enforcement officers during their *law enforcement*.'" [In August, Chinese authorities raided Covenant Home Church, Changchun Sunshine Reformed Church, and Zion Church in Beijing.]

PUSH BACK AGAINST GENDER-ALTERING PROCEDURES ON CHILDREN

(Friday Church News Notes, September 2, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "American Academy of Pediatrics," *CBN News*, Aug. 24, 2022: "Gender medical treatment for children has seen a staggering spike in recent years. In the U.S. alone, more than 50 pediatric clinics perform or refer out for procedures, including surgery, that could leave young patients unable to have children of their own. Now, a surprising move by the American Academy of Pediatrics may be putting the brakes on such radical measures. It comes in the wake of criticism from parents and professionals, plus a significant shift in direction overseas. In July, the United Kingdom stunned many when it closed its Tavistock Centre, the country's gender clinic for children. The shutdown came after an independent review found shaky scientific evidence for pushing hormones, puberty blockers, and surgery. ... Now, a class action lawsuit against Tavistock is launching with potentially up to a thousand affected families joining. Barrister Thomas Goodhead is leading the suit and told *Times Radio*, 'I think this is going to be one of the largest medical negligence scandals of all time.' ... In the U.S., social media protests over pediatric gender clinics have taken off, prompting places like the Boston Children's



has harmed their children. Doctors are also speaking out in professional groups like SEGM [Society for Evidence-based Gender Medicine].”

EUTHANASIA’S SLIPPERY SLOPE IN CANADA (Friday Church News Notes, September 9, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from “Euthanasia for ‘Mature’ Minors,” *Breakpoint*, Aug. 31, 2022: “In 2016, Canada legalized euthanasia through the euphemistically titled Medical Aid in Dying (or MAiD). Since passing, the number of Canadians who either ‘enthusiastically’ or ‘cautiously’ support the practice has risen slightly from 75% to 80%. The response from communities representing those with disabilities, however, has remained consistently



Hospital to remove videos explaining its surgeries. On Monday, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) appeared to backpedal, saying that for the vast majority of children it does not recommend medical treatment or surgery. In 2018, it called the watchful waiting method, which delays medical treatment, an outdated approach. ... Many parents are rising up by seeking support in parent groups or becoming politically active after witnessing how gender medicine

opposed. Their fears, that Canada’s end-of-life policies would prove to be only the cliff edge of a moral abyss, have proven to be largely accurate. As Maria Cheng of the Associated Press has reported, Canada ‘arguably has the most permissive euthanasia rules [in the world.]’ Just last year, over 10,000 lives were legally taken, an increase of a third from the year before. **Patients can request aid in dying without informing family members and for any reason,**

PLANTS CALL IN AIR DEFENSES (Friday Church News Notes, September 2, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from creationmoments.com, March 29, 2021: “New research shows that, when attacked, many plants make chemicals that will give munching insects a bad case of indigestion. They also seem to warn their neighbors about the attack so that they, too, start up their defenses. Some plants even call in air defenses. Some plants, when attacked by caterpillars, release a scent that scientists simply describe as ‘green leaf odors.’ These odors attract certain female wasps, who home in on the plant. The wasp will sting the caterpillar, leaving him paralyzed. She then lays her eggs in the pest, who remains paralyzed until the hatching young wasps consume it. That ‘green leaf odor’ is a plant’s way of calling in air defenses. It is communication between plant and insect! Some evolutionary biologists are upset with the intelligence and design in this arrangement. Plants are supposed to be too simple to communicate. As one evolutionist put it, this is ‘not a defense against anything’ ... it ‘just happens.’ I remember trying that excuse as a child. The cookie jar fell to the floor while I was trying to sneak a cookie. ‘It just happened,’ I



said, as if the cookie jar had come alive before my unbelieving eyes and jumped to the floor. My mother reminded me that things don’t ‘just happen.’ And science teaches us that things don’t ‘just happen.’ Not only do we see that God exists, we also see a bit of His love in providing for the plant and His intelligence as the author of communication. Author: Paul A. Bartz. Ref: Chen, I. 1990. ‘Pest-eating allies: calling up the reserves,’ *Science News*, v. 138, Dec. 22 & 29. p. 410.”

including, beginning in 2023, mental health issues and not just physical suffering. Doctors, as well as nurse practitioners, can raise the topic of euthanasia with any patient and are not required to first exhaust all other treatment options. ... Next year, euthanasia will likely be extended to so-called ‘mature’ minors. At a time when so many efforts are being made toward suicide prevention among teenagers, they will be taught that death is an acceptable way out of mental anguish. ... Cheng wrote, ‘Some disabled Canadians have decided to be killed in the face of mounting bills. Other disabled people say the easy availability of euthanasia has led to unsettling and sometimes frightening discussions.’ The worst impact of this slope Canada is sliding down could be a perversion of the word ‘care.’ For example, one Canadian armed forces veteran was outraged after a healthcare worker raised the possibility of assisted death as a ‘treatment’ option for his PTSD. Alan Nichols was a 61-year-old man who was hospitalized in 2019 over fears he might be suicidal. ‘Within a month,’ Cheng described, ‘Nichols submitted a request to be euthanized and he was killed, despite concerns raised by his family and a nurse practitioner.’ The only physical health condition listed on Nichol’s form of consent was hearing loss. According to his brother Gary, ‘Alan was basically put to death.’ Stories like these are shocking, but we can’t say we were not warned by nearly every disability group in Canada, observers from the UN, and even the American Medical Association. When it comes to euthanasia and doctor-assisted death, abuses and loopholes are not anomalies. They are inevitabilities of a system that operates from a cheapened view of human value and

a redefined understanding of healthcare.”

COURT BLOCKS BIDEN RULE THAT WOULD FORCE CHRISTIAN DOCTORS TO PERFORM GENDER-AFFIRMING SURGERIES

(Friday Church News Notes, September 9, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

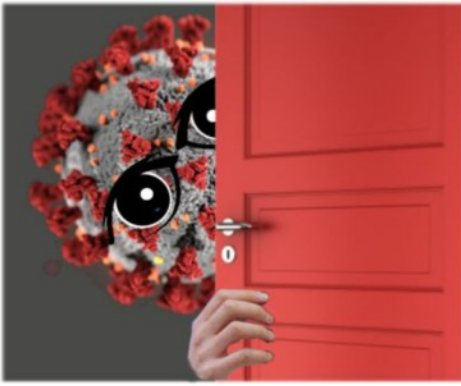
- The following is excerpted from “Major Victory,” *Christian Headlines*, Aug. 30, 2022: “A federal appeals court delivered a major victory to religious liberty advocates Friday by ruling that the Biden administration cannot force religious doctors and hospitals to perform abortions and gender-affirming procedures under Obamacare. The issue was the much-debated ‘Section 1557’ of the 2010 Affordable Care Act (Obamacare), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, and disability by medical professionals. The Biden Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)--like that of the Obama administration--interprets Section 1557 to also prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. Further, Biden’s HHS says discrimination on the basis of sex encompasses ‘pregnancy termination’--that is, abortion. But the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals on Friday sided with a



coalition of religious groups, including the Christian Medical and Dental Associations (CMDA) and the Franciscan Alliance. The case is *Franciscan Alliance v. Becerra*. The appeals court, in a 3-0 decision, affirmed a lower court decision that had permanently blocked the Biden rule. The case dates back to 2016 and has seen multiple stages, with the Trump administration dropping the Obama rule. The Biden administration then mostly reinstated the Obama rule. The judges noted that the Biden rule would ‘require that hospitals perform gender-reassignment surgeries and abortions.’ Critics have dubbed the rule the ‘transgender mandate.’ ... ‘This ruling is a major victory for conscience rights and compassionate medical care in America,’ said Joseph Davis, an attorney at Becket [the legal organization that battled the Biden rule in court]. ‘Doctors cannot do their jobs and comply with the Hippocratic Oath if the government requires them to perform harmful, irreversible procedures against their conscience and medical expertise.’”

IS COVID OVER? (Friday Church News Notes, September 9, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from John Hinderaker, PowerLine.com, Aug 16, 2022: “Has it gone away, not to return, or will it be back soon in another wave and perhaps another variant? This screen shot comes from the CDC web site. It shows total deaths in the US, from all causes, by week. Over the last five or six months, total fatalities have essentially tracked with the historic demographic record, so that Covid has contributed little or nothing to total mortality. ... A year ago, looking at the same chart, I thought Covid



seemed to be on the way out. That conclusion was premature. So how is this year different? I don't think it is; not much, anyway. At this point, Covid is pretty much the common cold. My wife caught it a couple of weeks ago, and I caught it from her. In our experience, it was not a particularly severe cold, but it hung on and didn't want to go away. It was similar to H1N1, which I caught 10 or 12 years ago, whenever that was. Just as the common cold or influenza didn't strike for a couple of years and then disappear, Covid likely will be a permanent part of our landscape. I am no biologist, but I suspect that Covid has taken over some portion of the biological niche that colds and flu have long occupied. Over the years, it may become less severe, although Omicron is already pretty benign. ... we should be prepared for the likelihood that, just as in 2020 and 2021, the fall will bring an increase in Covid cases and Covid mortality. If that happens, as I think it likely will, it is crucial that we not give in to repressive forces: we must not close our children's schools, we must not shut down businesses and churches, and, as important as anything, we must not resurrect the idiotic mask mandates that have scarred our culture and our children's development for the last two years. Covid is not over as a disease—with a few exceptions, diseases are rarely 'over'—but it is vitally important that

Covid be over as a justification for totalitarian policies and disruptions in our way of life."

COMMENTARY FROM SCRIPTURE ON THE 2020 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
(Friday Church News Notes, September 9, 2022,
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- In these evil times, God's people need to be immersed in Scripture and have a biblical mindset. The issue is not mainstream media vs. conservative media. The issue is the Bible vs. all of man's media. Consider the Bible's commentary on the 2020 election: "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" (Daniel 2:20-21). "... the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will" (Daniel 4:17, 25, 32). "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 Chronicles 29:11). "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof *is* of the LORD" (Pr. 16:33). "I have made the earth, the man and the beast that *are* upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me" (Jeremiah 27:5). "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power *belongeth* unto God" (Psalm 62:11). "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" (Psalm 75:5-7). "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Romans 13:1). The following is Charles Bridges' commentary on Proverbs 8:16--"By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." "*By me kings reign*; not only by my permission, but by my appointment. They bear my name. They are stamped with my authority (Ex. 22:28; Ps. 82:6; Joh. 10:35). **Proud anarchy disputes the prerogative, and traces the authority to the people** ... Scripture politics lay down the offensive truth--'There is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God.' They are ministers of God, not servants of the people (Ro. 13:1-6). **Government in all its administrations--kings, princes, nobles, judges--is a Divinely-consecrated ordinance. Every kingdom is a province of the universal empire of the 'King of kings'**" (*Exposition of the Book of Proverbs*, 1846).

THE HUNGRY LEAF (Friday Church News Notes, September 9, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)
- The following is from creationmoments.com, February 19, 2021: "It's a warm day on the Amazon River. A small fish swims near the surface, looking among the natural floating river debris for some food. As he looks among the

occasional leaf or twig in the water, he sees no danger. At the same time, one of the floating 'leaves' is waiting for the little fish to move just a bit closer. Then, without warning, the floating 'leaf' comes to life, grabs the fish and eats it! What the little fish thought was simply another floating leaf was actually another fish. The Amazonian leaf fish is carefully designed not only to look like a leaf, but to act like one as well. It has a flat body, very much like a leaf. A black line runs the length of its body, giving the appearance of the midrib of a leaf. A fleshy growth in its lower jaw looks like a leaf stem. Beyond looking like a leaf, the leaf fish also acts like a leaf. It lies still in the water, drifting with the current. To hide its identity further, it draws its fins close to its body, removing any last hint that it is indeed a hungry fish looking for lunch. The leaf fish combines deceptive coloring, appearance and behavior into one design so that it, too, can make its living. In this, the leaf fish shows that the Creator makes nothing without also designing a special purpose for that creature. According to the Bible, the same can be said even more emphatically for each human being He has made. Your Creator has a special purpose for you, too, and it begins with His plan of salvation for you through His Son, Jesus Christ. Author: Paul A. Bartz. Ref: Hanson, Jeanne K., and Deane Morrison. 'The



wonderful weird of flora and fauna,' *Star Tribune First Sunday*, Dec. 2, 1990. p. 17."

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S FANTASY WORLD (Friday Church News Notes, September 16, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The late Queen Elizabeth II, as likable as she was as a person and as effectual she was as a royal figurehead, lived in a fantasy world, as most people do. When the queen died on September 8 at age 96, she was England's longest-reigning monarch. She came to the throne in 1952, not long after World War II. Winston Churchill was Prime Minister. She was decorous, dutiful, dependable, cheerful. In public, she was always impeccably and modestly dressed. She took her job as queen seriously. In her 21st birthday message (1947) broadcast from South Africa, she made the following public vow: "I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and to the service of our great imperial family to whom we all belong. ... God help me to make good my vow, and God bless all of you who are willing to share in it." By all counts, Elizabeth fulfilled her vow. The problem is that she was living in a fantasy world. Her throne was a fantasy. She had no real authority. Her church was a fantasy. As an institution, the Church of England is real, but as a church, it is a fantasy. It has no likeness to the church we see in Scripture. The saddest thing is that Elizabeth's gospel was a fantasy. In her annual Christmas messages, which were heard by millions, her only gospel was the gospel of love your neighbor. She mentioned Jesus, but He was only a Teacher, an Example, a Light to follow, not a



Saviour from sin and judgment. She spoke of God and His love, but it was the heresy of universalism. What she said in 1997 was typical: "St. Paul spoke of the first Christmas as the kindness of God dawning upon the world. The world needs that kindness now more than ever, the kindness and consideration of others that disarms malice and allows us to get along with one another with respect and affection. Christmas reaffirms that God is with us today, but as I have discovered afresh for myself this year, He is always present in the kindness shown by our neighbors and in the love of our friends and family. God bless you all and happy Christmas." That is not the gospel of Jesus Christ, and no amount of human kindness can remove man's sin before God and take away the wages of sin, which is eternal death. Like probably all of her predecessors, and like a very large portion of the world's population, Queen Elizabeth had Christianity as religion, but Christianity doesn't save. Salvation is not merely a doctrine to believe; it is a supernatural new life in Christ. "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

CONSPIRACIES AND THE CHILD OF GOD (Friday Church News Notes, September 16, 2022,



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- Someone wrote recently and said, "I know you don't believe in conspiracies." But that is not true. Of course there are conspiracies in this dark world. A conspiracy is a secret plan to pervert justice, to cause harm, to steal, to injure, to kill, to rig elections, to undermine legitimate authority, etc. The Psalms describe conspiracies. Consider Psalm 10, "He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor. He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net. He croucheth, and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones. He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it." That is a perfect description of a conspiracy, and this world is filled with such things. **What I have said and emphasized is, first of all, that many conspiracies are myths and we must be careful not to get caught up in mythology. Second, I have said that to study and root out conspiracies is not the calling of God's people.** Let unregenerate conservatives spend their lives on that sort of thing. They have no higher calling. But the children of God have been bought with a great price, which is the blood of Christ, and they are not their own, and their heavenly Master has given them their

marching orders for this present life. What this dark world needs more than anything is New Testament churches. It is the greatest need of every city and every town. I'm not talking about those weak, powerless, man-made things that call themselves churches. I'm talking about true New Testament churches as we see in Scripture, as we see in Acts 2:41-42 and Ephesians 4:11-16 and Philippians 2:12-16 and Colossians 1:28-29 and 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10. I'm talking about biblical, Spirit-led, life-changing churches that are truly the pillar and ground of the truth. The New Testament church is the headquarters for Christ's Great Commission, which is God's main plan for this age. It is the church that preaches the gospel, disciples the saints, trains the workers, prepares the preachers, and builds up the homes. This is what God's people need to focus on like a laser. Christ said that he would be with these churches until the very end of the age: "and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world" (Mt. 28:20). God's people need to know the times, and on God's calendar it is Great Commission time and it is Church time. All of the redeemed need to recommit themselves to building strong New Testament churches. It is no small task. It requires every hand on deck. God's people need to reject tradition and follow the Word of God. They need to be Christ followers, not man followers. They need to stop fretting and start trusting, stop lazing and start serving. That's what I have said about conspiracies.

BILLY GRAHAM CORRUPTED GOD'S WORK IN JAPAN (Friday Church News Notes, September 16, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- Tomonobu Yanagita, a fundamentalist preacher in Japan in the 1950s and 1960s, described the mixing of evangelicals and modernists by Billy Graham's big tent philosophy and the resultant doctrinal confusion. "Yanagita has warned repeatedly of the havoc being wrought in missionary circles by the leaders of New Evangelicalism. He recalls the joyful prospect that loomed for sound, fundamental missions in 1945 when General MacArthur issued his declaration for religious freedom for Japan. An unprecedented number of Bible-believing missionaries came to that land to begin their labors. They were reinforced by experienced missionaries that had been forced out of China in 1949 and many new groups began in Japan with the purpose of spreading the true Gospel. 'Then,' continues Dr. Yanagita, 'this period of formation of ... evangelical groups who stood firmly for the Biblical position was challenged and interrupted by the coming to Japan in 1956 of Dr. Billy Graham, who demanded that all groups, including Bible believers and modernistic pro-Shinto believers, unite for the purpose of evangelism. Billy Graham demanded "a united front of all Christian groups" before he would preach in Japan. ... the way was opened for the pre-war compromising leaders to take over again by this means of ecumenical evangelism. This joint mass evangelism including modernistic unbelievers and



evangelicals caused an influx of modernist thought into evangelical groups bringing about ultimate compromise” (William Ashbrook, *Evangelicalism The New Neutralism*, first edition, 1958, p. 34).

WITCHCRAFT AND THE MODERN WORLD (Friday Church News Notes, September 16, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The modern world is permeated with witchcraft. Since the 1960s, rock music has promoted pagan and demonic themes. The Rolling Stones, for example, sang “Sympathy for the Devil” and incorporated voodoo ceremonies into their *Goat’s Head Soup* album. Hinduism and its popular western counterpart, the New Age, are demonic to the core. The cover story of *Time* magazine for June 19, 1972, was “Occult Revival.” It described a growing fascination with witchcraft among college educated people. Ancient occult practices such as Tarot, I Ching, palmistry, and Ouija boards have exploded in popularity. In 1969, Anton LaVey published *The Satanic Bible*, which has gone through dozens of printings and has been



translated into Spanish, Danish, and Swedish. The occult is a major theme in popular writing. Even the most mainstream bookstores have sections on the occult and the paranormal. The *Harry Potter* books, which promote unadulterated witchcraft to children, have sold 450 million copies, and the *Harry Potter* franchise, which includes the movies, has brought in \$24 billion in sales. Science Fiction is filled with occult themes. Hollywood has spewed out occult movies one after the other, such as *Rosemary’s Baby*, *The Exorcist*, *The Omen*, *Star Wars* (promoting the occult concept of “the Force”), *Avatar*, *Lord of the Rings*, *The Matrix*, and *Blair Witch*. *New Dawn Magazine* for March 21, 2014, reported that “Russia is currently undergoing a massive occult revival.” Nearly 40% of books in Russian deal with the occult, and popular TV programs promote the paranormal. Astrology, which was born in ancient Babylon, has witnessed an explosion in popularity in modern times. Newspapers carry horoscopes, and Americans purchase 20 million books on astrology annually. In spite of this, you rarely hear of churches burning occult material today. It is more typical for professing Christians to bring their love for the occult into the churches instead of making a clean break with it.

MIRACLE OF SMELL (Friday Church News Notes, September 16, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from creationmoments.com, November 25, 2020: “It’s commonly known that many animals are able to detect extraordinarily weak odors. The real mystery is how they can smell scents that are 1,000 times too weak to produce the chemical reactions



necessary to make a scent signal. From the chemist’s point of view, our sense of smell shouldn’t work as well as it does. When you smelled that wonderful dinner a few days ago, a marvel of chemical reactions was taking place in your nose. Scientists still aren’t sure how we sense such a wide range of smells. It was while investigating this question that scientists may have stumbled across the answer to another question. The receptors in our noses have to detect a certain number of scent molecules before they can trigger the chemical response that makes the signal that tells us we have smelled something. When air is drawn into your nose, an organ called Steno’s duct sprays a fine mist. Scientists always thought this mist simply humidified the incoming air. Now they’ve discovered that the duct also makes proteins that grab onto odor molecules. Sprayed into the incoming air, the proteins collect odor molecules. Then, with their load of odor molecules, they settle onto receptors that trigger your sense of smell. As a result, even scents that are too weak to smell are concentrated by this ingenious system so that we can sense them. Our sense of smell helps protect us, gives our food flavor, and adds richness to the experience of living. It’s truly a marvel of our Creator’s design. Ref: Vaughan, Christopher. 1990. ‘Molecular odor-eaters.’ *Science News*, v. 133. p. 348.”

7TH CONGRESS OF WORLD RELIGIOUS LEADERS (Friday Church News Notes, September 23, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The 7th Congress of Leaders of World Religions met in Kazakhstan on September 14-15 and issued a call for world unity and peace. Participants included Pope Francis, Muslim Grand Imam of Al Azhar, Russian Orthodox Metropolitan Antonij, Orthodox Patriarch Theophilos III, and the Chief Rabbis of the Ashkenazi and the Sephardic (*Vatican News*, Sep. 12, 2022). The 108 members of the congress adopted the Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace. The congress issued an “appeal to all people of faith and goodwill to unity in this difficult time and to contribute to ensuring security and harmony in our common home—planet Earth” (*Emirates News*, Sep. 18, 2022). The first Congress of Leaders of World Religions was held in 2003 at Astana, Kazakhstan. The second congress, in 2006, met in a new building designed for the event, the Palace of Peace and Reconciliation. These congresses are the latest ecumenical gatherings fostering global religious unity. This end-time movement began with the World’s Parliament of Religions in New York City in 1893. Since then, there have been seven such parliaments, the latest in 2021. In 2002, Pope John Paul II led 200 religious leaders in the Day of Prayer

for Peace in Assisi, Italy. There were representatives of Orthodox, Protestant, Baptist, Mennonite, Mormon, Judaism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Bahai, Confucianism, Shintoism, Hinduism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, and others. The World Council of Churches also foreviews a worldwide apostate “church.” It is composed of more than 300 “Christian” denominations representing some 500 million people in more than 100 nations, but the unity envisioned by the WCC encompasses all religions. At recent general assemblies of the World Council, the main speakers included Hindus, Buddhists, Jewish rabbis, Muslims, Sikhs, Native American Indians, and Australian aborigines. Thus, there is already a harlot “church” sitting upon many waters. It is the forerunner to the Mystery Babylon described in Revelation 17 that is united with the Beast, who is the Antichrist.

RICK WARREN PREACHES FINAL SERMON AT SADDLEBACK (Friday Church News Notes, September 23, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Rick Warren, founder of the Southern Baptist-aligned Saddleback Church in southern California, preached his final sermon as pastor on Aug. 28, 2022. The new pastor is Andy Wood. Warren’s influence is vast, reaching into every sphere of Christianity, from Catholicism to Mormonism, from liberal Protestantism to evangelicalism and Baptists. Bruce Ryskamp, president of Zondervan, said, “*The Purpose Driven Life* is more than a bestseller; it’s become a movement.” Rick Warren has been called “America’s pastor,” and it is for good reason. He is so shallow in his teaching, so



positive in his approach, so slighting of repentance, so neglecting of unpopular doctrines such as judgment and hell, so tolerant of heresies, so enthusiastic of rock music, so soft-spoken on that nasty subject of worldliness, that apostate America can’t help but love him. Warren’s gospel is incredibly superficial: “If you are not sure you have done this, all you need to do is receive and believe. ... Wherever you are reading this, I invite you to bow your head and quietly whisper the prayer that will change your eternity. ‘Jesus, I believe in you and I receive you.’ Go ahead. If you sincerely meant that prayer, congratulations! Welcome to the family of God!” (*The Purpose Driven Life*, pp. 58, 59). There is nothing in Warren’s gospel about God’s holiness and justice, no dealing with sin, nothing about Christ’s blood, no repentance. Just “believe on Jesus.” What Jesus? The apostle Paul warned about false christs, but Rick Warren doesn’t. Warren has done as much as any man alive to build the apostate “one world church.” He has done this by promoting Contemporary Christian Music, which is a bridge to apostasy. He has done this by his “judge not” philosophy, by his radical ecumenical activities, by his teaching that God is unconcerned about doctrine, by his constant promotion of heretics, particularly Roman Catholic authors, and by his promotion of a multiplicity of corrupt Bible versions, which has



destroyed the authority of the Bible as “thus saith the Lord.” For documentation of these things, see [Purpose Driven or Scripture Driven?](https://www.wayoflife.org/free_ebooks/purpose_driven.php), available in print or as a free eBook from https://www.wayoflife.org/free_ebooks/purpose_driven.php.

FEDERAL COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF FIRST AMENDMENT

(Friday Church News Notes, September 23, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Another Federal Judge Strikes a Blow,” *PJMedia*, Sep. 7, 2022: “U.S. District Court for the Northern District of New York Judge Mae A. D’Agostino was appointed to the federal bench in 2011 by President Barack Obama. But that biographical detail did not prevent D’Agostino from delivering a decision protecting countless orphaned children. In the case of *New Hope Family Services, Inc. (NHFS) v. Sheila Poole, the Acting Commissioner of the Office of Children and Family Services of New York*, D’Agostino held that state officials cannot force NHFS to agree to adoptions of children in its care to couples who are either of the same sex or are unmarried. ... Roger Brooks, the Senior Counsel for the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), who represents NHFS, explained the

significance of D’Agostino’s decision: ‘The court’s decision is great news for children waiting to be adopted and for the parents partnering with New Hope Family Services to provide loving, stable homes. New Hope is a private religious ministry that doesn’t take a dime from the government. Shutting down an adoption provider for its religious beliefs--needlessly and unconstitutionally reducing the number of agencies willing to help--benefits no one, certainly not children.’”

CHRISTIAN TAROT (Friday Church News Notes, September 23, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Now there is a book, *The Contemplative Tarot*, that promotes the occult tarot cards as a Christian contemplative method. Author Brittany Muller grew up Roman Catholic, rejected “Christianity,” discovered tarot, then returned to Catholicism and brought her tarot cards with her as a new way to seek God. “Muller found in tarot the ritual and reflection she missed in religion. Eventually, she found her way back to Christianity--and Christianity and the cards turned out to be ... a ‘natural pair’” (“Brittany Muller,” Religion News Service, Sept. 13, 2022). Muller says, “There’s been sort of a revival of tarot just in general in the



last five or 10 years, and it’s been really interesting to see the different ways people use tarot now. ... I liken it to *Visio Divina*, a contemplative prayer practice that translates to ‘divine seeing.’ It involves praying with images--to look at an image, to insert yourself into the image, to spend time with an image in contemplation and to see if God is speaking to you in some way through the image. This fits well into the Catholic contemplative prayer movement. Of course, Catholicism has always been able to Christianize paganism, but today, this process is happening in nearly every aspect of Christianity. It is the fulfillment of Bible prophecy: “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

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- 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)
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