

O Timothy

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

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

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DEPRESSION

and the
Child of God

By David Cloud

"A great many cases today that are diagnosed as clinical depression are doubtless the products of sin and false doctrine, though such things are rarely acknowledged. In modern psychology, sin is typically dismissed as a result of depression, rather than the cause of depression. One drinks, abuses drugs, and commits adultery because he is depressed. Depression is treated as a disease, never an effect of one's sinful lifestyle..." Page 9.

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



NO HAPPY PILL: A STUDY OF ANTIDEPRESSANT DRUGS ~ By David

I am not a medical doctor. I am a Bible teacher. My concern is for the spiritual welfare of God's people and the strengthening of homes and churches in these evil times. Anything that affects the mental and spiritual health of God's redeemed people is the business of the churches.

God has given His redeemed people everything they need for life in this fallen world.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance

NO HAPPY PILL

*A Study Of
Antidepressant Drugs*

By David Cloud

patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never

fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 1:3-11).

I cannot say that there is never a time to take some type of antidepressant drug. Man’s makeup is extremely complicated. There is the body, soul, spirit, and heart. No one but God understands man fully, and God has revealed many things in Scripture.

My dad returned home from World War II broken from his experiences in severe battles on the Pacific Islands. Sometimes he could function pretty well; other times he would go into a tailspin. Eventually it was impossible for him to hold a job. His wife and children could not figure him out. It was an ongoing, never-ending nightmare. He was in and out of hospitals, given shock treatment (which is legal torture, as far as I am concerned), and put on drugs. Sometimes drugs (I am not sure which ones) seemed to help, until he stopped taking them. Today, Dad’s condition is called PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). It’s real, but it is a term that is widely abused, being applied to everything from severe combat to automobile accidents, child and domestic abuse, admission to intensive care, prison employment, refugee experiences, and “any event in which you fear for your life” (ptsduk.org).



In June 2022, the Fellowship Baptist Church of Sidney, Montana, removed Pastor J.D. Hall from the ministry after it learned that he was abusing the prescription antidepressant drug Xanax. On June 5, the congregation announced that “it

came to the attention of the church leadership that our lead pastor had fallen into a dependency upon prescription alprazolam (Xanax), characterized by use that exceeded his prescribed dosage.”

Hall had been stopped by the police and charged with driving under the influence (DUI). He had also been angrily abusing his family. Addiction and anger are common downsides to antidepressant drugs. This, of course, is exactly what one would *not* expect from a “happy pill.”

“Xanax, the most prescribed psychiatric medication in the United States, is generally used to treat anxiety disorders and anxiety caused by depression. The drug is also ‘extremely addictive when used long-term,’ according to the Addiction Center” (“JD Hall was abusing Xanax,” *Christian Post*, June 28, 2022).

THE PREVALENCE OF ANTI-ANXIETY DRUGS

Antidepressants are the most widely prescribed drugs. The world market is \$11 billion annually.

Over 100 million people take psychiatric drugs worldwide, including 17 million children!

“[W]hile 13 percent of the U.S. population takes an antidepressant, almost one in four women ages 50 to 64 take one” (Rebekah Edwards,” “Dangers of Psychoactive Drugs,” Feb. 16, 2018).

“Between 1991 and 2018, total SSRI prescriptions in the U.S. rose by more than 3,000%. The number of prescriptions for the most common SSRI hit 224 million last year, 224 million prescriptions in a country of 330 million people. ... Antidepressants are supposed to cure depression. That’s why they’re prescribed. And yet, **over the same period that SSRI prescriptions have risen 3,000% ... the suicide rate has jumped by 35%**” (Tucker Carlson, “Drugs are not the answer to every human problem,” *Fox News*, July 25, 2022).

From 1995-1999, antidepressant use increased 580% in ages 6 years and younger.

WHAT ARE ANTIDEPRESSANT DRUGS?

Antidepressant drugs “help to relieve the symptoms of depression such as low mood, irritability, feelings of worthlessness, restlessness, anxiety, and difficulty in sleeping” (drugs.com). They are also called anti-anxiety drugs, anxiolytics, and anti-panic drugs.

Anti-anxiety drugs are prescribed for the treatment of Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), a vague, catch-all psychological term for a wide variety of emotional problems. “Individuals with GAD are often overly concerned about

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everyday matters such as health, finances, death, family, relationship concerns, or work” (*Wikipedia*). “GAD produces fear, worry, and a constant feeling of being overwhelmed.” And who does not experience such things in this fallen world! (Note: We consider the field of psychology “science falsely so-called.”)

Antidepressant drugs are based on the hypothesis that depression and mood swings are caused by a “chemical imbalance” in the brain. The “monoamine hypothesis of depression” (also called catecholamine theory) claims that lack of monoamine neurotransmitters (e.g., dopamine, serotonin, noradrenaline) can trigger depression. Serotonin and other neurotransmitters are chemicals in the blood that are a necessary part of the brain’s processes. The brain naturally restricts the overproduction of neurotransmitters by absorption, but antidepressant drugs change the natural process in order to increase the chemicals.

The first antidepressant drug was iproniazid, developed in 1951 as an anti-tuberculosis drug. It worked by inhibiting activity of monoamine-oxidase enzymes to increase the concentration of biogenic monoamines (dopamine, serotonin, noradrenaline). (In the 1960s, iproniazid was retracted because of the side effect of lethal liver injury.)

SSRI (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor) drugs are the most commonly prescribed antidepressants. They increase the presence of serotonin in the brain by inhibiting the brain’s reuptake mechanism. The first was **fluoxetine (PROZAC)**, which was introduced by the Eli Lilly company in 1987. Eli Lilly had developed the synthetic version of LSD in the early 1950s. It acts by flooding the brain with serotonin. “The SSRIs and SNRIs increase serotonin gradually so that it becomes more confusing to the user and the observer that this chemically-induced mental illness/psychosis is actually a drug effect” (Ann Blake-Tracy, “History of Antidepressants,” Aug. 3, 2015, drugawareness.org). SSRI drugs include Zoloft, Paxil, Luvox, Sarafem, Stratera, Celexa, Lexapro. Effexor, Remeeron, Pristiq, Cymbalta, and Brisdelle. Side effects include “Headache, disturbed sleep, drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, blurred vision, nervousness, restlessness, agitation, and sexual dysfunction” (MedicineNet.com).

SNRI (Serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor) “increase the brain levels of the two hormones called serotonin and norepinephrine; these hormones are types of feel-good hormones that improve mood.” They include venlafaxine (Effexor), duloxetine (Cymbalta), atomoxetine (Strattera), and desvenlafaxine (Pristiq).

SDRI (selective dopamine-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor) was first approved in 1989 under the name Bupirone (azaperone). It increases dopamine or serotonin levels in the brain. The most commonly prescribed brand is

BuSpar. “Common side effects of the drug include mood swings, confusion, headache, nausea, diarrhea, fatigue, and increased sweating. Other serious side effects, such as irregular heartbeat and rash, can also occur” (SproutHealthGroup.com).

Tricyclic antidepressants work by “increasing the levels of serotonin and norepinephrine while reducing the levels of another neurotransmitter called acetylcholine” (MedicineNet.com). They include imipramine (Tofranil) anispridine (**Elavil**), and doxepin (Sinequan).

Another group of anti-anxiety drugs are **benzodiazepines (BENZOS)**. They are categorized as a tranquilizer. They are used to treat anxiety, seizures, and insomnia. Commonly prescribed benzos include alprazolam (**Xanax**), lorazepam (Ativan), lormetazepam (Noctamid), clonazepam (Klonopin), diazepam (**Valium**), chlorthalidone (**Librium**), temazepam (Restoril), and triazolam (Halcion), as well as their generic equivalents.

“In 2013, more than half (56%) of all benzo prescriptions were for the treatment of anxiety. Other uses include treating alcohol withdrawal, insomnia, panic disorder, and seizures. Benzos largely replaced earlier drugs called barbiturates, which were too addictive and had too many dangerous side effects. Benzos abuse is more difficult to identify than other types of substance abuse because it can resemble some of the conditions benzos are used to treat, including anxiety and sleep disorders. Using benzos with alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, opioids, and other prescription drugs can be life-threatening” (Elizabeth Handy, “Dementia Risk when taking medications,” June 7, 2022, emdrandpsychotherapy.com).

Between 1996 and 2013, the number of benzos prescriptions filled increased to 5.6% of the U.S. population.

Benzos such as Valium and Librium are widely abused by illegal drug users. My hippy buddies and I used Valium (among many other drugs) in our rock & roll apartment in Hollywood, Florida, in the early 1970s when we returned from Vietnam. They produce a strong high, especially when abused.

ANTIDEPRESSANT CHEMICAL IMBALANCE NOT TRUE SCIENCE

The field of modern medicine does not know how antidepressants work, though they commonly make the following claims: “[Amitriptylin] works by increasing the levels of chemical substances in your brain and improving your mood. It also blocks the transmission of pain signals and provides relief from nerve pain” (practo.com). “Antidepressants work by correcting chemical imbalances of neurotransmitters in the brain. Experts believe these are responsible for changes in mood and behavior” (“All about antidepressants,” medicalnewstoday.com).

“Experts are not sure exactly how antidepressants work, but historically they were *thought to work* by increasing levels of certain neurotransmitters, such as dopamine, serotonin, and/or norepinephrine, in the brain. This does not appear to be the way they work for depression, although they are still effective at treating depression” (drugs.com).

In 2022, a large study by the University College London concluded that serotonin deficiencies are not the reason people get depressed. It was published in the journal *Molecular Psychiatry*. Lead author Joanna Moncrieff said, “I think we can safely say, after a vast amount of research conducted over several decades, there is no convincing evidence that depression is caused by serotonin abnormalities, particularly by lower levels or reduced activity of serotonin.’ The popularity of the *chemical imbalance* theory of depression has coincided with a huge increase in the use of antidepressants. Prescriptions for antidepressants have risen dramatically since the 1990s, with one in six adults in England and 2% of teenagers now being prescribed an antidepressant in a given year. Many people take antidepressants because they have been led to believe their depression has a biochemical cause, but this new research suggests this belief is not grounded in evidence” (“No evidence,” July 20, 2022, sciencedaily.com).

“No blood, urine, or chemical imbalance exam can test for the presence of a mental disease or illness. Even x-rays or brain scans can’t show the presence of a “mental disorder.” This leads many to believe that healthy patients have a great possibility of being diagnosed with supposed “disorders” even if they are only displaying minor symptoms. Many of these symptoms include stress and difficulty concentrating – issues that can often be chalked up as a natural response to everyday stress” (Edward Group, “12 Shocking Facts about the Dangers of Psychiatric Drugs,” Citizens Commission on Human Rights International, Apr. 14, 2014).

The following is by Jez Tromans, “A Disorder for Everyone!” adisorder4everyone.com, June 17, 2017:

“American psychiatrist Peter Breggin, who has never prescribed a psychoactive medication in all his working life, believes ‘informed therapists and healthcare providers’ have an ethical duty to provide scientific information about the real effects of psychiatric drugs, and consumers, ‘instead of naively accepting whatever the doctor prescribes to them’ also need to take on responsibility for educating themselves. In a recent review he focused on what he terms *three principles of rational psychopharmacology*:

“The first is *the brain disabling principle*, which states that all psychoactive substances work by causing dysfunctions of the brain and mind. It further observes that no

psychiatric drugs work by improving or correcting biochemical imbalances or any other presumed biological malfunctions.

“The second principle is *intoxication anosognosia (medication spellbinding)* which states that all psychoactive substances tend to cause a subjective over-estimation of their positive effects while masking their harmful ones, sometimes resulting in extremely harmful behaviors such as mania, violence and suicide.

“The third principle is *chronic brain impairment* – that exposure to psychoactive substances, especially long-term, results in impairments of the brain or mind that can become persistent or permanent, including atrophy (shrinkage) of brain tissue.” (Breggin, “Rational principles of psychopharmacology for therapists, healthcare providers and clients, *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 2016).”

ADDICTION

“Substances like anti-anxiety medications, antidepressants and other illegal substances are all habit-forming and often abused to keep up with demanding schedules and therefore can develop into an addiction” (“Dangers of Psychoactive Drugs,” Arizona Addiction Recovery Center, Mar. 10, 2020).

Benzos are highly addictive. In 2012, researchers at the National Institute on Drug Abuse found that “benzodiazepines cause addiction in a way similar to opioids [codeine, oxycodone, heroin], cannabinoids [marijuana], and GHB [a central nervous system depressant commonly referred to as a club drug].”

“Benzos are also known to produce sleepiness, disorientation, impaired vision, loss of motor control, slurred speech, delayed breathing, muscular weakness, and other side effects. ... In addition to their sedative effects, benzodiazepines have been linked to the production of ‘Dopamine which is a chemical messenger in the brain that is involved in reward and pleasure. After a few weeks of using benzos, the brain may learn to expect them and hence cease striving to manufacture these chemicals on its own without them” (Elizabeth Handy, “Dementia Risk when taking medications,” June 7, 2022, emdrandpsychotherapy.com).

Signs of Benzos abuse include slurred speech, blurred vision, poor motor coordination, drowsiness, inability to reduce intake, doctor shopping to get extra pills, engaging in risky behavior (e.g., driving while under the influence).

“Withdrawal from benzodiazepines can be uncomfortable, frightening, and even dangerous, and should always take place under medical supervision. Symptoms usually start within 24 hours, and typically last a few days to a few months, depending

on the severity of the addiction” (“How Addictive Are Benzodiazepines?” Into Action Recovery Centers).

“Xanax, which is a brand name version of alprazolam, is a popular drug among addict circles. This is a prescription drug that can make people feel relaxed when they are dealing with anxiety or panic disorders. Unfortunately, the way that they impact the brain has made them a popular choice for people who abuse drugs” (Anthony N. Palumbo, criminal defense attorney, “Xanax abuse can lead to criminal issues,” palumbo-renaud.com).

“Xanax, the brand name of the drug alprazolam, is a highly addictive benzodiazepine usually prescribed to treat panic and anxiety disorders. **Tolerance to Xanax can develop quickly, so addictions can develop even when it’s taken as prescribed**” (“5 Signs of Xanax Abuse,” Sept. 13, 2020, anylength.net).

THERE IS NO HAPPY PILL

Antidepressant drugs are Band-aids. They do not heal emotional problems. In fact, they usually make the problems worse. They do not address the true underlying issues.

Dr. Elizabeth Handy warns:

“Psychotropic drugs, with the exception of rare chemically-based cases, do not facilitate healing. There is no scientific evidence, or first-hand evidence in my experience, that medications heal or ‘fix’ traumatic symptoms. They serve as an attempt at a means to self-manage—that is, they dull the senses and symptoms enough for the patient to get through the day or simply to minimize symptoms. The symptoms themselves will not go away until the individual is ready to do the work—facing the trauma and establishing a true plan to process and ultimately heal” (Handy, “The Dangers of Psychotropic Drugs,” Sept. 22, 2014, emdrandpsychotherapy.com).

“Another study done by Columbia University and Johns Hopkins says that doctors frequently prescribe a combination of up to three anxiety medications and SSRI’s in the same time, hoping that if the first one doesn’t work then maybe the second or third will, turning their patients into experimental lab rats. **What’s worst is that they do this while knowing that there is no evidence or studies supporting multiple usage and knowing that there can be extremely dangerous interactions when combining drug usage.** These medications are even being prescribed for patients without anxiety disorders, such as persons with shyness, sadness, tiredness, and other normal lifestyle feelings that do not necessarily indicate anxiety or depression, yet these normal personalities are being classified as diseases. Why? **Because it’s much easier to pop a pill or write prescriptions than it is to**

analyze the reasons and causes of the person’s distress” (“The Hidden Dangers of Antidepressant Drugs,” Jan. 6, 2015, Prevent Panic Attacks).

HARMFUL, EVEN DANGEROUS, SIDE EFFECTS

“But not all researchers are convinced by the efficacy of these commonly prescribed antidepressants which increase the levels of monoamine transmitters in the brain, and some are even investigating their potentially harmful side effects. First, despite the ubiquity of antidepressants, depression remains the most prevalent mental illness (Kessler & Bromet, 2013). Second, there is growing concern that MRI medications may actually increase the odds of suicide (Healy, 2003). ... Then, in addition to these mixed outcomes, studies at the biological level show that synaptic concentrations of serotonin and noradrenaline are in fact not lower than normal in all individuals suffering from depression, nor do these individuals have fewer monoamine receptors in their brain, challenging the validity of the monoamine hypothesis (Hinz et al., 2012). ... In contrast, an increasingly popular theory states that even if monoamines have a role in some specific forms of depression, they are more often likely to play an indirect role which involves more complex cerebral metabolic mechanisms (Barchas & Altemus, 1999)” (Anne-Laure Le Cunff, “The origins of the monoamine hypothesis of depression,” NessLabs.com).

“Prolonged misuse of Xanax can cause some more serious effects, some of which can be long-lasting. Many of these longer-term side effects affect the mind with disorders such as depression, aggression, impulsivity, delirium, and psychosis. In the very long-term, Xanax abuse can increase the person’s risk of developing dementia and Alzheimer’s disease” (“5 Signs of Xanax Abuse,” Sept. 13, 2020, anylength.net).

“In human given terms, we can begin to recognise that these medications are affecting access to, skewing and, even worse, damaging the very subtle resources that we work with – emotions/motivation, empathy and rapport (thus all-important abilities to relate to others suffer), and dreaming, imagination, pattern matching, observing self and rational thinking can all become frighteningly distorted. Entire nervous and digestive systems are affected, making recovery a long and complicated process. Jez Tromans, “A Disorder for Everyone!” adisorder4everyone.com, June 17, 2017

“Peter R. Breggin, M.D., a psychiatrist trained in Harvard, has been conducting research and analysis for over 20 years on the effectiveness of SSRI drugs and has concluded that ongoing chronic exposure to SSRI antidepressants frequently makes people lose interest in daily activities, lose the sense of enjoyment, loss of concern in matters, and overall less engaged in their lives, but worst of all, more depressed” (“The Hidden Dangers of Antidepressant Drugs,” Jan. 6, 2015, Prevent Panic Attacks).

“Physicians are generally very quick to prescribe these drugs - but they aren’t quick to tell you how hard it is to stop taking them. Withdrawal symptoms can vary between disorientation, anxiety, depression, panic attacks, irregular heartbeat, inability to gain an erection, and can even include bizarre physical symptoms such as electrical “jolt” sensations in the brain, black, tarry stool and blood hemorrhages under the skin” (Elizabeth Handy, “The Dangers of Psychotropic Drugs,” Sept. 22, 2014, emdrandpsychotherapy.com).”

“Studies show that **people who have no thoughts of suicide before taking psychoactive drugs have developed suicidal thoughts after taking medications like antidepressants, SSRIs, anticonvulsants, sedatives, anti-anxiety drugs, etc.** The suicidal ideation only stopped once they were taken off said-medication ... **One published study however, showed that adults with no history of any mental illness are at doubled risk for suicidal and violent behavior while taking and/or withdrawing from SSRIs**” (“Dangers of Psychoactive Drugs,” Arizona Addiction Recovery Center, Mar. 10, 2020).

In 2004, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ordered a “black box” label on all antidepressants **warning of increasing suicide risk in children and adolescents. In 2006, the warning increased to age 26.**

The following warning is by Diana Kwon, “The Hidden Harm of Antidepressants,” *Scientific American*, Feb. 3, 2016:

“More than one out of 10 Americans over age 12—roughly 11 percent—take these drugs, according to a 2011 report by the National Center for Health Statistics. And yet, **recent reports have revealed that important data about the safety of these drugs—especially their risks for children and adolescents—has been withheld** from the medical community and the public. In the latest and most comprehensive analysis, published last week in *BMJ* (the *British Medical Journal*), a group of researchers at the Nordic Cochrane Center in Copenhagen showed that **pharmaceutical companies were not presenting the full extent of serious harm** in clinical study reports, which are detailed documents sent to regulatory authorities such as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the European Medicines Agency (EMA) when applying for approval of a new drug. The researchers examined documents from 70 double-blind, placebo-controlled trials of two common types of antidepressants—selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRI) and serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRI)—and found that the **occurrence of suicidal thoughts and aggressive behavior doubled in children and adolescents who used these medications.**” ...

“This paper comes on the heels of disturbing charges about conflicts of interest in reports on antidepressant trials. Last September a study published in the *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* revealed that a third of meta-analyses of

antidepressant studies **were written by pharma employees** and that these were 22 times less likely than other meta-studies to include negative statements about the drug. That same month **another research group reported** that after reanalyzing the data from Study 329, a 2001 clinical trial of Paxil funded by GlaxoSmithKline, they uncovered exaggerated efficacy and undisclosed harm to adolescents.

“Because of the selective reporting of negative outcomes in journal articles, the researchers in the most recent *BMJ* [*British Medical*] study turned to clinical trial reports, which include more detailed information about the trials. They discovered that some of the most useful information was in individual patient listings buried in the appendices. For example, **they uncovered suicide attempts that were passed off as “emotional liability” or “worsening depression”** in the report itself. This information, however, was only available for 32 out of the 70 trials. “We found that a lot of the appendices were often only available upon request to the authorities, and the authorities had never requested them,” says Tarang Sharma, a PhD student at Cochrane and lead author of the study. “I’m actually kind of scared about how bad the actual situation would be if we had the complete data.”

“‘[This study] confirms that the full degree of harm of antidepressants is not reported,’ says Joanna Moncrieff, a psychiatrist and researcher at University College London who was not involved in the study. ‘They are not reported in the published literature, we know that—and it appears that they are not properly reported in clinical study reports that go to the regulators and form the basis of decisions about licensing’” (Diana Kwon, “The Hidden Harm of Antidepressants,” *Scientific American*, Feb. 3, 2016).

“Although hints about hostile behavior existed in the past, including in published **case studies**, last week’s *BMJ* study was the first large-scale work to document an increase in aggressive behavior in children and adolescents. ‘This is obviously important in the debate about school shootings in the States and in other places where the perpetrators are frequently taking antidepressants,’ Moncrieff says” (Kwon).

The following is excerpted from “The Dangerous Downsides of Antidepressants,” Nov. 3, 2016, *The People’s Pharmacy*:

Here are just a few stories from people who stopped an antidepressant medication suddenly:

“Due to a change in our insurance and lack of communication from our company, I wasn’t able to refill my prescription of Cymbalta. Saturday was my last dose and as of Monday I felt like I was losing my mind but didn’t know why. Ohhhh, how ignorance is NOT bliss in this situation.

“I’m sitting in my office and I think today was the worst physical and emotional roller coaster ride I have EVER been

on. I have literally gone from wanting to scream, throw things or hit someone to crying in a matter of minutes...ALL DAY. "My head is spinning and every 30 seconds or so, I hear this 'whoosh, whoosh, whoosh' in my ears (similar to hearing your pulse when you have a bad migraine). I have this creeping crawling feeling going up the back of my neck when I feel an attack coming and need to quickly excuse myself from normal conversations. These are not stressful conversation by any means. Or, I suddenly just start sweating. "This is absolute craziness!" Shel

"I took Pristiq for about two years. I tried to taper off as my MD advised. It was over 3 weeks but I experienced terrible brain zaps, anxiety, insomnia and irritability and did not go to work for about 10 days. It was one of the worst experiences I have ever had. I am on a healthier approach to handling life's stresses: exercise, relaxation, aromatherapy, massage and vitamin support." Cathy

"I have now been completely sertraline free for over a month, and my withdrawal symptoms are finally gone.

"I had them all: nausea, brain shocks/zaps, vertigo, headaches, digestive problems, numbness/tingling in my hands, feet, and face.

"I'm writing to let you know that it does get better, even on days when you think you cannot possibly survive one more hour of feeling so sick. SSRI withdrawal is painful and scary and, as many others who have commented on this website, if I had known what it would be like to wean off of this drug I would never have taken it." Jess

The following testimony was sent to me on Nov. 11, 2022:

"You're right about the SSRIs. I started taking Paxil as an unsaved 20-year-old in 2001. I was saved by the Lord Jesus Christ in 2011. In 2014, I wanted to be obedient to the Lord as I made a quest to wean off the SSRIs (Zoloft), and went an entire year without them. But the withdrawals were insanity. ... So I went back on the SSRI (Zoloft) in 2015, just so I could function in the working world. Nobody should ever, ever, EVER start taking the SSRIs. Never. I wish someone would have told me about the Lord Jesus Christ and the King James Bible in 2001. Instead, I followed the world system's batch of lies in 2001, and there's still consequences for it, 21 years later."

Following is another testimony:

"Benzo and antidepressant withdrawal can take years to recover from, if at all, and the depth of suffering is unlike anything I can describe physically and mentally. The medical community ignores these facts, prescribes more drugs to 'treat' the effects of withdrawal and accuses people of relapse. I have suffered from antidepressant withdrawal and have been physically disabled for over 4 years now because of the damage done to my central nervous system. ... I would LOVE to taper off and quit, but I fear the withdrawals, again."



DEPRESSION

and the

Child of God

By David Cloud



Man is a complicated, tripartite being: body, soul, and spirit (1 Th. 5:23). There is heart, soul, and mind (Mt. 22:37). There is the spirit of the mind (Eph. 4:23). In his fallen condition in a fallen world, man is subject to a great number of afflictions that affect every aspect of his being.

The field of psychology has been based on a humanistic view of man and God from its inception and cannot be reconciled with God's Word. (See *Christ or Therapy* and *The Dark Side of Christian Counseling* by E.S. Williams; *PsychoHeresy: The Psychological Seduction of Christianity* by Martin Bobgan;

Manufacturing Victims: What the Psychology Industry Is Doing to People by Tana Dineen,)

Following are some biblical truths about depression and emotional melancholy. The quotes from Charles Spurgeon are from *Lectures to My Students* unless otherwise noted.

Depression is part of this fallen life and its reason will not always be known.

"mine eye poureth out *tears* unto God" (Job 16:20).

“Mine eye is consumed because of grief” (Ps. 6:7).

“The troubles of my heart are enlarged: *O* bring thou me out of my distresses” (Ps. 25:17).

“My tears have been my meat day and night” (Ps. 42:3).

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and *why* art thou disquieted in me? ... O my God, my soul is cast down within me” (Ps. 42, 5, 6, 11; 43:5).

“My soul cleaveth unto the dust” (Ps. 119:25).

“My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word” (Ps. 119:28).

“Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest” (Jer. 45:3).

“For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body” (Ro. 8:22-23).

“Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations” (1 Pe. 1:6).

“I note that some whom I greatly love and esteem, who are, in my judgment, among the very choicest of God’s people, nevertheless, travel most of the way to heaven by night” (Spurgeon)

“I am the subject of depression so fearful that I hope none of you ever get to such extremes of wretchedness as I go to” (Spurgeon).

“Hours after, I have been myself depressed, and I have felt an inability to shake it off” (Spurgeon).

“I could weep by the hour like a child, and yet I knew not what I wept for” (Spurgeon).

“... I need something which shall cheer my heart, why I cannot tell, wherefore I do not know, but I have a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me; my soul is cast down within me; I feel as if I had rather die than live; all that God hath done by me seems to be forgotten, and my spirit flags and my courage breaks down. I need your prayers” (Spurgeon).

“We have our times of natural sadness; we have, too, our times of depression, when we cannot do otherwise than hang our heads. Seasons of lethargy will also befall us from changes in

our natural frame, or from weariness, or the rebound of over excitement. The trees are not always green, the sap sleeps in them in the winter; and we have winters too. Life cannot always be at flood tide: the fulness of the blessing is not upon the most gracious at all times” (Spurgeon).

“Causeless depression is not to be reasoned with, nor can David’s harp charm it away by sweet discourings. As well fight with the mist as with this shapeless, undefinable, yet all-beclouding hopelessness. One affords himself no pity when in this case, because it seems so unreasonable, and even sinful to be troubled without manifest cause; and yet troubled the man is, even in the very depths of his spirit. If those who laugh at such melancholy did but feel the grief of it for one hour, their laughter would be sobered into compassion. Resolution might, perhaps, shake it off, but where are we to find the resolution when the whole man is unstrung? The physician and the divine may unite their skill in such cases, and both find their hands full, and more than full. The iron bolt which so mysteriously fastens the door of hope and holds our spirits in gloomy prison, needs a heavenly hand to push it back” (Spurgeon).

“I know that wise brethren say, ‘You should not give way to feelings of depression.’ ... If those who blame quite so furiously could once know what depression is, they would think it cruel to scatter blame where comfort is needed. There are experiences of the children of God which are full of spiritual darkness; and I am almost persuaded that those of God’s servants who have been most highly favoured have, nevertheless, suffered more times of darkness than others. The covenant is never known to Abraham so well as when a horror of great darkness comes over him, and then he sees the shining lamp moving between the pieces of the sacrifice. A greater than Abraham was early led of the Spirit into the wilderness, and yet again ere He closed His life He was sorrowful and very heavy in the garden. No sin is necessarily connected with sorrow of heart, for Jesus Christ our Lord once said, ‘My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.’ There was no sin in Him, and consequently none in His deep depression. I would, therefore, try to cheer any brother who is sad, for his sadness is not necessarily blameworthy. If his downcast spirit arises from unbelief, let him flog himself, and cry to God to be delivered from it; but if the soul is sighing--‘though he slay me, yet will I trust in him’--its being slain is not a fault. The way of sorrow is not the way of sin, but a hallowed road sanctified by the prayers of myriads of pilgrims now with God--pilgrims who, passing through the valley of Baca [lit: of weeping], made it a well, the rain also filled the pools: of such it is written: ‘They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God’” (Spurgeon, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 1881, vol. 27).

Some people are more prone to depression and gloominess than others.

“As to mental maladies, is any man altogether sane? Are we not all a little off the balance? Some minds appear to have a gloomy tinge essential to their very individuality; of them it may be said, ‘Melancholy marked them for her own;’ fine minds withal, and ruled by noblest principles, but yet most prone to forget the silver lining, and to remember only the cloud” (Spurgeon, “The Minister’s Fainting Fits,” *Lectures to My Students*).

We must trust the sovereignty and goodness of God.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose” (Ro. 8:28).

“It would be a very sharp and trying experience to me to think that I have an affliction which God never sent me, that the bitter cup was never filled by his hand, that my trials were never measured out by him, nor sent to me by his arrangement of their weight and quantity” (Spurgeon).

“If you drink of the river of affliction near its outfall, it is brackish and offensive to the taste, but if you will trace it to its source, where it rises at the foot of the throne of God, you will find its waters to be sweet and health-giving” (Spurgeon).

“As long as I trace my pain to accident, my bereavement to mistake, my loss to another’s wrong, my discomfort to an enemy, and so on, I am of the earth, earthy, and shall break my teeth with gravel stones; but when I rise to my God and see his hand at work, I grow calm, I have not a word of repining” (Spurgeon).

There can be divine purposes for depression.

For preparation to help others

“Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation” (2 Co. 1:4-6).

"One Sabbath morning, I preached from the text, 'My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken Me?' and though I did not say so, yet I preached my own experience. I heard my own chains clank while I tried to preach to my fellow-prisoners in the dark; but I could not tell why I was brought into such an awful horror of darkness, for which I condemned myself. On the following Monday evening, a man came to see me who bore all the marks

of despair upon his countenance. His hair seemed to stand up right, and his eyes were ready to start from their sockets. He said to me, after a little parleying, 'I never before, in my life, heard any man speak who seemed to know my heart. Mine is a terrible case; but on Sunday morning you painted me to the life, and preached as if you had been inside my soul.' By God's grace I saved that man from suicide, and led him into gospel light and liberty; but I know I could not have done it if I had not myself been confined in the dungeon in which he lay. I tell you the story, brethren, because you sometimes may not understand your own experience, and the perfect people may condemn you for having it; but what know they of God's servants? You and I have to suffer much for the sake of the people of our charge ... You may be in Egyptian darkness, and you may wonder why such a horror chills your marrow; but you may be altogether in the pursuit of your calling, and be led of the Spirit to a position of sympathy with desponding minds” (Spurgeon, *An All Round Ministry*, pp. 221-222).

“I often feel very grateful to God that I have undergone fearful depression of spirits. I know the borders of despair, and the horrible brink of that gulf of darkness into which my feet have almost gone; but hundreds of times I have been able to give a helpful grip to brethren and sisters who have come into that same condition, which grip I could never have given if I had not known their deep despondency. So I believe that the darkest and most dreadful experience of a child of God will help him to be a fisher of men if he will but follow Christ” (Spurgeon, *The Soul Winner*, chapter 14).

For humbling

“And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong” (2 Co. 12:7-10).

“Those who are honoured of their Lord in public have usually to endure a secret chastening, or to carry a peculiar cross, lest by any means they exalt themselves, and fall into the snare of the devil” (Spurgeon)

For chastening

“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father

chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness. Now **no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous:** nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed” (Heb. 12:6-13).

For spiritual growth

“And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Ro. 5:3-5).

“I am afraid that all the grace that I have got of my comfortable and easy times and happy hours, might almost lie on a penny. But the good that I have received from my sorrows, and pains, and griefs, is altogether incalculable ... Affliction is the best bit of furniture in my house. It is the best book in a minister's library” (Spurgeon).

The ministry brings special cares and sorrows.

“For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without *were* fightings, within *were* fears” (2 Co. 7:5).

“Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches” (2 Co. 11:28).

“For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick” (Php. 2:26).

“Passionate longings after men's conversion, if not fully satisfied (and when are they?), consume the soul with anxiety and disappointment. To see the hopeful turn aside, the godly grow cold, professors abusing their privileges, and sinners waxing more bold in sin—are not these sights enough to crush us to the earth? The kingdom comes not as we would, the reverend name is not hallowed as we desire, and for this we must weep. How can we be otherwise than sorrowful, while men believe not our report, and the divine arm is not revealed? All mental work tends to weary and to depress, for much study is a weariness of the flesh; but ours is more than mental work—it is heart work, the labour of our inmost soul. How

often, on Lord's-day evenings, do we feel as if life were completely washed out of us! After pouring out our souls over our congregations, we feel like empty earthen pitchers which a child might break” (Spurgeon).

Depression can be associated with spiritual warfare.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 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*” (Eph. 6:10-12).

Depression can precede times of victory. Many times the devil will fight hardest and send dark times prior to great spiritual breakthroughs and victory.

“This depression comes over me whenever the Lord is preparing a larger blessing for my ministry; the cloud is black before it breaks, and overshadows before it yields its deluge of mercy. Depression has now become to me as a prophet in rough clothing, a John the Baptist, heralding the nearer coming of my Lord's richer benison” (Spurgeon).

Depression can also *follow* times of victory, as with Elijah who was so downcast after his great victory at Mt. Carmel that he wanted to die.

“Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time. And when he saw *that*, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which *belongeth* to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: **and he requested for himself that he might die;** and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I *am* not better than my fathers” (1 Ki. 19:2-4).

We must look to our spiritual health.

“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins” (2 Pe. 1:5-9).

If you are not growing, you are going backwards, and backsliding can cause depression

Don't neglect the daily quiet time with God in serious Bible study and prayer, walking in communion with Christ, yielding to the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18), putting off the old man and putting on the new (Eph. 4:22-24).

Sin can cause depression. Though not all depression is caused by sin (e.g., Christ in Psalm 69:20), much of it is. We all have a fallen nature and a deceitful, wicked heart, and we all live under the curse of death because of sin, so there is no such thing as perfect health as God originally intended it. Paul spoke of "the body of this death" (Ro. 7:24), and life in that body is the reality even for born again Christians.

Sin grieves the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30) and brings divine chastening (Heb. 12:6). Sin can even lead to premature death if not repented of (1 Jo. 5:16-17).

A great many cases today that are diagnosed as clinical depression are doubtless the products of sin and false doctrine, though such things are rarely acknowledged.

In modern psychology, sin is typically dismissed as a *result* of depression, rather than the *cause* of depression. One drinks, abuses drugs, and commits adultery *because* he is depressed. Depression is treated as a disease, never an effect of one's sinful lifestyle. The depressed is a hapless victim of circumstances.

Tina Campbell, of the black gospel duo Mary Mary, contemplated murder and suicide in 2013 after her husband committed adultery. She said, "I'm sad; I'm broken, I'm insecure. ... I considered taking my life. I considered taking me, my children. I was just like, 'I don't want to leave a legacy of suicide to them, so maybe I should just take all of them.' ... I was like, 'Maybe I should take out these people who did me wrong and then take us out, and leave my husband here to figure it out, so that he can realize, 'look what you did'' ("Mary Mary's Tina Campbell," TheGrio.com, Mar. 3, 2016). The violence was not limited to her thoughts. She used a hammer and scissors to destroy her husband's car. In public testimony, Tina never acknowledged her worldly "after your own lusts," 2 Timothy 3:3-4 lifestyle and her false charismatic theology as a possible factor in her depression. She was just a victim.

CCM artist Sheila Walsh, then co-host of Pat Robertson's *700 Club*, was hospitalized in 1992 and underwent psychiatric therapy, including drug treatment, because she was "wrestling with a disease of the mind." She says that it is wrong to assume that "your behavior or a perverse lack of faith brought it on" ("Sheila Walsh Escapes the Darkness of Depression," *The 700 Club*, n.d). She says that we should always say to those suffering from depression, "It's not your fault" ("Sheila Walsh Thanks God Every Day for Her Mental Health Treatment," Assist News Service, Oct. 21, 2015). She was diagnosed with

severe clinical depression and post-traumatic stress disorder, as if she had been in fierce military combat, and more than 20 years later Walsh continues on medication. Again, in her public testimonies there was no acknowledgement of the possibility that her ecumenical philosophy and worldly lifestyle, including her disobedient marriage to an immoral, divorced man, had anything to do with her mental condition.

We don't know what really caused these women's mental issues and depression, but we do know that it is wrong to leave out the possibility that sin and false teaching had anything to do with it.

Depression is often the result of alcohol and drug abuse.

Depression can also be caused by the sin of other people who effect me. "A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son *is* the heaviness of his mother" (Pr. 10:1).

We must look to our physical health.

Bad health can cause depression.

"Has it not often happened that dyspepsia has been mistaken for backsliding, and bad digestion has been set down as a hard heart?" (Spurgeon).

Spurgeon suffered terribly from gout, sometimes bedridden for weeks at a time, racked in pain. He said, "I have been brought very low. My flesh has been tortured with pain and my spirit has been prostrate with depression. ... With some difficulty I write these lines in my bed, mingling them with the groans of pain and the songs of hope."

Lack of sleep can cause depression. When I am tired, I am much more subject to depression. I have learned not to make decisions late at night. I know that things will look much darker then.

Lack of rest can cause depression. Some people need more rest than others. We need to understand ourselves and be wise with our lives, but we must also be careful not to pamper ourselves.

"It is wisdom to take occasional furlough. In the long run, we shall do more by sometimes doing less. On, on, on for ever, without recreation may suit spirits emancipated from this 'heavy clay', but while we are in this tabernacle, we must every now and then cry halt, and serve the Lord by holy inaction and consecrated leisure. Let no tender conscience doubt the lawfulness of going out of harness for a while" (Spurgeon).

Lack of physical exercise can cause depression. It is important to get regular physical exercise to keep the body as healthy as possible.

David Brainerd, famous missionary to the American Indians, tended toward great emotional extremes, sometimes feeling spiritual passion and love for God, but often being afflicted with dark depression. At least 22 times in his diary he expressed a wish for death. At the beginning of his *Journal* he wrote, "I was, I think, from my youth ... inclined rather to melancholy than the other extreme." Doubtless Brainerd's tuberculosis, which took his life at age 29, contributed to his depression.

I recall a preacher friend who had kidney failure and it brought him into a deep spiritual depression. He told me that whereas the Bible had been his delight, it now mocked him. When he had a successful kidney transplant, this condition was resolved.

We think of Eric Liddell, the famous Scottish Olympic runner who became a missionary to China and died in a Japanese prison camp. He was known to be an exceedingly cheerful person, but in his final sickness he was thrown into depression.

"In the evening especially, shortly before lights out in his room, the melancholy threatened to drown him. This wasn't unusual among the men in his dorm as the war dragged on. What became noticeable, however, was that Liddell couldn't shake himself out of it the next morning. His depression wouldn't go away. ... The doctors mentioned the possibility of a 'nervous breakdown'" (Duncan Hamilton, *For the Glory*).

It turned out that Liddell had a brain tumor. He soon had two strokes and died at age 43.

We must cry out to God for help.

"In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, *and* strengthenedst me *with* strength in my soul" (Ps. 138:3).

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. 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. 5:7-10).

"When I was racked some months ago with pain, to an extreme degree, so that I could no longer bear it without crying out, I asked all to go from the room, and leave me alone; and then I had nothing I could say to God but this, 'Thou are my Father, and I am thy child; and thou, as a Father art tender and full of mercy. I could not bear to see my child suffer as thou makest me suffer, and if I saw him tormented as I am now, I would

do what I could to help him, and put my arms under him to sustain him. Wilt thou hide thy face from me, my Father? Wilt thou still lay on a heavy hand, and not give me a smile from thy countenance?' ... So I pleaded, and I ventured to say, when I was quiet, and they came back who watched me: 'I shall never have such pain again from this moment, for God has heard my prayer.' I bless God that ease came and the racking pain never returned" (Spurgeon).

We must have the upward look.

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

We must have the long look.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal" (2 Co. 4:17-18).

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Ro. 8:18).

We must understand that heaviness can be spiritually beneficial.

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *ye* double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your* joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas. 4:8-10).

We must keep our eyes upon God and our faith in His promises.

"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him" (Job 13:15).

"I am the subject of depression so fearful that I hope none of you ever get to such extremes of wretchedness as I go to. But I always get back again by this—I know that I trust Christ. I have no reliance but in Him, and if He falls, I shall fall with Him. But if He does not, I shall not. Because He lives, I shall live also, and I spring to my legs again and fight with my depressions of spirit and get the victory through it. And so may you do, and so you must, for there is no other way of escaping from it" (Spurgeon).

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?



HOMOSEXUAL DEAN OF CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

(Friday Church News Notes, October 28, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The new Dean of Canterbury Cathedral, David Monteith, is a homosexual who is in a "same-sex civil partnership." Previously, Monteith was Dean of Leicester. Monteith's nomination was approved by the late Queen Elizabeth ("New Dean of Canterbury," Oct. 11, 2022, Englishcathedrals.co.uk). Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, said, "I'm delighted by David's appointment. ... We will benefit greatly from David's experience and perspective, not least from his work in helping diverse faiths and cultural communities to live well together." Canterbury Cathedral is the location of the throne of the Archbishop of Canterbury, head of the Church of England. The Dean heads up the team in charge of the day-to-day management of the cathedral under direction of the archbishop.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH: U.K. VS U.S.A. (Friday Church News Notes, October 28, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from

John Hinderaker, PowerLineBlog.com, Oct. 19, 2022: "It is easy for Americans to forget how rare, and how precious, our guarantee of free speech is. Even the United Kingdom, the country from which we inherited most of our historic freedoms, does not recognize anything like our First Amendment. This fact was brought home by the recent declaration of a 'safe zone' in Bournemouth, England. Rod Dreher has the story. It has to do with the sacrament of abortion, the last ideal, it seems, to which many liberals subscribe. ... What is with the word 'safe'? A lot of people are not safe in today's world, with murders, aggravated assaults, carjackings and the like spiraling out of control. But that isn't what liberals have in mind when they say people are 'safe.' They mean that any expression of opinions different from theirs has been suppressed. ... Under the First Amendment and existing U.S. law, a ban on protesting, 'engaging in an act of disapproval,' offering 'prayer or counseling,' 'displaying text or images' on one side of a controversy, and praying, reciting scripture, or crossing oneself in a defined geographic area, would be unconstitutional. Does that mean it can't happen here? No. The Constitution cannot eternally guarantee the right of free speech if that right is not supported, generally, by our populace. And major segments of our society, including those who



now control the Democratic Party, are bitterly hostile to free speech. They subscribe to the idea that it is 'unsafe' to 'allow' speech with which one (a liberal, not a conservative) disagrees. And they view the First Amendment's free speech guarantee as minor and subservient to more important 'rights,' like the right to an abortion free of any exposure to disapproval."

CATHOLIC CHURCH ABANDONING OPPOSITION TO ABORTION AT HIGHEST LEVELS

(Friday Church News Notes, October 28, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Mother Earth, Pregnant Mothers," FrontPageMag.com, Sept. 29, 2022: "A high-ranking Vatican official stunned Catholics during a recent television interview by inadvertently confirming the Catholic Church's retreat from one of its fundamental moral positions ... The official in question said on Italy's national network Aug. 26 that the church had no interest in opposing that nation's law allowing abortion. Enacted in 1978, Law 194 legalizes abortions in the first trimester and permits them afterward only if the mother's life is in danger or if the fetus displays 'serious abnormalities or malformations,' the law states. That official even had the audacity to say that Law 194 represented 'a pillar of our social life.' ... Astonishingly, the Vatican official who made those



remarks was Cardinal Vincenzo Paglia, president of the Pontifical Academy for Life, which Pope John Paul II founded specifically to oppose abortion. Tommaso Scandroglio, reporter for the Catholic newspaper *La Nuova Bussola Quotidiana*, perfectly described the impact: 'It is as if the president of the Jewish Anti-Defamation League is declaring himself in favor of the Holocaust.' ... In May 2021, the Vatican's leading theological authority after the pope discouraged American bishops from withholding Communion from Catholic politicians who support abortion. In issuing that letter, Cardinal Luis Ladaria, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, contradicted both his own church's catechism and canon law. ... The Catholic catechism describes abortion a 'moral evil.'"

THE HISTORY OF ISLAM'S SLAUGHTER OF ARMENIANS

(Friday Church News Notes, October 28, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Why Concessions to Islam Never work," *PJMedia*, Nov. 19, 2020: "Thus, before Islam violently conquered eastern Anatolia (Asia Minor) in the eleventh century, Armenia was significantly larger than today. Beginning a thousand years ago, however, Turks chipped away at and absorbed ethnically Armenian territory. What is happening today is simply part of that continuum. The *Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa* (d. 1144), an Armenian historian who lived close to the initial conquests, makes all this clear. According to this valuable historical resource, in 1019, 'the first



appearance of the bloodthirsty beasts ... the savage nation of infidels called Turks entered Armenia ... and mercilessly slaughtered the Christian faithful with the sword.' Three decades later the raids were virtually nonstop. In 1049, the founder of the Turkic Seljuk Empire himself, Sultan Tughril Bey (r. 1037–1063), reached the Armenian city of Arzden, west of Lake Van, and 'put the whole town to the sword, causing severe slaughter, as many as one hundred and fifty thousand persons.' Other contemporaries confirm the devastation visited upon Arzden. 'Like famished dogs,' writes Aristakes (d. 1080) an eye witness, the Turks 'hurled themselves on our city, surrounded it and pushed inside, massacring the men and mowing everything down like reapers in the fields, making the city a desert. Without mercy, they incinerated those who had hidden themselves in houses and churches.' Eleven years later, in 1060, the Turk's laid siege to Sebastia (which, though now a Turkish city, was for the preceding 400 years Armenian). Six hundred churches were destroyed, 'many and innumerable people were burned [to death], and countless women and children 'were led into captivity to Persia.' Between 1064 and 1065, Tughril's successor, Sultan Muhammad bin Dawud Chaghri--known to posterity as Alp Arslan, one of Turkey's unsavory but national heroes--laid siege to Ani, the fortified

capital of Armenia, then a great and populous city. The thunderous bombardment of Muhammad's siege engines caused the entire city to quake, and Matthew describes countless terror-stricken families huddled together and weeping. Once inside, the Islamic Turks 'began to mercilessly slaughter the inhabitants of the entire city ... and piling up their bodies one on top of the other. ... Innumerable and countless boys with bright faces and pretty girls were carried off together with their mothers.'"

SAUL ALINSKY'S RULES FOR RADICALS (Friday Church News Notes, October 28, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Saul Alinsky (1909-1972), atheist labor activist, has been a major influence in radicalizing generations of university students and in transforming the Democratic party. Hillary Clinton wrote her senior college thesis on Alinsky. Barack Obama taught workshops on the Alinsky method and spent four years as a community organizer in Chicago with the Developing Communities Project. Clinton and Obama followed the Alinsky method by working "within the established system" to stir up revolution from within. Alinsky's 1971 *Rules for Radicals* begins with a shout out to Lucifer, "the first radical who rebelled against the establishment and did so effectively that he at least won his own

kingdom." In *The Purpose*, Alinsky wrote, "In this book we are concerned with how to create mass organizations to seize power and give it to the people." Other quotes from *Rules for Radicals* -- "The **disruption** of the present organization is the first step toward community organization. Present arrangements must be **disorganized** if they are to be displaced by new patterns. ... **All change means disorganization of the old** and organization of the new. ... An organizer must stir up dissatisfaction and discontent. ... The organizer must first **rub raw the resentments** of the people of the community; **fan the latent hostilities** of many of the people to the point of overt expression. He must **search out controversy** and issues, rather than avoid them, for unless there is controversy people are not concerned enough to act." Alinsky praised America's liberties and contrasted them with the totalitarianism of Marxist states. He did not advocate America's overthrow, but Marxists are using his satanic methods of disruption and division and fanning hostilities for the nation's destruction.

ABANDONED AT COLDWATER (Friday Church News Notes, October 28, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from CreationMoments.com, Sept. 29, 2021: "Coldwater Lake in Washington State looks so pretty, nestled between the mountains. This scene of tranquility is very popular among the fishing community. A better view of Coldwater Lake can be had by climbing the steep trail up to Coldwater Ridge. As you reach the top, you look back at the magnificent views of the Mount St. Helens with its gaping crater, forever marred by



having lost such a large portion of itself in the violent eruption of May 1980. In the other direction, you see the lake, which did not even exist before the eruption. The devastation caused by the volcano blocked Coldwater Creek so that the valley filled with water. So you keep walking along the ridge, and you spy a different sort of devastation. Huge pieces of rusting machinery can be seen. This machinery was there to aid with logging processes because this ridge used to be covered with forest before the eruption. The blast from the volcano had a speed of up to 350 mph as it hit the ridge, knocking down the trees and sending the logging machinery into a spin so that it landed in its current position. If the eruption had occurred on the Monday or the Saturday, one can imagine that this machinery would have been operated by many loggers, causing far more deaths than actually occurred on that Sunday morning. Out of that violence has come the tranquility of the lake scenery, just as out of the violence of the worldwide Flood, God brought a message of hope and mercy to a world reborn. Author: Paul F. Taylor."



Barack Obama

Saul Alinsky

THE ELON MUSK ERA OF TWITTER (Friday Church News Notes, November 4, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - On October 27, Elon Musk's purchase of Twitter was finalized.



When Musk announced his intent to purchase the company for \$44 billion in April, he made the following statement, “Free speech is the bedrock of a functioning democracy, and Twitter is the digital town square where matters vital to the future of humanity are debated.” He also said, “My strong intuitive sense is that having a public platform that is maximally trusted and broadly inclusive is extremely important to the future of civilization.” Upon taking ownership last week, Musk tweeted, “The bird is freed” and began making changes in the social media giant, firing its top executives, including CEO Parag Agrawal and policy head Vijaya Gadde. Musk tweeted the following statement to the company’s advertisers: “The reason I acquired Twitter is because it is important to the future of civilization to have a common digital town square, where a wide range of beliefs can be debated in a healthy manner, without resorting to violence. There is currently great danger that social media will splinter into far right wing and far left wing echo chambers that generate more hate and divide our society. In the relentless pursuit of clicks, much of

traditional media has fueled and catered to those polarized extremes, as they believe that is what brings in the money, but, in doing so, the opportunity for dialogue is lost. That is why I bought Twitter. I didn’t do it because it would be easy. I didn’t do it to make more money. I did it to try to help humanity, whom I love. And I do so with humility, recognizing that failure in pursuing this goal, despite our best efforts, is a very real possibility.”

ELON MUSK (Friday Church News Notes, November 4, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Elon Musk (b. 1971), a South African immigrant, is in the long lineage of American inventors and entrepreneurs. He is CEO of Tesla, the electric car and battery company, and founder and CEO of SpaceX, which has created a reusable rocket (the *Falcon*) that has been resupplying the International Space Station since 2012. In 2020, SpaceX became the first private company to place astronauts into orbit and to dock with the space station. In 1999, Musk was a co-founder of the online

bank X.com, which eventually became PayPal. Musk is currently the world’s wealthiest person. He is not a Bible-believing Christian. In fact, he is not especially very conservative politically. In the matter of Twitter, it appears that he simply loves liberty and wants America to continue to be a land of liberty. A large portion of the country passionately shares that sentiment.

TWITTER’S HISTORY OF LEFT-WING CENSORSHIP (Friday Church News Notes, November 4, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Twitter, launched in 2006, is “an online news and social networking site where people communicate in short messages called tweets.” It is called “microblogging.” The messages are limited to 280 characters (originally 140), but they can include photos and videos and links to web sites, social media accounts, etc. Twitter has become the most popular forum for live news and firsthand reports from ongoing events. But over the past few years, Twitter has increasingly acted as a totalitarian censoring agency aimed at restricting the speech of political and religious conservatives. After putting repeated warnings on President Donald Trump’s tweets (including a pro-life video featuring smiling babies in Jan. 2020 and tweets concerning mail-in balloting and racial violence in



Minneapolis in May 2020), Twitter infamously banned the president of the United States in January 2021. When the ban occurred, Trump's Twitter account was in the top ten most popular, with about 70 million followers. In June 2020, Twitter banned comedy writer Graham Linehan for making the outrageous statement that "men aren't women." Twitter banned Christian media companies *The Babylon Bee* and *The Christian Post* for calling Rachel Levine--a transgender Biden official who serves as the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services--a man. PJ Media's Matt Margolis's Twitter account was permanently suspended "for pointing out that transgender Americans make up a small percentage of the population, and gender dysphoria is a mental disorder." Project Veritas released undercover footage of Twitter employees discussing "shadow-banning," which secretly reduces the visibility of an individual's tweets. In Oct. 2020, Acting Homeland Security Secretary Chad Wolf labeled Twitter a threat to America's security, warning that the tech giant's quick trigger finger in censoring government agencies could deny people information they need to be safe.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST PASTOR CALLS FOR BANNING CHURCHES WITH FEMALE PASTORS (Friday Church News Notes, November 4, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - In October 2022, Pastor Mike Law of Arlington Baptist Church, Arlington, VA, published a motion to amend the SBC Constitution "to include an enumerated 6th item under Article III, Paragraph 1 concerning 'Composition,' to read: 'Does not affirm, appoint, or employ a woman



as a pastor of any kind.'" Pastor Law continues, "Personally, I felt the need to offer this amendment because five Southern Baptist churches, roughly within a five-mile radius of my own congregation, are employing women as pastors of various kinds, including women serving as 'Sr. Pastor.'" In February 2021, it was reported that five churches approved by the North American Mission Board (NAMB) of the SBC have women pastors ("NAMB Caught with More Women Pastors in Churches," *Capstone Report*, Feb. 8, 2021). One of these SBC churches, Echo Church of southern California, lists five women as pastors. In May 2021, Saddleback Church, pastored by Rick Warren, announced on Instagram that it had ordained three female pastors. "Yesterday was a historic night for Saddleback Church in many ways! We ordained our first three women pastors, Liz Puffer, Cynthia Petty, and Katie Edwards" (May 7, 2021). Saddleback is the second largest congregation in the Southern Baptist Convention. Petty said in an interview, "This is a new day for women in ministry and I am honored and blessed to help carry the mantle of being a Pastor and have the title as NextGen Ministries pastor at Saddleback Church!" (Al Mohler, "Women Pastors ... and the Looming Test," May 10, 2021). In October 2022, Saddleback's new pastor, Andy

Wood (formerly of Echo Church), announced that his wife, Stacie, is the newest "teaching pastor" at Saddleback ("New Saddleback pastor sees women clergy in church's future," Associated Press, Oct. 24, 2022). A 2020 study of the 500 largest SBC churches, found that 10% have female pastors and another 10% or more have female ministers in various roles, such as "Youth Minister," "Singles Minister," or "Ministry Director."

U.S. SUPREME COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF COACH FIRED FOR PRAYING (Friday Church News Notes, November 4, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Fired Football Coach Joe Kennedy to Be Reinstated," *Christian Headlines*, Oct. 28, 2022: "Former Washington state high school assistant football coach Joe Kennedy, who was fired in 2015 for praying on the field after games, will be reinstated at the school in March 2023. Following a years-long legal battle with the Bremerton School District, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Kennedy's favor with a 6-3 decision in late June. On Tuesday, attorneys from both parties filed a joint stipulation in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington stating that Kennedy will be reinstated to his former position by March 15, 2023. ... In June, the Supreme Court ruled that



the football coach was within his constitutional right to pray on the field after the games. ‘Here, a government entity sought to punish an individual for engaging in a brief, quiet, personal religious observance doubly protected by the Free Exercise and Free Speech Clauses of the First Amendment,’ Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote in the majority opinion. ‘And the only meaningful justification the government offered for its reprisal rested on a mistaken view that it had a duty to ferret out and suppress religious observances even as it allows comparable secular speech,’ he continued. ‘The Constitution neither mandates nor tolerates that kind of discrimination.’”

200 MILLION UNDER COVID LOCKDOWN IN CHINA (Friday Church News Notes, November 4, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Millions in China Are Back under Lockdown,” *PJMedia*, Oct. 28, 2022: “China is one of the few nations remaining that is clinging to the ‘Zero Covid’ policy of massive testing and draconian lockdowns whenever an outbreak of the virus is detected. And with winter coming, Chinese citizens are bracing themselves for more unprecedented measures to try and stop the outbreak in its tracks. **Currently, more than 200 million people are under total lockdown--**



no shopping, no work, not even a walk in the park. ... [On the] occasion of the party congress that ended last week ... President Xi made it clear that the nation would redouble its efforts to control the pandemic by locking down the county and isolating its people ... Aside from maintaining a policy that has failed everywhere else it’s been tried, China is stuck in Covid hell.”

CANADIAN PASTOR FOUND NOT GUILTY OF VIOLATING COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

(Friday Church News Notes, November 11, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Vindication,” *Christian Headlines*, Nov. 2, 2022: “A Canadian pastor who was arrested and jailed for holding church services during the COVID-19 pandemic has been acquitted of violating the province’s health rules. ‘All glory to God!’ Tim Stephens, the pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Calgary, tweeted Tuesday after Provincial court Judge Allan Fradsham ruled that the government had failed to prove its case. The controversy dates back to church services on February 28 and March 7 of 2021, when peace officers for the city of Calgary cited Stephens for failing to follow Alberta’s social distancing rules. Fradsham, though, ruled that Stephens was not legally responsible for members’ conduct. Stephens’ only responsibility was that he himself followed the social distancing rules, the judge ruled. ‘I see nothing in the provisions ... which imposed any legal obligation on Pastor Stephens to ensure, compel, or encourage compliance, by those attending the religious services he was conducting,’ Fradsham wrote in a nine-page decision. ... Stephens



wrote on Twitter, ‘In total, 5 health tickets withdrawn, 1 criminal charge withdrawn, 1 contempt charge withdrawn, and now acquitted on these two counts. But I still spent 21 days in jail.’”

KROGER TO PAY LARGE PENALTY FOR FIRING EMPLOYEES WHO REFUSED TO CELEBRATE GAY PRIDE

(Friday Church News Notes, November 11, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Kroger reaches \$180K settlement,” *The Hill*, Oct. 29, 2022: “The supermarket chain Kroger reached a \$180,000 settlement in a religious discrimination lawsuit over its uniform, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) announced Thursday. The EEOC sued Kroger in 2020 on behalf of two former employees, who were ultimately fired for refusing to wear a uniform with a logo that they believed resembled a Pride flag. ... Brenda Lawson and Trudy Rickerd were working at a Kroger store in Conway, Ark., in April 2019, when the store adopted a new apron as part of its uniform. The apron featured a multi-colored heart that several employees believed was a symbol of support for the LGBT community. Rickerd refused to wear the apron, and Lawson wore the new uniform but covered the symbol with her nametag. Both were

DEVIOUS FUNGUS (Friday Church News Notes, November 4, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from creationmoments.com, December 2, 2020: "Parasites, especially fungi, are usually written off by evolutionary biologists as simple, primitive organisms. However, whether they choose to recognize the Creator or not, biologists are learning that nothing in God's creation is simple or primitive. Parasites seem to display some of the most clever planning or scheming--depending on your point of view--in all creation. A parasitic fungus that infects a roadside weed called catchfly *seems* to do nothing harmful to the plant. After infection, a profusion of white blossoms will open--even a few weeks earlier than normal. Bees and butterflies will arrive to collect the grains from the flowers. However, the grains they are spreading aren't pollen but fungus spores. The fungus has not only turned female flowers into males, but has transformed the stamens into spore factories. This is not the only trick played by the fungus. It also coaxes the catchfly into producing far more flowers than usual, making the plants it infects more attractive than surrounding catchflies. As a result, pollinators come first to the infected flowers before going to the uninfected plants. This is but one example among many



Catchfly Plant

showing that nothing from God's hand is carelessly done. Author: Paul A. Bartz. Ref: Cowen, Ron. 1990. 'Parasite power,' *Science News*, v. 138, October 6. p. 200."



written up for dress code violations. In response, the two employees requested religious accommodation from Kroger. However, Kroger determined that 'there was nothing to accommodate since the symbol was not meant to represent support for the LGBT community.' Lawson and Rickerd continued to refuse to wear the uniforms and were eventually fired. As part of Thursday's

settlement in the case, Kroger agreed to pay \$180,000, create a religious accommodation policy and provide enhanced training to store management on religious discrimination."

LONDON POLICE APOLOGIZE, PAY COMPENSATION FOR WRONGFUL ARREST OF EVANGELIST (Friday Church News Notes, November 11, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Met police apologise," *Premier Christian News*, Oct. 21, 2022: "The Metropolitan Police has apologised and admitted it 'fell below standards' following two wrongful arrests of a

Christian evangelist at Speakers' Corner in London. Hatun Tash, a Christian evangelist who regularly critiques Islam at Speakers' Corner, has also received £10,000 in compensation and costs after challenging the arrests. ... Supported by the Christian Legal Centre, Tash challenged the arrests on the grounds of wrongful arrest and unlawful imprisonment. ... Following the



Hatun Tash

apology, Tash said, ‘I am very concerned by the approach the police has been taking at Speakers’ Corner. The police have repeatedly taken away my rights and told me that they cannot protect me because they do not want to offend a certain group of people, which has been very disturbing. I believe Jesus Christ is the good news for Muslims, the police and the world. Police need to protect my rights as I tell others this good news. My hope is that many Muslims will come to faith in Jesus. More must be done to properly deal with Islamic violence and intimidation at Speakers’ Corner. We don’t live in Pakistan; we don’t live in Saudi Arabia. I am Christian and by default I believe that Muhammad is a false prophet. I should be allowed to say that in the UK without being stabbed or repeatedly arrested. Police inaction and fear has led to mobs being encouraged to silence, threaten and to even try to kill me. It is heart-breaking that we live in a society where police do not want to arrest a Muslim for fear of being called Islamophobic. ... **By doing this, Sharia Law is ruling Speakers’ Corner rather than the law of the UK,**’ she continued. In July 2021, Tash was stabbed in front of police at Speakers’ Corner by a man in a black Islamic robe in broad daylight. No arrest has ever been made.”

STREET PREACHER IN ENGLAND FOUND NOT GUILTY OF HATE SPEECH

(Friday Church News Notes, November 11, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from “Street Preacher,” *Premier Christian News*, Nov. 3, 2022: “A street preacher has been found not guilty of



hate speech after suggesting the Muslim prophet Muhammad was a paedophile. Shaun O’Sullivan was accused of causing religious and racially motivated harassment, alarm and distress by criticising Muhammad and Buddha when preaching in March 2020. Passers-by suggested he was being racist, alerting the police of his actions in Swindon Town Centre. ... Appearing in Swindon Magistrates Court, the 32-year-old was found not guilty of the public order offence with which he was charged. ... Mr O’Sullivan—who is a born-again Christian WHO would previously heckle and persecute street preachers, said: ‘I am relieved that the magistrates have seen sense and found me not guilty. It was never my intention to offend or upset people. My intention was to tell the truth based on the evidence in the Bible and Islamic scripture, and when you do that in public there is always someone who will be offended. Offending someone is not and never should be seen as a crime.’ ... According to Islamic tradition, the prophet consummated his marriage to his wife Aisha when she was 9-years-old.”

AMERICA’S TEENS AVERAGE 70 HOURS PER WEEK GLUED TO SCREENS (Friday Church News Notes, November 11, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from

“Outside of School,” *The Federalist*, Oct. 31, 2022: “Americans ages 11 to 18 play online for an average of 10 hours per day, according to a study out today by a research team that includes psychologist Jean Twenge, author of ‘iGen’ and ‘Generation Me.’ The researchers surveyed 1,600 Americans ages 11 to 18 in May 2022. **On average, the study participants reported using digital media an average of 10 hours and four minutes per day**, on such entertainment activities as social media, video chat, texting, shopping, and gaming. ... this total of 70 hours per week spent on screens also did *not* include time spent watching TV. ... Other studies on children’s screen use reinforce this finding--that **America’s young people are wasting almost all of their waking free time on entertainment instead of personal growth or service to others.** ... The study recommends that parents keep electronic devices out of kids’ bedrooms at night, limit screen time to a few hours per day, delay smartphone access to age 16 or 18, keep kids off social media as long as possible, and arrange for their kids to make friends with kids in families with similar boundaries about tech use to help their children socialize with people instead of robots. ... This is another form of societal suicide. Laziness cannot maintain, let alone keep advancing, the United States’ world-class level of scientific and cultural advancement. Nothing worth having comes without strenuous and



sustained effort. Internet addictions erase not only willpower but also self-discipline, excellence, and the communication skills needed to work with others and sustain key relationships such as marriages, as Twenge and others' academic work shows. ... Parents need to man up and do the hard work of tightly restricting the addictive side of the internet from their kids, for not only their own good but for the sake of our country. ... don't wait for others to do your job for you. Put down your phone, grab your kids, and make your family motto the title of one of my childhood books: 'Do Something Besides Watching TV.' **If your children enter adulthood having done nothing with 25,000 hours of their lives they can never get back, and with their brains destroyed by internet slot machines, that's on you. You're the one paying for their phone and letting them self-destruct.** Tell them to get a job or read some books or do anything but sabotage themselves and our society." [For a Bible-believing Christian approach to this danger and for practical suggestions for homes and churches, see *Spiritual Safety in the Facebook Age*,

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

FABULOUS ANCIENT SCIENCE (Friday Church News Notes, November 11, 2022) - The following is from creationmoments.com, December 3, 2020: "For centuries the Chinese were the world's greatest scientists and engineers. Many people know that the Chinese invented the compass and gunpowder, but these are only the beginning. Over 1,000 years ago, Chinese astronomer Su Song built the first planetarium. He even tilted it at



a precise 23.5° to match the Earth's tilt. More than 2,000 years ago another Chinese astronomer noted the moons of Jupiter--long before Galileo 'discovered' them. Almost 1,000 years ago, the Chinese used gunpowder to make over 30 types of fire arrows, including one that was a two-stage rocket. They were great shipbuilders as well. One of the most famous examples is a nine-masted, 300-foot ship with watertight bulkheads. The Chinese-invented odometer featured reduction gears and carved figures that beat a drum every time a distance of about one-fifth of a mile was traveled. The world's first known working seismometer--a device that registers earthquakes--was built in 132 AD. A 16th-century palace roof was designed with a series of interlocking joints that were layered to provide flexibility in case of an earthquake. As our knowledge of humanity reaches into history and grows, the picture we are seeing is not that of a primitive becoming more like a modern human. Rather, we see humans--ever curious and inventive--creatures that are very different from the animal world. Truly we have come from the hand of God Himself! Author: Paul A. Bartz."

COP27 AND THE UNITED NATIONS' GLOBAL CONTROL PROGRAM (Friday Church News Notes, November 18, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The United Nations' COP27 conference in Egypt, Nov. 6-18, is the latest major event in the global push for draconian steps to stop "man-made climate change." COP stands for Conference for Parties, referring to the states that have signed the United Nations Convention on Climate Change. U.S. President Joe Biden and Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin will address the 40,000 attendees. Perhaps Putin will make the point that the wholesale destruction of the Ukraine is good for the climate. Man-made climate change is a modern myth which has been exposed by many scientists, but it is a perfect vehicle to increase the UN agenda toward a one-world government. The UN wants the power to force nations to comply with its demands: replacing reliable fossil fuel energy with unreliable, insufficient wind and solar, replacing the internal-combustion engine with electric, dramatically decreasing the use of fertilizer and the number of cattle, etc. (thus risking food shortages and famine), providing "loss and damage" funding to developing nations for harm allegedly caused by climate change (i.e., cyclones, floods), and paying billions of dollars



annually to a Green Climate Fund. (Always follow the money trail.) Climate fervor is “earth worship.” It is the hysteria of those who do not believe in the almighty Creator God and His revelation to mankind. God’s Word tells us how the earth began and how it will end, and it has nothing whatsoever to do with climate change. Man did not make the earth, and man could not save the earth, even if it *were* dying. Man is dependent upon God, who alone has the power to sustain the universe.

THE UNITED NATIONS: A NEW AGE TOWER OF BABEL (Friday Church News Notes, November 18, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Prominent at COP27 are representatives of the world religions. There are 100 “faith leaders” and 40 religious sessions. A prominent theme is interfaith unity and world peace. The logo for COP27 combines the natural rays of the sun with the spiritual rays of ancient Egyptian sun worship (Aten). The official explanation is that “the sun of Aten, with its rays ending with hands, expresses the generosity of nature that gives us means of living, luxury and prosperity. In the middle, a new horizon stretches to express *hope for a better world*.” Note that the glory due to the Creator God is given to Aten and “nature.” During COP27, some of the religious leaders will climb Mt. Sinai to announce a new edition of the Ten Commandments with earth worship at its heart. The new commandments are called “Ten Universal Principles for Climate Justice” or “The Ten Principles of Climate Repentance.” Number 2 is “creation manifests divinity.”

THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY



(Friday Church News Notes, November 18, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The United Nations is merely one aspect of the “mystery of iniquity,” which is the devil’s program to put the man of sin on the throne of this world. The mystery of iniquity is under God’s sovereign control and cannot succeed until God allows. The timing of the revelation of the Antichrist is in God’s hands. See 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12. In the meantime, God has given His redeemed people their marching orders in Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:44-48; and Acts 1:8, and as ambassadors of Christ and pilgrims, that is the business we are to occupy ourselves with until the Rapture. The preaching of the gospel, the building of sound churches, and the establishment of fruitful Christian homes is our business. We should know what is happening in the world, but to focus on conspiracies and signs is misguided. “For **the mystery of iniquity** doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. 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: *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they

received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (2 Thessalonians 2:7-10).

LANCASTER BAPTIST OF LANCASTER, CA. INFLUENCING INDEPENDENT BAPTISTS IN CANADA TOWARD CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP (Friday Church News Notes, November 18, 2022,

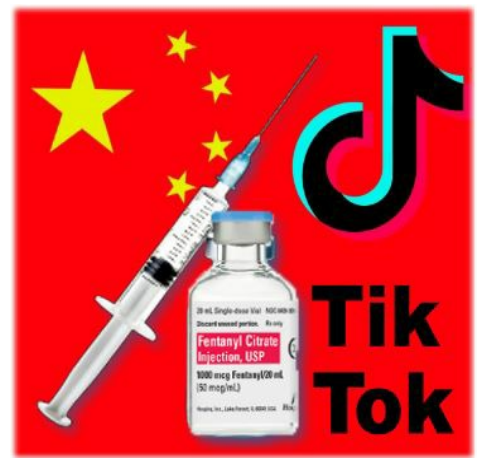
www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Contemporary Christian Music is a dangerous bridge to the world and to the “broader church” with all of its ancient and end-time heresies. We have given irrefutable evidence of that in various reports, books, and video presentations. We have also demonstrated that Lancaster Baptist Church of Lancaster, California, is at the forefront of popularizing Contemporary Christian Music among Independent Baptists. A pastor recently sent the following testimony: “I agree with you that Lancaster has had an undeniable influence on music in Independent Baptist churches. Pastors who ignore or even deny it have their head ‘stuck in the sand.’ This influence is even noticed here in Canada. This past September a national IFB preachers conference was held at a church in British Columbia where the pastor is a West Coast graduate. Though I was not in attendance, I did watch via livestream and was saddened to see contemporary music and worship styles so clearly flaunted in a group that is generally the most conservative in Canada.” For multimedia education on these issues, see the video presentations “CCM: A Bridge to Dangerous Waters” and “Lancaster’s Role in the Downgrade,”

https://www.wayoflife.org/s3/satanic_attack_on_sacred_music.php

BOY WINS MISS AMERICA REGIONAL COMPETITION (Friday Church News Notes, November 18, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - A boy claiming to be transgender won the 2022 regional Miss America competition in Derry, New Hampshire. The Miss Greater Derry pageant winner is qualified to enter the Miss New Hampshire contest, which is the state level competition for the national Miss America pageant. Brian (which he pronounces *Bree-Ann*) Nguyen, who not only is not a “miss” but is also obese, announced on Instagram, “My Social Impact Initiative is #QueensAre Everywhere. This is a media movement that helps the next generation develop self-confidence, realize their potential, and become the leaders of their destiny. ... I am ecstatic to be the FIRST transgender woman to be a Miss America local titleholder, and I hope to make everyone proud and become the first to walk the Miss America stage.” The Miss America pageants aren’t modest by biblical standards and we aren’t defending them, but that isn’t the point. The point is that Miss America is for “misses” not “mistress.” The trans movement is brazen rebellion to the Creator who made mankind “male and female,” and they need to be told that it won’t turn out well for them if they do not repent and turn to Jesus Christ for miraculous, transformative, undeserved salvation. On a practical level, who in their right mind would chose an obese boy over a bunch of pretty girls in a

beauty contest? What did the poor girls think when they so stupidly lost their chance to win a scholarship and progress to the Miss New Hampshire pageant? They should speak out. In 2021, a “transgender” male named Kataluna Enriquez won the Miss Nevada USA pageant. On a better note, in February this year, a federal judge ruled that the Miss United States of America pageant can maintain their rule that contestants “be natural born female[s].” The operators of this pageant had enough sense to reject a male who tried to enter the contest, and he lost his lawsuit. Everyone needs to speak out against this insanity.

TIKTOK IS CHINA’S DIGITAL FENTANYL (Friday Church News Notes, November 18, 2022, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “TikTok,” *Fox News*, Nov. 11, 2022: Tristan Harris, Center for Humane Technology warns, “In China’s version of TikTok, if you are under 14 years old, they show you science experiments you can do at home, museum exhibits, patriotism videos, and educational videos, and they also limit [use] to only 40 minutes per day. Now, they don’t ship that version of TikTok to the rest of the world. It’s almost like they recognize that technology is influencing kids, so they make their domestic version a spinach version of TikTok, while they ship their opium version to the rest of the world.” Brendan Carr, FCC



Commissioner, says, “I think it is a very smart move to ban TikTok. TikTok is China’s digital fentanyl. A lot of people look at TikTok and think it is just a fun application for sharing dance videos or other funny videos, but that is just a sheep’s clothing. Underneath, it operates as a very sophisticated surveillance app. It is pulling everything from search and browsing history, potentially keystroke patterns, biometrics including face-prints and voice-prints. Up to now, we have been told by TikTok officials, ‘Don’t worry. All of this is stored in the U.S., or stored outside of China.’ But this summer there was a blockbuster story that internal communications from TikTok said everything is seen back in China. That is a risk for espionage, foreign political influence, and other activity. There was a report that officials of ByteDance, the parent of the app in Beijing, are attempting to surveil the location of specific Americans through this app. There are real, serious dangers here.”

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



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