

O Timothy

“Keep that which is committed to thy trust...”

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

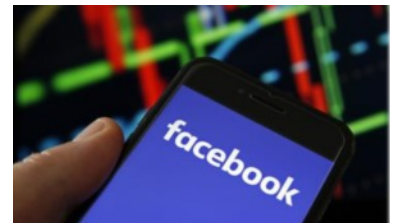
Volume 41 - Issue 2 - February 2024



HYMNS - Wesley's
magnificent hymns on
Christ's Incarnation
By David Cloud

“Charles Wesley’s Hymns for the Nativity of the Lord (December 1745) proclaim, in peerless poetry, the glories of Christ’s incarnation. The collection is not merely about a babe in the manger; it is about the magnificent mystery of God manifest in the flesh. This is the true message of Christmas.” Page 6.

Digging in the Walls: A month’s worth of news items, republished from Friday Church News Notes. **Page 14.**



THE TALE OF THE BROW OF NAZARETH ~ By David Cloud

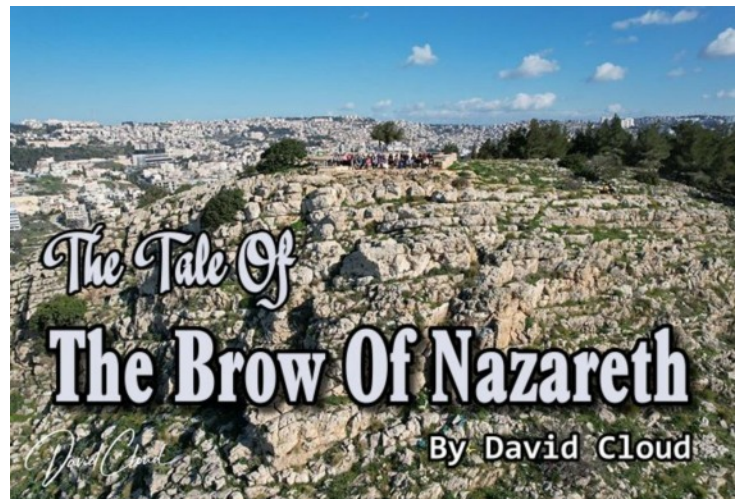
Recently we sent the following to an Israeli tour guide friend:

Your time is running out. Few men have had the opportunities to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ that you have had.

The brow of Nazareth tells the tale of Jesus’ relationship with His own nation (Luke 4:16-30). Everyone on this text list has stood there.

Nazareth, Jesus’ hometown, was a microcosm of the nation’s relationship with Him. It is summarized in John 1:11, “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”

In Nazareth, we see Jesus rejected as the Christ though He fulfilled all Scripture. He was born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2), proclaimed by Elijah (Mal. 4:5-6), preached in the region of Zebulun, Naphtali, and



Galilee (Isa. 9:1-2), did mighty miracles (Isa. 35:4-6; 42:7), spoke with the tongue of the learned (Isa. 50:4), was despised and rejected of men (Isa. 53:3).

In Nazareth, too, we see the fulfillment of prophecy. Jesus read from Isaiah 61 and said, “This day is this

scripture fulfilled in your ears.” Either he was deluded or a deceiver, and there is no evidence for that.

In Nazareth, we see Israel’s ancient hatred toward the salvation of the Gentiles in contradiction to the law of Moses. We see this in Jonah caring more for his shading gourd than for the eternal souls of the Ninevites. Eight hundred years later, it was Jesus’ mention of God’s blessing on the Gentiles (the woman of Sidon and Naaman the Syrian) that so enraged the Nazarenes that they tried to kill Him! “And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.”

That animosity ultimately led to the crucifixion of Jesus on the brow of another hill 65 miles to the south, in direct and dramatic fulfillment of prophecy. The entire Old Testament points to “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” Remove the suffering Christ from the Hebrew Scripture; remove Jesus from Jewish history; and nothing makes sense.

It is because of Jesus that we spend large sums of money to visit Israel, that we love the Jews, that we love the land of Israel, that we care about Israel’s

struggles, that we believe Old Testament prophecy, that we understand the law of Moses, that we reject rabbinical tradition, that we have a sure hope of salvation, that we preach the gospel to both Jew and Gentile, that we are looking for Christ’s return. For us, it’s all about Jesus.

Jesus called Israel to repentance and offered salvation, and Israel did not repent. On the eve of His crucifixion, He said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Matthew 23:37-39).

The state of Israel has made a lot of money off of Jesus and has benefited greatly from the support of those who love Jesus name, but it has not yet said of Him, “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

We refuse to be of that tribe of “Christians” who keep quiet about these things or treat them as peripheral matters for the sake of peace. A true friend refuses to keep quiet when he sees a friend in imminent danger.

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David W. Cloud, Editor

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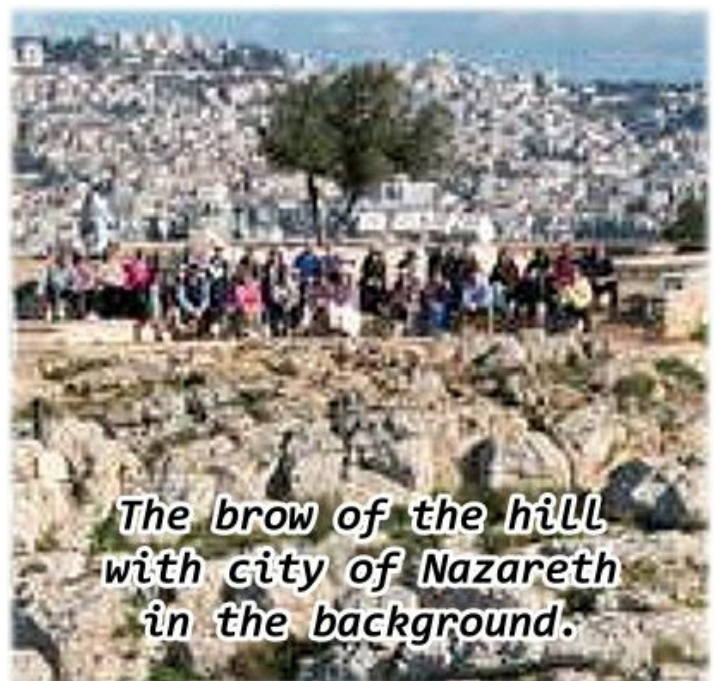
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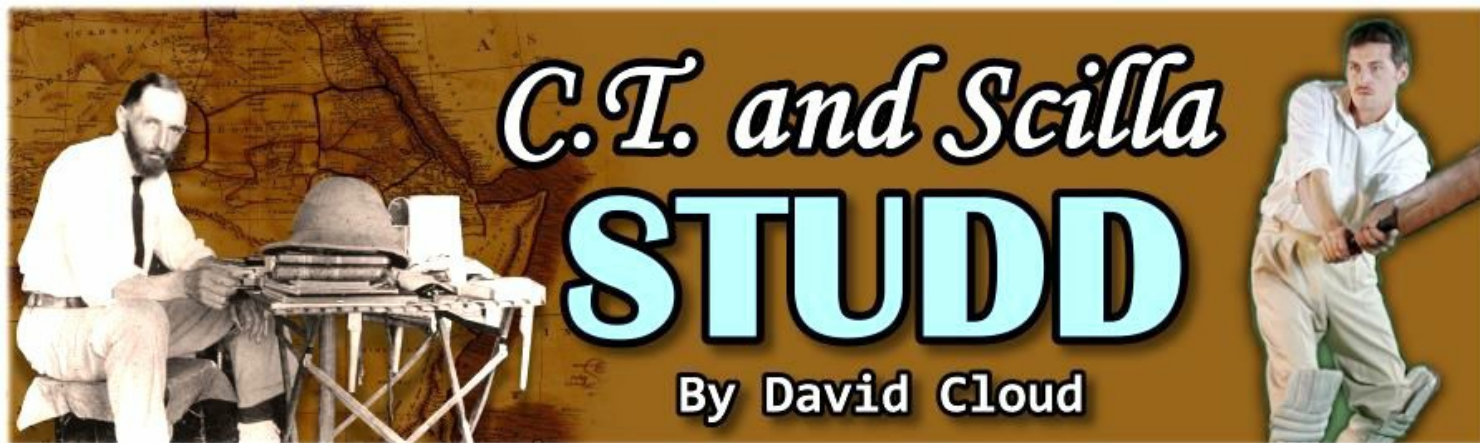
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By David Cloud

The following is excerpted from [The History and Heritage of Fundamentalism and Fundamental Baptists](https://www.wayoflife.org/publications/books/history_and_heritage_of_fundamentalism_and_fundamental_baptists)
https://www.wayoflife.org/publications/books/history_and_heritage_of_fundamentalism.php



The Cambridge Seven were students from Cambridge (one was from the Royal Military Academy) who were saved during their student years and volunteered to go to China with J. Hudson Taylor's China Inland Mission. They made this commitment during the 1883 Moody-Sankey crusade at Cambridge.

The most famous of the seven was **CHARLES THOMAS (C.T.) STUDD** (1860-1931), a renowned cricketer and graduate of Eton and Cambridge. C.T.'s brothers were also cricket stars. C.T. was the captain of the famous Cambridge Eleven team in 1882.

Their father, Edward, had made a fortune in India planting indigo and planned to spend the rest of his life playing. He lived in a mansion on a large estate and had his own cricket field. He gambled and raised race horses. His horse *Salamander* won the Grand National in 1866. This is a grueling four mile race with 30 jumps. It's called a steeplechase.

In 1877, at age 56, Edward attended a D.L. Moody meeting and was saved. He gave up gambling and sold his race horses and started hosting gospel meetings in his large house. His coachman said, "All I can say is that though there's the same skin, there's a new man inside."

One of his sons later wrote, "Father had been full of a thing that takes more possession of a man's heart and

head than anything else, the passion for horse racing, and in the evening he was a changed man."

That's a real born again salvation, and there is no other kind.

Edward lived only two years after he was saved, but it was said that he did more for Christ during that time than most do in a lifetime. C.T. and his brothers didn't like the change in their father at first, but they were converted in 1878 through an evangelist associated with Moody. C.T. said, "I got down on my knees and I did say 'thank you' to God. And right then and there joy and peace came into my soul. I knew then what it was to be 'born again,' and the Bible which had been so dry to me before, became everything."

Over the next six years, through the influence of secular college and sports, he got into "an unhappy backslidden state," but during his brother's illness in 1884 C.T. surrendered his life unreservedly to Christ. He turned his back on a life of wealth, pleasure, and leisure and served as a missionary in China, India, and Africa until his death.

He came to the realization that a life outside of God's perfect will is meaningless. He said, "I know that cricket would not last, and honour would not last, and nothing in this world would last, but it was worthwhile living for the world to come." He wrote the poem "Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last."

Studd described the change like this:

"The real thing came before me. ... The commands of Christ became not merely Sunday recitations, but battle calls to be obeyed, unless one would lose one's self-

respect and manhood. Assent to creed was born again into decisive action of obedience. Orthodoxy became reality. Instead of saying 'Lord, Lord' in a most reverent voice many times and yet continuing deaf to the simplest commandments, I began to look upon God as really my Father and to rely upon Him as a real Father and to trust Him as such. Instead of talking about fellowship, I enjoyed it. ... I talked of God and Jesus Christ as Real, Living, Personal Friends and Relations. They have never chided me for it. If a man is willing to obey and sacrifice, he soon learns what is the blessed reality of the fellowship of God's Son Jesus Christ--familiar and social intercourse."

Before C.T. Studd went to China as a missionary, he gave away his large inheritance. He believed Jesus' promise to give him a hundredfold (Mt. 19:29), saying, "An hundredfold is a wonderful percentage; it is 10,000 percent." He said the Bank of Heaven is safer than the Bank of England. He distributed the money to evangelistic and missionary endeavors: Moody Bible Institute, George Müller's orphanages, the Salvation Army, and others. "As coolly and deliberately as a business man invests in some 'gilt-edged' securities, as being both safe and yielding good interest, so C.T. invested in the Bank of Heaven. This was no fool's plunge on his part. It was his public testimony before God and man that he believed God's Word to be the surest thing on earth, and that the hundredfold interest which God has promised in this life, not to speak of the next, is an actual reality for those who believe it and act on it" (Norman Grubb, *C.T. Studd Cricketer and Pioneer*).

In China, Studd married an Irish missionary named Priscilla Stewart, who was called "Scilla." She had surrendered to missionary work after her conversion. But before she was born again, Scilla was a party girl. She said, "I am a missionary now, but I was not made that way. Had you asked me to come to a meeting when I was a girl, I would have said, 'No, thank you, none of your religion for me'; for my idea of a person loving God was to have a face as long as a coffee pot."

Before their engagement, C.T. wrote to his mother as follows, "She ain't very big, and as regards her face, well, she has the beauty of the Lord her God upon her, which is worth more than all the beauty of the whole world. ... she can also play the harmonium or organ and sing a bit ... she doesn't fear the face of man or woman a little bit, I do believe, but just fires away at everybody she meets

about their souls." Scilla was a Salvation Army "lassie" who participated in street evangelism.

Later, C.T. said, "I did not marry her for her pretty face; I married her for her handsome actions towards the Lord Jesus Christ and those He sent her to save. ... In fact, until this day I verily believe that of all God's many good gifts, the least of all is good looks."

Before they were married, C.T. gave Scilla 3,400 British pounds he had kept back from his inheritance. He kept this because of God's Word which says, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Ti. 5:8). She decided to give even that away. "She, not to be outdone, said, 'Charlie, what did the Lord tell the rich young man to do?' 'Sell all.' 'Well then, we will start clean with the Lord at our wedding.' She gave the money to the Salvation Army. In her letter to General Booth she said, "Henceforth our bank is in heaven. You see we are rather afraid--notwithstanding the great earthly safety of Messrs. Coutts and Co. and the Bank of England--we are, I say, rather afraid that they may both break on the Judgment Day."

Of course, the Lord took care of them throughout their lives. One example will suffice:

"My own family knew nothing of our circumstances, only that we were in the heart of China. The last of our supplies was finished, and there was no apparent hope of supplies of any kind coming from any human source. The mail came once a fortnight. The mailman had just set out that afternoon, and in a fortnight he would bring the return mail. The children were put to bed. Then my wife came to my room. We had looked facts in the face. If the return of the postman brought no relief, starvation stared us in the face. ... We got on our knees for that purpose. I think we must have stayed there twenty minutes before we rose again. ... Our hearts were relieved; it did not seem to us either reverence or common sense to keep on talking to God as though He were deaf or could not understand our simple language, or the extremity of our circumstances ... The mailman returned at the appointed time. ... out came another letter ... I looked at the signature first, one wholly unknown to me. 'I have,' he said, 'for some reason or other received the command of God to send you a check for 100 pounds. I have never met you, I have only heard of you, and that

not often, but God has prevented me from sleeping tonight by this command.”

C.T. and Scilla had four daughters: Salvation Grace Faith, Dorothy Catherine, Edith Mary, and Pauline Evangeline.

C.T. believed that God gave them girls so they could show the value of females to the pagan Chinese people.

“One of the curses of China is not to let their little girls live. They say they have the trouble of bringing them up, and then when they are married, the dowry they receive does not make up for all that has been spent on them. I went into a mother’s house once and found her groaning, and asked where the baby was. It was born at daylight and immediately it was thrown into a moat, or perhaps into one of the pagodas--which are built for this purpose with a certain hole so that the wolves can jump in and get the baby when they want it” (Norman Grubbs, *C.T. Studd*).

All of their daughters lived to adulthood and married, and two were missionaries. Studd believed in living by faith and trusting God to meet every need. He believed that all who die without faith in Christ will face eternal punishment. He said, “Some want to live within the sound of church or chapel bell; I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell.”

In 1885, before the Cambridge Seven left England, they toured university campuses of the United Kingdom. A booklet of their testimonies was published, and Queen Victoria expressed gratitude at the receipt of a copy. *The Evangelisation of the World: A Missionary Band* became a bestseller. It was distributed to every YMCA and YWCA in the United States and the British Empire.

All seven men had successful missionary careers. Their example produced an explosion of student missionary volunteers. The China Inland Mission itself grew from 163 missionaries in 1885 to 800 by 1900.

Only One Life by C.T. Studd

Two little lines I heard one day,
Traveling along life’s busy way;
Bringing conviction to my heart,
And from my mind would not depart;
Only one life, ’twill soon be past,
Only what’s done for Christ will last.

Only one life, yes, only one,
Soon will its fleeting hours be done;
Then, in ‘that day’ my Lord to meet,
And stand before His Judgment seat;
Only one life, ’twill soon be past,
Only what’s done for Christ will last.

Only one life, the still small voice,
Gently pleads for a better choice
Bidding me selfish aims to leave,
And to God’s holy will to cleave;
Only one life, ’twill soon be past,
Only what’s done for Christ will last.

Only one life, a few brief years,
Each with its burdens, hopes, and fears;
Each with its days I must fulfill,
Living for self or in His will;
Only one life, ’twill soon be past,
Only what’s done for Christ will last.

When this bright world would tempt me sore,
When Satan would a victory score;
When self would seek to have its way,
Then help me Lord with joy to say;
Only one life, ’twill soon be past,
Only what’s done for Christ will last.

Give me, Father, a purpose deep,
In joy or sorrow Thy word to keep;
Faithful and true what e’er the strife,
Pleasing Thee in my daily life;
Only one life, ’twill soon be past,
Only what’s done for Christ will last.

Oh let my love with fervor burn,
And from the world now let me turn;
Living for Thee, and Thee alone,
Bringing Thee pleasure on Thy throne;
Only one life, ’twill soon be past,
Only what’s done for Christ will last.

Only one life, yes, only one,
Now let me say, “Thy will be done”;
And when at last I’ll hear the call,
I know I’ll say “’twas worth it all”;
Only one life, ’twill soon be past,
Only what’s done for Christ will last.

And when I am dying, how happy I’ll be,
If the lamp of my life has been burned out for Thee.



HYMNS - Wesley's magnificent hymns on Christ's Incarnation

By David Cloud

Charles Wesley's *Hymns for the Nativity of the Lord* (December 1745) proclaim, in peerless poetry, the glories of Christ's incarnation. The collection is not merely about a babe in the manger; it is about the magnificent mystery of God manifest in the flesh. This is the true message of Christmas. (The original collection consisted of 18 hymns. Three more were added to the 1810 edition.)

Hymns for the Nativity was very popular, going through about 25 printings in Wesley's lifetime. It is readily available online today.

<https://ia801903.us.archive.org/11/items/newyemn00wes/newyemn00wes1.pdf>

https://divinity.duke.edu/sites/divinity.duke.edu/files/documents/cswt/31_Nativity_Hymns_%281745%29.pdf

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The only well-known hymn that remains from this collection is "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus," which was hymn number X.

In this collection, every biblical aspect of Christ's incarnation is considered. Wesley looks at Christ's nativity in light of God's eternal plan described in Eph. 1:10. The plan begins in eternity with the Triune God. The coming of Christ was prepared by God's covenant with Abraham, the creation of Israel, and the giving of the law and the prophets. In the fulness of time, the Father sent the Son (1 Jo. 4:14). The Son willingly came, was born a virgin, became the God-man (Immanuel), lived a sinless life, made the vicarious atonement for man's sin, rose from the dead, instructed His disciples to preach the gospel to the

ends of the earth in the church age, ascended to heaven, sits at the right hand of the Father as our High Priest, is coming again to reign on David's throne, will judge all of the unsaved at the great white throne judgment, will make a new heaven and a new earth, will reign forever as the Head of the new creation. Then, all things will be one in Christ, both in heaven and in earth (Eph. 1:10).

In *Hymns for the Nativity of the Lord*, Wesley considers

- The incarnation's mystery and paradox (God made man)
- its purpose (Christ's vicarious sacrifice, resurrection, the eternal redemption of sinners, and the new creation with all things made one in Christ)
- its revelation of God (infinite power, infinite love, infinite grace and mercy, infinite wisdom, infinite holiness)
- its infinite benefits to man
- its infinite instruction for men and angels
- its endless delight as the subject of meditation
- the necessity of proclaiming it to all men
- the necessity and joy of worshipping the God of the incarnation

The delightful, challenging lyrics are bursting with instruction. Nearly every stanza is a perfect theological jewel. They "are sprinkled with vivid, arresting, and provocative phrases as well as soul-lifting and exhilarating thought. The spirit is that of adoration and wonder" (T. Crichton Mitchell, *Charles Wesley: Man with the Dancing Heart*, p. 196).

Consider Hymn VI, "Join, all ye joyful nations," stanzas 3, 4, and 5 -

3 Go, see the King of Glory,
Discern the heavenly Stranger,

So poor and mean, His court an inn,
 His cradle is a manger.
 Who from his Father's bosom
 But now for us descended,
 Who built the skies, on earth he lies,
 With only beasts attended.

4 Whom all the angels worship,
 Lies hid in human nature:
 Incarnate see,--The Deity,
 The infinite Creator!
 See the stupendous Blessing,
 Which God to us hath given:
 A child of man, in length a span,
 Who fills both earth and heaven.

5 Gaze on that helpless Object
 Of endless admiration!
 Those infant hands, shall burst our bands,
 And work out our salvation;
 Strangle the crooked serpent,
 Destroy his works for ever,
 And open set,--The heaven gate,
 To every true believer.

The words are striking, remarkable, memorable.

Consider Hymn X, "Come, thou long-expected Jesus," stanza 2.

Observe the repetition of "Born" in stating the purpose of Christ's incarnation. Note the imperatives addressed to Christ: "Now bring ... Rule ... Raise."

This is dramatic praying based on the promises of God's Word. Christ taught us to pray like this: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us ... forgive us ... lead us ... deliver us..." (Mt. 6:9-13).

Born thy people to deliver,
 Born a Child, and yet a King,
 Born to reign in us for ever,
 Now thy gracious kingdom bring;
 By thy own eternal Spirit,
 Rule in all our hearts alone,
 By thy all-sufficient merit,
 Raise us to thy glorious throne.
 (Hymn X, stanza 2)

Consider Wesley's description of Christ in these hymns -

- "the Saviour of mankind" (Hymn I, stanza 4)
- "The incarnate God" (Hymn 1, stanza 4)
- "our Saviour and Lover" (Hymn II, stanza 3)
- "Him, strong to redeem" (Hymn II, stanza 6)
- "the everlasting Lord, Who made both earth and heaven" (Hymn III, stanza 1)
- "God of God, and Light of Light" (Hymn III, stanza 2)
- "the God replete with Truth and Grace" (Hymn III, stanza 3)
- "A universal Saviour" (Hymn VI, stanza 1)
- "The wonderful Messiah, the joy of every nation ... The Counsellor of sinners, Almighty to deliver" (Hymn VI, stanza 2)
- "The Prince of Life and Peace" (Hymn VIII, stanza 1)
- "Christ, the Sun of Righteousness" (Hymn VIII, stanza 2)
- "thou long-expected Jesus" (Hymn X, stanza 1)
- "Israel's Strength and Consolation" (Hymn X, stanza 1)
- "Hope of all the earth" (Hymn X, stanza 1)
- "Dear Desire of every nation" (Hymn X, stanza 1)
- "Joy of every longing heart" (Hymn X, stanza 1)
- "The new heaven and earth's Creator" (Hymn XI, stanza 1)
- "thou mild, pacific Prince" (Hymn XI, stanza 3)
- "Son of man our Maker is, Lord of Hosts, and Prince of Peace" (Hymn XII, stanza 1)
- "the wonderful Immanuel" (Hymn XIII, stanza 1)
- "All-wise, all-good, almighty Lord" (Hymn XV, stanza 1)
- "Servant of God, and Son of Man, Eternal Son of God Most High" (Hymn XVI, stanza 1)
- "the holy, heaven-born Child, Heir of the everlasting throne" (Hymn XVII, stanza 1)
- "the Nation's Hope, the World's Desire" (Hymn XVII, stanza 2)
- "The Giver of concord and love, the Prince and the Author of Peace" (Hymn XVIII, stanza 2)
- "The God supreme, the Lord most high, the King Messiah" (Hymn XIX, stanza 1)
- "The Almighty God is he, Author of heaven bliss, the Father of eternity, the glorious Prince of Peace" (Hymn XIX, stanza 3)
- "the universal Monarch ... the saint's eternal King" (Hymn XIX, stanza 5)

- “thou universal Blessing, Abraham’s long-expected Seed” (Hymn XXI, stanza 1)

Consider Wesley’s description of the incarnation -

By this the Saviour of mankind,
Th’ incarnate God shall be display’d,
The Babe, ye wrapp’d in swathes shall find,
And humbly in a manger laid.
(Hymn I, stanza 4)

What angel can the grace explain,
That very God is very Man!
By love paternal given:
Born is the everlasting Lord;
Who made both earth and heaven!
(Hymn III, stanza 1)

Behold him, high above all height!
Him, God of God, and Light of Light
In a mean earthly shrine:
Jehovah’s Glory dwells with men,
His Person in our flesh is seen,
The character divine!
(Hymn III, stanza 2)

What angel can the grace explain,
That very God is very Man!
(Hymn III, stanza 1)

God comes down; he bows the sky,
And shows himself our Friend!
(Hymn IV, stanza 1)

God, the Invisible appears!
God, the blest, the great I AM,
Sojourns in this vale of tears,
And Jesus is His Name.
(Hymn IV, stanza 1)

Emptied of his majesty,
Of his dazzling glories shorn,
Being’s Source, begins to be,
And Christ himself is born.
(Hymn IV, stanza 2)

See the eternal Son of God, A mortal son of man,
Dwelling in an earthly clod,
Whom heaven cannot contain!
Stand amaz’d, ye heavens, at this!

Se the Lord of earth and skies!
Humbled to the dust he is,
And in a manger lies!
(Hymn IV, stanza 3)

The incarnate Deity,
Our God contracted to a span,
Incomprehensibly made man.
(Hymn V, stanza 1)

He laid his glory by,
He wrapp’d him in our clay,
Unmark’d by human eye,
The latent Godhead lay;
Instant of days he here became,
And born the mild Immanuel’s Name.
(Hymn V, stanza 2)

See in that Infant’s face,
The depths of Deity,
And labour while ye gaze,
To found the mystery.
(Hymn V, stanza 3)

To us a Son is given.
The Messenger and Token
Of God’s eternal favour,
God hath sent down, to us his Son,
A universal Saviour!
(Hymn VI, stanza 1)

Go, see the King of Glory,
Discern the heavenly Stranger,
So poor and mean, His court an inn,
His cradle is a manger.
Who from his Father’s bosom
But now for us descended,
Who built the skies, on earth he lies,
With only beasts attended.
(Hymn VI, stanza 3)

Whom all the angels worship,
Lies hid in human nature:
Incarnate see,--The Deity,
The infinite Creator!
See the stupendous Blessing,
Which God to us hath given:
A child of man, in length a span,
Who fills both earth and heaven.
(Hymn VI, stanza 4)

Gaze on that helpless Object
Of endless admiration!

Those infant hands, shall burst our bands,
And work out our salvation;
Strangle the crooked serpent,
Destroy his works for ever,
And open set,--The heaven gate,
To every true believer.
(Hymn VI, stanza 5)

God is in our flesh reveal'd,
Heaven and earth in Jesus join,
Mortal with Immortal fill'd,
And human with divine!
(Hymn VIII, stanza 1)

Lo! he lays his glory by,
Emptied of his Majesty;
See the God who all things made,
Humbly in a manger laid.
(Hymn XII, stanza 2)

The everlasting God comes down,
To sojourn with the sons of men;
Without his majesty or crown
The great Invisible is seen;
Of all his dazzling glories shorn,
The everlasting Word is born!
(Hymn XIII, stanza 2)

tho' now he on his footstool lies,
Ye know, ye built both earth and skies
(Hymn XIII, stanza 3)

Th' eternal God from heav'n came down,
The King of glory dropp'd his crown,
And veil'd his majesty;
Emptied of all but love, he came
(Hymn XV, stanza 2)

Jehovah is come down from heaven
(Hymn XVII, stanza 8)

Rejoice in Jesu's birth!
To us a Son is given,
To us a Child is born on earth,
Who fills both earth and heaven!
His shoulder props the sky,
This universe sustains!
(Hymn XIX, stanza 1)

Consider Wesley's description of man's lost condition -

- "the fallen race" (Hymn I, stanza 2)
- "those whose dreary dwelling borders on the shades of death" (Hymn XI, stanza 1)
- "the sin-sick sons" (Hymn VIII, stanza 2)
- "my soul, diseased and blind" (Hymn VIII, stanza 3)
- "our deepest darkness" (Hymn XI, stanza 1)

Consider Wesley's description of salvation -

The forfeited favour, of heaven we find
Restor'd in the saviour, and Friend of mankind.
(Hymn VII, stanza 1)

Christ, the Sun of Righteousness,
In them shall rise to set no more,
All the sin-sick sons of grace,
To health and heaven restore.
(Hymn VIII, stanza 2)

Jesus the Holy Child,
Doth by his birth declare,
That God and man are reconcil'd,
And one in him we are.
(Hymn IX, stanza 2)

His kingdom from above,
He doth to us impart,
And pure benevolence and love,
O'erflow the faithful heart:
Chang'd in a moment we
The sweet attraction find,
With open arms of Charity
Embracing all mankind.
(Hymn IX, stanza 2)

The new heaven and earth's Creator,
In our deepest darkness rise,
Scattering all the night of nature,
Pouring eye-sight on our eyes.
(Hymn XI, stanza 1)

Save us in thy great compassion,
O thou mild, pacific Prince,
Give the knowledge of salvation,
Give the pardon of our sins;
By thy all-restoring merit,

Every burden'd foul release,
 Every weary, wandering spirit,
 Guide into thy perfect peace.
 (Hymn XI, stanza 3)

Father, thy heavenly voice I own,
 Thy gracious majesty;
 Thro' Jesus, thy beloved Son,
 Thou art well-pleas'd with me!
 (Hymn XIV, stanza 3)

Salvation from our sins we found,
 Through Jesus's grace forgiv'n;
 And Jesu's grace doth more abound,
 And makes us meet for heaven.
 The hallowing virtue of thy Name,
 Our spotless souls shall prove;
 And to the utmost sav'd, proclaim,
 Our Lord's almighty love.
 (Hymn XIV, stanza 5-6)

Jehovah is come down to raise
 His dying creatures from their fall;
 And all may now receive the grace,
 Which brings eternal life to all.
 (Hymn XVII, stanza 9)

Consider Wesley's description of the purpose of the incarnation -

Knees and hearts to him we bow,
 Of our flesh and of our bone,
 Jesus is our brother now,
 And God is all our own.
 (Hymn IV, stanza 4)

All glory to God, Who ruleth on high,
 And now hath bestow'd, and sent from the sky,
 Christ Jesus the Saviour, poor mortals to bless;
 The pledge of his favour, the seal of his peace.
 (Hymn II, stanza 2)

He deigns in flesh to appear,
 Widest extremes to join,
 To bring our vileness near,
 And make us all divine.
 (Hymn V, stanza 5)

Made perfect first in love,
 And sanctified by grace,

We shall from earth remove,
 And see his glorious Face:
 His love shall then be fully shew'd,
 And man shall all be lost in God.
 (Hymn V, stanza 6)

What mov'd the Most High, so greatly to stoop?
 He comes from the sky our souls to lift up;
 That sinners forgiven might sinless return,
 To God and to heaven, their Maker is born.
 (Hymn VII, stanza 4)

A peace on earth he brings,
 Which never more shall end:
 The Lord of Hosts, the King of Kings,
 Declares himself our Friend;
 Assumes our flesh and blood,
 That we his Spirit may gain.
 (Hymn IX, stanza 3)

Born thy people to deliver,
 Born a Child and yet a King,
 Born to reign in us for ever,
 Now thy gracious kingdom bring;
 By thy own eternal Spirit,
 Rule in all our hearts alone,
 By thy all-sufficient merit,
 Raise us to thy glorious throne.
 (Hymn X, stanza 2)

All heaven and earth be ever join'd,
 To praise the Saviour of mankind.
 (Hymn XIII, stanza 1)

A Son is born, a child is given,
 That mortals, born again,
 May in the new-made earth and heaven,
 With God for ever reign.
 (Hymn XIV, stanza 2)

But our whole race to Christ unite,
 And by thy Spirit join'd,
 Thou wilt eternally delight
 In all thy ransom'd kind.
 (Hymn XIV, stanza 4)

Didst thou not in thy person join,
 The natures human and divine,
 That God and man might be
 Henceforth inseparably one?

(Hymn XV, stanza 3)

No horrid alarm of war,
 Shall break our eternal repose,
 Where Jesus's Spirit o'erflows;
 Appeals'd by the charms of thy grace,
 We all shall in amity join,
 And kindly each other embrace,
 And love with a passion like thine.
 (Hymn XVIII, stanza 5)

Consider Wesley's description of the angels' part in Christ -

An herald from the heavenly King,
 I come your every fear to chase;
 Good tidings of great joy I bring,
 Great joy to all the fallen race.
 (Hymn I, stanza 1)

Him the angels all ador'd,
 Their Maker and their King:
 Tidings of their humbled Lord,
 They now to mortals bring.
 (Hymn IV, stanza 2)

Let us then with angels gaze
 On our new-born Monarch's face,
 With the choir-celestial join'd,
 Shout the Saviour of mankind.
 (Hymn XII, stanza 4)

Hymn XIII

1 Let angels and archangels sing,
 The wonderful Immanuel's Name,
 Adore with us our new-born King,
 And still the joyful news proclaim:
 All heaven and earth be ever join'd,
 To praise the Saviour of mankind.

3 Angels, behold that Infant's face,
 With rapturous awe the Godhead own
 'Tis all your heaven on him to gaze,
 And cast your crowns before his throne;
 tho' now he on his footstool lies,
 Ye know, he built both earth and skies.

4 By him into existence brought,
 Ye sang the all-creating Word;
 Ye heard him call our world from nought
 Again, in honour of your Lord,
 Ye morning stars, your hymns employ,
 And shout, ye sons of God, for joy

Consider Wesley's call to praise -

Hymn II, stanza 1

Ye heavenly choir, assist me to sing,
 And strike the soft lyre, and honour our King;
 His mighty salvation, demands all our praise,
 Our best adoration, and loftiest lays.

These are but a few glimpses into the treasures of Wesley's nativity hymns.

NINE CHILDREN AND NINE COWS (Friday Church News Notes, January 19, 2024, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Recently I asked a newly married unsaved couple if they were looking forward to children, and they told me it was too expensive. But God's people do not have to fear having as many children as God gives, because He owns them and He will provide for them. About 45 years ago, a pastor's wife, who had an extra large van full of children, told me that I need never worry about having as many children as God gives, because He is faithful. We are reminded of a deacon who is mentioned in John Rippon's *Baptist Register*. "Mr. Davey, a deacon of Chard, had nine



children; and at, or near the birth of each child he was favoured with an additional cow to his worldly substance; so that he had as many cows as children, and no more!"



The following is one of the testimonies we received in response to the feedback we received when doing research for the book *Keeping the Kids*. The first edition was published in 2010. The new enlarged edition (2023) is [Keeping the Kids in the Social Media Age](https://www.wayoflife.org/publications/books/keeping_the_kids.php).

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

“We have a teen daughter whom we briefly allowed to have a smartphone and iPad. We took every precaution to shield and prevent her from accessing things that would be an ungodly influence in her life. We placed parental controls on both devices, performed regular and unannounced checks on each device to ensure nothing was going on behind our backs that should not have been. Most of the time, she would play games and watch YouTube tutorials and shows we approved. ...

“In the year we allowed her access to these devices, we had no ‘real’ problems except for the occasional disobedience of getting on the device when she was not allowed to be on it (e.g. during school hours, because we homeschool). *Nevertheless, the one main, consistent, and overriding problem we encountered time and time again was the spirit these devices seemed to place over her. She went from having a sweet spirit in all her ways and relationships, to being lazy, selfish, sneaky, delayed in obedience (disobedience), disrespectful, and having a bad attitude.* NOW TO ANYONE ELSE, THEY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SEE THE CHANGE AS IT WAS VERY SUBTLE. Someone would really have to know her to even recognize there was a change occurring. Thankfully, because we have homeschooled her throughout her life, I have the unique advantage of REALLY KNOWING WHO MY CHILDREN ARE and therefore can recognize the change quickly.

“For about a year, we went back and forth with her privilege to be on the phone and iPad. When finally I

started to see a pattern emerge. When she was on the devices, she had an ugly spirit and character problems. When she was grounded from it, her sweet spirit returned and the character problems disappeared. So we decided that she was not ready for such devices because it was doing more harm than good. It’s hard enough to raise godly children, and we don’t need to add things that will make it that much more harder; it’s foolishness! So we kept her off all these devices, and put a password on every electronic device in the house for a year. If she needed internet access, we logged into the computer for her and she did what needed to be done and logged off.

“After a year off electronics, we recently decided we would allow her access to her iPad (again) especially since it is now summertime. However, that did not last very long. After only a few weeks, we were starting to have very familiar character problems once again! I warned her; she’d shape up for a few days, and then back to warning, shaping up, and so forth. Last week, I had my last straw and said we were back to no electronics. Boy, did this unleash a rebellious spirit in her that lasted for days! I faced her rebellion head on and refused to overlook any of it. If it meant losing my sanity to fix the problem, then so be it. She is worth it! Finally, she got over her rebellion of losing the iPad, and now we’re back to seeing a sweet spirit once again. I just informed her that we would not be introducing anymore personal electronics if that’s the spirit we encounter when it gets taken away. Obviously, she is not mature enough to handle such a privilege. If personal electronics become a god in your life, then it’s foolishness for us to allow you to have it. Sometimes there are things in life that, on the surface, seem to add quality and convenience to our lives, but in reality it only brings a multitude of heartache! I’m sure she did not like to hear this, but that’s of no concern. We will be her parents first and foremost, even if it makes us unpopular!”

Secular Warnings *about* SOCIAL MEDIA

By David Cloud



Bill Gates

Steve Jobs

The following is excerpted from [Keeping the Kids in the Social Media Age](https://www.wayoflife.org/publications/books/keeping-the-kids.php) (December 2023)

<https://www.wayoflife.org/publications/books/keeping-the-kids.php>

Even the unsaved are wising up about the danger of the internet, social media, and mobile phones and are taking control of it.

Chris Anderson, former editor of *Wired*, has five children and 12 tech rules. They include no phones until the summer before high school, no screens in bedrooms, network-level content blocking, no iPads at all, and screen time schedules enforced by Google Wifi that he controls from his phone. Bad behavior? The child goes offline for 24 hours (“A Dark Consensus about Screens,” *New York Times*, Oct. 26, 2018). He says, “Rule No. 1 is there are no screens in the bedroom. Period. Ever. My kids accuse me and my wife of being fascists and overly concerned about tech, and they say that none of their friends have the same rules. We have rules because we have seen the dangers of technology firsthand. I’ve seen it in myself; I don’t want to see that happen to my kids.”

Kristin Stecher is a former social computing researcher married to a Facebook engineer, Rushabh Doshi. After researching the matter, they decided they want almost none of it in their home. “Doing no screen time is almost easier than doing a little. **If my kids do get it at all, they just want it more**” (“A Dark Consensus about Screens,” *New York Times*, Oct. 26, 2018).

Athena Chavarria, who worked as an executive assistant at Facebook, says, “**I am convinced the devil lives in**

our phones and is wreaking havoc on our children.” She did not let her children have cellphones until high school, and even now bans phone use in the car and severely limits it at home. She said she lives by the mantra that **the last child in the class to get a phone wins** (“A Dark Consensus about Screens,” *New York Times*, Oct. 26, 2018).

Jesse Weinberger is the author of *The Boogeyman Exists: and He’s in Your Child’s Back Pocket*. In a survey of 70,000 children, she found that, on average, pornography consumption began when children turned 8, and sexting and pornography addiction began around age 11. Weinberger says, “The longer you keep Pandora’s box shut, the better off you are. There’s no connection to the dark side without the device.”

Before his death, **Steve Jobs**, founder of Apple, was asked if his kids loved the iPad. He replied, “They haven’t used it. We limit how much technology our kids use at home” (*New York Times* interview).

Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft, said, “You’re always looking at home technology can be used in a great way--homework and staying in touch with friends--and also where it has gotten to excess. We don’t have smartphones at the table when we are having a meal. ... We often set a time after which there is no screen time” (cited from David Eaton and Jeremiah Callihan, *Smartphone Sanity*).

These people are exercising more wisdom in this matter than the average parent in a Bible-believing church. Their rules aren’t strong enough, because they aren’t based on biblical principles, but they are probably stronger than those of the average Christian parent.

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?



SOCIAL MEDIA THE DEVIL'S MIXING BOWL (Friday Church News Notes, December 22, 2023, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- Social media is the devil's mixing bowl to weaken Christians in their spiritual stand. Facebook and other social media tend to mix everything together, the holy and the unholy, the sacred and the profane, the spiritual and the worldly, righteousness and unrighteousness, truth and heresy, wisdom and nuttiness. In this manner, social media provides a direct and powerful and continual assault on biblical holiness and purity. Consider the following warnings we have received from Christian friends. **Testimony # 1** - "When someone leaves a good church and starts living according to the world, many people continue to remain friends with them and 'like' everything they do. They will encounter things on Facebook that their church is against, such as immodest clothing, rock music, drinking, smoking, dancing, dating, wrong marriages. They hear these things preached against at church, but they approve of them on Facebook. They will not separate from people who are going in the wrong direction. From that standpoint, I believe that Facebook has done great damage to churches. I have friends in independent Baptist churches around the world and I have observed that this takes place everywhere."

Testimony # 2 - "It is amazing to me the lack of discernment so many professing Christians have. They will 'like' and 'share' Facebook posts that feature false doctrine, psycho-babble, half-truths and sayings, and off-color memes. Contemporary Christian, Country, and other types of music not fit for consumption by a child of God is often liked and shared."

Testimony # 3 - "I found that I 'reconnected' with people that the Lord had separated me from. The Lord geographically moved me from an area that I did not need to live in. When I got saved He removed me from things that were not spiritually or physically healthy for me. The Lord saved me from a very wicked life! As a Christian I had no business reconnecting with them. Satan had me believe that I could be a witness to them. It did not happen! There were zero salvations as a result of me 'reconnecting' with anyone on Facebook."

THE WHOLE WORLD IMAGINING A VAIN THING

(Friday Church News Notes, December 22, 2023, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The Psalmist prophesied that the whole world will imagine a vain thing, which is to cast off "the bands" of God and Christ. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people



IMAGINE a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us” (Psalm 2:1-3). The word translated “anointed” is the Hebrew *messiah*, which is the same as the Greek *Christ*. It refers, of course, to Jesus, who is revealed in the same Psalm as the Son of God (verse 7). This vain imagination is spreading across the globe with a great fervor today, even among professing Christians. John Lennon’s song “Imagine” has become an anthem of sorts for this rebellion, and it is interesting that it uses exactly the same word used by the Psalmist 3,000 years ago. The lyrics say: “IMAGINE there’s no heaven ... No hell below us, above us only sky ... no religion too/ You may say I’m a dreamer, but I’m not the only one/ I hope some day you’ll join us, and the world will live as one.” Lennon dreamed that the world would come together by imagining a unity in rebellion against God’s absolute authority and the exclusiveness of salvation through His Son. I’ve heard “Imagine” sung and played practically everywhere I have traveled in this world, in more than 30 countries. It has been sung as a duet by Dolly Parton and the homosexual rocker Elton John. It was sung by Bill Clinton with a Jewish and Arab children’s choir. It was used by a short-term missionary P.E.A.C.E. team from Rick Warren’s Saddleback Church in August 2006 as part of a video slide show that was posted on YouTube. I used to love that song before I was saved (“Imagine” came out in 1971, when I was in the apex of my run from God), and I, too, didn’t believe in hell or in a God that would send people to hell.

But I thank the Lord for His mercy in opening my blinded eyes.

SOCIAL MEDIA PROTECTION REQUIRES A MINDSET OF TAKING CONTROL (Friday Church News Notes, December 22, 2023, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24). The fundamental protection in the social media age is to take control. It is the determination that **I will have one Master, and that Master is Jesus Christ! I’m not going to allow anyone or anything to take the place of Christ as my Master. I will not be a slave to a smartphone or a video game or YouTube or Facebook or Twitter or FoxNews or Snapchat or Instagram or Tiktok. I will not be a slave of a constant stream of “notifications.” I will not be the puppet of some faceless, money-grubbing corporation. I will not be controlled by social engineers. I will not allow my time to be wasted on vanity and wickedness.** This requires stepping back and analyzing one’s life and every aspect of how communication technology is affecting me, not just one time, but repeatedly, continuously. It needs to be done by individuals, by families, and by churches.



MAJORITY OF AMERICANS 18-24 BELIEVE ISRAEL SHOULD BE “ENDED AND GIVEN TO HAMAS” (Friday Church News Notes, December 29, 2023, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is by Jon Levine, *New York Post*, Dec. 16, 2023: “A majority of young Americans said they believe Israel should ‘be ended and given to Hamas,’ according to a shocking poll. The survey, conducted this week by Harvard-Harris polling, found 51% of Americans between the ages of 18 and 24 said they believed the long-term answer to the Israel-Palestinian conflict was for ‘Israel to be ended and given to Hamas and the Palestinians.’ Only 32% said they believed in a two-state solution, and just 17% said other Arab states should be asked to absorb Palestinian populations. The figure was in stark contrast to other age groups, which all dramatically preferred a two-state solution. Just 4% of Americans 65 and over said they felt Israel should be ended. ‘These individuals siding with evil over democracy should be a wake-up call,’ Sen. Roger Marshall (R-Kansas) told *The Post*. ‘Ideological rot among young Americans, driven by woke values and victim culture, has gotten so bad they’ve convinced themselves to sympathize with actual terrorists who hate America.’”

THE PRONOUN POLICE IN U.S. GOVERNMENT (Friday Church News Notes, December 29, 2023, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “The Pronoun Police Have Arrived,” *Fox News*, Dec. 15, 2023: “If your boss required you to publicly announce that $2 + 2 = 5$ and act like you sincerely believed it, would you comply or be fired? Unfortunately, tens of thousands of federal employees are being put to a similar test by the Biden administration. But instead of being required to deny basic math, they are being forced to deny basic biology under radical ‘gender identity’ policies. On International Transgender Day of Visibility, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management ordered federal agencies to prohibit the intentional use of ‘incorrect’ pronouns in the workplace because it could contribute to an ‘unlawful hostile work environment.’ First to comply were the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Department of State and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (USCBP), all of which have recently issued workplace pronoun mandates. Not surprisingly, the administration’s LGBT advocate-in-chief, Assistant Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine, announced the policy for HHS. Although Levine is a biological male (and for decades



went by Richard), HHS employees are prohibited from using anything other than ‘she’ when speaking of Levine and all other trans-identifying biological males at HHS. Further, because the policy covers ‘gender non-conforming, agender, gender fluid or non-binary’ identifications, biologically male employees can retain male names and dress and appear like a man on any given day, and still demand to be addressed as she, xir, or they. ... Not to be outdone, the USCBP issued a memo for Border Patrol agents prohibiting them from addressing persons they catch illegally crossing the border as ‘Mr., Mrs., Ms., Sir [or] Ma’am’ until they ask, ‘can you please confirm your pronouns or gender identity?’ and then adopting whatever the immigrant says. ... Perhaps most offensive of all, under OPM guidance, all federal facilities with showers and changing rooms must now be opened to people of the opposite sex based on their say-so.”

THE GOLDEN AGE OF COAL (Friday Church News Notes, December 29, 2023, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “The Golden Age,” *PowerLineBlog*, Dec. 18, 2023: “You wouldn’t know it from reading the newspapers, but that is what we are living in. The recently-concluded COP28 conference touted a coming end to the use of fossil fuels, with coal first in line for extinction. But that isn’t happening. Robert Bryce has the data: ‘The [International Energy Agency] expects coal use to rise by 1.4% this year and set a new record of 8.5 billion tons’ (“Two Days after COP28,” Dec. 18, 2023, robertbryce.substack.com). So more coal is being burned than ever before.



‘That increase shows, yet again, how difficult it will be to achieve significant cuts in CO2 emissions from hydrocarbon use. Mainly due to coal use, which accounts for about 40% of emissions from energy, global CO2 emissions will set another new record in 2023 of 36.8 billion tons.’ So good luck with ‘net zero’ by 2050, or any other date. Environmentalists in the U.S. and Western Europe have succeeded in prematurely shuttering a number of coal plants, but that is virtually irrelevant. It is China and India, along with countries like Indonesia, that are driving the coal explosion. And those countries don’t even pretend to be participating in a ‘transition’ to wind and solar energy. ... When it comes to coal, supposedly slated for extinction by the world’s ‘greens,’ the U.S. and Western Europe are irrelevant. ‘Some 204,000 megawatts of new coal-fired capacity is now under construction around the world. Of that 204,000 MW, about 67% is in China. To put that massive amount of new capacity in perspective, the U.S. currently operates about 205,000 MW of coal-fired power plants. ... In addition to the huge amount now being built, another 353,000 MW of coal-fired capacity has been announced, pre-permitted, or permitted. Of that 353,000 MW in the queue, about 72% is in China’ (Bryce). ... The challenges are unprecedented because until now, no one has done anything as stupid as shutting down vast

quantities of reliable electric power while having no plan to replace that capacity, on any timetable or at any cost. But that is where we are now.”

ROME MOVING TOWARD FULL ACCEPTANCE OF HOMOSEXUALITY

(Friday Church News Notes, December 29, 2023,

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

- Pope Francis has done more than any previous “pontiff” to move the Catholic Church toward full acceptance of homosexuality. On Dec. 18, the Vatican announced that the pope has formally approved letting Catholic priests bless same-sex couples, so long as it is “not tied to any specific Catholic celebration or religious service and should not be conferred at the same time as a civil union ceremony.” Rome still officially rejects same-sex marriage and condemns homosexual relations as “intrinsically disordered.” In 2013, in his first broadcast news conference, Pope Francis said, “Who am I to judge,” when asked about a homosexual priest. Earlier this year, the pope said it is permissible for transgender people to be baptized and to serve as godparents (“Step by step,” *AP News*, Dec. 19, 2023). All of this makes sense in light of the massive numbers of homosexual priests, as evidenced by the billions of dollars that the Catholic Church has paid to settle lawsuits pertaining to child



molesting, which usually involves a priest and a male child or youth. Rome’s acceptance of homosexuality also makes sense in light of the Bible’s description of Mystery Babylon. “And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication” (Revelation 17:4).

VIOLENT PORNOGRAPHY’S VAST INFLUENCE

(Friday Church News Notes, December 29, 2023,

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

- The following is excerpted from Jonathan Van Maren, “Pornography is destroying childhood and changing sexual desire,” *The Bridgehead*, Nov. 14, 2023: “[I]n a recent column for the *Daily Mail*, Holly Bourne [best-selling British author] details how ubiquitous porn use among young people is creating a toxic rape culture that makes life unbearable for teenage girls. The connection between pornography and sexual violence is a subject I have been reporting on in this space for nearly ten years, but the full reality of what it means to see a generation raised on a diet of sexual violence is still sickening to watch. ... Bourne has been on the frontlines of youth culture, and what she saw scarred her so badly she experienced mental trauma as a result. ... When I started giving presentations on this issue over a decade ago, choking as a sexual practice was unheard of. Now, it is normative. Why? Because pornography has served as sex education for an entire generation ... Bourne says, ‘the widespread consumption of hardcore pornography is now a public health emergency.’ ... We are going to find



out what that impact is. So far, it is pretty gut-wrenching. ... Broken marriages. An even further rise in sexual confusion and deviancy. That is why calling out this problem in clear terms is so important--and why we should consider not simply addressing porn as a public health crisis, but banning it entirely.” **CONCLUSION:** We have no reason to think that pornography is going to be banned in any meaningful way. Bible-believing people must do their own banning by wise parenting, by keeping smart phones away from young people, by filters, by accountability, and most of all by abiding in Christ and walking in the Spirit.

BUILT-IN ERROR

CORRECTION (Friday Church News Notes, December 29, 2023,

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

- The following is from CreationMoments.com, December 29, 2023: “It sounds like science fiction to suggest that if someone typed your



name into a computer and misspelled it, the computer would find and correct it. This would need a very sophisticated software program. But did you know there is an even more sophisticated information storage and transmission system in each of your cells--your genetic code? Not only does your genetic code store far more information in a microscopic space than can our largest computers, it also has a built-in error correction system. Scientists have discovered a number of key enzymes within the cell that have just one job: find and correct errors in the genetic code. Those errors can creep into the code because of radiation, certain chemicals, or other outside forces. The enzymes faithfully correct any errors, preventing mutations--the same mutations that scientists thought could cause evolution. One expert on enzymes has stated that science has no explanation for how such sophistication could have evolved. Neither is there any explanation for how life could have continued without this genetic proof-reading and correction capability. Only our Creator could have been wise enough to design an information system that can correct its own errors. Even we human beings have not figured out how to do this with our much simpler computers. Certainly, blind chance could never do what the best of human intelligence can do!

REF: Fersht, A.R. 1980. *Trends in Biochemical Science*, v. 5, p. 282.
Lambert, G.R. 1984. *Journal of Theoretical Biology*, v. 107, p. 387.”

FASCINATING FINDS AT ANCIENT SHILOH (Friday Church News Notes, January 5, 2024, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Shiloh, north of Jerusalem, was the site of the Tabernacle for nearly 400 years, from the time of Joshua to that



of Samuel. Jerusalem was still a pagan city, and Shiloh was God’s appointed place of worship. Every morning and evening a lamb was sacrificed on the brazen altar. The Tabernacle and the Levitical system pointed to Jesus Christ and His vicarious atonement on Calvary, Christ “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). The Tabernacle was a major way that the law of Moses “was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Galatians 3:24). Scott Stripling and the Associates for Biblical Research have completed four seasons of digs and have unearthed fascinating evidence supporting the biblical record. The following is excerpted from “Archaeologist Excited by Recent Finds,” *CBN News*, Aug. 30, 2023: “This year, Dr. Scott Stripling brought us up to speed on what’s happened here since we first visited this project [in 2019]. He says, ‘Since then, we’ve come way down, five meters or so, maybe six meters in some places, and so now we can see the various structures that are here, and indeed we can now say that this is very likely the gate that’s referred to in the Bible, and that’s pretty big stuff. ... the Bible tells us that Eli (the high priest at the time) is in the gate of Shiloh when he gets the news that the Ark of the Covenant has been captured, that his sons have been killed. He falls over backward

and dies in the gate.’ ... The next stop on the archaeological tour was a nearby bone deposit. Stripling described how meaningful the site was for the excavators. ‘The people working over here ... are uncovering evidence of the (Jewish) sacrificial system. ... The pottery and the bones. They tell an unmistakable story that matches what we read in the biblical text.’ As we stood over the site, Stripling said, ‘This is unexcavated; underneath your feet and my feet is about (4 feet) of solid bone, waiting to be excavated. Bone on top of bone, on top of bone. And we have micro stratigraphy in this area so we can see that the deposition is laid down over a long period of time, just like the Bible says.’ When asked what kind of bones would be found there, he replied, ‘Sheep, goat, cow--and disproportionately from the right side of the animal.’ ... ‘Why is the right side so significant?’ he asked. ‘Well, the priests are the ones who live here, and Leviticus 7 tells us that the right side of the animal is the priest’s portion. So ... you got a hundred thousand bones and they’re disproportionate. Give me another explanation. It just happens to coordinate with what the Bible says.’”

THE STATE OF “GENDER AFFIRMING CARE” FOR YOUTH IN THE U.S., ENGLAND, AND EUROPE



WINGED TROOPS (Friday Church News Notes, January 5, 2024, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from CreationMoments.com, December 20, 2023: “We have long known that the community within a honeybee hive divides the labor among specialized workers. There are scouts who search for food. Nurses tend the young. Some bees specialized in cleaning. There are even undertaker bees who remove and dispose of dead members of the hive. Scientists have now discovered that honeybee colonies also have brigades of specialized ‘soldiers.’ These bees often seem to be sitting around, not doing much. In fact, they have only one duty--attack large intruders. It appears that these bees are fed and cared for by the hive members while they wait for the alarm. Should a raccoon, bear or human threaten the hive, thousands of soldier bees swarm around the enemy and sting. Soldiers have been well-known members of ant and termite colonies. However, up to now, they have never been confirmed in honeybee hives. The universal need for soldiers for protection among social insects reminds us that some things are universal in this world. These soldiers are not responsible for a bear’s attack on the hive. Nor are



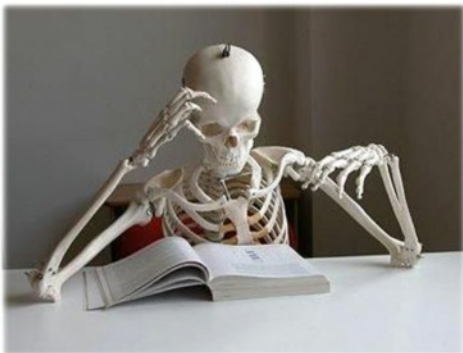
human soldiers who follow just war principles responsible for human war. Humanity’s greed and lack of love for others cannot be abolished by getting rid of armies. Rather, greed, theft and the need for protection remind us that we are not what God intended us to be. The solution lies not in denying reality, but in returning to our Creator through the forgiveness of our sins as made possible by Jesus Christ. Author: Paul A. Bartz. REF: ‘Soldiers swarm to rescue,’ *The Argus* (Fremont, CA), Mar. 17, 1991.”

(Friday Church News Notes, January 5, 2024, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Increasing Number of European Nations Adopt a More Cautious Approach,” *Forbes*, June 6, 2023: “Increasingly, European nations are adopting a more cautious approach to gender-affirming care among minors. In March, for example, the Norwegian Healthcare Investigation Board announced it would revise its current clinical recommendations with respect to ‘gender-affirming care’ for minors. The updated guidelines would restrict the use of puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and transition-related surgery to clinical research settings. Norway joins other European nations, such as Finland, Sweden and the U.K., in introducing limits

on the provision of gender-affirming care to minors. In the U.S., a partisan divide is shaping up between states that allow for and guarantee access to youth gender-affirming care and states that ban or severely restrict gender-affirming care for minors. There doesn’t appear to be much middle ground. Thus far this year, 12 states have either banned or severely limited gender-affirming care for minors. It’s expected that more Republican-led states will soon follow suit. At the same time, five Democrat-led states have passed legislation designed to legally protect transgender healthcare coverage and access for minors. ... In the U.S., talk of introducing guardrails is sometimes met with being branded ‘transphobic’ or a ‘science denier.’ ... But caution with respect to gender-affirming care for

minors may be warranted, as European experience indicates. ... In Europe there has been a gradual shift from care which prioritizes access to pharmaceutical and surgical interventions, to a less medicalized and more conservative approach that addresses possible psychiatric comorbidities and explores the developmental etiology of trans identity. ... From puberty blockers to cross-sex hormones to surgery, the rules across Europe tend to be either stricter than many jurisdictions in the U.S. or in the process of tightening.”

ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETIES ENTER FANTASY WORLD BY DENYING BIOLOGICAL STANDARD FOR MALE AND FEMALE (Friday Church News Notes, January 12, 2024, www.wayoflife.org,



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

- The following is excerpted from “Conference cancels panel,” *Fox News*, Sept. 29, 2023: “Anthropologists from the largest associations of anthropologists in the world canceled an event discussing the importance of biological sex in the context of studying the human skeleton while citing ‘transphobia’ as the reason for the panel being cut. The American Anthropological Association (AAA) and The Canadian Anthropology Society (CASCA) were skewered for walking back their approval for a panel event at its 2023 conference discussing biological sex. The AAA and CASCA said that it was now tightening its review process to ensure such an event wouldn’t recur in the future. The event in question discussed ‘Sex identification whether an individual was male or female--using the skeleton is one of the most fundamental components in bioarchaeology and forensic anthropology.’ One of the speakers who was slated to attend, Elizabeth Weiss, an anthropology professor at San José State University, said in an interview with *FOX News Digital* that the field has been nose-diving into an ‘off the rails’ agenda, with activists pushing for some facts to be replaced with feelings. As anthropologists have developed more precise metrics to determine the sex of the human skeleton they study in the field, the more they get attacked

for knowing and being able to determine those differences, she said. **‘So just as we are getting better and better at identifying what is male and what is a female and the skeletal record, we are getting more and more attacked for knowing how to do this,’** she said. ‘Truth is not necessarily considered an objective goal and the victims’ narrative is more important than facts. Who tells the story is more important than the data, which we obviously know is not true.’”

SOCIAL MEDIA THE GREAT TIME WASTER (Friday Church News Notes, January 12, 2024, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

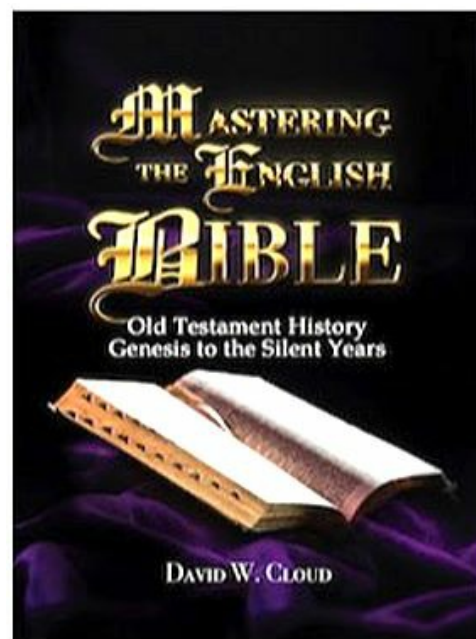
- Social media is *designed* to grab your attention and keep it. It has been called “engineered addiction.” One man said, “Facebook is like a black hole sucking productivity away.” Another said, “YouTube is a trap. Instagram is a trap. Facebook is a trap. ... they have been designed to hook you. I went for a 10-day retreat and realised how much time I had been wasting on these platforms. They distort the perception of reality and above all eat up the precious time that you have.” Even the *London Telegraph* warns about this: “There is no better late-night activity than trawling through the dregs of Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest to see what your followers have been up to. You’ll find things you never knew or wanted to discover: arty photographs of colleagues’ Christmas dinners overlaid by ridiculous filters, endless irritating videos of cute animals, and catty exchanges between TOWIE celebs accused of stealing each others’ boyfriends. Problem is, IT’S A BOTTOMLESS PIT. There is, quite literally, no end to the meaningless waffle of the web--and,



once you start...” (“The 7 best ways to waste time on the internet,” *The Telegraph*, Dec. 30, 2014). [TOWIE refers to “The Only Way is Essex, a popular British TV program followed by multitudes of young social media addicts.”]

THE GLORIES OF LEVITICUS (Friday Church News Notes, January 12, 2024, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- Leviticus is a neglected book of the Bible. It is one in which Bible readers typically get “bogged down,” but Leviticus is full of glory because it is all about Christ and His vicarious atonement. Christ is the burnt offering, the meal offering, the peace offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering. Every detail points to Christ. He is the lamb and the ram and the ox. He is the poor man’s



sacrificial dove. He is the atonement, the propitiation, and the redemption. He is the justifier and the sanctifier. He is the priest who offers the offering, and He is the offering itself. He is the scapegoat who carried our sin far away. He is the priest who cleanses the spiritual lepers. He is the Holy One who imputes His own perfect holiness to the unholy. He is the passover and the unleavened bread. He is the sabbath rest. He is the firstfruits from the dead. His eternal kingdom is the Jubilee of jubilees. (We recommend the Leviticus studies in *Mastering the English Bible*, “Old Testament

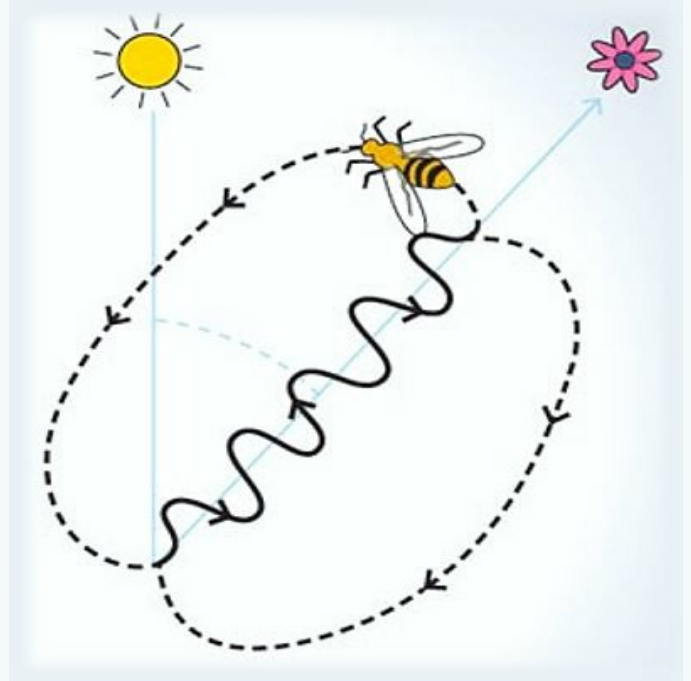
History - Genesis to the Silent Years,” https://www.wayoflife.org/publications/books/mastering_of_his_tory.php)

EXHORTATION TO SOME WHO ARE IN TROUBLE BECAUSE OF JANUARY 6

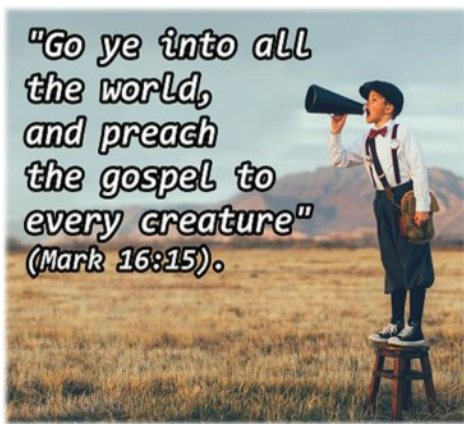
(Friday Church News Notes, January 19, 2024, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - I sent the following to a relative recently about some acquaintances who are in prison or facing prison because of their participation in January 6. “I am very sorry to hear about the continuing trouble to -----

----- They are sheep without a shepherd. This is not the 18th century; it is the 21st century, and it is an entirely different time. We know that the government is becoming increasingly wicked and anti-God; we know that the January 6 crowd is being treated severely and not with true justice. But our wicked government is merely a reflection of the people, even the vast majority of Christians so-called, and its evil character and stupidity is a judgment of God on the nation. I believe it is very possible that both Trump and Biden are judgments of God. The terrible division of the nation is a

THE HONEYBEE DANCE (Friday Church News Notes, January 12, 2024, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Honeybees--Always on the Move,” *Answers Magazine*, Apr. 1, 2011: “Once our forager bee finds a new source of pollen or nectar, she returns to the colony to tell others about it. First, she waggles her body in a straight line; then she loops back in a semicircle to waggle again. This waggle dance is quite accurate at giving her fellow bees the direction and distance to the food source. It also describes the quality and type of food source. The honeybee’s dance communicates to other workers a new source of pollen or nectar. Variations in the dance communicate the distance, quality, and direction of the new source. The greater the distance to the food, the slower she dances and the longer she moves along the line. To communicate better food quality, she increases the vigor and intensity of her waggles. She describes the source’s direction by the angle of her waggle on the honeycomb’s surface. If her waggle moves upward on the comb (toward 12 o’clock), the food is toward the sun. But if she waggles toward the right (toward 3 o’clock), the food is 90° to the right of the sun’s position. If much time has passed, she will alter her dance to accommodate the change in the sun’s position. ... While the dance has been observed throughout history, it wasn’t until the twentieth century that Austrian scientist Karl von Frisch decoded its meaning. He was awarded a Nobel Prize



in 1973 for his discoveries. Scientists now believe that smell plays a role in the dance as well. But how did such behavior originate? The dance conveys information from one party to another in complex ways, almost like a language. It is hard even to imagine how such communication could have arisen over millions of years of slow change, since the entire colony has to understand the dance in order for it to be effective. It makes more sense to believe that a sovereign Designer created honeybees with the innate instinct to communicate with each other in this way.”



judgment of God. We must step back and view the situation biblically. It is the very end of the end times. The mystery of iniquity is coming into full bloom. The Rapture is doubtless near. It is not time to focus on politics; it is time to obey Christ's command while we still have opportunity (Matthew 28:18-20). And we still have great opportunity. Our own church work is more fruitful and blessed than ever. This is Christ's marching orders to the very end. See verse 20, "and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world." This is the business that Christ taught His disciples in the 40 days between His resurrection and ascension. It is repeated in Mark 16, Luke 24, and Acts 1. Had our friends devoted their thoughts and deeds to obeying Christ, they would not be in trouble now for a vain cause. We must be careful that we do not fight against God, all the while thinking we are on His side. When godly king Josiah went out against Pharaoh Neco, he was told that he was actually fighting against God and it turned out to be so (2 Chronicles 35:20-25). By acting wrongly (even as a righteous man), Josiah died in a goofy venture and ended the revival he had started and hastened the end of the nation. Poor Jeremiah was left without a friend on the throne and had to stand nearly alone against Israel's wickedness to the very end. We must

know the times. There was a time to fight the pharaoh, and there was a time to leave the pharaoh alone. There is a time to disobey the government, but Paul shows us how to do that. He disobeyed the government when the government told him not to preach the gospel. He did not engage in any other policy. He focused his attention on obeying Christ's Commission. He spent a lot of time in jail, but never as a riotous man. The best thing God's people can do for America is obey Christ and live holy, obedient lives and build godly homes and churches and keep raising a godly seed until the trumpet and the shout (Malachi 2:15). I might very well go to jail before I die, but it will be for preaching the truth of Scripture in a wicked age, not for going off on a wild goose chase through unscriptural counsel. The only true help for America is found in God's house, not the White House.

ATHEIST CHURCHES PROLIFERATING (Friday Church News Notes, January 19, 2024, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - According to a report on *Yahoo News*, "Church without God," Jan. 11, 2024, atheist churches or secular churches are growing. They mimic Christian churches in many ways, with singing (i.e., "Imagine" by John Lennon and "Livin' on a Prayer" by Bon Jovi), preaching (lectures), testimonies, ceremonies for major life transitions such as births, funerals, and weddings, etc. The Sunday Assembly and the Oasis are networks with dozens of chapters, some of them with hundreds of attendees. The Sunday Assembly is called "the first atheist megachurch." There are also regional organizations such as the Seattle Atheist Church and the North Texas Church of



Freethought. Lectures might include an astronomer giving a talk about the New Horizons spacecraft's mission to Pluto. They extol values like rational thinking and materialist philosophies, which promote the idea that only physical matter exists." Some have "debaptism" ceremonies "in which they renounce their former religion." They are whistling in the dark. What atheist churches don't preach is the actual implication of what they believe, which is that you came from nowhere, you are nothing, your life means nothing, and you are going nowhere. No matter how they try to copy a church format, they are left with the atheist gospel, which is that life is a big, stupid accident. The vast universe is the product of an explosion; life sprang from non-life; intelligence arose from non-intelligence; man is an evolved ameba; human life has no ultimate purpose; and when you're dead you're dead. As for ourselves, we don't advocate atheism or religion. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God who became a man by the virgin birth, lived a sinless life, suffered and bled as a vicarious atonement for the sins of the world, rose from the dead, and ascended to the right hand of God, who offers eternal salvation to those who believe. Because we are sinners and God is holy, we instinctively want to hide from God as Adam and Eve did, but they learned that the holy God

loved them and wanted to redeem them to Himself, as He does every son and daughter of Adam.

THE UNITED NATION'S TRANSGENDER HEALTH COMMITTEE (Friday Church News Notes, January 19, 2024, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "Half of the WHO's transgender health committee members," *Daily Mail*, Jan. 9, 2024: "The WHO last month published the biographies of 21 experts who have been invited to help formulate guidelines that will shape how countries treat gender dysphoria. Of the a 21-member panel who have been invited to help formulate guidelines that will shape how countries treat gender dysphoria, 11 have no formal medical training. ... Ashley--a trans woman who uses the pronouns 'they/them [and a curse



word]’--is the committee’s most controversial and outspoken member. They have [the *Daily Mail* kowtows to transgender nuttiness by using their ‘preferred pronouns’] a significant TikTok following where they express hardline views on trans issues, calling for mental health checks on trans children to be scrapped before they are given puberty blockers and hormone drugs. Seven are trans themselves, ten have a medical background and of those, eight are doctors. The rest are a mixture of activists, social

justice advocates, human rights lawyers, STD researchers, and policy advisors. ... Ashley ... has a ‘be gay, do crimes’ tattoo ... In a statement, Reed Alsalem, now the executive director of the LGBT Courage Coalition, a campaign group, called the WHO panelists a group of ‘agenda-driven activists with little or no scientific expertise.’ ‘Some are well-known, radical activists who promote experimental medical interventions and stigmatize exploratory therapy,’ said Reed. The panel should include ‘experts with a diversity of perspectives,’ she added. ‘Stakeholders whose views differ from those held by transgender activist organisations do not appear to have been invited. ... The WHO group will set global guidelines for the ways that healthcare workers around the world can increase access ‘and utilisation of quality and respectful health services by trans and gender-diverse people.’”

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- Standing for the whole counsel of God. (Acts 20:27; Jude 3)
- Challenging Christian workers to uphold the truth and resist the apostasy of our times. (1 Timothy 6:20-21)
- Exposing the spirit of error and compromise within Christendom (Hosea 4:6a; 2 Tim. 3)
- 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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