

O Timothy

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

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

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"How could the person be saved when he or she was obviously not convicted or repentant of his sin against God, not even very interested in God, in fact, when by all appearances he had only prayed a prayer merely hoping for an easy ticket to Heaven which would require no change on his part and wanting also to get rid of the soul winners?" **Page 3.**

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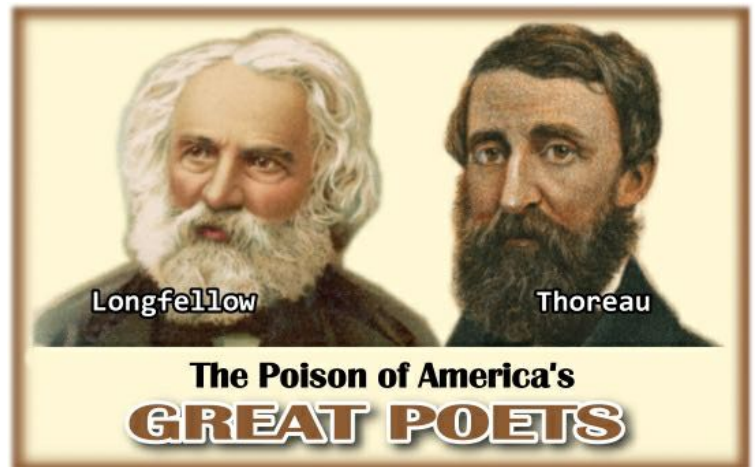


THE POISON OF AMERICA'S GREAT POETS ~ By David Cloud

What is happening in America today is shocking, but it is the product of 250 years of the leavening work of Satanic poison. The 19th century witnessed an explosion of end-time apostasy. Even most professing Christians have been unwittingly influenced by it or at least by the society it has helped create. The poison has been promulgated in the public school system, low and high. I was brainwashed by a public school education and only by the grace of God was I delivered into the glorious light of Jesus Christ and His Word.

Consider just four examples of the influential writers who poisoned society with barely a whimper of resistance even from the staunchest Bible churches.

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), author of *On Walden Pond*, was a Unitarian. He denied man's fall, the necessity of the new birth, and Christ's sacrificial atonement. He rejected God's Word and exalted human thinking. He sought for "truth" through communion with nature, study



of eclectic philosophies, and reflection. He was his own god. In *Walden*, Thoreau said, "No man ever followed his genius till it misled him." Like Emerson, Thoreau loved Hindu doctrine. He wrote, "In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the *Bhagavad Gita*, since whose composition years of the gods have elapsed, and in comparison with which our

modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial” (*On Walden Pond*).

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) was introduced to Hinduism as a child by his aunt Moody Emerson. Though he was for a while the pastor of Second Baptist Church in Boston, he held Hindu concepts of pantheism and the divinity of man. He wrote, “... the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God” (Emerson, *Nature*), and, “... there is no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins” (Emerson, *The Over-Soul*, 1841). Emerson taught that man is his own ultimate authority. In his message to the Phi Beta Kappa society at Harvard in 1837, entitled “The American Scholar,” Emerson exhorted scholars to free themselves of tradition (such as the Bible) and to maintain a “self-trust.” He taught that man should follow his own heart. “To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men,—that is genius” (Emerson, *Self-Reliance*).

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-82) was a Unitarian. He was a professor of modern languages at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, which was a hotbed of Unitarianism and abolitionist thinking fueled by the liberal social gospel. Influential Unitarian Hezekiah Packard was a trustee of Bowdoin in the 1830s and 1840s. Packard’s son Alpheus was a professor of Latin and Greek

at Bowdoin from 1824-65. Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852), was the wife of a Bowdoin professor and wrote her book in her husband’s office. She is known as “the little woman who started the big war,” as her book incited anger against the slavery states and provoked hotheads on both side of the issue. Her brother Henry Ward Beecher was the liberal pastor of Plymouth Church in Brooklyn. During Beecher’s career there, he opened his pulpit to Unitarians such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Horace Greeley and even to agnostics such as Mark Twain. Henry Beecher “once argued that a Sharps rifle held a better argument than a Bible for persuading slaveholders--hence these rifles were nicknamed ‘Beecher’s Bibles’ when used to combat the spread of slavery in the Kansas Territory before the American Civil War” (<http://www.embassy.org.nz/encycl/ulencyc.htm>).

The Beechers were related to Julia Ward Howe, a Unitarian universalist and the author of the “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” which confused the coming of Christ with the American armies of the North. She misidentified God’s altar with “the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps” and falsely claimed that His gospel was “writ in burnish’d rows of steel.” Julia Ward Howe delivered a pantheistic, universalistic message at the Parliament of the World’s Religions in 1893 entitled “What Is Religion?” (http://womenshistory.about.com/library/etext/bl_1893_pwr_howe.htm).

Walt Whitman (1819-1892) was perhaps America’s most influential and acclaimed poet. He has been called a prophet, and his work *Leaves of Grass*, “a new American bible.” Whitman was a transcendentalist, a pantheist, a universalist, a New Ager who believed in the divinity of man. He worshipped himself and encouraged others to do the same. “Divine am I inside and out, and I make holy whatever I touch or am touch’d from, The scent of these arm-pits aroma finer than prayer, This head more than churches, bibles, and all the creeds. ... I celebrate myself, and sing myself. ... I breathe the fragrance myself and know it and like it, The distillation would intoxicate me also, but I shall not let it. ... And nothing, not God, is greater to one than one’s self is. ... And I say to humankind, Be not curious about God, For I who am curious about each am not curious about God. ... I hear and behold God in every object, yet understand God not in the least, Nor do I understand who there can be more wonderful than myself” (“Song of Myself,” *Leaves of Grass*).

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Heaven-Oriented SOUL WINNING

By David Cloud



In Scripture, there is not one example of heaven mentioned in the context of soul winning.

Read the following passages and add, “Do you want to go to heaven when you die, then follow me in this prayer” and see if there is any connection between the biblical practice of evangelism and the modern practice.

Luke 19:1-5
John 3:1-3
John 4:7-10
Acts 2:37-38
Acts 20:17-21
Acts 26:19-20

History of heaven-oriented soul winning

Jack Hyles invented the “If you want to go to heaven when you die, then pray this prayer” soul winning technique.

Let's Go Soul Winning, 1962, Sword of the Lord

“I know a fellow in Texas who, when he got converted, couldn't even spell Jesus. The first year he won 169 to Jesus. He picked up a hitchhiker and tried to witness to him. The hitchhiker shook his head. He then talked real loud, but the hitchhiker pointed to his ears and shook his head. So this new convert started writing the Gospel out and the hitchhiker pointed down and shook his head. He couldn't read, he couldn't hear, he couldn't talk. So this soul winner, who went to the third grade and couldn't even spell Jesus, stopped the car and got out, took his Bible, pointed to the Bible, pointed to his heart, pointed to Heaven, made a motion to open your heart and let Him come in, got on his knees and began to pray. The deaf and dumb fellow got on his knees and mumbled a bit, got up with a smile of Heaven on his face, pointed to the Bible, pointed to Heaven and pointed to his heart.”

This was one of the textbooks on soul winning at Tennessee Temple in the 1970s. During my first year

there I observed the following type of thing repeatedly. The soul winner would take someone through the “Roman's Road” although the individual usually showed no interest in what was being said and although--unlike the conversions we see in Scripture--the individual appeared to be itching to get away from us and to go about his or her business. In spite of the lack of any evident Holy Spirit conviction or repentance, the soul winner would manipulate the person into praying a prayer and then would announce them “saved” and would go on to give them assurance of “salvation.” I always cringed at this technique. How could the person be saved when he or she was obviously not convicted or repentant of his sin against God, not even very interested in God, in fact, when by all appearances he had only prayed a prayer merely hoping for an easy ticket to Heaven which would require no change on his part and wanting also to get rid of the soul winners?

Chattanooga and the surrounding area had been burned over by Quick Prayerism. A large percentage of the people had “prayed the prayer,” but for the most part there was no change. I pastored one of the Highland Park chapels in Tracey City, and it was the same there.

Lee Roberson pastored Highland Park Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tennessee, from 1942 to 1983. There were probably a million or more professions through Highland Park's ministries during these years. There were 63,000 baptisms during Roberson's 40-year pastorate and another 28,000 “made decisions for Jesus Christ” at Highland Park's Camp Joy (James Wigton, *Lee Roberson: Always about His Father's Business*, pp. 158, 217). If even 63,000 people were truly saved during those years, the moral climate of that part of the country would have been dramatically changed, but it wasn't. The Highland Park community itself deteriorated shockingly. “A fashionable, up-scale area of the city when Lee Roberson arrived in 1942, by the time he retired it had digressed into a typical

ghetto-type area--with drugs, prostitution, and crime” (Wigton, p. 303). Yet a *huge* number of people in Highland Park had prayed the sinner’s prayer.

Hyles taught that every pastor should win at least one soul to Christ and baptize them every week. “Why couldn’t a pastor be responsible for baptizing fifty-two converts a year that he wins to Christ? This certainly should be a minimum. ... I have several people in my church who bring over one hundred converts a year down the aisle professing faith in Jesus Christ” (Hyles. *Let’s Baptize More Converts*, Sword of the Lord, 1967).

Dr. Roberson actually *required* that there be someone who would profess Christ and be baptized in every service. The visitation director was Walter Wendelken, and it was not merely his job to oversee the church’s far-reaching visitation program. “It was Wendelken’s job to make sure there were always new people who had prayed to receive Christ as Savior and were prepared to come forward publicly at the invitation on Sunday...” (Wigton, *Lee Roberson: Always about His Father’s Business*, p. 183). When Roberson preached at Temple Heights Baptist Church in Tampa, Florida, the pastor, James Wigton, said that Roberson told him that “the sign of a wounded church was the absence of anyone coming forward at the invitation. In one service, no one came forward. Wigton says, “[H]e was quite upset and chastised me privately. The next time we had Dr. Roberson at our church, I warned out pastoral staff in advance to be sure to have people ready to come down the aisle to make public commitments to Christ!” (Wigton, p. 270). Clarence Sexton, who headed up the Highland Park bus ministry after Wendelken, said, “He expected you to have someone saved, down the aisle and baptized every service” (Wigton, p. 125). But this isn’t possible, except by human manipulation. Even if an individual spends 12 hours a day, every day of the week, he can’t be sure that someone will be born again and ready for baptism at the end of that week.

Jack Hyles’ children excelled in Quick Prayerism.

Consider Dave Hyles, who was the youth pastor at Hyles Anderson. Elmer Towns described an experience with the First Baptist Church’s youth soul winning on a Saturday in 1974, led by Dave Hyles. More than 200 teens showed up, and Dave said, “Last week we won over 1,000 souls to Jesus Christ; let’s do it again tonight.” Towns accompanied 31 young men on a bus to an inner

city, high crime area in Chicago. The young men tell him that they had 21 out the week before and had “won over 200 to the Lord.” This week they aimed for more than 300.

“Joe stopped at the first home; nine played on the porch. ‘Hey, would you like to ride a bus to church tomorrow morning?’ He began talking about God. The kids didn’t know much about Him. Within minutes the group swelled to 15 curious Spanish kids. He talked about creation and the message of Calvary. ‘If you were to die tonight, would you go to heaven?’ Joe asked and pointed his finger at each one of the kids. All shook their heads negatively. ‘I want you to bow your heads right here and pray to receive Jesus Christ.’ He did not ask if they wanted to be saved, or if they were ready; he just told them to pray so they would go to heaven. ... Most of them repeated the simple prayer after him. ... As each boy jumps on the bus, he reports how many had been won to the Lord. Twenty-six is the highest number; one is the smallest--total of 261 for the evening. All the guys cheer” (Towns, *World’s Largest Sunday School*, pp. 177, 179).

Consider Cindy Hyles Schaap, Hyles’ daughter and the former wife of Jack Schaap, a man who was personally trained by Hyles and who took the pastorate of First Baptist after Hyles died. There is a video online of Cindy giving her testimony about soul winning. She said that her parents allowed her to start going on the teenage soul winning visitation when she was 11, and between then and graduation from high school she won 2,500 souls. Two thousand five hundred! Before graduating from high school! At the time she gave that testimony, she had won 5,000.

We think of Gospel Light Baptist Church, Walkertown, North Carolina, which was pastored by Bobby Roberson beginning in 1956 and through its heyday in the 1970s to the 1990s. It regularly hosted Sword conferences. In 2015, the church hosted a Southwide Baptist Fellowship meeting. David Gibbs was the moderator, and Roberson was honored. (He died in 2018.) Gibbs said that the church and its bus ministry were responsible for four million people getting saved. Four million! There are only ten million people in all of North Carolina! How can they boast of such numbers with a straight face? Do any of them really believe that four million people were actually saved? Or one million, or a half a million? One discerning pastor commented, “I believe our state would be much different if that many people were truly saved through one ministry, not to mention how many other similar churches there are in this state.” Indeed!

Bobby Roberson attributed his “success” in soul winning to a Jack Hyles/John R. Rice training conference in 1956. He said, “I never knew how to win people just personally to Christ. He [Hyles] taught us thirty-five points, and he acted out knocking on a door, getting a conversation up with a person, and how to approach him. I wrote it all down. That was on Tuesday. On Thursday I got one of my men to go with me, knocked on a door and led my first two people to Christ. And that’s been almost fifty-four years ago” (“Walking with Giants: An Interview with Dr. Bobby Roberson,” Paul Chappell, Oct. 7, 2010).

Paul Chappell described how that Bobby Roberson led a stranger to Christ in a matter of minutes. “Not only did he lead his church in faith-filled, strategic outreach, but he personally shared the gospel with people one on one. I remember another time when I was preaching at his church as we were walking across the parking lot he saw someone he didn’t know. He stopped to meet him, asked him if he knew the Lord, and led him to Christ right there in the parking lot” (Paul Chappell, “Five Ways Dr. Bobby Roberson Influenced Me,” paulchappell.com, Feb. 13, 2018).

Tom Malone was another prominent preacher of the generation of John Rice, Bobby Roberson, Jack Hyles, and Lee Roberson. Malone was on the board of the Sword of the Lord and his books were published by the Sword. One of those was his biography. Consider this description of one of his soul winning ventures:

“When he went next door to ask about the family, he met a Spanish fellow who could hardly speak English. Dr. Malone began to witness to him with gestures, pointing to the sky and to his heart. The man understood that God loved him and died on the cross to save him. In minutes the man bowed his head and asked Christ to come into his heart” (*Tom Malone: The Authorized Biography*, Sword of the Lord, 2003, p. 234).

In “minutes,” Malone led a man to Christ who didn’t speak English! The man “understood” the gospel? How did he understand? How did Malone know that he understood? This would be ridiculous if it weren’t so serious. It isn’t possible to properly explain the gospel to a man who doesn’t speak your language, especially in minutes! Why would a preacher not put such a man into contact with someone who speaks his language and could deal with him carefully as Philip did with the Ethiopian eunuch? Why would a preacher try to get a man to “ask

Christ to come into his heart” in such a context? The answer is that the preacher was brainwashed by a Quick Prayerism program.

A pastor described the following scene to me recently, which is similar to ones I have personally witnessed many times. While visiting a large fundamental Baptist church in California, he went on visitation with the most notable soul winner in the church. A lady answered the bell at one house and stood impatiently behind the screen door while the soul winner went quickly through the plan of salvation. She wanted to attend to her child, who was fussing in the background, but he begged her to listen to the presentation. During the entire time, she was looking back into the house, severely distracted. At the end of his presentation, he boldly demanded that she open the door partially and take his hand. She seemed shocked by his request, but she cautiously did as he said. He then asked her if she wanted to go to Heaven when she died. When she answered in the affirmative, he asked her to pray after him the sinner’s prayer, which she did. He announced her gloriously saved, and she immediately closed the door and went about her business. This is what I call Quick Prayerism. This lady, and millions like her, have prayed the sinner’s prayer without Holy Spirit conviction of sin, clear understanding of the gospel, or repentance toward God and saving faith toward Jesus Christ.

A pastor friend recounted the following experience he had at one of Paul Chappell’s conferences. The soul winner in question is a veteran Independent Baptist missionary to Japan, a man with significant influence in the independent Baptist movement.

“We went out with their staff on Saturday morning for soul winning. We were immediately partnered up with some of the veterans. The first door we went to, we spoke to a friendly Catholic guy and to my surprise, the guy got ‘saved’ before my very eyes as ----- took him from a few scripture passages to the sinner’s prayer so smoothly that I was caught off guard. I caught myself and while ----- was recording this man’s contact details and writing it down, I asked the man whether (1) he believed that he was a good person and (2) that it is possible to go to Heaven by being a good person. This man who had just got ‘saved’ told me ‘YES.’ I looked around and the other two men beside me said nothing and did nothing. We went to a few more places and eventually reached a home with a Roman Catholic young lady who came to the door. She said she was a professing Christian. Even though she said that all

churches were the same ----- gave her assurance of salvation by quoting 1 John 5:13.”

For several weeks in 1977, my wife and I followed up on a Phoster Club soul-winning program in a fundamental Baptist church in Florida. Though the Phoster Club ladies reported many salvations, we did not find even one person who demonstrated biblical evidence. (I know that some people are saved through these programs, but the large statistics do not reflect spiritual reality.)

A friend pastored a fundamental Baptist church in northern Indiana near First Baptist of Hammond. In 1980, a Hyles-Anderson student in his church obtained roughly 1,000 decision cards from First Baptist Church’s visitation ministry. They diligently followed up on these individuals but were extremely disappointed to find that not even one person was interested in the things of Christ. The batch of professions was entirely void of spiritual reality. He testified to me that this opened his eyes to the danger of the Hyles approach to evangelism and underscored the duplicity of the reports that are published by First Baptist. I will not give his name, because I don’t want him subjected to the carnal harassment to which I have been subjected; but I have it on record, and the Lord knows.

Pastor Thomas Watson said that he practiced Quick Prayerism for years before repenting of it. He would ask people if they wanted to go to heaven when they died and when they indicated that they did, he would lead them in a sinner’s prayer. During that time he led “hundreds” in a sinner’s prayer, but he does not know of one person who showed evidence of salvation. The last time he did this, he was dealing with a young black man. He stood at the man’s door and led him in a sinner’s prayer. After walking off the man’s porch, he returned and called the man back to the door and asked him, “You just prayed a sinner’s prayer. Be honest with me; do you believe anything has changed; do you believe you are saved?” The young man replied, “No, man, I just wanted you to leave.”

Pastor Watson went soul winning with another preacher in those days and three teenage girls came to the door. They had been playing loud rock & roll but turned the music down before answering the door. One girl was standing in the doorway, and the other two were standing behind her. The preacher told them about hell and the judgment to come and then asked them if they wanted to go to heaven when they died. They said yes, and he said that he was going to pray and then he was going to lead

them in a prayer. Pastor Watson kept his eyes open, and the girls were laughing and mocking the preacher who was praying. It was a big joke to them. As soon as the preacher finished, they shut the door and the music was immediately blaring again. When the preacher started rejoicing in his new converts, Pastor Thomas told him about the girls’ actions during the prayer. The preacher was not shaken one bit, saying, “You will never convince me that they didn’t get saved.”

Longview Baptist Temple in Longview, Texas, claims that more than one million people were won to Christ in 25 years (http://www.lbtministries.com/Pastor/Meet_Our_Pastor.htm). Yet on an average Wednesday evening service, which is the truest reflection of an American church’s active membership, you will find only a few hundred people in attendance. Literally hundreds of thousands of these souls that have been “won” are nowhere to be found.

When we were given the “decision” cards to follow-up a county fair ministry in Oklahoma in the late 1990s, of the hundreds of professions that were recorded we could not find *even one* person who gave any evidence of salvation or was even interested in attending church.

A pastor friend followed up on the more than 100 “salvation decisions” that were made at a county fair ministry in Kentucky in 2011, and he *did not find one soul* who was even interested enough in Christ to attend church.

The Zenith of Quick Prayerism.

“Quick prayerism” reached its apex on May 3, 1998, when Jack Hyles claimed that more people were saved and baptized at his church on that day than were saved and baptized on the day of Pentecost or on any other day in church history. Hyles estimated that around 15,000 people were saved on that day and 5,112 were baptized.

When the events at Hyles’ church are compared with those of Acts chapter two, though, five serious discrepancies appear.

First, Peter preached the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, whereas Hyles preached on Heaven. In his invitation, Hyles told the people that even if they had the slightest interest in going to Heaven, to come forward. Well, who doesn’t want to go to Heaven?

Second, Peter demanded repentance, whereas Hyles did not even mention repentance or even hint that it might be necessary for salvation.

Third, those saved on the day of Pentecost were added to the church, whereas those who prayed on Hylescost were not allowed to join the church.

Fourth, the only “methodology” used at Pentecost was prayer, the preaching of the Word of God, personal testimony, and the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit; whereas Hyles used a multiplicity of man-made promotions and gimmicks to attract people to his meetings and to manipulate people into making “decisions” and submitting to baptism.

Fifth, those saved at Pentecost “continued stedfastly in doctrine, fellowship, and prayer,” whereas very few of those who were counted in Hyles salvation statistics exhibited such plain evidence of salvation.

Following is the sad and frightful testimony of a preacher who personally participated in Hylescost when he was a student at Hyles Anderson. This provides a glimpse into the carnal, shallow, unscriptural inner workings of Quick Prayerism.

“One of the churches I attended years ago decided to try to replicate the day of Pentecost. ... My little part in this mission was to take an empty bus to the worst projects in town. I was to fill it up and drive to the church with fifty or so unsaved young people. I was to deliver these young people to a rented sports arena where the preacher would give a salvation message. Before returning the kids to the bus and thus to home, **we were instructed to ensure that all of these young people were baptized after the invitation had been given.**

“Imagine for a moment the scene. Thousands of people unused to church were crammed into a building not acoustically designed for church. The average worker to rider ratio was about one to thirty. The service stayed just this side of pandemonium only with the help of **frequent promises of cash prizes.** At the invitation, **all the people were instructed to repeat the sinner’s prayer after the preacher. From the pulpit, instructions were given to the workers to herd their charges toward the swimming pools for baptism.** ...

“Later that evening after all the activities of the day were over, the pastor of the church solemnly opened an envelope. To a cacophony of cheering and shouting, he told us that we had baptized more than three thousand

people that day. Then turning to a guest speaker on the platform he said, ‘And all of these people were dealt with one on one out of an open Bible.’

“I sat there stunned in my seat. I was not stunned by the number but by the assertion that all of this was done carefully. ... The preaching was plain and clear. But the service was mass chaos, there was zero actual conversational give-and-take to ensure understanding, and the mass assent was printed and impersonal” (Tom Brennan, *Schizophrenic: A Diagnosis of the Independent Baptist Movement*, pp. 206, 207).

Another pastor who was an eyewitness to Hylescost is Courtney Lewis. At the time, he was a student at Fairhaven Baptist College in Chesterton, Indiana, about 25 miles east of Hammond. He was involved with Fairhaven’s bus ministry and spent Saturdays and Sundays working with street kids in Chicago. He found out that First Baptist bus workers had contacted some of the kids he was working with and that they were going to participate in the big day, so he got permission to observe some of the proceedings. His testimony is as follows:

“It was a huge day for First Baptist Church of Hammond, Indiana. They could not bring everyone to Hammond, so they rented out satellite buildings in the area, and one of those was in Chicago, close to where we were ministering. They had rented out a Seventh-day Adventist church and were holding this rally for the kids. They had passed out flyers to the kids for their parents saying, ‘Your children will be taught about the gospel of Jesus Christ, and they will also be *taught about* baptism.’ So we went to that meeting. We sat in the back, and a bus pulled up and unloaded about 50 or 60 kids. We saw the kids that we were ministering to on normal Sundays get off the bus. They brought all of the kids into a classroom. They sat the kids down, and a worker came up and led the kids in one verse of ‘Amazing Grace.’ He sat down and another man came up and gave a five- or seven-minute presentation of the gospel to a these children--street kids, who had [for the most part] never heard the gospel. I was a street kid; I know what is going on in Chicago. There was no mention of repentance. It was just a basic Romans Road survey. Very weak. He said, ‘Bow your heads and close your eyes. Every one who wants to be sure that you are going to heaven, raise your hand.’ Several kids raised their hands, including one or two of the kids that we knew. As they raised their hands, there were workers that sat down with them there in that room. They pulled up a chair next to a kid and opened up the Bible. The worker that I was watching in particular was saying to the kid, ‘If you want to know for sure that you are going to heaven, here are the things that you have to know.’ While talking, the worker was continually looking around the room,

totally disinterested in the kid, but telling him, ‘Number 1, you are a sinner; number 2, Jesus died on the cross for your sins; number 3 you have to accept Him as your Saviour. Would you like to do that?’ The kid said yes, so the worker said, ‘Let’s bow our heads and pray this prayer.’ Several of the kids in that room did that. When that was done, they took the kids that prayed that prayer out of the classroom and they had set the auditorium up so that there was a baptismal tank with a curtain on one side for the girls and a curtain on the other side for the guys. There was a worker standing right by the baptismal tank with a clipboard. The kids changed behind the curtain and were brought one by one into the baptistry. As they did, the worker with the clipboard put a check mark for each baptism. He was nonchalantly making check marks: check, check, check, check, check. The kids were then taken out of that room and lined up at the door where they had entered, given a hotdog, put on the bus, the bus pulled away, and another bus pulled up, and the whole circuit started all over again. I saw it with my own eyes. There was a mom that came in later that was very irate. ‘How dare you baptize my son! I never gave you permission,’ she said. They pulled the file out and said to her, ‘It says here that your children will be *taught about* salvation and baptism.’ I say, that is wicked! That is wicked! And those were the soul-winning methods that were used for years at First Baptist Church of Hammond, Indiana. At least one of the kids that we had been working with was baptized that day. The next Sunday he was back at our church, and we said to him, ‘You were there last week and you got baptized. Why did you get baptized?’ He just shrugged his shoulders and said, ‘I don’t know.’ That was my experience” (Courtney Lewis, a testimony delivered to the preachers attending a Bible conference at Berean Bible Baptist Church, Cavite, the Philippines, January 15, 2020).

The emphasis of Scriptural soul winning is not going to heaven when you die; it is new life in Christ starting now. It is a new relationship with God starting now.

“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:40-420)

“Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance” (Ac. 26:19-20).

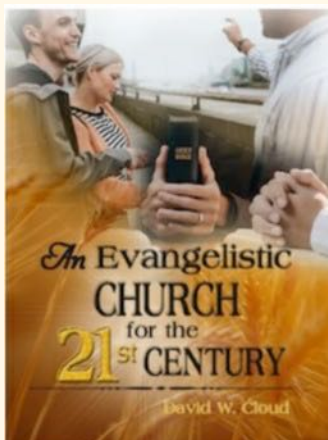
“Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Co. 5:17).

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature” (Ga. 6:15).

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10).

“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).

“For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” (1 Th. 1:9).

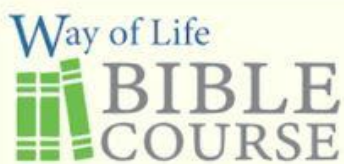


An Evangelistic Church for the 21st Century

by David W. Cloud

This course is unique in its approach. While it is practical, it does not present a formulaic approach to soul winning, recognizing that individuals have to be dealt with as individuals. The course does not include any sort of psychological manipulation techniques. It does not neglect repentance in soul winning, carefully explaining the biblical definition of repentance and the place of repentance in personal evangelism.

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



Churches Using Way of Life BIBLE COLLEGE COURSES

Following are some testimonies from pastors who are using the **Way of Life Bible College** curricula

<https://www.wayoflife.org/bc/course.php>



Simeon Western, Northside Baptist Church, Adelaide

We are running your Mastering the English Bible Course (Old Testament) on Tuesday nights. We are doing this one over 2 semesters. Our full time students recently completed "Understanding the Bible for Yourself" This semester they are doing "Understanding Bible Prophecy." Though you taught portions of it during the conference in July, we want them to get the full benefit of going through this course in detail.

Steve Hensley, Lighthouse Baptist Church, Payette, Idaho

We have gone through the One Year Discipleship course and Effectual Bible Student. I thank God for your work.

Tim Kelly, Lewiston Baptist Church, Lewiston, Maine

We have gone through Understanding the Bible for Yourself. I am getting ready to order at least two of every course in your Bible course system. One for my library and one for the church folks to check out to do home study. So we will have one class going and then encourage everyone to have one course for personal study too. If it is here physically on our library shelves, it will be more of a motivation for them to get involved.

Steve Boots, Mt. Victory Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia

I've expanded on the Unshakeable Faith throughout the course so I am still doing that with our teens. I am also planning, in September, to begin the One Year Discipleship course with the whole church in our institute. Planning to order all the copies for that soon.

Wayne Boadway, Royal City Baptist Church, Guelph, Ontario

We have used Way of Life materials for probably 20 years. We have also used your Sunday School material from years ago and parts of 'Keeping the Kids!' We are

currently using the course on "Proverbs" as a help in the morning preaching time and we are using the 'Understanding The Bible Yourself' and 'The New Testament Church' in our Tuesday evening Institute. We have about 25 students each Tuesday evening (from September to May). Many of them have attended for several years and we have used your materials for each of those courses (Pastoral Epistles, The Four Gospels, A History of the Church, etc). I as well as our church family have been blessed greatly by the Way of Life ministry. Particularly the O Timothy and the Advanced Bible Studies Series. The materials that you have produced are invaluable to our church. We have used and continue to use the ABSS materials as well as other materials in our institute and Sunday School and Youth program and have seen some tremendous changes in the lives of those who participate in our Bible Institute. Thank you for your uncompromising stand especially in the area of contemporary music. It is greatly appreciated. It was my own pastor who introduced me to your materials back in 1995, particularly the O Timothy Magazine which has been a great blessing to me and many in our church over the years.

James McDonald, Bethel Baptist Church, London, Ontario

I am using your Unshakable Faith for Bible class and also looking into using your material for training one of my young men for ministry.

Derek Seeley, Beaver Falls Baptist Church, Clatskanie, Oregon

We are using the Bible College books. We have finished Birds Eye View, Effectual Bible Student, Repentance and Soul-winning, and are currently going through Job and Psalms in the Mastering the English Bible courses. We have an average of about 20 folks who stay after church and listen to the videos, and an average of 10 who take the entire class for a grade. Your books and sermons are being used and are being a blessing to us for sure! Thank you so much for putting them together into a college format, I know several of our young people were torn between going to college but wanting to stay under their parents authority and also wanting to begin

working and saving for their future; and you've made it possible for them to do all three! Thank you!

Steve Houghton, Deaf Baptist Church, Pinellas Park, Florida

I am using your two volumes of Baptist History. And your review questions are so helpful. I love it. I plan to use your books for my Deaf Bible Institute here in central Florida.

Nathan Searle, Southern Cross Baptist Church, Engadine, NSW

I taught the fourth lesson of An Unshakeable Faith to my high school students today. We have 23 students in our high school at present. We were working through a study on the life of Christ, but I was sensing some doubts among a few students about some key foundational issues of the Christian life, so I switched to this study a few weeks ago in order to sure up the foundations. I have also taught this course over a year in our Bible Institute and have found it to be excellent.

Robert Hammond, Trumbull, Connecticut

This fall, I'm using your Acts text (and Pictorial Bible) as part of a Bible college course. Last semester, I used your Gospels text. I appreciate that these materials are accessible, thorough, and doctrinally-sound. I heartily recommend your course materials for use in Bible colleges, institutes, and churches.

Geraint Howells, U.K.

I would like to let you know that I have recently purchased some of your Bible commentary series (Daniel, Romans, The Future According to the Bible and Corinthian Epistles). I live in the UK and have been preaching for 12 years. Despite (and I say this as graciously as possible) knowing a LOT more biblically than the average church-going Christian, I have recently been convicted of my serious lack of Biblical knowledge. There are only very few options in England for sound Bible College training. Having started your commentary on Daniel for example, I have been greatly blessed and helped in gaining and remembering the knowledge of the themes of the book- expressly, the glory of God and His almighty power over the affairs of men. The review questions I have found to be particularly helpful. This is because it DISCIPLINES me in going over the passage and the material again and again until I can satisfactorily answer the questions and thereby retain the knowledge. Our tiny church here has already started to reap the

benefits of my serious studying of your Bible college materials. Thank you and may the LORD greatly bless you in the ministry - for His name's sake.

Courtney Lewis, Cornerstone Baptist Church, Chicago

Currently, we are using the new series on Why We Hold to the King James Bible and Mastering the English Bible. Dr. Cloud's Bible courses offer an exceptional educational experience for those seeking to deepen their understanding of Scripture while remaining rooted in sound doctrine. His courses (and in-person conferences) are meticulously crafted, providing a rich depth of content that explores Bible truths thoroughly. Each course is designed to be both doctrinally robust and highly practical, ensuring that the principles taught can be effectively applied in everyday life and ministry. These courses have been of immense help in strengthening our church in Chicago. The practical nature of the video courses makes it feel like bringing Bible college directly to your church, allowing our people to benefit from high-quality theological training without leaving their local church!!! Whether you are a pastor, a teacher, or a layperson, Dr. Cloud's courses are an invaluable resource for enhancing Biblical knowledge and strengthening one's faith.

Ryan Rench, Calvary Baptist Church, Temecula, California

I am teaching Understanding Bible Prophecy in Sunday School and for the Spring semester in our Bible institute we are planning to teach the expository preaching course (Feed the Flock), the evangelism course, and the Acts course (Mastering the English Bible). The courses are thorough and helpful. Thank you very much!

Way of Life Bible College

<https://www.wayoflife.org/bible-college/>

Courses

<https://www.wayoflife.org/bc/course.php>

Course materials

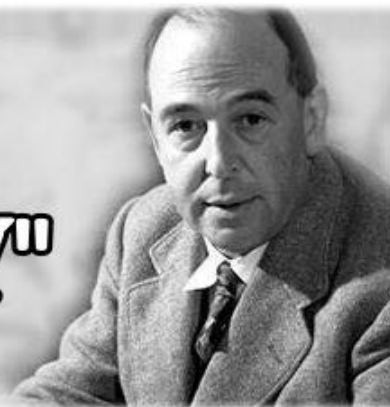
Course materials (Syllabus, Review Questions, Tests, Score Sheet) may be downloaded for free. Look for the green "Download Course" button on each course/book description/purchase page. You will find these pages on our website by navigating to "Books" and then "Courses."

Here's a direct link to the courses:

www.wayoflife.org/courses/

C.S. LEWIS & "MERE CHRISTIANITY"

By David Cloud



C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) is loved with an equal fervor by conservative evangelicals, emergents, Roman Catholics, Mormons, even atheists, a fact that speaks volumes to those who have ears to hear.

One of the many reasons evangelicals love Lewis is his ecumenical thinking and refusal to practice separation.

This was admitted by *Christianity Today*. "Lewis's ... concentration on the main doctrines of the church coincided with evangelicals' concern to avoid ecclesiastical separatism" (*Christianity Today*, Oct. 25, 1993).

Following is an overview of Lewis's ecumenical philosophy and his influence on the ecumenical movement:

"Lewis was firmly ecumenical, though he distanced himself from outright liberalism. In his preface to *Mere Christianity*, Lewis states that his aim is to present 'an agreed, or common, or central or mere Christianity.' So he aims to concentrate on the doctrines that he believes are common to all forms of Christianity--including Roman Catholicism. It is no surprise that he submitted parts of the book to four clergymen for criticism--an Anglican, a Methodist, a Presbyterian, and a Roman Catholic! He hopes that the book will make it clear why all Christians 'ought to be reunited,' but warns that it should not be seen as an alternative to the creeds of existing denominations. He likens the 'mere Christianity' that he describes in the book to a hall from which various rooms lead off. These rooms are the various Christian traditions. And just as when you enter a house you do not stay in the hall but enter a room, so when you become a Christian you should join a particular Christian tradition. Lewis

believes that it is not too important which room you enter. It will be right for some to enter the door marked 'Roman Catholicism' as it will for others to enter other doors. Whichever room you enter, says Lewis, the important thing is that you be convinced that it is the right one for you. And, he says, 'When you have reached your own room, be kind to those who have chosen different doors.' ...

"This enigma of C.S. Lewis was no more than a slight bemusement to me until recently three things changed my bemusement into bewilderment.

"In March 1994 the Evangelicals and Catholics Together movement produced its first document. This was a programmatic document entitled *Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium*. It was rightly said at the time that this document represented 'a betrayal of the Reformation.' I saw no connection between this and C.S. Lewis until a couple of years later when the symposium *Evangelicals and Catholics Together: Working Towards a Common Mission* was published. In his contribution to the book, Charles Colson--the evangelical 'prime mover' behind ECT--tells us that C.S. Lewis was a major influence which led him to form the movement (Billy Graham was another!). In fact Colson says that Evangelicals and Catholics Together seeks to continue the legacy of C.S. Lewis by focusing on the core beliefs of all true Christians (*Common Mission*, p. 36). The enigma took on a more foreboding aspect.

"The enigma darkened further when just last year (after becoming connected to the internet at the end of 1996) I discovered, quite by accident, that C.S. Lewis is just as popular amongst Roman Catholics as he is

amongst evangelicals. Perhaps I should have known this already, but it had never struck me before.

“The third shock came last autumn when I read that *Christianity Today*--reputed to be the leading evangelical magazine in the USA--had conducted a poll amongst its readers to discover whom they considered the most influential theological writers of the twentieth century. You will have already guessed that C.S. Lewis came out on top!

“After these three things it came as no surprise to me this year to find that C.S. Lewis has exerted a major influence on the *Alpha* course [which has a Roman Catholic branch] and that it quotes or refers to him almost *ad nauseam*. Could not the *Alpha* course be renamed the ‘Mere Christianity’ course? ...

“In conclusion, I offer the following reflection. If it is true to say that ‘you are what you eat,’ then it is also true to say that ‘a Christian is what he hears and reads’ since this is how he gets his spiritual food. Thus **if Christians are brought up on a diet of C.S. Lewis, it should not surprise us to find they are seeking ‘to continue the legacy of C.S. Lewis.’** The apostle Paul said, ‘A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump’ (Gal. 5:9--the whole passage is relevant to the present context); thus **IF EVANGELICALS READ AND APPLAUD SUCH BOOKS AS *MERE CHRISTIANITY* IT SHOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE IF WE FIND THEM ‘WORKING TOWARDS A COMMON MISSION’ WITH THE ENEMIES OF THE GOSPEL. THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN SHOULD BE VERY CAREFUL WHAT HE READS, AND THOSE IN POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY (PASTORS, TEACHERS, PARENTS) SHOULD BE VERY CAREFUL WHAT THEY RECOMMEND OTHERS TO READ**” (Dr. Tony Baxter, “The Enigma of C.S. Lewis,” *CRN Journal*, Winter 1998, Christian Research Network, Colchester, United Kingdom, p. 30).

In April 1998, Mormon professor Robert Millet spoke at Wheaton College on the topic of C.S. Lewis. In a recent issue of *Christianity Today*, Millet, dean of Brigham Young University, is quoted as saying that C.S. Lewis “is so well received by Latter-day Saints [Mormons] because of his broad and inclusive vision of Christianity” (John W. Kennedy, “Southern Baptists

Take Up the Mormon Challenge,” *Christianity Today*, June 15, 1998, p. 30).

Lewis carried on a warm correspondence in Latin with Catholic priest Don Giovanni Calabria of Italy over their shared “concern for the reunification of the Christian churches” (*The Narnian*, Alan Jacobs, pp. 249, 250). Calabria was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1988.

In 1943, Lewis gave a talk on “Christian Apologetics” for a group of priests in Wales (*The Narnian*, p. 229).

From the 1940s to the end of his life, Lewis’s spiritual advisor was a Catholic priest named Walter Adams (*The Narnian*, p. 224). It was to this priest that Lewis confessed his sins.

In 2013, *The Catholic World Report* published “C.S. Lewis and Catholic Converts,” a lengthy article documenting Lewis’s roll in drawing men and women to the Roman Catholic Church. It begins, “While Lewis himself never entered the Catholic Church, his writings have led a dizzying array of converts across the Tiber.” The report lists prominent names including Leonard Cheshire, Meriol Trevor, Ian Ker, E.F. Schumacher, William Oddie, David Quinn, Michael Coren, Al Kresta, Dwight Longenecker, Francis Beckwith, Mark Brumley, Sheldon Vanauken, H. Lyman Stebbins, Warren Carroll, Ronda Chervin, Ross Douthat, Thomas Howard, Bobby Jindal, Peter Kreeft, Lorraine Murray, Jef Murray, Bernard Nathanson (who performed more than 60,000 abortions before converting to Catholicism), Kevin O’Brien, Carl Olson, and Walter Hooper.

“Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?” (1 Co. 5:6).

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Co. 15:33).

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Ti. 3:5).

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Ro. 16:17).

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?



EVANGELIST SAYS 95% OF EVANGELICAL CHURCHES ARE LIKE COUNTRY CLUBS (Friday Church News Notes, December 20, 2024, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -

In a recent interview, evangelist and motivational speaker Nick Vujicic says the vast majority of evangelical churches are "more like a country club." "In 95% of the churches we have GenZ today swearing, sleeping around, and every knows it, but no one is really keeping anyone accountable. So I am seeing the fruit of no accountability and no meat being taught. ... I think we haven't seen the [real] accounts [yet] of [the result of] addictions to technology, which really is scary. Seven and a half hours a day young people are on technology, and more than 65% of teenagers are doing self production of inappropriate photos of themselves. ... [A]s long as we don't bring in boundaries that hold men accountable that starts at the leadership, I am very afraid of what's ahead. A telling sign is how many more people prayed pre-election compared to now. I think that many of the conservative Christians are praying less now ... fasting less, when we think that a president is what we need. But he is not our saviour. ... In the end, it's not about the president, it's about the church" ("Nick Vujicic sounds alarm on church culture," *The Christian Post*, Dec. 5, 2024). Though born without arms and legs, Vujicic has learned to live a pretty normal life and has traveled widely on speaking tours. He is married with four children. He is not a fundamentalist, to say the least, but he is willing to speak out

about the terrible weakness he sees in the evangelical circles in which he moves, and we admire that. The fact is that a great many churches that consider themselves "Fundamental KJV-Only Baptist" are in no better shape spiritually than the evangelical churches Vujicic describes. Vujicic calls for more biblical depth, more godliness in leadership, more discipline, more separation, more heavenly mindedness than political/worldly mindedness. That's exactly what the vast majority of fundamental Baptist churches need.

U.K. EXTENDS BAN ON PUBERTY BLOCKERS FOR CHILDREN INDEFINITELY (Friday Church News Notes, December 20, 2024, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -

The following is excerpted from "U.K. extends ban," *Standing For Freedom*, Dec. 12, 2024: "The U.K. has announced that its ban on giving puberty blockers to those under 18 has been extended indefinitely, after finding the drugs cause significant risks to children while providing no benefits. In 2022 Dr. Hilary Cass released her interim report showing that **professionals at the Tavistock Clinic, the nation's primary gender clinic, were pushing children into transitioning even as they ignored their other mental health issues and the reality that almost all children will come to accept their biological sex later in life.** In response, the U.K. permanently closed the Tavistock Gender Clinic, and in March it temporarily banned all healthcare providers from prescribing puberty blockers to anyone under 18 (except for those enrolled in clinical trials), due to the uncertainties surrounding the efficacy and long-term effects of the



drugs. That ban was again extended in May following the release of Cass's full review, which found that there was no evidence of a benefit to puberty blockers in treating children with gender dysphoria and there was evidence of potential serious harms. Yesterday, the U.K. made the ban indefinite. ... Health and Social Secretary Wes Streeting stated, 'Children's healthcare must always be evidence-led. ... It is a scandal that medicine was given to vulnerable children without the proof that it was safe or effective.' The U.K.'s decision comes one week after the Biden administration doubled down on its advocacy for gender-affirming treatments by arguing before the Supreme Court that puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and surgeries are necessary, safe, and beneficial to gender-confused children."

SAYING "NOPE" TO

TEMPTATION (Friday Church News Notes, December 20, 2024, www.wayoflife.org

fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - In dealing with temptation, Emeal Zwayne uses the acronym NOPE - *Not One Peek Even*. He says, "I saw a couple of very scantily dressed women jogging near my car as I drove through my neighborhood. As soon as I caught sight of them in my periphery, I automatically exclaimed, 'Nope!' I instantly felt a strong resolve rise up in my heart, and it flooded my whole being with a mixture of unwavering determination and satisfying joy. I remember that as soon as this happened, I wished I could somehow come up with a meaningful acrostic that would help focus my mind and strengthen my resolve anytime I'm tempted to lust. About five seconds later, four words instantly popped into my mind--*Not One Peek Even*. ... Peeking is where it all starts. And peeking will definitely result in piquing your interest when it comes to the area of lust. ... If you think about it, you'll realize that there is an edgy flare associated with the word *NOPE*. It comes loaded with tenacity and attitude. ... No other attitude will do when dealing with the temptation

to lust. A flavorless *no* is insufficient. Our will must bellow out a thunderous *NOPE*. When possible, I recommend saying the word aloud. ... If you're really serious about fighting like a man, brother, then you're going to ... need to be brutal about how you deal with what comes across your eyes and what crops up in your mind. ... When I say NOPE in times of temptation, I combine it with five declarations associated with love and directly correlated to five fingers on one of my hands. As a citizen of God's kingdom, I imagine myself extending my hand toward a plow, as Jesus referenced in Luke 9:62, and determining not to look back toward any sexual temptation that would lure me away from my God. As I envision myself reaching out to grab the plow, I say the following five things in successive order, as I systematically wrap each of my corresponding fingers, one by one, around the handle: 'Not One Peek Even--because I love my *Lord*, I love my *lady* (wife), I love my *lineage* (my children and grandchildren), I love His *lambs* (other Christians), and I love the *lost* (unbelievers). and then I hold on tightly with a firm and unyielding grip" (*Fight Like a Man*).

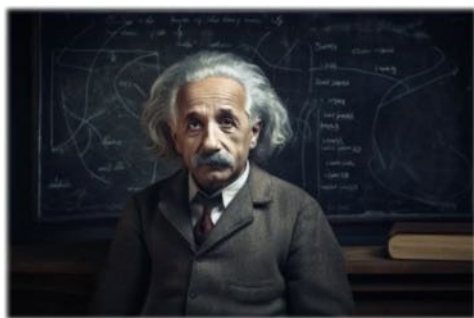
SOCIAL MEDIA THE GREAT TIME WASTER

(Friday Church News Notes, December 20, 2024, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Many who have written to us about Facebook and other social media forums mention this problem. Social media is *scientifically designed* to grab your attention and keep it. "I find the biggest hindrance of Facebook is that it can be a very big time waster. There are so many connections that can be had with Facebook that if a person is not careful they will spend more time on Facebook than they do in their Bibles and on their knees." "I have struggled with letting Facebook control too much of my time, and I do regret a lot of time lost to Facebook. I'm not even tempted to use Facebook anymore because I remember how depressing it could be



to sit and scroll looking at the same stuff over and over knowing that there were other things I could and should be doing with my time." "Facebook is very addicting. Next thing you know you have wasted time going throughout posts reading comments. I have had to limit myself to checking mine only a couple of times a week if that." "Facebook is like a black hole sucking productivity away." "YouTube is a trap. Instagram is a trap. Facebook is a trap. If you're still here, that's because 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." Consider "35 Things You Do that Waste Your Time": "Popping by YouTube and getting sucked into something totally irrelevant. Watching random videos that scroll across your feed about someone's child or cat or checking Facebook or Twitter 'real quick'" ("35 Things," ProlificLiving.com). "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).

EINSTEIN'S GOAL (Friday Church News Notes, December 27, 2024, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - "Albert Einstein once said, 'I want to know God's thoughts in a mathematical way.' Einstein wanted an equation, perhaps no more than one inch long, that would encapsulate all physical laws, the beauty, the majesty, the power of the universe into a single equation. That was his life's goal" ("Einstein," History Channel). Einstein, a Jew by heritage, was a brilliant man who had a gift of understanding "natural" laws, and he knew that those laws required a Designer, but according to his own testimony he never knew that Designer because he rejected the Designer's Revelation. The Bible doesn't encapsulate the mysteries of the universe in a mathematical equation, but it does encapsulate those mysteries in pithy statements that will require an eternity to fully understand. Like this one: "God ... hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:1-3). In these 70 simple words, 58 of which are a mere one syllable and 51 of which are four letters or less, we learn the answer to the most important questions of life and the greatest mysteries of the universe. We learn that there is a God. The Bible doesn't try to prove God's existence, because His existence is evident in His work. A universe that must be described in terms of "beauty, majesty, complexity, and power" requires a beautiful, majestic,



complex, powerful Author. God gave man enough sense to know that, unless the man corrupts his own reason through rebellion. We learn, too, that God has a Son, and that Son is the express image of His person, and that Son is the Creator. We learn that God has so much affection for man that His Son died on the cross to purchase the atonement for man's sin. We learn that the Son is currently sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and that the Son upholds all things by the word of His power. The word "uphold" is also translated "to carry" and "to bear." Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, the Creator, bears this universe by His almighty power. The "God particle" is God Himself (not that the creation *is* God, of course). Thank the Lord that one doesn't have to have the mental brilliance of an Einstein to know this lovely God. He only has to humble himself and repent of his sin and put his faith in Jesus Christ as his only Lord and Saviour.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES (Friday Church News Notes, December 27, 2024, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The "times of the Gentiles" (Lu. 21:24) refers to the period during which Israel is under Gentile domination. It began when the Gentile king Nebuchadnezzar took Judah captive (2 Ch. 36:1-21). Since then, "Jerusalem has been under Gentile overlordship" (Scofield). Though Israel returned to the land after the Babylonian captivity, she has remained under Gentile control except during the brief reign of the Maccabees. When Jesus was born, Israel was under the dominion of Rome. That Israel is still under "the times of the Gentiles" is why she is at the beck and call of major Gentile powers, such as America, the European Union, the United Nations, and the World Court. Oftentimes, she has not been at liberty to make her own decisions, even when her welfare is at stake. The "times of the Gentiles" is why Israel does not control the Temple Mount and cannot do as she pleases with her own territory in "the West Bank," etc. This is God's will for the present,

because Israel is still in rebellion to God's law and in rejection of her own Messiah. The "times of the Gentiles" will end when Christ returns. His kingdom is described by Daniel as the stone that is cut out without hands that destroys the Gentile kingdoms (Da. 2:44-45).

EARLY PRO-LIFE FEMINISTS (Friday Church News Notes, December 27, 2024, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from Marjorie Dannenfelser, "Pro-Life Feminists Are Old-School," *National Review*, Jan. 20, 2017: "Susan B. Anthony campaigned, above all, for women's right to equal economic and political opportunity. But the newspaper she owned and ran with Elizabeth Cady Stanton refused to carry ads for abortifacients, and published numerous articles from feminist leaders denouncing abortion as evil. Anthony said in her famous, oft-repeated temperance speech, that 'the newspaper reports every day of every year of scandals and outrages, of wife murders and paramour shooting, of abortions and infanticides, are perpetual reminders of men's incapacity to cope successfully with this monster evil of society.' ... Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell was the very first woman to become a medical doctor in the United States ... The National Women's History Museum honors Dr. Blackwell as our first woman physician, while editing out of her history one of her major passions: opposing the cruelty of abortion. She wrote in her diary: 'The gross perversion and destruction of motherhood by the abortionist filled with me indignation.' This sentiment motivated her lifelong efforts, as it did those of other early feminist physicians, including Dr. Charlotte Lozier. Sarah F. Norton, who,



with Susan B. Anthony, successfully persuaded Cornell University to admit women in 1870, wrote that ‘perhaps there will come a time when an unmarried mother will not be despised because of her motherhood ... and when the right of the unborn to be born will not be denied or interfered with.’”

SOCIAL MEDIA THE DEVIL’S MIXING BOWL (Friday Church News Notes, December 27, 2024, 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, truth and heresy, righteousness and unrighteousness. In this manner, social media provides a direct and powerful and continual assault on biblical holiness and purity. Consider a couple of the many warnings we have received from Christian friends: “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.” Another said, “I found that I ‘reconnected’ with people



that the Lord had separated me from. The Lord geographically moved me away 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.”

KENNETH COPELAND SAYS HE WILL LIVE TO 120 (Friday Church News Notes, January 3, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Speaking in December at his church in Texas, 88-year-old Word of Faith preacher Kenneth Copeland said he has made a deal with God so that he will live to be 120. “I have made and entered [into a] covenant with God and on December 6, 2056, I’ll see you all later. I’m out of here, 120 years old” (“Televangelist Kenneth Copeland,” *Christian Post*, Dec. 23, 2024). Copeland has uttered many false doctrines and false prophecies, including the Word-faith heresy. Consider a couple of examples: “He [Adam] was not a little like God. He was not almost like God. He was not subordinate to God even. ... Adam is as much like God as you could get, just the same as Jesus. ... Adam, in the Garden of Eden, was God manifested in the flesh” (“Following the Faith of Abraham I,” *Believer’s Voice of Victory*, 1989 audiotape, #01-3001, side 1). “Believe it in your heart; say it with your mouth. That is the principle of faith. You can have what you say” (Copeland, quoted from *Charismatic Chaos*, p. 285). “The earth doesn’t belong to God; it doesn’t belong to Jesus; he gave it to men. If you study the Scripture, you will realize that God is pretty well bound up to whatever we ask Him to do” (“Kenneth Copeland delivers a special message about Hurricane Irma,” September 9, 2017).



In September 2017, Copeland cursed Hurricane Irma in Jesus’ name and pronounced it “dead.” In fact, Irma hit the Florida mainland as a powerful category 3 storm and caused widespread wind and flood damage.

ANTI-CHRISTIAN VIOLENCE IN INDIA REACHES RECORD LEVELS IN 2024 (Friday Church News Notes, January 3, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Violence Against Christians,” *Premier Christian News*, Dec. 28, 2024: “The United Christian Forum (UCF) has revealed that violence against Christians in India has reached unprecedented levels, with 745 incidents reported through November 2024. This marks a dramatic rise from 127 incidents recorded in 2014 and represents a nearly six-fold increase over the past decade. Uttar Pradesh recorded the highest number of cases at 182, followed by Chhattisgarh with 139. Incidents were reported in 23 of India’s 28 states, highlighting the widespread nature of the issue. ... in Manipur ... sectarian conflict has led to significant destruction, including the demolition of over 200 churches in 2023. UCF expressed concern about the lack of governmental attention to these incidents, contrasting it with the swift response to attacks on minorities in neighbouring Bangladesh. The UCF also raised concerns about systemic issues, including law enforcement bias, citing a report from the People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) that alleges police complicity in crimes against Christians ... India currently ranks 11th on the Open Doors World Watch List of countries where

Christians face the most severe persecution.”

CHURCH TAKES BIBLE KNOWLEDGE TEST (Friday Church News Notes, January 3, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - “Bro. Cloud, I took your *Bible Knowledge Test* (the brief one) to the pulpit and held a pop-quiz right at the start of our Wed. night service (which was a special Thanksgiving Service this past November). I am happy to report that many of our people were able to answer correctly. What was even more exciting is that some of the young children were able to supply correct answers as they too participated in answering the pop-quiz. Some of our people quizzed out, after three correct answers, so as to give others a chance to answer. It was a delight for the congregation to hear the little children answer correctly--the people actually cheered. And when other adults answered correctly, that too, brought on some glad cheers. I got feedback from others who were challenged that they didn’t know the answers, but that they are glad to have had their ignorance exposed (even if it was to their own selves). Now they are resolved to listen better to the messages and sermons. I told them, I hope this experience would spur them on to really learning more and more the precious Holy Bible that God gave to us. We will be accountable to God someday for His words. Did we study it? Did we memorize it? Did we take heed to it? Did we read it? Did we understand it (or earnestly, purposefully try to understand it). Did we share it? Did we treasure it? I told our people, if we expect to have a good Judgment Seat of Christ experience in the future, then we better do good with what He has given to us, today. AMEN. We appreciate your *Bible Knowledge Test* book (at least for now the ‘Brief’ section of that resource).”

SOCIAL MEDIA A MAGNET TO DRAW THE LORD’S PEOPLE TO THE WORLD (Friday Church News Notes, January 3, 2025,



www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Facebook is filled with worldly people and worldly things. You aren’t forced to participate with worldly things and you can control your own Facebook page and your “friends,” but staying in control is no small task. Facebook doesn’t want to make it easy for its users to shut themselves off from notifications and suggested “friends” and “Likes,” and such. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok are the devil’s nose-rings to take young people wherever he wills. The young people in our church who are growing spiritually are those who have given up social media, and we have many of these. One reader said, “Many years ago, I left Facebook for the simple fact that I found too many so called Christians that I had grown up with or went to Bible college with had left their first love and it became very depressing and troublesome.” A pastor says, “I have taught our young people not to be on Facebook, and the ones who have stayed in the church are those who followed that advice.”

WITCHCRAFT ON SOCIAL MEDIA (Friday Church News Notes, January 3, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Young women gravitate toward modern



witchcraft,” *The Washington Post*, Oct. 29, 2024: “Today’s witches are young influencers with popular social media accounts. They host podcasts and post astrological divinations from their downtown dwellings. ... the #witchesoftiktok ... rack up hundreds of thousands of views and likes daily. ... astrology’s influence is growing, especially among younger Americans. According to YouGov’s 2022 poll, more than 1 in 4 Americans say the stars influence their lives. That includes 37% of adults younger than 30. The astrology market, in particular, has grown significantly from \$2.2 billion in value in 2018 to \$12.8 billion in 2021. By 2031, it is expected to reach \$22.8 billion, Allied Market Research said. Women are more likely to buy in. ... A 2023 survey from the Pew Research Center explores details of this growing interest in ‘spirituality.’ It said 42% of adults believe the dead can communicate. Nearly half of respondents said they believe the dead can lend the living a helping hand ... On Reddit, groups such as WitchesvsPatriarchy even share politically charged hexes. One user recently described a ‘freezer spell’ aimed at Donald Trump and Project 2025, with plans to symbolically ‘freeze’ their influence by sealing names in bottles under the waning moon. ... WitchesvsPatriarchy has more than 750,000 active members.”

THE PASTOR’S SACRED STUDY (Friday Church News Notes, January 3, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - A pastor, who is divinely appointed to “feed the flock,” must teach his people the importance of his study time and exhort them to respect that time and help him guard it. He should explain that there are certain times when he is unavailable except for real emergencies. If they want a godly pastor who has a rich personal devotional life and if they want an educated pastor and a rich preaching/teaching ministry, they will understand and respect this. One preacher said, “I carve out a time away

from everything in order to avoid distractions. I notify my wife, and others so that I can get into my study mode. I gather the necessary materials ahead of time. My desk has most, if not all, of the resources that I will need or consult. I will have water and peanuts on the desk also so that I don't need to waste time getting up and breaking my concentration. My cell phone is on airplane mode, a no disturbance sign is on the door." I know of a pastor who does some of his study in a back corner of a public library. While traveling, I've often done my Bible study in my car while parked in some quiet place. There are occasions, of course, when a preacher must interrupt his study schedule, but it should be for a true emergency only. If the preacher allows himself to be at the beck and call of people during his study time, he will get into the bad habit of being hit and miss. The preacher must honor God by honoring God's Word and giving it the right priority in his daily life. In case of emergency, the pastor can make some arrangement for being contacted during his study. Perhaps the people can call his wife, secretary, or a deacon and inform them of the problem, and they can decide whether to inform the pastor at that time or to wait until later.

JIMMY CARTER DEAD AT 100

(Friday Church News Notes, January 10, 2025, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Jimmy Carter, 39th President of the United States, died on Dec. 29 at age 100. A long-time Sunday School teacher at Maranatha Baptist Church of Plains, Georgia, Carter is an example of the



apostasy that has leavened a large portion of Baptist churches. I am sad to say that the likable, ever-smiling Jimmy Carter was a lousy president and a worse Christian. He was an intelligent and well-meaning, but gullible, misguided do-gooder. On the presidential side, he gave away the Panama Canal, pushed through the Camp David Accords (which gave the Sinai peninsula to Egypt and weakened Israel's control of the so-called West Bank), blamed Israel for Palestinian terrorism, helped pave the way for the Islamic State turning Iran into a major terrorist-sponsoring nation, concluded the SALT II treaty with the duplicitous Soviet Union, weakening America's missile programs, and severed formal relations with democratic Taiwan in order to establish full diplomatic ties with communist China. He also gave China most favored nation trade status. On his visit in 2003 he played right into the Chinese government's hands by not criticizing the communists on any point. Carter's wrong-headed handling of China "set the stage for China's economic ascent--and later, its rivalry with the U.S." It could well lead to a war that America will not win. Much more could be said about Jimmy Carter's presidency, but let's turn to the Christian side. In 1977, in the first year of his presidency, Carter told the *Lutheran Forum* magazine that his favorite mentoring theologians were rank liberals Paul Tillich, Soren Kierkegaard, and Reinhold Niebuhr. Tillich called the Christmas story a "legend" in the December 1977 issue of *The Lutheran*. That year, Carter appointed pro-abortion activist Sarah Weddington to the position of assistant to the president. Weddington was lead attorney in the 1973 abortion case, *Roe v. Wade*, which resulted in legalization of abortion in America and the murder of millions of unborn babies. In 1992, Carter agreed to serve as the honorary co-chair of the Human Rights Campaign, a homosexual advocacy group. In a 1997 interview, Carter said Mormons are Christians and should not be the targets of "proselytizing" (Carrie Moore, "Are Mormons Christians," *Deseret News*,

Nov. 15, 1997). On his visit to India in 1989, Carter accepted a Hindu tika on his forehead, and in 1990 he said that the principles of Christ are "not incompatible with the principles of other faiths" (*Christian Century*, June 6, 1990). In January 2004, after Georgia public school superintendent Kathy Cox ordered the word "evolution" to be removed from its science textbooks, Carter entered the fray and won the day for evolution ("Another Attempt to Deny Evolution," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, Feb. 12, 2004). In June 2000, Carter spoke at the ultra liberal Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's (CBF) 10th annual convention in Atlanta. One of the organizations associated with the CBF is Baptist Women in Ministry, whose meetings have featured prayers to "Mother God." Baptist Women in Ministry treasurer Sally Burgess said, "God is good, and She knows what She's doing" ("Mother God worshipped," Baptist Press, June 29, 2001). Carter also spoke at the New Baptist Covenant Celebration in Atlanta in January 2008, which we attended with media credentials. One of the approved ministries at that conference was the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists which pushes for churches to receive practicing homosexuals as members and to approve of homosexual "marriage." Jimmy Carter was right at home in this spiritual wickedness. The root problem in all of this was that Carter was not born again. On Nov. 19, 2019, Carter told his Sunday School class that he had doubts about life after death until his cancer in 2015. Only at age 95 were his doubts resolved ("Sunday school class with Jimmy Carter," *Higher Ground*, Jan. 4, 2025), and, sadly, the resolution did not entail being saved biblically. Carter did not preach the gospel of Christ's atoning sacrifice to the thousands who attended his bi-monthly Sunday School classes. The funerals of both Roselynn and Jimmy Carter featured the John Lennon atheist song "Imagine." The large majority of America's prominent leaders of all political and religious stripes have long thumbed their collective nose at Almighty God's holy Word and holy laws.

RELAX AND ENJOY WHAT GOD IS DOING (Friday Church News Notes, January 10, 2025, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - “The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going” (Pr. 14:15). The doctrine of apostasy (the Bible’s teaching that false Christianity will increase throughout the church age) and a biblical testing mindset has protected me for more than 50 years. It protected me as a new Christian confronted by the bewildering variety of churches, denominations, cults, and isms. It has protected me ever since. I think of an experience I had at the 1987 North American Congress on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelization in New Orleans, which I attended with media credentials. It was an ecumenical conference represented by some 40 denominations, including Roman Catholic. All sorts of heresies were present, including baptismal regeneration and prayers to Mary. One afternoon I was conversing with a young man who worked for an Episcopalian organization. I asked if he was born again, and he gave me a fairly biblical testimony. I then said, “If you are saved, how can you be comfortable in the midst of so much heresy?” He replied, “You need to relax and enjoy what God is doing.” I tried to explain that the Bible warns of apostasy and we must test everything by Scripture to protect ourselves, but he wasn’t listening. Later I thought to myself, **I want to enjoy what God is doing, but I don’t want to be deceived by what the devil is doing!** God’s Word teaches that “Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light” and “his ministers also be transformed as ministers of righteousness” (2 Co. 11:14-15). If I would be open and non-vigilant like this man counseled, I would be in great danger. I have been protected because I know the Bible’s teaching about apostasy and I have a biblical testing mindset. Every born again saint must understand the doctrine of apostasy and protect himself and his loved ones against error. This requires being a serious, effectual Bible student and measuring everything by God’s Word.

Every New Testament church must educate its people in these essential things. Parents must be educated and they must educate the children. Every generation must be re-educated. “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Ac. 17:11).

NIETZSCHE AND THE ANTICHRIST (Friday Church News Notes, January 10, 2025, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Friedrich Nietzsche (pronounced neet’cha) (1844-1900) was raised Lutheran. His father and both grandfathers were Lutheran pastors, and as a boy he aspired to follow in their footsteps. At age 17, he rejected the Bible under the influence of skeptical writings. He became a blasphemer of God and Christ. He called himself “the most terrible opponent of Christianity.” In *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1883-85), Nietzsche called for a race of “overmen” (*ubermensch*) who live as they please with complete disregard for divine judgment. In his book *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche mocked mercy, kindness, patience, and humility and esteemed “severity, violence, slavery, danger ... devilry of every kind ... everything wicked, terrible, tyrannical, predatory, and serpentine” so long as it “serves as well for the elevation of the human species.” Hitler and the Nazis lived out Nietzsche’s *ubermensch* dream to the destruction of millions, and it didn’t elevate the species one iota. Nietzsche’s *ubermensch* is a perfect description of the coming Man of Sin. Nietzsche, the terrible opponent of Christianity, went insane at age 45 with “a complete loss of his mental faculties.”

CANADA TOWN AND MAYOR FINED FOR REFUSING TO CELEBRATE PRIDE MONTH (Friday Church News Notes, January 10, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Canadian town fined,” *Fox News*, Dec.



1, 2024: “A Canadian town is facing a fine of \$10,000 for refusing to participate in Pride Month and fly the ‘LGBTQ2 rainbow flag’ outside its municipal building. The town of Emo, Ontario, which has a population of about 1,300 and is situated near the border with Minnesota, was found to have violated the Ontario Human Rights Code by the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario for refusing to proclaim June as Pride Month, according to a report from the *National Post*. The town was also issued a citation for its failure to fly ‘an LGBTQ2 rainbow flag,’ the report notes, despite Emo not having an official flag pole. In addition to the \$10,000 fine, officials from the town were ordered to complete mandatory ‘human rights’ training. According to the report, the decision to cite Emo began with a 2020 incident in which the town was approached by a group called Borderland Pride, which issued a written request asking that Emo declare June Pride Month. The request was defeated by a 3-2 vote at a later Emo township council meeting, where Mayor Harold McQuaker argued there was ‘no flag being flown for the other side of the coin... there’s no flags being flown for the straight people.’ ... Borderland Pride sought a \$15,000 fine for the Township as well as a \$10,000 fine for each of the three council members who voted no on the group’s request, according to the report, though the tribunal eventually settled on the \$10,000 fine for the township and a \$5,000 fine for McQuaker.”

THE HOWARD FAMILY: THE DANGER OF WRONG ASSOCIATIONS (Friday Church News Notes, January 17, 2025, www.wayoflife.org,

fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Corinthians 15:33). Thomas Howard (1935-2020) was raised in a prominent fundamentalist family. His father Philip Howard, Jr., was the editor in the 1920s of the *Sunday School Times*, the largest weekly fundamentalist paper. Thomas's uncle, Charles Trumbell, was the previous editor. The Howard family was a fundamentalist family, both in doctrine and practice. The Howard children had "a strict religious education." They were taught to have "an earnestness about holy things." The family practiced separation from the world. The children were taught to fear the temptations of "sex, alcohol, tobacco, bridge, the foxtrot [dancing], the races, and the movies" ("Died: Thomas Howard," *Christianity Today*, Oct. 19, 2020). They "were raised to be missionaries." The family discipline was called "GMT: Good Missionary Training." The parents had been missionaries to Belgium. Thomas's sister, Elizabeth (1926-2015) became a missionary to Ecuador where she married Jim Elliot, who was killed by the Auca Indians. As the new evangelicalism of the 1950s leavened the Howard family circles and the institutions with which they were associated, they gradually changed. Thomas encountered the new evangelical philosophy at Wheaton College and "began to question what he'd previously thought was certain" (Ibid.). He devoted himself to British Literature and was an expert on C.S. Lewis. He was influenced by Lewis's ecumenical philosophy that was expressed in *Mere Christianity*: Christianity is a big house; the denominations (e.g., Protestant, Baptist, Anglican, Orthodox, Roman Catholic) are the various rooms; Christians should accept every branch as genuine Christianity. Protestants and Baptists and Roman Catholics are just different rooms in "the church." Instead of giving his life to missionary work, Thomas pursued scholarship, which immersed him in dangerous waters. His doctoral dissertation was on the fantasy novels of Charles Williams, a liberal Anglican

who exalted a spirit of doubting. Williams was a member of the Fellowship of the Rosy Cross, which promoted the mysticism and false gospel of Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism, and Theosophy. This is demonic territory. By the influence of his intimate study of Anglican literature, Thomas eventually joined the ultra-liberal Episcopal Church, the American branch of Anglicanism. In 1985 he joined the Roman Catholic Church, left his teaching job at Gordon College and taught at St. John's Seminary in Boston. In 1997 he published *On Being Catholic*. By his example and literature, he influenced others to join the Catholic Church. In September 1997, Elizabeth Elliot spoke at an interdenominational meeting in Wisconsin. When asked, "Can a person be Catholic and Christian in union?" she replied, "Yes, we can have unity in diversity; my brother is a Catholic and a Christian." This unscriptural thinking was the product of new evangelical blending and merging. Instead of anchoring themselves in the old paths of God's Word, the Howard children allowed themselves to be carried away by the new evangelical tide. The result was spiritual and doctrinal disaster. "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Corinthians 15:33).

FACEBOOK DUMPS "FACT CHECKERS" AND ADDS TRUMP FRIEND/FREE SPEECH ADVOCATE TO THE BOARD (Friday Church News Notes, January 17, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Facebook Dumps," *PowerLine*, Jan. 7, 2025, and "Meta Goes MAGA," Jan. 6,



2025: "In another victory for free speech, Meta has announced that Facebook will no longer employ third-party 'fact checkers.' Instead, it will adopt a system similar to X's 'community notes' feature: 'The Community Notes model will allow users on Meta's social media sites Facebook, Instagram and Threads to call out posts that are potentially misleading and need more context, rather than placing the responsibility on independent fact checking organizations and experts. ... A program intended to inform too often became a tool to censor, Meta said.' Of course, it was always intended as a method of censorship. Mark Zuckerberg and his colleagues have apparently now figured that out. Zuckerberg himself issued a video statement: 'It's time to get back to our roots around free expression,' Mr. Zuckerberg said. The company's current fact-checking system, he added, had 'reached a point where it's just too many mistakes and too much censorship.' ... In one of the most interesting corporate developments in a long time, Meta announced today that it is bringing three new members into its board of directors. One of them is Dana White, proprietor of the Ultimate Fighting Championship, a speaker at the Republican National Convention, and one of Donald Trump's closest friends. ... Mark Zuckerberg has not been on the liberal plantation lately, if he ever was. He has expressed regret for enforcing the federal government's censorship demands. ... I think Zuckerberg is serious about staking out a position for Meta/Facebook that is not subservient to the Left. ... White is an outspoken advocate of free speech and is unabashedly patriotic, and I think Zuckerberg, and likely others at Meta, are signaling that the days when Facebook will censor conservatives are over."

HOW DEI DESTROYED THE LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT (Friday Church News Notes, January 17, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "The Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) is run by three lesbians named 'Kirsten,'" *World Israel News*, Jan. 10, 2024: "The



most important thing to know about Los Angeles Fire Chief Kristin Crowley is that she is the first LGBTQ fire chief in the history of the Los Angeles Fire Department. ... Crowley's status as the first LGBTQ fire chief appears at the top of her bio on the LAFD site. ... But DEI [diversity, equity, and inclusion] wasn't done with the LAFD just yet. Not until two other lesbian 'Kirstens' were also running the LAFD. Kristina Kepner, the first lesbian Assistant Chief and ... Kristine Larson ... was rewarded with the title of the LAFD's first lesbian Equity Bureau Chief with a \$399,000 salary. Diversity mandates had led to three lesbians named some version of 'Kirsten' running the LAFD. Meanwhile, Jamie Brown became the LAFD's first lesbian Training Commander. ... Many glass ceilings were being broken, but there was no one who actually knew how to fight fires. Unless it was by asking the fire about its preferred pronouns. Crowley, Kepner, and Brown were all paramedics, not firefighters. ... Even before the worst firestorms in over a decade hit, there were warnings that the DEI LAFD brass had wrecked one of the country's greatest firefighting services. ... Crowley succeeded Chief Ralph Terrazas, hailed as the first Latino chief who replaced Chief Douglas Barry, the first black chief, and in the ordinary way of things, Crowley will be replaced by the first transgender fire chief who will then have to be replaced by someone even more diverse. Assuming that there is still a Los Angeles to pay them/it/xem a six-figure salary. ... Now the LAFD has been reduced to begging for volunteers with firefighting experience."

THE RISE OF NO-NAME CHRISTIANITY (Friday Church News Notes, January 17, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - A report entitled "Non-Denominationalism Is the Strongest Force in Religion, and Maybe in American Society too" (*Graphs about Religion*, Jan. 9, 2025) examines the rapid disappearance of denominational churches (e.g., churches that identify as Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist, Anglican, Baptist, etc.) and the rapid growth of no-name churches. It describes "the rise of the nons--that is those folks who identify as non-denominational Christians." In the early 1970s, only 3% of Protestant Christians identified as non-denominational, whereas by 2022 this had grown to 33%. Biblically, this is a description of the merging and blending process that is gradually producing a one-world "church." Everything is changing, moving, merging, blending, homogenizing. In dramatic fulfillment of Bible prophecy, the stage is being set for the day of the Lord and the rise of Mystery Babylon. The doctrine of apostasy is a doctrine that is clearly taught in God's Word, and it is no small matter. It is a fundamental doctrine and a fundamental issue. In brief, the doctrine of apostasy is the Bible's teaching that there will be a falling away from the New Testament faith beginning even in the days of the apostles and progressing in strength throughout the church age, ending in an explosion of apostasy at the end of the age (e.g., Mt. 13:33; 1 Ti. 4:1-5; 2 Ti. 3:1-5; 4:3-4; 2 Pe. 2-3; Jude). That's where we are! The black and white of absolute truth is being replaced with the gray of ecumenical compromise. There are many factors at work in this process, such as the widespread popularity of a non-judgmental, be positive philosophy with its distaste for such things as separatism, doctrinal division, reproof, warnings, and labeling. Contemporary worship music is another major factor. It is a music with no boundaries--no boundaries with the world and no boundaries among Christians. It is

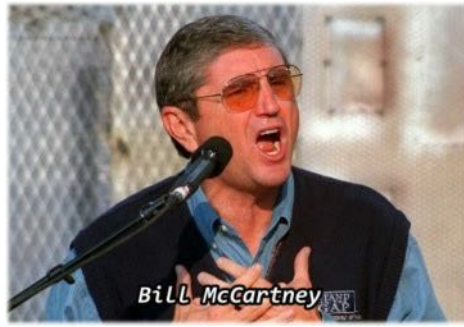
uniting every type of church. In the middle of everything sits "evangelicalism, which encompasses the broadest tent conceivable. Today's evangelicalism is friendly with Roman Catholicism, with theological liberalism, with Mormonism, even with 21st century fundamentalism (such as a rapidly growing number of biblically shallow, soft on separation independent Baptists).

DONALD TRUMP BACK IN OFFICE (Friday Church News Notes, January 24, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - In an amazing turn of events, Donald Trump won America's presidential election by a landslide in November with a majority in both houses of Congress, and he was sworn in as America's 47th president on January 20. Great changes for better have been introduced from day one. We realize that American voters are fickle. We know that Trump could die tomorrow and World War III could begin next month. We know this world's greatest troubles are yet future. We don't believe the promise that we are entering the "golden age of America." We know that America as a whole is a wicked nation in God's eyes and that most of America's professed Bible churches are a lukewarm, worldly mess, which does not bode well for the future. Our hope is not in politics. Our confidence is not in man. Our focus will remain on fulfilling Christ's Great Commission, preaching the gospel, building true New Testament churches, and looking for His coming. But the dramatic change we are witnessing right now is an encouragement to every lover of the Old America with its emphasis on liberty



and justice, law and order, its support of Israel, and its opposition to totalitarianism. Surely this is an answer to the prayers of the righteous and a token of great mercy from the Almighty, and we are enjoying it for what it is.

BILL MCCARTNEY DIES (Friday Church News Notes, January 24, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Bill McCartney, founder of Promise Keepers (PK), died on Jan. 10 at age 84. McCartney was a successful coach for the University of Colorado football team and enthusiastic promoter of professional sports. Promise Keepers was hugely successful in the 1990s. A crowd of 4,200 men attended the first convention at the Coors' Event Center in Boulder in 1991. The organization reached its peak in 1997 when its "Stand in the Gap" rally in Washington, D.C. drew a half million or more men. It achieved great success in creating ecumenical unity, drawing participation from every denomination, including independent Baptist. Promise Keepers encourages men to adopt the "Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper," number six being, "A Promise Keeper is committed to reaching beyond any ... denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity." That is ecumenism. McCartney, though a member of a Vineyard church, never renounced the Roman Catholic Church, and there was a strong Catholic element in the PK movement. In an interview with a Catholic publication, McCartney said that full Catholic participation was his intention from the start. "Back in 1992, at our first [large] stadium event [Folsom Field, Colorado], we very clearly stated from the podium that we eagerly welcomed the participation of Roman Catholics, and we've had scores of Roman Catholics attend and go back to their churches excited" (*Our Sunday Visitor*, July 20, 1997, p. 10). In an interview on the national radio program "Promise Keepers This Week" (August 31, 1996), McCartney said, "Promise Keepers is going to have to understand



that more and more Catholics are going to participate. And what every guy needs to do is, STOP LOOKING AT PEOPLE'S LABELS ... LET'S NOT START CATEGORIZING PEOPLE." Catholic priests, including Jim Berlucchi, John Salazar, and Michael Scanlon, were speakers at various PK events. Mike Timmis, a Roman Catholic, was added to the PK board of directors in 1997. Don Jasmin, who attended a PK conference in western Michigan with media credentials in 1998, warned, "The PK emphasis is more dangerously ecumenical than ever, with Roman Catholics now occupying strategic places of prominence in administration and operation" (*Calvary Contender*, February 15, 1999). Some Promise Keepers representatives stated that their only motive in inviting Roman Catholics to participate was to win them to Christ. The facts refute this. Promise Keepers is trying to make a comeback after largely fading from the limelight after McCartney's resignation in 2003.

CALGARY PASTOR APPEALS HARSH SENTENCE FOR OPPOSING DRAG QUEEN STORY HOUR (Friday Church News Notes, January 24, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Calgary Pastor," *Western Standard*, Jan. 19, 2025: "Calgary pastor Derek Reimer has been sentenced to a year of house arrest and two additional years of probation after opposing drag queen story hour events, prompting a fundraising campaign amidst concerns over free speech. ... Reimer's legal troubles began in February 2022 when the Pastor of Mission 7 Ministries attended a drag queen story hour at the

Seton Public Library in Calgary. Reimer approached the library manager to voice his disapproval of the reading aimed at children aged six to eight. ... in the following weeks, he protested at other libraries and was successful in shutting down about 15 events. He was arrested and re-arrested three times in five weeks, ultimately spending 43 days in jail. Derek has received multiple criminal charges and by-law tickets totaling thousands of dollars. ... 'This could be the test case,' Reimer's lawyer Andrew MacKenzie warned. 'This could open the door to a lot of individuals around Canada being criminalized for posting the wrong thing on social media.'"

FEDERAL COURT INVALIDATES TITLE IX REWRITE (Friday Church News Notes, January 24, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "A Colossal Win," *Standing for Freedom*, Jan. 10, 2025: "A federal court in eastern Kentucky has dealt a 'death knell' to the Biden administration's radical Title IX rewrite, an effort to expand the definition of biological sex to include gender identity at K-12 schools and higher education institutions. Yesterday, U.S. District Court Judge Danny C. Reeves granted summary judgment in a challenge brought by the state of Tennessee and other plaintiffs, meaning that he found the rule to be so constitutionally and legally problematic based on just the most cursory examination that there was no reason for it to even go to trial. The plaintiffs in this case included nine other states, among them Virginia, Kentucky, and Ohio; the Christian Educators



International Association; and a 15-year-old female student-athlete. Reeves, who temporarily blocked the new Title IX rule last summer, found that the Biden administration's effort to change the clear meaning and intent of the 50-year-old amendment to the Civil Rights Act is 'unconstitutional,' 'overly broad and vague,' and 'arbitrary and capricious.' He also stated that the Department of Education had exceeded its statutory authority and violated the Spending Clause. ... The decision completely vacates the rule nationwide, according to legal observers... 'This is a huge win for Tennessee, for common sense, and for women and girls across America,' said Tennessee Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti. 'The court's ruling is yet another repudiation of the Biden administration's relentless push to impose a radical gender ideology through unconstitutional and illegal rulemaking.'"

WHY ARE SO MANY YOUNG PEOPLE SUDDENLY IDENTIFYING AS TRANSGENDER? (Friday Church News Notes, January 24, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Why



Are So Many?" *Standing for Freedom*, Jan. 16, 2025: "A recent study found that there was a 422 percent increase among 18- to 24-year-olds identifying as transgender from 2014 to 2023 ... **The question is, why the generational gap and the exponential increase in young Americans and whites identifying as transgender?** ... there are numerous reasons behind the rise. Here are just a few: **Social Media, Internet.** ... The outsize influence of social media, the Internet, and even traditional media outlets that have embraced LGBTQ ideology have a profound impact on younger generations. In example after example parents say their teenager began believing they were a different gender after spending large amounts of time in their room on the Internet. ... **Federal Funding.** The U.S. began funding LGBT programs long before Joe Biden became president; however, no

administration accepted, promoted, or bankrolled the LGBT ideology more than this one. For example, investigative reporting by the *Epoch Times* found that over the last three fiscal years, the federal government spent \$4.1 billion in taxpayer dollars on LGBT programs. ... **Public Education.** ... Schools are now pushing gender theory on children as young as preschool and even hiding the gender confusion of children and teens from their parents. As a result, conflicts between parents and schools have become widespread as parents seek to stop schools from indoctrinating their children and introducing them to sexually explicit material. ... **The Medical Field.** Against all scientific logic, evidence, and common sense, many doctors and the country's most prestigious medical associations are aggressively pushing gender ideology on vulnerable patients. Why? One reason is profit. A *Daily Wire* report caught doctors from the Pediatric Transgender Clinic at Vanderbilt University Medical Center calling transgender surgeries 'big moneymakers.' And it's not just major surgeries that promise a new revenue stream. When a person begins on the path to gender transition, he or she becomes a lifelong patient."

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