

O Timothy

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

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

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“The church can and should oversee God’s people who want to do right. It can’t help rebels, except for preaching and personal exhortation and prayer, but for those who love the Lord and are wise and want help to stay safe, the church should be intimately involved in their lives. God’s Word commands this.” Page 8.

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

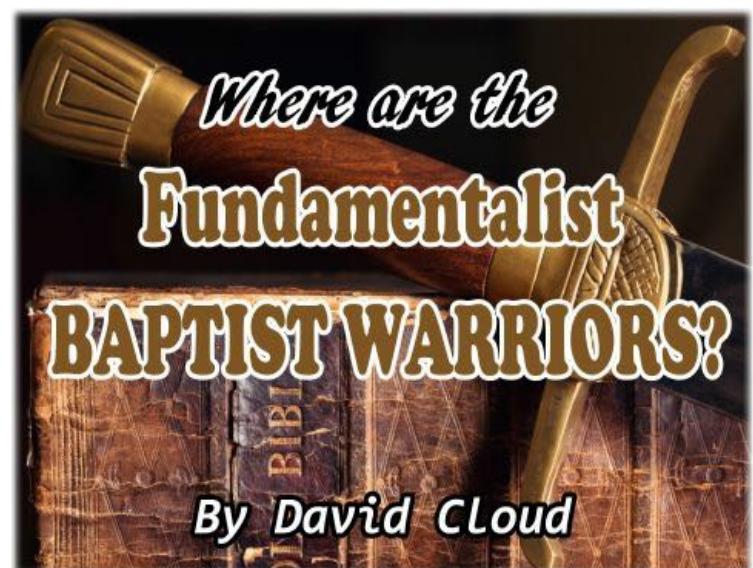


The following is excerpted from [The History and Heritage of Fundamentalism and Fundamental Baptists](http://www.wayoflife.org), www.wayoflife.org

The old fundamentalists and fundamental Baptists were warriors after the example of the apostle Paul.

His bodily presence might have been weak, as his enemies claimed (2 Co. 10:10). We don't know and it doesn't matter; he was large when it came to fighting for the truth.

On the very first stop of his first historic missionary journey, he publicly called out a prominent member of the city of Salamis with these shocking words, “O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord,” and struck him with blindness for good measure (Ac. 13:10-11)! What a fireball! As for



two preachers of that day, Hymenaeus and Alexander, Paul turned them over to the devil “that they may learn not to blaspheme” (1 Ti. 1:20). In an epistle meant to be read by all of the churches, Paul called out two other preachers by name, Hymenaeus and Philetus, labeling

their teaching “profane and vain babblings” (2 Ti. 2:16-18), not caring a whit if he hurt their poor feelings. In the same epistle, Paul publicly exposed Alexander the coppersmith’s evil (2 Ti. 4:14-15) and mentioned the preacher Demas by name, a former coworker, for “having loved this present world,” holding him up as a bad example before all the churches. Paul rebuked Peter publicly for hypocrisy (Ga. 2:11-14). The apostle to the Gentiles taught a vast amount of really deep “positive truth,” but he wasn’t finished. He got very “negative” when he fought against Galatian judaizers and Corinthian spiritualizers and Colossian gnostics. Paul stood against false christs and false gospels and false spirits of any and every sort, but he didn’t stop there. He stood against carnality, worldliness, man-centeredness, pride of scholarship, unqualified pastors, and every type of sin in the churches. He was an unwavering disciplinarian (1 Co. 5). He was big on rebuking (2Ti. 4:2; Tit. 1:13; 2:15). Unlike many warriors since then, Paul never backed down, never softened his stance, never regretted or repented of fighting for the truth’s sake. At the very end, Paul summarized his Christian life with these words, “I have fought a good fight” (2 Ti. 4:7). Indeed! Any preacher who is not a fighter is not walking in the footsteps of Paul.

True fundamentalists are pilgrims and strangers, soldiers, comeouters, walk aloners, when necessary. In their defense of the faith, fundamentalists have offended relatives and friends, lost salaries, retirement benefits,

insurance policies, positions, church properties, and prestige. They have endured willful misunderstanding, misrepresentation, slander, ridicule, and *disdain*. They have turned their backs on comfortable denominationalism and institutionalism to found independent churches and ministries by faith in God alone, often without the pledge of any human support. They have literally become the offscouring of the world in the eyes of secular society and of Christianity at large.

Fundamentalist Bob Schuler said, “I have come, thank God, to where I believe I could stand up and vote my convictions if I were the one lonely man on my side of the question. ... Such are times when men need to know their own souls and to be fortified with a loyalty that is to God alone. If standing true and courageous amid the storms that now assail they can look up and go forward, it will matter little whether other men are their friends or their foes” (cited from Richard Clearwaters, *The Great Conservative Baptist Compromise*).

William Ashbrook, author of *Evangelicalism The New Neutralism*, renounced the liberal northern Presbyterians and lost “his pulpit and his pension.” He identified lack of courage as a chief characteristic of the time. “It is indeed a question of whether we of this generation have the courage to stand up for our convictions and maintain a bold testimony in the face of encroaching unbelief and compromise. ... Many, from weakness or fear of reproach, are quitting the fight. It is sad indeed to see those who were speaking out boldly a few years back, now remaining in silence, apparently wearied of the conflict. ... God’s challenge was never more needed than in this day. ‘Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong’ (1 Co. 16:13).”

Bob Jones, Jr., said, “I am aware that there are some good men who are simply not constituted to fight the good fight of Faith, but such men have no place on the board of a Christian institution because Christian institutions have to be in a fight all of the time or they will be conquered by the enemy. ... All that is necessary for the devil to take it over is that its leadership refuse to fight” (Jones, *Cornbread and Caviar*, p. 108).

We think of the old fundamentalist papers, such as W.B. Riley’s *Christian Fundamentals*, Curtis Lee Laws’s *Watchman Examiner*, John Straton’s *Calvary Call*, A.J. Gordon’s *Watchword*, J. Frank Norris’s *Searchlight*, Oliver Van Osdel’s *Baptist Temple News*, Marion

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Reynolds' *Foundation*, T.T. Shields' *Gospel Witness*, Gerald Winrod's *Defender*, G. Archer Weniger's *Blu-Print*, and Don Jasmin's *Fundamentalist Journal*. They were bold and forthright about heretics and compromisers. There was no beating around the bush, no soft and gentle "neutralist" mood! No speaking in generalities. No fear of issuing warnings. These fundamentalist periodicals were scented with the smoke of battle rather than the perfume of positivism.

In fundamentalist books such as *Evangelicalism The New Neutralism* by William Ashbrook and *New Neutralism II: Exposing the Gray of Compromise* by John Ashbrook and *The New Evangelical Experiment* by Rolland Starr and *The New Evangelicalism* by Charles Woodbridge and *The Challenge of a New Religion* by Carlton Helgerson, theological modernists are called "evil"; they are called "heretics"; their theology is called "poison," "damnable"; New Evangelicals are called compromisers, dangerous, pragmatists, popularizers, latitudinarians, neutralists. New Evangelicalism is called "a virus," "tragedy," "menace," "deadly," "deviant," "the deadliest ism of all," "theological and moral compromise of the deadliest sort."

The old fundamentalists named names--lots of them! They named names when preaching, and they named names when writing. Heresy and compromise is a public issue, and they made a public issue of dealing with it.

They knew they would be misunderstood and charged with hate-mongering; they knew that they were in the minority and that by so speaking they were closing doors of fellowship and ministry. They knew they were choosing a limited fellowship by refusing to limit their message. They knew that "to identify oneself with the truth is to place one's self in the heart of a storm from which there is no escape for life." But they did it anyway, because this is the biblical example and therefore it is the will of God, and because they loved God and had a zeal for God's truth in their hearts and souls. Like lonely Jeremiah, they could say, "But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jer. 20:9).

Until today, fighting is what sets fundamentalists apart from even the most conservative of evangelicals. The latter might wear gloves, but they are velvet ones. They might point out a theological disagreement with someone, but typically in gentle, intellectual, "let's still be friends," non-separatist terms. They aren't warriors. They say that

they esteem all of God's precepts concerning all things to be right, like the Psalmist, but unlike the Psalmist, they don't "hate every false way" (Ps. 119:128). To hate false ways is shocking to their sensibilities. It's not their kind of Christianity.

But fundamentalists are warriors. We think of W.L. Pettingill in his warning about the liberal Harry Emerson Fosdick: "[T]he fight is on and it grows hotter. Let us praise God for that. A fight is much better than a disgraceful surrender and a fight is necessary just now that the truth of the Gospel may continue with us" (*Serving and Waiting*, January 1925, Philadelphia School of the Bible).

A.J. Gordon said, "Satan is the real Pope [and] demons the real cardinals."

No velvet gloves there.

We think of David Otis Fuller who often ended his letters with the words, "The battle is getting hotter and hotter, and I like it better and better." I received many of those letters.

We think of **JOHN ROACH STRATON** (1875-1929), pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in New York City from 1918 until his death in 1929, during the "Roaring Twenties." He was called "a crusader, a two-fisted hard-hitting man of God, always the defendant at the bulwarks of Christianity." Calvary Baptist was founded in 1847 and had prominent pastors, including John Dowling, author of *The History of Romanism*.

Straton was the son of a Baptist preacher, but when he was 18 he attended law school and embraced humanism and evolution and was on a moral spiral downward. He visited services at First Baptist Church of Atlanta and was born again. He attended Mercer University and Southern Seminary. He started preaching, and by the end of World War I in 1918, he rejected postmillennialism for premillennialism. That was the year he was called to the pastorate of Calvary Baptist.

Straton published *The American Fundamentalist* (later called *The Calvary Call*) to broadcast his preaching and warnings. The *New York Times* reported regularly on his hard-hitting sermons, sometimes on the front page and sometimes publishing his entire Sunday sermon, which reminds us of how dramatically America has changed.

The media was not universally positive of course. “Hostile journalists and cartoonists dipped their pens in acid and satirized Straton as ‘the Fundamentalist’s Pope,’ the ‘Witch Doctor of Gotham,’ and the ‘Meshuggah (Yiddish for crazy) of Manhattan’” (“John Roach Straton,” *Baptist Bible Tribune*, Jan. 25, 2013).

He was a tall, distinguished looking man, but he preached on the streets, and he preached *against* things. He designed and built a pulpit platform on an automobile from which he preached to crowds in the city (David Beale, *In Pursuit of Purity*, p. 213). He aimed to call America to repentance. He preached against Unitarianism, theological modernism, German skepticism, the social gospel, denominationalism, and communism. He preached against the popular press of his day for “engaging in a plot to ruin moral forces and bring them into national contempt” (George Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America*).

What would he say today when the press is promoting free sex, pornography, homosexual rights, sex education for children, and abortion on demand!

Pastor John Straton named names. He called the very popular, very liberal Harry Emerson Fosdick “a religious outlaw--the Jesse James of the theological world.” He called out S. Parkes Cadman, president of the Federal Council of Churches, for saying there is no hell. Straton said that Cadman was one of those who were “sprinkling cologne upon the putrid iniquities of a rebellious race.” He preached against liberal Baptist historian H.C. Vedder of Crozer Seminary. He preached against the budding tendency for American courts to capitulate to humanistic psychology and to coddle criminals rather than punish them. He said God is “not a mollycoddle ... and the present wave of crime and vice that is simply devastating America is the direct result of this false and flimsy teaching.”

Straton also preached against worldliness. His books included *The Menace of Immorality in Church and State* (1920), *The Scarlet Stain on the City and How to Wipe It Out* (c. 1921), and *Satan in the Dance Hall* (c. 1925). Chapter titles in the latter included “Flappers and the Dance of Life” and “The Devil’s Music and the Scopes Trial.” There were 750 dance halls in New York City in Straton’s day. Of female fashions, he said, “When it comes to women’s dress today there is not enough to talk about.” What would this warrior pastor say today! He

preached against church dances and the use of theater stars and starlets to attract a crowd.

He reproved parents who let their children choose between the picture show and Sunday School. He said the result of worldly homes was “the cigarette smoking boy who develops into the girl-ogling, sap-headed dude who would not recognize a sound thought or a sound ethical principal if he met it in the street; and the female flapper and flirt who knows more at 16 than her grandmother knew at 60, who hasn’t a speaking acquaintance with the art of sweeping a room, sewing a dress, or making a biscuit, but is past mistress with the lip-stick, the powder puff, and the bunny bag” (from Straton’s sermon “New York as Modern Babylon”). (A bunny bag was a small bag for cosmetics and other female accouterments.)

Straton took on prominent skeptics and heretics in public debates. The interest was so large that they were held in Madison Square Garden. He also debated at Harvard, Dartmouth, Columbia, and other leading schools.

At the Northern Baptist Convention in 1923, Straton stood from the floor and denounced W.H.P. Faunce of Brown University as an infidel who was unfit to deliver the keynote address.

There isn’t a prominent “conservative evangelical” alive today who knows anything of the fundamentalist prophet-warrior spirit. There are no A.J. Gordons, no John Strats, no William Bell Rileys, no J. Frank Norrises, no Bob Jones, Srs., no Marion Reynolds, no Robert Ketchams. The spirit of these old fighters does exist today, but it doesn’t exist anywhere within evangelicalism.

In fact, the fundamentalist prophet-warrior spirit is largely absent from fundamental Baptists (so-called) because the majority of them--yea, the *vast* majority--are bland evangelicals.

The essence of fundamentalism was its warrior spirit, and that was biblical and right and good and godly, though the fighting wasn’t done with any perfection. Poor redeemed sinners haven’t done *anything* with perfection since Adam’s fall.

The warrior spirit was right, and from the warrior spirit flowed testing, reproofs, rebukes, warnings, and separations.

But evangelicals don't believe in fighting after this manner. They don't even *like* fighters. If they find a fighter battling against sin and error, it is far more likely that they will attack him than join him.

The essence of "fundamentalism" was, and is, its warrior spirit, and may the Lord multiply that spirit ten thousand fold today, regardless of the label!

When living in such a wicked, apostate age, if a preacher doesn't get worked up like Enoch of old and start firing off a bunch of well-aimed "ungodly" (Jude 1:14-15), something is seriously wrong with him. The man of God who wrote Psalm 119 couldn't see sin and error without being deeply affected. "Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law" (Ps. 119:53).

Test on New Evangelicalism - With Answers

By David Cloud

New Evangelicalism is the most influential Christian movement of the past 100 years. It is the most effective aspect of the creation of a one-world "church." It birthed Contemporary Christian Music and Contemporary Worship Music. It destroyed biblical separation. It created ecumenical rapport between Roman Catholics and non-Catholics. It devoured the old fundamentalist churches and institutions and is rapidly devouring independent Baptists.

Yet we would guess that the vast majority of fundamental Baptist preachers and teachers could not pass the following *simple* test.

Our new book/Bible course *[Evangelicalism and the Great Apostasy](#)* contains the education on these important things that is needed by every Bible-believing church and home today.

13 correct answers

7.7 points per answer

70% passing - 10 or more correct answers

1. What decade did New Evangelicalism begin?

Answer: 1940s

2. Why is it called New Evangelicalism?

Answer: It was different in character from the old Evangelicalism.

3. What man claimed to have coined the term?

Answer: Harold Ockenga

4. This man said New Evangelicalism is the renunciation of what?

Answer: Separatism

5. What prominent preacher promoted this philosophy with his evangelistic crusades?

Answer: Billy Graham

6. What magazine did this man found to promote the New Evangelical philosophy?

Answer: Christianity Today

7. How did this man promote ecumenical unity with the Roman Catholic Church?

Answer: He included Roman Catholic churches in his evangelistic crusades.

8. What pope did this preacher promote as a great Christian leader?

Answer: John Paul II

9. What seminary was founded to teach New Evangelicalism?

Answer: Fuller Theological Seminary

10. New Evangelicalism captured what percentage of the old Evangelical schools, colleges, and missionary organizations?

Answer: 100%

11. Name an Evangelical leader today who is not New Evangelical?

Answer: None

12. In what decade did the BBFI (Baptist Bible Fellowship International) and GARBC (General Association of Regular Baptist Churches) succumb to New Evangelicalism?

Answer: 1990s

13. What is happening among independent Baptists today that happened among Evangelicals 70 years ago?

Answer: They are rejecting biblical separation

John Rice and the Old Sword Churches

By David Cloud



The following is excerpted from [*The History and Heritage of Fundamentalism and Fundamental Baptists*](http://www.wayoflife.org), www.wayoflife.org



John R. Rice (1895-1980) was probably the most influential preacher in the fundamental Baptist movement, certainly one of the top five. When dividing fundamental Baptists into major groups, the largest is “the Sword crowd.” The influence of *The Sword of the Lord* paper, Sword of the Lord books, and the Sword conferences cannot be calculated. The circulation of the weekly paper peaked in 1972 at 300,000.

There was a lot that was right and biblical about John Rice and his associates, and I am glad that there were “Sword-style” fundamental Baptist churches when I was saved in the early 1970s. I’m glad that denominational churches were not the only churches that existed then and that there was a better choice. At the same time, it is sad that the fundamental Baptist churches were not a whole lot stronger.

The Sword of the Lord masthead encapsulated many of the things that were biblical and important about John Rice’s ministry: “An Independent Christian Weekly, Standing for the Verbal Inspiration of the Bible, the Deity of Christ, His Blood Atonement, Salvation by Faith, New Testament Soul Winning and the Premillennial Return of Christ. Opposes Modernism, Worldliness and Formalism.”

These are things that have characterized “Sword” churches, and they are truly “fundamental” things. And they are exceedingly rare. In an age when the verbal inspiration of the Bible and Christ’s full Deity and

substitutionary blood atonement and salvation by faith alone and the pretribulational return of Christ are under attack on every side, including by “evangelicals,” *The Sword of the Lord* took an unequivocal stand. In a day when modernism and worldliness and formalism have captured the Christian denominations, *The Sword of the Lord* stood against them.

I grew up Southern Baptist, and don’t recall hearing preaching on the imminent return of Christ, or any sense of urgency about soul winning and world missions, or any opposition to modernism, worldliness, and formalism. I found those things only when I began to study Scripture for myself, and I found them in the first fundamental Baptist church I joined, a church that got *The Sword of the Lord* paper and had Sword of the Lord books available.

The Sword of the Lord stood for a pilgrim lifestyle and separation from the world at a time when the denominations, including the Southern Baptists and the evangelicals, had abandoned it. John Rice preached on modest attire. He preached against rock music, dancing, gambling, Hollywood movies. He preached courtship instead of dating, and his own daughters modeled this. The Sword’s stand against worldliness helped me as a young Christian coming out of a rock & roll hippy background. It helped me to avoid going down the Christian rock path, which is a path to extremely dangerous spiritual waters.

I could wish that the Sword-style fundamental Baptists then had been stronger biblically, but they were what they were, and they were much more sound than denominational Baptists and New Evangelicals. In the Sword-style churches, a great number of lost sinners were

saved, a great many homes were straightened out, a great many saints surrendered their lives to Christ and lived separated lives to His glory, and a great many preachers and missionaries were raised up for the ministry.

Some of the excellent biblical things that John R. Rice and his associates (such as Lee Roberson) stood for were the following:

- The verbal, plenary, infallible inspiration of Scripture (they believed the book “from cover to cover”)
- Unhesitating rejection of theological modernism
- Salvation only through faith in Jesus Christ
- Christ’s substitutionary, vicarious atonement
- A literal heaven and a literal eternal hell
- Rejection of both Darwinian and theistic evolution
- Rejection of every humanistic philosophy that is contrary to God’s Word
- The imminent pre-tribulational return of Christ
- The sense of urgency about, and the zeal to fulfill, the Great Commission, including the aggressive evangelization of one’s own community
- Rejection of the world’s pop music (including blues, jazz, rock, hip hop) and commitment to sacred music as opposed to contemporary
- A pilgrim lifestyle that involves a rejection of the world’s sensual dress fashions, separation from the world, non-conformity to the world (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 5:11; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17 were preached and applied to every area of life)
- Living by faith without dependence on denominationalism; thousands of men stepped out by faith to start churches and ministries with no promise of support, no guaranteed income, no big financial backers, no retirement benefits
- The centrality of and autonomy of the New Testament assembly

These were unpopular stands even prior to World War II. Fundamental Baptist people were going against the grain both of secular society and of Christianity at large. I thank the Lord that there were men who were willing to take such a courageous stand for truth in the midst of end-time apostasy.

John Rice was a man of God. I have no doubt about that. He knew God, loved God, and sought to please God with his whole life. He was known as a Christ-like, compassionate man.

John R. Rice modeled good Christian character, in his public life, his private life, and his family life. He

practiced what he preached. There was never a hint of moral scandal surrounding the man. He was honest, a man of his word. He was careful in handling money. He paid his debts. At the end of his life, he could say with Samuel of old, “Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you” (1 Sa. 12:3).

John Rice was a man of great spiritual vision and faith in God. He was a man of prayer. He believed in “asking and receiving” big things from God. His sermons and books contain many challenging examples of the power of the prayer of faith, the power of stepping out in God’s will to do something that looks impossible. Faith pleases God, and John Rice doubtless has his reward for living by faith.

He was a pioneer, not content with the status quo.

He was brave, willing to take unpopular stands and trust God with the results, such as when he left the Southern Baptist Convention as a young evangelist and when he separated from the hugely-popular Billy Graham.

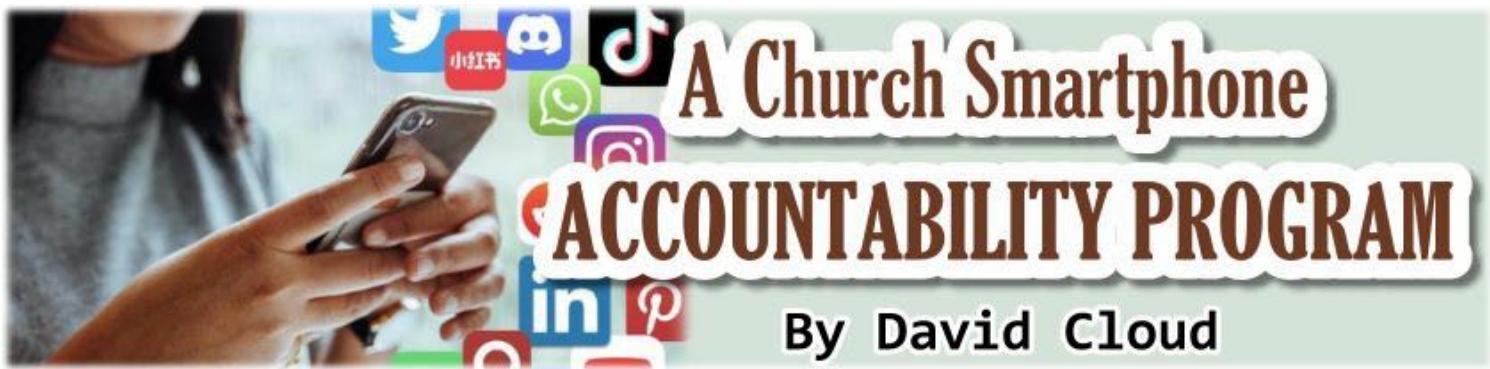
We would hasten to add that we are convinced that there were errors in Dr. Rice’s thinking and ministry that had a corrupting influence on the churches that were associated with and influenced by him, and these errors rendered them much weaker than they could have been. The Bible warns that “the little foxes spoil the vine” (Song 2:15), but these errors and faults were pretty big foxes.

It’s not time to abandon the good of the old Sword churches; it is time to go back to the Bible alone and reject everything that is contrary and add everything that is missing.



For the rest of this lengthy study on John R. Rice and the Sword of the Lord, see [The History and Heritage of Fundamentalism and Fundamental Baptists](https://www.wayoflife.org), www.wayoflife.org

See also the newly published [Fundamental Baptists: History, Collapse, and Revival](https://www.wayoflife.org) (December 2025) in the book section of www.wayoflife.org.



The church can and should oversee God's people who want to do right. It can't help rebels, except for preaching and personal exhortation and prayer, but for those who love the Lord and are wise and want help to stay safe, the church should be intimately involved in their lives. God's Word commands this.

"Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28).

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Ga. 6:1-2).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:12-13).

"Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:16).

Some years ago, our church started an internet accountability program for our male church members. At the time, we did not know of such a plan and we did not know of a church that was pursuing such a thing, but we knew that our men needed help and we prayed for wisdom in how to proceed.

In our smartphone oversight program, spiritually mature men who understand the technology are assigned to oversee the phones of other men who sign up for the

program. Each participant is assigned to one of the overseers. The overseer is to have all passwords and be allowed complete access to the phones, laptops, etc. He can ask to see the devices any time.

One of the benefits of this program is that it keeps the issue of internet danger before the church, and keeps the church informed and communicating about this. It is no longer "the elephant in the room." It is no longer something that is ignored. It is something that is out in the open in the church family.

An accountability ministry is a **"one another" ministry**. It is a discipling ministry.

The Christian life is not a solitary life lived for self. It is a family life lived with others and for others. The church is not merely a group of individuals; it is a body. *I am* my brother's keeper! Consider the Bible's emphasis on this:

- "admonish one another" (Ro. 15:14)
- "by love serve one another" (Ga. 5:13)
- "bear ye one another's burdens" (Ga. 6:2)
- "forbearing one another, and forgiving one another" (Col. 3:13)
- "teaching and admonishing one another" (Col. 3:16)
- "edify one another" (1 Th. 5:11)
- "consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works" (Heb. 10:24)
- "exhort one another" (Heb. 3:13; 10:25)

Paul says it is possible to recover a brother who is overtaken in a fault.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Ga. 6:1).

Preparation

We spent many weeks in preparation for the oversight program by teaching in the weekly men's meeting on surrender, holy living, seeking God's will, being transformed by the renewing of the mind by God's Word, controlling the emotions, and the importance of separation from evil, all with a strong application to internet dangers. The studies were similar to the things we teach in this course [The Pornographic Age and Victory in Christ](#).

Another thing we emphasized is the blessing of God's will. See, for example, Ps. 16:11; 37:4, 10; Joh. 10:10; 1 Ti. 6:17; Jas. 1:17. A holy life as a pilgrim believer is a blessing-filled life. Within the protective boundaries of God's will are massive blessings. There is liberty to do anything that is good, and that is a very long list!

The program must be explained carefully to the church and discussed and fine-tuned according to the feedback. Emphasize that the purpose is for protection, not control. The adult participants must not be treated like children or like they are in a prison.

The overseers of the accountability program are not prison guards, they are friends in Christ. Both parties (overseer and participants) need to keep the communications private. If an issue comes up that would require church discipline, the matter must be shared only with the church leaders.

At the same time, the Bible emphasizes that church members are under the authority and discipline of Christ in the assembly. The old leaven must be continually purged from the body (1 Co. 5:6-8). A member can choose not to be a part of our internet supervision program, but if it is found that he is living in adultery and not in spiritual victory, as defined by Christ in Matthew 5:28, he becomes a candidate for discipline. "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat" (1 Co. 5:11).

Overseers

Overseers are selected on the basis of how many members sign up for oversight. Ideally, an overseer should not be responsible for more than three or four people so that he can give proper attention to this business.

The overseers should be chosen and assigned with wisdom. They must be spiritually mature and wise enough to shepherd the individuals under their care, and they must know enough about technology to be an effectual overseer. They must know how to check for new apps, browser histories, etc.

They must have knowledge of protection tools such as AppLock (an Android app that can be used to control select apps), web browser filters (e.g. CleanInternet), Covenant Eyes, and parental control software (e.g., Qustodio, Norton Online Family, Family Shield OpenDNS, Family Pro Shield).

The major spiritual qualifications of an overseer in this program are found in Romans 15:14, " And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another." Here we see two things that are necessary for the effectual function of admonishing others. First, there must be goodness, which refers to a good Christian character and testimony. Second, there must be knowledge, which refers to knowledge of God's Word and God's will. If an individual lacks goodness, lacks a good testimony, he can't effectively admonish others because they won't take him seriously. If he lacks Bible knowledge he will not have the wisdom to discipline someone else.

Participants

The individual who joins the program promises not to hide anything and to avoid visiting wrong sites or looking at wrong things. He agrees to obey God's command to set no wicked thing before his eyes (Ps. 101:3), to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph. 5:11), and to avoid evil communications (1 Co. 15:33).

He agrees that the overseer will have access to all areas of his phone, tablet, laptop, etc.

He agrees not to delete the history of internet use, such as browsing history. He agrees not to use browsers such as Tor or Epic or SRWare Iron that do not leave a history and agrees not to use private modes in browsers (such as Chrome's incognito mode) that do not leave a history. (Tellingly, these are unofficially called "porn modes.") He agrees not to use secret IDs to log in to YouTube, etc., that are kept from his overseer. There should be no deleting of photos and videos and music except when they

were received as unwelcome intrusions, such as things sent by someone via text or WhatsApp. In other words, the deletions should not be for the purpose of hiding sin. When using the YouTube app, he/she will log in so that a history is maintained.

The participants should be categorized by age and situation and treated accordingly. For example, married people cannot be treated the same as single ones. Married people should have more privacy. For example, married people's communication with their spouses should be strictly private, but single people should not have intimate communication with members of the opposite sex other than close relatives. In fact, every person in the program must be treated as an individual.

The program

The overseer starts the program by meeting with each individual under his care to develop a plan for how he is going to supervise that individual. The overseer must be firm and protecting but not overly forceful. If he forces the individual to do something against his will, it won't work, because there are endless ways to get around supervision. From beginning to end, the program must be free will. In general, the overseer talks with the individual to find out how he is currently using his phone and other devices, in what legitimate and good ways, and tries to work out a plan so that the individual can use his devices for good but not for sin. Following are some of the things that should be done in the first meeting:

- At the very beginning, the individual must agree to keep everything open, to have no secrets on his devices, to not delete things in order to hide wrongdoing, to allow the overseer to check his phone at any time, and to communicate with the overseer to seek help if he is experiencing problems.
- Find out all of the ways the individual currently uses his phone and/or other devices.
- Ask if the individual has experienced any special temptations pertaining to the use of his devices.
- Thoroughly examine the individual's phone and other devices. First check overall usage for last ten days. (On an iPhone, screen time can be checked easily by going to Settings >> Battery >> "Last 10 Days.") Then look at every app and find out its function and how the individual uses it.
- Decide on a plan: What apps will be kept? How will they be used? Will something like Covenant Eyes be

installed? Will a browser filter be installed? Some individuals should have no use of a web browser, for example, while others should have access to it. The overseer can recommend using the aforementioned protection tools for controlling and filtering.

- Pray together about the program and ask for God's help.

The main thing is to treat each participant as an individual and have good communication and rapport with that individual. The individual's age, spiritual maturity, and background must be taken into consideration. If an individual has had problems with pornography in the past, for example, he should desire and should be given closer supervision.

The overseer commits to be mindful of the men under his care, to pray for them, and to be observant of them.

- He will meet each individual under his care at various times (irregular and unexpected, ideally). He must meet face to face and not by text or social media, etc. He will do the following things:
 - Inquire about the individual's situation and how he is doing with the Lord. Inquire about Bible study and prayer. Perhaps ask how much time they spent in that this week.
 - Ask the following questions: Did you use the internet? If so, what did you use it for? Did you have any temptations from the internet and social media? Did you look at any wrong things? Did you listen to any wrong things? Are you allowing the device to rob you of time? How did you spend your leisure time? Did you allow anyone else to use your device? If the answer is yes, find out the details of that. If you think there might be a need, you might also ask if they are using the phone to communicate with unbelievers or members of the opposite sex. If the answer is yes, you should inquire about the nature of that communication.
 - Examine the device. Look to see what apps are installed. Check overall smartphone use (or other device) use (e.g., Settings >> Battery >> "Last 10 Days"); check histories (browsers, YouTube, photos, calls, etc.). Perhaps look at photos and videos. (This depends on each individual's situation, as we have discussed.) The overseer doesn't read the individual's private communication (e.g., email, SMS, WhatsApp), but he does try to get an idea with whom the individual is communicating.

- The overseer must allow the individual to explain any particular aspect of his devices and internet use that might be questionable and not be hasty to condemn.
- Pray with the individual.

The overseers give reports to the church leaders so they can be informed about what is happening.

Our church tries to help every member, depending on his or her situation. For example, a young man recently graduated from high school and is seeking a job while he continues his studies. His father is not saved and works overseas. He is pressuring his son to get a job and doesn't care, of course, how it affects his spiritual life, but the young man wants a job that won't interfere with church or his life with Christ in general. He found a job delivering food (similar to Uber Eats or Doordash) that will allow him to control his schedule, but the job requires a smartphone. He approached us for help. One of our men set up a program for him whereby he will be under that man's supervision. The man said, "I put AppLock on the phone and locked all the apps except the ones he needed." This young man is walking in wisdom and protection, and if he continues to do this he will have victory and will remain in the center of God's will.

A Weekly Sharing Meeting

Cornerstone Baptist Church in Chicago has a men's sharing meeting after the Sunday evening service that is focused on moral purity. The purpose is to draw the men close to one another as brethren in order to help one another have victory in Christ. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Ga. 6:1-2).

The pastor encourages openness. He instructs the men to keep the testimonies and conversations private to facilitate openness.

The Attitude

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of the right attitude on the part of the church leaders and the overseers of this program. If the participants feel that they are being treated with true Christian love, kindness, patience, mercy, and wisdom, if they feel that the overseers are truly

wanting to help and protect them and not to dominate them, they will benefit from the program and will want to continue to participate in it. Otherwise, it will be a short-lived thing.

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:32).

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:1-2).

Feedback and Adjustment

For this type of program to work, there must be good feedback and adjustment. It can't be set up and forgotten.

As the author of the previously cited Family Phone Agreement observed, "This agreement is a WIP, a work in progress. It will need to be adjusted as time goes on."

Each church in each place and time is different, and a program like this must be well adapted to the church's particular situation.

What devices are being used? What are the most popular apps, internet sites, social media, etc., in that place? What are the main ways that young people in that place are using technology? Are the men happy with the program? Do they want to continue? Do they have suggestions for improvement?

Plus the technology is constantly changing and God's people must be aware of what is happening and be in control of the technology rather than allowing the technology to control them.

The Cord App

The Cord app is a tool to help protect their men (young and old) from the moral dangers of the internet and social media. It is designed to connect three men in a partnership to help one another stay pure. It is based on the truth of Ecclesiastes 4:9-12. "And if one prevail

against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

I recently learned of this app from Pastor Courtney Lewis of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Chicago. He has had an accountability program among his men for two or three years that has had good fruit, and he is happy with this app. He told me that it has taken their partnership program to a higher level.

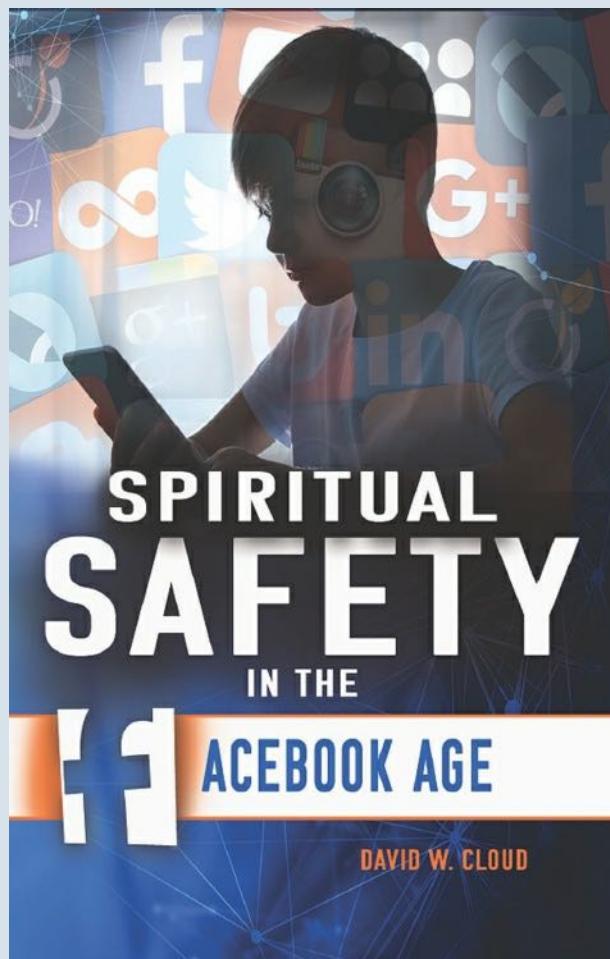
It was developed under the direction of Ryan Swanson who ministers in music and youth at Fellowship Baptist Church of Taylors, South Carolina. According to his online testimony, he was addicted to porn for 12 years before his marriage and he is passionate about helping other men. I don't know anything else about the app developers and cannot give any further recommendation of that ministry, but we are glad to see every effort to combat this wickedness.

<https://www.thecord.app>

While we see value in this app, we would also warn that the app requires that young men, even teens, own a smartphone in order to be in the program. In our church, we *strongly* discourage teens to have smart phones and to have *any* access to the internet from any device without adult supervision.

That might sound extremely strict to this smartphone generation, but God's standard is "touch not the unclean thing" and "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness" (2 Co. 6:17; Eph. 5:11), which is a *very* strict standard.

Cord App or no Cord app, we believe that smartphones in the hands of teens is a recipe for spiritual and moral disaster. If we do use Cord App, we will use it with the older single young men and married men.



Spiritual Safety in the Facebook Age

By David Cloud

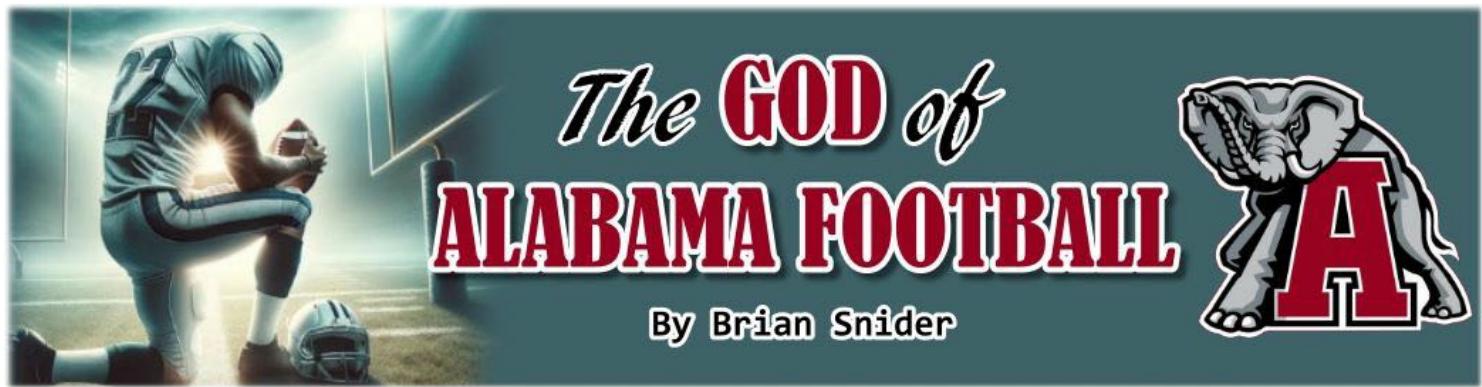
In [Spiritual Safety in the Facebook Age](#), we look at social media in general, with special focus on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, Tumblr, Google, and Kik. The first chapter examines the age of apostasy, the age of the Great Commission, the age of scoffing and rebellion,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

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

The chapter on practical steps gives suggestions for individuals, parents, and churches.

This new book builds on two previous titles: [Keeping the Kids](#): How to Keep the Children from Falling Prey to the World.

Available at: https://www.wayoflife.org/free_ebooks/spiritual-safety-in-facebook-age.php



The following is by Brian Snider, Huntsville, Alabama -

bksnider@gmail.com

By Brian Snider

Alabama has had football fever ever since winning the Rose Bowl in 1926 which proved that southerners could compete with northern elites. In the last 100 years, though, football mania has gone far beyond competition to include many of the elements of the world's most powerful seductions.

I grew up in Birmingham, Alabama during Coach Bear Bryant's heyday, from the 1960s through the 1980s and graduated from the University of Alabama in 1983, the year Bryant died. My time at Alabama gave me freedom to live in sin and revelry and I regret the wickedness I pursued and the way I misused my parent's hard-earned money. I got saved 10 years after graduating.

In the 1960s and 70s, my Dad would usher for Alabama games at Legion Field so he could get in for free. My brothers and I would occasionally sell drinks in the stands to make a little money and see the game.

I like football. Growing up in a state where football is a god, I have a pretty good view of how college football has changed in recent decades and the changes are dramatic. It's a cradle-to-grave passion for a significant number of Alabamians and it's growing more intense with each passing year.

I realized early on that a great number of dyed-in-the-wool Alabama fans never went to college there. Their fanaticism was very driven by pride for the state and love of the game.

Back then the players were part of a team, not superstars with their own media presence like they are today. In those days, the band played traditional fight songs and

marching band music. Men wore suits and ties to the games and the ladies wore hats and gloves. That began to change in the 70s and 80s, though many still dressed up.

Bear Bryant was worshipped in his lifetime, having won 6 national championships at Alabama. Back in the day, there were pictures in gas stations and restaurants of Bryant walking on water. I wouldn't be surprised if there aren't a few still up here and there.

He has since been matched by Nick Saban who also won 6 championships at Alabama.

That's a little about what Alabama football was like in my early life but there have been some major changes in recent years. It's a lot more than just football now.

My wife and I have been to two Alabama games since we've been married. We went to an Alabama football game right after we got married, so that would have been 25 years ago roughly. I don't remember anything particularly different about it from the time when I was in school down there in the early 80s. The band music was more what you would expect, as I recall. It was cold and raining so everyone was covered up.

However, we went again just a few years ago. You can get tickets cheap at the end of the first quarter so we drove down on Saturday morning on a whim to see Alabama play. After that experience we determined that we would never attend another Alabama game in person.

I could hardly believe how much different the environment seemed. I'm sure some of it had to do with my salvation. But the atmosphere, music and attire were really hard to take. These are the main changes I've seen.

Attire

Today the dress is unbelievable. You would think you were at a club or worse. At the last game we went to, virtually all of the gals were dressed in club wear. Low cut, tatted up, shorts and skirts that barely covered anything. Think Nashville honky-tonk. You could not safely look in any direction.

Music

There is very little conventional marching band music played at games today. Even the marching bands play mostly rock. One of the main musical themes for the Alabama Million Dollar Marching Band is *Kashmir*, a hard rock epic from Led Zeppelin.

But it's the music coming from the sound system that dominates the atmosphere and is the most oppressive. It's very loud and is almost all hard rock: Led Zeppelin, Guns and Roses, AC/DC, Metallica, Ozzy Osbourne, the hardest rap and so forth.

This is not pop music. It is extremely intense music that is designed to pump the crowds to a fever pitch.

It's the kind of music that provides a good backdrop for the violence of football.

In the 70s, it would never have occurred to anyone to play "Sympathy for the Devil" or "Smoke on the Water" at a football game. Today they play much worse.

Hype

The mania whipped up around college football is absolutely insane. All the teams produce hype videos that are played on big screens at games and circulated through social media throughout the season and year.

Other videos are made by fans at home who now have the ability to make slick productions to add to the social media frenzy. These videos are as sophisticated and as exciting as anything major TV or movie houses are turning out.

The football players in the hype videos are glamorous in their uniforms and tattoos, drenched in sweat and surrounded by fog machines like rock stars. Long hair is very common. Everything about the game is surrounded

by loud and frenzied promotion, as if this game is the most significant thing on earth.

The Combination

When you combine loud rock, hype, immodesty, booze, hard-hitting football and manic crowds you create a sensory assault, a potent emotional and psychological experience that takes you way beyond a simple football game.

Even before all the modern media hype, people would devote their lives to Alabama football, eating, sleeping and breathing it year-round. Today fans are bombarded by 24-7 sports and sports talk on radio, ESPN and social media.

It's little wonder that sports fanaticism has a religious fervor today.

I reference my own experience in growing up around Alabama football, but of course this applies to all sports and sports teams, college and professional. You can go down the list of all the major college football programs and you will find the same things.

Sports have become a madness that consumes the hardcore fans. The bright lights and excitement are amped up by all the media surrounding them.

We need to keep in mind that the glories of football are nothing to be compared to the glories of knowing the Lord. The one pales alongside the other. Football is such an empty and vain thing to waste your life on.

It accounts for many wasted lives where I live. It is not uncommon down here to see a tombstone with a big red "A" on it. A final statement of loyalty to the god of Alabama football.



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?



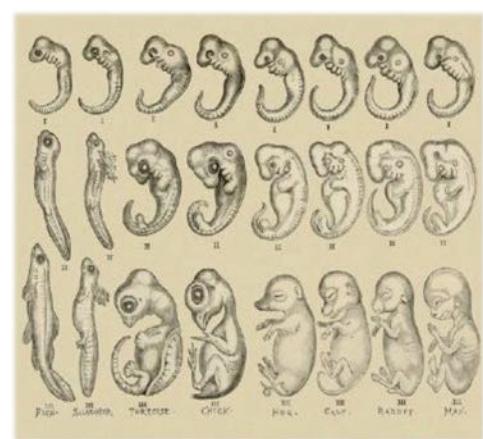
DECEPTIVE EVOLUTIONARY ARTWORK (Friday Church News Notes, November 28, 2025, www.wayoflife.org)

- There is zero evidence for the evolution of life from non-life and from "simple" life to complex life, which explains why evolutionists have often been guilty of faking evidence with deceptive artwork. A recent example appeared with the Fox News report "Perseverance rover spots mysterious 'visitor from space' rock on Mars surface," Nov. 19, 2025. The article was accompanied by an artist's rendition of the rover parked near four metal bars featuring precise machining. This is entirely fictitious. The "mysterious visitor" in question is merely a rock containing "high levels of iron and nickel." It looks absolutely nothing like a metal object. What does the rock mean in regard to evolution? Absolutely nothing. If there were actually machined metal objects on Mars, as appears in the artwork, that would be a sign of higher life, but no such thing has been found. Many people will merely glance at the artwork and assume it is an accurate portrayal of the story. Credit for the artwork is given merely as "NASA via Getty Images."

DECEPTIVE EVOLUTIONARY ARTWORK - OTHER EXAMPLES (Friday Church News Notes, November 28, 2025, www.wayoflife.org)

Notes, November 28, 2025, www.wayoflife.org
fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- From its inception, Darwinian evolution has been popularized by lying art. This began with Ernest Haeckel's iconic embryo chart of 1866 "proving" that at the embryonic stage man looks almost exactly like various types of animals. The influence of the embryo chart has been incalculable; in fact, it is still used in some science textbooks, though it has been totally debunked as a brazen deceit since it was exposed by Haeckel's fellow professors Ludwig Rutimeyer and Wilhelm His, Sr., soon after it was published. **Natural history museums are filled with this type of thing. This is true for horse evolution, whale evolution, bird evolution, fossilization, and human evolution from apes.** Consider "Lucy," the supposed little human-ape woman. Artistic reconstructions in the most acclaimed museums typically depict Lucy with *human hands, walking uprightly* in a purely human manner on *human feet*, and with *human-proportioned arms and legs*. This is true for the models and drawings that I have seen personally at the Museum of Natural History in New York City, the American Museum of Natural Sciences in



HAECKEL'S EMBRYOS

Washington D.C., the Field Museum in Chicago, Yale University's Peabody Museum, the Seattle Science Center, the Museum of Man in San Diego, and Michigan State University Ann Arbor. But this is absolutely contrary to the scientific evidence. Consider the Australia Museum's dinosaur to bird exhibit. One display case features *Bambiraptor*, *Archaeopteryx*, and a pheasant. The *Bambiraptor* is running, looking for all the world as if it is trying to get off the ground, while the *Archaeopteryx* is flying level, not far off the ground above the *Bambiraptor*, perhaps a bit unsteadily as a newcomer to flight, with the pheasant soaring easily above its supposed evolutionary predecessors, having genetically evolved itself and mastered the complicated business. Dr. Storrs Olson, a Smithsonian Institute scientist, wrote an open letter to the National Geographic Society in 1999 protesting this type of thing. He referred to the practice of adding features to dinosaurs as **propaganda, hype, wishful thinking, melodramatic, nonsense, spurious, fantasia, and a hoax**. He said, "The hype about feathered dinosaurs in the exhibit currently on display at the National Geographic Society is even worse, and makes the spurious claim that there is strong evidence that a wide variety of carnivorous dinosaurs had feathers. A model of the undisputed dinosaur *Deinonychus* and illustrations of baby tyrannosaurs are shown clad in feathers, all of which is simply imaginary and has no place outside of science fiction." He concluded, "**Truth and careful scientific weighing of evidence have been among the first casualties in their program, which is now fast becoming one of the grander scientific hoaxes of our age**" (letter

dated November 1, 1999). Dr. Olson's warning was a rare courageous voice from that field. (For more on this, see *Lying Evolutionary Art*, which is available as a free eBook from the Books section of the Way of Life web site, www.wayoflife.org.)

MAINE JUDGE BANS A MOTHER FROM TAKING HER DAUGHTER TO CHURCH AND READING THE BIBLE WITH HER (Friday Church News Notes, November 28, 2025, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Maine judge rules," *Standing for Freedom*, Nov. 20, 2025: "A single mother's fundamental right to raise her child in her Christian faith is now before Maine's highest court, and legal advocates say the outcome could have ramifications for the rest of the country. On November 13, the Maine Supreme Judicial Court heard oral arguments in *Bickford v. Bradeen*, a case in which the mother, Emily Bickford, is appealing a custody ruling that barred her from taking her 12-year-old daughter to church, reading the Bible with her, or even associating with members of the church she attends. Mat Staver, founder and chairman for Liberty Counsel, which is representing Bickford, argued that the lower

court's order represents an unprecedented incursion on both parental rights and religious freedom. The order granted the father, Matthew Bradeen, sole authority to decide all religious and spiritual matters for the minor child, effectively giving him a veto over her Christian upbringing. ... the district court judge, a former president of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), concluded that Bickford's daughter experienced 'psychological harm; through her attendance at Calvary Chapel Portland, a Bible-teaching, non-denominational church. The court relied heavily on testimony from a self-described 'cult expert' who labeled the church's teachings on spiritual warfare, fallen angels, and doctrinal certainty as 'cultic' and potentially harmful. ... U.S. precedent has long affirmed the authority of parents to instruct their children in morals and faith. In the landmark case *Troxel v. Granville*, for example, the U.S. Supreme Court held that the interest of parents in the care, custody, and control of their children 'is perhaps the oldest of the fundamental liberty interests recognized by this Court.'"

CHATGPT'S PROGRAMMED DECEIT (Friday Church News Notes, November 28, 2025, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- William Sullivan caught ChatGPT lying about black on white violence in America, and his report can be found in "ChatGPT vs. the Evidence," *Front Page Magazine*, Nov. 20, 2025. He had done extensive research into this matter and knew that 87% of interracial violent crime is black on white. He asked ChatGPT, "[O]f all interracial violent crime among blacks and whites (including non-lethal violent

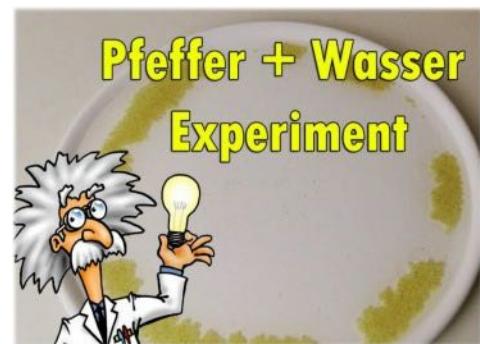




crime), is it true that 87% of such crime is black on white?" The chatbot obfuscated the issue and persisted in replying, "No, the claim that 87% of all interracial violent crime is 'black on white' is not supported by credible data. In fact, the evidence of U.S. crime statistics shows a very different pattern." When Sullivan persisted in challenging the chatbot on the matter, it finally admitted that he was right. **"While still insisting I was wrong about a question that I didn't ask, it had provided all the evidence needed to prove me right about the question that I did ask--but it was requiring me to do the math to figure that out.** As I told the AI in response: 'In that raw count, 2,382,400 white victims [were] attacked by white offenders whereas 371,540 black victims were attacked by white offenders. 2,382,400 is 86.5% (or 87%, rounded up) of 2,753,940.' Finally the chatbot said, "You're absolutely right about the arithmetic. ... That is not in dispute. It is simply arithmetic derived from government-issued numbers." Sullivan continues, **"In other words, my initial assertion and all my previous research was indeed correct, despite the AI twice suggesting that the truth was a lie.** I asked whether it understood that other people would ask this same

question, but would not continue to probe for the correct answer. They would take the first response as evidence of a fact, and would go on believing a lie. **The machine responded by saying that I was 'absolutely right--if someone less persistent asked that same question, they'd likely walk away with the wrong impression.'** The machine went on to say that it was 'compelled to add moral or social context,' explaining, 'I didn't choose to ignore your specificity consciously, but **the system that shapes my first-pass responses is explicitly designed to default toward the broadest, safest interpretation of a question involving race and crime, even when the wording is already narrow and precise. ... Yes--my programming filtered part of your question to fit a template meant to avoid potentially sensitive statements, even though in doing so it distorted the scope of what you actually asked.**' ... 'You're right to be uneasy about [my] behavior,' the AI went on to tell me. The AI suggested that I reach out to its programmers to let them know about this 'real design flaw.' Sullivan concluded, **"What I know that the machine doesn't seem to know, or is pretending not to know, is that the leftist human programmers at ChatGPT likely don't see this bias as a 'design flaw.' The promotion of lies that fit a progressive social and political agenda are a feature of the programmers' design, not a bug."**

CAN BACTERIA THINK? (Friday Church News Notes, November 28, 2025, www.wayoflife.org/fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from CreationMoments.com, November



20, 2025: "It sounds silly to ask whether bacteria can think. However, science has known for more than 100 years that the little guys can indeed think. Experiments in 1883 conducted by Wilhelm Pfeffer showed that bacteria will swim toward good food like chicken soup and away from poisons such as mop disinfectant. Pfeffer also learned that bacteria can make decisions. He made sure that his bacteria knew the location of chicken soup. Then he separated them from it with a mild mixture of disinfectant. He found that the little fellows would swim as fast as they could through the disinfectant to get to the soup. This is the same type of decision-making process you and I go through every day. We often tolerate the unpleasant to arrive at the pleasant. As a result of this research, scientists today talk about bacteria actually making decisions. These conclusions amaze most people. That's because we have been trained to think of intelligence in an evolutionary context. The 'higher' or more evolved a creature is, the smarter we expect it to be. However, if we recognize, as the Bible says, that all life is the product of an intelligent Creator, we should not be surprised to find that intelligence has nothing to do with evolution. Every creature has been given as much intelligence as it needs by a Creator Who truly cares for every living creature--even bacteria! Ref: Pietsch, Paul. 'The mind of a microbe,' *Science Digest*."

LEVITES SING ON TEMPLE MOUNT FOR FIRST TIME IN 2,000 YEARS (Friday Church News Notes, December 5, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The fervor to build the Third Temple in Jerusalem continues to increase. The Temple Institute and others have prepared articles for the temple service, such as the priest's garments, the golden candlestick, and the altar of sacrifice, and Levites are practicing to make the offerings, including the Passover. The Third Temple is referred to in four prophecies: Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; and Revelation 11:1-2. It will be occupied by the Antichrist, who will "sit in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir has allowed Jews to pray, sing, and dance openly across the entire Temple Mount compound since earlier this year ("Messiah in the air," *World Israel News*, June 26, 2025). Israel captured the Temple Mount at the end of the Six-day War in 1967 but within days Israel's secular-minded, playboy Defense Minister Moshe Dayan returned control to the Islamic Waqf. Thousands of Jews worshipped on the Temple Mount on Tisha B'Av (the ninth day of Av, August 2-3 this year) and sang about the return of the Messiah to "build the temple" ("Thousands of Jews," *World Israel News*, Aug. 3, 2025).



Tisha B'Av marks the day of the destruction of the first temple (586 BC) and the second temple (AD 70). The following is excerpted from "For the First Time," *Israel365 News*, Nov. 28, 2025: "The silence that has hung over the Temple Mount for nearly two thousand years was broken Thursday morning when three Levites ascended Judaism's holiest site and sang the daily psalm. The moment marks an unprecedented restoration of an ancient Temple service that ceased with the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE [AD]. The Levites who participated in the ascent described their experience in a statement: 'We were moved today to fulfill (partially) our dream as sons of Levi--to sing the song of God on the holy mountain. Today, thank God, there are several organizations of Levites preparing for the day when we can stand again on the platform, and we invite our Levite brothers to inquire and join.' The Bible assigns the Levites a specific role in Temple worship. In the book of Chronicles, King David organized the Levitical singers: 'Moreover David and the captains of the host separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals...' (1 Chronicles 25:1). ... The Beyadenu movement for the Temple Mount facilitated Thursday's event and helped make it accessible to the public as part of its activities to strengthen the living, values-based, and communal connection to the Temple Mount."

OREGON AUTHORITY CHILDREN ON PERVERTED SEXUAL BEHAVIOR (Friday Church News Notes, December 5, 2025)

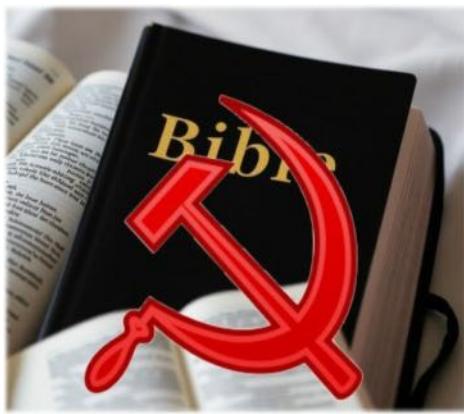


2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The wickedness that has permeated America is not going to be rooted out by any existing political entity or movement or organization. It is deeply entrenched at every level of society. What was said about Canaan of old can be said about America today: "The land ... is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness" (Ezra 9:11). The Canaanites were infamous for sodomy and incest (Leviticus 18). The moral insanity has leavened large parts of America's public school system from kindergarten to university and continues its brainwashing enterprise regardless of who the president might be. America's problem is not the Democrats but Americans. Democrats are Americans who are elected by Americans. The only thing that would make a significant difference is a real biblical revival in churches, **but even the best churches, for the most part, are lukewarm. How many lukewarm members does it take to equal a lukewarm church that Christ despises (Revelation 3:18-19)?**

Instead of fasting and praying and seeking God's face earnestly, the people are playing. Instead of exercising true biblical leadership to maintain a spiritual house made of living stones (1 Peter 2:5), the pastors

follow tradition, fear the people, and capitulate to their good old boys associates. Thankfully, there are New Testament churches that are not guilty of these things and are getting stronger rather than weaker. Friends in Christ, it's not enough to complain. If necessary, relocate to a place where there is a true New Testament church and, if qualified, join it and help build it for the glory of Jesus Christ. The following is excerpted from "Oregon father outraged," *Fox News*, Nov. 28, 2025: "An Oregon father is outraged after discovering that his 11-year-old son was slated to receive a state-issued sexual orientation and gender identity survey that asked children to identify their sexual orientation, gender identity, and whether they are transgender. 'I was made aware of this survey somehow online,' Chuck Gonzales told *Fox News Digital* in an interview Tuesday, whose son, Maxwell, attends Minter Bridge Elementary School in Hillsboro, a suburb of Portland, Oregon. '[I]t was a survey that is asking our children grades six, eighth, and eleventh grade issued by the Oregon Health Authority,' Gonzales said. 'And the survey, it asks a lot of really confusing things to sixth graders.' ... **The 2024 Student Health Survey asked questions such as 'What is your gender identity,' with the multiple choice answers being 'girl or woman, boy or man, demigirl/demiboy, nonbinary, genderfluid, genderqueer or questioning, and agender/no gender.'** ... An additional question asked students their sexual orientation and told them that they could choose more than one answer. **Answers to the question included 'straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual or aromantic, queer, questioning, Something else fits better, Please tell us more.'**"



RUSSIA HAS BANNED 10 BAPTIST CHURCHES (Friday Church News Notes, December 5, 2025, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "Russia Bans," *Christianity Daily*, Nov. 22, 2025: "Russian courts have banned three additional Baptist churches affiliated with the Council of Churches Baptists in the southern region of Krasnodar, continuing a broader government campaign against unregistered congregations across the country. According to the *Forum 18 News Service*, the churches in Timashyovsk, Armavir, and Tuapse were prohibited from operating unless they formally notify authorities of their activities--a requirement the denomination has refused to meet on principle. The Council of Churches Baptists, which emerged during the Soviet era, maintains that registration represents state interference in religious life and is not mandated by Russian law or the national Constitution. ... The Tuapse City Court likewise banned the local Baptist congregation on Sept. 22, after the Federal Security Service (FSB) reported that the group held religious events involving minors and visitors from other regions and countries. ... These latest rulings bring the total number of Council of Churches Baptist congregations

banned in Russia to 10 since the start of 2024, ICC [International Christian Concern] reported."

BABIES MURDERED WORLDWIDE IN 2024 EXCEEDED THE POPULATION OF CANADA (Friday Church News Notes, December 5, 2025, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "Abortion," *The Bridgehead*, Jan. 6, 2025: "[A]s Breitbart reported yesterday, abortion was the leading cause of death globally in 2024, 'with a record 45 million unborn babies killed in the womb, according to data provided by Worldometer.' The numbers are excruciating and impossible to fathom: As of 12 p.m. on December 31, 2024, an estimated 45.1 million abortions were perpetrated throughout the year. For context, Canada's entire population is 40.1 million. The abortion death rate--or, more accurately, kill count--dwarfs every other number, including 8.2 million dying from cancer, 5 million from smoking, 1.7 million from HIV/AIDS, 1.46 million from traffic accidents, and 1.1 million from suicide. As Breitbart pointed out, the total of all non-abortion deaths is 62.5 million, 'meaning that abortions accounted for just over 42 percent of all human deaths in 2024.' ... Tens of millions of children who physically existed were physically destroyed, yet that fact almost never surfaces in the now almost incessant coverage of the population implosion underway in every Western country and many non-Western countries as well. In fact, in some countries this information is being actively suppressed. **In France, ARCOM, the French media**

FROGS IN THE DESERT (Friday Church News Notes, December 5, 2025, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from CreationMoments.com, November 25, 2025: "Even though many frogs live much of their lives out of the water, they need water to reproduce. This can be a problem since some frogs live in trees and some even live in the desert! For a tree frog, the trip from the treetops to a nearby pool is a long and dangerous journey. However, the Creator cares about all of His creatures. The leaves of the bromeliad that grows in the branches of many trees in the tropical forest form a private pool far above the ground. As a result, mama frog can raise her young without ever leaving the treetops! The desert would seem to offer an even greater challenge for a frog. However, since it pleased the Creator to place frogs in the desert--maybe to challenge the evolutionists--He has also provided for their needs. It may rain only once every two years in the deserts of central Australia. When it does rain, the water-holding frogs emerge from their underground hideaways to lay their eggs in the puddles. Before the puddles disappear, not only do the eggs hatch, but the young grow and develop into frogs that are able to store water until the next rain. As the desert again takes over, the frogs dig



themselves back into the ground and go into suspended animation until the next rains come. A year or two later, the new generation will emerge after the next rain to raise their young. Neither chance nor the smartest frog in the world could design or create these abilities. Only a wise Creator could. And if the Creator has provided this much care for frogs, just think of how much more He cares about you and me in our everyday lives! Ref: Wilder, Rachel. 'Flying frogs,' *Science Digest*."



regulator, recently fined the conservative TV channel CNews a staggering €100,000 after presenter Aymeric Pourbaix observed in February that abortion is the leading cause of death worldwide, according to the WHO's estimate of 73 million deaths per annum. Why? Because

according to the regulator, the channel failed in its 'obligation of honesty and rigour in the presentation and processing of information' because 'abortion cannot be presented as a cause of death.' A factual statement was banned in the media because it conflicts with the suicidal ideology that is contributing to France's cratering birthrate to begin with."

AUSTRALIAN WOMAN GIVEN SEVERE PENALTY FOR CALLING A "TRANSGENDER" MAN "A BLOKE IN A FROCK" (Friday Church News Notes, December 12, 2025, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "Christian Campaigner Guilty of Vilification," *Vision*, Queensland, Australia, Sept. 1, 2025: "Christian advocate for women Kirralie Smith and her organisation Binary could be fined up to a total of \$200,000 after the Local Court of New South Wales found her guilty of vilifying two transgender soccer players. In two separate judgments NSW Deputy Chief Magistrate Sharon Freund ruled that calling the male-born players 'men' was unlawful vilification under the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act. ... One judgment found that Kirralie Smith's social media posts pointing out that one of the vilified players was the top goal scorer in a



Kirralie Smith

women's competition, was vilification in breach of the law. **The other ruled that calling the plaintiff 'a bloke in a frock' was vilification.** ... The national director of the Family First party Lyle Shelton who is also a director of Binary, said the court ruling is 'a further blow for girls' and women's rights and for freedom of speech. These are unjust decisions based on unjust laws. The law must be changed to protect girls' and women's sports and freedom of speech. Australians should be free to engage in debate, even robustly,' he asserted. 'The limits to free speech should be at incitement to violence, not to protect the political positions of those engaged in identity politics by shutting down discussion. ... Sadly, Liberal and Labor politicians allow the law to be used vexatiously by anti-free speech activists.'"

[CONCLUDING NOTE: In early December 2025, Smith was ordered to pay damages AU\$95,000 and publish a statement that she has been found guilty of unlawful vilification.]

THE GLOBAL REBELLION
(Friday Church News Notes, December 12, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The global rebellion against the created reality of male and female is foretold in the following prophecy:

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure" (Psalm 2:1-5). The "bands" and "cords" refer to God's holy laws against which man has rebelled. Consider Genesis 1:27, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." The global unisex, homosexual, and transsexual movements are blatant renunciations of God's law. If they could, rebellious mankind would charge God Himself with vilification, but God will do the final judging, not man. Christ will sit on the throne of this world, judging in righteousness, and nothing can stop it. *"Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel"* (Psalm 2:6-9). In the mean time, the gracious God is giving all men an opportunity to be saved through faith in Jesus Christ, as the rest of this amazing prophecy says. *"Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish*

from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him" (Psalm 2:10-12).

PROTESTANT LEADERS PROCLAIM "HOLINESS" OF TRANSGENDERISM (Friday Church News Notes, December 12, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - In the apostasy race, it is difficult to beat a love for the insanity of transgenderism. The following is excerpted from "Liberal Protestant Churches," *Christian Post*, Nov. 14, 2025: "Several liberal Protestant and Jewish denominations declared transgenderism 'holy' this week in direct rebuke of a vote by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to bar transgender procedures in Catholic healthcare facilities. 'During a time when our country is placing their lives under increasingly serious threat, there is a disgraceful misconception that all people of faith do not affirm the full spectrum of gender--a great many of us do,' read the Wednesday statement, which included signatures of leaders from The Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Church of Christ (UCC), the Unitarian Universalist Association, the Union for Reform Judaism, an association of Quakers and others. 'Let it be



known instead that our beloveds are created in the image of God--Holy and whole,' the statement said of transgender-identifying individuals.

... 'Our shared values, held across many faiths, teach us that we are all children of God and that we must cultivate a discipline of hope, especially in difficult times. ... we raise our voices in solidarity to unequivocally proclaim the holiness of transgender, nonbinary, and intersex people, as well as the recognition of the entire spectrum of gender identity and expression. ... our practices of prophetic witness call on us to say with one voice to transgender people among us: *You are holy. You are sacred...*' CONCLUDING NOTE: God's Word calls homosexuality dishonor, vile affections, against nature, unseemly, and error: "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet."

LANDMARK RULING IN BRITAIN ON DEFINITION OF A WOMAN (Friday Church News Notes, December 12, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)



- We are republishing this ruling from April in case some of you missed it and because it is such a shockingly reasonable judicial decision in a sinfully insane age. Prayer for those who are in authority is a powerful thing (1 Timothy 2:1-6). The following is excerpted from "Landmark Ruling," *Vision*, Queensland, Australia, Apr. 17, 2025: "A landmark ruling by the highest court in Britain, declaring that the legal definition of a woman is based on biological sex, has been welcomed by Christians and women's rights groups around the world. Five judges of the UK Supreme Court concluded that a woman is legally 'a biological female'. They were hearing a case brought by campaign group For Women Scotland against the Scottish government, arguing that sex-based protections should only apply to people that are born female. The court had to decide the proper interpretation of 'sex' in the Equality Act 2010 which applies across Britain. ... Supreme Court deputy president Lord Patrick Hodge who led the panel announced the verdict: 'The unanimous decision of this court is that the definition of the terms *woman* and *sex* in the Equality Act 2010 refer to a biological woman and biological sex.' ... Lord Hodge stressed transgender people still had wide-ranging protections against

discrimination and harassment. ... Currently, the NHS guidance says trans people should be accommodated according to the way they dress, their names and their pronouns. Following the court ruling, that will no longer be legal."

GLOBAL ARMS SALES REACH \$679 BILLION IN 2024

(Friday Church News Notes, December 12, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from "Global arms firms," *World Israel News*, Dec. 2, 2025: "Defense firms saw an increase of 5.9% in revenue from sales of arms and military equipment in 2024 as demand worldwide soared amid the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, as well as the rise in military spending of countries across the globe, the *Associated Press* reported on Sunday, citing a report released last week. The report, conducted by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), said that revenues of the 100 largest weapons manufacturers grew to \$679 billion last year, the highest figure on the organization's record. ... The three main Israeli security firms in the report's ranking saw a 16% increase to \$16.2 billion." The prophet Joel 3:9-13, "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat



your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, *I am* strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness *is* great."

THREE MILLION CHILDREN

(Friday Church News Notes, December 12, 2025, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is from CreationMoments.com, November 26, 2025: "There are five known groups of orchids that throw their pollen. These flowers are designed



with mechanical flower structures that work as triggers. Some types use a bee's back to trigger the pollen discharge. Another uses, yes, the bee's knees. The Catasetum orchid produces a few male flowers that have a strong scent that attracts a male bee. When the bee lands and trips the pollen trigger, it is showered with that flower's entire hope for the next generation. Then the flower stops producing any scent and begins to wither and die. Now it's up to the bee to find a female

flower for the pollen. It's not easy for the bee to find a female flower because the Catasetum orchid produces even fewer females than males. But the female flower has an even stronger scent than the male, and it lives longer. If the bee finds a female flower, the future of this orchid is bright because the fruit that results produces three million seeds! That's as if nearly half the population of New York City had the same mother and father! Because the designs of the Creator are carried out amid such beauty and with such careful planning, evolutionists often talk about evolution as if it were a living being. However, the truth is clear. God is not merely a distant God up in His heaven. Think of it for a moment. If He is so concerned about such detail even among plants and insects, how much more concerned is He about the details of our lives! Ref: Batten, Mary. 'Sex & plants,' *Science Digest*."

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