

O Timothy

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

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

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“Parents who want to see their children follow Christ will have an effectual supervisory program. They will know what their children are doing. They will not allow them to have unsupervised access to the internet. They will limit the time the children spend on mindless entertainment, even the most innocent kinds, so they will not become addicted to a-musement and be guilty of sluggardism.” **Page 5.**

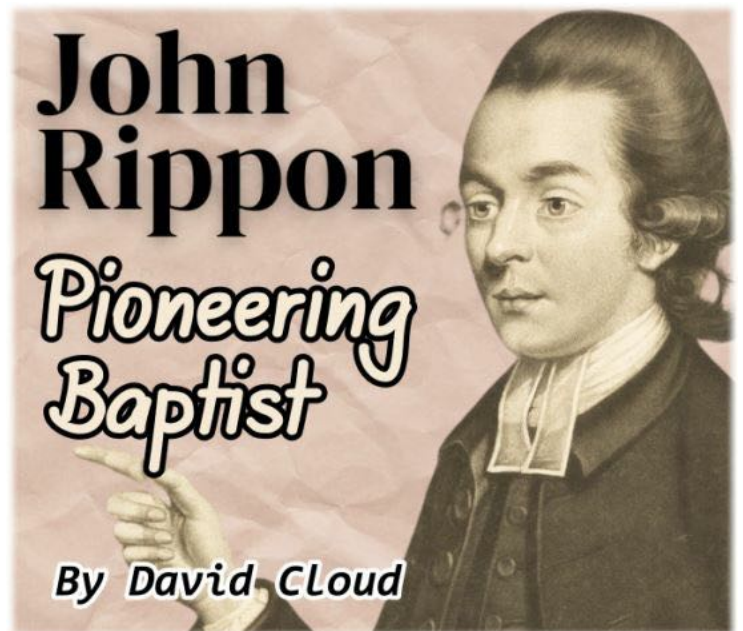
Digging in the Walls: *A month's worth of news items, republished from Friday Church News Notes.* **Page 14.**



The following is excerpted from [Transforming Congregational Singing in the 21st Century](#), available in the Books section of www.wayoflife.org -

John Rippon (1751-1836) pastored the church at Carter Lane for 63 years (1773 to 1836). In 1833, the church moved to New Park Street.

This was during the reigns of George III (1760-1811), George IV (1820-1830), and William IV (1830-1837). The American War of Independence was fought (1776-1783). The French Revolution lasted from 1787-1799. The modern missionary movement was launched, with William Carey becoming England's first missionary in 1792 and Adoniram Judson America's first foreign missionary in 1816. In 1800, the United Kingdom was created by the merger of Great Britain and Ireland. In 1803, America made the Louisiana Purchase from Napoleon, the 828,000 square miles nearly doubling the size of the new nation. In 1804, the British & Foreign Bible Society launched the global Bible society movement. In 1806, Meriweather



Lewis and William Clark completed their survey of the American West. The first steam locomotive was invented in 1814; the world's first railway line opened in 1825; photography was invented in 1827; the telegraph in 1838.

Rippon graduated from Bristol Baptist College at age 20 and was called to the pastorate at Carter Lane two years later. He was first called to candidate while still a student, but there was some resistance by older members who were accustomed to John Gill's super sober ministry.

"Mr. John Rippon was sent to them. He was a youth of some twenty summers, of a vivacious temperament, quick and bold. The older members judged him to be too young, and too flighty; they even accused him of having gone up the pulpit stairs two steps at a time on some occasion when he was hurried--a grave offence for which the condemnation could hardly be too severe" (Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle: Its History and Work*).

Rippon rejected his predecessor's "high Calvinism," believed in the universal offer of the gospel, saw spiritual revival in his own church and beyond, and was at the forefront of a great revival of hymn singing among Baptists. All of these things were interconnected. A revival of strong theology--with Christ's eternal Sonship, incarnation, vicarious atonement, bodily resurrection, and ascension at its heart--prayer, gospel preaching, holiness, and missionary vision, go hand-in-hand with effectual hymn singing. These are products of an unrestricted move of the Spirit.

"Leading a notable London congregation in the midst of the spiritual renewal of his denomination,

Rippon offered two novel contributions to the reviving of the Particular Baptist community: a denominational hymnbook that supplemented Watts to 'provide a comprehensive resource for the homiletical bias of Baptist worship.' and the publication of his *Baptist Annual Register* (1790-1802), which 'not only provided a unique expression of the denomination's new maturity and confidence but also promoted a deeper mutual awareness among Baptists.' During the five decades following these two ventures by Rippon, the Particular Baptist denomination grew from about 17,000 members in 1790 to 86,000 by 1838, an increase exceeding population growth" (Joseph Carmichael, *The Sung Theology of the English Particular Baptist Revival*).

The *Baptist Annual Register* was "a periodical containing an account of the most important events in the history of the Baptist Denomination in Great Britain and America during that period." It is immensely important for Baptist research.

Under Rippon's ministry, the church experienced spiritual revival. It was fruitful in salvations and in raising up preachers.

"Many souls were won to Jesus by his teaching, and out of these a remarkable number became themselves ministers of the gospel. The church-book abounds with records of brethren preaching before the church, as the custom was in those days" (Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle: Its History and Work*).

Rippon was the first president of the Baptist Union (1812), the same Union from which Charles Spurgeon withdrew 75 years later.

In 1792, the Baptist College of Providence, Rhode Island, bestowed upon Rippon a Doctor of Divinity degree.

As we have seen, Rippon was a graduate of the **Bristol Baptist Academy**, which was a powerful force for "evangelical Calvinist revival." The Academy was the vision of Edward Terrill, who deeded a large gift to be used "for the support of a minister at Broadmead who was skilled in the Biblical languages and whose task would be to prepare young men for ministry among Baptist churches" (Hayden, *Continuity and Change*, p. 21).

Baptist preachers associated with this academy included John Ash, John and Benjamin Beddome, Benjamin

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Francis, Andrew Gifford, John Sutcliff, John Fawcett, Joshua Thomas, Robert Hall (author of *Help to Zion's Travellers*, 1781), Hugh Evans, and Caleb Evans. Many of these men engaged in a monthly prayer for revival.

These men's "devotional hymnology, passion for associating, and evangelistic initiatives helped divert many churches from high Calvinism and introduced them to these influences which were powerfully at work in the Evangelical Revival" (Raymond Brown, *The English Baptists of the Eighteenth Century*).

Bristol Academy-associated men were at the forefront of a great missionary enterprise, chiefly John Sutcliff of Olney, the preacher/scholar Andrew Fuller, and the autodidact cobbler William Carey. In 1785, Fuller published *The Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation*. This has been called "the shot that provoked the army onto the field of battle." In 1792, Carey published *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians, to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*. This has been called "the manifesto of the modern missionary movement." Fuller, Carey, Sutcliff, John Ryland, and others formed the Baptist Missionary Society in 1792, and Carey was the society's first missionary, departing for India in 1793.

In 1769, the Bristol Baptist Academy published *A Collection of Hymns Adapted to Public Worship* which contained 412 hymns, including many by Isaac Watts. This was a ground-breaking Baptist hymnal. It was called **the Bristol Collection** for its association with the Academy. It was edited by John Ash (1724-1779) and Caleb Evans (1737-1791), who were influential in the Baptist awakening.

John Rippon published a hymnal in 1787 popularly called **Rippon's Selection**. (The full title was *A Selection of Hymns from the Best Authors, intended as an Appendix to Dr. Watts' Psalms and Hymns*.) It contained 588 psalms and hymns. This hymnal eventually replaced the *Bristol Collection*. Spurgeon called it "the first really good selection of hymns for dissenting congregations."

Rippon's *Selection* was designed to facilitate the ministry of Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. All of the selections were doctrinally solid and spiritually challenging. There was no mindless fluff! The tunes were designed to be easily sung by an ordinary congregation of redeemed saints.

Rippon authored some of the hymns, but since he didn't identify himself as author, only a few can be ascribed to him with any certainty. Among these are "The Day Has Dawned, Jehovah Comes," "Amid the Splendours of Thy State," and "There is Joy in Heaven, and Joy on Earth." Rippon added three stanzas to "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," originally written by Edward Perronet in 1780.

Rippon wrote hymns to be sung after his Sunday sermon to reinforce the preaching and to further educate the congregation on theology. He said, "Singing is not only sweet and raising to the Spirit, but also full of instruction." These old Baptists paid far more attention to the use of hymns for theological education than the vast majority of modern Baptists do.

Rippon's Selection included Isaac Watts' psalms. Rippon was considered the foremost authority on Watts' hymns. In 1801, he published a comprehensive edition of Watts entitled *An Arrangement of the Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs of the Rev. Isaac Watts, D.D.* The 718 Watts' hymns were arranged by subject. This is online at <https://archive.org/details/hymnsr00watt>

Rippon's Selection went through 11 editions in Rippon's lifetime, 30 editions altogether. An edition was published in America in 1820. It was so popular that it was called the "unofficial hymnbook for Baptist Churches." By 1827, over 200,000 copies had already been distributed in England and more than 100,000 in America.

An expanded edition published in 1844 was entitled *The Comprehensive Edition*, popularly called **The Comprehensive Rippon**. It contained more than 1,170 hymns.

This hymnal was loaded with great treasures. Not only did it include hymns by Isaac Watts (40), but also by Anne Steele (53), Samuel Stennett (39), Benjamin Beddome (36), William Cowper (8), John Needham (19), Philip Doddridge (91), John Fawcett (23), Augustus Toplady (15), John Newton (25), Thomas Gibbons (27), Charles Wesley (21), and many others. (For this tabulation, we used the 1804 edition.)

Rippon also published hymn tunes collected from a wide variety of sources. The first was *A Selection of Psalm and Hymn Tunes from the Best Authors*, 1791. It contained "in a greater variety than any other volume extant, the most

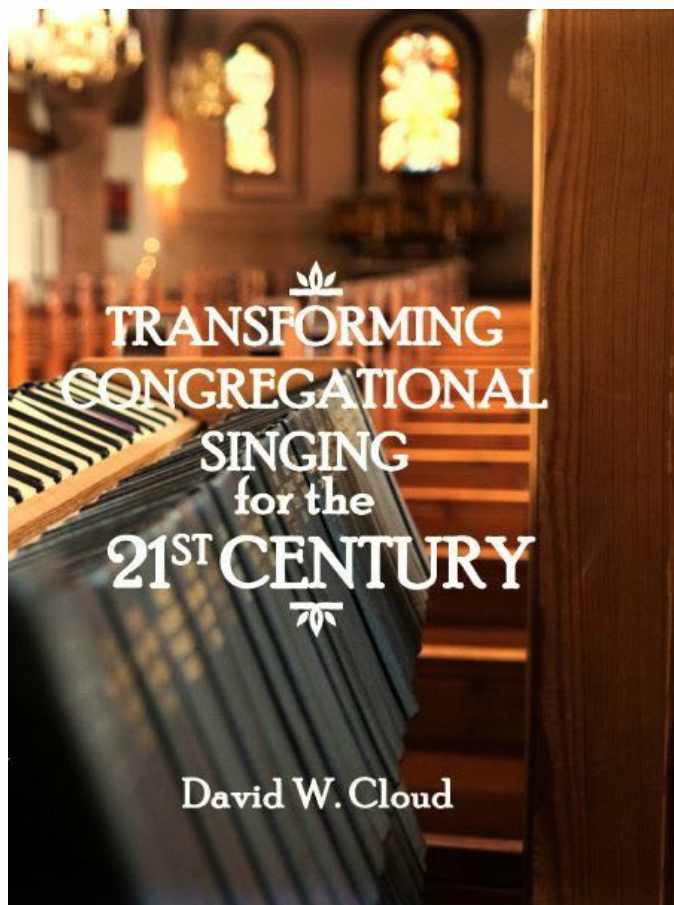
approved compositions which are used in London, and in the different congregations throughout England” and “many original tunes never before printed.” There were more than 300 tunes. Rippon’s tune book included the most extensive use of marks of music expression and tempo that had yet appeared in hymnals, such as p. (piano, soft), f. (forte, loud), ff. (fortississimo, extremely loud), cres. (crescendo, gradual increase in volume), dim. (diminuendo, a gradual decrease in volume), grave, lively, solemn, brisk, etc. Rippon is said to be “the first person to compile, on an extensive scale, a book of tunes with a comprehensive hymn book suitable for the devotional exercises of religious worship” (Herbert Skeats, *History of the Free Churches*). Rippon’s *Selection of Hymn Tunes* can be obtained in a reprint from Amazon.com.

Rippon pastored the church for 63 years, but like his predecessor he kept control of the pastorate well beyond

when he was effectual. Though he was not able to preach the last three years of his pastorate, he did not retire. As a result the church suffered.

“He outlived his usefulness, and it was a wonderful instance of divine care over the church that the old gentleman did not do it serious injury. He retained the will to govern after the capacity was gone, and he held his power over the pulpit though unable to occupy it to profit. Supplies who came to preach for him were not always allowed to officiate, and when they did, the old minister’s remarks from his pew were frequently more quaint than agreeable” (Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle: Its History and Work*).

This type of thing has happened too many times. The church was without a permanent pastor for 17 years after Rippon’s death and declined much in membership and spiritual zeal. The revival would come under young Spurgeon’s ministry.



Transforming Congregational Singing for the 21st Century by David W. Cloud

The book begins with a practical study on Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 as the model of exactly what God says we are to be doing. It has an extensive history of congregational singing with lots of practical things, covering the Bohemian Brethren, Huguenots, Moravians, Luther, Calvin, Anabaptists, Welsh hymn singing, Scottish Presbyterians, old British Baptists, First Great Awakening, Second Great Awakening, Shape-note Singing, and the Fundamentalist-Revivalist era.

There are chapters on weighing the music and weighing the lyrics. There is an extensive study on song leading and there are chapters on choosing hymnals and expanding the church’s hymn repertoire and analyzing hymns.

This book provides web links to over 240 specially selected resources by the author. The links in the eBook are working hyperlinks (if your pdf app provides for that feature.)

Available from the Way of Life Literature Store, at:

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

VIDEO GAMES

Waste, Addiction, Evil, Occult

By David Cloud

Enlarged May 27, 2026 (first published March 17, 2020)



The previous edition of this report was "[Beware of Video Games.](#)"

Parents who want to see their children follow Christ will have an effectual supervisory program. They will know what their children are doing. They will not allow them to have unsupervised access to the internet. They will limit the time the children spend on mindless entertainment, even the most innocent kinds, so they will not become addicted to a-musement and be guilty of sluggardism. They will immerse their children in the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:15-17). They will be exceedingly careful that their child's profession of faith in Christ lines up with Bible reality and evidence. They will disciple their children to be real Bible students. They will model godly Christian living and maintain a compassionate Christ-like atmosphere in the home.

"Some studies suggest that gaming is absolutely taking over the minds of children all together."

"Add to this the fact that today's video gaming have text and chat and in some cases video chatting capabilities. This spells disaster. A space for evil communications that corrupt good manners. And then a bunch of pedophiles and perverts, too. Just horrible."

"Virtual life becomes more appealing than real life."

A father approached me at a Bible conference and said that his teenage daughter begs him every day to allow her to use his smartphone to play a video game, because "she needs to relax." I told him that there are far better and safer options for "relaxing" than video games. The dangers are multitudinous as we document in this report: addiction, the slippery slope of being drawn into less

innocent games, using smartphone time to access any number of dangerous platforms, such as Snapchat or TikTok, and being drawn into the toxic world of teenage social media.

The first commercially successful video game was *Space Invaders*, which appeared in 1978. By 1982, *Space Invaders* was the biggest money making entertainment product in the U.S. It was only available in gaming arcades and was sold in little chunks of time that cost 25 cents, but it earned more than \$2 billion! Soon, video games were earning \$5 billion a year. In the early 1980s, the first personal video gaming consoles appeared. By 1982, Atari was the fastest growing company in America.

Anything this popular demands a very close look by God's redeemed people.

The most popular video games for 2020 are *Minecraft* (users can create their own virtual reality worlds; it appeared in 2011 and had sold 180 million copies by 2020 and had 112 million monthly active players), *Fortnite* (online shooter game, 125 million players per year), *GTA Grand Theft Auto V* (hyper-violent game that includes auto theft, reckless driving, gang wars, and murder), *Rainbow Six Siege* (shooter game), *Super Smash Bros* (fighting game), *Red Dead Redemption II* (western-style violent game), *Overwatch* (multiplayer shooter game), *Rocket League* (vehicular soccer game), *League of Legends* (multiplayer online battle game "inspired by *World of Warcraft*"), *PayerUnknown's Battlegrounds* (violent war game in which 100 players battle to the death), *Counter-Strike Global Offensive* (terrorist, counter-terrorist), *Call of Duty* (special forces missions), *Legend of Zelda* (occult action-adventure), *Spider-Man* (super powers), *Elder Scrolls* (violent occultic action-adventure, dragons, super powers).

Grand Theft Auto (GTA) has made billions of dollars. *Grand Theft Auto V* has made more than any movie in history.

Many of the most popular YouTube channels are video game oriented.

In 2020, the top YouTube celebrity was Felix Kjellberg (PewDiePie), a gamer with 102 million subscribers. The most popular YouTube channels also include gamers JuegaGerman (37 million), El Rubius (36 million), Fernanfloo (34 million), Evan Fong (23 million), Markiplier (20 million), Jacksepticeye (19 million), DanTDM (19 million), PopularMMOs (14 million), Captain Sparklez (10 million), The Game Theorists (10 million), H20Delirious (10 million), I Am Wildcat (6 million), Game Grumps (4.5 million).

Some have become millionaires via their YouTube channels. The number of social media followers is called social currency, but it can be converted to real currency if it is large enough. Businesses will pay social media stars to advertise and review their products. Since 2012, PewDiePie has made about \$90 million through the social currency of his YouTube gaming channel. All he does is video record himself playing games with a running commentary.

In 2019, some of the top YouTube earners other than PewDiePie were Dan Middleton (\$18.5 million per year), Mark Fischbach (\$17.5 million), Evan Fong (\$17 million), Luis Alvarado (\$16 million), Sean McLaughlin (\$23 million), Alastair Aiken (\$7 million), JuegaGerman (\$6 million), Guillermo Diaz (\$5 million), Samuel de Luque (\$4 million).

Just like the video games themselves, most gaming channels are filled with filthy language, blasphemy, immodesty, the occult, and violence.

“YouTube stars/influencers can normalize wrong beliefs or behaviors all to make a little cash” (*Smartphone Sanity*).

Video Games and Addiction

While there are video games that are relatively innocent and might be used in wise and godly moderation, these are not the most popular ones, and even with these there is always the danger that video gaming will become an addictive waste of life’s fleeting hours.

“Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied” (Pr. 27:20).

There is also the ever-present danger of getting drawn into evermore evil games. A former gamer says, “Visiting families, I’ve seen ‘innocent’ children’s games having advertisements for violent games that showed texts like ‘kill’ or ‘headshot,’ including the bloody graphics. Other advertisements contained gambling, women with very few clothes on, and so on. I’ve yet to see the first video game on a smartphone/tablet that doesn’t have such advertising.”

The following note is from a reader who saw a warning about addiction to video games in our weekly publication, *Friday Church News Notes*:

“I am writing with a heavy heart. Your Church Notes on the video and computer games is true. I see video games and movies have taken over the children’s lives in my church. Our preacher preaches against it all and sets the best example. As a matter of fact, when we travel, we haven’t found a better church than ours. I just have seen so much TV and video games creep into homes and then it gets uncontrollable. The moms say they allow this because they don’t want to let their children out into the world and they don’t want them to be bored. [Note from Brother Cloud: How unreasonable it is to bring the world into the home in the name of keeping kids out of the world!] The sad thing is that it overtakes their lives and I am observing that when the children are getting into their teens and even 18, 19, 20, 21, etc., they are even deeper into the video games. Yes, 21-year-olds spending every free second playing X Box, Play Station, Nintendo, etc. These same young people, when it comes to the church services, don’t sing the hymns, sit on the back pew, and don’t seem to care much about the things of God. They get up several times during the preaching service to get a drink of water. It’s so sad.”

A young person sent the following testimony:

“I am writing to tell you how much I appreciate your ministry. I am a homeschooled student and I have used your articles numerous times for researching various subjects and issues. I am especially glad, however, that you warn people about video games and their destructive influence and overall effect on the players. Unfortunately, many people I know have been sucked into the video game world and are consequently wasting their lives. Even if a video game has nothing obviously unbiblical it still has that destructive influence. I know of several people at my church who play video games. What I can’t under-

stand is why they can't spend their time in a more profitable way. If they need excitement or entertainment they could just read some good books, but then video game playing and reading don't really go hand in hand. Video games are too unrealistically violent and exciting and draw them away [from reality]. Earlier this month a friend told me how her two brothers spent the whole day with lots of other boys playing video games together. She said they all sat completely mesmerized while staring at their computer screens. Communication was achieved by instant messaging rather than actual speaking. It is very sad. Countless people are wasting their lives pursuing this vain employment. I pray with all my heart they will realize their error and seek the Lord. I am truly grateful for comments on this topic."

These testimonies were written in the 1990s, and the situation has gotten a great deal worse since then.

Video games are so addictive that thousands of husbands and wives have been virtually abandoned for make-believe games played in cyberspace. In other words, they have been abandoned for nothing, for a figment of the imagination, for pixels on a screen, for less than soap bubbles.

An article on MSNBC.com was titled "Game Widows Grieve Lost Spouses." Consider an excerpt:

"Though their spouses and partners haven't gone to the great beyond, these particular widows and widowers say their loved ones have gone someplace that's almost as distant and unreachable. Some have left this world for the 'World of Warcraft,' others have forsaken this life for 'Second Life' and still others have been taken away by 'EverQuest,' 'Final Fantasy XI' and 'Dark Age of Camelot.' ... As the ranks of those playing video games in general--and massively multiplayer online games in particular--continue to grow, so grow the ranks of those who refer to themselves as 'game widows.' They are the husbands, wives, girlfriends and boyfriends of gamers whose playing habits have consumed their lives. The bereaved say their mates have suffered a kind of digital death that has left only the shell of the person they loved behind. And like a real death, it has left the people who remain heartbroken, scared and angry."

Video games were addictive from their inception. A *Washington Post* reporter assigned to try *Space Invaders* in 1980 said, "I dropped in a quarter and saw 55 rectangles waving little arms and dropping laser bombs on earth, which is at the bottom of the screen. I fired back with my three laser bases, which got bombed out in about

30 seconds. ... I was still pounding on the FIRE button at the end of the game. End of quarter. Start of addiction." That report stated, "It's like drugs. They'll tell you: 'I got a \$4-a-day habit.'" In 1981, Dr. Robert Millman told *The New York Times* that video games were like "sniffing glue" and were "a seductive world."

Video games are designed to be addictive. The developers and marketers are in the business for money. They are not innocent promoters of entertainment. They will steal your time, your heart, your holiness.

The multi-player online video games are so addictive that they are likened to drugs. *EverQuest* is called "never rest" and "ever crack," *World of Warcraft* is called World of War Crack, *Halo 3* is called Halodiction.

The most addictive games in 2015 were the following: *Madden*, *Dota 2*, *Grand Theft Auto*, *Tetris*, *Candy Crush Saga* (the company is valued at \$7.5 billion), *Minecraft*, *EverQuest*, *The Sims* (player has omnipotent control over people), *World of Warcraft*, *Call of Duty* (the last two are played by more than 100 million players), *Halo 3*, *Total War*, *Pong*, *Civilization*, *Diablo 3*, *Super Meat Boy*, *Team Fortress 2*, *Dark Souls 2*, *Counter Strike*, *Starcraft 2*, *Persona 4 Golden*, *Monster Hunter 3*, *Elder Scrolls*, *Angry Birds*, *Faster Than Light*, *Peggle*, *League of Legends*, *Civilization V*, *Pokemon*.

The most addictive and dangerous are the MMORPG (massively multiplayer online role-playing) games. Nothing takes over young people's hearts and minds more than these.

Even in remote places like Nepal, gaming competition is becoming popular. A report on Nepali gamers in the *Kathmandu Post* (Aug. 29, 2015) was entitled "By Their Bootstraps." Gaming started in Nepal in internet cafes in 2010. The 2015 Colors E-sports Carnival at the Civil Mall had 500 participants competing at *Defense of the Ancients* (DOTA), a multi-online battle game.

A young man in our church didn't start growing spiritually until he gave up online multi-player video gaming. He attended church faithfully for about a year and seemed to love the Bible teaching, but he wasn't making any real progress in his spiritual life. We didn't know about his video gaming addiction. Since giving it up, he has made great strides. He left his secular education to join our Bible college.

A former gamer in the Netherlands describes the way that the gaming companies create addictions:

“First off, you need to know that at the fundamental background of all MMO’s, video games (whether PC or console), and smartphone games are the statistics. They keep track of what level peoples’ characters are, what items they collected, what items they buy, how long it takes them to get said items, and the list goes on and on. They use the statistics for targeted advertising, bringing out more items that sell well, and above all they use it to know when to release new content.

“If you release content too early, people can’t play it. If you release it too late, people quit and play another game. Unfortunately, video game makers are masters at this and know exactly when to release new content. Usually the timing is just before the majority of players finish the old content.

“For the ‘hardcore’ players like me, they use ‘grinding’ which is just another word for ‘running the treadmill.’ They need special content to keep players like me hooked because we finish game content too fast. The game makers give you group based content called instances or raids in which you have to take down powerful bosses. This requires a lot of coordination and tactics and isn’t easy. Defeating a boss means you can get your character special armour such as chest, legs, boots, gloves, helmet and cloak or swords, axes, bows, ingame currency, and the list goes on. To get all the items you have to play for months and then of course new content comes and the whole ‘grinding’ starts all over again and again and again and again.

“Nowadays almost all games whether on PC, console, or smartphone have the aforementioned addictive components and then some. Their goal, of course, is to make as much money as possible.

There are differences between each game but here’s how they do it:

1. Early in the game they don’t bother you much. You get free coins, rubies, diamonds or whatever ingame currency they use to give you a head start. It’s just enough to keep you playing for a while but not too much. The goal is to get you ‘hooked.’
2. Once they have you ‘hooked’ they start throwing up ‘roadblocks.’ There generally are three ways to get past those ‘roadblocks.’ One, you have to ‘grind’ or start “running the treadmill” and you get it for ‘free.’ They hope it gets too tedious for you to do, cave in and buy some ingame currency. Two, you buy ingame currency to buy yourself past the ‘roadblock.’ Three, you have to watch an advertisement which of course makes the game maker money. The goal of course is to keep you ‘hooked.’

3. They sell you treasure chests which if you open have items in it. Sometimes you get them for free but most times you don’t and you have to open them with ingame currency. Most times you get basic items but occasionally you get rare items and you have an infinitesimal small chance on getting extremely rare items. The last category is basically the ‘jackpot’ and are the most coveted items. The goal is to make you keep buying treasure chests to get the aforementioned jackpot.

“Playing video games will cause you to waste more and more time playing your game and spend less and less time on Bible reading, Bible study, prayer, going to church, or you’ll just end up pretending and secretly play during the sermon. No Christian man, woman or child is above sin and thereby is not above becoming addicted to video games. You need to know that game makers STUDY YOU! They study human psychology! They know what makes humans tick and they know how to get you addicted. I’ve been addicted to games and I know this to be true” (“Testimony of a Video Gamer,” www.wayoflife.org).

Video Games and Moral Relativism

Another warning that we would give about video games is that many of them are programmed with relativistic moral choices.

These choices include such things as decisions as whether to kill a person or to save him, to help terrorists or to resist them, to break the law or to obey it. Many games allow the player to take on both good and bad personas.

We are told that “unstructured, open-ended play gives gamers a great deal of choice about how to behave in video games” (“Real moral choices in virtual game worlds,” *The Guardian*, Aug. 16, 2007).

The games promote moral relativism or situational ethics, the idea that morality changes according to the circumstances. Examples of these games are *System Shock* and *BioShock* produced by Irrational Games. Ken Levine, president of the company, says cutting-edge gaming programmers are constructing “moral playgrounds,” which are places in which people “can explore different philosophies, principles and personalities.”

The situation ethics is also seen in such games as *Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion*. The characters in this game are “all entirely lacking in principle.” You can “murder someone’s family and steal from their shop and then give

them a load of cash and they would treat you as a long-lost friend.”

From a biblical perspective, this is dangerous for at least two reasons.

First, man’s fallen heart, which is naturally attracted to sin and rebellion, can be fed and enflamed.

“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” (Ro. 6:16).

“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (Jas. 1:14-15).

When a young person is allowed to live in a make-believe video world in which he can choose to commit evil without any real-life consequences, he is feeding and enflaming his old nature and is becoming a slave in the process.

Second, there is the danger of demonic deception and control. He is “that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world” (Re. 12:9). He is “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2). He is the ruler “of the darkness of this world” (Eph. 6:12). He walks about seeking whom he may devour (1 Pe. 5:8). He blinds the minds of them which believe not (2 Co. 4:4). He must be actively fought with “the whole armor of God” (Eph. 6:11-19).

The human imagination is a major spiritual and moral battleground. If used in a wise and godly way, the imagination can produce spiritual growth. The believer finds the will of God by “renewing the mind” (Ro. 12:2) and by “casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Co. 10:5).

If abused, though, the imagination can descend into increasingly dark territory. Romans 1:21 associates vain imaginations with a darkening of the heart, and vain imaginings is an accurate description of most video games. The Bible warns that those who do not “retain God in their knowledge” are given over to a reprobate

mind (Ro. 1:28), because anything that takes the place of God in man’s heart and life is an idol, and God hates idols (Ex. 20:3). I would strongly suspect that most young people who become immersed in video games are not retaining God in their knowledge during that endeavor, to say the least.

In light of the Bible’s warnings about the possibility of enslavement to the old nature and demonic deception in the imagination, the moral relativism in video games is a recipe for spiritual disaster.

Video Games and Violence

Many video games are very violent.

One of the most popular is *Grand Theft Auto*. Players assume the role of lawless, destructive criminals who kill innocent bystanders, policemen, and military personnel, “while dealing with only temporary consequences.” It has been called a cop-killing training machine. Some of the versions require the player to torture people in brutal ways to advance to new levels. Sexual elements include hiring and killing prostitutes (by means of the player’s choice of fist, machete, bat, or gun). “Grand Theft Auto is a world governed by the laws of depravity. See a car you like? Steal it. Someone you don’t like? Stomp her. A cop in your way? Blow him away. There are police at every turn, and endless opportunities to take them down. It is 360 degrees of murder and mayhem” (“Can a Video Game Lead to Murder?” 60 Minutes, June 17, 2005).

Real life murders have been committed by people who were obsessive players of *Grand Theft Auto* and have even admitted to being inspired by the game.

Video Games and the Occult

Many video games are permeated with the occult.

The following is excerpted from “Escaping Reality: The Danger of Role-playing Games,” Vince Londini, March 22, 2005.

Growing up in an independent Baptist church, we were occasionally warned about the dangers of the occult. Every three to five years, someone whose interest had been piqued would offer a Sunday School lesson or sermon about witchcraft, sorcery, magic, Satanism, and the occult. These lessons would focus on the fantastic, nearly unbelievable

activities performed by devotees of these black arts. After being rightly warned to stay far away from anything even remotely occultic, we might hear a few brief thoughts about *Dungeon's and Dragons* (D&D). Those warnings focused on the pagan/Satanic material that game authors such as Gary Gygax (of D&D fame) used as source material for creating their pretend magic systems and fictional fantasy worlds. That seemed to be the extent of the warnings I received about role-playing games (RPGs).

As a Jr. High student, my inquisitive mind discovered board-games, strategy war-games, and simulations. My mind was captivated by the prospect of sophisticated make-believe with quasi-realistic representations of the choices a General, WWII squad leader, or stock investor might make. These games, especially the war simulations, began consuming an increasing amount of my time as they often required 40-80 page 8.5x11 inch rule-books and hundreds of small cardboard counters to represent everything from flamethrowers to tanks to individual officers on a battlefield. However, like any lazy North-American child, I quickly tired of misplaying these games because I'd forgotten rule 3.4.2.3 (no kidding) about the correct way to game, for example, the bullet penetration of a .30cal German light machine gun. I think I forgot to count the correct distance for the bullets to penetrate and roll on a chart to see if the units behind the target were injured. That might have changed the entire course of the battle, but it happened five turns ago, and I only just discovered it while looking up rule 7.5.10 about flamethrower operations.

No doubt, you're already worn-out just reading my recollection! You might be wondering what that has to do with role-playing. The summer before I entered High School, I discovered RPGs. While similar to war-games and simulations in having large rule-books, the role-playing rules taught the players how to tell an interactive story. The story focused on a character controlled by the player. Each player makes every decision his respective character faces as the story unfolds. The rulebooks provided fictional background material and a combat system to game man-to-man (or beast, as the case may be) combat using a variety of weapons. In general, the rules were far less complex than war-games and the immersive escapist aspects of the story far more intense, precisely because it wasn't being interrupted by obscure rules.

I discovered the 'Middle Earth Role-Playing' Game (MERP) by Iron Crown Enterprises (I.C.E.). In Jr. High I found and read Tolkien's famous *Lord of the Rings* saga set in his imaginary world of Middle Earth. While some aspects of the story were beyond my adolescent attention-span, my imagination en-

joyed the idea of elves, dwarves, humans and hobbits using good magic to fight orcs, trolls, and their evil allies. Over the next 10 years I would read the complete trilogy three times, the introductory volume called *The Hobbit* some five or six times, and in attempts to re-read the trilogy I re-read *The Fellowship of the Ring* over 10 times. I also read some of Tolkien's other works that laid more background material for his mythology, such as the *Silmarillion*. We bought piles of rules manuals and source books for the games that expanded the story from the original premises and read all of these many times.

Notice three reasons I was attracted to role-playing. One, the game I found allowed me to pretend to be a character in a fictional story I had already come to enjoy. Two, the game I found was set in a fictional world already declared 'safe' by my Dad and Mom and peers. Sure, I'd seen D&D on the shelves before, but I wasn't the slightest bit interested. I knew THAT was wrong. But, Tolkien's stories were just harmless fantasy, right? Besides, it's just a game, isn't it? Three, the game I found was better than just reading a story or watching TV, because it involved telling your own story and making choices to discover how the story was going to turn out.

O CHRISTIAN, BEWARE! It took 10 years to pull that sinful hook out of my flesh. My deceitful, self-pleasing, worldly-affectionate heart led me to help the world, flesh and devil hook me good. I'm still a weaker man today for having given my heart to role-playing games. Please let me warn you about the three key dangers role-playing games pose to the born-again Christian.

Violence

Whether fantasy (meaning quasi-medieval with sorcery thrown in), science-fiction, horror, or historical, role-playing games most often promote and glorify violence. Regardless of what simulation-like elements the game play may contain, at their core these games are about killing or defeating one's opponents in order to gain wealth, possessions, and 'experience.' The player then uses these gains to better equip and train his character to provide better capabilities for killing or defeating more powerful opponents.

Witchcraft

While this aspect of role-playing games was addressed during my formative years, I foolishly believed there could be 'good' magic instead of 'bad' magic. Nearly every RPG involves 'magic' whereby the rules attempt to game the imagined effects of magical incantations and abilities. Science-fic-

tion or 'horror' RPGs will imagine the existence of ESP, telepathy, and other 'psionic (psi) powers' with basically the same effect.

The player's character uses spells and magic items in fantasy gaming (psi-powers and non-existent technology devices in Sci-Fi gaming) as a shortcut to defeat opponents beyond the character's ability. From here on, I'll usually refer to fantasy role-playing, but you can fill in the terms for the other genres as I did for Sci-Fi in the previous sentence.

Magic in these games is considered a good thing, much sought after to gain advantage such as: Spells, potions, amulets, wands, staves, rods, scrolls, runes (cryptic magical writing), bracelets, rings, necklaces, magic weapons, magic armor, and magic clothing. As a young Christian, I knew magic was bad, but we so enjoyed the game effects of the magical spells and items, that our games invariably involved a lot of them. We wouldn't game actual spiritual realities like demons or Hell, but we reveled in magic swords and spells, and we thought we could do "good" with them. What a curse!

Anti-God Worldview

While the witchcraft aspects of most fantasy RPGs occasionally gets attention from our Biblicist pulpits, this last aspect is often ignored. An entire sermon could be preached here against using fiction, TV, movies, lust, as well as games to escape from thinking about reality and Spiritual truths.

It is just as anti-God to ignore Him, as to curse or attack Him.

With regard to role-playing games, God, Christ, salvation from sin, the gospel, heaven, and hell are either mocked or twisted and warped beyond Scriptural recognition. The players are fed ideas, attitudes, and philosophies about religious and Spiritual truths from a very pagan perspective.

Most born-again souls that get caught up in role-playing games probably have never thought this point through. But, what you're really telling God when you play any game that glorifies what God opposes or ignores His existence is – 'Thanks for creating the World, dying for my Sins, saving my soul, sealing me with your Spirit, and preserving your Word for my instruction; but, I'd rather spend my time pretending to explore an imaginary world whose authors rebel against Your existence by not including You. I know You understand that I need to have my fun.'

What true believer would ever want to say this to God's face, verbally? But, how many are telling God this by their actions?

According to Psalm 10:4, one of the behaviors of the wicked is his refusal to constantly consider God. 'The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.'

The most dangerous aspect of role-playing games is not their sinful content (though that is dangerous), but the temptation the player faces to meditate on the game, imagine future scenarios for the game, and calculate how to game various real-world situations. **In other words, these games have great ability to keep one's mind continually distracted from spiritual truths and reality even when one isn't wasting time playing them.**

I don't want to share the humbling details of the games I've gone back to for a short season, or the unwise, sinful purchases I've made. For me, giving up the pencil and paper role-playing game was far easier than abandoning ungodly, worldly computer games which are just as sinful as the games I've described, because they contain many of the same elements. Over the course of my adolescence, I foolishly spent months and years forming these sinful habits and affections. They didn't just disappear when I decided I wanted them to go away. Beware the dangerous hooks of sin! ('Escaping Reality: The Danger of Role-Playing Games,' March 22, 2005).

(I am sad to report that some time after writing this, Londini left the ministry and went back to his video gaming addiction, but this adds an even louder warning about the dangers he exposed and the "hooks" that such gaming set into the users.)

Even many of the more innocent-appearing video games are deeply associated with the occult.

Consider the current craze, **Pokémon Go**. Pokémon promotes the search for occult power. The cards are called "energy cards." Players engage in "pretend" occult warfare.

There is nothing innocent about Pokémon. It is a clever attempt at demonic mind-control. Almost overnight it became the most popular mobile game in American history, increasing the stock market value of part owner Nintendo more than 50%. "Pokémon Go, the newest iteration of the nearly 20-year-old Pokémon franchise, engages players in an 'augmented reality' where they try to find and capture Pokémons hidden throughout the real world. The *Australian Business Review* has suggested that it may be a 'watershed moment' in the development of virtual reality" ("Pokémon Go craze drawing gamers to church," *Baptist Press News*, July 15, 2016). The game

“uses the mobile phone’s camera to create the perception that the Pokémon characters are actually in front of the players.” It is so engaging and addictive that people have crashed their automobiles and walked into dangerous situations. Two men recently fell off a cliff near San Diego while engaged in the game.

David Brown, retired pastor of First Baptist Church, Oak Creek, Wisconsin, who made the effort to investigate *Pokémon* and apply the test of God’s Word to it in 1999, says, “The name *Pokémon* is derived from POCKET MONSTER. ... One of the first things I did was to find out who produced the Trading Card Game. Here is an exact quote right from the Web page of the producer - ‘The *Pokémon* Trading Card Game is a new collectable Card Game that is made and distributed by *Wizards of the Coast*. The same company that made the best-selling game ... *Magic: The Gathering*.’ *Wizards of the Coast* also owns TSR, the producers of *Dungeons & Dragons*. When I discovered who owned the American *Pokémon* Trading Card Game rights, I knew it was not just an innocent card game for elementary school children. [The *Pokémon* rap mantra says]: ‘I will travel across the land/ Searching far and wide/ Each Pokémon to understand/ The power that’s inside/ Gotta catch them all.’ ... To be sure, it is a game, but a game that does not glorify God! When God says something is wrong, it is wrong regardless of what form it is in. Not only that, but many of the kids who play this game *are* seduced into believing the principles that the game subtly teaches” (Dave Brown, “[The Problem with Pokémon](http://logosresourcepages.org/),” logosresourcepages.org).

In the official literature, the main characters of the game are described as headstrong, stubborn, quibbling, hormonal, having a fascination with and trying to “score” with the opposite sex, self-centered, vindictive, obnoxious, and prone to cross-dressing!

Pokémon promotes the search for occultic power. The cards are called “energy cards.” Players engage in “pretend” occultic warfare. Currently there are 729 species of *Pokémon* monsters, and 151 of them are sought by *Pokémon Go* players. Two of them are named *Abra* and *Kadabra*, long associated with magic. The *Abra* card promotes the ability to read minds. The *Kadabra* character has a pentagram on his forehead. What an incredibly dangerous, wicked influence for children!

Nintendolife says there are poison types, psychic types, dark types, fairy types, dragon types, and ghost types.

There is nothing innocent about *Pokémon*. It is a clever attempt at demonic mind-control. For more about the dangers of *Pokémon* see “[The Problem with Pokémon](http://logosresourcepages.org/)” by David Brown, <http://logosresourcepages.org/>

We were recently informed about the “**End Poem**” associated with the game **Minecraft**.

“Given that your warnings on various matters have been quite useful to me and others, I wanted to suggest an important topic if you ever revisit your article on video games. I believe it would be very profitable to make a warning on the ‘End Poem’ from the game *Minecraft*. **Many children in Baptist churches (as in many others) play this game with the parents having no knowledge of what is in it because it is not obviously wicked like other games.** The impact of this poem has been sizable and has been quite commented on. It is held in high esteem among the playerbase.”

“End Poem” is presented to the player who defeats *Minecraft*’s final boss, the Ender Dragon. The poem has been in the public domain since 2022. It is utterly demonic. Claiming to be the mind of the universe, it says it can read the player’s thoughts. It says thoughts come from the universe and can create reality. “Sometimes when they are deep in dreams, I want to tell them, they are building true worlds in reality.” It says the truth should be told “safely, in a cage of words. Not the naked truth.” It promotes pantheism (“we are the universe”), warlocks, witches, father sun, mother moon, ancestral spirits, animal spirits, demons, poltergeists, aliens, and extraterrestrials. The poem ends with these lies: “the universe says everything you need is within you ... the universe says the light you seek is within you ... the universe said you are the universe tasting itself, talking to itself, reading its own code ... the universe said I love you because you are love.”

Minecraft is permeated with the demonic, taking the gamer ever deeper into the occult.

“*Minecraft* is composed of three worlds: The Overworld, The Nether, and The End. Players must first gather resources in the Overworld by gathering wood, farming, mining, crafting equipment, enchanting their gear, and trading/robbing villagers so that they are prepared to enter the Nether and End. The Nether is *Minecraft*’s version of hell, but it is made childish and not overt. There are mobs that are analogous to evil spirits and the dead, such as blazes, ghosts, and wither skeletons. There the player must

slay several blazes to craft an ‘eye of ender’ to lead them to a portal where they will go into The End. There they will defeat the Ender Dragon and the game ends.”

Video Games and Wasting Time

“How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man” (Pr. 6:9-11).

“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Eph. 5;15-16).

The average gamer spends eight hours per week playing video games. This equates to 416 hours per year.

Some years ago, a teen told me he wanted to learn to study the Bible on his phone, but when I asked to look at his phone, I found that it was filled with games. I challenged him to get rid of them and to spend that time on Bible study and other profitable things. I told him that until he was willing to put aside wasteful things, he wouldn’t make much progress in his spiritual life.

A Christian young lady that we know got convicted about how much time she was wasting on video games, and she sat down and analyzed her life. She discovered that she was spending three months a year on video games! She deleted the games from her iPad and is spending that time memorizing Scripture and other profitable things.

Young people who want to find God’s will must learn to be careful about time. “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:16). We deal with this in [The Mobile Phone, the Christian Home and Church](#), in the section on “The Youth.”

Even the more innocent games use rock music as a background, thus addicting young people to the world’s music with all of its inherent dangers. (See [What Every Christian Should Know about Rock Music](#), available as

a free eBook from the Books section of www.wayoflife.org.)

Video Games and Taking God’s Name in Vain and Violent Thoughts

“I’ve played games which contain extreme violence and taking the name of the Lord in vain. GTA [Grand Theft Auto] is such a game. It uses the name of the Lord in vain almost continually and allows you to engage in adulterous acts and murder by picking up a whore, going somewhere quiet, picking an item from the price list (I won’t mention it here because it’s too wicked). After you finish, you kill her and get the money back. Yes the game rewards you for doing that. The end result was that I started using the name of the Lord in vain, using foul language I won’t mention here, and entertaining thoughts about violence. **Video games that use the name of the Lord in vain, use violence, sorcery and such aren’t innocent and are a great spiritual danger**” (“Testimony of a Video Gamer,” www.wayoflife.org).

Video Games and Spiritual Wounds and Scars

A young person might think that he can mess around with video games for a while and then leave them behind later when he gets more serious about life.

But messing around with sin always leaves scars. One father illustrated this to his sons by having them hammer some nails into a wooden door. Then he said, “Take them out.” While the nails could be removed, the holes remained. That is what happens to those who mess around with the world. It leaves wounds and scars even when repented of.

“It was a long time ago that I foolishly toyed around with these games and the damage in my life remains to this day” (“Testimony of a Video Gamer,” www.wayoflife.org).

“Over the course of my adolescence, I foolishly spent months and years forming these sinful habits and affections. They didn’t just disappear when I decided I wanted them to go away. Beware the dangerous hooks of sin! (Vince Londini).



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?



THE IDEOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF THE IRANIAN REGIME

(Frida Church News Notes, April 24, 2026,

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866-295-

4143) - The following is excerpted from "The Ideological Underpinnings,"

Israel Today, Apr.

17, 2026: "It is often assumed that policymakers in Washington fully understand the ideological foundations of the Iranian regime.

That assumption is questionable. Iran's governing system is not simply authoritarian or generically theocratic; it reflects a distinctive synthesis of religious doctrine, revolutionary theory and anti-colonial thought. This ideological framework shapes both how the mullahs govern internally and how the country's government positions itself in the world. At its core, the Iranian clerical regime represents an intersection of political Islam, elements of Marxist-influenced revolutionary thinking and anti-colonial ideology--filtered through a particular interpretation of Shi'a Islam sometimes described as 'Red Shi'ism.' ... In the 20th century, these religious themes intersected with secular revolutionary ideas, especially those associated with anti-colonial movements. The writings of Frantz Fanon were particularly influential. Fanon argued that oppressed peoples could

overcome materially stronger powers through sustained resistance, psychological transformation and a willingness to endure suffering. In this framework, endurance becomes a form of power, and struggle itself can reshape both individuals and societies. These ideas resonated across the developing world, including in the Middle East. They contributed to a broader narrative in which asymmetric struggle--often carried out by nonstate actors--could challenge and, under certain conditions, defeat more powerful adversaries. While such theories were not uniquely Islamic, they proved adaptable to religious frameworks that already emphasized sacrifice, justice and moral struggle. Within Iran, these strands were synthesized by intellectuals such as Ali Shariati. Shariati sought to reinterpret Shi'a Islam in explicitly activist and revolutionary terms. ... The institutional structure of the Islamic Republic reflects this synthesis. Alongside conventional state institutions, Iran created parallel organizations designed to safeguard and advance the jihadi's ideological mission. Most prominent among these is the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps ... **Understanding this framework is essential for interpreting Iran's behavior. The regime does not operate solely according to traditional cost-benefit analysis. Concepts such as endurance, resistance, martyrdom and ideological legitimacy play a central role in decision-making. Policies that appear counterproductive when viewed through a purely material lens may serve different purposes within an ideological one--reinforcing internal cohesion, projecting resolve or sustaining a narrative of struggle.**"

overcome materially stronger powers through sustained resistance, psychological transformation and a willingness to endure suffering. In this framework, endurance becomes a form of power, and struggle itself can reshape both individuals and societies. These ideas resonated across the developing world, including in the Middle East. They contributed to a broader narrative in which asymmetric struggle--often carried out by nonstate actors--could challenge and, under certain conditions, defeat more powerful adversaries. While such theories were not uniquely Islamic, they proved adaptable to religious frameworks that already emphasized sacrifice, justice and moral struggle. Within Iran, these strands were synthesized by intellectuals such as Ali Shariati. Shariati sought to reinterpret Shi'a Islam in explicitly activist and revolutionary terms. ... The institutional structure of the Islamic Republic reflects this synthesis. Alongside conventional state institutions, Iran created parallel organizations designed to safeguard and advance the jihadi's ideological mission. Most prominent among these is the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps ... **Understanding this framework is essential for interpreting Iran's behavior. The regime does not operate solely according to traditional cost-benefit analysis. Concepts such as endurance, resistance, martyrdom and ideological legitimacy play a central role in decision-making. Policies that appear counterproductive when viewed through a purely material lens may serve different purposes within an ideological one--reinforcing internal cohesion, projecting resolve or sustaining a narrative of struggle.**"



NUNS FACE JAIL TIME FOR REFUSING TO FOLLOW NEW YORK'S TRANS RULE (Friday Church News Notes, April 24, 2026, www.wayoflife.org

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

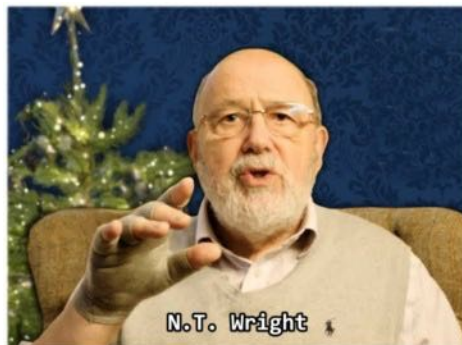
- This situation reminds us that totalitarian wickedness has not gone away because of Donald Trump's presidency. The only protection is effectual prayer on the part of born-again believers who are on praying ground. The following is excerpted from "Nuns Sue New York," *PJ Media*, Apr. 8, 2026: "A group of nuns in New York has taken legal action to, as the *Washington Times* reports, 'block a New York transgender-rights law that requires nursing homes to use pronouns, assign rooms and allow restroom access based on a patient's gender identity, or risk jail time.' The Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne is an order of nuns who care for indigent terminally ill patients. ... the State of New York threatens to shut down the ministry of the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne, Rosary Hill Home, and the ministry of similar CBA members unless they violate their Catholic faith. New York's LGBTQ Long-Term Care Facility Residents' Bill of Rights, codified at New York Public Health Law § 2803-c-2 ... requires long-term nursing facilities to post a notice that assures the public that they do not discriminate based on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or HIV status, and that

every two years, employees go through 'cultural competency training.' If they don't comply, they will get hit with major consequences, which, according to the *Washington Times*, include 'fines of up to \$2,000 for the first violation and up to \$5,000 for repeat violations. Those engaging in *willful violations* of public health law are punishable by fines of up to \$10,000 or one year in prison, or both.'"

N.T. WRIGHT SAYS GOD RAISED ADAM AND EVE FROM HOMINIDS (Friday Church News Notes, April 24, 2026, www.wayoflife.org

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

- N.T. Wright, an influential Anglican theologian who has been called "one of the world's pre-eminent New Testament scholars," claims that man grew out of the ape kingdom. The following is from "N.T. Wright Says," *Protestia*, Apr. 10, 2026: "Fresh off of suggesting that abortion may be a tragic yet best allowable option in cases of rape, incest, or for the mental health of the mother, and that belief in the bodily resurrection of Christ is not necessary to be a Christian, famed New Testament scholar N.T. Wright has shared some thoughts on the origins of Adam and Eve. On a recent episode of *Premiere Unbelievable?*, after being asked whether or not Adam and Eve literally existed, Wright opines: 'The



way that I'm inclined to see an original human pair, let's put it like that, is to say that undoubtedly from all the historical evidence we've got, there were what we might call hominids, human-like creatures, and we might even call them proto-humans, for many generations, perhaps for many thousands of years before the time we're now talking about. But that just as God called Abraham and Sarah and said, *now I've got a special purpose for you*. So it seems to me perfectly reasonable to suppose that God would say to one pair of proto-hominids, whatever we're to call them, 'come with me. I've got a special purpose for you. I'm now going to enable you to reflect my image into the world. and reflect the praises of creation back to me. And your purpose will be to bring the, at the moment, rather random and chaotic world under my saving sovereign stewardship.' So that it seems to me is a way of saying that if there was an original Adam and Eve, that would be what it was all about. Not, I mean, what we're getting away from, of course, is any idea of seven periods of 24 hours. That's certainly not what Genesis 1 is trying to communicate.'" **CONCLUDING NOTE:** There is zero evidence that man evolved from apes. The evolutionary story of man's evolution is riddled with nonsense and fakery, including Ernst Haeckel's apeman, Piltdown, Nebraska Man, Neanderthal, Ramapithecus, Orce Man, and Lucy.

WAKE UP, PASTORS, PARENTS, WE ARE LIVING IN A PORNDemic (Friday Church News Notes, April 24, 2026, www.wayoflife.org

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

- The following is excerpted from a sermon by Pastor Simeon Western,



Northside Baptist Church, Adelaide, Australia: "You have heard of a pandemic. What we have in our churches that is even more dangerous is a pornademic. I don't enjoy having to tackle this problem. I wish I didn't have to talk about it. It makes me faint to look at it because it is like ten Goliaths facing us all at once. But I have come to a realization in my experience to date that this pornademic is not going to go away, and whether we like it or not, as parents, as pastors, we are going to have to face this battle. And you've got to be awake to it, and you've got to be alert to it, because it is destroying families, it is destroying marriages, it is destroying lives. **Wantonness has taken over the people of God. It is killing the spiritual lives of so many Christian men.** And I've been praying, 'Lord, what do I do about it as a pastor? How can we tackle this more effectively?' And I think maybe this is of the Lord, but the thought that came to mind is that we need to go on the offense. That means that you as a parent need to be involved in this because if you are not careful your ten year old could get hooked on your unprotected device. **The amount of young men I have counseled would have shocked you, and guess where they got hooked on porn? In their home school bedrooms on unprotected devices which parents let into their home and did not think carefully and wisely about what they were doing.**

There is forgiveness and restoration and such, and I'm not trying to smash you down if you have made mistakes as a parent, but you had better get on your knees and say, 'God, forgive me for being unwatchful, forgive me for not being alert, and now my son or daughter is practically an addict, and I'm going to have to fast and pray and get my hands dirty to lift them out of the pit in which I, to a degree, allowed them to get into.'" For victory in this battle see *The Pornographic Age and Victory in Christ* at the Courses section of www.wayoflife.org.

THE GREAT EVIL OF INGRATITUDE (Friday Church News Notes, April 24, 2026, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful..." (Romans 1:21). "Gratitude is not a spiritual or moral dessert which we may take or push away according to the whims of the moment, and in either case without material consequences. Gratitude is the very bread and meat of spiritual and moral health, individually and collectively. What was the seed of disintegration that corrupted the heart of the ancient world beyond the point of divine remedy? What was it but ingratitude?" (Noel Smith). Unthankfulness is an indictment against all men and reveals their sin-ridden, guilty condition. When men say, "Wherein have we sinned so greatly to deserve punishment?" God answers, "By not being thankful to me, by not living every moment of your life in passionate thankfulness."

ON THE ISRAEL STATE'S 78TH ANNIVERSARY NETANYAHU SAYS ISRAEL IS "STRONGER THAN EVER" (Friday Church News Notes, May 1,

2026, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - On Israel's 78th Independence Day ceremony, April 21, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel has "risen like a lion and fought like one" and "is stronger than ever" ("Under the stars of Mount Herzl," *Israel Today*, Apr. 22, 2026). He described the current period as a "generation of revival." Netanyahu is smart, courageous, persistent, and has done a lot of good for his nation. But what he does not know, because he is blind to the true meaning of Scripture, is that Israel has been preserved by God in her apostasy and is back in the land in apostasy. This was prophesied in Ezekiel 37:1-14, which describes Israel's return to the land in two stages: first as spiritually dead ("but there was no breath in them," v. 8); second as spiritually revived ("and they lived," v. 10). Israel is back in the land to prepare for the fulfillment of Daniel 9:27 and Matthew 24:15-22, among other prophecies: the rise of the Antichrist, his covenant with "many" in Israel, the building of the third temple and its desecration by the Antichrist's blasphemy, and the final wars of desolation. At that time a remnant of Israel will be converted and believe on Jesus as the Messiah (Zechariah 12-13), followed by the return of Jesus to establish His global kingdom (Zechariah 14). The evidence of Israel's spiritual death is overwhelming. The day before the Independence Day ceremony, the Israel government announced "This



June the Dead Sea becomes Pride Land, the biggest LGBTQ+ festival ever in the Middle East” (@Israel, X, Apr. 20). Pride Land will have “family-friendly areas with children’s activities.” The north end of the Dead Sea is the location of ancient Sodom and Gomorrah!

ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS AND TEMPORARY VISITORS GIVE BIRTH TO 9% OF U.S. BABIES

(Friday Church News Notes, May 1, 2026, www.wayoflife.org fbs@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following reminds us that the trajectory of American culture is unequivocally and irreversibly (apart from a revival greater than any America has heretofore experienced) toward the loss of biblical influence and its replacement with multiculturalism: Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Roman Catholicism, atheism, Humanism, Marxism, etc. The following is excerpted from “Illegal immigrants and temporary visitors,” Apr. 23, 2026: “Nearly 1 in 10 newborns in the U.S. in 2023 were delivered by mothers who were either in the country illegally or on a temporary visitor’s pass. ... They were born to families where neither the mother nor father had permanent status in the U.S., meaning either citizenship or a green card. Most of the time, in some 245,000 cases, the mothers were illegal immigrants. In the other 15,000 cases, the mothers

had some temporary visitor’s status. ... More than 4 million babies born in the U.S. from 2006 to 2023 [fit this definition] ... Illegal immigrants are often part of families at the lower end of the income scale, and they end up costing tens of billions of dollars in education and welfare payments each year.”

SMALL CHILDREN SUSPENDED FROM U.K. SCHOOLS FOR “HOMOPHOBIA”

(Friday Church News Notes, May 1, 2026, www.wayoflife.org fbs@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “UK nursery suspends toddler,” TheBridgehead.ca, Apr. 1, 2025: “A toddler between the ages of two and four years old has been suspended from a nursery in the United Kingdom after being accused of ‘transphobia’ or ‘homophobia.’ ... The short version: a toddler was kicked out of school for anti-LGBT bigotry ... the *Independent* noted that ‘data does show 94 pupils at state primary schools were suspended or permanently excluded for homophobia or transphobia in 2022/23,’ and ‘ten of the suspended pupils were from year one and three were from year two where the maximum age is seven.’ ... ‘This is totalitarian insanity,” author J.K. Rowling stated on X. “If you think small children should be punished for being able to recognize sex, you are a dangerous zealot who should be nowhere near kids or in any position of authority over them.’ Elon Musk responded: ‘Utter madness!’ This latest case--and the hundreds of others detailed in the data obtained by the *Telegraph*--highlights the fact that even with



substantial victories against gender ideology, including a number of high-profile legal cases, the *Cass Review*, and a permanent government ban on puberty blockers for minors, trans activists have thoroughly infiltrated most Western institutions.”

GOLD-TONGUED MUMMIES

(Friday Church News Notes, May 1, 2026, www.wayoflife.org fbs@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Archaeologists have found three mummies with gold tongues in the Minya region of northern Egypt. “The mummified individuals were wrapped in cloths with geometric patterns before being placed in wooden coffins. A total of three gold tongues and one brass tongue were found, each crafted from thin foil. ... In Egyptian religious thought, especially in traditions linked with the god Osiris, the deceased were expected to speak, justify themselves, and participate in judgment. The tongues are generally interpreted as enabling this capacity for speech in the afterlife” (“Gold Tongues,” *Bible History Daily*, Apr. 24, 2026). Gold tongues were also found at Alexandria near the Mediterranean coast in 2021 and at Oxyrhynchus in middle Egypt in 2025. A ritual performed by a priest wearing a mask of Anubis, the jack-headed god of the dead was supposed to awaken the body and restore its



ability to breathe, eat, and speak when it was needed by the soul of the deceased. It began with the “opening the mouth” ceremony. It was all in vain, of course. The soul’s eternal destiny is sealed at death, depending on the individual’s relationship with the Son of God. The nations descended into the gross darkness of idolatry after the Flood, but they had no excuse. There was the light of creation and the light of conscience, both leaving men without excuse before God (Romans 1:20; 2:11-16). There was also the light of the revelation of God to Israel in the law of Moses, which was well known in Egypt.

POPE CALLS MOSQUE “THE SPACE THAT BELONGS TO GOD, A DIVINE AND SACRED SPACE” (Friday Church News Notes, May 1, 2026, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - On April 13, Pope Leo XIV visited the Grand Mosque of Algiers and said to the rector of the mosque, “I thank you for these reflections and for these important words during this visit, from a place that represents the space that belongs to God, a divine and sacred space, where many people come to pray and to seek the presence of the Most High in their lives. ... To seek God also means recognising the image of God in every man and woman” (“Pope Leo arrives in Algeria,” *National*



Catholic Register, Apr. 13, 2026). The Grand Mosque of Algiers is the third largest in the world, capable of accommodating 120,000, and its minaret reaches a height of 267 meters.

MAKING SCENTS OF SMELLS (Friday Church News Notes, May 1, 2026, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from CreationMoments.com, April 3, 2026: “How many different scents do you think your nose is able to smell? The answer is about 10,000. How does your nose tell the difference between a rose and a skunk? Until only recently, scientists really weren’t sure. Now we know that humans and mammals detect smells by using at least 1,000 different genes. These genes are located in every cell in your body, but they are active only in your nose. This discovery, say scientists, gives them their first insight into how smell works. Before this, said one scientist, ‘We had almost no knowledge of the olfactory system and this really opens up the molecular study of smell in a very fascinating way.’ They say that each of the different genes seems designed to respond to a small group of odors. As each group of genes does its part, the entire system is able to recognize everything we can smell. These genes pass signals from the nerve cells in the nose to a small region of the brain called the olfactory bulb. Now that smell genes are identified, researchers say they can begin to understand how odors are detected and how the brain interprets those signals. Our sense of smell relies on a very elegant and sophisticated system. Imagine, 1,000 genes lie at



the heart of that system. Each one of those genes is information--a programmed code that is designed to make sense of what we smell. Information, programming and decoding are all terms that assume that we have a highly intelligent Creator who designed our sense of smell! REF.: ‘Scientists find genes that let the nose make scents of what it smells,’ *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*.”

BEWARE OF TURNING POINT’S RADICAL ECUMENISM (Friday Church News Notes, May 8, 2026, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Turning Point USA is a powerful conservative political organization, but it is not merely a political organization, and Turning Point’s radical ecumenism is potentially harmful for Bible-believing homes and churches. Turning Point USA is a bridge to every heresy in the “wider church” today, including papal supremacy, a sacramental gospel, Mariolatry, priestcraft, theistic evolution, process salvation, universalism, new Reformed Calvinism, cultural liberalism, and contemplative prayer. “Kirk’s wife is Catholic and for the last few months of his life he had been attending Mass with her” (*The American Catholic*, Sept. 14, 2025). The Catholic News Agency said “Charlie Kirk was ‘this close’ to



becoming Catholic” (Sept. 19, 2025). There is a photo online of him attending mass (*Catholic Vote*, Sept. 11, 2025). A recent video clip on the Turning Point Facebook page, with 354,000 views as of May 1, 2026, features a 10-year-old boy at a Turning Point forum addressing Turning Point leaders Michael Knowles and Matt Walsh, both Roman Catholics. The boy says, “I wanna be a priest when I grow up, and I want to ask what would your advice be?” The Turning Point leaders respond with clapping and double thumbs up. They said, “That’s great news. ... It’s a wonderful thing. Why do you want to be a priest?” The boy replies, “Because God is calling me.” The Turning Point men respond, “Awesome! Awesome! That’s beautiful. This is really great. This is wonderful. ... [When you meet a 10-year-old] who wants to serve God and be a priest, you just say, ‘We’re gonna make it. [Loud shouting and clapping by the audience.] ... As for advice, continue to ask God for direction and keep following. ... Out of the mouth of babes, this is exactly what TPUSA is about. It is exactly what Charlie [Kirk] was doing. It’s one of the most beautiful answers I have heard at any event” (Turning Point USA’s Facebook page). At that same Turning Point USA forum, an attendee actually preached a sound

gospel to the heretical Turning Point leaders!

www.facebook.com/share/v/1ENhf-wazHF/?mibextid=wwXlfr.

Scripture warns of the development of apostasy through the church age with an explosion of false Christianity at the end of the age, which is exactly where we are and exactly what we see. **God’s Word forbids God’s redeemed people to join hands with false Christianity for any purpose, not for evangelism, not for anti-abortion crusades, not for politics, etc.** In a major passage describing and warning of the apostasy (2 Timothy 3-4), the apostle Paul said, “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Ti. 3:5). If you encounter professing Christians who don’t hold a sound gospel, don’t hold to infallible Scripture, add tradition to the same authority as Scripture, etc., turn away from them. See Acts 20:28-31; Romans 16:17; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 11:1-4, 12-15; Philippians 3:17-19; Ephesians 5:8-11; Colossians 2:8, 18; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 2:16-21; 3:5; 4:3-4; 2 Peter 2; 1 John 1:8-11; Jude 1:3-23; and Revelation 2:2, 14-15. **Broad tent evangelical ministries such as Turning Point USA do some good, but in the end they are building the one-world church and are bridges to every heresy that**

exists in our day. Beware! Christ has already assigned the business of His redeemed people for this age, and it is the Great Commission and the New Testament church (Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Timothy 3:15). It is impossible to obey Christ’s Great Commission (“teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you”) while joining hands with apostasy. We appreciate any good thing in ministries such as Turning Point, but we are going to obey God’s Word and mark and avoid error (Romans 16:17) and give our full attention to proclaiming and obeying the whole counsel of God. The Lord Jesus Christ has given us our marching orders to the end of the age. We refuse to join hands with *any* element of the apostasy, even if it is labeled “evangelical,” for a political agenda or any other purpose. A large percentage of fundamental Baptists are getting weaker in their thinking on biblical separation through association with evangelical ministries and engagement in politics. **For extensive evidence of what is happening in evangelicalism,** see ***EVANGELICALS AND THE GREAT APOSTASY*** at the Courses section of www.wayoflife.org. It consists of a textbook, video classes, PowerPoints, review questions, and tests. See especially the segments “Evangelicalism a Bridge to Dangerous Waters.”

TENNESSEE DECLARES JUNE “NUCLEAR FAMILY MONTH” (Friday Church News Notes, May 8, 2026, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is excerpted from “Tennessee Declares,” StandingforFreedom, Apr. 17, 2026: “Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee, R, signed a resolution on April 9 declaring



June as ‘Nuclear Family Month,’ positioning it as an alternative to LGBTQ+ ‘Pride Month.’ House Joint Resolution 182 passed the state House in April 2025 and cleared the Senate last month. The resolution states that ‘the nuclear family, consisting of one husband, one wife, and any biological, adopted, or fostered children, is God’s design for familial structure and has been the bedrock of society since the creation of the world’ and that ‘the nuclear family built the United States of America and created prosperity within our nation.’ It also highlights the social ills that result when the nuclear family is disrupted, noting that fatherless families are 4 times more likely to live in poverty, while children raised without fathers are 10 times more likely to experience drug or alcohol abuse and more likely to face mental health and behavioral challenges, with 60 percent of youth suicides involving children from fatherless homes. ‘The nuclear family is under attack in our beloved State and nation, and it is our responsibility to uplift, protect, and support values that help Tennessee prosper,’ the resolution states. ... LGBTQ+ advocacy groups loudly criticized the measure. Some referred to it as ‘an act of war’ on LGBTQ Americans ... The sexual revolution that swept America starting in the 1960s has led only to an increasingly chaotic society and human despair. This ‘revolution,’ led by radical

feminists and LGBTQ activists, has been waging war on God’s good order ever since, as promiscuity, no-fault divorce, pornography, abortion, gay marriage, drug use, and the sexualization and mutilation of children have all been normalized and accepted.”

A FAITHFUL WIFE (Friday Church News Notes, May 8, 2026, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - “Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price *is* far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life” (Proverbs 31:10-12). The following is excerpted from *Submerged: Life on a Fast Attack Submarine* by Henry Rausch: “As a senior officer stationed in NATO, I found myself in a Naples Museum where I encountered a Roman epigraph carved on a large stone tablet. It had adorned the grave of a Roman citizen’s wife. On the tablet, he related how much he had loved her and grieved her death. The inscription told this story: He had been imprisoned by his creditors. Instead of abandoning him, she administered his accounts while he was in prison and sued for his release. She never wavered in her resolve to vindicate her husband, finally seeing him freed and restored to good standing. She could not bear children and had offered him a divorce so he could marry a woman who would give him heirs. He refused. His love for her burned bright through two millennia. That tablet struck a chord. I recognized my wife in the man’s testament.”

AMERICA’S DEBT (Friday Church News Notes, May 8, 2026,



www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “US Government Caught in Debt-Driven ‘Doom Loop,’” Apr. 30, 2026, www.us-debt-clock.com: “Imagine the NFL’s 30 football stadiums, filled to the top with stacks of \$100-bills. That still wouldn’t be enough to hold the \$39 trillion U.S. national debt. You’d need seven more football stadiums full of \$100 bills. With the national debt barreling on toward \$40 trillion, the U.S. government seems caught in what some are calling a debt-driven ‘doom loop.’ To make matters worse, the Penn Wharton Budget Model warns that the national debt is actually closer to 100 trillion. Half of every dollar the government borrows now goes to interest on the debt, close to one trillion per year. And while the economy seems fine now, experts warn that the situation could turn bad very quickly. However, it seems few in Washington have the political courage to do anything about it. House Budget Committee Chairman Rep. Jodey Arrington (R-TX) condemned Congress’s lack of action on the debt. ‘This institution has failed,’ Arrington said from the House floor. ‘We have failed our country. We have jeopardized our economy, our security, and our leadership in the world. And worst of all, we have compromised on our children’s future.’ And yet, few

politicians in Washington are willing to essentially sabotage their chances of reelection by voting to rein in the major cause of the debt: Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.”

BIRDS WERE NEVER REPTILES (Friday Church News Notes, May 8, 2026, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is from CreationMoments.com, April 23, 2026: “Many textbooks tell young people today that birds are modified reptiles. Suppose, they say, that millions of years ago the scales on some reptiles began to fray along the edges. In time, they say, the frayed scales turned into feathers and birds were born. The elegance and beauty of the feather make this story hard to believe. Can sticking a feather on a lizard produce a peacock? The bird’s feather is only a small part of the complete flying system of the bird. Even with very careful planning and redesigning, a reptile doesn’t have what it takes. A bird needs massive breast muscles for flight. In some birds, 30% of the body weight of the bird is breast muscle. By comparison, in humans, breast muscles are only about 1% of body weight. A bird also needs an extremely high metabolism and blood pressure to deliver the energy those muscles need for flight. Birds have a higher metabolism than any other creature; they also have the necessary high blood pressure.



Finally, as is well known, birds need light skeletons. The man-o’-war has a wingspan of seven feet. But its entire skeleton weighs only a few ounces—less than its feathers! Even the most clever rebuilding of a reptile cannot produce a bird. In fact, birds have very little in common with reptiles. The entire being of the bird, from body to brain, has been specially designed for flight by a Creator who clearly knows everything there is to know about flight. REF.: Vandeman, George. ‘The miracle of flight,’ *Signs of the Times.*”

TURNING POINT USA REVISITED (Friday Church News Notes, May 15, 2026, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- In last week’s *Friday Church News Notes*, we warned of Turning Point USA’s radical ecumenism, which is potentially harmful for Bible-believing homes and churches. Turning Point USA is a bridge to every heresy in the “wider church” today, including papal supremacy, a sacramental gospel, Mariolatry, priestcraft, theistic evolution, process salvation, universalism, new Reformed Calvinism, cultural liberalism, and contemplative prayer. “Kirk’s wife is Catholic and for the last few months of his life he had been attending Mass with her” (*The American Catholic*, Sept. 14, 2025). The Catholic News Agency said “Charlie Kirk was ‘this close’ to becoming Catholic” (Sept. 19, 2025). There is a photo online of him attending mass (*Catholic Vote*, Sept. 11, 2025). In the previous Friday News, we described a video clip on the Turning Point Facebook page that features a 10-year-old boy at a Turning Point forum addressing Turning Point leaders Michael



Knowles and Matt Walsh, both Roman Catholics, and being praised for his aspiration to be a Catholic priest. The Turning Point leaders respond with clapping and double thumbs up, saying, “That’s great news. ... It’s a wonderful thing. ... Awesome! Awesome! That’s beautiful. This is really great. ... This is exactly what TPUSA is about. It is exactly what Charlie [Kirk] was doing. It’s one of the most beautiful answers I have heard at any event” (Turning Point USA’s Facebook page). **At that same Turning Point USA forum, an attendee actually preached a sound gospel to the heretical Turning Point leaders!** www.facebook.com/share/v/1ENhfWazHF/?mibextid=wwXIf. Scripture warns of the growth of apostasy through the church age with an explosion of false Christianity at the end of the age, which is exactly where we are and exactly what we see. **God’s Word forbids God’s redeemed people to join hands with false Christianity for any purpose, not for evangelism, not for anti-abortion crusades, not for defense of a six-day creation, not for politics.** In a major passage describing and warning of the apostasy (2 Timothy 3-4), the apostle Paul said, “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Ti. 3:5). If you encounter professing Christians who don’t hold a sound gospel, don’t hold to infallible Scripture, add tradition to

the same authority as Scripture, etc., God’s Word says turn away from them. See also Acts 20:28-31; Romans 16:17; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 11:1-4, 12-15; Philippians 3:17-19; Ephesians 5:8-11; Colossians 2:8, 18; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 2:16-21; 3:5; 4:3-4; 2 Peter 2; 1 John 1:8-11; Jude 1:3-23; and Revelation 2:2, 14-15.

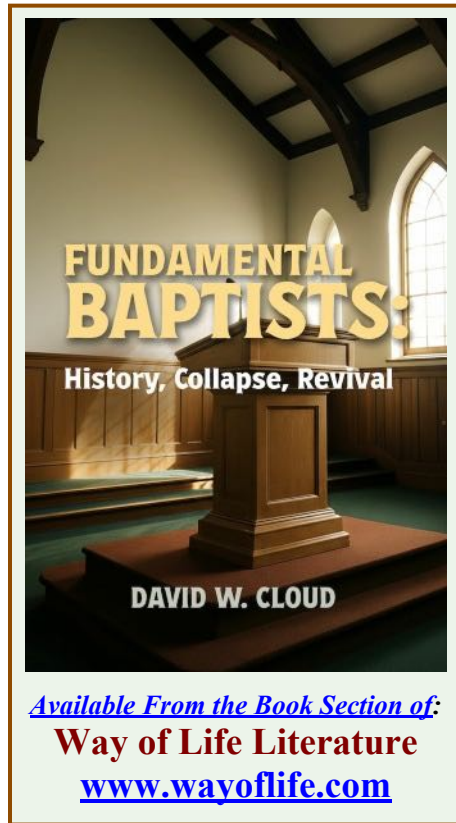
FOREIGN INFLUENCES ENTERING BIBLE-BELIEVING CHURCHES THROUGH UNSCRIPTURAL ASSOCIATIONS (Friday Church News Notes, May 15, 2026, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- I received the following communication from a missionary recently: “Another influence that Charlie Kirk [Turning Point USA] has brought to the table is a renewed emphasis on Sabbath keeping. I have run into some independent Baptists who are starting to question why we are not having church on Saturday, pointing to the verses in the Old Testament where God said the Sabbath is holy. It is alarming to me that our independent Baptist churches are more characteristic of the Galatian churches, instead of the Ephesian congregation when it comes to being steadfast in our beliefs and practices.” This is one small example of the foreign influences that are entering a great many fundamental Baptist churches because of unregeneracy, spiritual lukewarmness, biblical shallowness, ignorance of sound doctrine, lack of education in issues facing the churches, and failure to practice biblical separation, resulting in corruption by heretical influences from the internet and social media. The root problem is the pastors who are following independent Baptist

tradition rather than the Word of God. The common thinking is that if a church holds to the King James Bible, has a sound doctrinal statement, has “standards” for workers, maintains door-to-door evangelism, and uses a hymnbook, it is in good shape, but this is not a scriptural viewpoint. What is typically lacking even in such a church is a regenerate membership (biblical soul winning rather than Quick Prayerism, expecting and requiring evidence of supernatural salvation), a strong expository preaching/teaching ministry, the goal of building up every member to be a real Bible student and an effectual minister of Christ, the building of godly families that can raise a godly seed (Mal 2:15) with the fathers the heads of the homes and the mothers the keepers of the homes, serious discipling of youth, effectual, thorough-going separation from the world, protection from rampant immorality (such as dealing

with the pornographic issue), and real education in the issues and dangers facing Bible-believing churches today. It’s time to forget “getting back to the old paths,” meaning the old paths of traditional independent Baptists, and instead getting back to the Bible itself. Baptists of the 18th and 19th century were much stronger than Baptists of the 20th and 21st, but even they were not strong enough. **A majority of fundamental Baptists are rapidly becoming evangelical. To understand what this means and how wrong and dangerous it is, we recommend [EVANGELICALISM AND THE GREAT APOSTASY](#).** An accompanying 700-slide PowerPoint set is a pictorial study on the dangers. We also recommend [FUNDAMENTAL BAPTISTS: HISTORY, COLLAPSE, AND REVIVAL](#). These are available from the Books and PowerPoints sections of www.wayoflife.org.

A PREACHER REVIEWS BRO. CLOUD’S BOOK *FUNDAMENTAL BAPTISTS: HISTORY, COLLAPSE, REVIVAL* (Friday Church News Notes, May 15, 2026, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - “I just finished reading your book, [Fundamental Baptists: History, Collapse, and Revival](#). First of all, the book demonstrates your broad and precise knowledge of, as well as your experience with, the men and movements within Independent Baptist Fundamentalism (I found myself saying, ‘I didn’t know that’ often). You were fair and honest in your assessments and evaluations of the former and founding leaders within the IFB movement, and you were candid and correct in pointing out the collapse within these



movements stemming from poor leadership transitions and/or from a second-generation mentality similar to the generation ‘which knew not the LORD’ (Judges 2:10). You covered so many errors and blunders, both in doctrine and practice, that it is impossible for the reader to miss the three major themes of the book: History, Collapse, and Revival. I sense your burden and concern for the Lord’s churches throughout the work. One especially powerful quote was: ‘Warning is difficult. It is hard to give and hard to receive’ (p. 56). With this book, you have undertaken the difficult task of giving warning, in fact, several warnings--which is what every biblical preacher should aspire to do. Thank you for caring enough to point out the problems, but also for pointing readers to God’s words as the very solution to those problems. As with anything and everything else--there are some very minor areas of disagreements but nothing major as to reject the main thrust of your book. In particular, I appreciated the eight Scripture passages you expounded in an effort to provide a biblical framework and standard that calls men back to the Bible rather than to the traditions of men. The concept that ‘every member’ is to be a serious Bible student--is amazing, true, and revolutionary--AMEN! and Why not? This is one of those powerful ideas--and I am burdened and grieved about this.”

CHERITH

(Friday Church News Notes, May 1, 2026,
www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

The following is by Lydia Western

**Thy camp is pitched by Cherith stream,
The hamlet of thy love, thy means,
And running low the crystal drains away,
Sinks into the burning sand, the hardened clay.**

**From its waning freshness thy spirit found its share,
And foolish fear has told thee thy Jesus doesn't care.
That little shall drain till nothing left
But turbid leagues of hearts bereft.**

**Greater eyes have seen the stream has dried,
The fainting spirits died.
And comes the voice of One beholding,
Guiding words, His new unfoldings.**

**Get thee hence, my will is thy supply.
Let Cherith's blessings die,
If once supplies thy soul hath cherished
Turned to dust and perished.
Let Jesus be thy guide.**

**He shall not mock nor disappoint thee.
Trust his promise for the need.
New morning joy, the night its fears assuage,
And wipes the burning tears away.**

Aim of O Timothy Magazine

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



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