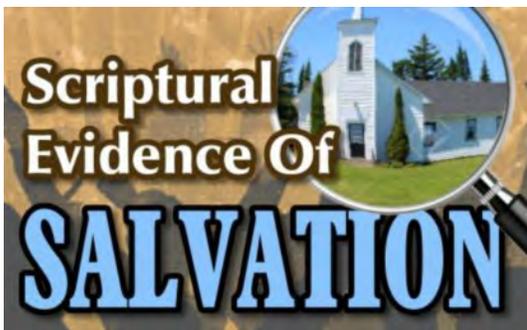


O Timothy

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

A Monthly Newsletter for Spiritual Protection and Edification

Volume 33 - Issue 8 - August 2016



"The thing that is often missing in young people who grow up in Christian homes and churches is salvation. They go through the motions of professing Christ. They know how to give the right answers and to act right when it is necessary, but the reality of the kind of supernatural salvation that we see in Scripture is foreign to their daily lives." Page 6.

Digging in the Walls: A month's worth of news items, republished from Friday Church News Notes. **Page 12.**

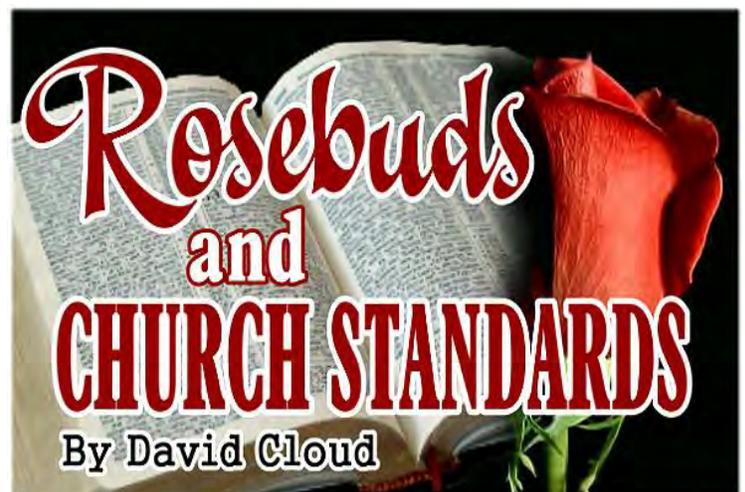


ROSEBUDS AND CHURCH STANDARDS - By David Cloud

Recently I challenged a preacher friend about putting people into ministry before they are spiritually qualified for the task and how that they end up negatively influencing the church, particularly the young people. In viewing that church's youth ministry, I was convinced that the leader wasn't yet qualified to hold that position. In talking with him, I felt that his thinking and biblical understanding were still weak, and his wife was present at the activity and was immodestly dressed. It was confusion.

I wrote the pastor about this, and he responded as follows:

"Thanks for your insights. ... When I remember where [our youth man] has come from and how far he has come, I am encouraged that he is moving in the right direction. Needless to say, he has some semi-neo friends and family who want to see him compromise, so it is a battle. In our area we face overwhelming odds in that we suffer from a scarcity of separatist workers



and when we do find one he goes off to Bible college and we never see him again. It is the old dilemma: do we have a youth program led by men who are less than we want them to be in order to reach the children from our large families, or do we shut it down because there are no mature men to lead them? ... I note that he took

on board your criticisms and appears to be willing to move in a biblical direction. I will speak to him about the issue of dress at the youth activity. I was shocked to see how his wife dressed. ... there is certainly more work to be done with them. Pray for me to be strong, truthful with them, and loving at the same time. It is so easy for me to crush some of these rosebuds trying to get them to open up to the Lord.”

REPLY FROM BROTHER CLOUD

Thanks for the feedback. I've been thinking a lot about this subject the last few years and learning a lot in a practical way.

I truly understand your dilemma. We never have enough workers and never will. But I believe that we sometimes use this as an excuse for not upholding the clear standards of God's Word. The Lord is the one who *requires* faithfulness. “Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:2). That’s God’s requirement, and who am I to require less? To be “found faithful” is a general principle, and the term is full of biblical meaning.

To be found faithful would encompass faithfulness to church services and functions and fellowship (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:25; 1 Tim. 3:15), faithfulness in doctrinal purity (Acts 2:42; 1 Tim. 1:3; Jude 3),

faithfulness in modesty (1 Tim. 2:9), faithfulness in right relationship to the leaders (1 Thess. 5:12-13; Heb. 13:17), faithfulness in separation from the world (Eph. 5:11), etc.

Holding high biblical standards for workers isn't a matter of crushing rosebuds. We don't want to crush rosebuds; we passionately want to develop them and see them blossom for the Lord, and that is what we are doing. I love the Messianic prophecy, “A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth” (Isaiah 42:3). Christ is so gracious and kind and patient. It is our passion not to quench the smoking flax or crush the little bud. And I believe that if anyone were to talk to our people, they would testify that we love them and care for them and demonstrate it in a thousand ways.

I once heard of a preacher who said that many of his people were on the fence and he aimed his Bible preaching at them and whichever way they fell was their business and he was content either way. I agree that it *is* each individual’s business which way he or she “falls,” but I care deeply that they “fall” on the Lord’s side! And I care more about it with each passing year.

But loving the smoking flax and the little bud is a different thing from maintaining standards for church workers. I want to wait for the flax to flame up and the bud to flower sufficiently (according to God’s standards, not mine) before it is put into the ministry. **SERVING IN MINISTRY IS NOT A RIGHT; IT IS A PRIVILEGE RESERVED FOR THOSE WHO ARE FIT IN THEIR CHRISTIAN LIVES.**

I was glad to meet your youth man. He is on the right path and moving in the right direction, and you are having a good ministry into his life. I will repeat, though, that as for me and my house, we would never let him lead our young people at this stage in his life. My compassionate, Christlike wife would have been even more discouraged than I was if she had seen that youth outreach. A man whose wife doesn’t know how to dress modestly and who would allow her to dress immodestly at a youth activity isn’t ready to work with youth. As we know, the fundamental principle of modesty pertains to the heart. Modest dress is merely a reflection of a modest heart; and this young

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couple hasn't settled those heart matters solidly enough so that it affects their external behavior.

It is better to have no workers and teachers than the wrong ones, better to have one qualified helper than ten unqualified or questionable, borderline ones.

Youth workers who are still holding on to the world in many ways, who are still biblically weak, who haven't yet gotten a lot of fundamental issues nailed down, will produce the same poor fruit in the congregation's children, youth, and families.

By the way, we avoid a lot of problems when we have the standards for various positions written down and teach them frequently to the people as a process of spiritual education. That way we aren't tempted as much to fudge about someone who is moving in the right direction but hasn't yet arrived at the right place of public ministry.

If the church standards include a certain level of biblical knowledge, a certain level of general faithfulness, a certain level of honoring of, and agreement with, the pastors, a certain level of modest dress, a certain type of family life, a certain level of right attitude, a certain level of separation from the world, etc., then *that* is the standard, and those who don't meet the standard in some area can't hold the position until they grow more. It's that simple, but it's that simple only as long as we both have a clear standard and also enforce it.

A rule not enforced is no rule. To have rules and not enforce them is lawlessness, which results in spreading anarchy.

Christlikeness is compassion and gentleness and patience, but it is also firmness, even toughness, in regard to God's holy laws. The Lord said, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Revelation 3:19).

Consider how forceful Christ can be in reproof to His own people (not to speak of His millennial rod of iron and the issue of eternal judgment for the unbeliever):

"But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, **GET THEE BEHIND ME, SATAN:** for thou savourest not the

things that be of God, but the things that be of men" (Mark 8:33).

"Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and **UPBRAIDED THEM** with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him" (Mark 16:14).

"But he turned, and **REBUKED THEM**, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of" (Luke 9:55).

"Then he said unto them, **O FOOLS** and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Luke 24:25).

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else **I WILL COME UNTO THEE QUICKLY, AND WILL REMOVE THY CANDLESTICK** out of his place, except thou repent" (Revelation 2:5).

"But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, **WHICH I ALSO HATE**" (Revelation 2:6).

"So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and **WILL FIGHT AGAINST THEM WITH THE SWORD OF MY MOUTH**" (Revelation 2:15-16).

"Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And **I WILL KILL HER CHILDREN WITH DEATH**; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works" (Revelation 2:22-23).

"Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, **I WILL COME ON THEE AS A THIEF**, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee" (Revelation 3:3).

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, **I WILL SPUE THEE OUT OF MY MOUTH**" (Revelation 3:15-16).

Five times in the Gospels, Christ expressed disappointment and reproof by saying that the disciples were of little faith (Mat. 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; Lk. 12:28).

Christ also “looked round about on them with anger” (Mark 3:5); called Israel a “generation of vipers” (Ma. 12:34) and a “faithless and perverse generation (Mat. 17:17); called the Jewish leaders “hypocrites ... blind guides ... fools and blind ... serpents” (Mat. 23:13-33); sharply, fearfully upbraided the cities in which He did mighty works (Mat. 11:20-24). He called Herod a fox (Lk. 13:32). He twice drove the moneychangers and sellers out of the temple (Jn. 2:15-17; Mk. 11:15-17). He commanded that holy things not be given to dogs and pigs (Mat. 7:6). He will smite the nations (Rev. 19:15).

Under grace the following things are true that pertain to a strong disciplinary ministry and environment:

- John warned about a sin unto death (1 John 5:16-17).
- Ananias and Sapphira were killed by God (Acts 5).
- Many church members were sick and died at Corinth (1 Cor. 11:30).
- A church member was turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh (1 Cor. 5:5).
- Paul feared being cast away or rejected and put on a shelf in regard to service (1 Cor. 9:27).
- Paul taught Timothy to keep God's commands without spot (1 Tim. 6:14).
- Jude instructed saints to *earnestly contend* for the faith (Jude 3).
- Paul taught the saints to separate from disobedient brethren (2 Thess. 3:6).
- Hebrews teaches that we are to serve God with godly fear because He is a consuming fire (Heb. 12:28-29).
- Paul taught the brethren to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts (Titus 2:11-12).
- Paul taught the brethren to reject heretics after only the first and second admonition (Titus 3:10-11).
- John taught the brethren to love not the world (1 John 2:15-17).
- James called the brethren adulterers and adulteresses for loving the world (Jam. 4:4).
- Paul warned that every believer will be judged by Christ (1 Cor. 3:12-15).

Paul exemplifies the right “balance” in ministry. He

said, “Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample” (Phil. 3:17). See also 1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1. On the one hand he was as gentle as a nurse with the believers (1 Thess. 2:7). On the other hand, he was firm and unyielding about discipline (1 Cor. 5; 2 The. 3:6-14). He was a strong reprovor (e.g., 1 Cor. 6:5; 15:33-36; Gal. 3:1), and he taught the preachers under his watchcare to be the same (2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:13; 2:15).

Paul’s ministry of reproof to the carnal church at Corinth worked repentance and change (2 Cor. 7:8-11). A sound ministry of reproof and discipline has the same power today.

A fundamental issue is foundation building. We must build the right foundation, regardless of how long it takes. When we started the church plant in 2003, I thought things would go faster than they have. We had quite a bit of help from the beginning and we had some experience and we had more freedom than ever from the government and society, but it turned out that it has taken 13 years to get the right foundation so we can start more aggressively planting other churches from this base as we have envisioned from the beginning. How long does this take? It takes as long as it takes. The work is the Lord’s, and we can’t go faster than He goes.

You talk about being “in the bush” or “in the boonies,” but no one is really farther out in the boonies than we are. We don’t naturally have any more good workers to choose from than anyone else. We almost never get anyone from other churches, properly trained or otherwise. In the 25 years of our church planting work here, I can count on my fingers the numbers of members we have received from other churches. By God’s grace, we have been able to build our own workers from the material God has given us out of darkest paganism. And holding high standards for workers is one of the methods we use.

I am convinced, and I have experienced in our ministry, that if we hold high standards and use only those people who are qualified for a particular position (and the qualifications are not the same for all positions of service), that this produces more qualified workers. It is the slow path, and that can be frustrating, but it is the solid path. Every time I have gotten in a

hurry and have ignored the principle of 1 Timothy 3:10 (“let these first be proven”), I have regretted it. It is a matter of making the foundation strong before a superstructure is built.

Christ has plainly instructed us about what happens to a house constructed on sand, and we are seeing the fruit of that everywhere among Independent Baptist churches today. They are collapsing because of a weak foundation.

I see this as an issue of faith like everything else. We teach people to put God first and be faithful to services, and God will take care of them. But they have to take the step of faith.

We teach couples to put God first and live on one salary so that the wife and mother can be a keeper at home as God’s Word instructs, and He will take care of them. That is a principle that runs throughout the Christian life, and it is based on Matthew 6:33.

Likewise, I believe that as a preacher I must honor the Lord’s standards for baptism, church membership, and workers and wait on Him to provide what is needed.

I constantly cast this business onto the Lord on the basis of one of my favorite prayer promises (1 Pet. 5:7). It is His harvest, His Word, and His standards. I have often prayed, “Lord, you *must* raise up workers. You see what we are working with. You see our lack. We want to move ahead and get more done in your great harvest fields according to your command, but you *must* give us qualified workers if you want that to happen. We can’t create that type of heart. Only you can. We are waiting on you, Lord. You told us to do this work, but we can’t move if you don’t move.”

When we started church planting again in 2003, that is what I told the Lord. “I am ready to do it, Lord, but we *must* have help. I am just one weak man. We *can’t* do this alone.” I know you can’t boss the Lord, but Abraham, Moses, and other men of God have taught us that you can get a lot from the Lord if you are pressing and persistent in things clearly pertaining to His will. I learn from Scripture that this is the prayer of faith and that God is pleased with it. In my ministry He has always answered this cry, beginning when we started the first church in the early 1980s.

You have been in this battle longer than I, and you have a lot of God-given wisdom, and you have seen a lot of sweet fruit, and I would that I had a tenth part of your Christlike love and patience, but I do believe that you have developed some weak habits along the way and the battle has beaten you down a bit and set you back on your heels a bit, as it tends to do. You are working with some very stubborn people. There is a fierce stubbornness in your nation to submission to authority. This is true of all of Adam’s sons, but there are national characteristics, such as those that Paul described in regard to the Creteans (Titus 1:12-13). When I heard one of your preacher friends say that no one in a nine-year-old church would help him set up the chairs, etc. for the services except one man, even though he has pleaded with and even sharply reproved the people about this, I was amazed. When I heard him say that he tried to have a prayer service in which the first half hour was devoted to praying for missionaries, followed by a brief message from the Word, then a second half hour or so devoted to praying for other things, and that *no one* would stay for the second half of the prayer time, I was dumbfounded. No doubt you are working with some seriously stubborn people!

At the same time, the people we work with are about as stubborn and lacking in good character (in their own nature) as anyone on this fallen earth. Their national character is the product of thousands of years of unrelenting spiritual darkness, with gospel light only having come in the last 50 years. God’s Word and Spirit are able to transform such people, but it is a slow, hard process, and we have found that holding the line of God’s standards is a major part of it.

I also believe that you might have some lingering weak philosophy and thinking and arguments from your old Bible training and former associations. As you know and have often agreed with me, a general softness and biblical shallowness runs through many Independent Baptist “circles,” and we can be affected by it even when we disagree with it, as you so clearly do.

I find this very hard to say to a man I so love and admire, but this is a battle I believe I must fight with all my preacher friends. I am striving for the future of currently sound churches. As I said to a mature preacher last week, “The last time I saw you was

seven years ago and so much has changed. Where will our churches be in seven years? in 14 years?"

We need to take *everything* to a higher level of spiritual and doctrinal standard in this day and age.

Without the Lord and His calling, I am a zero with the rim rubbed out. I often wonder why God called me, why He wants to use such a weak man, such a nobody, to proclaim this message; but I am convinced that He has given me the "strict" message about holding a biblical line, and I have seen it pay great dividends everywhere I have had the opportunity to minister, and never more than today.

Several of the young preachers in Australia recently expressed thanks to me for this type of conversation into their lives.

Even the oldest pastor in attendance at the conference told me that I had sharpened him in many ways.

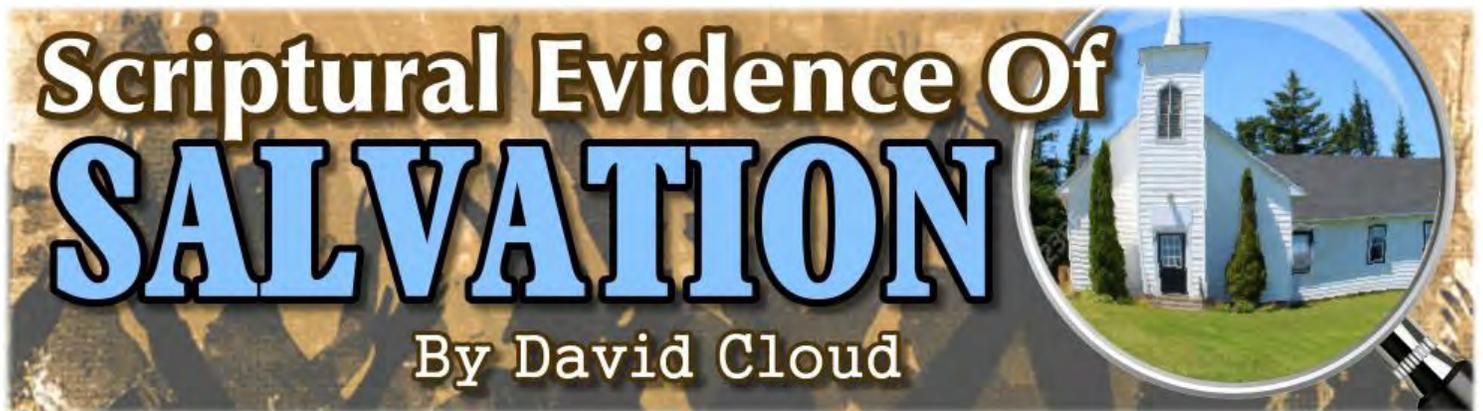
Thank the Lord for men of "retirement age" who are still in the battle and still learning.

When I preached the youth discipleship conferences in South Africa last year and in the Philippines earlier this year, the same thing happened. Several preachers told me personally that they realized that they had been building a soft foundation by not being careful enough about salvation before baptism and by receiving church members too quickly and by not maintaining good standards for the workers, and they told me that I had sharpened them in these matters.

That is one of my major objectives.

"For the commandment *is* a lamp; and the law *is* light; and reproofs of instruction *are* the way of life" (Proverbs 6:23).

A friend in Christ and His truth,
Bro. Cloud.



The following is excerpted from [**THE MOBILE PHONE AND THE CHRISTIAN HOME AND CHURCH**](#). ISBN 978-1-58318-198-0. Many Christian homes and churches are losing a frightful percentage of their young people to the world. This practical and far-reaching youth discipleship course deals with the parent's part, the church's part, and the youth's part in discipling young people. It covers salvation, child discipline, the Christian home environment that produces disciples, reaching the child's heart, Bible study techniques, how to protect young people from dangers associated with the Internet and smartphones, how to use apologetics, and many other things. The section on building a wall of protection deals with such things as having a basic home phone that teens

can use under parental oversight, using filters and accountability software, controlling passwords and apps, the power of pornography, the dangers of *Facebook* and video games, avoiding conversation with members of the opposite sex, and monitoring the young person's attitude. The course explains how the church and the home can work together in youth discipleship. It describes the characteristic of a church that produces youth disciples, such as having qualified leaders, officers, and teachers, maintaining biblical standards for workers, being careful about salvation, being uncompromising about separation from the world, building godly homes, discipline, prayer, and vision. It deals with how to train young people to be effective Bible students and how to involve them in the

church's ministry. Finally, the course deals with eleven biblical principles of spiritual protection that young people must build into their own lives. These are living to please the Lord, living by the law of the Spirit, practicing humility, pursuing Christian growth, pursuing edification and ministry, pursuing honesty, practicing vigilance and separation, pursuing pure speech, redeeming the time, pursuing temperance, and obeying and honoring one's parents.

The [*Youth Discipleship Library*](#), which can be purchased from Way of Life Literature, contains the associated training materials that we describe in this course. 200 pages; available in print and as a free eBook from www.wayoflife.org

The thing that is often missing in young people who grow up in Christian homes and churches is salvation. They go through the motions of professing Christ. They know how to give the right answers and to act right when it is necessary, but the reality of the kind of supernatural salvation that we see in Scripture is foreign to their daily lives.

Consider the following testimony which is typical of hundreds we have received through the years:

"Having taught in my church's Christian school, I truly believe that out of an enrollment of 40-50 kids, most likely more than 95% were lost. It breaks my heart to see so many young people have a head knowledge of Christ, but they have never truly believed from the heart. What concerns me even more than that is that many parents and even church leaders seem to not want to acknowledge the reality of the situation. We comfort ourselves with the fact that our kids memorize Bible verses and come to church, when in reality most of them come because Mom or Dad make them, and then during the services most of them are sleeping, laughing and talking to their friends, or checking their cell phones. Most youth groups in Independent Baptist Churches are an absolute joke. My wife and I spent 20 months on deputation visiting Independent Baptist Churches, and we could not believe some of the things we were seeing from the youth groups. It is high time that Independent Baptist churches face the issue of our unconverted youth, because if we don't our churches are headed for disaster."

I know this by experience. I grew up in a Baptist church and professed Christ at about age 10 or 11, but I wasn't saved. I had no inner motive and compulsion to do right.

I had zero personal love for the Bible. I broke my parents' rules, snuck around, lied, pursued every worldly thing, and found a way to do what I wanted to do. As soon as I could, I left home and "followed my heart."

The missing element in my life was repentance toward God (Acts 20:21), and this is what is missing in the lives and hearts of many young people. I "believed in Jesus," but so do the devils (Jam. 2:19). In fact, the devils tremble, which is far more than the average "Christian" young person does! I knew about Jesus and believed in Him, but I did not surrender to God's authority. That is the essence of repentance. The sinner has rebelled against God and broken His law, and he must repent of this. Repentance is a change of direction *in the heart*. It is not a change of life; it is a change of heart that results in a change of life. Two great biblical examples of repentance are the Prodigal Son (Lk. 15:17-19) and the idolaters at Thessalonica (1 Th. 1:9).

Parents and church leaders need to look for clear evidence of salvation. We are warned about those who "profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Titus 1:16).

Biblical evidences of salvation include the following:

1. A life-changing conversion experience (John 3:3; Mat. 18:3; 2 Cor. 5:17).

In every single case, the salvations described in the Bible were life-changing conversion experiences. We think of the woman at the well (John 4), Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), the Jews on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41-42), the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26-39), Paul (Acts 9:1-20), Lydia (Acts 16:14-15), and the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:25-34).

2. Personal knowledge of the Lord (Jn. 17:3; Mat. 11:28-30; Gal. 4:6).

Salvation is not a reformation or a new religion. It is to know the Lord personally, to walk and talk with Him as Lord and Saviour, Father and Friend. It is to cry, "Abba, Father."

When people express doubt about their salvation, I ask them if they know the Lord and when and how it was that they came to know Him.

Many young church people are like Samuel who knew *about* the Lord but did not know the Lord in a personal way (1 Sam. 3:7).

Jesus warned about those who profess Him as Lord, but He says to them, “I never *knew* you” (Mat. 7:21-23). He warned of the foolish virgins to whom the bridegroom says, “Verily I say unto you, I know you not” (Mat. 25:12).

3. Love for and obedience to God’s Word (Jn. 8:47).

A person’s attitude toward the Bible is one of the clearest evidences of his spiritual condition. Jesus said that His sheep hear His voice and follow Him (Jn. 10:26-30).

After I professed faith in Christ at age 10-11, I had no more interest in the Bible than I had before. I never read it. I had no interest in preaching and teaching. I was at church because my parents took me, not because I had an interest in spiritual things. That is not the condition of a saved person.

4. Love of righteousness (1 Jn. 2:3-4).

Consider the testimony of David Sorenson, a pastor’s son. He made a profession of faith at age five in an evangelistic meeting. He was coached to tell others that he was saved, and he did that for 15 years. But he says, “I had no interest in the things of God. I only went to church because my dad was the pastor, and I had to go. I could not have cared less about the Bible.” At age 20 he was saved in Bible College and his life changed radically because he began to love the things he used to hate and to hate the things he used to love.

One thing that will always change is the individual’s attitude toward authority. If a child is saved, he will change in his attitude toward the authority of his parents and teachers and church leaders.

5. Continuing in the gospel (Col. 1:21-23; 1 Cor. 15:1-2; Heb. 3:12-14).

Salvation is evident by continuing in the gospel. Those who profess the gospel and then renounce it are not saved and never were saved. I have seen many examples of this through the years. I think of my own experience. I made a profession of faith in Christ as a boy, but I turned away from the gospel and accepted Hindu doctrines such as reincarnation.

I think of a young married couple in the first church I joined. They opened their home to me, introduced me to the Sword of the Lord pamphlets, and encouraged me in many ways. I went off to Bible School for a year, and when I returned home, I was told that they were divorced. I found the man at his work and talked to him and was shocked to hear that he no longer believed in Christ as Lord and Saviour.

I think of John and Charles Wesley, who were so zealous for Christ that they formed a “holy club” at Oxford University, were labeled “Methodists” for their methodical habits of prayer and Bible reading, were ordained as Anglican priests, and hazarded the dangerous voyage across the Atlantic Ocean to America in order to preach to the natives. But the Wesleys were trusting in their good works rather than the grace found in the gospel of Christ. They knew *about* the Lord, but they didn’t know Him personally. When a Moravian preacher asked John if he had a hope to be saved, he replied, “I do.” But when the preacher asked him the reason of his hope, he said, “Because I have used my best endeavours to serve God.”

I think of a pastor’s brother who made a profession of faith in Christ, but he now believes there are many ways to God.

I think of a pastor’s son who was looked up to by the young people in his church, but today he professes to be an atheist.

I think of a Roman Catholic Church who prayed the “sinner’s prayer” but still believes that good works are a part of salvation and that “good people go to heaven.”

I think of Hindus who have attended our services and Bible studies in Nepal and professed to “believe in Jesus” but who turned back to Hinduism and idolatry.

6. Divine chastisement (Heb. 12:6-8)

A child of God can and does sin, but there is an indwelling, loving Disciplinarian who chastens him. There is even a sin unto death (1 Jn. 5:16-17).

The saved person will have a sensitivity to sin and a conviction about sin. I think of a child who got saved and afterwards became concerned about sins she had committed and “gotten away with.” Before salvation, if

her parents were not watching, she would do things behind their backs. For example, she took her father's socks and stuffed them down a hole in the back hallway. The disappearance of the socks was a unsolved mystery in the home, but after she got saved she came weeping to her mother and confessed that sin, though no one had ever caught her. That is an evidence that something real was happening in her life. She stopped being "sneaky." She starting being trustworthy to obey even if no one was watching.

Those are simple, but profound, evidences of a spiritually-converted life in a child.

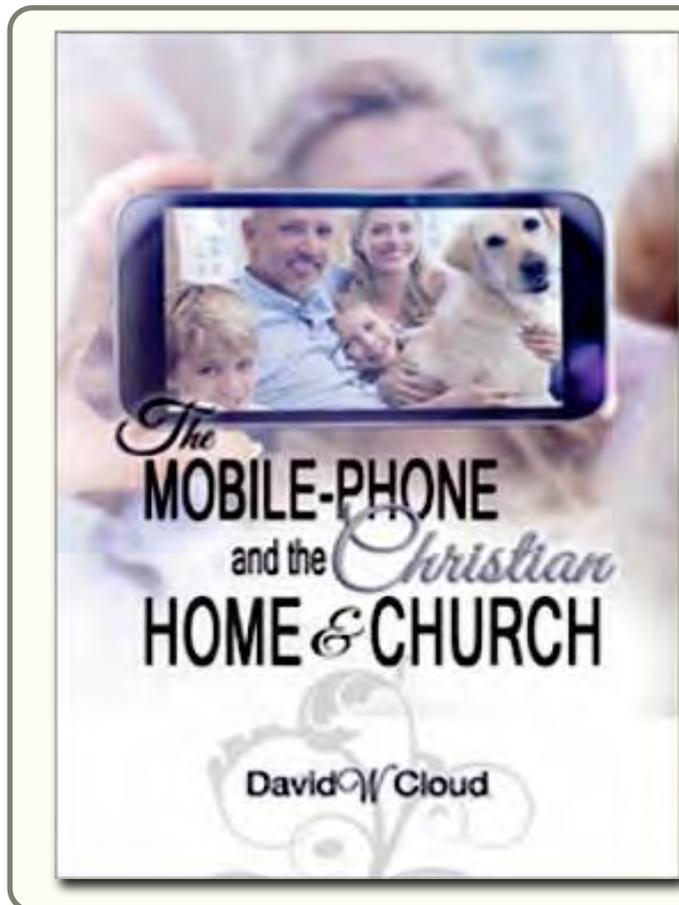
When looking for evidence, we aren't looking for sinless perfection. We must be careful that we not think that the saved individual will suddenly become perfect. When "testing" others, the child of God must not forget how imperfect *he* is! We are simply looking for a regenerated heart and a changed direction in life.

Children will be children, but there will always be a change in thinking and attitude if an individual is saved,

whether he be young or old. We must believe the Bible when it says that *profession* is not *possession* (Titus 1:16). So many children in Christian homes and churches make a profession of faith in Christ but they do not show a change in their lives, and they eventually depart to the world. In many cases, the parents and the church leaders still say they are saved.

Jerry was my best buddy growing up. We went through school together, graduated together, went to Vietnam in the Army about the same time, and came back to America and became drug-using "hippies" together.

I came to Christ at age 23, but Jerry never did. He mocked my faith in Christ and refused to listen to me when I tried to talk to him from the Bible. Eventually he got involved in "Native America" spirituality, which is demonism. He died a few years ago at about age 61, and I visited his mother. His mother and father were faithful church goers, and the mom had been a Baptist Sunday School teacher. She told me that she had hope of Jerry's salvation because he went to church when he was a boy, but there was zero evidence that he was saved.



The Mobile Phone and the Christian Home and Church

A Youth Discipleship Course

by David W. Cloud

Many Christian homes and churches are losing a frightful percentage of their young people to the world.

This practical and far-reaching youth discipleship course deals with the parent's part, the church's part, and the youth's part in winning and discipling young people. It covers salvation, child discipline, the Christian home environment that produces disciples, reaching the child's heart, Bible study techniques, how to protect young people from dangers associated with the Internet and smartphones, how to use apologetics, and many other things.

It deals with how to train young people to be effective Bible students and how to involve them in the church's ministry. The course deals with eleven biblical principles of spiritual protection that young people must build into their own lives.

[Available From Way of Life Website](#)



The following is excerpted from [*THE FUTURE ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE*](#). ISBN 978-1-58318-172-0. One of the many reasons why the Bible is the most amazing and exciting book on earth is its prophecies. The Bible unfolds the future in great detail, and *The Future According to the Bible* deals in depth with every major prophetic event, including the Rapture, the Judgment Seat of Christ, the Tribulation, the Antichrist, Gog and Magog, the Battle of Armageddon, the Two Witnesses, Christ's Return, Muslim nations in prophecy, the Judgment of the Nations, the resurrection body, the conversion of Israel, the highway of the redeemed, Christ's glorious kingdom, the Millennial Temple, the Great White Throne judgment, and the New Jerusalem. The first two chapters deal at length with the amazing prophecies that are being fulfilled today and with the church-age apostasy. Knowledge of these prophecies is essential for a proper understanding of the times and a proper Christian worldview today. The 130-page section on Christ's kingdom describes the coming world kingdom in more detail than any book we are familiar with. Every major Messianic prophecy is examined. Prophecy is a powerful witness to the Bible's divine inspiration, and it is a great motivator for holy Christian living. In this book we show that the Lord's churches are outposts of the coming kingdom. The believer's position in Christ's earthly kingdom will be determined by his service in this present world (Revelation 2:26-27; 3:21). The book is based on forty years of intense Bible study plus firsthand research in Israel, Turkey, and Europe. 520 pages. Available in print and eBook editions from Way of Life Literature, www.wayoflife.org.

Bible prophecy associates the Antichrist with the building of the Third Temple (2 Th. 2:3-4). (The First Temple was

built by Solomon, and the Second Temple was built after the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity and was extended and glorified by King Herod, so that it was called Herod's Temple.)

Great preparations are being made in Israel for the building of the Third Temple. The Temple Institute, founded in 1986, has prepared all of the articles, including a menorah (candlestick) fashioned from 95 pounds of gold (valued at \$2 million) and the high priest's golden crown costing \$30,000.

When I visited Jerusalem in 2010, the menorah was on display on the Western Wall Plaza across from the Temple Mount. The Temple Institute is constructing a full-scale model of the Temple near the Dead Sea to use for training priests.

What Messiah are the Jews looking for?

The Jews today are looking for the Messiah, but the Messiah they are looking for is actually the Antichrist.

1. The Jews are looking for a Messiah that will rebuild the temple.

In Jewish tradition, the rebuilding of the temple is associated with the coming of the Messiah. According to Maimonides (also called Rambam), the highest rabbinical authority, any Jew that starts rebuilding the Temple is a potential Messiah.

Shimon ben Kosiba was considered a Messiah in the second century A.D. when he led a revolt to recapture Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple. He was named Bar Kokhba ("Son of the Star") based on the Messianic

prophecy of Numbers 24:17, and a coin was struck depicting the Temple with the Ark of the Covenant inside and the Messianic star on the roof.

A representative of the Temple Institute told us in 2010 that they are looking for a temple builder: “We are waiting for a Messiah. In Jewish tradition, we believe that in every generation there is someone who can be the Messiah. The question is who will he be. The answer is only someone who does specific things can be called the Messiah. The one who brings Israel back to Israel. The one who builds the temple again.”

By this tradition, it is simple to see how the Antichrist will be looked upon as the Messiah. He will come as a peacemaker and by his satanic power he will make a way for the Jewish Temple to be rebuilt in spite of Muslim animosity.

2. The Jews are looking for a Messiah that will solve their problems and bring peace when things look dark.

In a video interview in Jerusalem in 2010 a Reformed Jewish rabbi told us that the Messiah will come when things look really dark and will establish peace. He said:

“Jerusalem is to be whole, and when the Messiah comes the temple will be returned to us. But that can't happen until there is eternal peace. Ultimately we have to go deeper into destruction before we come out into the light and until God redeems not only the Jewish people but also the rest of the world. Peace has to come, but peace can only come when things get really dark.”

But the Jewish prophets said there is no peace to the wicked (Isa. 57:21). There can be no peace for Israel until she is in right relationship with God, until she repents of her sin and is forgiven and converted. Until then, any so-called peace will turn out to be a false peace, which is exactly what the Antichrist will bring (1 Thess. 5:3).

3. The Jews are NOT looking for a Messiah who will save them from sin.

The Jews have no sacrifices, and they are content with that, thinking that they don't need a blood atonement. They celebrate the Passover and the Day of Atonement without a lamb and without the shedding of blood.

We asked a Reformed Jewish rabbi in Jerusalem, “How do you purge your sins?” and he replied, “We ask God

for forgiveness through prayer and through actions.” When queried about Leviticus 17:11--“it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul”--the rabbi said that to interpret that as meaning that man needs a literal blood sacrifice is a false interpretation.

A representative of the Temple Institute said the same thing:

“God knows that we don't have the sacrifices. That is why He has given us a different way of atonement, and that's by prayers. We have prayers that great rabbis wrote just after the destructions, and we say these prayers and that's as if we are sacrificing.”

The Jews stumbled at the Suffering Messiah 2,000 years ago. They were looking for a Messiah to save them from Rome and to provide for their physical needs, not a Messiah who would die for their sins. They wanted a king, not a Saviour.

Why should they look for a suffering Messiah when they don't think of themselves as sinners? When we asked the aforementioned American rabbi if he is a sinner, he looked around in sort of a perplexed manner and even had to be asked the second time before admitting that “we all make mistakes in the world.” But he only admitted to mistakes and “negative inclinations,” not to sin. He said that the Jew's righteousness is in the law of Moses and in the Talmud, the rabbinical tradition.

This is the same self-righteous blindness that the apostle Paul wrote about 2,000 years ago in Romans 9:30-33.

“What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling-stone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.”

Thus, the Jews are not looking for a Saviour from sin; they are looking for a Messiah that will bring peace, that will solve their problems, that will help them to rebuild the Temple, that will not rebuke them as sinners but will help them follow their “positive inclinations.”

Though they don't know it, they are actually looking for the Antichrist, and they will accept him when he comes.

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?



NEW YORK TIMES SAYS PAUL COMMANDED CHRISTIANS TO KILL HOMOSEXUALS

(Friday Church News Notes, June 24, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -

A *New York Times* article says that the apostle Paul ordered Christians to kill homosexuals. The report says, "A Republican congressman read his colleagues a Bible verse from Romans that calls for the execution of gays" (Jeremy Peters and Lizette Alvarez, "After Orlando, a Political Divide on Gay Rights Still Stands," *New York Times*, June 15, 2016). The ignorance behind this statement is astounding. The Bible "verse" in question is not one verse, but a passage, Romans 1:18-32, and it does not call on Christians to execute homosexuals. The passage begins and ends with these words: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. ... Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" (Romans 1:18, 32). This important passage of Scripture teaches that all sinners, not just homosexuals, are worthy of death before a holy God. It mentions fornicators, covetous, murderers, deceivers, backbiters, haters of God, proud, disobedient to parents, covenant breakers, and the unmerciful, among others. All are worthy of death, because "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). This shows the necessity of Christ's compassionate sacrificial death in the sinner's place. But absolutely nowhere does the New Testament call upon Christians to kill anyone, not thieves or adulterers or homosexuals or

witches, not anyone. Someone with even the most basic knowledge of the New Testament Christian faith would know that such a thing is foreign to the gospel of Jesus Christ. "Christians" who have been guilty of killing people are not true Bible-believing Christians. Christ and the apostles warned that false teachers would come into the world and bring reproach upon His name (e.g., Matthew 24:4-5, 11, 24; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Peter 2:1-2; 1 John 2:18-19). The law of Moses did call for the death of adulterers, homosexuals, and practitioners of witchcraft, among others, in the Old Testament books of Exodus and Deuteronomy, but Christians are not under the law of Moses. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (Galatians 3:24-25). When the disciples James and John wanted to call down fire upon some who did not receive Christ, He "turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of" (Luke 9:55). The writers and editors at the *New York Times* would do well to read the Bible instead of abusing it.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS FIND ANCIENT ATHENS' SOPHISTICATED NAVAL BASE

(Friday Church News Notes, June 24, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -

Recently archaeologists discovered three giant ship-sheds that housed Greek triremes on the ancient ports of Piraeus, Athens' naval base. The sheds, covering 1 million square feet (110,000 sq. meters), housed about 400 ships, which were tended by 80,000 sailors and soldiers ("Archaeologists Uncover Massive



Naval Bases of the Ancient Athenians,” *Smithsonian Magazine*, June 17, 2016). Each ship had its own shed, but they were built side-by-side. The ship was pulled up a ramp into dock (requiring the effort of 140 men) to protect it from wood rot, timber shrinkage, and marine woodworms. The sheds had stone columns that upheld tiled roofs that protected the ships from the hot sun. The ships could be slipped into the harbor and put into action quickly. They were protected by massive stone walls built on dirt moles that enclosed all but the necessary entrances to the ports. These acted as gates that could be closed off with huge chains. There were fortified towers on either side of the gates. Any enemy ship trying to enter the harbor would be under fire continually from the walls and towers. The sheds have been dated to between 520 and 480 BC, which means they probably housed triremes that took part in the Battle of Salamis. They were torn down around 404 BC with the defeat of Athens at the end of the Peloponnesian War. The *trireme* (three oar) (pronounced tri-reem or treem) had two large sails and three banks of oars, each oar operated by one man. It was used by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Persians, and Romans, and was the dominant type of warship from the 6th to the 3rd centuries BC. It was about 120 feet long and crewed by 200 men, including 170 oarsmen.

A FALSE REVIVAL (Friday Church News Notes, June 24, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “Dress Rehearsal for a False Revival?” *Light-house Trails*, June 13, 2016: “According



to a news release from PRWire titled ‘Pope Francis To Address Americans At National Mall Event Together 2016 With Special Video Message,’ Pope Francis will be joining (via video) evangelical leaders such as Ravi Zacharias, Luis Palau, Michael W. Smith, and Josh McDowell, emerging-church leaders such as Francis Chan, Ann Voskamp, Jennie Allen (IF), and Mark Batterson (*Circle Maker*) and charismatic leaders such as Sammy Rodriguez and Hillsong for an event motivated by a goal to bring unity to all those who ‘love Jesus.’ The event is called ‘Together 2016,’ subtitled ‘Fill the Mall.’ Nick Hall, the organizer of the event who hopes to draw one million people to the National Mall on July 16th, stated: ‘Together 2016 is about laying aside what divides us to lift up Jesus who unites us.’ Hall told one news source, ‘We are coming together in historic unity to pray for a reset for our nation.’ It’s been over fifteen years since contemplative pioneer Richard Foster shared his vision of Catholics and evangelicals coming together and over two decades since Chuck Colson helped author a document titled ‘Evangelicals/Catholics Together.’ It’s been over a decade since Rick Warren announced his hopes to bring about a second reformation that would include people of different religions. In more recent days, evangelical leaders such as Beth Moore, Franklin Graham, and Kenneth Copeland have played their parts in helping to remove the barriers between the evangelical/Protestant church and the Roman Catholic Church (something the Catholic Church calls the New Evangelization program). According to the Bible, we know a time is coming when a global one-world religion will serve alongside a global one-world government, both of which will reject Jesus Christ as the Messiah and Lord. Whether they realize it or not, the leaders and musicians participating in Together 2016 are helping to make that global religion a reality as they participate in this ongoing relay race of breaking down the walls that divide different faiths in the name of unity at all costs.”



SONG LEADER WARNS ABOUT THE JAZZING UP OF HYMNS (Friday Church News Notes, June 24, 2016, www.wayoflife.org,

fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - “Brother Cloud, I saw the following quote in your recent e-letter on the Getty’s: ‘I believe the CCM crowd is trying to bridge the gap by redoing theologically rich hymns to the new CCM rock tunes.’ That is a fact. I know, because each week as I prepare the music ministry plan for our services, I seek to expand our hymnody by at least one, and sometimes more, hymns. Before I managed the music, we basically sang the same 50 or so hymns repeatedly. ... When I plan for us to sing a hymn new to us, I always ‘youtube’ it to hear it being sung and played so I can evaluate how difficult it is going to be for us to absorb it (if a difficult one, I have the pianist play through once before we sing). ... at least a third of the time I find the lead entry on youtube for the hymn I’m looking for being performed either with an entirely different, rock-style tune, or I find it so jazzed up that it doesn’t even seem the same song. The CCM crowd is not content to leave us alone with our music; they are seeking to steal it and co-opt it to the end of slithering in among us. It is infuriating.”

HONESTY AND OBEDIENCE TO GOD ALWAYS THE BEST POLICY (Friday Church News Notes, June 24, 2016, www.wayoflife.org,

fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from *The Biblical Illustrator* on Leviticus 6: “A young man came to a gentleman one day with a case of conscience. He was corresponding clerk in a flourishing house of business. His employers had begun to direct him

to write letters to customers containing statements which he and they knew to be false. He had objected, and they said: 'We are responsible for these statements; it is nothing to you whether they are true or false.' I said to him, 'Did they sign the letters, or ask you to write them in your own name?' As soon as the question left my lips I saw that if there were a difference both would be wrong, and I hastened to tell him so. He said, 'I have to sign them with my name, per Messrs. Blank.' I said, 'Your case is clear; you must decline to do it.' He said, 'Then I shall be dismissed'; and, after a pause, 'I have a wife and family.' I replied, 'My dear friend, this is a trial of faith and principle; you must do right, and trust to God to take care of you and your family.' I met him some days after. 'Well Mr. — , ' I said, 'how are you getting on?' He replied, 'I am still in my situation; I had an interview with the partners, and told them I could not write letters I knew to be untrue. They were very angry, and I expected to receive notice, but I have not received it yet.' Months passed, and he remained in his situation. After a while he called upon me, and I saw in his face that something had happened. 'Well, Mr. — , ' I said, 'have you had your dismissal?' 'No,' he said, 'I have not,' and smiled. 'What then?' 'A very confidential post in their service, with a higher salary, has fallen vacant, and they have put me into it. On second thoughts these unprincipled men had come to the conclusion that a clerk who would not deceive a customer would not deceive them, and was too valuable to be lost.'" [CONCLUDING NOTE: This story would have turned out just as well had the honest young man been fired, because God knows our situation and has promised never to leave nor forsake His people.]

JACOB SHEEP TO RETURN TO ISRAEL (Friday Church News Notes, July 1, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - A flock of "Jacob sheep" are soon to be transported from Canada to Israel. Called "Jacob sheep" because they are



spotted and speckled as per Genesis 30:32, they are owned by Gil and Jenna Lewinsky of Abbotsford, British Columbia. The Israeli Ministry of Agriculture has given rare permission to import live sheep, and El Al, Israel's national airline, has agreed to subsidize 90% of the cost of transportation from New York ("On wings of El Al, biblical sheep to end 3,000-year exile," *Times of Israel*, June 21, 2016). The Lewinskys are still working to secure land in Israel where they hope to house the sheep in an educational farm that will be open to the public, and they need to raise \$200,000 in crowd funding. Currently there are no Jacob Sheep in Israel.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF ISRAEL'S ENTEBBE RAID (Friday Church News Notes, July 1, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -

The following is excerpted from "Bullet scars as Uganda remembers," *Times of Israel*, June 26, 2016: "Skimming above the choppy waves through the dark the four planes swooped in low over Lake Victoria, packed with over 200 elite Israeli commandos on a daring raid to free hijacked hostages. Landing soon after midnight at Uganda's Entebbe airport on July 4, 1976, it took the paratroopers less than an hour to storm the base and free over 100 passengers aboard an Air France plane, an opera-



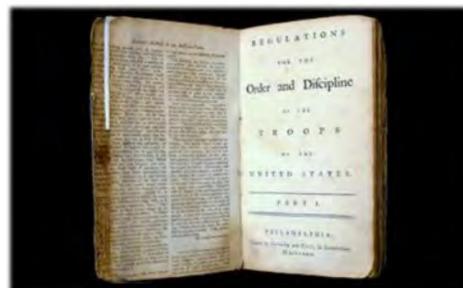
tion that has gone down in special forces legend. The plane had been hijacked a week earlier on June 27. Four decades later, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is due to visit Uganda for the anniversary not only to mark the operation and boost now-friendly ties between Uganda and Israel, but also to pay a deeply personal tribute. The commando leader, the only Israeli soldier killed in the raid, was his older brother, 30-year old Lieutenant-Colonel Yonatan Netanyahu. ... Uganda and Israel are planning the memorial to be one of reconciliation, preserving the bullet scars in the walls of the old terminal at Entebbe, still the airport for the capital Kampala, some 40 kilometers (25 miles) to the north. Earlier this month, some of the retired commandos who took part in the raid visited the scene of the extraordinary rescue, standing alongside Ugandan officials, including the son of their then enemy, dictator Idi Amin. ... Amin's son Jaffar, a 10-year old boy when the raid took place, welcomed the commandos to Uganda this month as a 'sign of reconciliation,' remembering the stories his father told after he was deposed and forced into exile. ... Jaffar recalled what his father had said when he asked why he had not sent fighter jets to shoot down the departing Israelis. 'My father said of the Israelis, Son, those are the children of God, when they start to fight, they never stop,' Jaffar said. 'To him, he felt they had come to rescue their people, they had accomplished their mission, so he let them go.'"

NORWAY TO RETURN SEIZED CHILDREN TO CHRISTIAN PARENTS AFTER INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE (Friday Church News Notes, July 1, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from "Norway to Return," *The Christian Post*, June 6, 2016: "The Christian parents of five children, who were seized by Norwegian child services seven months ago to 'prevent' them from being 'indoctrinated' with Christianity, will soon be reunited as the authorities have agreed to return the cus-



tody of the remaining four kids to the family. ‘We thank you all for your love, support, prayers, and active participation in the reunification of this family. May God richly bless you and repay you for all you have done to bring this family back together,’ says a statement from the Romanian Pentecostal parents, Marius and Ruth Bodnariu, who have been living in Norway for more than a decade, according to *Romania Insider*. Norway’s *Dagen* newspaper reported that the decision to return the kids to their family is parts of an agreement reached with the family. The five children were seized by the Norwegian Child Protective Services on Nov. 16 and 17 last year based on a teacher’s concerns about how the kids were being raised by ‘radical’ Christians who were ‘indoctrinating’ their children. Parliamentarians, lawyers and Christian groups from many countries, including the United States, Romania and other part of Europe, raised serious concerns over the action of the Norwegian child services. ... Last month, more than 100 attorneys from the United States and abroad and members of the European Parliament wrote a letter to the Norwegian Prime Minister, saying the government’s act of seizing the children violated domestic and international law, and urging their immediate release. ‘We find the facts of this international incident unacceptable not only on legal grounds but also on humanitarian and moral grounds. We view these transgressions as grievous breaches of domestic and international law. ... Therefore, it is important that Norway immediately release the children back to their biological parents,’ the authors of the letter demanded.”

DISCIPLINE AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION (Friday Church News Notes, July 1, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - George Washington, America’s Commander-in-Chief during the War of Independence from Great Britain, said during the French and Indian War, “Discipline is the soul of an army. It makes small numbers formidable; procures success to the weak and esteem to all.” Yet when Washington took control of the American “army” in July 1775, it was “a mixed multitude of people under very little discipline, order or government.” Two years later, the ragtag American army was still pathetic, and it was a German named Friedrich von Steuben who whipped it into shape. Steuben had served as adjutant general on the staff of Frederick the Great and had been made a baron. After meeting Benjamin Franklin in Paris, Steuben volunteered his services to Washington in exchange only for his expenses. Like many other Europeans who joined the America effort, Steuben wanted to “fight for liberty.” He had a major role in the war effort and was awarded American citizenship and 16,000 acres of land in New York after the victory. “The Continental army was in shambles when Steuben joined Washington at Valley Forge in late February 1778. In addition to lacking arms, ammunition, food, shelter, and morale, the army had no orderly military structure, no formal training system, and no organized administration procedures. The troops didn’t even know how to march in formation. Steuben immediately began imposing the lessons he had learned in the Prussian military on the encampment, attempting to transform a willing but



untrained assembly of militias into an army in a matter of months. The fact that he didn’t speak English only made the already seemingly impossible task just a little more difficult. Steuben attacked the problem by creating a model company of slightly more than a hundred men, then began drilling them in the full range of military skills from marching to fighting with a bayonet. Creating the prototype of the tough drill sergeant, he made his men relentlessly practice reloading and firing, reloading and firing, until the process became natural and efficient. He taught them basic tactics and simple maneuvers. As a veteran officer described Steuben’s impact, ‘Discipline flourishes and daily improves under the indefatigable efforts of Baron Steuben--who is much esteemed by us.’ In addition to personally demonstrating these techniques, he spoke to Alexander Hamilton and General Nathanael Greene in French and they translated his comments into English. ... Once these men were sufficiently trained, they began passing along their knowledge to other groups, and the effect rippled through the entire army. This training regimen eventually was turned into the classic manual *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States* ... [it] remains the foundation for the professional army. ... In subsequent battles the colonists stunned the British with their rapid and orderly response to commands, their newfound ability to maneuver, and their deadly use of the bayonet” (*Bill O’Reilly’s Legends and Lies: The Patriots*, written by David Fisher, 2016). **CONCLUSION:** There are important lessons here for churches in the training of Christian soldiers for the Lord’s army. See, for example, Romans 13:12; Galatians 6:9; 2 Corinthians 4:2; 10:3-5; Ephesians 6:10-18; 1 Timothy 1:18; 2 Timothy 2:2-3; 4:7; Hebrews 10:25; 12:3-13.

TEL AVIV GAY PRIDE PARADE (Friday Church News Notes, July 1, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Tel Aviv hosted its 18th annual Gay



Pride Parade on June 3, attended by an estimated 200,000. The parade culminates a week-long Gay Pride celebration. Many Israeli Defense Force personnel participated. A permanent LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual) Center opened in Tel Aviv in 2008. Israel's Tourism Ministry markets Tel Aviv worldwide as "the premiere LGBT tourism destination." Since 2002, Jerusalem has hosted its own Gay Pride Parade, though it has often been accompanied by opposition demonstrations led by Orthodox Jews. Well does Revelation 11:8 liken end-time Jerusalem to Sodom.

ILLUSTRIOUS CHEMIST SAYS SCIENCE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND ORIGIN OF LIFE

(Friday Church News Notes, July 1, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Nobody Understands," *Christian News*, June 13, 2016: "An illustrious chemist who has previously shed light on critical shortcomings in scientists' understanding of evolution has written a detailed essay explaining 'the massive gaps in our understanding' of how life first originated. Dr. James Tour is a professor of chemistry, computer science, and materials science and nanoengineering at Rice University. He has written over 590 research publications and over 100 patents, and he is the recipient of



numerous scientific awards. ... In his most recent paper, a 12,000-word essay titled 'Animadversions of a Synthetic Chemist,' Tour tackles a question that has puzzled scientists for centuries: Where did life come from? The essay was published in the most recent edition of *Inference: International Review of Science*. ... The chemical-synthesizing process is enormously complex, requiring intelligent, meticulous oversight. ... Tour considers must-have elements of life, including carbohydrates, DNA, and RNA. He also references the work of Albert Eschenmoser--a respected synthetic chemist who was determined to create life's ingredients in a lab but eventually decided to change direction and research other areas because his findings were unsatisfactory. ... 'Under prebiotic conditions the reaction in question is not likely to yield anything useful. With each added step, difficulties are compounded by improbabilities so overwhelming that no other field of science would depend upon such levels of faith,' he wrote. ... 'Those who think scientists understand the issues of prebiotic chemistry are wholly misinformed,' he continued. 'Nobody understands them. Maybe one day we will. But that day is far from today. It would be far more helpful (and hopeful) to expose students to the massive gaps in our understanding. They may find a firmer--and possibly a radically different--scientific theory. The basis upon which we as scientists are relying is so shaky that we must openly state the situation for what it is: it is a mystery,' he concluded."

AMERICA'S RELATIVISTIC MORAL PHILOSOPHY

(Friday Church News Notes, July 8, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from "Barna Study: America Has a New Moral Code," *Answers In Genesis*, June 12, 2016: "Barna recently conducted a general population survey to determine current American views on morality. ...



Over half of Americans think that 'whatever is right for your life or works best for you is the only truth you can know.' ... Barna's president David Kinnaman argues that the formerly, nominally Christian ethic that used to characterize this nation is being replaced with 'a new moral code.' He says this morality can be characterized by self-fulfillment and has six guiding principles. These principles, listed below, are troubling. 1. 'The best way to find yourself is by looking within yourself.' An incredible 91% of US adults and 76% of practicing Christians agreed 'completely' or 'somewhat' with this statement. 2. 'People should not criticize someone else's life choices.' Overall 89% of adults and 76% of Christians agree. 3. 'To be fulfilled in life, you should pursue the things you desire most.' 86% of American adults and 72% of Christians said, 'Yes.' 4. 'The highest goal of life is to enjoy it as much as possible.' 84% of adults and 67% of Christians agreed that this was the highest goal of life. 5. 'People can believe whatever they want, as long as those beliefs don't affect society.' Those who agreed with this statement consisted of 79% of American adults and 61% of practicing Christians. 6. 'Any kind of sexual expression between two consenting adults is acceptable.' Incredibly, nearly 69% of American adults and an astonishing 40% of Christians agreed with this. These statistics should provide a wake-up call to every Christian. Though you will not find any of these ideas in Scripture, the majority of Christians accept five out of six of them! ... David Kinnaman has some sobering thoughts on this new morality, our culture, and the church. 'The highest good,

according to our society is “finding yourself” and then living by “what’s right for you.” ... There is a tremendous amount of individualism in today’s society, and that’s reflected in the church too. Millions of Christians have grafted New Age dogma onto their spiritual person. When we peel back the layers, we find that many Christians are using the way of Jesus to pursue the way of self. ... While we wring our hands about secularism spreading through the culture, a majority of churchgoing Christians have embraced corrupt, me-centered theology.” CONCLUDING NOTE: America’s churches are indeed to blame for this mess. New Evangelicalism, for example, has been preaching non-judgmental moral relativism for more than a half century. For documentation see [New Evangelicalism: Its History, Characteristics, and Fruit](#), available in print and eBook editions from www.wayoflife.org.

THE NEW CAMPUS GESTAPO (Friday Church News Notes, July 8, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is from “Meet the New Campus Gestapo,” *New York Post*, June 26, 2016: “On campuses across America, the Thought Police have a new tool: Bias Response Teams, administrators who crack down on classroom insensitivity. More than 100 US colleges have set up BRTs. The newshounds at Heat Street last week dug up a taste of how it works. A professor at the University of Northern Colorado got visited by the school’s Bias Response Team--for imploring his students to think about opposing viewpoints. Heat Street’s Freedom of Information Act request revealed that the professor 1) had students



read an Atlantic article about rising sensitivity of college students, and 2) asked them to consider un-PC views on topics like global warming and transgender issues. A trans student finked to the BRT that the professor mentioned the idea that ‘transgender is not a real thing, and no one can truly feel like they are born in the wrong body.’ She wrote she ‘was very offended and hurt by this.’ The BRT told the professor to never talk about transgender issues again, or even mention un-PC opinions on the topic, whether his or someone else’s. If professors can’t ask students to engage in critical thinking, we might as well close down the universities now.”

EUROPEAN COMMISSION WANTS TO CONTROL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCESS (Friday Church News Notes, July 8, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -



The following is excerpted from “The European Commission,” *Breitbart*, June 2, 2016: “The European Commission plans to attack citizens’ right to online privacy, insisting that state-issued ID cards should be used to log into platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and even Uber. The Vice President for the Digital Single Market on the European Commission, former Communist Andrus Ansip, is behind the next European Union (EU) raid on personal freedoms, promoting the idea of using national ID cards to log in to online services. Leaked documents from within the European Commission revealed a call for the roll out of a more extensive use of national ID cards across the EU. The documents have since been uploaded to the Commission’s own website. Mr. Ansip is from Estonia, a small Baltic

country and former Communist state which has the most highly-developed national ID card system in the world.

The Estonian state website boasts: ‘Much more than simply a legal picture ID, the mandatory national card serves as the digital access card for all of Estonia’s secure e-services.’”

ROME’S WHISTLING SLING STONES (Friday Church News Notes, July 8, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Whistling sling projectiles have been discovered in southwestern Scotland dating to the second century AD. They were used by Romans in an attack against a hilltop fort. The cast lead bullets were drilled with a 0.2-inch (5mm) hole that caused them to make a sharp buzzing or whistling noise. Archaeologist John Reid calls them a “terror weapon” (“Whistling Sling Bullets,” *Archaeological News*, June 13, 2016). “In Old Testament times, slingers were regular components of an army and were often used together with archers; during siege warfare their role was to pick off the enemy from the besieged city’s ramparts. Such slingers were capable of hurling a projectile at over one hundred miles an hour and their effective range was well in excess of one hundred yards” (Alfred Hoerth, *Archaeology and the Old Testament*). Skilled slingers are mentioned in the Bible (2 Kings 3:25). Ancient projectiles discovered at Hamoukar (in northeastern Syria) were actually egg-shaped, but more pointed, and made out of clay. More than 2,000 of these sling bullets were found in 2005 in excavations co-sponsored by the Oriental Institute and the Syrian Department of Antiquities. One of the stones had pierced into a mud



brick wall (“Evidence of battle at Hamoukar,” *University of Chicago Chronicle*, Jan. 18, 2007). “[The pointed shape of the Hamoukar projectiles] tells us two things: that they could be armour-piercing; and that the slingers must have had a technique for sending them off with a spin, like a rifle bullet, so as to keep them properly oriented during their flight to the target” (Paul Kriwaczek, *Babylon: Mesopotamia and the Birth of Civilization*, Kindle location 1633). Of course, the most famous slinger in history is David. “And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd’s bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine. ... And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David” (1 Samuel 17:40, 49, 50). (The Way of Life Literature course [Bible Times & Ancient Kingdoms](#) includes an illustrated study of sling stones and other ancient weapons in the PowerPoint presentation on Assyria.)

THE SOLDIERS WE LEFT BEHIND (Friday Church News Notes, July 8, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbs@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “The Soldiers We Left Behind: Special Operators in an Afghanistan Meat Grinder,” Daniel Horowitz, *Conservative Review*, June 21, 2016: “The worst aspect of Obama’s foreign policy is not that he



pulled our troops out of the endless and aimless wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. In fact, contra his promise, Obama has kept troops in those countries. **The most deplorable aspect of his policy is that he has re-shifted the burden of an entire military force onto the backs of several thousand special operators and placed them in untenable predicaments with egregious rules of engagement in pursuit of undefined and conflicting goals.** I want to direct your attention to a *Wall Street Journal* article, which encapsulates this theme I’ve written about for quite some time and have discussed on my podcasts. The article, titled ‘Afghan War Rules Leave U.S. Troops Wondering When It’s OK to Shoot,’ vividly demonstrates how our special operators are placed in the most dangerous and vulnerable positions defending the flagrant Afghani military against the Taliban, but must place a call to a lawyer before taking a shot at the enemy or calling in an air strike when their lives are in danger. What Obama is doing to the SOCOM community in Afghanistan is likely a bigger scandal than Benghazi. Here is the game Obama plays: In order to maintain the illusion that he is pulling out of an unpopular and endless war, Obama announces that most troops are leaving the theater of war. He has the media tell the public that there are merely 9,800 troops in Afghanistan just to train the Afghani army or a few thousand ‘advisors’ in Iraq to help with the effort against the Islamic State, but most combat operations have ceased. What he doesn’t say is that most of those few thousand soldiers are special operators who are sent on endless missions with the full intensity of special operations, yet are responsible for holding the entire region together--a task that typically requires a force of over 100,000 conventional soldiers. This is while their comrades are deployed to over 135 other countries. ... During Obama’s first term, casualties almost tripled in Afghanistan from the previous seven years combined despite the supposed end of combat. Over 90 percent of the wounded in action were

incurred during Obama’s presidency. That is because he placed our warriors in the most precarious position possible. The military had already withdrawn in large numbers, there was no longer any strategic mission with a definitive outcome, yet our special operators were sent out on endless deployments and dangerous missions. To make matters worse, they couldn’t even fight the enemy and are now governed by worse rules of engagement than even conventional forces were ever bound by. Even worse, the Afghani government is aware of every special operations mission before it is carried out. It is no secret that many personnel in the government and military are double agents for the Taliban. Many believe double crossing Afghanis were the source of the Extortion 17 tragedy--the group of over two dozen special operators, including 15 members of SEAL Team 6, being shot out of the sky in August 2011. They were also likely killed as a result of the egregious orders from the top not to bomb the known Taliban fighters spotted in the landing zone. That was clearly a more tragic, impactful, and consequential scandal than Benghazi, yet nobody in congressional leadership seemed interested in pursuing it.”

ONE WORLD CHURCH ON THE MOVE (Friday Church News Notes, July 15, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbs@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from “300 denominations meet for ecumenical gathering in Munich,” *Christiantoday.com*, July 5, 2016: “Some 1,700 Christians from around 300 denominations have met in Munich for a ‘Together in Europe’ gathering of the Ecumenical Congress promoting unity



between Catholics, Protestants and Evangelicals. In a meeting supported by Pope Francis and Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew I, leaders of the Catholic Church, the Anglican Church, several Orthodox Churches, Protestant denominations and free evangelical denominations including some Baptists and Pentecostals debated for three days about how to walk towards ‘encounter, reconciliation and hope in a better future.’ ... Pope Francis and Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople sent video messages to the meeting. ‘We want to contribute towards reconciliation of Christians and of Churches,’ the organisers said on their website. ‘Through our witness of unity and reconciliation we also hope to impact on society as a whole. We want to encourage all people of our time to respond with a decisive and hopeful yes for going ahead together and overcoming barriers among people, nations, social and cultural groups.’ The Congress finished with an open air rally attended by around 5,000 people under the banner: ‘500 years of division is enough--unity is possible.’” **CONCLUDING NOTE:** True Christian unity requires oneness of mind, not an ecumenical “unity in diversity.” The Word of God says, “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Corinthians 1:10).

“800,000-YEAR-OLD” HUMAN FOOTPRINTS (Friday Church News Notes, July 15, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from Ken Ham’s Blog, July 9, 2016: “Researchers claim to have uncovered possible *Homo erectus* footprints from a desert in south-east Eritrea (a coastal African country bordered by Sudan, Ethiopia, and Djibouti). These footprints--size 12 if they had been wearing shoes--appear to have been made by a group of tall individuals,

THE FISH WITH THREE LINES OF DEFENSE (Friday Church News Notes, July 8, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

- The following is from CreationMoments.com, March 17, 2015: “To hear evolutionists tell it, millions of years of chance mutations, combined with natural selection, produced all manner of living creatures. Now, let’s look at just one creature--the porcupinefish--and see how the theory of evolution works out in real life. If the theory fails the test, it’s a strong indicator that the theory lacks the power to explain the existence of any living creature. ‘The porcupinefish is blessed with not one, not two, but three lines of defense. The first comes into play when a predator is near. The porcupinefish quickly swallows a large amount of water, practically doubling its size. This makes the fish too large for some predators to swallow. The second line of defense comes into play as the fish transforms itself into a football-sized balloon covered with menacing



barbs. Its scales stand on end, turning it into an aquatic version of the land-dwelling porcupine. The very sight of these sharp scales protruding in every direction scares off many predators. The third line of defense for some porcupinefish species is the neurotoxin in their internal organs--a toxin that’s at least twelve-hundred times more potent than cyanide.’ As Wikipedia points out, ‘As a result of these three defenses, porcupinefish have few predators.’ Now, can evolutionists explain how this unique fish came to have these three lines of defense? No, they can’t. Not even Darwin tried to explain it when he wrote about the porcupinefish in his book *The Voyage of the Beagle*.”

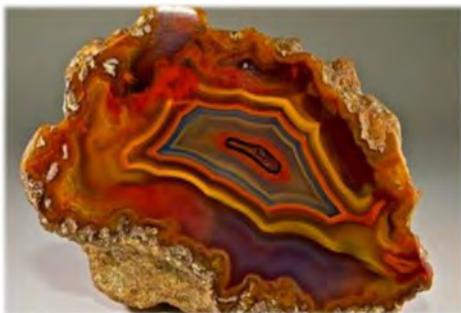
and evolutionist researchers say the footprints were made 800,000 years ago. Now, in an evolutionary worldview, *H. erectus* is considered to be ‘physically close to modern humans,’ and these footprints were supposedly left behind 600,000 years before modern man. The researchers believe these prints ‘may provide important clues on how *H. erectus*’s gait evolved until *Homo sapiens* ... came about.’ Despite their belief that these footprints offer an in-



sight into evolution, the researcher who led the dig noted that ‘the prints show toe details, a marked longitudinal arch and an abducted toe, all features distinctive of human feet.’ Another article describes the prints as ‘nearly identical to modern human footprints.’ So human footprints that look just like modern human footprints provide vital clues into the evolution of the human gait? A view that’s much more consistent with the evidence is the biblical view. *Homo erectus* is not another human species that is ‘physically close’ to us. The observational evidence confirms these individuals were humans--descendants of Adam and Eve, just like us. They made and used tools, buried their dead, built fires and seafaring vessels, and spread out to settle three continents. After leaving Babel, these humans were some of

the earliest people to settle around the world and leave remains that we can find today. The minor differences we see between them and us are simply part of the enormous variety God built into the human genome. When we start with God's Word, the observational evidence makes sense, can be consistently interpreted, and confirms the Bible's true, historical science that humans have always been humans! That's because it's God's Word--not human imagination--that provides the true history of the world."

AGATES FOR THE GLORY OF GOD (Friday Church News Notes, July 15, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The child of God is at liberty to enjoy life to the fullest in God's perfect will. He "giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Timothy 6:17). To enjoy the creation without putting the Creator first in one's affections is idolatry, but when God is put in the proper place, the creation can be enjoyed, and it all points back to Him and teaches us about Him. Geologist Bill Kitchens studies agates and has a web site GodMadeAgates.com that features studies about agates and beautiful photos of them. He says, "Agates are treasures of God's grace that, through natural processes, fill voids in rocks around us for people to find, wonder at, and use. ... The appreciation of beauty and the desire to create beauty, and to understand it, are parts of the 'image of God' built into mankind 'in the beginning.'" The Bible says of Israel in Christ's coming kingdom, "And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones" (Isaiah 54:12).



CULTIC STRANGENESS AT JACK HYLES' FUNERAL (Friday Church News Notes, July 15, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The late Jack Hyles, former pastor of First Baptist Church of Hammond, Indiana, was one of the most influential independent Baptist leaders. Though he is dead, his influence is still vast. Hyles pastored First Baptist from 1959 until his death in 2001 at age 74, when his son-in-law Jack Schaap (pronounced *skaaap*) took the helm. In 2013, Schaap was sentenced to 12 years in prison for transporting an underage girl across state lines for sex. Hyles operated by the cultic principle of demanding unquestioning loyalty from his people and friends. He said on more than one occasion, "If I told my staff to jump off a bridge and commit suicide, they would do it." He said this, for example, in a sermon on March 5, 1989. Hyles' daughter, Linda, says, "Every member was in complete obedience to my father. They didn't dare disagree or be disloyal, for fear of being publicly ridiculed or punished or banished for doing so. They didn't go on a vacation without asking my dad's permission, and if he had said to drink the Kool-aid, I'm not kidding, they would have" (Linda [Hyles] Murphrey's testimony at the TEDxOjaiChange event in Ojai, California, April 5, 2012). During a Sunday sermon, Hyles held up a cup bearing the image of the skull and bones, which is a warning that the contents are poisonous, saying to Johnny Colsten, one of the men sitting behind him on the platform, "I'd like for you, if you don't mind, to drink this." Colsten did not hesitate to drink the potential Kool-Aid ("Let Us Prey: Big Trouble at First Baptist," *Chicago Magazine*, January 2013). The cultic thinking that was promoted by Hyles and exhibited toward him was evident at his memorial service at First Baptist Church, Hammond, February 6, 2001. After leading a rousing rendition of "This Is My Story," the song leader said, "I'm sure somebody might say, 'Bro. Evans you shouldn't lead singing



like that at a funeral.' Well, folks, you've got to understand that the Boss is still watching me, and I've got to do it the way that he likes it done." One preacher at the service said, "Sure, he was Moses, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Paul the Apostle, Billy Sunday, Bob Jones, Sr., and John R. Rice all rolled into one." Another preacher said, "Brother Hyles was a lot like God in many ways. Since I believe that God can have a unique, individual relationship with everyone all at the same time, it was not difficult for me to understand that to an extent Brother Hyles could have a unique, individual relationship with thousands of people, all at the same time more than humanly possible, with some sort of supernatural ability that rubbed off on him by being with God, he was a good friend to thousands of us, all at the same time." (For more on the continuing fruit of Hyles' philosophy and methodology, see [The Hyles Effect: A Spreading Blight](#), available in print or as a free eBook from www.wayoflife.org. See also a new compilation of video segments about Hyles at vimeo.com/170110703, which includes the aforementioned video clips from Hyles' funeral, as well as statements by his daughter and others.)

ONE BOMBER AGAINST ALL ODDS (Friday Church News Notes, July 15, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - America was still a praying nation during World War II and countless events that occurred during that global engagement can be explained in no other way than God's gracious answer to prayer. My mother's Baptist church was open seven days a week, and people were praying there every day. The following account



Four pursuit planes of the Japs attacked simultaneously at each side. Four were shot down with the side guns. During this fight, the bomber's radio operator was killed, the engineer's right hand was shot off, and one gunner was crippled, leaving only one man available to operate both side guns.

is from President Franklin D. Roosevelt's *Fireside Chat*, April 28, 1942. Prayer was not mentioned in connection with this event, but it is very likely that someone involved was on "praying ground." My maternal grandmother had two sons in the war that she prayed home, one miraculously surviving the sinking of his battleship. Here is Roosevelt's account: "One more story that I heard only this morning: This is a story of one of our Army Flying Fortresses operating in the western Pacific. The pilot of this plane is a modest young man, proud of his crew for one of the toughest fights a bomber has yet experienced. The bomber departed from its base, as part of a flight of five bombers, to attack Japanese transports that were landing troops against us in the Philippines. When they had gone about halfway to their destination, one of the motors of this bomber went out of commission. The young pilot lost contact with the other bombers. The crew, however, got the motor working again and the plane proceeded on its mission alone. By the time it arrived at its target the other four Flying Fortresses had already passed over, had dropped their bombs, and had stirred up the hornets' nest of Japanese 'Zero' planes. Eighteen of these 'Zero' fighters attacked our one Flying Fortress. Despite this mass attack, our plane proceeded on its mission, and dropped all of its bombs on six Japanese transports which were lined up along the docks. As it turned back on its homeward journey a running fight between the bomber and the eighteen Japanese pursuit planes continued for 75 miles.

Although wounded in one hand, this gunner alternately manned both side guns, bringing down three more Japanese 'Zero' planes. While this was going on, one engine on the American bomber was shot out, one gas tank was hit, the radio was shot off, and the oxygen system was entirely destroyed. Out of eleven control cables all but four were shot away. The rear landing wheel was blown off entirely, and the two front wheels were both shot flat. The fight continued until the remaining Japanese pursuit ships exhausted their ammunition and turned back. With two engines gone and the plane practically out of control, the American bomber returned to its base after dark and made an emergency landing. The mission had been accomplished. The name of that pilot is Captain Hewitt T. Wheeler, of the United States Army. He comes from a place called Menard, Texas, with a population of 2,375. He has been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. And I hope that he is listening."

CHURCHES EMBRACING POKÉMON AS "OUTREACH" TOOL (Friday Church News Notes, July 22, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Pokémon Go has become a craze. Almost overnight it has become 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 Pokémon 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." Two men recently fell off a cliff near San Diego while engaged in the game. Some churches are even embracing it as an "outreach" tool. For example, Trinity Baptist Church of Yukon, Oklahoma, a SBC congregation, held a *Pokémon Go* activity on July 17 at which they "searched for *Pokémons* together." Pastor Dave Dolphin says, "Everything can be something you can leverage to turn people toward the Gospel." Pastor Kevin Glenn of Calvary Baptist Church in Las Cruces, New Mexico, said, "My conviction is that there are elements of creativity in the cultural products of our time. We can find redemptive analogies in them." Sure, we should preach the gospel to Pokémon Go players, but it is confusion to use something with direct occultic associations as any sort of tool of evangelism and to encourage the use of such things. It would be like preaching the gospel with Tarot cards. The Bible is very clear on this. The following Scriptures, among many others, expose the error and rebellion of the contemporary "engage the culture" philosophy. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*" (Ephesians 5:11). "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you" (2 Corinthians 6:17).



How successful would Dolphin, Glenn, etc., be in their “engage the culture” venture if they started obeying God’s Word to reprove the works of darkness and to refuse to touch the unclean thing?

Pastor David Brown, First Baptist Church of 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](#)”).

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. It is no accident that *Pokémon Go* often leads people to church properties. “Many churches have been included, along with other public places, as Pokestops and gyms in the game. Gyms are places where players can battle one another and help one of three teams gain supremacy in the location. Pokestops are places where players can pick up free items that help them in the game” (*Baptist Press News*, July 15, 2016). The creators of the app doubtless know that most churches are spiritually powerless; most of the church youth aren’t born again; and the *Pokémon* demons will have more influence on church kids than the churches will have on *Pokémon* players. For more about the dangers of *Pokémon* see “[The Problem with Pokémon](#)” by David Brown, <http://logosresourcepages.org/Occult/more.htm>

MAN CLAIMING TO BE SOUTHERN BAPTIST EMBRACES “QUEER” THEOLOGY (Friday Church News Notes, July 22, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Jeff Hood, graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and self-pronounced “Southern Baptist pastor,” promotes acceptance of homosexuality and calls God “Queer.” In 2014, he spoke on “Embracing the Power of the Queer.” The forum was the Cathedral of Hope, an “inclusive, progressive Christian church” in Dallas, Texas, which is a member of the United Church of Christ. Using filthy language, Hood said it doesn’t matter if Adam and Eve were real people. Other statements he made: “Friends, you are perfect! ...



Some people talk about reading your Bible. Sometimes I tell people, ‘You just need to read yourself.’ ... Jesus was the most queer person on earth. ... It is OK to be queer, no matter what that means for you” (“Southern Baptist Minister Embraces Homosexuality,” *Pulpit & Pen*, June 9, 2014).

WORLDLY JUNK AT JOHNNY HUNT’S CHURCH (Friday Church News Notes, July 22, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Johnny Hunt pastors a mega Southern Baptist Church (First Baptist of Woodstock, Georgia), and the church’s 25th anniversary in 2011 featured a rewrite of Hunt’s favorite “hymn,” “Under the Boardwalk,” a 1960s hit by the Drifters. It’s a song about a man frolicking on the beach with his girl. The original lyrics include, “Out of the sun/ we’ll be havin’ some fun/ people walking above/ we’ll be falling in love/ under the boardwalk ... On a blanket with my baby is where I’ll be.” This is the type of philosophy that has driven the immoral global pop culture. First Baptist Church’s music department rewrote the words to “honor” “our beloved Pastor Johnny,” complete with a goofy dance routine (“Puttin’ on the Ritz for Johnny Hunt,” *Pulpit & Pen*, July 10, 2016). First Baptist Church’s 30th anniversary this year featured a



“1920s Costume or Black Tie” ball at the Delta Flight Museum. What a vile thing it is to turn the holy church of Christ into a sensual dance party, to make the serious things of God into a nonsensical spectacle as vain as a child’s soap bubble. Pastor Hunt, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, will be held accountable for this. He was the main speaker at the Southwide Baptist Fellowship in 2003, a fellowship of independent Baptist pastors. That year a man wrote to me, saying, “I visited Hunt’s church and got up and left because of the wild, party-like atmosphere in their ‘worship’ service.”

BEN FRANKLIN’S PROPHECY OF THESE TIMES (Friday Church News Notes, July 22, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbs@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) -



At the Constitutional Convention in 1787, Benjamin Franklin made a speech in favor of the constitution and the new American Union, and in so doing he prophesied of these present times in the nation’s history. He said, “I think a gen-

eral government is necessary for us, and there is no form of government but what may be a blessing to the people, if well administered; and I believe, further, that this is likely to be well administered for a course of years, and can only end in despotism, as other forms have done before it, when the people shall become so corrupted as to need despotic government, being incapable of any other. ... Thus I consent, Sir, to this Constitution, because I expect no better, and because I am not sure that it is not the best. The opinions I have had of its errors I sacrifice to the public good” (*The Works of Benjamin Franklin*, Vol. 5, 1904, pp. 156, 157).

MYSTERY BABYLON (Friday Church News Notes, July 22, 2016, www.wayoflife.org, fbs@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - The following is excerpted from H. Grattan Guinness, *The Approaching End of the Age: Viewed in the Light of History, Prophecy and Science*, 1879: “The last words of the angel to John, seem to leave no possibility of mistake as to the city. ‘The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth ... and the woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.’ There was but one great city, which in John’s day reigned over the kings of the earth. It was ROME; and Rome is the only city which was great then, has been great, in one way or other, ever since, and is so still. And Rome was seated on seven hills, ‘the



seven mountains on which the woman sitteth.’ Her common name with the classic writers of St. John’s age is ‘the seven hilled city.’ ... The medals and coins of the day, represent Rome as a woman sitting on seven hills; and her titles show with sufficient clearness, how thoroughly she reigned. She was styled ‘the royal Rome,’ ‘the mistress of the world,’ ‘the queen of nations.’ Her sway was all but universal. She was the metropolis of that fourth great empire which Daniel had foretold would break in pieces and subdue all things, ‘dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly,’ and at the time of the Apocalyptic visions, her power was at its height. ... We previously saw that she must represent a church, now we know what church. The harlot is the Church of Rome; for simple minds there seems no escape from this conclusion. And it is a singular and notable fact, that no other city but Rome, has ever given its name to a church, which has embraced many kindreds and nations.”

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