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## FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES

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### TEMPLE INSTITUTE REENACTS THE PASSOVER

In its ongoing effort to prepare for the Third Temple, the Temple Institute has reenacted the Passover. Called “a drill,” it was performed by “priests in training.” The reenactment video narrator says: “Jerusalem is already rebuilt. All that is left for us is to make every effort toward the renewal of the divine service and the fulfillment of the divine destiny of the people of Israel. This is what the Passover Seder is really all about. This is the real Passover Seder. May we merit to bring the Passover offering this year in the rebuilt Jerusalem. Blessings



for a happy and kosher Passover from the Temple Institute in Jerusalem.” This is both exciting and sad. It is exciting because it is such a dramatic sign of the times and the imminent Rapture, but it is sad because it reflects the spiritual blindness in which Israel still dwells. The

real Passover is Jesus Christ, the one identified by John the Baptist as “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29), and there will be no peace for Israel until she recognizes this reality. (See [www.ritmeyer.com](http://www.ritmeyer.com) for photos of the reenactment and link to the Temple Institute video.)

### SOUTHERN BAPTISTS AND CATHOLICS PRAISING NEW AGER’S WORK

Southern Baptists, Catholics, Pentecostals, and emergents are praising the latest work of the New Age entertainer Roma Downey. Those who praise Downey’s newest production, *A.D. The Bible Continues*, include Ronnie Floyd, President of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), Ed Stetzer of the SBC’s LifeWay Research, George Wood, General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God, Catholic Cardinal Donald Wuerl, Joel Osteen, T.D. Jakes, Andy Stanley, Max Lucado, Perry Noble, and Rick Warren. The praise from these men is effusive and lacking any warning about Downey’s apostasy. For example, Stetzer says, “In ‘A.D.’, Mark and Roma have masterfully brought together the text and context, bringing the story alive in a fresh, new way--showing

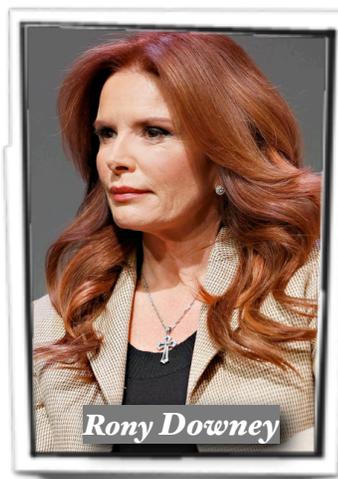
the true promise and peril of the early church situation. ‘A.D.’ is amazing television, and a gift to the church.” Roma Downey is the Roman Catholic co-creator with husband Mark Burnett of the History Channel’s popular *The Bible* miniseries and *The Son of God* movie. She calls Pope Francis “a new pope of hope” (“Roma Downey,” *Christian Post*, April 4, 2013). She says, “I have prayed to Mary and loved her my whole life” (“The Bible: An Epic Mini-Series,” Catholiclane.com, Feb. 28, 2013). She promotes the use of the rosary as a meditation practice by which she prays to Mary as the Queen of Heaven and the Mother of God. The Catholic Mary is sinless and can hear and answer the prayers of every petitioner, thus having the divine attributes of mediatorship,

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## SOUTHERN BAPTISTS AND CATHOLICS PRAISING NEW AGER'S WORK

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omnipresence, and omnipotence. But Roma Downey's heresies exceed those pertaining to Rome's papacy, sacramental gospel, and communion with a demon masquerading as Mary. Roma graduated from the University of Santa Monica with a graduate degree in Spiritual Psychology, which is described at the school's web site as "the study and practice of the art and science of human evolution in consciousness." The benefits of Spiritual Psychology include "experiencing enhanced spiritual awareness through knowing yourself as a Divine Being" and "learning to relate to yourself with greater compassion and awareness of yourself as a Divine Being having a human experience." Why would any Bible-believing Christian recommend movies produced by a New Ager without the loudest and most fervent qualification, at the very least? "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14).



## FORMER HP CEO BLASTS APPLE CEO'S HYPOCRISY

The following is excerpted from "Fiorina blasts Apple CEO's 'hypocrisy' over Indiana law," *The Hill*, Apr. 3, 2015: "Former Hewlett-Packard chief Carly Fiorina on Thursday blasted Apple CEO Tim Cook's opposition to Indiana's religious freedom law as 'hypocrisy.' Fiorina, a potential 2016 GOP presidential contender, said Cook had a double standard and cited Apple's operations in other countries with controversial laws about gays and women in an interview with *The Wall Street Journal*. 'When Tim Cook is upset about all the places that he does business because of the way they treat gays and women, he needs to withdraw from 90% of the markets that he's in, including China and Saudi Arabia,' Fiorina argued. 'But I don't hear him being upset about that.' Fiorina said his stance exposed a 'level of hypocrisy here that is really unfortunate.' She added that Indiana's Religious Freedom Restoration Act contained 'nothing objectionable' and that Cook's criticism stemmed from 'narrow special interests' rather than reality. 'I think this is a ginned-up controversy by people who play identity politics that has divided the nation in a way that is really unhelpful,' Fiorina added. Cook, who came out as gay last year, criticized the Indiana measure when it was signed into law last week. The CEO said it ran counter to Apple's policies on tolerance."

## SELF-ESTEEM GURU ROBERT SCHULLER DEAD AT AGE 88

Robert Schuller (1926-2015), founder of the Crystal Cathedral and the *Hour of Power* television broadcast, died last week at age 88. Few men have had more influence on “evangelicalism” in this generation. In his popular book *Self-Esteem: The New Reformation*, Schuller called for the creation of a new kind of Christianity: one that believes in the universalistic Fatherhood of God and the divinity of man, one that is positive and non-judgmental, one that worships a New Age self-esteem Christ, one that denies the necessity of Christ’s blood atonement, one in which salvation is to be reconciled with one’s own goodness, one that believes in the essential truth in all religions. These heresies spread far and wide during Schuller’s lifetime. He was one of the most popular religious television personalities in America for decades, with his *Hour of Power* program viewed by 20 million people in 180 countries at its peak. His books sold by the millions. His self-esteem Christianity has been adopted by multitudes of people who believe they are Christians and attend churches, but in reality they worship a false christ and follow a false gospel. Schuller was one of the fathers of the megachurch movement as well as of the emerging church. Schuller was endorsed by a wide range of Christian leaders such as Billy Graham, James Dobson, R.C. Sproul, W.A. Criswell, Tony Campolo, Bill Bright, Bill Hybels, Jack Hayford, John Wimber, Lee Strobel, Charles Colson, and Rick Warren. Schuller built the Crystal Cathedral in 1980, a 2,800-seat megachurch sanctuary with 10,000 panes of glass. In 2011, the Crystal Cathedral was sold to the Roman Catholic Church and became a Catholic cathedral.

## MORE THAN HALF OF AMERICANS DO NOT BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS SINLESS

The following is excerpted from “Most Americans Now Say Jesus Actually a Sinner,” *WorldNetDaily*, Apr. 2, 2015: “Despite more than nine out of 10 Americans agreeing Jesus was a historical figure, what they believe about Him diverges widely, according to a newly released survey from the Barna Research Group, a nonprofit organization that has been analyzing cultural trends related to religious belief since 1984. The survey of more than 4,000 U.S. adults online and by phone suggests Americans are conflicted about the central figure of Christianity and have failed to successfully pass on their faith to succeeding generations. ... But when the divinity of Jesus is asserted, only 56 percent of Americans agreed. Among Elders--those born before 1946--62 percent said Jesus was God, but among Millennials, the number dropped to 48 percent. ... Those rejecting Jesus as God said He was just another spiritual figure, comparable to Muhammad or Buddha. With the question of divinity in play, it is perhaps no surprise a majority--52 percent--of Americans said Jesus was a sinner like other people while living on Earth. ... Once again, Millennials showed the greatest departure from orthodoxy with 56 percent saying Jesus sinned.”

## IRANIAN MILITIA COMMANDER SAYS ERASING ISRAEL OFF THE MAP IS NON- NEGOTIABLE

The following is excerpted from “Iran Militia Chief,” *The Times of Israel*, May 31, 2015: “The commander of the Basij militia of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards said that ‘erasing Israel off the map’ is ‘nonnegotiable,’ according to an Israel Radio report Tuesday. Militia chief Mohammad Reza Naqdi also threatened Saudi Arabia, saying that the offensive it is leading in Yemen ‘will have a fate like the fate of Saddam Hussein.’ Naqdi’s comments were made public as Iran and six world powers prepared Tuesday to issue a general statement agreeing to continue nuclear negotiations in a new phase aimed at reaching a comprehensive accord by the end of June.”

## A CHRISTIAN BUSINESSMAN

In this day when business in America seems to be all about money and when there is crookedness in both high and low places, it is refreshing to think of businessmen who have put God first. James Cash Penny (1875-1971), founder of the J.C. Penny stores, is an example. His father, a Baptist pastor, died when James was a teenager, but not before he was instilled with biblical principles of living. When the young James got a job with a grocer, he bragged one night at supper to his mother and father about how “foxy” his employer was in selling low quality coffee for the price of expensive coffee. Even though jobs were rare in that small town, James’ father told him to quit. Though he was dying of tuberculosis and they needed the money, the preacher would rather that his son be unemployed than associated with a crooked businessman. At first the J.C. Penny stores were called Golden Rule, because he was “dedicated to following the Golden Rule as a basic commercial principle.” The Golden Rule refers to Christ’s principle of “thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” Penny offered quality products at fair prices and treated the customers with respect. He kept the profit margin small. He tested every policy by asking if it was “right and just?” He made his managers part owners of the stores in order to share the wealth. Yet though he was Christian in name, he didn’t come to saving faith until he was older. He had become embittered at churches in his youth when his father was fired for wanting to start a Sunday School.

(Primitive Baptists officially hold to extreme sovereign election and often do not believe in gospel missions.) After experiencing a financial crash during America’s Great Depression, Penny’s health broke, physically and emotionally, and he ended up in a sanitarium. There he attended a Christian meeting and saw that he had been trusting his good works rather than God’s grace in Christ. Through the words of the hymn “God Will Take Care of You” and Christ’s invitation in Matthew 11:28-30, J.C. Penny was converted. He recalled, “I can’t explain it. I can only call it a miracle. I felt as if I had been instantly lifted out of the darkness of a dungeon into a warm, brilliant sunlight. I felt as if I had been transported from hell to paradise. I felt the power of God as I had never felt it before. From that day to this, my life has been free from worry. The most dramatic and glorious 20 minutes of my life were those I spent in that chapel that morning.” Penny gave millions of dollars to Christian charities. He said he would rather be known as a Christian than a merchant. In an advertisement he said: “Business is therefore as much religious as it is secular. If we follow the admonition to love God, and our neighbors as ourselves, it will lead us to understand that, first of all, success is a matter of the spirit.” This is the attitude that will permeate Christ’s coming kingdom, and it is the attitude that should permeate the lives of those who belong to Christ in this present world.

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### CONCLUSION

The Friday Church News Notes is designed for use in churches and is published by Way of Life Literature’s Fundamental Baptist Information Service. Unless otherwise stated, the Notes are written by David Cloud. Of necessity we quote from a wide variety of sources, but this obviously does not imply an endorsement. We trust that our readers will not be discouraged. It is God’s will that we know the times (1 Ch. 12:32; Mat. 16:3) and that we be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. The News Notes remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the Lord’s coming. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ? “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Rom. 13:11-14). This material is sent only to those who personally subscribe to the Fundamental Baptist Information Service mailing list. To SUBSCRIBE, go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/wayoflife/subscribe.html>. TO UNSUBSCRIBE OR CHANGE ADDRESSES, go to the very bottom of any email received from us and click “Manage My Subscription.” Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org).