SOUTHERN BAPTIST PASTOR PRAISES THE SHACK

Last week we described the “back to the Southern Baptist Convention” movement among Independent Baptists in “Prominent BBFI Church Joins the Southern Baptist Convention,” Friday News, Feb. 17, 2017. Shortly after writing that piece, we were reminded of the heresies that are countenanced within the SBC. Wade Burleson, pastor of the Southern Baptist Emmanuel Baptist Church of Enid, Oklahoma, published a blog report a few days ago praising Paul Young and his heresy-filled book The Shack. Young has actually preached to this Southern Baptist congregation, though he doesn’t even claim to be a Christian. Young told Burleson that he is “a hopeful universalist.” Young “believes that our loving God sent His Son to die for every single sinner without exception. One day God will effectually reconcile every sinner to Himself. He uses the term ‘hopeful’ universalism because he understands that the Scriptures speak of judgment, but He is ‘hopeful’ that even in judgment, the love of God will eventually bring the sinner being judged to love for Jesus Christ. Paul Young is ‘hopeful’ that the fire of God’s love will eventually and effectually persuade every sinner of God’s love for Christ” (Burleson, “The Shack and Universal Reconciliation,” February 2017, http://wmpaulyoung.com/universal-reconciliation). Like Young, many others who hold the heresy of universal salvation like to couch the issue in terms of a possibility. They pretend that the Bible does not settle this issue, but that is nonsense. When

AMERICA’S LARGEST CHRISTIAN BOOKSTORE CHAIN CLOSING

Family Christian Stores, America’s largest Christian bookstore chain, is closing after 85 years (“Family Christian Stores,” ReligionNews.com, Feb. 23, 2017). The chain’s 240 stores in 36 states will close. Several factors contributed to the collapse, including an overload of debt which the chain’s owners could have avoided had they obeyed the precepts of the Bibles they sell. Chiefly, though, bookstores in general are being overtaken by the changing of the times. The explosion of the availability of eBooks and eVideos and the convenience of online shopping is hammering most traditional “brick and mortar” retailers. From a spiritual viewpoint, Family Christian Stores were as much a danger as a blessing. They were filled with corrupt Bible versions, worldly music, and the writings of a vast number of heretics (e.g., C.S. Lewis, Paul Young, Robert Schuller, Bruce Metzger, Dallas Willard, Norman Vincent Peale, ...
The Bible has spoken clearly on an issue, as it has on eternal redemption and eternal judgment, there is zero possibility that anything else will happen. The fire of eternal hell is not the fire of God's love; it is the fire of God's holy wrath, and Young doesn't believe in this God. Young's "hopeful universalism" is a blind "hope" of his own vain imagination, because the Bible plainly refutes it. The Bible says that those who believe on Jesus Christ savingly have eternal life, and those who reject Him have eternal judgment. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Joh. 3:36). Being unable to prove that Scripture itself teaches a "universal hope," Pastor Burleson justified Young's heresies by noting that evangelical hero C.S. Lewis held the same belief. But we would say to Pastor Burleson, "C.S. Lewis has zero authority. He was a rank heretic, and the fact that he is widely loved by Southern Baptist pastors is evidence of their apostasy, not of Lewis's theological soundness." Burleson concluded his report with these foolish words: "[G]o and enjoy The Shack. It is not heresy." What true Bible believer would want to join hands in denominational fellowship with such heretics?

In an act right out of the Muslim Sharia law playbook, a 42-year-old man in Denmark has been charged with "blasphemy" for burning the Quran. The defendant’s lawyer “said his client burned the Quran in self-defense, asserting that the Islamic holy book ‘contains passages on how Mohammed’s followers must kill the infidel, i.e. the Danes’” (“Danish man who set fire to Quran,” Breitbart, Feb. 24, 2017). At the same time, it is legal to burn a Bible in Denmark, where the state church is “Lutheran.” A man who burned a Bible on state television in 1997 was not charged. Islam has been a judgment on apostate Christianity since its inception.
TRUMP ADMINISTRATION ROLLS BACK FEDERAL TRANSGENDER BATHROOM RULE

U.S. President Donald Trump has rescinded the guidelines instigated by Barack Obama to give transgender students the right to use whichever public restrooms they are most comfortable with (”Trump administration orders U.S. schools to ignore Obama transgender bathroom efforts,” UPI, Feb. 23, 2017). The Trump administration said, “This is an issue best solved at the state and local level.” As it turns out, Obama reached a little too far, too fast with his bathroom policy, but we would not be surprised if the “right” of transsexuals to use the bathroom of their choice will be discovered in the Constitution by the nation's judges. However that turns out, the bathroom issue is actually a red herring. The more fundamental issue is that homosexuality and its related entities (lesbian, bisexual, transsexual) have become morally acceptable to a large and rapidly growing percentage of the nation's citizens, and they are already legally protected from “discrimination” under some federal, state, and local laws. Betsy Devos, U.S. Education Secretary under Trump, immediately came out with a statement that her department's Office for Civil Rights “remains committed to investigating all claims of discrimination, bullying, and harassment” against LGBT students. It is this reality that is bringing increasing persecution against Bible-believing Christians, as we have documented in “What Rights Others Lose When Homosexuals Gain their Rights,” and absolutely nothing has happened in the recent political upheaval to change this reality.

NASCAR CHRISTIANITY

This year, the prayers at the Daytona QQQ 300 and Daytona 500 automobile races were given by Southern Baptist Ronnie Barton (First Baptist of South Daytona) and Seventh-day Adventist chaplain Art Bakewell. Opening the Daytona 500 race with a prayer for blessing and protection is a tradition that goes back to 1959. The prayer has been part of the televised program since 1979. From 1959 to 2005, the prayer was given by Hal Marchman of Central Baptist Church (Southern Baptist) in Daytona Beach (“Prayer at the Start,” Daytona Beach News-Journal, Feb. 24, 2017). Barton said he depends on his “heavenly thoughts” to guide his prayer. The Christianity of NASCAR is exceedingly shallow and worldly. The night before the race, hundreds of people party in the infield. In 1968, in my “bad old days,” I got so drunk during the infield party that I passed out and missed the race. It would be impossible to pray a legitimate prayer of blessing on this worldly mess. Many of the NASCAR drivers claim to be Christians, but at the same time they are the “lords” of this drunken, drugged up, half-naked debacle. Not only do the NASCAR drivers themselves routinely neglect the Lord’s assembly in disobedience to Hebrews 10:25, but they encourage their followers to do the same. The prayers aren't even offered in Jesus name. Marchman ended his prayers with “Shalom and Amen.” “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11).
LACEWING MAGIC

The following is from CreationMoments.com, Nov. 17, 2014: “The relationship between the beaded lacewing larvae and the California termite poses a real problem for those who believe there is no Creator. The lacewing larvae enter termite nests in order to finish their growth cycle. Later, they leave as adults. The problem is, termites are often still at home when the larvae enter the nest. The termites, 30 times the size of the larvae, pose a serious threat to the larvae. But if you watch the larvae enter the nest, they wave their abdomen to an approaching termite, and the targeted termite immediately falls over. Upon further study, scientists have learned that the tiny larva releases a chemical that totally paralyzes the termite. Studies have also shown that the chemical works only on this particular species of termite. The evolutionary explanation is that for millions of years lacewing larvae crawled up to every sort of insect, madly waving their abdomens at them--and were promptly eaten! One wonders how the larvae survived at all and why it was that their chemical protection just happened to work on those termites that made nice safe tunnels for them to grow in. To believe that the lacewing’s defense developed just by chance is nothing more than blind faith. It’s not science. And it is a very opposite kind of faith from those who believe in a Creator!”