
FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES

ROB BELL COUNSELS HURTING PEOPLE TO AVOID THOSE WHO QUOTE SCRIPTURES LIKE ROMANS 8:28



Former megachurch leader Rob Bell, who has moved beyond the bounds even of the emerging church, is spouting his heresies on a “Bible Belt Tour” across the southern region of America. It’s actually a profitable place for him, since the South is filled to the brim with “cultural Christians” who have gone through the motions of “believing in Jesus” but have not been born again. Bell resonates loudly with unregenerate people who want Christ *and* the world. In Atlanta, he spoke at the Variety Playhouse. One of his themes seems to be to encourage doubts about God and the Christian faith and to rob people

of spiritual and moral absolutes. During Q&A, a young man raised his hand and told Bell that “he was struggling with his faith” because he was told by a doctor that his wife and unborn baby probably won’t survive the delivery. He asked if he was wrong to be angry with God. Bell replied that he had “no easy answers,” but he would counsel him “to avoid people who will try to comfort him by quoting scriptures like Romans 8:28 (‘And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God’) and by telling him that his loss was somehow part of God’s mysterious will” (“Outlaw pastor Rob Bell shakes up the Bible Belt,” CNN, Jul. 28, 2017). In a 2005 interview with Beliefnet, Bell said, “[T]he church must stop thinking about everybody primarily in categories of in or out, saved or not, believer or nonbeliever.” In his influential book *Velvet Elvis*, which is popular with a great many Southern Baptists, Bell described a wedding that he conducted for two pagan unbelievers who told him that

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THOUSANDS MARCH IN SUPPORT OF THE BUILDING OF THE THIRD TEMPLE

On Monday evening, July 31, thousands of Israelis marched around the walls of Jerusalem’s Old City at the beginning of Tisha B’Av in support of the building of the Third Temple (“Israelis March Demanding Access to Temple Mount and Building of Third Temple,” *Israel Today*, Aug. 1, 2017). Tisha B’Av, meaning the ninth day of the month Av, is a mourning fast to remember the destruction of the first and second Jewish temples, which were destroyed on the same day (the first in 586 BC and the second in AD 70). On Tisha B’Av, the Torah is draped in black. There is fasting and mourning, with the reading of the book of Lamentations and Jewish poetry called kinnot. Orthodox Jews believe that Tisha B’Av will be kept until the Messiah comes to build the temple and bring peace to Israel, at which time it will become a celebration. In truth, the third temple will be built by the antichrist and desecrated by his presence. “Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

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“they didn’t want any Jesus or God or Bible or religion to be talked about” but they did want him to “make it really spiritual” (p. 76). Bell agreed with this ridiculous request and said that his pagan friends “are resonating with Jesus, whether they acknowledge it or not” (p. 92). Bell’s 2011 book *Love Wins* was more of the same. Not only does he preach near-universalism, he preaches a false god, a false christ, a false gospel, a false heaven, a false hell, you name it. He is a master at taking Scripture out of context and shoehorning his heresies into a text. These are the dangerous waters that contemporary worship music builds bridges to, as we have documented in the video presentation “The Foreign Spirit of Contemporary Worship Music,” available as a free eVideo at <https://www.wayoflife.org/free-evideo/index.php>

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS EMBRACE GENDER-INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IN THE BIBLE

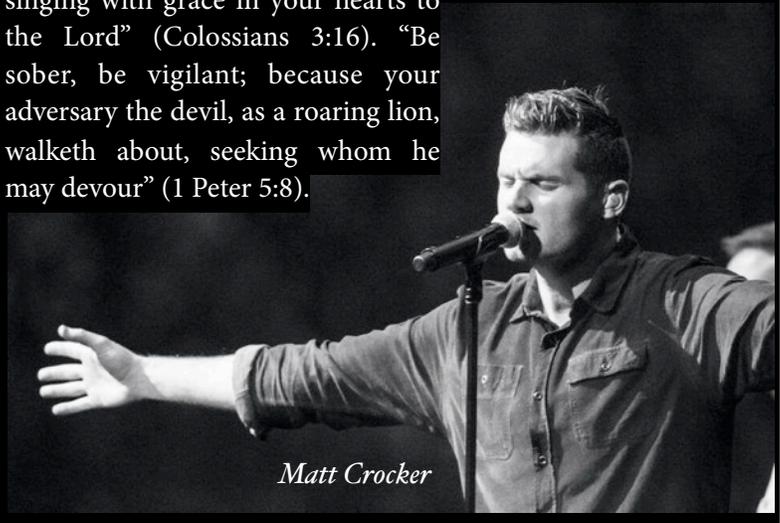
The following is excerpted from “Southern Baptists Embrace,” *The Atlantic*, Jun. 11, 2017: “Last fall, the publishing arm of the 15-million member Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) released the Christian Standard Bible (CSB). LifeWay Christian Stores, America’s largest Christian retailer, which is owned by the SBC, sells the translation at hundreds of its locations nationwide and touts it as a work of superior scholarship. But patrons are largely unaware that the denomination-approved translation is gender-inclusive. Such news would presumably shock many in the evangelical body. The denomination has affirmed that the Bible commands wives to submit to their husbands and that modern notions of transgender identity blur the line between God-ordained masculine and feminine roles. The group has passed numerous resolutions since the late 1990s publicly condemning Bible translations that attempt to utilize gender-inclusive language. When several revisions to the popular New International Version (1984) appeared to employ gender-neutral language, for example, Southern Baptists condemned the translation by name and chastised its publishers. A 2011 resolution even instructed LifeWay to cease selling the translation in its stores. (LifeWay has continued to sell the NIV despite the resolution to remove it; the translation remains the most popular among Southern Baptists with a 40 percent share.) The rationale behind the rebuke was two-fold. First,

inclusive translations abolish many gender-specific terms. For example, they may change ‘father’ to ‘parent,’ ‘son’ to ‘child,’ and ‘man’ to ‘mortal.’ And second, these translations added words and phrases not found in ancient manuscripts for the sake of inclusion. A common example is the translation of ‘brother’ as ‘brother or sister.’ In response to this perceived menace, the SBC commissioned its own Bible translation, the Holman Christian Standard Bible, which was finalized in 2003. It was intended ‘to champion the absolute truth of the Bible against social or cultural agendas that would compromise its accuracy.’ The translation was well received and the Bible battlefield quieted for more than a decade. But when a revision was released last fall, a number of the same ‘gender-neutral’ elements that the SBC previously condemned were inserted into its own translation. The CSB now translates the term *anthropos*, a Greek word for ‘man,’ in a gender-neutral form 151 times, rendering it ‘human,’ ‘people,’ and ‘ones.’ The previous edition had done this on occasion; the new revision adds almost 100 more instances. ‘Men of Israel’ becomes ‘fellow Israelites’; when discussing Jesus’s incarnation the ‘likeness of men’ becomes ‘likeness of humanity.’ The CSB translates the term *adelphoi*, a Greek word for ‘brother’ in a gender-neutral form 106 times, often adding ‘sister.’ ‘Brotherly love’ is translated ‘love as brothers and sisters.’”

HILLSONG DRUMMER SAYS GOAL OF CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP MUSIC IS TO “ENTER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD”

In a recent interview, Matt Crocker, longtime drummer for Hillsong United and currently a worship leader, said, “My goal is to create an atmosphere for people to be able to enter into the presence of God and then hear the message of God through the actual speaking of it. I love the idea of teaming up with someone to create that atmosphere. It allows people to encounter His presence” (“Seeing the World in Wonder with Hillsong United’s Matt Crocker,” *WorshipMusician.com*, Jul. 21, 2017). This is a clear and accurate description of the objective and essence of contemporary worship. It’s all about a feeling, which is why it incorporates the backbeat, beat anticipation, and other forms of rock & roll dance syncopation, as well as unresolving chord sequences and other musical elements that have a sensual effect. Contemporary worship music’s objective is in great

contrast to sacred music, which works through the edification of the mind and heart. In the New Testament’s teaching about worship music, there is not a hint of “entering into an experience with God,” which is a nebulous thing that can easily lead to spiritual deception. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Colossians 3:16). “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).



Matt Crocker

PRESIDENT TRUMP BANS TRANSGENDERS FROM U.S. MILITARY

President Trump has announced via Twitter that transgender people will not be allowed to serve in any capacity in the United States military, apparently signaling his decision to turn back the policy instigated by Barack Obama. Trump said, “After consultation with my Generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow Transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the U.S. Military. Our

military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical cost and disruption that transgender in the military would entail. Thank you.” This is good news for military readiness, assuming that the “presidential twitter ban” is actually implemented from top to bottom and that it is not overturned by activist military officers, the courts, or the next president.

THE LEATHERBACK TURTLE

The following is from CreationMoments.com, July 17, 2017: “Leatherback turtles make use of far more of the sea than most creatures. They can dive to depths of over 4,000 feet. They prefer cold, open ocean waters but lay their eggs on tropical beaches. Not only are they found all over the world, but the same *individual* may be found all over the world. In 1970, a turtle that was tagged off the South American coast also turned up just off the West African coast, almost 4,000 miles away. Leatherbacks are uniquely designed, inside and out, to travel the world’s seas. Their bodies are teardrop shaped. This gives them nearly ideal efficiency traveling through water. In addition, they have seven ridges along the length of their upper shell, further increasing the efficiency of water flow around them. Their bodies, including the shell,

are covered with a very smooth, leathery skin. Studies of leatherback hatchlings show that they use 20 percent less energy to swim through the water than any other turtle hatchling. Leatherbacks live their entire lives in the open sea, except for a trip to shore to lay eggs every few years. They almost never stop moving. Scientists who attached radio monitors to leatherbacks were astonished to find that they swim and dive day and night, never stopping to sleep. Their front flippers are more than half the length of the entire body. They are driven by powerful pectoral muscles that can make up as much as 30 percent of the turtle’s weight. The leatherback turtle is a marvelously designed creature whose very existence glorifies our Creator (Source Scott Eckert, “Bound for Deep Water,” *Natural History*, Mar. 1992, p. 29).”



INFORMATION

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.