FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES

CENTENNIAL OF THE BALFOUR DECLARATION

This week the British government recognized the centennial of the 1917 Balfour Declaration with a series of events that culminated in a dinner featuring UK Prime Minister Theresa May and Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In the face of Palestinian protests, May remained steadfast in her commitment to the celebration, saying, “It is one of the most important letters in history. It demonstrates Britain’s vital role in creating a homeland for the Jewish people. And it is an anniversary we will be marking with pride” (“Theresa May vows to mark Balfour centennial ‘with pride,'” The Times of Israel, Oct. 25, 2017). The Balfour Declaration pledged the British government’s support for a Jewish homeland. Issued in November 2, 1917, by Arthur James Balfour, the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, it said, “His Majesty’s government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.” In less than a year, the British had driven the Ottomans out of “Palestine,” sounding the death knell of 700 years of Muslim control of the land and paving the way for the Jews’ return. The British remained in Palestine as an occupational force and in 1922 were given a Mandate by the League of Nations to rule “Palestine.” Britain became increasingly pro-Arab and anti-Israel over the next quarter century, backtracking on the promise of the Balfour Declaration, and when Israel established her state in May 1948 it was in spite of England and not with her help.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND’S Apostate Archbishops

The Church of England has never been scripturally sound, and it has moved ever farther away from God’s Word. Consider some statements over the last 65 years from the Archbishop of Canterbury, the highest position in the Anglican Church. In 1953, William Temple, in his book Nature and God, said, “… there is no such thing as revealed truth.” In 1961, Michael Ramsey said, “… heaven is not a place for Christians only. … I expect to see many present day atheists there” (London Daily Mail, Oct. 2, 1961). In 1982, Robert Runcie said he was an agnostic as to why Jesus suffered on the cross (Sunday Times Weekly Review, London, April 11, 1982). I read this interview over breakfast in London that morning, and nearly spilled my coffee. In 1996, George Carey lashed out at fundamentalists who place the Bible “above and beyond human knowledge.”

continued on next page ...
inquiry” (Christian News, Dec. 9, 1996). In 2008, Rowan Williams led the Church of England in issuing the following statement: “Charles Darwin, 200 years from your birth, the Church of England owes you an apology for misunderstanding you and, by getting our first reaction wrong, encouraging others to misunderstand you still” (“Church Makes ‘Ludicrous’ Apology,” The Daily Mail, Sept. 13, 2008). In a 2014 interview, Williams said that he practices a combination of Buddhist/Catholic/Orthodox meditation practices (“Rowan Williams: How Buddhism Helps Me Pray,” The Telegraph, London, July 2, 2014). Last month, Justin Welby told a reporter for GQ magazine that he cannot answer the question as to whether or not gay sex is sinful.

OXFORD BANS CHRISTIAN GROUP FROM FAIR

The following is excerpted from “Oxford bans offensive Christian group from fair,” OneNewsNow, Oct. 18, 2017: “The Oxford University campus at Balliol College was to conduct its ‘Freshers’ Fair’—otherwise known as freshmen orientation—when organizers banned the Christian Union from participation, contending that it would alienate members of the freshman class and would signal the presence of an atmosphere of homophobia on the campus. This controversial decision prompted a response from Simon Calvert of the United Kingdom Christian Institute (UKCI). ‘The idea that this little group of earnest Christian students at Balliol represented some kind of threat to the other students is as ridiculous as it is offensive,’ Calvert argued in a UKCI press release. ‘You’ve really got to ask yourself how these people can be so ignorant of the Christian faith, which has given us in this country so many rights and freedoms that countries around the world with no Christian heritage just don’t have.’ Students organized a protest on the basis of free speech and freedom of religion. Organizers are now convinced that it would be best to allow Christians in the future.”
NORTH KOREA’S HELLISH PRISON CAMPS

The following is excerpted from “Kim Jong Un’s Hellish Prison Camps,” The Daily Caller, Oct. 26, 2017: “Hundreds of thousands of people are languishing away in dozens of hellish prison camps, many of which the rogue North Korean regime denies even exist. A new Committee on Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) report based on satellite images and defector testimony reveals young North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un’s vast network of camps for political prisoners and other individuals identified as enemies of the state. These facilities, where ‘forced labor with deliberate starvation, inadequate medical care and poor hygiene conditions cause the deaths of thousands of inmates annually,’ are located across the country, according to David Hawk, a North Korea expert and the author of the report on the country’s prison system. .. Amnesty International suggested that as many as 200,000 people could be suffering in North Korea’s prison facilities. Tough physical labor, cruel interrogations, torture, and death have been reported at these camps. ... The rogue regime has short- and long-term prisons, as well as political prison facilities, for a variety of different criminals. ... Defectors—including former guards and prisoners--have described the tragic and horrible details about the Hoeryong prison camp. Ahn Myong-chol, a former guard at the camp, ‘estimated that between 1,500 and 2,000 prisoners, mostly children, died annually of malnutrition during his years there.’ ‘Those who die are the lucky ones,’ Lim Hye-jin, the first former female guard to speak openly about her experiences, introduced earlier this year. She described rape, torture, abuse, and public executions. In one instance, a guard set a woman on fire because she annoyed him. Lim revealed that once, when two brothers broke out of prison, the prison guards murdered seven of their family members on the spot, and numerous other prisoners were beaten severely. After they were recaptured, the two brothers were beheaded. ‘They called everyone to watch as a warning not to flee. The other prisoners then had to throw stones at them.’”

QUEEN ELIZABETH I’S CORONATION AND THE ENGLISH BIBLE

“Queen Elizabeth passed through London to the august ceremony in great state [1558]; and emblematical pageants were erected in different parts of the city. In Cheapside, one was exhibited which must have been peculiarly gratifying to the friends of the Reformation, from the manner in which it was received by the queen. It exhibited Time coming out of a cave, and leading a person clothed in white silk, who represented Truth, his daughter. Truth had the English Bible in her hand, on which was written VERBUM VERITATIS [the Word of Truth]. On the approach of Elizabeth, Truth addressed her, and presented her with the book. The queen kissed it, held it in her hands, laid it on her breast, greatly thanked the city for their present, and added that she would often and diligently read it” (James Townley, Illustrations of Biblical Literature Exhibiting the History and Fate of the Sacred Writings, 1842, Vol. II, p. 287, citing Burnet’s History of the Reformation).
GOSPEL MUSIC ASSOCIATION AWARDS
“THE SHACK” MOVIE

At its annual Dove awards, the Gospel Music Association selected The Shack as the “inspiration film of the year.” The Shack, authored by William Paul Young, is a fictional account of a man who is bitter against God for allowing his daughter to be murdered and who returns to the scene of the murder, an old shack in the woods, where he has a life-changing encounter with God. The “God” that he encounters, though, is not the God of the Bible. Published in 2007, it has sold more than 20 million copies internationally. With the release of the movie, the book has again risen to the top of the charts. William Young is not a member of a church and is even reticent to call himself a Christian, describing himself as “spiritual but not religious” (“After The Shack, a Crossroads: William Paul Young,” Publishers Weekly, Sept. 21, 2012). Yet the novel has been endorsed by Pat Robertson’s 700 Club, CCM artist Michael W. Smith, Gayle Erwin of Calvary Chapel, James Ryle of the Vineyard churches, Andy Crouch, a senior editor of Christianity Today, Gloria Gaither, Mark Lowry (former singer with the Gaithers), Eugene Peterson, author of The Message, many Southern Baptists (such as Wade Burleson, pastor of Southern Baptist Emmanuel Baptist Church of Enid, Oklahoma), and others. Fundamentally, The Shack is about redefining God. In a 2007 interview, Young told about a woman who wrote to him and said that her 22-year-old daughter came to her after reading the book and asked, “IS IT ALL RIGHT IF I DIVORCE THE OLD GOD AND MARRY THE NEW ONE?” Young therefore admits that the God of The Shack is different from the traditional God of Bible-believing Christianity. He says that the God who “judges sin” is “a Christianized version of Zeus.” In The Shack, Young depicts the triune God as a young Asian woman named “Sarayu” (supposedly the Holy Spirit, but the name is from the Hindu scriptures and represents a mythical river in India on the shores of which the Hindu god Rama was born), an oriental carpenter who loves to have a good time (supposedly the Son of God), and an older black woman named “Elousia” and “Papa” (supposedly God the Father). Young’s god is the god of the emerging church. He is cool, loves rock & roll, is non-judgmental, does not exercise wrath toward sin, does not send unbelievers to an eternal fiery hell, does not require repentance and the new birth, puts no obligations on people, doesn’t like traditional Bible churches, and does not accept the Bible as the

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, info@wayoflife.org.