Did you pray for your national and local leaders this week? For Americans, this means praying for President Donald Trump and the U.S. Congress and state and local leaders. It is one of the few things that God has specifically and emphatically told His people to pray for. Effectual fervent prayer changes things, but prayerlessness and complaining change nothing. “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

INTERNET-CELEBRITY FACE

China has taken the selfie craze to a new level of vanity by means of apps that enhance one’s appearance. The most popular are produced by the multi-billion-dollar company Meitu. Its first photo-editing app, which appeared in 2008, bears the company’s name Meitu (“beautiful picture”). Other apps have followed, including BeautyPlus and MakeupPlus. They do things such as lighten the skin, smooth the complexion, remove freckles, whiten the teeth, enlarge the eyes, apply makeup and hair color, even slim and contour the face. Meitu’s apps are installed on more than a billion phones in China and across Asia and generate six billion photos a month (“China’s Selfie Obsession,” The New Yorker, Dec. 18 & 25, 2017). Meitu also sells smartphones that are designed specifically for selfies, with more powerful front-facing cameras and built-in beautifying apps “that start working their magic the moment a picture has been taken.” The name for the “new kind of face” produced by Meitu apps is wang hong lian (“Internet-celebrity face”). Meitu has actually become a verb in the Chinese lexicon, but it is an exercise in fantasy. It is purest vanity. Of those billions of selfies, how many are even looked at by anyone other than the photographer? Who cares? Where will those selfies be even in one week, not to speak of five years? It is narcissism and escapism, and it is a major sign of the times. We would warn God’s people to be not conformed to the vanity and foolishness of the world. Spend the precious hours of your fleeting life on things of eternal value. “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves...” (2 Timothy 3:1-2).

CHINA THE ALL-SEEING STATE

A special Fox News report this week was entitled “Trump, Mattis turn military loose on ISIS, leaving terror caliphate in tatters.” This is a welcome change in policy from the days of Barack Obama. Following is an excerpt: “Hundreds of ISIS fighters had just been chased out of a northern Syrian city and were fleeing through the desert in long convoys, presenting an easy target to U.S. A-10 ‘warthogs.’ But the orders to bomb the black-clad jihadists never came, and the terrorists melted into their caliphate--living to fight another day. The events came in August 2016, even as then-Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump was vowing on the campaign trail to let generals in his administration crush the organization that, under President Obama, had grown from the ‘jayvee team’ to the world’s most feared terrorist organization. Trump ... named legendary Marine Corps Gen. James Mattis as secretary of defense ... Just over a year later, ISIS has been routed from Iraq and Syria with an ease and speed that’s surprised even the men and women who carried out the mission. Experts say it’s a prime example of a campaign promise kept. President Trump scrapped his predecessor’s rules of engagement, which critics say hamstrung the military, and let battlefield decisions be made by the generals in the theater, and not bureaucrats in Washington. At its peak, ISIS held land in Iraq and Syria that equaled the size of West Virginia, ruled over as many as 8 million people, controlled oilfields and refineries, agriculture, smuggling routes and vast arsenals. It ran a brutal, oppressive government, even printing its own currency. The terror organization now controls just 3 percent of Iraq and less than 5 percent of Syria. ... President Trump gave a free hand to Mattis, who in May stressed military commanders were no longer being slowed by Washington ‘decision cycles,’ or by the White House micromanaging that existed under President Obama. ... Marine Col. Seth Folsom, who oversaw fighting in Al Qaim near the Syrian border, said, ‘I never felt constrained. In a lot of ways, I felt quite liberated because we had a clear mandate and there was no questioning that.’”

PRESIDENT TRUMP’S MANDATE TO DESTROY ISIS
ONE IN FOUR WOMEN THINK PHYSICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GENDERS DUE TO “SOCIETAL EXPECTATIONS”

“Unfortunately, feminism has warped the consciousness of the masses so effectively that one in four women actually believe that their physical differences with men are due to ‘societal expectations’ and not biology. In other words: Sally thinks Dan is stronger than she because society tells us so. This is peak delusion. In Pew Research Center polling of adults in the United States from August and September of this year, a stunning 25% of women thought differences in physical abilities were mostly due to societal expectations; not far behind the Delusion Train, 18% of men agreed. The polling also found over 60% of women thought differences between the genders regarding workplace abilities, expression of feelings, and approaches to parenting were mostly due to societal norms. ... Overall, men were much more likely to attribute differences between the genders to biology, as opposed to ‘societal expectations.’ ... Additionally, Democrats (The Party of Science) were found to be far more likely than Republicans to attribute societal norms over biology to gender differences, which is not exactly surprising coming from the party that believes three-year-old boys are actually girls because they say so.”
THE UTTER IMPOSSIBILITY THAT BUTTERFLY METAMORPHOSIS COULD EVOLVE

The following is excerpted from Seeing the Non-existent: Evolutions Myths and Hoaxes, David Cloud, copyright 2011: “Michael Pitman, who taught biology at Cambridge, asks how it would be possible for metamorphosis to have evolved: ‘Within this dry shell the organs of the caterpillar are dissolved and reduced to pulp. Breathing tubes, muscles and nerves disappear as such; the creature seems to have died. But processes are in operation which remould that pulp into different, coordinating parts, and in due course the insect, which has not grown up or developed in any normal sense, re-emerges as a beautiful, adult butterfly. It is a kind of resurrection. Certainly it demonstrates the absurdity of invoking natural selection by successive mutation to explain such an obviously, yet subtly programmed, process. Why, on that basis, should the ancestral insect have survived the mutations that projected it into the chrysalid stage, from which it could not yet develop into an adult? Where was natural selection then? How could pre-programmed metamorphosis, in insect, amphibian or crustacean, ever have evolved by chance? Indeed, how could development have evolved piece-meal? The ball is in the evolutionist’s court, tangled in a net of inexplicability’ (Adam and Evolution, p. 71). Even if we assume that a caterpillar could evolve from something else, how could evolution proceed beyond that to the pupa and the butterfly? Why would a happy little ‘evolved’
caterpillar, merrily eating its way through succulent leaves, decide to spin a silk pad and form itself into a pupa? And if somehow this came into its thinking process, how could it learn to do such an amazingly complicated thing? And why? And even if this somehow happened, and the caterpillar mysteriously dissolved into a biological soup, that would be the end of it. How would the dissolved caterpillar ever rearrange itself into a different creature unless this entire process was already programmed into its genetic makeup? Genetic mutations and natural selection stand mute before metamorphosis. Furthermore, the caterpillar cannot reproduce. It has no sex organs. If it does not go through the death and rebirth of metamorphosis and become a butterfly, it has no way to perpetuate itself. It had to have had the ability to undergo metamorphosis from the very beginning in order to exist! The metamorphosis process had to have been perfect from the beginning. A partial metamorphosis would mean death to the creature. The process must form a perfect butterfly that can carry out the complicated mechanism of reproduction.”

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.