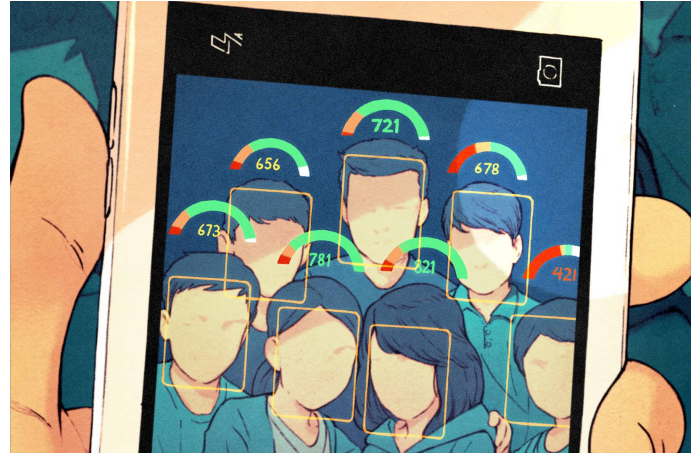


# FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES

## CHINA'S SOCIAL CREDIT SYSTEM— SOCIALISM IN ACTION

The following is excerpted from “China’s Social Credit System,” futurism.com, Dec. 2, 2017: “In a contentious world first, China plans to implement a social credit system (officially referred to as a Social Credit Score or SCS) by 2020. The idea first appeared in a document from the State Council of China published in June 2014. It is a technological advancement so shocking to modern-minded paradigms that many can do little but sit back in defeatist chagrin as science fiction shows us its darker side. The SCS seems relatively simple. Every citizen in China, which now has numbers swelling to well over 1.3 billion, would be given a score that, as a matter of



of public record, is available for all to see. This citizen score comes from monitoring an individual’s social behavior—from their spending habits and how regularly they pay bills, to their social interactions—and it’ll become the basis of that person’s trustworthiness, which would also be publicly ranked. This actually sounds worse than an Orwellian nightmare. A citizen’s score affects their eligibility for a number of services, including the kinds of jobs

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## WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM?



Mao Zedong

The following was printed in Friday News on November 23, but we want to republish it in this issue. There is a rapidly growing acceptance of socialism among American voters, but it is the product of gross and frightful ignorance. The following is excerpted from Jay Richards, “What’s the Difference?” *The Stream*, Aug. 7, 2017: “Too many of us are still clueless about socialism and communism. I blame biased media and fuzzy thinking. ... Still, sometimes, the truth leaks out. Last year, *The Washington Post* published a long piece by Ilya Somin. It’s about the ‘greatest mass murderer’ in the world. ... Guess who wins that grim prize. ... It’s Mao Zedong, the leader of China’s communist revolution. ‘From 1958 to 1962,’ Somin notes, ‘his Great Leap Forward policy led to the deaths of up to 45 million people--easily making it the biggest episode of mass murder ever recorded.’ Let that sink in. In under five years, a government led by one man murdered 45

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## CHINA'S SOCIAL CREDIT SYSTEM—SOCIALISM IN ACTION

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or mortgages they can get, and it also impacts what schools their children qualify for. ... China's SCS proves reality is darker than fiction. ... The government also says that this will 'allow the trustworthy to roam everywhere under heaven while making it hard for the discredited to take a single step,' according to *The Wall Street Journal*. ... The major issue is this: the SCS goes well beyond just rating one's ability to manage debt; in essence, it puts a number on a citizen rating their worth as a human being—and it forces others to respect that rating. 'China's proposed social score is an absolute reaffirmation of China continuing to push forward to be a complete police state,' said Anurag Lal, former Director of the U.S. National Broadband Task Force for the FCC under the Obama administration and president and CEO of mobility solutions firm Infinite Convergence, in an email to *Futurism*. 'They take it a step further by becoming not only an establishment of a totalitarian police state that monitors its people but one that completely evades users' privacy. All forms of activity and interactions, online or otherwise, will be rated, available to view and stored as data.' Ultimately, the problem is that 'socially acceptable behavior' will be defined by the Chinese government, not a democratic process or an objective panel. And punitive measures will certainly be taken when a person breaks this trust. With the SCS, the Chinese government will actually hit two birds with one stone: They will have a way of promoting and enforcing what they consider to be 'socially acceptable behavior,' and they will have a way of monitoring virtually all aspects of citizens' lives."

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM?

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million of its own people. Scholars have long known the basic stats. But historian Frank Dikötter has shown [*Mao's Great Famine*, 2011] that the number is larger than previously thought. And many more of the deaths were deliberate, rather than 'just' the outcome of bad policies that led to famine. Millions were tortured to death, often for minor crimes like digging up a potato. ... **Lots of people seem to think 'communism' just means 'bad socialism.' But that ignores the meaning of words and Marxist theory itself ...** Here's a brief primer: Marx and his disciples claimed that 'capitalism' must give way to 'socialism,' where private property would be abolished and an all-powerful state would own everything on behalf of the people. That's what Marx meant by the word socialism, and that's the main dictionary definition. This was only supposed to be a stage, though, not the end of all our strivings. At some point, under socialism, people would lose their silly fondness for property, family, religion, and other evils. A 'new socialist man' would emerge and then the state would 'wither away.' Everyone would enjoy peace, prosperity, and the brotherhood of man. Marx and his acolytes called that final, stateless paradise 'communism.' Here's the point: Those regimes led by mass murderers with their gulags, death camps, man-made famines and killing fields were *socialist*. That's not slander. It's what these countries called themselves. USSR stood for the 'Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.' You gotta break millions of eggs with socialism to make the communist omelet. ... That was sort of the theory anyway. In practice, socialism has just been evil. Unremitting evil, wherever it's tried. Have a look at North Korea and now Venezuela. Socialism doesn't lead to a higher plane of existence or a stateless utopia. It leads to a bottomless pit of immorality, poverty, and death. Why would we expect anything different? It's based on a false view of human nature, history, labor, property, economic value, capital, and the role of prices."

## MEDITATION BUSINESS EVALUATED AT \$1 BILLION

Calm, an online meditation subscription service, has raised \$115 million in startup funding and is evaluated at \$1 billion, which is called “unicorn” status (referring to its rarity) (“The Meditation Unicorn,” *businessresearcher.com*, Feb. 6, 2019). Calm is only the largest of a slew of popular meditation services and apps, such as Simple Habit, BioBeats, and Headspace. The latter has in-flight meditation channels on eight airlines. Calm cofounder Alex Tew says, “This financing will accelerate our mission to make the world healthier and happier.” Meditation is the practice of entering into a transcendental or altered state of consciousness by means of a mantra or by focusing the mind on a single mental image, etc. Meditation is an integral part of Hinduism and Buddhism that has spread widely through Western society since the twentieth century. The invasion from the east began in the 1920s with Hindu gurus such as Paramahansa Yogananda (d. 1952), founder of the Self-Realization Fellowship Society, and Jiddu Krishnamurti (d. 1986) of the Order of the Star in the East. Yogananda’s book *Autobiography of a Yogi*, continuously in print since 1946, has been translated into 18 languages and has wielded a great influence. Before I was saved in 1973, I joined the Self-Realization Fellowship Society. It emphasizes the Hindu-New Age concept that man is divine, the universe is God (pantheism), and man can connect with truth and power in his inner self through mystical practices, particularly meditation. It is “the science of uniting the individual soul with the Cosmic Spirit.” It was in the 1960s that Hindu meditation exploded in popularity in the West when the Beatles became associated with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, founder of Transcendental Meditation. Maharishi called TM “the spontaneous flow of knowledge.” In October 1975, Maharishi’s picture appeared on the cover of

*Time* magazine. Most members of the Beatles moved on from TM, but George Harrison remained closely affiliated with the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. His 1970 hit song “My Sweet Lord” glorified the Hindu god Krishna and featured a yoga mantra. Meditation is a major instrument in the New Age tool kit, together with positive thinking, positive confession, visualization, guided imagery, and hypnosis. It is used by New Age channelers and alternative health care providers. It is a mainstay of life coaching and human potential gurus, such as Jack Canfield and John Gray. It is used by the world’s largest corporations and by the U.S. military. There is a New Age meditation room at the United Nations headquarters in New York City. Meditation cannot be separated from its pagan roots and has inherent spiritual dangers. The attempt to enter an alternative state of mind is a recipe for spiritual deception. Deepak Chopra says that through meditation “a change occurs” and that “something may be glimpsed behind the screen of thought, a sense that you have entered a deeper reality” (*The Third Jesus*, p. 93). At this point, the meditator “may sense a hidden presence that cannot be described but can still be felt.” In view of the Bible’s warning about demons that pose as angels of light, this is a loud warning to those who have ears to hear. Not surprisingly, meditation often leads to acceptance of pagan beliefs such as pantheism, panentheism, reincarnation, and universalism. “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Corinthians 11:14-15). “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).



# SNOW ROLLERS

A snow roller is formed when a thin blanket of snow is rolled across ice by wind or gravity to form something that looks like a bale of hay. They are extremely rare and fascinating. Though a “natural” phenomenon, like the marvelous snow flake, it is obvious to the Bible believer that they are also controlled by God. The Creator did not make the world and then leave it. Christ upholds all things by His power (Heb. 1:3) and by Him all things consist (Col. 1:17). “Fire, and hail; snow, and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word” (Psalm 148:8). Every scientist should fall to his knees in wonder at the marvels of God’s creation that are being discovered on a daily basis, but instead their hearts are ever more hardened as they hold steadfastly to the myth of evolution. It is wiser to bow before the compassionate but holy God and receive His gracious salvation. Then you can go through life singing, “This is my Father’s world, the birds their carols raise, the morning light, the lily white, declare their Maker’s praise. This is my Father’s world; He shines in all that’s fair; in the rustling grass I hear Him pass, He speaks to me everywhere” (“This Is My Father’s World,” text by Malthie Babcock, music by Franklin Sheppard).



## 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](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org).