

FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES

RUGBY LEAGUE TO FIRE \$1 MILLION STAR PLAYER OVER BIBLE VERSE POSTS ON HOMOSEXUALITY

The following is excerpted from ChristianHeadlines.com, Apr. 16, 2019: “An Australian rugby star who makes more than \$1 million per year is set to be fired in the coming days for posting a Bible verse about homosexuality on social media and urging his followers to ‘turn to Jesus.’ Rugby Australia said April 14 that Israel Folau was in breach of the players’ code of conduct and had 48 hours to accept the sanction or have the matter referred to a Code of Conduct hearing. The incident warranted ‘termination of his employment contract,’ the statement said. The

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Israel Folau

ISRAEL’S MERMAID COMMUNITY

“Last year, Shir Katzenell made a drastic life change, leaving a prestigious job in the Israeli army to pursue a childhood dream: becoming a mermaid. Ever since getting hooked on Disney’s ‘The Little Mermaid’ as a kid, Katzenell confided, she has longed to turn into one. While her friends moved on, Katzenell’s enchantment with mermaids



endured. She fantasized about swimming underwater alongside fish in a 10-pound tail and sequined bikini. Then she actually gave it a try. Together with a friend and fellow mermaid-fan, Michelle Koretsky, she started an unlikely

social scene: a group of aspiring mermaids in Israel, which has grown on Facebook to nearly 1,000 members. It’s the Israeli pocket of a worldwide community that she claims is gaining prominence. ... Now, as a 34-year-old ‘full-time mermaid,’ she sells brightly-colored tails, some with dizzying \$800 price tags, and teaches people the skill of swimming in them. The tail-clad group convenes regularly to romp in public pools across the country and participate in demonstrations to raise awareness about ocean preservation. ... One of the clan’s few mer-men, Yuval Avrami, marveled at how his fabric fin flitted in the water, describing it as a ‘dream come true.’ He said he learned about the trend through transgender friends and became fascinated by ‘the transition from one species to another, the ability to inhabit a new, magical identity.’” (See also *Fantasy Dangers*, a free eBook available from www.wayoflife.org.)

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meeting could occur next week. Speaking after church Sunday, Folau said he would not apologize for the Bible-centric social media posts on Instagram and Twitter and would be content walking away from rugby. Folau signed a contract in 2015 that paid him nearly \$1.5 million U.S. per year. He signed an undisclosed new deal last year, and made at least one list as the highest-paid rugby player in the world. He plays for the Wallabies Australian national rugby team and the New South Wales Waratahs in the Super Rugby League. ‘First and foremost, I live for God now,’ Folau told *The Sydney Morning Herald Sunday*. ‘Whatever He wants me to do, I believe His plans for me are better than whatever I can think. If that’s not to continue on playing, so be it. In saying that, obviously I love playing footy and if it goes down that path I’ll definitely miss it. But my faith in Jesus Christ is what comes first.’ The controversy started April 10 when Folau—who is known for his Christian faith—posted an image on Instagram that referenced Scripture and read, ‘Warning. Drunks, Homosexuals, Adulterers, Liars, Fornicators, Thieves, Atheists, Idolaters. Hell Awaits You. Repent! Only Jesus Saves.’ He wrote next to the Instagram picture, ‘Those that are living in Sin will end up in Hell unless you repent. Jesus Christ loves you and is giving you time to turn away from your sin and come to him.’ He also quoted Galatians 5:19-21: ‘Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.’ The post received 44,000 likes. The same day, he linked on Twitter a story about Tasmania allowing those ages 16 and over to change their birth certificates or to remove gender from the certificates altogether. He wrote: ‘The devil has blinded so many people in this world, REPENT and turn away from your evil ways. Turn to Jesus Christ who will set you free.’ That post gained 4,000 likes. Raelene Castle, chief executive of Rugby Australia, said Folau had been warned in the past about his social media posts.”

CBD-INFUSED AND THC-INFUSED

With the onslaught of the legalization of recreational marijuana, it is important to understand the difference between CBD-infused products and THC-infused. Both CBD (cannabidiol) and THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) are products of cannabis plants (e.g., marijuana and hemp). Both are therefore called *cannabinoids*, but there is a major difference. THC is intoxicating, whereas CBD is not. CBD will not create euphoria or a state of “high.”

CBD also does not have the negative side effects of THC, such as addiction, psychosis, long-term effects on learning, cognition, and personality, “amotivational syndrome” (lethargy and loss of interest in achievement), bronchitis and respiratory infections, and increased risk of cardiovascular disease. Many medical benefits are claimed for CBD, but the only CBD product to receive approval by the Food and Drug Administration so far (June 2018) is *Epidiolex*, which is used to treat forms of epilepsy. The marketing of CBD-



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infused food, which is just beginning, will doubtless be a bridge for some to THC. For example, the creator of *Jelly Belly* jelly beans is marketing a CBD-infused edition. *ABC News* reported on this with the opening line, “Jelly bean aficionados will now be able to experience something stronger than a sugar rush” (“Creator of Jelly Belly released cannabis-infused jelly beans,” *ABC News*, Mar. 20, 2019). Also, Carl’s Jr. is testing a CBD-infused sandwich in Denver which is named Rocky Mountain High Cheese Burger Delight. The very name seems to promise an intoxicating effect. The way these products are marketed gives the false idea that they are a bit intoxicating, and it is probable that some customers who fail to get an expected “buzz” will be tempted to obtain the “real thing.” The legalization of recreational marijuana will have major, far-reaching negative societal ramifications.

BAPTIST CHURCHES NOT PREACHING ON THE SECOND COMING

The following is from a reader: “About three years ago I was speaking with another fundamental Baptist pastor here in the area. I mentioned that I truly believed the Lord was coming soon. He said, ‘You know, everybody was preaching on this back in the 70’s, 80’s and 90’s and thought surely Christ would come before 2000. I really don’t preach that much any more.’ I about fell on the floor and responded to him, ‘If Christ did not come by then, how much closer now?’ I said, ‘I preach His coming regularly trying to wake people up to holiness and living for Christ so that they won’t be ashamed at His coming.’ Speaking to a missionary friend who spoke at our church recently, I mentioned this story. His words were, ‘I have heard more from you today about the second coming than I have for months in other fundamental Baptist churches. This is from a man from a large

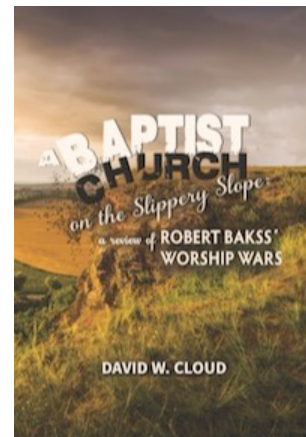


missions ministry who preaches regularly across the country. Our people live in denial of this truth and unfortunately our preachers are also.” Another reader sent the following comment: “Fundamental Baptist preachers seem very reluctant to delve into prophecy. ... I don’t think I have ever heard a really solid message from an IFB preacher from the mountain of Old Testament prophecies with momentous future fulfillment.” The imminent return of Jesus Christ is a major New Testament doctrine, and the preaching and teaching of it is essential for holy living. Preachers who neglect it are rebels against God’s Word and are not qualified for the ministry. The mindset of always looking for Christ’s return was modeled by the church at Thessalonica, which “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven...” (1 Th. 1:9-10).

YOUNG PREACHER GETTING BAD COUNSEL FROM BACKSLIDDEN PASTORS WHO ARE ON THE CONTEMPORARY SLIPPERY SLOPE

Note from Bro. Cloud: I received the following testimony from a young preacher recently. It describes what is happening widely in Independent Baptist churches. It describes what has become the majority thinking over the past 15 years. I pray that this young man will stand fast in the "strictness" of God's Word and not follow a multitude to do wrong. "Dear Brother Cloud, I have been GREATLY encouraged by your writings because I had been struggling with the idea of holding to and preaching Christian standards when so many of the 'good' independent Baptist churches and pastors no longer do. I was getting to the place where I felt alone in desiring to preach and teach holiness from the pulpit, for I had asked many (at least 10) preachers if adapting CCM was ok and if we should preach hard on modesty and music and they ALL told me that if we love people and show them the love of the Lord they will eventually come around to creating their own standards. I was so discouraged because I had been convicted about the music/dress that I was listening to and allowing in my own life and family and was desiring to find a man who would say, 'YES! TAKE A STAND!' So thank you for doing right no matter the cost. I have been the youth pastor at an independent Baptist church, but I have been asked to leave by the pastor because he feels I am 'too conservative/fundamental' for his ministry (our church is adapting CCM praise music and giving up modesty for the sake of 'keeping the unsaved in

church'). I am in the process of seeking God's face and will for where He wants us to go and what He wants us to do. The main purpose of this email is to let you know that as I seek to serve the Lord, my goal is to be what you laid out in your 'O Timothy' magazine. My desire is to be one of the 1,000 preachers that will not give up the faith and hold to sound doctrine and Biblical standards. I do not expect a response, but I wanted you to know that your sound Biblical teaching has given me the Biblical foundation I had been praying for/ searching for so that I could respond (both to others and in my own heart) with the Bible as to why I DO believe that holding Bible standards on music, dress, television, technology, etc., is VITAL to Christianity today."



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.