

FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES

HILLSONG FOUNDER BRIAN HOUSTON'S IMMORAL BEHAVIOR

Brian Houston, former senior pastor of the Hillsong association of churches (Pentecostal) headquartered at Hills Christian Life Centre, Sydney, Australia, has been exposed by his own church for “inappropriate behavior” with women. A letter sent to church members last Friday, March 18, acknowledged that two women complained about Houston’s behavior in 2013 and 2019, but only now was the matter being addressed publicly (“Hillsong Founder Breached Code of Conduct,” Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Mar. 18, 2022). In the first case, Houston sent sexual text messages to a female staffer. He blamed the matter on sleeping pills! In the most recent case, Houston spent time in the hotel room of a female that he met during a church conference. He had been drinking. Afterward Houston took three months off and promised to abstain from alcohol, but “he didn’t abide by that,” according to the church’s letter. “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise” (Pr. 20:1). “Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. ... Thine eyes shall behold strange women...” (Pr. 23:29, 33). Earlier this year,



Brian Houston

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MUSLIMS KILL EVANGELIST IN UGANDA



The following is excerpted from “Hardline Muslims,” *Morning Star News*, Mar. 8, 2022: “Hardline Muslims who grew furious at the preaching of a speaker at an open-air evangelistic event last week in eastern Uganda beat him to death and burned his body, sources said. John Michael Okero was quoting verses from the Koran about Christ on Feb. 28 in Kadungulu village, Serere District when a Muslim identified only as Shakuuru grabbed the microphone from him. He and other Muslims started beating Okero as they accused him of blaspheming Allah by saying that he has a Son,

misinterpreting the Koran, touching the Koran without ritual cleansing ... They beat him to death with iron bars, stones and sticks and later burned his body to a chant in the Ateso language referring to a thief who steals people from one religion to join a bad religion, the source said. Okero was 43. Police were called but arrived after the assailants had fled, the source said. ... The assault was the latest of many instances of persecution of Christians in Uganda that *Morning Star News* has documented.”

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Houston stepped down as director of all Hillsong boards after being indicted for concealing his father's sexual child abuse. In 2003, Brian's wife, Bobbie (who was co-pastor of Hills Christian Life Center at the time), published a tape set entitled *Kingdom Women Love Sex*. In May 2016, Hillsong New York City hosted a Hillsong Women's Conference that featured, among other things, scantily-dressed 'cheerleaders,' an Elvis impersonator, and a "naked cowboy" wearing only a cowboy hat, boots, and a guitar. The cowboy was Hillsong NYC's own youth pastor, Diego Simla. In August 2019, Marty Sampson, worship leader and song writer for Hillsong, said he was seriously entertaining atheism and was "so happy now, so at peace with the world." In 2020, Carl Lentz, pastor of Hillsong New York City, was fired for adultery. In 2021, Darnell Barrett, pastor of Hillsong Montclair, New Jersey, resigned after posting filthy photos of himself on social media. A short time later, Hillsong Dallas, Texas, shut down due to the worldliness of its husband-wife "pastor team," Reed and Jess Bogard. It was reported that they had "been using church money to fund their lavish lifestyle, including insanely expensive designer clothing, frequent stays at expensive

Airbnb rentals, and thousands of dollars on single meals" ("Hillsong Caving in on Itself," *Reformation Charlotte*, Apr. 12, 2021). Hillsong is one of the most influential producers of contemporary worship music, but its worldly rock & roll is a reflection of the worldliness of its leaders and people. Observers need to understand that Hillsong churches are not true New Testament churches and Hillsong does not represent biblical Christianity. It is the apostasy described in 2 Timothy 4:3 - "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." In fact, in 2003, Brian Houston told a *Sydney Morning Herald* reporter that the church is so successful because "we are scratching people where they are itching" ("The Lord's Profits," *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 30, 2003). Bible-believing churches that use contemporary praise music are playing with fire. This music brings with it a philosophy that will change the character of any "Biblicist" church. Worldliness produces the climate in which contemporary Christian music is embraced, and the embracing of it increases the worldliness and leads to apostasy.

ONLINE CRACKDOWN AGAINST CHRISTIANS IN CHINA

The following is excerpted from *Morning Star News*, Feb. 14, 2022: "Unregistered house churches that have relied on online gatherings and teaching to survive the COVID-19 pandemic and persecution will have that option taken away under draconian measures taking effect on March 1, sources said. Churches, seminaries and other ministries have been shaken by the government announcement on Dec. 20 that all religious information on the internet will be forbidden unless organizations obtain government permission--an option not open to unregistered house churches. Only the five government-approved religious organizations may apply for such permission: The Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM, representing officially-approved Protestant churches), the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association and the officially recognized organizations of Buddhism, Islam and

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ONLINE CRACKDOWN AGAINST CHRISTIANS IN CHINA

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Taosm. ... Starting March 1, all information relating to religion on all social media platforms and independent media must have authorization from the government, China Aid stated. If any religious content on the internet--all words, images and videos--are not approved by authorities, internet service providers in conjunction with religion departments and public security departments are to stop their internet service, according to the group. **'If an individual or organization posts religious events without permission or the official license, they will be categorized as people with no social credit score,'** China Aid noted. Huang wrote that the measures were issued by a department of the State Council and contravene laws of higher bodies such as the National People's Congress. ... **The measures require an 'Internet Religious Information Service License,'** that can be obtained only by organizations belonging to the five authorized religions, according to *Bitter Winter*. The officially recognized organizations are subject to surveillance and limitations, it noted."

LEARNING FROM THE DRAGONFLY



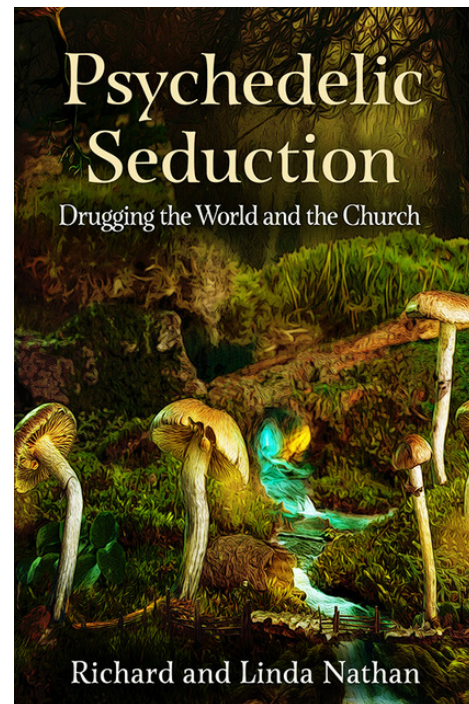
The following is from CreationMoments.com, January 19, 2022: "Evolutionary naturalism paints the picture of life as if it were a haphazard series of accidents that just

barely resulted in a range of living things that just manage to survive. This fanciful picture destroys our sense of wonder over the sophisticated engineering designs in nature. Consider the mystery of flight, for example. Some evolutionists suggest that perhaps birds are descended from lizards that fell out of trees a lot. Other evolutionists say that birds came from lizards who grew wings—not for flight, but to chase down and catch insects. Yet, they have little to say about the fact that we humans have come by most of our sophisticated knowledge about flight from studying the birds. Then there is the problem, for the evolutionist, of how flight accidentally evolved so *many times* for so many creatures. Scientists studying the dragonfly are learning even more secrets of flight. Our best high-performance aircraft can barely lift themselves off the ground. However, the dragonfly can lift 15 times his own weight into the air. Scientists have learned that this is because the dragonfly's wings are designed to create little whirlwinds over their top surfaces. These whirlwinds are the secret to creating incredible lifting power. Ways are now being planned to apply this secret to new aircraft designs. The engineering excellence found in nature and from which we have learned so much even in this day of interplanetary probes, is not witness to a mindless process of evolution, but to a wise and mindful Creator. Author: Paul A. Bartz. REF: 'Dragonfly model for future wings,' *Science Digest*, Mar. 1984, p. 87."

THE PSYCHEDELIC PANDEMIC

The following is excerpted from *Psychedelic Seduction: Drugging the World and the Church* by Richard and Linda Nathan, available from lighthouse trailsresearch.com: “Psychedelic drugs are integrating into our society at breakneck speed. ... Psychedelics are a huge rising star in the drug therapy industry, and ‘there’s almost no mental health condition right now that’s not being looked at.’ That’s because mental health issues currently are costing the global economy \$1 trillion per year. Consequently, numerous large organizations, schools, and companies are studying the use of psychedelics for such conditions as mood and substance use disorders, PTSD, opioid addiction, alcohol and cancer issues, Alzheimer’s, end-of-life fears, anorexia nervosa, and major depression, among other areas. In 2019, Johns Hopkins University opened the first-of-its-kind Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research. They also have published ‘groundbreaking studies in more than 60 peer-reviewed articles in respected scientific journals. This makes Johns Hopkins the leading psychedelic research institution in the U.S., and among the few leading groups worldwide.’ The Center’s opening fortuitously corresponded with the FDA’s ‘breakthrough therapy’ classification for psilocybin. This new classification helps fast-track the approval of promising pharmaceuticals, of which psilocybin is major. ... ‘The psychedelic pharma market is currently a little over \$2 billion and is

expected to be valued at more than \$6.8 billion by 2027.’ ... ‘I believe that the future of psychiatry will find psychedelic medicine at its heart’ (Alex Belser, Ph.D.). ... While psychedelic ‘therapy’ focuses on non-directive support of a patient’s inner experience and is wrapped in psychological jargon, it’s the same method shamans and sorcerers use to contact spirits and gain supernatural power.”



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.