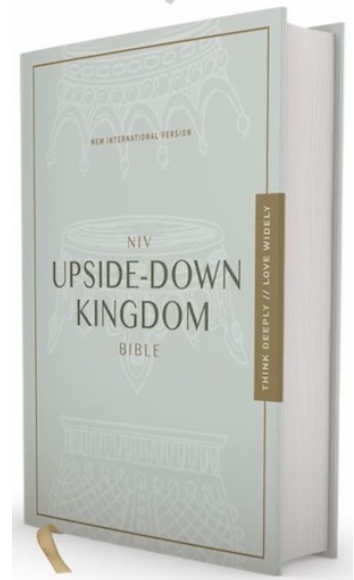

FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES

MUSHY, DANGEROUS EVANGELICALISM TODAY: PRESTON SPRINKLE AND THE UPSIDE DOWN KINGDOM STUDY BIBLE

The *Upside Down Kingdom Study Bible* NIV was published this month by Zondervan. Preston Sprinkle, general editor, is influential among Southern Baptists and evangelicals in general. Sprinkle is the founder of The Center for Faith, Sexuality & Gender, Theology in the Raw podcasts, and Exiles in Babylon conferences. Sprinkle has taught at Cedarville University which was GARBC from 1953-2006, at which time it moved into the Southern Baptist orb. (Sprinkle taught there in its SBC incarnation.) Cedarville's history illustrates the downgrade of the General Association of Regular Baptists from fundamental Baptist in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s to non-separatist evangelicalism since the last two decades of the 20th century. This is part of the general collapse of "fundamentalism" in the past 50 years. Sprinkle promotes textual criticism and wanders in the wilderness of the modern texts and versions, with no absolute Scriptural authority. He is a Mr. Facing Both Ways, which is typical of evangelicals. He can sound like a Biblicist at times, but he is, in fact, an enemy of solid Biblicism. At the RateMyProfessors web site, a Cedarville student said **Sprinkle is "funny and open to different interpretations of the Bible."** Sprinkle says, **"read the Bible with conviction" but "hold your predetermined beliefs loosely."** In other words,

practice dialogue and ecumenism, not separation. This principle is one of the chief building blocks of the "one world church." Don't be dogmatic in doctrine. Be open to other views in such things as the following: the days of creation (are they literal 24 hour days?), the extent of the flood (was it global or local?), the nature of homosexuality (is it always a sin? can you be born that way? are homosexual desires wrong? should impenitent homosexuals be received as church members? was the sin of Sodom actually the sin of being homosexual?), abortion (is it always wrong?), hell (is it a place of fiery torment; is it eternal?), baptism (is infant baptism heretical? is immersion essential?), women in ministry (can't women be pastors?), salvation (can salvation be a process rather than a conversion experience? does a person have to personally believe in Jesus Christ to be saved? will only born again people go to heaven?). **Regardless of his personal Reformed Calvinist beliefs, Sprinkle, by his "hold your beliefs loosely" philosophy, is teaching God's people to build bridges to every heresy in the "broader church" of end-time apostasy.** The notes in the *Upside Down Kingdom Study Bible* reflect this confusion. "Christians would do well to research the various Christian viewpoints and ongoing discussions ... Christians should be patient in forming their view on questions related to the flood and should not condemn other thoughtful Christians" (pp. 166, 173). In contrast, Paul instructed Timothy, **"Hold**



Preston Sprinkle

continued on NEXT page

POPE SAYS ALL RELIGIONS LEAD TO GOD

At a youth inter-religious gathering in Singapore, Pope Francis said all religions lead to God. “If you start to fight, ‘my religion is more important than yours, mine is true, and yours isn’t,’ where will that lead us? There’s only one God, and each of us has a language to arrive at God. Some are Sheik, Muslim, Hindu, Christian, and they are different paths [to God]. ... They are like different languages in order to arrive at God, but God is God for all. Since God is God for all, then we are all children of God” (“Pope in multi-faith Singapore,” *Crux Now*, Sept. 13, 2024). Francis made similar remarks in Kazakhstan in 2022. There is nothing new here. In 1987, Pope John Paul II led an inter-religious prayer meeting in Assisi consisting of representatives of 32 “Christian” denominations plus representatives of most non-Christian religions: Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jews, Muslims, African and North American animists, Japanese Shinto’s, fire-worshipping Zoroastrians, and Baha’i. Though Pope John Paul did not specifically say that all religions are paths to God, it is obvious that he believed that to be true by

continued on NEXT page



Pope Francis

*“each of us has a language
to arrive at God”*

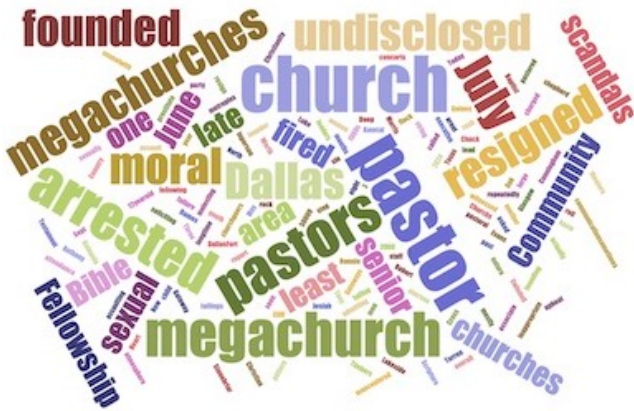
MUSHY, DANGEROUS EVANGELICALISM TODAY: PRESTON SPRINKLE...continued from front page

fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 1:13), and, “**keep** this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Timothy 6:14). Paul further exhorted, “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Romans 16:17). That is the opposite of “look into all views and dialogue with openmindedness.” Further, in typical evangelical fashion today, Sprinkle boasts of a worldly lifestyle. He is comfortable with the sensual pop culture. In his biographical sketch, he says his favorite bands include raunchy secular rockers “Coldplay, U2, Josh Garrels, Beck, Rush, Def Leppard, Pearl Jam, Bob Marley.” Secular rock is so filthy that it is impossible just to browse the album artwork at Amazon without being morally polluted.

Sprinkle says his favorite beers are “IPAs [India pale ale], Belgium Tripels, Quads, and anything that tastes like New Holland’s Dragon Milk [sweet, highly flavored].” In contrast, John said, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (1 John 2:15-16). Sprinkle would probably ridicule my interpretation of “worldliness” with a knowing wink and smile, but I say on the authority of God’s Word that he is wrong on that as he is on many other fundamental matters, but he well represents evangelicalism today. Like the church at Sardis, the vast part of evangelicalism has a name that it lives, but is dead (Revelation 3:1). Beware!

PASTOR SCANDALS IN DALLAS MEGACHURCHES

This year has witnessed a rash of pastoral scandals in megachurches in the Dallas, Texas, area. “the Dallas–Fort Worth metroplex, as the area is called, which has seen a string of at least eight pastors step down from megachurches in the past few months over moral failings, mostly sexual in nature. The leaders oversee

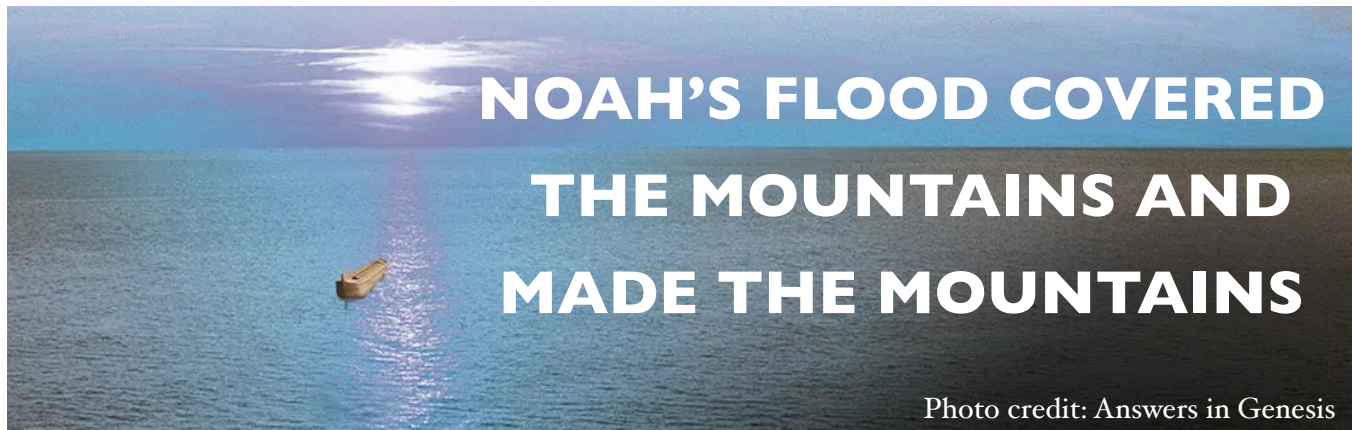


at least 50,000 in-person churchgoers. In June, Gateway’s founder and senior pastor, Robert Morris, resigned following a report of his repeatedly molesting a 12-year-old in the 1980s. ... Gateway asked another one of its executive pastors, Kemtal Glasgow, to resign after an undisclosed ‘moral failing’ ... In June, Tony Evans resigned from the megachurch

he founded, Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship, after admitting to an undisclosed sin. ... Stonebriar Community Church, founded by Chuck Swindoll, fired one of its longtime associate pastors in July after an undisclosed ‘moral failure.’ Three other pastors of large churches were arrested. The senior pastor of North Dallas Community Bible Fellowship, Terren Dames, was arrested in May for soliciting a prostitute, and the church fired him. The founding pastor of Koinonia Christian Church, Ronnie Goines, was arrested for sexual assault in late July. Lakeside Baptist Church’s youth pastor, Luke Cunningham, was arrested and charged with sexually assaulting a child ... In late July, Josiah Anthony, lead pastor of the megachurch Cross Timbers Church, resigned for ‘a pattern of inappropriate communication--sometimes sexual--with women in the church and on staff’ (“Deep in the Heart of Megachurch Country,” *Christianity Today*, Sept. 3, 2024). A megachurch is a church with an attendance of 2,000, but they aren’t New Testament churches that are founded on Scripture and pastored by men who actually know and shepherd the flock. They are man-centered theaters with rock & roll concerts and an overall upbeat party atmosphere.

POPE SAYS ALL RELIGIONS LEAD TO GOD ...*cont. from page 2*

inviting all religions to pray for world peace. Though great changes have occurred in the Roman Catholic Church since the Second Vatican Council of the 1960s, the Roman Catholic Church of today is actually more unscriptural than it was in Luther’s day. It still holds the ancient heresies that were condemned by Baptists and Protestants of old, such as the pope the head of church, the mass the re-sacrifice of Christ, the sacraments a channel for salvation. Mary the ever-virgin Queen of Heaven, and prayers to and for the dead. In addition to traditional Catholic heresies, the Roman Catholic Church today is filled with gross errors which were almost unknown to the Catholic Church of the sixteenth century, such as evolution, New Age faith and practice (i.e., a seminar at Catholic Quigley Seminary in Chicago in 1988 featured messages by Matthew Fox and other New Age speakers on “the cosmic Christ within”), universalism (Mother Teresa and Pope John Paul II are examples of Catholic leaders who believe all men are children of God), and modernistic theology (Rome’s theological schools are largely given over to the modernistic approach to the Bible which denies the infallible inspiration of Holy Scripture, the six-day creation, the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, etc.).



The following is by John D. Morris, Ph.D. in geological engineering: “We now know, of course, that the earth has plenty of water to launch a global flood. It has been calculated that if the earth’s surface were completely flat, with no high mountains and no deep ocean basins, that water would cover the earth to a depth of about 8,000 feet. But is there enough water to cover a 29,035 foot mountain? The key is to remember that the Flood didn’t have to cover the present Earth, but it did have to cover the pre-Flood Earth, and the Bible teaches that the Flood fully restructured the earth. ‘The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished’ (2 Peter 3:6). It is gone forever. The earth of today was radically altered by that global event. That Flood accomplished abundant geologic work. Eroding sediments here, redepositing them there, pushing up continents, elevating plateaus, denuding terrains, etc., so that the earth today is quite different from before. Today even mountain ranges rise high above

the sea. Mt. Everest and the Himalayan range, along with the Alps, the Rockies, the Appalachians, the Andes, and most of the world’s other mountains are composed of ocean-bottom sediments, full of marine fossils laid down by the Flood. These rock layers cover an extensive area, including much of Asia. They give every indication of resulting from cataclysmic water processes. These are the kinds of deposits we would expect to result from the worldwide, world-destroying Flood of Noah’s day. At the end of the Flood, after thick sequences of sediments had accumulated, the Indian subcontinent evidently collided with Asia, crumpling the sediments into mountains. Today they stand as giants--folded and fractured layers of ocean-bottom sediments at high elevations. No, Noah’s Flood didn’t cover the Himalayas, it formed them!” (John Morris, Ph.D., “Did Noah’s Flood Cover the Himalayan Mountains?” www.icr.org).

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.