

Friday Church News Notes

The following is another installment of the Friday Church News Notes designed especially for use in churches. It is published by Way of Life Literature's Fundamental Baptist Information Service.



Elderly Episcopalian says he never heard a preacher say that adultery is wrong

Friday Church News Notes, July 30, 2004, <http://www.wayoflife.org>
Tere Wilson has been an Episcopal priest for nearly 20 years, but he has become fed up with the liberalism of the national Episcopal denomination and has formed a breakaway congregation. It is called the Light of Christ Church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. When Wilson preached recently on sin and adultery, an elderly man in his 70s said he had never, in all of his years of being an Episcopalian, heard anybody say from the pulpit that adultery was wrong ("Breakaway Church's Pastor calls on ECUSA to Repent," Agape Press, Aug. 9). This is an amazing testimony to that denomination's rank apostasy. What is the root of America's moral debauchery? It is the apostasy and compromise in the pulpits of its churches.

Tere Wilson leads service for Light of Christ Church

Pagan Olympic Games haven't changed much

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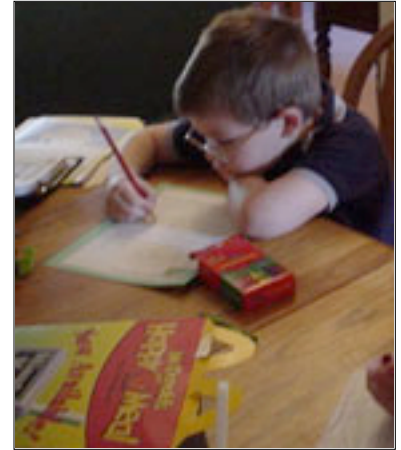
The Olympic games are as pagan today as they were when Zeus was the focus 2,000 years ago. The Olympic games were allegedly founded in 776 B.C. and continued for more than 1,100 years, until they were banned in 393 A.D. by Emperor Theodosius, who insisted the event was too pagan. (Death before defeat in the ancient games, BBC News Online, Aug. 9). He was right, but the games were revived in the late 19th century and they are dedicated today to the humanistic god of the modern era. The contestants in the ancient games performed nude or near nude, as they do today. They received almost universal adulation and worship, as they do today. The winners were showered with huge amounts of money, as they are today. Victors from Athens, for example, received a cash prize equivalent to \$300,000 today. Athletes cheated then, as they do today. The ancient games were the occasion for drunken debauchery, as they are today. The human body is an amazing creation capable of wonderful feats, but the Olympic games do not glorify a holy Creator.



Home schooling increasing in America

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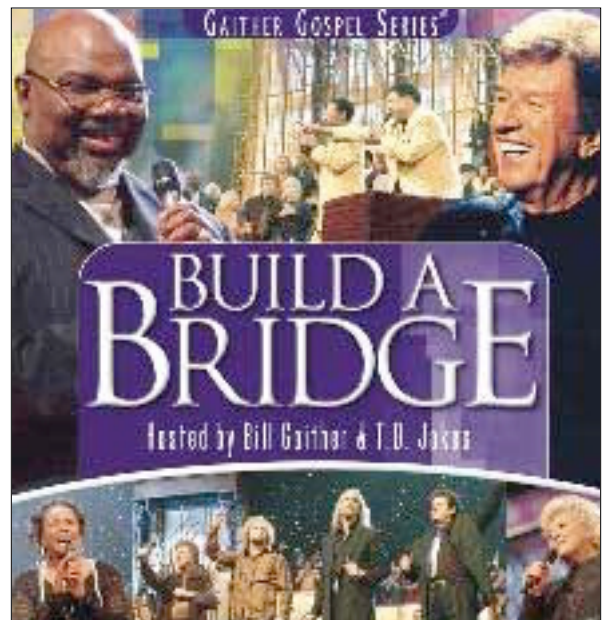
According to a new Education Department survey, home schooling has increased 29 percent in America since 1999, and 1.1 million students were home-schooled last year. The top two reasons cited by parents for choosing home schooling are concerns about the environment of public schools (i.e., drugs, negative peer pressure) and flexibility to teach religious or moral lessons. The National Center for Home Education believes the number of home-schooled students is closer to 2 million. I was educated in the public school system from 1955 to 1967 and it was the most morally destructive influence in my young years and I bear spiritual scars from that experience to this day. Parents are responsible to protect their children from ungodly and unscriptural influences, and those that do so never regret it.



The Gaithers radical ecumenism

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Bill Gaither has a large influence upon many independent Baptist and other fundamentalist churches because of Southern Gospel music, but Gaither is a radical ecumenist who obviously does not believe what the Bible says about contending for the faith and separating from doctrinal error. Recently Bill and Gloria Gaither appeared at T.D. Jakes' Potter's House in Dallas and sang, appropriately enough, Russ Taff's anthem of unity, which says, "You're my brother/ you're my sister/ so come take my hand/ together we will work until He comes/..." Jakes holds the positive-only, judge-not philosophy. He supports women preachers and denies the Trinity. He practices the unscriptural and dangerous "spirit slaying" and preaches a prosperity gospel. In 1990 I saw the Gaithers at the North American Congress on the Holy Spirit World Evangelization. It did not concern the Gaithers that half of the crowd of 15,000 were Roman Catholics and that a Roman Catholic mass was held every morning.



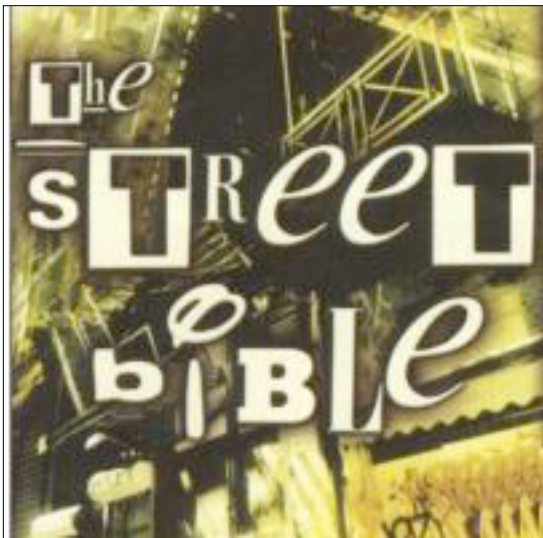
What is the American Dream?

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An article in the USA Today financial section for August 8 was titled "Immigrants chase American dream." According to this article the American dream is financial prosperity and owning an expensive home. Doubtless, this is the American dream to many, but originally the American dream was liberty, especially religious liberty, and this remains the American dream for Bible believers. The American dream for us is the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. This was certainly the American dream to the Pilgrims and other religious settlers in the 17th century. Economic prosperity can be a blessing, but it can also be a curse; because of fallen human nature, a nature that is never satisfied with things, that tends always towards covetousness and idolatry. Ancient Sodom was characterized by "pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness" (Ezek. 16:49).

NOTHING LASTS FOREVER

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An article on the impermanency of digital data in USA Today concluded, "Already, most experts of the digital age concur on one principle: Nothing lasts forever" ("Photos, data only as good as what they are stored on," USA Today, July 27, 2004). When it comes to computers, this is no doubt true; yet in the midst of a constantly changing world we would do well to remind ourselves that there are indeed things that last forever. The human soul lasts forever. Death is man's 'long home' (Ecc. 12:5) and it will be spent either in heaven or in hell, depending upon its relationship with Jesus Christ.



New "hip" Bible translation

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The latest "hip" translation of the Bible is scheduled for publication in September by Zondervan. It is "The Word on the Street" by Rob Lacey, a "Welsh performance artist." Genesis 1:1-2 comes out like this: "First off, nothing ... but God. No light, no time, no substance, no matter. Second off, God says the word, and WHAP! Stuff everywhere! The cosmos in chaos: no shape, no form, no function -- just darkness ... total. And floating above it all, God's Holy Spirit, ready for action." The Lord Jesus said that even the very jots and tittles of the Hebrew Scriptures are important and unchangeable, and the final chapter of the Bible contains a solemn warning about adding to or taking away from God's Word; but there is an amazing carelessness toward the Scriptures in this generation.

Another rocker dies young

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Rick James, who had the raunchy 1981 hit "Super Freak," about a nymphomaniac rock groupie, died in August 2004 at age 56. He spent time in prison for restraining and assaulting women with a hot crack pipe during a cocaine binge at his house in 1991 and again in a hotel room in 1992. We have a list of 1,517 rockers who have died young. Someone might argue that if God's curse abides in a special way upon the rock & roll scene, why is it that some brash rock musicians are NOT cut off in their youth? Some of the most rebellious rockers, such as Mick Jagger and Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones, are nearing 60 years old. We do not know why God appears to be more patient with some rebels than with others. We do know that the wages of sin is death, and whether death comes at age 20, 40, or 70, it is one law that the rebel will not escape. We also know that God is merciful and longsuffering, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).



CONCLUSION: Friends in Christ, do not be discouraged by any of this. It is God's will that we know the times and that we be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. These things remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the coming of the Lord. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ day by day? Are you in the perfect will of God for your life and bearing fruit for His glory? "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).

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