

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.

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FALWELL LAUNCHES NEW VERSION OF MORAL MAJORITY

Friday Church News Notes, November 12, 2004, <http://www.wayoflife.org>
Jerry Falwell is launching a new version of the Moral Majority called The Faith and Values Coalition (TFVC). The three-fold goal is to lobby for pro-life judges, to seek a federal amendment barring same-sex marriage, and to elect another conservative president in 2008. Falwell's son Jonathan is executive director and Mathew Staver, founder of the Liberty Counsel, is vice-chairman. Tim LaHaye is the board chairman. Falwell founded the Moral Majority in 1979 and it existed for 10 years. It was an ecumenical venture that brought together Catholics, Protestants, Baptists, and Jews to "bring America back to God." In *Christianity Today*, Feb. 21, 1986, Falwell stated that Catholics made up the largest constituency (30%) in the Moral Majority. Falwell wrote the Foreword to Chuck Colson's 1992 book, *The Body*, which urges evangelicals to join forces with Catholics and charismatics and which looks upon the Catholic Church as a part of the body of Christ.



Jerry Falwell's political machinations have done little to stop America's downward slide into sin. Political action will never replace bold preaching.



MORE CHURCHES TARGETED BY MUSLIM TERRORISTS IN IRAQ

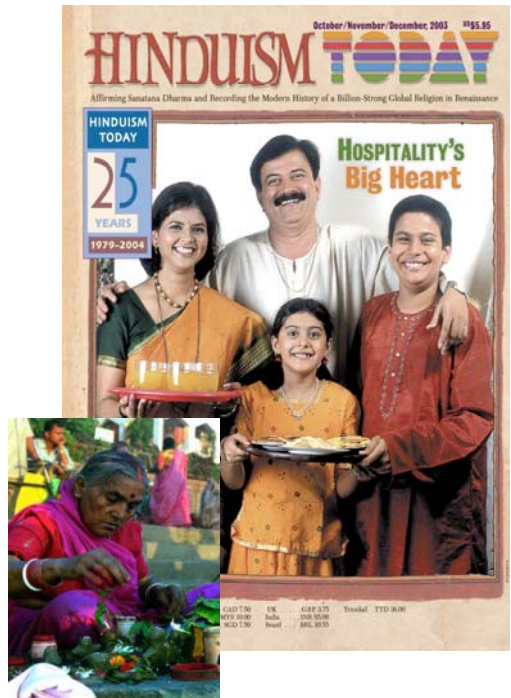
Friday Church News Notes, November 19, 2004, <http://www.wayoflife.org>

On November 9 Muslim terrorists bombed two more churches in Iraq, killing at least three and wounding dozens. These are the latest in a string of attacks targeting churches. Five churches were bombed in October and another five on August 1. Most, if not all, are Roman Catholic and Orthodox. A bomb also exploded at a church in Baghdad in December 2003, and in other cases bombs have been found and diffused. An American pastor of an independent Baptist church was shot to death earlier this year while visiting Baghdad.

CHRISTIANS IN INDIA ARRESTED AND CHARGED WITH “WOUNDING RELIGIOUS FEELINGS.”

Friday Church News Notes, November 19, 2004, <http://www.wayoflife.org>
The following is from *Compass Direct*, Nov. 4: “An Indian court recently charged five Christians with the crime of 'wounding the religious feelings' of Hindus, after a complaint was lodged in the tribal belt of Orissa. The Christians were released on bail on October 28. Lawyer Pratap Chhinchani, who will defend the five in court, said he believed a Hindu extremist group was behind the complaint and that the charges were false. Meanwhile, the World Hindu Council (VHP) continued its 'reconversion' drive in Orissa unhindered by local authorities. Christians reject the term 'reconversion to Hinduism,' since most tribal converts were animists before they turned to Christianity. However, Indian law views all tribal peoples as Hindu, placing them at the lower level of the Hindu caste system.”

“HINDUISM TODAY” attempts to put a smiling face on the Hindu religion, but the reality is far different. Hinduism breeds poverty and despair for most of its 1 billion followers.



WORSHIPPING DUNG

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One of the major Hindu festivals in Nepal and India is Tihar, which was celebrated November 10-15. Each day features a different type of worship. Day one is crow worship. Day two, dog worship. The other three days are set apart for the worship of wealth, brothers, and COW DUNG (by the high caste Brahmans and Chetris of Nepal; the Newars of Kathmandu Valley worship their own bodies on this day). What could be more foolish than worshipping cow dung!! Yet according to the Bible, anything other than the scriptural worship of true and living God is dung. In fact, anything outside of the good and acceptable and fruitful will of God for the believer is dung. “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ” (Philippians 3:8). Let us be careful that we not waste the precious fleeting hours of this life on “dung.”

HARSH SENTENCES FOR MENNONITES IN VIETNAM

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<http://www.wayoflife.org>

The following is from *Religion Today*, Nov. 16: “The People's Court of Ho Chi Minh City handed out harsh sentences to six Vietnamese Mennonite church workers in a four-hour trial which ended at noon today. Rev. Nguyen Hong Quang and five colleagues were charged with 'resisting officers of the law while doing their duty' in connection with a March 2 incident involving two undercover government operatives. The court sentenced Quang, general secretary of the Vietnam Mennonite Church, to three years in prison. Evangelist Pham Ngoc Thach received a two-year sentence. Nguyen Thanh Phuong, Nguyen Thanh Nhan, Miss Lee Thi Hong Lien and church elder Nguyen Hieu Nghia received sentences ranging from nine to 12 months. A Vietnamese lawyer who asked to remain anonymous said, 'On the basis of the legal issues and the realities of the case, we affirm that Rev. Nguyen Hong Quang and his fellow workers are not criminals guilty of the charges brought against them.’”



Nguyen Hong Quang preaching in Viet Nam



Rock star or pastor? It's hard to tell in many churches today as they attempt to 'outworld' the world. Chris Seay is the pastor of Ecclesia in Houston, a hip church for people who want to remain as cool as the world around them.

SOME PREDICT SERMONS WILL FADE OR CHANGE IN NEXT WAVE OF “POSTMODERN” WORSHIP

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Some contemporary Christian leaders are predicting that preaching will be dramatically changed in coming days. This came out recently in a symposium called “Music and Worship in an Emerging Culture” at Baylor University (“Speakers predict sermons will change in next wave of postmodern worship,” Associated Baptist Press, Oct. 26). Chris Seay of Ecclesia in Houston believes that art and dance and music will play increasingly larger roles. He says sermons must be modified radically because “the postmodern person” has a shorter attention span and learns more through stories and visuals. Brian McLaren of Cedar Ridge Community Church near Washington D.C., observes the songwriters play a more important role already than preachers. Hulitt Gloer of Baylor's Truett Seminary said that sermons need “intentional silences in them.” Louie Giglio of Choice Resources says that preachers need to understand that people today “aren't hungry for information.” Julie Pennington-Russell, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Waco, Texas, said the preacher should cease to be “a spiritual example.” Appearing to mock traditional biblical preaching, she said, “It's not like where you tie a Scripture to a chair and beat it with a rubber hose for 20 minutes to see what you can get out of it.” According to 2 Timothy 4:2-4, apostasy is closely associated with a rejection of biblical preaching.



Martin Luther well understood the power of music for good and for evil. He steered clear of music that would degrade those who heard it.

DIDN'T LUTHER AND THE WESLEYS USE BARROOM TUNES?

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Those who defend Contemporary Christian Music often claim that hymn writers Martin Luther and John and Charles Wesley used bar room tunes; therefore, it is legitimate, allegedly, to use rock music today. In fact, neither Luther nor the Wesleys used bar room tunes. Note the following quotes from authorities in this field: "Luther steered clear of rollicking drinking songs. He never considered music a mere tool that could be employed regardless of its original association but was careful to match text and tune, so that each text would have its own proper tune and so that both would complement each other" (Ulrich Leupold, "Learning from Luther?" *Journal of Church Music*, July-August 1996, p. 5). "The Wesleys did not use tavern or drinking songs to carry their texts. Their theology as well as their sense of aesthetics would have made such an occurrence unthinkable. There are no such examples in their collections. There are no suggestions or recommendations that others do so in any of their writings" (Dean McIntyre, director of worship resources at the United Methodist Board of Discipleship, United Methodist News Service, September 30, 2002).

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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