

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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HOMOSEXUAL ORGANIZATION AT BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

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An organization called the Mercer Triangle Symposium is promoting the homosexual agenda at Mercer University in Georgia. Billing itself as the GLBT [gay lesbian bisexual transgender] Rights Student Organization, it sponsored a National Coming Out Day on October 11 and publicized the event in the campus newspaper ("Homosexual Group at Mercer Prompts Concern in Ga. Baptist Convention," Baptist Press, Nov. 9). It also published the names of 29 faculty and staff that support the organization's goals, including professor of Christianity Margaret Dee Bratcher and assistant professor of Christianity Janell Johnson. The organization meets on campus twice a month. Mercer University is the largest and most prominent Baptist educational institution in Georgia. It receives roughly \$3 million a year from the Georgia Baptist Convention, which is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). Kirby Godsey, Mercer's President since 1979, is a modernist who denies practically every doctrine of the Christian faith. In the book *When We Talk about God ... Let's Be Honest* (Smyth & Helwys, 1996) Godsey denies that the Bible is infallible and claims that "the notion that God is the all powerful, the high and mighty principal of heaven and earth should be laid aside." This is a testimony to the fact that large numbers of people in the SBC at the state and local level are at least sympathetic with heresy and unbelief. Many do not like what Godsey is teaching, but they are not willing to make the only statement against heresy which means anything, which is to publicly denounce it in no uncertain terms and to separate from it in the strictest sense. Theological modernism is at least as wicked and dangerous as homosexuality. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim. 3:5).



Mercer University's pro-gay group meets in this building twice a month.

TELEVISION PROGRAMS TWICE AS SENSUAL AS SEVEN YEARS AGO

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Television programs in the United States contain double the number of sex scenes compared to seven years ago. This was the finding of a Kaiser Family Foundation survey of programs aired on ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, WB, PBS Lifetime, TNT, USA, and HBO. "The study found that 70 per cent of all shows included some sexual content, averaging about five scenes with sexual content per hour. That's up from about three scenes per hour in 1998, and from nearly 4" ("Most Sexed-up Shows on Idiot Box," AP, *Hindustan Times*, Nov. 10). "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me" (Psalm 101:3).



PASTOR CONDUCTS DOG WEDDING

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Seventy people gathered at the Animal Activity Center in Clinton, Michigan, on November 6 for the “marriage” of two dogs (“And They Call It Puppy Love,” *Detroit Free Press*, Nov. 7). The ceremony, which cost \$1200, was conducted by Pastor Joseph DeRose of Evangel Christian Church in Roseville. The “groom” was dressed in a top hat, black tuxedo and red bowtie and the “bride” in a white gown.



GRAHAM WILL NO LONGER PREACH AT CRUSADES



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Billy Graham has announced his retirement from preaching at evangelistic crusades. The 87-year-old Graham is in poor health with fluid on the brain, prostate cancer, and Parkinson's disease, and he uses a walker due to a pelvic fracture. The final Billy Graham Crusade was held in June in New York. Graham has preached the Gospel to more people than any other man in church history, but he has also done more to break down the walls of biblical separation between true and false churches than any other many in history. Graham has turned tens of thousands of seekers over to Roman Catholic and liberal Protestant churches. We are not left to wonder what the Lord thinks about this error. Jehoshaphat did the same thing in his day by affiliating with the wicked Ahab and pretending that they served the same God. “And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat,
Shouldst thou help
the ungodly, and

love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD” (2 Chron. 19:2). “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 9-11).



CATHOLIC CARDINALS AFFIRM EVOLUTION AND WARN AGAINST FUNDAMENTALISM



Cardinal Poupard

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During a news conference on a Vatican project to reconcile science and religion, Catholic Cardinal Gianfranco Basti affirmed Pope John Paul II's 1996 statement that evolution is "more than just a hypothesis." He said, "A hypothesis asks whether something is true or false. [Evolution] is more than a hypothesis because there is proof" ("Vatican: Faithful Should Listen to Science," AP, Nov. 3). Basti is the director of the Vatican's Science, Theology and Ontological Quest (STOQ). Cardinal Paul Poupard concurred and warned against a fundamentalist approach to Scripture. Not only has the Roman Catholic Church today not renounced its ancient heresies such as papal supremacy, priestcraft, sacramentalism, and sainthood, it has added to those many contemporary heresies such as evolution and modernistic documentary theories of Scripture.

CONTEMPORARY MOVEMENT WITHIN JUDAISM

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Reflecting the contemporary direction among churches, there is a similar movement among young Jews. It incorporates the use of pop music, plays, storytelling, and "irreverent clothing." While decried by traditional Jewish leaders, the "Young Jews" claim that this path is "the modern-day answer to the question that has vexed every generation, including this one: how to keep the religion alive" ("Hip Judaism," AP, *The Spokesman Review*, Spokane, Wash., Nov. 12, 2005, p. E3). Amichai Lau-Levie, president of StorahTelling, "whose shows are an explosion of traditional ritual and contemporary performance," says, "We use edu-tainment. It's 95 percent humor, culture, radical fun, and 5 percent meaning." Lau-Levie states his mission as "to promote Jewish literacy and to empower people to take it on their own terms." That is very similar to the contemporary church growth philosophy, but it is upside down. Man has no authority to take the truth of God's Word on his own terms or to modify it or turn it into "edu-tainment." As for Jews, God gave them the Law of Moses, and they are obliged to keep it in every point (which no man can do, because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God) or to flee to the Messiah Jesus Christ for salvation from its wrath. There is no middle ground. The Law was given to show man his lost condition and to lead him to Christ (Rom. 3:19; Gal. 3:24). To modify it in any sense is to destroy its purpose. As for Christians, God gave us the New Testament faith and we are to keep it without spot (1 Tim. 6:14). Though we are saved by grace without works, we are saved *unto* the works that God has ordained in the New Testament Scriptures. To weaken the New Testament faith is to create a false faith.



THE SADDLEBACK CHURCH STATEMENT OF FAITH: SHALLOW AND HERETICAL



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Rick Warren of Purpose Drive Life fame loves to simplify the Christian life and ministry. This is evident in Saddleback Church's statement of faith. Consider this excerpt from the statement on "Who is Jesus?" -- "Jesus Christ is God's Son and an equal of the Father. He has existed from the beginning of time, yet lived on earth during the first century A.D." This is heresy. Christ had no beginning; He is the eternal God and Creator of all things. Consider the statement on "What is Salvation?" -- "Our disobedient nature has eternally separated us from our Creator. No matter how hard we try, we can never earn our way back into God's presence. Our only hope

is to trust Jesus as God's provision for our disobedience." This statement is so shallow and insufficient that it is difficult to know where to begin, but briefly, salvation is much more than a vague, undefined trusting "Jesus as God's provision for our disobedience." Heretics on every hand could fit their theology into that. They say we are saved by Jesus' life or His example or His suffering in general. Notice that there is no mention of the death, burial, and resurrection. In fact, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 is not even referenced in the Saddleback statement of faith. No mention of the blood. No mention of repentance. The Saddleback paraphrase of the gospel is no gospel at all. The shallowness of this type of evangelism is why I could sit next to a church member at Saddleback on a research visit in 2003 and have him tell me that he has always been a Christian. This was in response to my question, "When were you born again?"

CONCLUSION: Friends in Christ, do not be discouraged by any of this. 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. 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? "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 list. To **SUBSCRIBE** or **UNSUBSCRIBE** or **CHANGE ADDRESSES** go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbis/subscribe.html>. Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061. 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org.