

Friday Church News Notes

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POPE CALLS FOR THE BUILDING OF A NEW WORLD ORDER

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In his Christmas message delivered from his balcony in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, Pope Benedict XVI called upon the world's inhabitants to "gather the necessary courage and build a new world order based on just ethical and economic relationships" ("Pope Offers Vision on Tackling Ills," BBC News, Dec. 25). He said this can be accomplished by a "united human family" taking inspiration "from the infant Christ child lying in the manger." The deceived Pope needs a dose of Holy Spirit regeneration and illumination. It is not the infant Jesus that the world needs to focus on but the crucified and resurrected Jesus, before who each and every sinner will either bow the knee in this life in repentance and faith or bow the knee in the next as a prelude to being cast



into the eternal Lake of Fire. The Bible gives no hope for peace in this present wicked world. There can be no peace because men have no peace in their sinful hearts. Unregenerate sinners cannot build an ethical world because they are not ethical. That "ethical world" will be built, but it will be built by the Lord Jesus Christ at His glorious return. As for this present time, "There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked" (Isa. 48:22). "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Thess. 5:3).

MANY CANADIANS BELIEVE IN THE DA VINCI CODE



Dan Brown

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In a survey of Canadians taken June 9-12, 2005, 16% said they had read the *Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown and 32% of those said they believed that "a holy bloodline exists and that this secret has been protected through the ages by a dedicated society" ("Canadian Readers Believe Da Vinci Code," *The Ottawa Citizen*, June 24). The nationwide survey was funded by the *National Geographic Channel*. If the survey results can be extrapolated, it would mean that 5 million Canadians have read the book and about 1.7 million agree with its thesis. The *Da Vinci Code* is a foolish novel that purports that Jesus married Mary Magdalene, fathered a child by her, and intended for her to assume leadership after his death and that it was "the church" that covered up this "fact" and replaced it with the doctrine that Jesus is divine and with a male-led ecclesiastical institution and has tried to keep all of this a secret ever since. The influential book has sold more than 25 million copies in 44 languages.

PRAYER OF JABEZ AUTHOR QUILTS HIS AFRICAN DREAM

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Bruce Wilkinson, author of the misguided book *The Prayer of Jabez*, has abandoned his grandiose Dream for Africa program. According to a front page *Wall Street Journal* report, Wilkinson quit the project this October, only two years after launching it (“Unanswered Prayers,” *Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 19). After selling some millions of copies of *The Prayer of Jabez* (22 million to date), Wilkinson said he was called of God to move to Africa. After moving to southern Africa, Wilkinson announced plans for his Dream for Africa in Swaziland, which would feature such things as Western tourists planting door-sized vegetable plots for Swazis (they don't even have to dig and prepare the soil but merely insert the seedlings!), sexual abstinence programs, and a massive \$190 million African Dream Village, an orphanage that would double as a tourist attraction. It was to provide a home for 10,000 of Swaziland's AIDS orphans and was to include a luxury hotel and an 18-hole golf course and much more.

Wilkinson teaches in *The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life* (which is based on the prayer found in 1 Chron. 14:10) that people should pray the prayer of Jabez word-for-word, every day for four weeks, expecting special blessing from God. In the Preface, Wilkinson says: “I want to teach you how to pray a daring prayer that God always answers.” After moving to Swaziland with his wife and youngest daughter, Wilkinson was praying his Jabez prayer and pursuing his African dream. The Swazi king, who has 14 wives (promiscuity is the major cause behind Swaziland's terrible AIDS statistics) and high government officials were apparently not tuned into Jabez, because they refused to sign on to Wilkinson's dream village. By July of this year, Wilkinson was complaining in an e-mail to the *Wall Street Journal* that “Swaziland takes a massive amount of effort to do the simplest things.” Welcome to the Third World, Mr. Wilkinson! In October he announced in a press release that “our work in Africa is complete.” The Africans, though, have a different perspective. Gcina Mdluli, a volunteer in Wilkinson's anti-AIDS program, said, “How can he leave everything in the middle of the road?” Wilkinson admits he “is trying to come to grips with a miracle that didn't materialize despite his unceasing recitation of the Jabez prayer” (*Wall Street Journal*). Pathetically, he said, “I asked hard enough.” Among many lessons that this sad story teaches, we will mention one, and that is that Wilkinson's Prayer of Jabez philosophy is wrong. He has demonstrated that beyond question in his own life. God is never obligated to answer my prayer, regardless of how right it might seem in my own eyes or how carefully it is worded or how sincerely it is asked or how many times it is repeated or how earnestly it is voiced. Prayer is a priceless privilege and responsibility, and I believe in asking God for great things and expecting great things. We have been doing this for 32 years and have had the joy of witnessing some mighty answers, but prayer does not make God my servant; prayer is never demanding but is always asking and is always willing to accept the answer of “No.” Even Paul the apostle prayed, “Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you” (Rom. 1:10).



Wilkinson teaches an AIDS seminar on African television. Wilkinson's doctrines have led to discouragement and failure for many who sought easy relief from troubles by praying repetitious prayers.

CANADA'S SUPREME COURT RULES THAT "SEX CLUBS" ARE LEGAL

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In another strange decision, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled on December 21 that group sex in publicly accessible places is legal ("Canada Legalizes 'Sex Clubs,'" LifeSiteNews, Dec. 21). "As long as consent is given, the area is somewhat private, and no payment is directly involved, partner exchanging or 'swinging' and group participation in sexual acts is not considered illegal." Since the legal age of consent in Canada is, amazingly, 14 years old, this means that mere teenagers can participate in "group sex" in clubs as long as alcohol is not sold on the premises. This is the same strange court that ruled that homosexuals should be allowed to have something like the same marital rights as heterosexuals.



Canadian Supreme Court

BILL CLINTON HAILS ELTON JOHN'S HOMOSEXUAL "MARRIAGE"

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Former U.S. President Bill Clinton sent a video greeting to Elton John and his homosexual "partner" on the occasion of their civil ceremony. They are among the first to take advantage of the U.K.'s new law allowing same sex partners to have civil union ceremonies and to enjoy many of the same benefits as married couples. Clinton congratulated Elton John for "tying the knot" and said, "If there were more people in the world like Elton, then the world would be a better place."

FEDERAL APPEALS COURT ISSUES A REBUKE TO THE ACLU FOR THE BOGUS "SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE" PRINCIPLE



Richard Suhrheinrich

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In its ruling on December 20 in a case involving the display of the Ten Commandments in a county courthouse the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals issued a rebuke of the ACLU's constant use of the bogus "separation of church and state" principle. Writing the decision, Judge Richard Suhrheinrich wrote: "A reasonable observer would not view this display as an attempt by Mercer County to establish religion. Instead, he would view it for what it is: an acknowledgment of history." He called "the separation of church and state," which the ACLU referred to repeatedly, an "extra-constitutional construct [that] has grown tiresome. The First Amendment does not demand a wall of separation between church and state. ... Our nation's history is replete with governmental acknowledgment and[,] in some cases,

accommodation of religion.... Thus, state recognition of religion that falls short of endorsement is constitutionally permissible. If the reasonable observer perceived all government references to the Deity as

endorsements, then many of our nation's cherished traditions would be unconstitutional, including the Declaration of Independence and the national motto ['In God We Trust']” (“Appeals Court Upholds Commandments Display, Issues Rebuke to ACLU,” Baptist Press, Dec. 21, 2005). The judge further said that the ACLU “does not embody the reasonable person.” Amen and amen to that! The Appeals Court ruled that the display of the Ten Commandments is constitutional when it is included with other documents and has a secular and historical purpose.

AMERICANS AND HEAVEN



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According to an ABC News Poll conducted October 5-9, 89% percent of Americans believe in heaven and 75% believe they will go there (“Nine in 10 Americans Believe in Heaven,” ABC News, Dec. 20). The survey found that 79% of the respondents think of themselves as Christians. Of those who believe in heaven, a whopping 78% think it is a place where people exist “only spiritually.” 60% of those surveyed believe that heaven is open to Christians and non-Christians alike, and 90% of Roman Catholics surveyed believed that.

Since Vatican II, the leadership of the Catholic Church has made every effort to convince Protestants and other religions that their views of salvation have changed. This has been done to ensure that the Catholic Church is the leader of all ecumenical endeavors. It's no wonder that the average Catholic thinks that those outside of Jesus Christ can be saved, in contrast to the clear teachings of Jesus Christ. Here, Pope John Paul II is shown kissing the Koran.

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.