

Friday Church News Notes

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RICK WARREN DOESN'T MENTION JESUS ONCE WHILE PREACHING TO JEWS

In June Rick Warren spoke at the Sinai Temple in Los Angeles and did not mention the name of Jesus one time. Rob Eshman, the editor of *The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles*, observed: "Warren managed to speak for the entire evening without once mentioning Jesus--a testament to his savvy message-tailoring" ("Jesus' Man Has a Plan," *The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles*, June 23, 2006). No, it is a testament to his wretched compromise. For Warren not to mention the name of Jesus when preaching to Jews is inexcusable, "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). The congregants at Sinai Temple do not need to hear about Rick Warren's seeker-sensitive philosophy and organizational methods; they do not need to hear him brag about how many copies of books he has sold or how much money he gives away; they need to hear that they are lost in their sins and will go to eternal hell if they reject Jesus as the Messiah. Warren and other Church Growth gurus claim that have not changed the Christian message, only the methods. In fact, if Rick Warren preached the same message that the apostle Paul preached he would have the same response from unbelieving Jews today that Paul had in his day. They would ridicule and oppose him. "*For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost*" (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16). Rabbi Ron Wolfson of the Sinai Temple has been influenced by Warren's "Purpose-Driven Church" book and has had personal discussions with Warren, and Warren told him "his interest is in helping all houses of worship, not in converting Jews."



COMMITTING VIOLENCE AGAINST THOSE WHO CALL MY RELIGION VIOLENT

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Pope Benedict has gotten himself into hot water for speaking against Islamic jihad, even though he is currently apologizing to beat the band and claiming that the quotes he cited in his sermon are not his own sentiments. In a speech on September 12 at the University of Regensburg in Germany, the pope referred to a 14th century dialogue between the emperor of Byzantium, Manuel II Paleologus, and a Persian Islamic scholar. The dialogue took place during the siege of Constantinople between 1394 and 1402, when the Muslims were preparing to conquer the Greek Orthodox capitol and overthrow the Byzantine Empire. They subsequently did so with great bloodshed and destruction and rapacious pillaging. The pope quoted Paleologus as speaking against Islamic

jihad, of which his own empire was an objective in that day, saying: "Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached." The pope then said that "violence is incompatible with the nature of God and the nature of the soul." The statement about Mohammed has Muslims up in arms in spite of the fact that Mohammed was definitely a warrior who advanced his religion at the point of the sword and taught the doctrine of jihad and great numbers of his followers have committed countless acts of bloodshed ever since based on this



doctrine. That not all Muslims have practiced jihad or supported terrorism does not do away with these facts. The response to the pope's remarks has been predictably fierce. It was condemned by political leaders in Pakistan, Indonesia, Iran, Lebanon, Malaysia, Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, India, and Palestine. The Pakistani parliament unanimously adopted a resolution condemning the pope for his "derogatory comments about Islam." The 57-nation Organization of the Islamic Conference, based in Saudi Arabia, soundly condemned the pope's statements. Many other Muslim responses were along the vein of: "How dare you say Mohammed taught violence; we will commit violence upon you for that!" Italy has

The Pope apologizes.... and the Pope's personal guard has been strengthened because of threats from Islamist groups. Muslim lawyer Anjem Choudary, in a protest outside Westminster Cathedral in London, said the pope should face execution for insulting Islam. A cleric in Somalia called on Muslims to "hunt down" and kill the pope. The League of Jihadists in Iraq posted this peaceful message at their web site: "Know that the soldiers of Mohammed will come sooner or later to shake your throne and the foundations of your state." The Mujahedeen's Army also threatened to strike the Vatican, referring to the pope as the "dog of Rome" and promising to "break your crosses in your home." A group calling itself the young Brigades of Fundamental Islam has distributed papers threatening to slay all Iraqi Christians unless the pope apologizes to their liking. Two Christians have been murdered in Iraq since the pope's remarks. Muslim gunmen murdered an elderly Italian nun at a children's hospital in Mogadishu, and there have been many violent attacks on churches in Gaza and the West Bank. Of course, the Islamic religion could not possibly be to blame for these things, could it? By the way, if Islam is truly a peaceful religion and if violence is an aberration, we should be hearing the plainest and most vehement and most universal condemnation of every Islamic terrorist from the lips of all peaceful Muslim leaders. And I am not talking about some vague statement that violence is wrong; I am talking about naming the names of the Islamic terrorist groups and violence-mongering clerics and condemning them in no uncertain terms. But for a few exceptions, the silence on that count is deafening.

been forced to raise the level of national security



...while Muslims rage.

CHRISTIANS MURDERED BY MUSLIMS IN SOMALIA

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A recent convert to Christianity, Ali Mustaf Maka'il, was shot in the back and killed by a gunman loyal to the Union of Islamic Courts (ICU), which took power in Mogadishu in June of this year. The 22-year-old college student and cloth merchant was murdered when he refused to join a crowd chanting Koranic verses in honor of a lunar eclipse ("Convert from Islam to Christianity Killed," Assist News Service, Sept. 15, 2006). There are reports of three other Christians in Somalia killed by Islamists in July as they returned home from a prayer meeting. ICU leader Hassan Dahir Aweys has promised to implement Islamic shari'a law. The Barnabas Fund reports: "According to shari'a, apostates (those who leave Islam for another religion), must be killed. ICU leaders have even threatened to kill as apostates Muslims who are lax in their prayers, claiming this is commanded by shari'a."

GOSPEL MUSIC CHANNEL PROMOTING THE LIE THAT MUSIC IS NEUTRAL

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The two-year-old Gospel Music Channel (GMC) promotes the lie that music is neutral and that Christian music is a legitimate form of sensual entertainment. GMC President Charley Humbarnd says: "Gospel music is any style of music that sings about the gospel and our Christian faith. [It's an] all encompassing brand that



Humbarnd

represents all styles" ("Expanding the Concept of gospel Music," *Christian Post*, Sept. 15, 2006). So any trashy music can be offered up to a holy God? You will never convince me of that. If a certain style of music is comfortable at a night club or a rock concert it has no place in the house of God. The Gospel Music Channel has grown rapidly and today reaches some 10 million homes in 3,000 cities and towns. Jerry Williams, GMC's director of programming, admits that Gospel music today "may sound like any other mainstream music," but the message is of "hope and encouragement." The fact that Contemporary Christian Music sounds like the world's party music is clear evidence of its spiritual bankruptcy. The Bible instructs God's people to sing "spiritual songs" (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Spiritual means holy and sacred; set apart to a holy God; different from the world.

It is the opposite of that which is carnal and of the flesh (Rom. 7:14; 1 Cor. 3:1). As for a message of "hope and encouragement," the message of the New Testament Christian faith is much more than that. It is not a vague feel-good-about-yourself hope and encouragement; it is a precise message of repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as the only Lord and Saviour. The worldliness of Contemporary Christian Music is evident in their award ceremonies and halls of fame and talent searches. The GMC is running a search "for the next Gospel Dream winner." This is a perfect imitation of the world. It is the "American Idol" approach. It is turning Christian music into commercialism and idolatry. "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2).

UNITARIAN CHURCH HOSTS PAGAN PRIDE DAY

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The First Unitarian Church of Providence, Rhode Island, hosted a Pagan Pride Day on September 16. The Unitarian-Universalist Association was formed in 1961 from a merger of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America, and practically any thinking is allowed in Unitarian churches except dogmatic Bible truth. The Unitarian-sponsored Rhode Island Pagan Pride Day featured lessons on palm reading,

Wicca, reincarnation, and tarot (“Some Unitarian Universalist Church Members Are Questioning,” *Providence Journal*, Sept. 15, 2006). Event organizer Lorna Steele has led a pagan group in the First Unitarian church for 14 years. It is associated with an organization called the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans. She says paganism encompasses witchcraft, Native American spirituality or nature worship, “Heathenry, and Hellenic Reconstruction.”

NASA SCIENTIST PLAYS CHICKEN LITTLE



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A NASA scientist claims that we have only 10 years at most to address “global warming” before environmental disaster takes place. James Hansen, director of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies, is only the latest environmentalist to cry that “the sky is falling.” It is sad to see people who are so smart be so blind, but it is a spiritual problem. The world will not end in a nuclear holocaust or become toast through global warming. The future is written in the Bible for all to see, but only those who bow their knees to Almighty God in repentance and receive His Son Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour can understand. All others are blinded by the devil. *“In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them”* (2 Cor. 4:3-4). The next event on the biblical calendar is the rapture of church age saints, followed by seven years of Great Tribulation, the return of Jesus Christ, and the establishment of His kingdom on earth. After He rules for 1,000 years there will be one final revolt against God, which will be put down quickly. Then there will be the Great White Throne judgment of the unsaved, followed by the destruction by fire of the present

heaven and earth and the establishment of the new heaven and the new earth. The same evolutionary scientists who discount the destruction of the world by the flood of Noah's day similarly discount the destruction of the world by fire in the future. They were described 2,000 years ago in the prophetic Scripture. *“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men”* (2 Peter 3:3-7).

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. David Cloud is the director of Way of Life Literature and author of the Friday Church News Notes.