

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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***!HERO* ROCK OPERA RETURNING FOR 2006 RUN**

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The contemporary Christian rock opera called "*!Hero*" is returning for a 2006 run ("*!Hero* Returns," *CCM Magazine.com*, Sept. 18, 2006). Written by Eddie DeGarmo and Bob Farrell, the opera has been called the "Jesus Christ Superstar for the MTV generation." It depicts "Christ" transplanted to New York City and facing issues such as gang warfare, HIV, and dirty cops. *!Hero* features blaring rock & roll, breakdancing, and "wide screens constantly flashing a litany of high tech images and pulsating graphics." *!Hero's* "Jesus" sports long dreadlocks. The Last Supper is a barbeque party and "Jesus" is crucified on a city street sign. Its decidedly unscriptural character is doubtless the reason why "every show in every city has met with rave reviews [even by secular publications], as well as standing ovations" (Rick Welke, *R&R Magazine*). The Christ figure is played by Michael Tait, of dc Talk, a black man who demonstrates his spiritual ignorance when he says, "Jesus had to be born somewhere; he had to be a color; it doesn't matter" (*Star-Telegraph*, Dallas, Texas, Nov. 20). It makes all of



the difference in the world where Jesus was born and what "color" He was. Had he been born into any family other than one tracing a direct lineage from Adam through Abraham and David, He could not have been the Messiah. Does DeGarmo, Tait, and company think that the genealogies of the Bible are just boring fillers? Jesus Christ was not an African or an Asian or a European; He was Jewish! It DOES matter, unless you care nothing whatsoever for the Word of God and have gone so far down the "contemporary" road that you are apostate! Jesus Christ is not merely some do-gooder who could have been born anywhere. He is the eternal Son of God and His birth, life, preaching, miracles, rejection, death, and resurrection were the precise fulfillment of Bible prophecy. We do not have the right to change one *iota* of it in an attempt to make it "culturally relevant." In one scene, Tait sings the song "Take My Hand" to an AIDS patient: "I'm not here to condemn you/ I'd never want to damn you..." The fact is that though the Lord Jesus came into the world to save sinners and He has great compassion for the lost, He preached often on eternal Hell and divine judgment. It is Jesus Christ who twice said in one sermon, "... *except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*" (Lk. 13:3, 5) and thrice warned in another sermon that hell is "*where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched*" (Mk. 9:44, 46, 48). If men do not acknowledge their wickedness before God, they cannot be saved. You can't "reach the MTV generation" for Jesus Christ with a twisted message and a confused gospel. The Bible warns repeatedly of false gospels, and that is what we have in *!Hero* (e.g., 2 Cor. 11:1-4; Gal. 1:6-8). In addition to Michael Tait, those who have been involved with *!Hero* include Rebecca St. James, John Cooper of Skillet, Grits, Nirva, rapper T-Bone, Matt Hammitt of Sanctus Real, and Mark Stuart of Audio Adrenaline. The Jesus depicted in *!Hero* is a false christ. Friends, I warn you in the strongest of terms to beware of Contemporary Christian Music.

LAUSANNE LEADERS EMPHASIZE UNITY

Friday Church News Notes, October 6, 2006, <http://www.wayoflife.org> Unity was one of the watchwords at the recent “Younger Leaders Gathering” in Malaysia, sponsored by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE). Phil Butler, senior associate with the LCWE, claimed that we are in the middle of a revolution with the rapid spread of Christianity, and said that the reason why hundreds of millions more aren't “coming into the



Mario Cappello with Pope Benedict XVI

kingdom” is that “credibility has been destroyed by divisions in the body of Christ” (“Lausanne Leaders Emphasize Christian Unity,” *Christian Post*, Sept. 29, 2006). Mario Cappello, head of the Institute for World Evangelization, also spoke about the need for unity in “the global world Church.” He has trained more than 200,000 Roman Catholics by using the JESUS Film, and this is the type of heresy that is considered genuine missionary work among large numbers of evangelicals today. Those who hold Rome's sacramental gospel and honor the pope and pray to Mary are not proper candidates for discipleship and missionary training; they are candidates, rather, for hearing the true gospel so that they can be saved and turn from their

apostate religion. As for the lack of unity between Christian denominations destroying the credibility of the gospel, that is not possible for the simple reason that it is God who has commanded His people to be strict in doctrinal purity (e.g., 1 Tim. 1:3; 6:13-14; 2 Tim. 3:16 - 4:4) and to separate from those who are not sound in doctrine (e.g., Rom. 16:17; 2 Thess. 3:6; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 3:5). The Lausanne Younger Leaders meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, September 24-30. The Lausanne movement itself was formed in 1974 after a meeting of evangelical leaders in Lausanne, Switzerland, and Billy Graham was one of the chief movers and shakers in its formation. Its objective is to encourage “world evangelization” and “to map a strategy to achieve it.” During its history, the LCWE has grown increasingly radical in its emphasis on ecumenical unity and has broadened the definition of world evangelization to include social-political, social justice endeavors, in direct contrast to the simplicity of Christ's Great Commission (Mat. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15; Lk. 24:44-48; Acts 1:8). According to reports I am getting, the so-called “Younger Fundamentalists” don't seem to be too far behind the “Younger Evangelicals” in their dislike for strictness in doctrinal purity and biblical separation and their mislabeling of stringent biblical holiness as “legalism” and “moralism.”

CANADIAN SHAI MUSIC AWARDS TO BE HELD IN JANUARY 2007

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The SHAI Gospel Music awards convention is scheduled to be held in Alberta in January 2007, and over 100 “artists” and 3,000 spectators and guests are expected. The convention will feature “networking and sharing” and awards. Contemporary Christian Music exists in open and clear disobedience to God's Word, which requires separation from the world. “And be not conformed to this world” (Romans 12:2); “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4); “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the

flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (1 John 2:15-16). In spite of these warnings, Contemporary Christian Music, as a rule, imitates the world's look, sound, promotion, and awards. Can you imagine for a moment the apostles holding an awards ceremony after a contemporary fashion? Can you imagine John announcing the award for Paul's “new hit song”? Or Peter praising the latest batch of “powerful artists”? Whatever the world has, there is a Contemporary Christian “alternative” of it, but a Christianized form of the world does not have God's blessing or power. God's program is holiness, and holy means set apart to a holy God; it describes something that is entirely different from the world, something heavenly and otherworldly in origin, and it cannot be conformed to the world's patterns and ways without destroying it. Beware friends; CCM is the devil's chum to entice professing Christians to the world. And with its “unity” theme song, it is also one of the glues of the ecumenical movement and is being used by the devil to create an end-times “world church.”

BRITISH MUSLIMS REFUSE TO OBEY CHRIST'S COMMAND TO LOVE ONE'S NEIGHBORS



Sentamu

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On September 14 John Sentamu, the Archbishop of York, suggested in a sermon that Muslims should do more to integrate into British society and should follow Christ's teaching to “love thy neighbour” (“Muslims Must Do More to Integrate,” *Daily Mail*, Sept. 15, 2006). Sentamu condemned Islamic terrorists as murderers who pervert their faith and observed that those who speak out on this subject are accused of being Islamophobic. He said: “My plea to all Muslims in this country is the words of Jesus Christ, who to you is a prophet and to me a saviour. 'You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.

I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. If you love those who love you, what reward do you have?’” (Note that the liberal Anglican Archbishop did not say that Jesus Christ is THE Saviour but merely A saviour.) The Muslim Council of Britain responded to Sentamu's reasonable suggestion by saying that it could not accept the plea for Muslims to love their enemies. The Council's spokesman said, “[W]e cannot just turn the other cheek.” Instead of crying out fervently and continually and effectually against every form of Islamic terrorism, British Muslim leaders spend more time and energy condemning police raids and security techniques such as profiling and complaining about alleged discrimination.

ESSAY CRITICAL OF ISLAM LEAVES TEACHER ON THE RUN FOR HIS LIFE

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The following is an excerpt from a Reuters News Service report dated October 1, 2006: “A French teacher hiding from Islamist death threats says he has been abandoned by the Education Ministry and has to arrange for his own safe houses when police bodyguards move him every two days. Robert Redeker went underground after publishing an attack on Islam on Sept. 19, in which he called the Koran 'a book of incredible violence' and Islam's prophet Muhammad 'a merciless warlord, a looter, a butcher of Jews and a polygamist.' Islam, Mr. Redeker said, 'exalts violence and hate.' Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin said the threats against Mr. Redeker, who teaches philosophy in a suburban Toulouse high school, were intolerable and showed that 'we live in a dangerous world that is often marked by intolerance.' ... Mr. Redeker said his wife was living in hiding with him under protection by police and the DST domestic intelligence agency.”

ALLEGED REVIVAL IN INDIA CHARACTERIZED BY “MIRACLES”

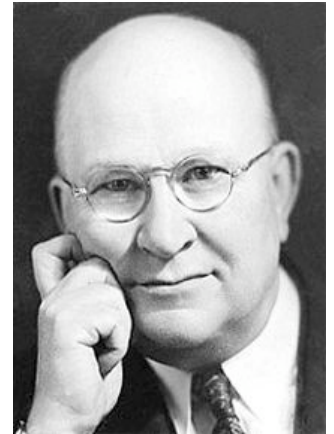
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In a recent report *BBC News* quotes Presbyterians in northeast India who claim that a “Holy Spirit awakening” has broken out accompanied by “miracles.” The leaders claim that “similar religious experiences proclaimed the beginning of a reawakening in the region in 1906, just two years after the last great revival in Wales” (“Miracles Boost Indian Christians,” *BBC News*, Oct. 1, 2006). The alleged miracles feature students “convulsing, behaving abnormally and even fainting.” In one church in the state of Meghalaya a cross has allegedly been glowing and radiating the image of Jesus. Of course, the image just happens to look like the popular but deluded artistic conceptions of a longhaired male. My friends, students fainting and acting strange is no more a miracle than falling on the floor! Since when did students not act strange! And as for fainting, there have been several reports over the past several months of Hindu students in Nepal fainting for no apparent reason. What an ignorant, foolish, shallow age we live in! If it were not for the many prophecies that describe end-times apostasy, such things would be impossible to understand. As it is, we can look at these things and say, “Praise the Lord, the time of His return draws near!”

A RIGHTEOUS WORLD IS COMING

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The following is by Harry Ironside from his commentary on Revelation: “What a long, dreary night with what frightful disturbing nightmares, if I may so speak, has this world known since sin, with all of its attendant evils, came in to wreck man's hopes of joy and gladness! But how precious to know that evil shall not always have the upper hand; that a time is coming, aye, and is very near, when the curse will be lifted, the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the rose; even the lower creation will be changed and revert to former habits before sin entered, 'the lion shall eat straw like the ox' (Isa. 11:7); the little child need not fear the most savage of beasts because they shall not hurt nor destroy in that day. Then government will be righteously regulated; abuses of every kind will be stopped, and for a thousand glorious years our Lord Himself shall reign in righteousness.”



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.