

Friday Church News Notes

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WE ARE WHAT WE READ

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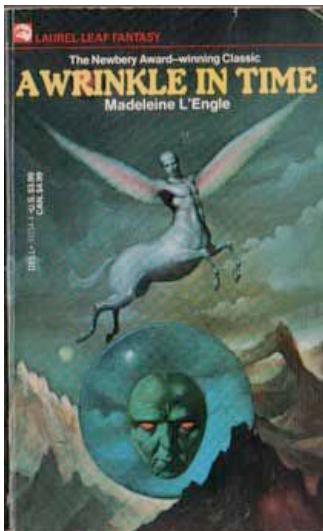
To a large degree the saying is true that “you are what you read.” I was reminded of this recently when *Christianity Today* published a list of the “top 50 books that have shaped evangelicals.” The report began:

“People and movements can be defined by the books they read and remember. The time it takes to read and digest a book requires us to engage someone else's ideas with more seriousness than almost any other activity” (*Christianity Today*, Oct. 2006).

This is certainly true, and it is a loud warning to fundamentalists and independent Baptists. Many have become New Evangelicals by reading New Evangelical literature non-critically. I have often been amazed when visiting bookstores on the campuses of fundamentalist schools to see the same compromising New Evangelical (or worse) authors that you find in the typical ecumenical bookstores, and there is no warning.

Christianity Today's book nominations were made by “dozens of evangelical leaders” who submitted their suggestions. The titles that were selected reflect the broad, ecumenical, non-judgmental, doctrinally and morally confused nature of today's evangelicalism. No. 3 on the list is C.S. Lewis's “Mere Christianity,” which teaches that Christianity is like a house with many rooms (e.g., a Baptist one, a Methodist one, an Anglican one, a Roman Catholic one, etc.) and that the individual Christian is free to choose the room that most pleases him but he should not criticize those who live in different rooms. No. 6 is “The Living Bible” by Kenneth Taylor, who took frightful liberties in creating his paraphrase and who broke the ground for the

slew of inaccurate “dynamic equivalency” versions that flood the market today. No. 7 is “Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger” by Ron Sider, one of the many voices that have convinced today's evangelicals that the Great Commission has a broad socio-political aspect. No. 11 is “Celebration of Discipline” by Richard Foster, a Quaker who is at the forefront of the current evangelical frenzy over Catholic style spiritual disciplines. No. 12 is “Power Evangelism” by John Wimber, who taught the delusion that to be truly effective, evangelism must be accompanied by signs and wonders. No. 19 is “The Cost of Discipleship” by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, one of the fathers of the heresy of neo-orthodoxy. No. 20 is “A Wrinkle in Time” by Madeleine L'Engle, librarian and lay preacher at the wretchedly apostate Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. No. 23 is “All We're Meant to Be” by Letha Scanzoni, a feminist who advocates the ordination of women and approves, under certain conditions, of lesbianism and sex outside of marriage. No. 30 is “Roaring Lambs: A Gentle Plan to Radically Change Your World” by the late Robert Briner, one of the father's of the Christian rock philosophy that advocates that Christians embrace the culture as a way to reach the unsaved: e.g., become a rapper to reach rappers and a sports fanatic to reach the sports fanatic and a ballerina to reach ballet lovers. No. 32 is “The Cross and the Switchblade” by David Wilkerson, who has greatly popularized the



A Wrinkle in Time ranked as the 20th most influential book of the last 50 years among evangelical Christians

unscriptural Pentecostal doctrine and practice among evangelicals. No. 34 is “This Present Darkness” by Frank Peretti,” a popularizer of the unscriptural charismatic-style spiritual warfare. No. 39 is “Desiring God” by John Piper, and the *Christianity Today* editor says it all when he observes, “Who expected a Calvinist Baptist to redeem hedonism for Christ?” No. 42 is “The Purpose Driven Life” by Rick Warren, who has promoted the New Evangelical “judge not” philosophy to multitudes. No. 44 is “The Gospel of the Kingdom” by George Ladd, who promoted the ancient heresy of amillennialism to large numbers of evangelicals. These are indeed the types of books that have shaped evangelicalism over the past few decades, but if I were them I wouldn't admit it.

FOURTH CATHOLIC DIOCESE IN AMERICA FILES FOR BANKRUPTCY

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On October 10 the Roman Catholic diocese of Davenport, Iowa, became the fourth American diocese to file for bankruptcy protection from lawsuits pertaining to abusive priests. Priestly sexual abuse cost the Roman Catholic Church in America at least \$467 million in 2005. That is the finding of an audit released by the Conference of Catholic Bishops. There were 783 “new and credible allegations of sexual abuse by clergy” last year, down from 1,092 in 2004. The total number of accusations of sex abuse since 1950 is 12,000 (“Abuse Cost Churches,” *Boston Globe*, March 31, 2006), and the cost has exceeded \$1.2 billion. A conservative Catholic organization documented this wretched business in the fall/winter 2002 issue of the magazine *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*, observing: “... the overwhelming majority of sexual abuse cases in the Catholic Church--about 90%--involve homosexual priests preying on teenage boys. The major media and the U.S. culture at large want to deny or spin the homosexual factor out of the scandal.” We would also comment that the judicial system in America is nearly as corrupt as these child-abusing Catholic priests. If a “minister” is guilty of a heinous crime, that minister should be held liable and should pay for his crime, and if a fellow “clergyman” is found to have contributed to the crime by trying to cover it up, then he, too, should be made to pay. But an entire group of churches should not be bankrupted by greedy lawyers as the present system unjustly allows. The American judicial system is no longer about justice for those who have been wronged; it is about money, which it drains from every victim that falls into its uncaring clutches.



Davenport Bishop William Franklin

HOLY BONES

Friday Church News Notes, October 20, 2006, <http://www.wayoflife.org> (Friday Earlier this month the heart of John Viannney, an alleged Roman Catholic saint who died 220 years ago, was displayed in the Cure of Ars Parish in Merrick, New York. Two lines of parishioners knelt before the heart in an act called “veneration.” This is pure paganism. We don't come to God through bones or “saints”; we come through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and



man. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19). There is not one hint in the Bible that Christians are to save the bones of the dead and make keepsakes of them for any purpose whatsoever. This is pagan and occultic. When the first martyr Stephen died, the church at Jerusalem did not keep his bones. They did not hack off a few pieces and distribute them to the other churches. They buried the man (Acts 7:2). All of him! Even in Old Testament times the bones of believers were not kept and incorporated into their worship. The body of Joseph was kept, not to use in worship but to carry to the Promised Land so that he could have a proper burial there (Gen. 50:25; Exodus 13:19; Joshua 24:32). God buried the body of Moses to prevent any possibility that his bones would be used as holy relics (Deut. 32:5-6). "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen" (1 John 5:21).

MUSLIMS LOOKING FOR "PERFECT MAN OF PEACE"

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Many Muslims are looking for the "Imam Madhi" or "Saviour of Times" who will be a perfect man of peace to usher in a new society. In his speech before the United Nations last month Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad concluded with these words: "I emphatically declare that today's world, more than ever before, longs for just and righteous people with love for all humanity; and above all longs for THE PERFECT



RIGHTEOUS HUMAN BEING AND THE REAL SAVIOR who has been promised to all peoples and WHO WILL ESTABLISH JUSTICE, PEACE AND BROTHERHOOD ON THE PLANET. Oh, Almighty God ... [b]estow upon humanity that thirsts for justice, THE PERFECT HUMAN BEING promised to all by you, and make us among his followers and among those who strive for his return and his cause" ("Iran Leader's U.N. Finale Reveals Apocalyptic View," *WorldNetDaily*, Sept. 21, 2006). Ahmadinejad claimed that he was bathed in a green light from heaven during the speech. According to the Bible, the Antichrist will come on the scene with a breathtaking peace program and a promise of brotherhood for all men. An

impressive and brilliant man, he will appear to have solved the Middle East crisis, but after three and a half years he will break his covenant and will rule the world with an iron fist for a short period before the real Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ, returns to establish His righteous kingdom on earth. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thessalonians 2:7-12).

GOD'S PLAN FOR THIS WORLD'S CIVILIZATION

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The following is from William R. Newell's commentary on the book of Revelation: "We need to consider, that God hates what men call 'civilization,' and 'human progress!' all man's system: his *philosophy* (which has self-wisdom as its postulate); his *science* (which discovers 'Nature' and denies its Creator); his *art* (which demands the beautiful in form, but abhors holiness in fact); his *inventions* (designed, from Cain's day onward, to make earth livable without God); his *religion* (which denies God's righteousness and hates God's Christ and His shed

blood); his *government* (which has no place whatever for the King who patiently awaits, upon His Father's throne, the moment when He shall receive the throne to which He only has the right) and, finally, those *pleasures* which man delights in--all of which consists in the indulgence of that 'mind of the flesh' which is 'enmity against God.' The Lord will shortly strike, crush, destroy, wipe out, efface and remove even from memory this hateful, abhorrent, abominable thing--man's 'independence!' 'Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth,' will be carried out to the letter! And that involves crushing the present earth system as one would stamp out a nest of wasps." "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Daniel 2:44).

GOD IS SINGING BEATLES SONGS?

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The world of Contemporary Christian Music grows stranger with each passing year. One CCM video album



features the Beatles silly song "I Want to Hold Your Hand" performed as if the Lord is singing it to believers. This is on the video of the "Heart of David Conference on Worship & Warfare" sponsored by Rick Joyner's Morning Star ministries. The worship leaders are Leonard Jones, Kevin Prosch, and Suzy Wills. At the end of the conference, when Jones performed his version of "I Want to Hold Your Hand," which he sings as if it were a message from God, the band members testified that they felt a great heat on the stage and then a cloud appeared, followed by a sweet fragrance. They concluded that it was a demonstration of the Lord's pleasure at the Beatles song and the people's enthusiastic response to it, but it is

more likely that it was a demonstration of the devil's excitement at the blasphemy of professing Christians putting the words of the Beatles into the mouth of the thrice holy God!

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.