

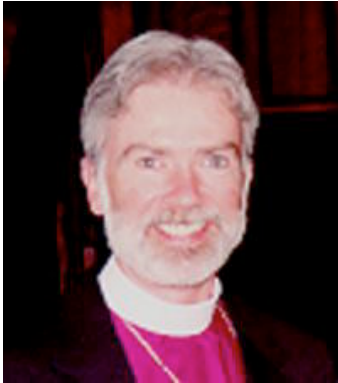
Friday Church News Notes

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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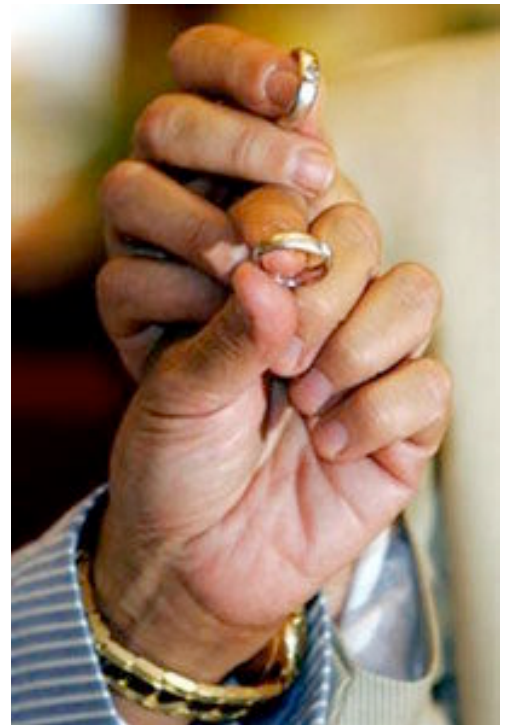
EPISCOPAL BISHOP APPROVES BLESSING OF HOMOSEXUAL "MARRIAGES"



Friday Church News Notes, October 27, 2006, <http://www.wayoflife.org>

Andrew Smith, the bishop of Connecticut in the Episcopal Church in America, has approved the blessing of homosexual "unions." He emphasizes that the decision does not allow Episcopal ministers to officiate at civil unions, which are legal in Connecticut, but it does allow them to impart "a pastoral ministry of blessing" ("Episcopal Bishop OKs Same-Sex Blessings," Associated Press, Oct. 22, 2006). In fact, the difference is meaningless. God's word condemns homosexuality in the

strongest of terms, calling it "vile affections," "against nature," "unseemly," and "a reprobate mind" (Rom. 1:26-28), and never gives the slightest support for "same-sex unions." To bless that which God has called abominable is the height of folly. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter" (Isaiah 5:20). The Anglican denomination is much more like the filthy Harlot of Revelation 17 than the holy church of Jesus Christ. Those who claim to be "evangelical" and remain yoked together with this heretical abomination are in open disobedience to God's Word. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14).



CHRISTIANITY TODAY ADMITS EVANGELICALISM'S LAODICEAN CHARACTER

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An editorial posted to the *Christianity Today* web site on October 19, 2006, inadvertently admits the Laodicean character of contemporary evangelicalism. The article, "Let's Improve the Public Perception of Evangelicalism," frets about public misperceptions of their movement, especially that "in the public's mind" evangelicalism is "linked with extreme fundamentalism." Horror of horrors! For 50 years the New Evangelicals have been trying to portray themselves as the reasonable, scholarly, positive face of Christianity, but society still thinks they are just fundamentalists. It is laughable. The author recounts the beginnings of modern evangelicalism as follows: "Let's agree that the word evangelical still works, but not like it did when the pioneers of the neo-evangelical

movement adopted it. At that time, it signaled their positive stance for the gospel along with a fresh, non-fundamentalist agenda of cooperation and cultural engagement.” Observe that the writer admits that New-Evangelicalism is this generation's heritage, and he glories in the fact that evangelicalism has rejected separatistic fundamentalism for a “positive stance.” This confirms what we have long said, that evangelicalism and neo-evangelicalism have become synonyms over the past 50 years. The author then boasts about evangelicalism's greatness as follows: “We now have institutional resources and influential churches to a degree barely hoped for 50 years ago. Our people are better educated and more affluent.” The Lord must be terribly impressed. “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (Rev. 3:17).

WOMEN PREACHERS IN THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

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While there are only a few female pastors in the Southern Baptist Convention, there are large numbers of women that are disobeying the Bible by assuming leadership roles in other ways and by teaching and preaching to men. 1 Timothy 2:12 forbids the woman to do two things: usurp authority over the man and teach the man. Both are forbidden, but there are large numbers of Southern Baptist churches that allow women to teach mixed adult Sunday School classes and otherwise openly disobey this plain Scripture. It is just as unscriptural for a woman to teach a class of men as it for her to be a senior pastor. Yet W.A. Criswell's wife, Dorothy, taught a mixed Sunday Class for many years composed of men and women at First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas. Some of those who sat under her teaching were students and trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (“Pastor's letter challenges seminary's proposed stance,” Baptist Press, Oct 17, 2006). Conservative SBC leader Paige Patterson's wife, Dorothy, has spoken as the principal speaker at the Sunday Morning worship service at Concord Missionary Baptist Church in Dallas (Baptist Press, Oct 17, 2006). Billy Graham's daughter, Anne Graham Lotz, who frequently preaches to mixed crowds of men and women, is a member of a Southern Baptist congregation. Texas Southern Baptists featured Lotz's “stirring preaching” at their Evangelism Conference in 1996 and she was again featured as a preacher at a Sunday morning worship service June 15, 2003, sponsored by the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists (*Ohio Baptist Messenger*, July 2003). If we are going to disregard the Bible in one area why not disregard it altogether?



Dorothy Patterson

MORE CONTRADICTION SIGNALS IN THE SBC ON “PRIVATE PRAYER LANGUAGE”

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On October 17, 2006, the trustees of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, voted to disallow professors from promoting the charismatic doctrine of a “private prayer language.” The statement says the seminary will not knowingly hire professors who advocate this practice. At the same time, though, the president of the seminary, Paige Patterson, said professors who practice this privately and do not teach it in the classroom will not be disciplined or fired, and one of the school's trustees who openly endorses this practice will remain in his position (“SWBTS Takes Stance against Pentecostal/charismatic Doctrine,”

Baptist Press, Oct 17, 2006). This reminds us of what happened at the SBC Foreign Mission Board in late 2005. The board passed a rule forbidding the appointment of missionaries who practice a “private prayer language,” but the head of the Board, Jerry Rankin, both practices and endorses it, and the current missionaries who practice it will not be dismissed. This demonstrates how weak a denominational structure is and how it necessarily results in compromise of the truth, because it brings together men with differing doctrines and opinions and the truth must be brought down to the lowest common denominator, and even if a stand is made on one side, it will often be contradicted on another. Why can't men be content with the institution that the Lord created, which is the New Testament church? The apostles did not create a denominational or associational structure to bring the churches together so they could allegedly “accomplish more together than separately.” There is not a hint of this in the book of Acts or anywhere else in the New Testament Scriptures.

NOBEL WINNER DOUBTS ISRAEL'S SURVIVAL

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Nobel Economics Prize winner Professor Robert Aumann doubts whether Israel is capable of surviving for the long-term. Aumann, who moved from the USA to Israel in the 1950s, says: “Too many Jews don't understand why they are here. If we don't understand why we are here, and that we are not America or just a place in which to live, we will not survive” (“Nobel Winner Doubts Israel's Survival,” Haaretz.com, Oct. 18, 2006). Aumann criticizes Israel for giving up land to the Palestinians and for untimely disengagement from conflicts with its neighbors. The professor would be right except for one thing, and that is God. According to the Bible, Israel's near future is very dark but beyond that her future is as bright as the glory of Christ's kingdom. Until Israel repents of rejecting her Messiah she will be insecure in this world, but when she repents during the 70th week of Daniel's vision she will again be the object of God's delight and protection. “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon



me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. ... And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God. ... Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east ... And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one” (Zechariah 12:9-10; 13:9; 14:3-4, 9).

GROWING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHRISTIANS IN IRAQ

Friday Church News Notes, October 27, 2006, <http://www.wayoflife.org>

The following is excerpted from “Thousands of Frightened Iraqi Christians Are Fleeing Iraq,” Barnabas Report, Oct. 20, 2006: “Several horrific attacks on Christians in the last three weeks have increased the fear amongst the Christian community. On Wednesday October 4th an explosion was detonated in the mainly Christian district of Camp Sara, Baghdad. As people gathered round to help the wounded a second, larger explosion occurred. Nine Christians were killed in the attack, one of the largest death tolls for a single attack. On Tuesday 10th

October Paulos Iskander, an Iraqi church minister, was abducted in Mosul. Iskander's eldest son received a phone call from the kidnappers demanding a ransom of \$250,000; the family, unable to raise this money, were able to negotiate for a ransom of \$40,000, but the kidnappers also demanded that Iskander's church publicly repudiate the remarks about Islam quoted by Pope Benedict XVI last month. ... However, before the ransom could be paid Iskander's decapitated body was discovered on 12th October, dumped in an outlying suburb of Mosul. His body showed signs of torture, with cigarette burns, bullet holes and wounds from beatings. His hands and legs had been severed, and arranged around his head which was placed on his chest. ... In Baquba, 65km north-east of Baghdad, a Christian doctor was abducted and killed on his way to work in Baquba hospital. There has also been an unconfirmed report that a 14-year-old Christian boy was crucified in Basra. Amidst the surge in hostility towards Christians in recent weeks, Christian girls have increasingly become the target in a spate of kidnappings and rapes. The girls are taken from their families at gunpoint, from their homes or snatched off streets into waiting cars. They are frequently raped and abused while in captivity, only released if their families are able to find the large ransoms demanded.”



Paulos Iskander

20,000 SCIENTISTS DENY CHIEF GLOBAL WARMING THEORY

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The following is from *The Berean Call*, Oct. 18, 2006: “20,000 scientists, of whom about 2,700 of them are physicists, geophysicists, climatologists, meteorologists, oceanographers or environmental scientists, who are in a position to understand the global warming issues, have signed the following statement: 'There is no convincing scientific evidence that human release of carbon dioxide, methane, or other greenhouse gasses is causing or will, in the foreseeable future, cause catastrophic heating of the Earth's atmosphere and disruption of the Earth's climate. Moreover, there is substantial scientific evidence that increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide produce many beneficial effects upon the natural plant and animal environments of the earth' (Beisner, E.C., P.K. Driessen, R. McKittrick, and R.W. Spencer, 2006, 'A call to truth, prudence, and protection of the poor: An evangelical response to global warming,' p. 10). Christians especially need to be cautious when it comes to the issue of global warming and other environmental issues. One of the reasons is that these issues have been hijacked by individuals who desire to change our way of life, and in particular, the Christian worldview that has guided the Western Hemisphere.”

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.