

Friday Church News Notes

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ANOTHER BIBLE FOR MODERN MAN

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A group of 52 "biblical specialists" has released a politically correct German Bible called "The Bible in a More Just Language." It uses inclusive language to refer to God as "our Mother and Father" and replaces the title "Lord" with "the Eternal One." It is designed to remove language that is offensive to homosexuals, feminists, and other "marginalized" groups. Luise Metzler, who raised 400,000 euros to finance the project said, "A Bible in the German language has to be sensitive about racism and ethnic discrimination..." ("German Bible in Inclusive Language," Ecumenical News International, Nov. 1, 2006). The new "translation" appeared on "Reformation Day" (October 1) and the first run of 20,000 copies quickly sold out. Lutheran bishop Baerbel Wartenberg-



Baerbel Wartenberg-Potter

Potter welcomed the new "translation," saying, "The Bible is not a museum but a living book." Wartenberg-Potter is the wife of Philip Potter, the former general secretary of the World Council of Churches, and in the year 2000 became the third woman elected to the office of bishop in the Lutheran Church in Germany. It is appropriate that this "Bible" was produced in Germany, the birthplace of theological modernism. It illustrates the complete lack of the fear of God on the part of large numbers of professing Christians today and is a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Timothy 4:3-4). The "Bible in a More Just Language" is not more perverted than The Message and The Today's English Bible and The New Living Bible and other "dynamic equivalency" versions used by Southern Baptist mega-church pastor Rick Warren and other influential evangelical leaders.

CORPORATIONS SUPPORTING THE HOMOSEXUAL AGENDA

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According to the 2006 report from the Human Rights Campaign, a homosexual advocacy organization, 138 major U.S. corporations earned their top rating of 100 percent and 436 include sexual orientation in their non-discrimination policies. Last month Wal-Mart was given a position on the board of the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce for its support of homosexual "marriage." Well did the Lord Jesus Christ say that the end of the age will be "as it was in the days of Lot" (Luke 17:28).



ROCK & ROLLER ELTON JOHN SAYS HE WOULD BAN RELIGION

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Elton John, the homosexual rock star, says he would ban religion because of its alleged hatred. In an interview with *Music Monthly Magazine* he said: "I think religion has always tried to turn hatred towards gay people. Religion promotes the hatred and spite against gays. But there are so many people I know who are gay and love their religion. From my point of view, I would ban religion completely. Organized religion doesn't seem to work. It turns people into really hateful lemmings and it's not really compassionate" ("Elton John: Religion Promotes Hatred," FoxNews.com, Nov. 11, 2006). This is a very sad and wrong-headed statement. It is also hypocritical. Elton John would be the first to say that religious people who judge his "lifestyle" are wrong to judge, but he obviously believes that he is perfectly free to judge them in the most severe manner. The true religion of the



New Testament does not promote hatred toward homosexuals. While it condemns their homosexuality, it teaches that they are the objects of God's love and it offers them eternal life through the grace of Jesus Christ if they will repent and believe. It is not hatred to warn of danger, whether physical or moral, and the Bible plainly says that sinners who refuse to repent of their sin will be judged. If a bridge is out and someone stands beside the road and warns drivers to turn around before it is too late, that is not hatred, and that is exactly what the Bible-believing Christian is doing in regard to homosexuality. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31).

NEW EPISCOPAL HEAD SAYS MISSION IS TO HEAL THE WORLD

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Katharine Jefferts-Schori, the newly ordained presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church in the USA (a branch of the Anglican Church), says the job of the "church" is to bring healing to the world ("Episcopal Head Shifts Focus," *Christian Post*, Nov. 13, 2006). Speaking at the denomination's Executive Council meeting on November 12, she said the healing will come through such things as halting the spread of AIDS, eradicating poverty, achieving universal education, promoting gender equality, and fighting environmental problems. She observed that these are the same objectives identified by the United Nations as Millennium Development Goals. It is no surprise to see the Episcopal Church adopting the goals of the United Nations, since it is one in spirit with this pagan one-world organization. The Episcopal Church, like its mother in Rome, is much more like the Harlot of Revelation 17 than a New Testament church. Like Rome, though to a lesser degree, the Anglican Church is drunken with the blood of the saints, having burned Baptists and other dissident Christians at the stake during the reign of its founder King Henry VIII, as well as during the reigns of Edward VI, Elizabeth I, and King James I, well into the 17th century.



BIASED REPORTING ON IRAQ

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The Prime Minister of Kurdistan in Iraq likens CNN International to the radical Arabic television network Al-Jazeera, saying they “are equally bad in their coverage of the situation in Iraq” (“Iraqi Leader Disparages US Media Coverage,” CNSNews.com, Nov. 6, 2006). He said: “When I was in the United States recently and read the negative news in the *Washington Post*, *New York Times* and in the network TV broadcasts, I even wondered if things had gotten so bad since I had left that I shouldn't return.” I have observed the same thing. We don't have a television in our home, but I have occasion to view CNN in airports and elsewhere on my travels, and it spews forth a steady stream of anti-American, anti-Israel, anti-Christian propaganda. It is important that we understand that the mainstream news media outlets, both newspaper, radio, and television, are propagandizing an extremely liberal philosophy.



Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani

TED HAGGARD'S DOWNFALL

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The media, both secular and religious, has been filled for the last week with stories of the moral downfall of Ted Haggard, one of America's most prominent Christian leaders. He was the pastor of the 14,000-member New Life church in Colorado Springs; the head of the National Association of Evangelicals; and the founder of the World Prayer Center. A homosexual named Mike Jones claimed that Haggard was his regular partner, and though Haggard denied the accusation at first, he eventually admitted his 'dark side' and was fired from the pastorate. A letter from Haggard was read to the New Life Church on November 5 in which the founding pastor admitted that he is “guilty of sexual immorality” and “a deceiver and a liar.” He said, “There is a part of my life that is so repulsive and dark that I've been warring against it all of my adult life.” Haggard is a Charismatic, a New Evangelical, and a radical ecumenist. In October 2005 Haggard said, “New Life doesn't try to 'convert' Catholics” and “the church would never discourage its members from becoming Catholic or attending Catholic Mass” (*Berean Call*, Jan. 2006). We would like to say that Haggard's carnal “non-judgmental” philosophy was the cause of his downfall, but the sad truth of the matter is that immorality is not something that happens only to doctrinal compromisers. In recent years fundamental Baptist preachers have also resigned for reasons such as child molestation, adultery, and drunkenness. Whether or not Haggard was ever truly born again is something that only the Lord knows, and there is a good chance that he is not; but the Bible teaches us that even born again people can sin grievously by yielding to the old fleshly nature that we inherited from Adam. The apostle Paul described this internal warfare and taught that the victory is through walking in the Spirit: “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Gal. 5:16-17). By the way, it is puzzling to me that New Life Church and the National Association of Evangelicals would dismiss Haggard for his *moral* disobedience when they completely ignored his *spiritual* disobedience. The Bible, on the other hand, soundly condemns both.



LIFEWAY'S INSUFFICIENT SURVEY OF CALVINISM

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“Is TULIP Blooming in the SBC” was the title of a report published on September 18 by LifeWay, the Southern Baptist Convention's publishing/bookstore arm. LifeWay did a survey of 413 Southern Baptist pastors and found that 10% admit to being “five point Calvinists,” while 4% were not sure, and 1% refused to answer. Though 85% of those surveyed refused to be labeled “five point Calvinists,” they could be “four pointers” or “three pointers,” as the survey wasn't specific enough in this regard. It appears to me that the survey was designed to find the least possible percentage of Calvinists. It would have been better had they asked specific questions, such as, “Do you believe that God sovereignly elects some sinners to salvation?” because that is the essence of Calvinism. I agree with the conclusion of Southern Baptist professors Fisher Humphreys and Paul Robertson who say: “Did the sovereign God decide in advance to save particular individuals and to damn others? If we answer that question Yes, we are Calvinists, whatever we may say of the other four points of Dort; if we answer it No, we are not Calvinists, whatever we may say of the other four points” (God So Loved the World: Traditional Baptists and Calvinism,” Insight Press, 2001, p. 95). I have found that many Calvinists are not willing to give a straight answer to the previous question, wanting to fudge in regard to the inescapable flipside of “sovereign election,” which is “sovereign reprobation.” This is what George Bryson, in his interesting 2004 book, calls “The Dark Side of Calvinism.” Following is an excerpt: “Despite the fact that many ... prefer to sharply distinguish between an election that is to salvation and a reprobation that is to damnation, such distinctions are not compatible with a consistent Reformed Theology. Many just do not want to face or admit the dark side of their theological system. ... To the Calvinist, a denial of sovereign grace is a denial of sovereignty and grace. ... [At the same time] Calvinists shout about their doctrine of unconditional election [but only] whisper when talking about unconditional reprobation, if they speak of it at all. ... To deny that the primary and ultimate cause of anything is anyone or anything but God is to deny a fundamental tenet of a consistent Calvinism. Thus, the distinction between a negative and positive decree in Calvinism not only does not clear up the matter, it compounds the confusion. 'God passes by,' a favorite phrase used by the Calvinist, is a cosmetic effort to distance God from damnation, and is therefore misleading. For the hardening process that leads to reprobation and ultimately damnation is, according to Calvinism, the work of God, as is the irresistible grace of God that leads to salvation for the elect. Moreover, it is God alone who hardens. ... Calvinists constantly argue that if anyone but God has a say about anything, especially in matters relating to ultimate destinies, then God is not sovereign” (p. 58, 61, 76, 77).



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.