

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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THE STRANGE CARTER-CLINTON ALLIANCE FOR A NEW BAPTIST MOVEMENT

Friday Church News Notes, January 19, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>
Former U.S. presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton have joined forces to call for a new broadly inclusive movement that will counter the "negative image" of Baptists and address social issues such as poverty, the environment, global conflicts, and AIDS. About 80 Baptist leaders representing 40 Baptist organizations joined Carter and Clinton at the Carter Center in Atlanta for the January 9 announcement ("Former Presidents Carter & Clinton," Baptist Press, Jan. 10, 2007).



These included representatives of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the American Baptist Convention, the National Baptist Convention, Mercer University, and other liberal groups and institutions. They announced plans for a "Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant" to be held in Atlanta at the end of January 2008. Carter called the recent gathering and announcement "a historic event," and we agree. It was a historic moment in the fulfillment of the Bible's prophecy about end-times apostasy. Bill Clinton, a serial liar who prevaricated boldly to the entire nation on public television ("I never had sex with that woman") and was caught lying under oath and has trouble defining something as simple as the word "is," said his goal is to be the new movement's "cheerleader." The "New Baptist Covenant" will be very interesting indeed. Since Bill Clinton is involved it will include support for homosexual rights and the murder of unborn children under the guise of "legalized abortion" and the acceptance of voodoo as the working of the Lord (in his autobiography "My Life" Clinton described a visit to a voodoo ceremony in Haiti as the "Lord working in mysterious ways"). And since Jimmy Carter is heading up the new movement it will include support for evolution (in 2004 Carter fought successfully to keep "evolution" in Georgia public school textbooks), the acceptance of Mormons as Christians (in 1997 he said Mormons should not be evangelized), the celebrating of liberal theologians who deny the Bible's infallibility and Christ's virgin birth (he has said that his favorite theologians are Karl Barth and Bart Brunner), and the rejection of a strict Bible doctrine stance (speaking at the 2000 CBF convention he called for an alliance that will "reject creedalism"). Historic indeed. "Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book" (Revelation 22:7).

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES RECEIVES MOST FUNDING FROM SECULAR CORPORATIONS

Friday Church News Notes, January 19, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org> During the 2004-2005 fiscal year, the National Council of Churches in America received more money from secular corporations than from its member denominations. Its income from members has declined 40% since the 2001-01 fiscal year, but income from liberal political-social action groups such as People for the American Way (PAW), the Sierra Club, and U.S. Action ("Group Speaks for Churches but Pushes Liberal Agenda," CNSNews, Jan. 11, 2007). The president for

U.S. Action spoke at the 2005 convention of the Communist Party USA. The Sierra Club is a radical environmentalist organization, and the misnamed People for the American Way is a pro-abortion, pro-homosexual, pro-evolution organization founded to oppose Christian principles in the public arena. It got off the ground in 1978 with the help of a \$40,000 grant from the Playboy Foundation (*NFD Journal*, April 1986). In 1995 the homosexual president of PAW, Arthur Kropp, died of AIDS (*Christian News*, Jun 19, 1995). It is not surprising to see the extremely liberal and unscriptural National Council of Churches buddying up to such organizations. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). The National Council of Churches in America has 35 participating denominations representing 45 million members. As the amount received from its members in 2004-05 was \$1.75 million, it follows that the ecumenical organization received less than 4 cents per individual member of the associated denominations. It's obvious that even its own members don't care much about it. In this news report we see the merging of the world and the "church" which is a characteristic of the Harlot of Revelation 17.



National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA

JEWS FOR JESUS' RADICAL ECUMENISM

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Recently when I asked readers for suggestions about Jewish ministries that are likeminded with our own doctrinal position, I was amazed that a few people replied with Jews for Jesus. Whatever this organization is, it is not a fundamentalist group by any stretch of the imagination and I am sure they would readily admit it. Jews for Jesus participated in the first ecumenical conference that I attended with press credentials. It was New Orleans '87. There were about 35,000 people in attendance representing some 40 denominations, and one-half were Roman Catholics. Many of the speakers were Catholic priests and nuns and a priest named Tom Forrest delivered the closing message. I learned at a press conference that the ministries that participated were required to sign an ecumenical statement agreeing to get along with all of the other participants. One of the pictures I took was a shot of a Catholic priest carrying a Jews for Jesus bag. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17). A ministry to the Jews that is likeminded with our own position is Hope of Israel Baptist Mission, a ministry of Victory Baptist Church, Cumming, Georgia, <http://www.hopeofisrael.net>.



VIDEO GAME SALES A RECORD \$12.6 BILLION

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Video games sales (equipment and software) in 2006 was a record \$12.6 billion in the United States. That is a lot of money and a lot of influence upon society. Many of the games are immoral and violent, and most of them feature background rock music. Some of the top selling games are Grand Theft Auto, Star Wars Knights, Warcraft, Final Fantasy, and Mortal Kombat. At best the popular video games are an addictive waste of fleeting hours. "Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied" (Proverbs 27:20). "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me" (Psalm 101:3).

CRACKDOWN ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN COMMUNIST VIETNAM

Friday Church News Notes, January 19, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org> There is a continuing crackdown on freedom of speech and religion in communist Vietnam. Bui Thi Kim Thank, a leading human rights and pro-democracy lawyer, has been incarcerated since last year in a psychiatric hospital and injected with drugs that have rendered her unable to speak ("Vietnam 'Poisons' Leading Rights Lawyer," BosNewsLife, January 13, 2007). She is a lawyer for the Democratic Party of Vietnam, an unrecognized group calling for democracy, human rights, and religious freedom. A Mennonite church meeting was broken up on January 9 and part of the building demolished. Communism is alive and well and it has never been a friend to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

BOYS DIE COPYING SADDAM'S HANGING

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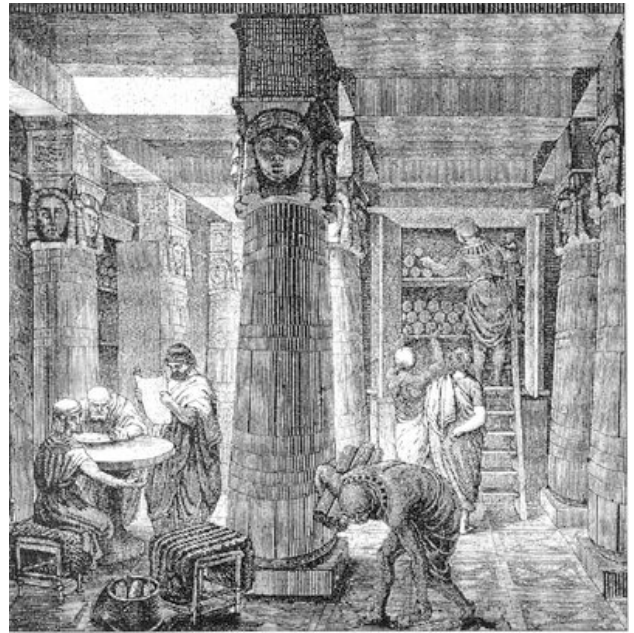
Several boys have died and some have been injured in apparent attempts to copy the televised images of Saddam Hussein's hanging. A 10-year-old died in Texas. A 12-year-old in Turkey. A nine-year-old in Pakistan. Two died and one was injured in Yemen. A 12-year-old died in Saudi Arabia. Others were reported to have died in Algeria and India. The father of the boy in Turkey said, "These television images are responsible for my son's death" ("Several Boys Die," AP, Jan. 14, 2007). The boy was strongly affected by the images and was constantly asking, "How was Saddam killed?" and "Did he suffer?" This is yet another testimony to the power of the media. People are dramatically affected by the music they hear and the television and movies and video games and Internet they watch, and those who deny this must also argue that advertising is a complete waste of money. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11). "Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied" (Proverbs 27:20). "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11).

THE BIBLE TEXT ISSUE: A TALE OF TWO CITIES

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The following is from Jack Moorman's excellent booklet *Modern Bible Versions: The Dark Secret*. "There is one point upon which both sides of the current Bible text-version debate agree: the early transmissional history of the New Testament is a 'tale of two cities', Antioch and Alexandria. And just as surely as the KJV Text was woven into the spiritual life of Antioch in Syria, so was also the Modern Version Text in Alexandria. ... The choice is a clear one, as there is very little common ground between them. Certainly Antioch has by far the more glorious Biblical heritage. It became to the Gentile Christians what Jerusalem had been to the Jews, and

superseded Jerusalem as the base for the spread of the Gospel. The 'disciples were called Christians first in Antioch' (Acts 11:26). It was the starting point for the Apostle Paul's missionary journeys. Mark, Barnabas, and Silas were there; as was Peter and probably Luke. The Book of Acts leaves us with no doubt that Antioch was the centre of early church activity. Egypt shares no such glory. It has always been looked upon as a symbol of the world-system which is opposed to the things of God. God would not allow His Son (Mt. 2), His nation (Ex. 12), His patriarchs (Gen. 50), or even the bones of the patriarchs (Ex. 13:19) to remain there. The Jews were warned repeatedly not to return to Egypt, not to rely upon it for help, not to even purchase horses there, etc. Thus, in contrast to what is being claimed today, it is hard to believe that Egypt and Alexandria would have been the central place where God would preserve His Holy Word. Frankly, it was the last place on earth that one could trust in doctrinal and biblical matters. It certainly wasn't safe to get a Bible there!



Etching of the ancient library at Alexandria

Even Bruce Metzger, a supporter of the Alexandrian Text, is compelled to catalogue the vast amount of religious corruption which came from Alexandria: 'Among Christians which during the second century either originated in Egypt or circulated there among both the orthodox and the Gnostics are numerous apocryphal gospels, acts, epistles, and apocalypses. Some of the more noteworthy are the Gospel according to the Egyptians, the Gospel of Truth, the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Philip, the Kerygma of Peter, the Acts of John, the Epistle of Barnabas, the Epistle of the Apostles, and the Apocalypse of Peter. There are also fragments of exegetical and dogmatic works composed by Alexandrian Christians, chiefly Gnostics during the second century. We know, for example, of such teachers as Basilides and his son Isidore, and of Valentinus, Ptolemaeus, Heracleon, and Pantaeus. All but the last-mentioned were unorthodox in one respect or another.* In fact, to judge by the comments made by Clement of Alexandria, almost every deviant Christian sect was represented in Egypt during the second century; Clement mentions the Valentinians, the Basilidians, the Marcionites, the Peratae, the Encratites, the Docetists, the Haimetites, the Cainites, the Ophites, the Simonians, and the Eutychites. What proportion of Christians in Egypt during the second century were orthodox is not known' (Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament*, Clarendon Press, 1977, p. 101). [Note from Bro. Cloud: Metzger errs in implying that Pantaeus was orthodox; he mixed pagan philosophy with Christianity.] Let it be said again: Alexandria was the worst possible place to go for a Bible! Yet it is precisely the place that our present-day translators have gone in gathering the major sources of the modern Bible" (Jack Moorman, *Modern Bible Versions: The Dark Secret*; this book is available from Plain Paths Publishers, <http://www.plainpath.org>, 828-863-2736, plain@juno.com).

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.