

Friday Church News Notes

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CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSICIAN SAYS HE'S INTO AEROSMITH



Toby Mac, left, and Steven Tyler, lead singer for Aerosmith

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In an interview with Tony Cummings on February 21, Toby Mac, formerly with the popular CCM band DC Talk, said his first LP was Aerosmith's "Toys in the Attic." He said: "I love rock and roll. I grew up listening to not only Run DMC, Beastie Boys and others but I also listened to The Police. My first LP was Aerosmith's 'Toys In The Attic.' That was the first LP I was ever given as a kid. I got it for my 12th birthday or something like that. So you know, I'm into that. But

for me, my heart is in hip-hop, especially expressive forms of hip-hop." We have often warned that CCM is not separated from wicked secular rock & roll, and this is yet another example. It is unconscionable for a CCM "artist" who influences Christian young people to pretend that Aerosmith's music is safe and acceptable. Aerosmith, the top American hard-rock band of the mid-Seventies, often sing about immoral themes in songs that were too dirty to describe. Lead singer Steven Tyler looked almost like a woman on stage, with his long hair, leotards, feminine blouses, and jewelry. Aerosmith's song "Dude (Looks Like a Lady)" glorifies bisexuality. Aerosmith concerts feature "liberal use of obscenities." Aerosmith considered adding a feature to their web site that would have allowed visitors to "watch each other on the screen having sex acts" ("Push 'play' for Vintage Aerosmith," *USA Today*, March 20, 2001, D2). Dan Lucarini, who wrote the excellent book "Why I Left the Contemporary Christian Music Movement: Confessions of a Former Worship Leader," made the following observation in a February 24 e-mailing: "I regret that I also had the same Aerosmith LP in 1975 and I performed some of the songs. 'Walk this Way' is about a teenage boy having sex for the first time and engaging in group sex. ... As the great hymn says, 'but I repented of my sin and won the victory' -- in Jesus! By the grace of God, I believed in Jesus Christ, He saved me and gave me strength to turn my back on this filth and repudiate it. That doesn't make me any better than Toby Mac in human terms, but I did it to please God not myself or men. Apparently Toby has never repented of his own Aerosmith sin nor did he take this opportunity to repudiate Aerosmith. Instead he honors them and tells us he is 'still into it'; has he no fear at all of our Holy God?"

CCM MUSICIAN CONTRIBUTES TO EARTH WIND & FIRE TRIBUTE ALBUM

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Kirk Franklin, one of the most influential Contemporary Christian Music artists today, contributed to the upcoming album "Interpretations," which is a tribute to the rock band Earth Wind & Fire. The album is scheduled for release in March. Franklin has also co-edited a video with Maurice White, founder of Earth Wind & Fire. This rock group is heavily into the occult. Terry Watkins warns: "There's no mistaking the new



age/satanic influence of the group Earth Wind and Fire. They blatantly flaunt occult symbolism, such as the all-seeing eye of Horus, zodiac signs, pyramids, hexagrams, the Egyptian ankh, and many more on their albums. To show the ultimate blasphemy, they even name one of their albums 'I AM'--a name reserved for God! The album 'I AM' has a cross of Christ in the center with an embryo and an old man in the center with a temple in the foreground. Their song 'Serpentine Fire' is based on the New Age teachings found in the Shah Kriza Yogi Meditation cult" (*Christian Rock: Blessing or Blasphemy*). The Earth Wind & Fire album *Spirit* pictures Maurice White and the other members of the band in a trance-like state surrounded by pyramids. Earth Wind and Fire's album *Powerlight* promotes Hindu yoga. In his 1998 autobiography "Church Boy," Franklin testified: "In the church, especially the African-American church during the seventies and eighties, HOMOSEXUALITY was a big problem. It still is in some places. IT'S A PROBLEM TODAY IN GOSPEL MUSIC--A MAJOR CONCERN--AND

EVERYBODY KNOWS IT. ... It seems that more than half the young people involved in dance, music, and the theater are openly gay. ... and the gospel music scene has not been exempt from that" (pp. 39, 40).

U.S. FEDERAL JUDGE RULES THAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE ENTITLED TO TEACH SEXUAL DIVERSITY

.....BUT PARENTS ARE ENTITLED TO EDUCATE THEIR KIDS IN OTHER WAYS

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In a February 23 ruling against a lawsuit filed by concerned parents, a federal judge said public schools are entitled to teach sexual diversity. U.S. district Judge Mark Wolf threw out the lawsuit which objected to portrayals of homosexual couples in the public school system in Massachusetts. He said in his ruling: "In essence under the Constitution public schools are entitled to teach anything that is reasonably related to the goals of preparing students to become engaged and productive citizens in our democracy. Diversity is a hallmark of our nation. It is increasingly evident that our diversity includes differences in sexual orientation." Wolf also said that parents have a fundamental right to raise their children and are not required to abandon that responsibility to the state and that they can choose private or home schooling as an alternative ("Judge dismisses Suit by Parents Opposed to Gay Classroom Talks," *Associated Press*, Feb. 24). The suit was filed in 2006 by two families who objected to books used in kindergarten and elementary school to portray homosexual families in a positive light. One case involved a second-grade teacher reading to the class the fairy tale "King and King" which describes two princes "falling in love." The public school system was vile even when I was in school in the '50s and '60s. It was one of the absolutely worst moral and spiritual influences in my life. For some reason, it simply wasn't an issue among most Christian parents in those days, but since the 1970s there has been an explosion in private and home schooling. Except in a very few cases in which there is simply no alternative (such as a divorce situation in which a saved parent must share child custody with an unsaved one by court appointment), a Bible-believing Christian who puts his children in the public school system today needs a spiritual revival. "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Corinthians 15:33).



BUDDHISM GROWING IN AMERICA

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An article in the February 22 edition of *USA Today* focused on the growth of Buddhism in America. In 1990 there were roughly 500,000 Buddhists, whereas by 2001 the number had almost tripled to 1.4 million. Soka Gakkai International, a Buddhist organization, estimates that there are more than 2 million Buddhists in America today. The *USA Today* article, "Seeking Prosperity through Inner Peace," examines Nichiren Buddhism, a strain of the religion that does not require such things as celibacy, austere diet, and renouncing of desire. It features the regular chanting of the words "devotion to



the wonderful dharma [religion] of the Lotus Sutra" in the Sanskrit language while facing a scroll inscribed with Chinese symbols. Practitioners include actor Orlando Bloom and singer Tina Turner. Woody Hochswender, who has written two books on Nichiren Buddhism, says, "Buddhism doesn't ask you to believe in God. Buddhism asks you to believe in yourself." He says he is seeking the truth inside of himself. According to this religion, the truth can be found by looking within through meditative practices, but the Bible says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9). The truth is not in us because we are sinners. The truth is in Jesus Christ and in the Bible, God's Revelation to mankind. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

CHRISTIANS ARRESTED IN BEIJING WHILE WALKING NEAR OLYMPIC CONSTRUCTION SITE

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The following is excerpted from "Christians Jailed for Walking Near Olympic Hotel," *WorldNetDaily*, Feb. 22, 2007: "A Christian house church leader in China and his mother are facing a criminal prosecution that appears to be part of that government's campaign to eliminate messages that are contrary to the official publicity releases as the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing approach. According to reports from Voice of the Martyrs (VOM), a Christian organization that works in support of persecuted Christians around the world, house church leader Hua Huiqi has been formally arrested and his 76-year-old mother arrested a second time for the offense of walking near a construction site for a hotel being built in preparation for the Olympics. ... China Aid Association officials told VOM that Hua has been very active in trying to help persecuted Christians and others who are oppressed by local officials who travel to Beijing trying to obtain justice from the central government. He and his mother were attacked, and while on the ground, kicked. Then later they were taken to a police station for questioning, according to reports. 'When Hua asked the police to release his sick mother and explain the legal ground for the detention, he was beaten repeatedly. While the temperature in Beijing was in the 20s, cold water was poured on him. He was later taken to a detention center,' the organization said. 'The Chinese government says they ensure freedom of religion, but this case clearly shows the truth,' Nettleton said. ... A number of human rights organizations--both faith-based and secular--have raised concerns about China's human rights record, and its preparations for the 2008 Games, which were awarded to Beijing in a vote by the International Olympic Committee in 2001."

ANOTHER DECEPTION ABOUT JESUS AND MARY MAGDALENE

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The fictional *Da Vinci Code* popularized the myth that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene and had a child. Now a documentary to be aired on the Discovery Channel is trying to give archaeological substance to the myth. "The Lost Tomb of Jesus" purports that six stone burial boxes discovered in 1980 originally contained the remains of Jesus and "his family." Not only does this fly in the face of the Bible and history, even secular archaeologists decry it as a cheap shot. William Dever, who is considered the dean of biblical archaeology among U.S. scholars, said: "I just think it's a shame the way this story is being hyped and manipulated. I've known about these ossuaries for many years and so have many other archaeologists, and none of us thought it was much of a story, because these are rather common Jewish names from that period. It's a publicity stunt, and it will make these guys very rich, and it will upset millions of innocent people because they don't know enough to separate fact from fiction" ("Lost Tomb of Jesus Claim Called a Stunt," *The Washington Post*, Feb. 28, 2007). Amos Kloner, the



Jewish scholar who originally excavated the tomb, called the documentary "nonsense." Joe Zias, former curator of archaeology at the Israeli Antiquities Authority, said the documentary is "intellectually and scientifically dishonest." Jodi Magness, an archaeologist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, said, "... the vast majority of scholars who specialize in archaeology of this period have flatly rejected this," and, "This whole case is flawed from beginning to end."

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.