

Friday Church News Notes

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POPE BENEDICT UPHOLDS PRIESTLY CELIBACY AND BAN ON COMMUNION FOR THE DIVORCED

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On March 13 Pope Benedict XVI reiterated the Roman Catholic Church's stance on priestly celibacy and its ban on Communion for divorced Catholics. In a 131-page document entitled "Sacramentum Caritatis" ("Sacrament of Charity") the Pope said: "Priestly celibacy lived with maturity, joy and dedication is an immense blessing for the Church and for society itself." In fact, the unscriptural doctrine of enforced celibacy has resulted in unspeakable and widespread immorality. The Bible says, "But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn" (1 Cor. 7:2). Marriage, in fact, seems to be a requirement for pastors and deacons (1 Timothy 3:2, 12). The Roman Catholic Church in America has spent more than a billion dollars in satisfying lawsuits that stem from the immorality of its priests. In the 19th century former priest Charles Chiniquy exposed some of the immorality of the priesthood in his book "The Priest, the Woman, and the Confessional." In his recent document the Pope also upheld the Catholic Church's doctrine that forbids a divorced Catholic to partake in the Mass. The Pope urged divorced Catholics to refrain from the marriage bed so they can receive the Eucharist, saying, "The Church encourages these members of the faithful to commit themselves to living their relationship ... as friends, as brother and sister." This is just as unscriptural as the doctrine of priestly celibacy. The Bible nowhere says that the marriage of divorced people is not a real marriage and nowhere demands that married people abstain from the conjugal relationship. Paul said: "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency" (1 Corinthians 7:5).



PENSACOLA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE STUDENTS ON MYSPACE REVISITED

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In the March 9 issue of the Friday Church News Notes we reported on young people on MySpace who identify themselves as affiliated with Pensacola Christian College (PCC). In considering this matter further based on feedback we have received, we want to revisit this with the following comments. *The first point I want to make is that there are not a lot of current Pensacola students on MySpace, at least as identifying themselves as such.* The young people who identify themselves on MySpace as affiliated with Pensacola are mostly former students, it turns out, and the school tries to keep its students away from this forum. One current student made the following four points in an e-mail: "1. PCC students do not have access to MySpace on campus. 2. The Intranet is in place so students cannot access MySpace. The Intranet is a specially designed access to certain websites of which MySpace is inaccessible. 3. The students on MySpace have been dismissed from school. 4.

PCC does not take MySpace postings by their students lightly. The matter is dealt with swiftly and carefully.” I am glad that this is the case and commend the school for taking these steps. *My second point is a warning that this problem not limited to MySpace.* Even though Pensacola tries to police MySpace sites among current students, this does not mean that they are not on it through an alias or that they are not on other social

Pensacola Christian College. (232 Members)

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networking sites. A friend wrote to say: “I could send you a link to a current Pensacola student who is on Facebook and whose site talks about the rock music (secular and CCM) that she enjoys. (She listens to Green Day. Look Green Day up if you want to know what this PCC student likes to listen to.) [Because of the warnings against MySpace] they just go to other sites. I know for a fact it is going on. I think your warning is valid. Two young people who just graduated from PCC last year are on MySpace talking about the hard rock music they have learned to love. Those who are still in school there are not going to broadcast their affiliation with the school and run the risk of getting kicked out. That doesn't mean they are not on MySpace. You just have to know how to look to find them. The kids at our church are very creative at being on MySpace under aliases, etc., to keep from being detected.” *My third point is that the fact that there are a large number of former Pensacola students on MySpace is a serious cause for concern.* One pastor found more than 200 MySpace sites representing former PCC students, and that is only those that openly identify themselves as such. Though this does not necessarily reflect on PCC itself, it is a cause for great alarm since the young people and families and churches they represent are fundamentalist in nature. *My final point is that this is a problem that certainly is not limited to PCC students.* It is a problem in fundamental Baptist churches across the land. A friend from a strong IB church wrote: “I have seen enough from my own church to know that kids from good churches are out there [on MySpace] in droves.” That is a sad and fearful testimony of the worldliness that is rampant in independent Baptist circles today. Our article “My Space or God's?” can be viewed online at <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/myspace-or-gods.html>.”

EPISCOPAL PAGANISM

Friday Church News Notes, March 16, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org> Recently I watched a DVD of the investiture and installation service of Katharine Jefferts-Schori as the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church in America. This took place on November 4-5, 2006, when she became the first female to occupy this position. Her entrance processional featured Native Americans chanting and drumming. The Indians had incense and eagle feathers that they used to consecrate the altar. There were also Buddhists in the procession. This fits Jefferts-Schori's universalist doctrine. A few days before her installation she said: “If we insist we know the one way to God, we've put God in a very small box” (“ECUSA's Incoming Leader,” AgapePress, Nov. 2, 2006). In fact, we don't know anything about God for certain except that which He has revealed in the Scriptures, and He has plainly stated that Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation. During her installation, Jefferts Schori wore a rainbow colored hat and robe. This is the color of the homosexual movement, of which she is supportive. She does not believe the Bible condemns “committed” homosexual relationships and claims that sexual orientation is “not a choice” but is “a piece of how one is created” (AgapePress, Nov. 2, 2006). During a



strange “baptism” ceremony the choir sang “wade in the water” in a jazz style while Jefferts-Schori walked down the isle sprinkling water on the crowd. Before this “baptism” she prayed, “Sanctify this water so that those who are baptized shall be cleansed from sin and born again.” Jefferts-Schori 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 this 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. “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. ... Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Timothy 3:1, 5).

CANADIAN ANGLICANS RESOLVE TO BLESS HOMOSEXUAL “UNIONS”

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On March 11, the Council of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada agreed on a resolution stating that “the blessing of same-sex unions is consistent with the core doctrine of the Anglican Church of Canada” (“Anglicans Promote Same-sex Blessings,” *The China Post*, Taipei, March 14, 2007). The resolution will be submitted to the denomination's General Synod in June. Archbishop Andrew Hutchison, who is the head of this apostate denomination, supports the resolution. The worldwide Anglican Communion had asked the Anglican Church of Canada to put a moratorium on blessing homosexual unions, but the request was ignored. In 1998 Anglican Church of Canada bishop Michael Ingham said Jesus is not the only way of salvation in his book “Mansions of the Spirit: The Gospel in a Multi-Faith World.” In an interview with ENI News Service, May 28, 1998, Ingham urged Christians “to recognise the grace of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the other great religious traditions of the world so that we may overcome our historic divisions and antipathies, and work together for world peace.” In May 2003 Ingham gave permission for six of his parishes in Vancouver, British Columbia, to perform ceremonies to bless homosexual relationships. In December of that year Ingham ordered the closure of Holy Cross church in Abbotsford, B.C., because it had refused to submit to his authority in this matter. In 1986 the Anglican Church of Canada joined the United Church of Canada in publishing a new hymnbook that contained prayers to Mary as the “Glorious Mother” and a song entitled “Lord of the Dance” that offered thanks for “the sacrament of sex.”

U.S. COURT OF APPEALS RULES AGAINST CHRISTIAN FREEDOM OF SPEECH

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In an amazing (but not surprising) ruling this month, the very liberal 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in America concluded that words such as “marriage” and “family values” constitute hate speech that could frighten homosexual employees. The ruling restricts the right of free speech of Christian employers of the city of Oakland, California, arguing that “public employees are permitted to curtail employee speech as long as their legitimate administrative interests outweigh the employee's interest in freedom of speech” (“9th Circuit Endorses Censoring



Christians,” WorldNetDaily, March 8, 2007). The ruling was against two Oakland city employees who attempted to organize the “Good News Employee Association” as a forum for “people of Faith to express their views on the contemporary issues of the day with respect for the Natural Family, Marriage and Family values.” This was in response to the continual assault of homosexual propaganda by Oakland's Gay-Straight Employees Alliance (GSEA), which is supported by the city. The GSEA is allowed to attack the Bible and to describe Christians as hateful in e-mails that are widely disseminated and on the city's bulletin board, but when some employees attempted to counter this propaganda they were ordered to cease and desist and their statement in favor of Family, Marriage and Family Values, which they had posted to the bulletin board, was deemed “homophobic” and a form of “sexual-orientation-based harassment.” As we have often warned, when homosexuals are given their “rights,” Bible-believing Christians lose theirs. The Pro-Family Law Center, which is defending the plaintiffs, has vowed to take the case to the Supreme Court.

TO CONDONE TRUTH MIXED WITH ERROR IS TO BE UNFAITHFUL TO GOD



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The statement was made by the preacher, pastor, and commentator Harry Ironside (1876-1951) -- “Error is like leaven of which we read, 'A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.' Truth mixed with error is equivalent to all error, except that it is more innocent looking and, therefore, more dangerous. God hates such a mixture! Any error, or any truth-and-error mixture, calls for definite exposure and repudiation. To condone such is to be unfaithful to God and His Word and treacherous to imperiled souls for whom Christ died. Exposing error is most unpopular work, but from every true standpoint it is worthwhile work. To our Savior, it means that He receives from us, His blood-bought ones, the loyalty that is His due. To ourselves, if we consider 'the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt,' it ensures future reward, a thousand-fold. And to souls 'caught in the snare of the fowler'--how many of them God only knows--it may

mean light and life, abundant and everlasting.”

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.